

BUXTON TOWN TEAM

NOTES ON THE DIRECTORS' MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 18TH AUGUST 2014

Present: Alan Thompson, Derek Bodey, Janet Miller, Jean Ball, Joe Dugdale, John Estruch, Linda Baldry, Roddie MacLean, Sarah Rawlinson, Tina Heathcote

Apologies: Philip Barton, Rachel Hoodith, Richard Silson

1. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was agreed that the notes of the meeting on 15th July represented an accurate record, and can be posted on the website.

JM

2. MARKETS

2.1 REVIEW OF ARTISAN MARKET RESEARCH

Sarah presented the findings of the University of Derby study on the first two Artisan Markets held in June and July. She stressed that the team had not been asked to make recommendations, but merely to present their findings.

The surveys covered three groups of stakeholders: visitors to the Artisan Markets; traders in the Artisan Markets; businesses (shops, restaurants, cafes, pubs etc.) in the vicinity. The aim was to identify the level of support for the market, the impact on local businesses, the motivation of the market's visitors and the level of satisfaction of the market traders, and to learn lessons for possible markets in the future.

In summary:

- the majority of visitors were from Buxton, female, over 45 years of age
- the majority of traders came from more than 11 miles from Buxton, and are regular market traders
- all three stakeholder groups strongly support the Artisan Market becoming a regular event
- market traders reported higher footfall and better sales on the Market Place (probably due to the weather)
- the level of support from visitors was the same regardless of the location
- Spring Gardens businesses did not report any significant effect on either footfall or trade when the Artisan Market was in either location
- Market Place businesses reported a significant increase in footfall, and some increase in trade, when the Artisan Market was held on the Market Place
- browsing and shopping at the Artisan Market were cited as the main motivations for visitors
- the quantitative responses appeared to indicate a strong preference among market traders for the Market Place as a location, however this was contradicted by some of the written comments

Suggested improvements included better signage and marketing; more entertainment especially for children; inclusion of a meeting point; transport between Spring Gardens, the Market Place and the Pavilion Gardens.

It was agreed that this was a very useful piece of work and the University was thanked for their contribution.

2.2 DISCUSSION

2.2.1 Validity of Survey Work

It was noted that this was a small scale survey, of only one market in each location, and that the very different weather conditions, and other events in the town, would have affected the results. Nevertheless it was agreed that the surveys provide the best data that we have on the impact of the market in each location.

It was also agreed that while the number of responses is small, it is sufficient to provide a representative view.

2.2.2 Location

John reported that Denise (The Market Co) thought that the Market Place is better suited for the logistics of setting up the market, but that some traders had concerns about weather at certain times of year and about whether people would be attracted in sufficient numbers to a market in higher Buxton.

Linda reported that if we wanted the Artisan Market to continue on Spring Gardens this would have to be agreed by the Licensing Committee and the Regeneration Committee, and there was no guarantee they would accept an extension of the permissions. There are no licensing issues if it were to continue on the Market Place, and Terry Crawford had advised that because the initiative was being led by the Town Team there was no need to hold a procurement exercise. The terms of engagement however may change from what was agreed for the trials.

It was noted that while the number of stalls was restricted to around 60 on Spring Gardens, there was far more space on the Market Place. John advised that Denise would like to increase to around 90 stalls initially, with potential for further growth if visitor numbers justified this.

A stated aim of the Market Co is to revitalize the area in which it operates; it was generally felt that the Market Place is more in need of revitalization than Spring Gardens. Alan pointed out that the aim of introducing the Artisan Market was to increase footfall in the main shopping areas of the town, and that there were more businesses in Spring Gardens who might benefit from this. It was accepted however that the research indicates that the location of the Artisan Market has very little effect on footfall in Lower Buxton.

It was pointed out that siting the Artisan Market in Higher Buxton fits better with Town Team objectives of linking the different areas of the town. Mention was also made of the major changes that are likely to take place in Higher Buxton over the next few years. To encourage people to move around the whole town, however, we will need to ensure improved signage and advertising and to consider the feasibility of some form of shuttle transport.

The possibility of alternating the Artisan Market between the two locations was discussed, but it was agreed that this would be impractical and lead to confusion.

2.2.3 Preferred Date

It was agreed that there would be very little benefit to local businesses from holding the Artisan Market on a Sunday, and that Saturday is the preferred day. Which Saturday was discussed; there are benefits to staying with

the first Saturday, and while other events (eg the monthly Farmers Market, the Spring Fair) could affect footfall this could be either positively or negatively. It was therefore concluded that there is no reason to change from the first Saturday of the month, and that the key is to work together on the timetable of events and to market events jointly.

2.2.4 Effect on Existing Market

It was noted that there was no longer any question of the existing market being relocated to Spring Gardens. If the Artisan Market is located on the Market Place however, the existing market does have to be accommodated as well. Having the two side by side is not ideal, however, as the haphazard nature of the regular market does detract from the neat uniformity of the Artisan Market.

2.2.5 Longer Term Aspirations

It was confirmed that the longer term aspiration is still to revitalise the regular weekly market, and that we would not want to support anything in the short term that might jeopardise the long term aim. It was accepted that a shortage of space is unlikely to arise in the foreseeable future, but that a much larger regular market alongside an Artisan Market would need to expand beyond the Market Place triangle.

Jean reported that Matlock Town Team had created a very successful weekly market, having spent their DCLG money on purchasing stalls. They have 40 regular traders and another 70 on the waiting list.

Roddie will arrange a separate meeting to discuss the revitalisation of the regular market.

RM

2.2.6 Ongoing Monitoring and Review

It was agreed that we should continue to monitor the market, and that it should be subject to regular review. Ideally this would involve the University, Sarah will enquire if this can be done.

SR

It was noted that only a minority of the traders at the Artisan Market were local to Buxton, and it is hoped that that this will improve over time. It was suggested that the proportion of local traders could be included as a criterion for ongoing review.

JE

2.3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It was noted that the Market Co is a private company, and that their objectives may not necessarily coincide with ours. We want to see the Artisan Market bring benefit to Buxton, however, and want to assist in any way we can to ensure that it is a success.

It was therefore agreed that:

- we will support the Market Co continuing to operate a monthly Artisan Market in Buxton for a further year
- we recommend that the Artisan Market is sited on the Market Place
- we recommend that the Artisan Market should continue to be held on a Saturday
- we will ask HPBC to integrate the Artisan Market into the calendar of events for the whole town including the Pavilion Gardens, and to work closely with us and with the Market Co on publicity and planning
- we will work with the Market Co to help promote the Artisan Market and in particular to encourage visitors to its location in Higher Buxton
- we will investigate options for low cost transport to move people between Higher and Lower Buxton on Artisan Market days
- we will work with HPBC to ensure clear demarcation between the Artisan Market and the regular Saturday market, which may involve the regular market being given a separate location eg the Sainsbury's car park or Scarsdale Place
- we will work with the Market Co and others to monitor the performance and implement improvements on an ongoing basis, and to address any problems that arise.

John will draft a letter summarising our conclusions, to be sent to HPBC and the Market Co.

JE

The meeting thanked Alan for having introduced the Artisan Market to Buxton.

3. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

3.1 Conference About Buxton

It was agreed that a forum, where all organisations with major plans or aspirations for Buxton could share their thoughts and reach a common vision, was a good idea and timely. Suggested invitees included HPBC, DCC, University, Vision Buxton, Buxton Civic Association, the Buxton Group, Buxton Opera House, TOP Group, Museum and major businesses eg Nestle. It was agreed that we should discuss the idea with HPBC initially, with a view to it taking place late January. Tina agreed to draw up a more detailed proposal.

TH

3.2 Great Places Expo, Deansgate, 15th September

We have been offered a free stall, which it was agreed we should take up; Roddie will make the arrangements.

RM

3.3 ATCM Great High Street Competition

The deadline for entries is the end of August; it was agreed that we could not meet this.

3.4 Town Team Stall on 6th September

John and Philip will organise the rota, Tina will arrange for extra Talking Signpost shifts.

JE/PB/TH

10. DATES OF NEXT DIRECTORS' MEETINGS

Dates for the next few months were agreed as follows: Tuesday 16th September; Monday 13th October; Tuesday 11th November; Thursday 11th December. All are at 7:30pm.