

RETAILERS' ASSOCIATION MEETING **Tuesday 7th March 17**

Present

David Jackson	(DJ) Chair The Lanes	Maria Beattie	(MB) Roman
Holly Woodhead	(HW) Marketing Manager	Savannah Middleton	(SM) VIP
Helena Jonsson	(HJ) Secretary/Minutes	Kate Apperley	(KA) EVH Bookshop
Melanie Carr	(MC) Inspira	Mike Miller	(MM) Primark
Liam Reidford	(LR) Inspira	Caroline Browne	(CB) Library
Diane Atkins	(DA) The Perfume Shop	Fizza Khan	(FK) Jack Jones
Jaime Adams	(JA) Peter Jackson	Rev K Teasdale	(KT) City Centre Chaplaincy
Chloe Robinson	(CR) Next		

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from: Bodycare, Clarks, Disney, Eurochange, Grape Tree, Jones Bootmaker, Katie Loxton, Lanes News, Monsoon, New Look, O2, Shopmobility, Sky, The Fragrance Shop and Timpson. Other stores did not reply.

2. Inspira

Inspira, formerly known as Connexions, work with schools and colleges across the county and aim to match young people and school leavers to employers. As well as helping retailers with recruitment, they also have links with The Careers & Enterprise Company which is a national organisation who are working to broker the links between schools and employers. A key component of their programme is the Enterprise Advisor role, which is filled by volunteers from retail companies. The time commitment for this role is 1 day a month over an academic year (September to August), and the time can be split between 2 volunteers if staffing is tight or over several smaller sessions during the month, such as short meetings with schools or attending a career's fair.

They are currently working with 22 schools, with another 21 waiting to sign up. They also work with a number of HR and recruitment companies, as well as larger companies such as BAE, Sellafield, the NHS, and also the Cumbria Local Partnership, however they are struggling to recruit retailers.

They are also looking for mentors to work with a group of 15 school students for a couple of hours a month. This is a new programme being piloted in Carlisle with Caldew School and Newman School, and will be expanded over Cumbria as mentors are recruited.

As well as working with young people, Inspira are expanding to work with unemployed adults through the Job Centre and other agencies in Carlisle. They currently have 2 contracts in this area; the National Careers Service and The Key. The Key is a minimum 45 hour work programme for unemployed adults to help them in completing application forms and also getting ready for interview. If Inspira know when retailers have vacancies they can also tailor the work programmes to the adults going through the training.

Further details on the Enterprise Advisor role, Employer Mentoring and The Key programme are attached and contact details for MC and LR at Inspira can be requested from HJ.

3. Trading Review

• Overview

Overall footfall for January was 565,700 which was -0.6% on last year, ahead of the national figure which was -2.7%. DJ is still waiting for the final accurate figures for February, though it is looking to be around -4 or -5% on last year. The weekly breakdown for February is as follows and looks to have been a tough month, particularly for fashion.

Date	2016 v 2015	Date	2016 v 2015
30/1/17	+1.7%	13/2/17	-5%
6/2/17	-8.9%	20/2/17	-4.6%

- **Store reports**

Majority reported January and February as down against 2016 figures. Valentine's has also been disappointing compared to last year.

Reverend Teasdale- still taking lots of wedding bookings for the church and Tith Barn. Training for the new chaplaincy programme will be completed by the end of March and officially launched post-Easter. Both Debenhams and House of Fraser are supporting the new programme.

4. **Marketing**

Valentines- we ran an online campaign this year, focusing primarily on Facebook. We ran separate adverts for men and women in order to see how the two differentiated from each other. The tagline for the women's advert was "Get the gift that you really want" and the tagline for the men's advert was "Get a gift for your loved one". We saw very good reach on both adverts – over 12,000 people – and also saw good engagement, however we didn't get many entries for the competition. This fits in with the overall observations from the retailers that interest in Valentine's is decreasing over time; something we will bear in mind for next year.

Social media- we have now launched an Instagram page and would appreciate retailers following our new page and helping to spread the word. The username for the Instagram page is 'The Lanes Shopping Centre'. Sarah Milne has recently taken on responsibility for The Lanes social media pages and will be posting regular weekly items on subjects such as what the fashion trend is for the week, and as such will be dropping into stores to take photos.

Mother's Day- this is traditionally a very busy weekend for us and as such we are following in a similar vein to last year, and will be holding an event in the centre on Saturday 25 March with prizes given out every 20 minutes between 11-3pm. CFM and Pete Moss will be in the centre to provide the entertainment for the event. To promote this we are running printed advertising in Cumbria Life, D&G Life and Carlisle Living, as well as radio advertising and online advertising.

New Customer Loyalty Scheme- letters have gone out to retailers with information about the new loyalty scheme we are working on with Coniq. We now have a launch date of **Wednesday 12 April**, which ties in with the school Easter holidays. The Easter weekend is typically a very busy weekend for us, and we will be holding an Easter Fun Day similar to last year's on Saturday 15 April.

Coniq have begun contacting retailers and company head offices regarding bringing retailers onto our new loyalty scheme. The scheme which Coniq deliver is to create a card for customers, similar to a Tesco clubcard. Each retailer taking part will have a scanner at the till point and retail staff will scan the customer's loyalty card when they make a purchase. Information on the purchase will then be fed to a back-end system which will provide each retailer involved a detailed monthly report showing what your customers are spending in your store, what they are buying, how often they are visiting, what age the customer is and where they live.

Customers will be able to receive tailored offers as they use their card which will be set on a sliding scale, so the more the customer comes in and scans their card, the better the offers they will receive. Some retailers are already signed on, as their company is already working with Coniq through other shopping centres and will simply be transferred over onto our new scheme. In addition, customers will get the chance to win a prize each month. HW is talking with businesses outside the shopping centre such as Carlisle Racecourse as well retailers inside the centre, about getting involved and offering prizes for this monthly competition.

An engagement team from Coniq will be onsite for a few days during the launch week with iPads to sign customers up to the scheme, and we will carry this on over the Easter weekend and into the second week of the Easter holidays. We will be promoting the new scheme on the radio, direct mail to 25,000 homes, in the centre and online. We will also send an e-shot to our current customer database which is now at around 14,000 people.

Coniq will be onsite for a meeting with retailers from **10.30-12.30pm on Tuesday 14 March**.

Please let HW know if there is a preferred contact at your company's head office who Coniq should be speaking to about getting involved in the loyalty scheme.

One Great Day- we have begun organising our One Great Day event, which this year will be on **Friday 30 June to Saturday 1 July**. Once again, it will be a cycle event however we are hoping to make it easier for businesses to take part in the cycle challenge by offering the choice of doing 12 hours (6 hours split across the Friday and the Saturday) or 24 hours.

On the Saturday we are planning a fun day with bouncy castles, face painting, magicians and we are also asking businesses and retailers to help run fun fair-type stalls. We are hoping these activities will encourage people to come into the centre and make donations as well as raising awareness of the charities we are supporting. We would welcome any ideas from stores about activities they could do in-store if they don't have the staff to put together a team. Fundraising activities don't have to be limited to the One Great Day weekend, stores are welcome to host activities throughout the month of June and we will be putting out collection tins inside stores from 1 June. We will also be asking for prizes retailers can donate towards a tombola we will be running on the Saturday.

5. **Lettings Update**

It's still quiet in regards to new lettings, though there is interest which we are working on progressing.

The local press have reported that Costa Coffee is looking to take on the former Ed's Easy Diner unit and it is looking positive.

Jack Wills are still looking to do a deal and talks are ongoing.

6. **Any Other Business**

Bank Holiday Trading- a letter has gone out to all retailers regarding trading hours for 2017 Bank Holiday dates. We are recommending core trading hours of 10-5pm on Bank Holidays, with the exception of Good Friday and Boxing Day which we would class as normal trading days. This will allow us to promote a clean marketing message to our customers. Please can stores return the forms listing their opening hours by **Friday 17 March**.

This year Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve both fall on Sundays and as such Sunday Trading Laws will apply, ie. stores over 3,000sq ft are restricted to 6 hours trading. We are recommending opening hours of 10-4pm for these two Sundays with restricted stores able to open at 9.30 for browsing time if required.

Anti-Social Behaviour- KT raised an issue which was highlighted after meeting with the manager of House of Fraser. There is an elderly lady who is often in the city centre, she wears a fur hat in the winter and has a walking stick. She is very abusive towards shop staff, church volunteers and Tithe Barn staff and frequently leaves a premise's customer toilets in a mess. She goes by the name of Lindsey or Georgina.

DJ also commented that we are still having ongoing issues with gangs of young kids (aged between 12-18) in the centre out of hours. We are working with the police who are re-establishing a presence in the city centre. The police are aware of who these kids are and they are working to catch them and warn them as well as trying to help them so they don't continue with this behaviour. We are continuing to progress plans to close down the centre overnight and would appreciate letters of support from retailers if you are affected by the issues caused by out of hours anti-social behaviour.

CB commented that the police have started running drop-in surgeries at Tesco in Rosehill, and are now also looking to expand this into the city centre and will be using the Library as a base for this.

KT also noted there has been an increase recently in the number of people presenting themselves as homeless as a means of making money by begging.

Recycling Facilities- CB asked about the possibility of introducing full recycling facilities into the centre. DJ commented that we have looked into this in the past, but due to size constraints in the service yard we could only offer partial recycling facilities. DJ will raise the issue with the landlord to see if it is possible to expand the facility.