

## Bromsgrove Centres Strategy Activity Overview – 2023/2024

The past year has been incredibly busy with building relations, new initiatives for the centres and day to day operational issues. Using the themes from the Centres Strategy 2023-2026 below is a summary of activity.

### **Accessibility**

Traffic Management – work has continued with retailers, BDC CCTV & Monitoring Centres and traffic wardens to reduce the number of vehicles on the high street during the Traffic Order times of 10:30-4pm. Feedback from stakeholders has shown an improvement however this work is ongoing and a formal change to the TRO has been requested with WCC & BDC Member support.

### **Safety and Security**

Taxi Marshall Schemes have continued at key dates throughout the year agreed by the TC Management group and supported by the Police.

Regular meetings of Bromsgrove Pubwatch occur on a bimonthly basis facilitated by the Centres Manager with collaboration from Redditch Pubwatch to ensure a joined-up approach across both areas. This has resulted in costs savings for both Pubwatch groups and the council who provide the software platform DISC. The Licensing L Savi Initiative has been introduced by Police supported by the Council and will be driven forward this year.

Early March 2024 will see the launch of a Shopwatch scheme and new radio system across Bromsgrove and Redditch. Collaboration with Redditch Business Improvement District will ensure a linked approach in deterring shoplifting in retail outlets and anti-social behaviour across the areas, supported by the Police, RBC and Community Safety.

Street Pastors continues to support and help the night-time economy. Regular catch-up meetings are in integral part of the pub watch forum and TC Management meetings.

### **Marketing/Promotion & Events**

Shop Local and Independent Campaigns have continued with Small Business Saturday & Love Your Market campaigns.

Collaboration with external groups and internal service areas has seen support for the following events.

- Rubery Festival
- Rocking Bromsgrove (Kings Coronation Event)
- Aston Fields Coronation Event
- Christmas Lights switch on across several centres.
- Friends of St John Christmas Market
- Indie Club Christmas Food Event

### **Talk of the Town Visa Award**

In partnership with Visit Worcestershire and Bromsgrove Indie Club a Bromsgrove Food Month is being established

- To build on Bromsgrove's reputation for Food & Drink
- To celebrate the towns independent scene
- To draw people into the town/area during the shoulder season
- To attract residents and visitors to the High Street and outlying centres
- Wider Marketing and PR to promote the event

This will be held in the Town Centre late Spring/early summer and will be funded through Visa, UKSPF and Visit Worcs. Bespoke marketing, advertising and website will be included to promote businesses with a view to this being an annual event.

### **Markets**

Regular attendance at traders' meetings and internal catch ups with the market manager to ensure Market & High Street activity work in tandem.

### **Business Support**

Through the UKSPF programme the Centres Enhancement Grant launched in January 2024 with a grant of up to 5k for shop front improvements and 10K to use a vacant unit. Applications closed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 24 and over 25 applications have been received which are currently being processed.

### **Public Realm**

All tarmac areas to Bromsgrove High Street repaired with matching blocks and March 2024 will see new planters mounted on lamp columns to provide much-needed colour to the high street.

Targeted letters /enforcement progressed to unsightly or problem premises.

Phase 2 Public Realm concept designs have been progressed with NWEDR & WCC through Levelling Up Fund monies, improvements to Chapel Street and High Street South should commence late Spring 2024.

### **Communication & Networking**

TC database of contacts

Bromsgrove Town Centre Management Group

Merging of Bromsgrove Indie Club with town centre steering group

Database of landlords/agents

Safer Bromsgrove Meetings

### **Footfall<sup>i</sup>**



Figures have remained static for High Street visitors with an increase on last year's numbers averaging at around 13,000 visits per day.

## Vacant Units

High Street Figures	2021	16 vacant units
	2022	17 Vacant Units
	2023	15 Vacant Units (7 of which are under offer or had lets agreed)

These numbers are provided by Strategic Planning who carry out a yearly health check of the Centres. The check is carried out in November each year and are based on the boundary's within the local plan.

## The future

The Centres action plan 2024/25 shows ongoing initiatives with the following new actions.

- Landlords Group
  - Database of landlords/agents
  - Update emails
  - Produce Marketing pack for prospective tenants/landlords
- Business Improvement District
  - Commission feasibility study
- Shopwatch Scheme
  - Implementation of scheme using Disc
- Busking Policy
  - Implementation of busking policy
- Banners/adverts
  - Designated space & Booking System

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<sup>i</sup> Data from Geolytix Footfall Tracker