

NEWPORTFIRST

Pre-Christmas Shopping Events..... Edition 14 of the **NEWPORTFIRST** newsletter set out proposed arrangements leading into the pre-Christmas shopping season. In summary, there are key events on **28th November** (NTC's Christmas Lights Switch-on & the St. Nicholas Fair organised by Rodney Pitt) and on **12th December** (Dickensian day / evening arranged by the Chamber of Commerce). Ideally late night shopping starts from 14th November and additional Sunday shopping between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm on 7th, 14th, and 21st December. Ideally, all shops should work to common late night shopping times however traders have expressed differing views and we would welcome feedback on works best for you.



Left: Play your part in Newport's High St health-Check (over-page).
Right: Don't miss out on the Pre-Christmas Shopping Events



SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING..... Nine Newport traders have recently learned how to use social media to help boost their business through better on-line promotions and marketing, and a second cohort of traders have now signed up to participate in a second module that starts on 25th November 2014. There are a few places left so if anyone is interested please contact the town team manager as soon as possible.

A need for social media training came partly from direct business feedback and partly through feedback provided by retail guru Mark O'Dolan who has worked with and advised around 20 Newport retail businesses through the summer. The training is promoted by Newport's 'town team', delivered by TCAT, and funded by the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Contacting the Town Team:-

Mike Atherton, Newport's Town Team Manager

Email: newportshropstownteam@hotmail.co.uk **Tel:** 07581 454882

Website: <http://www.allaboutnewport.co.uk/newport-shropshire/town-team.php>

Face-book: www.facebook.com/newporttownteam

High Street Health-Check 2014 About to Start..... It is now 12 months since the 'town team' carried out the first comprehensive health-check for Newport town centre. Detailed results and analysis are set out in the reports that may be viewed on our web-pages <http://www.allaboutnewport.co.uk/downloads/newport-town-team/newport-town-survey4.pdf>

Why carry out surveys? Having created a benchmark in 2013 we can now track how the town centre is fairing in two ways. Firstly, we can assess whether things are getting better or worse in Newport by contrasting our local year-on-year results and secondly, we can compare our findings with those of similar towns like Congleton and Sandbach in Cheshire or Royal Wootton Bassett in Wiltshire.

Surveys for 2014 are about to start using a national benchmarking tool-kit that was developed by Action for Market Towns. Information will be collected during November for 12 different town centre surveys including a business database, empty properties, shop rents, on-street and off-street car parking, footfall counts, and the number of market traders, etc.

How can you help? Traders and business operators can contribute to creating this valuable information source by completing a **Business Confidence Survey** that will be hand-delivered to you on Friday 7th November. You can also help by asking your customers to record their postcodes on the **Shopper Origin (Postcode) Survey** forms that will also be distributed to you on Friday. All survey forms will be hand-collected on 21st and 28th November giving plenty of time for completion.

The town team manager and a number of volunteers will be carrying out on-street **Shopper Surveys** on 14th, 21st and 28th November. Results from this survey in 2013 provided a valuable insight into what shoppers want and gave some indications of how traders might respond to meet those needs.

Want to know more? If you have any queries about any part of the health-check

Newport Town Team Gains National Recognition

Back in July the town team manager and one of the directors prepared a submission for the Action for Market Towns 'Towns Alive' Awards. The theme of the bid centred on our low key, incremental but integrated approach to creating digital capability & capacity within town centre businesses is developing. We are rewarded with a 'Highly Recommended' citation which shows we are helping make a real difference for local traders / businesses.