

RETAILERS' ASSOCIATION MEETING
Tuesday 18th July 17

Present

David Jackson	(DJ) Chair The Lanes	Jenna Mulvey	(JM) Thomson
Holly Woodhead	(HW) Marketing Manager	Craig McCaul	(CM) Jack & Jones
Cassie Heal	(CH) Secretary/Minutes	Mike Miller	(MM) Primark
Mark Whitley	(RJ) Debenhams	Catherine Hinson	(CH) Library
Will Elder	(WE) Holland & Barrett	Michael Butcher	(MB) St Cuthbert's

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from: Bodycare, Euro change, Monsoon, Peter Jackson, The Fragrance Shop, Next & Roman.

2. Trading Review

• **Overview**

Overall footfall for June was 836,600 and +8.4 % on last year, ahead of the national figure which was 3.0% down.

Since the opening of Primark we've been running at roughly +10% ahead of last year each week and well ahead of the competition (other shopping centres) up and down the country.

Footfa

ll for the first week in July was 173.7 +5.8% vs last year, against the national figure of -3.3%. Footfall for the second week in July was 180,900 +2.1% vs last year, against the national figure of -2%.

Our footfall has been good overall but I know that not all of you have seen the benefit in your own stores. As mentioned earlier a lot of the increase can be attributed to the arrival of Primark and we will see if this growth continues once we annualise the Primark effect. Business may have been tough over the last month or two for some retailers with the major distractions having an impact on spending - election, uncertainty, Brexit and inflation. Plus in addition it has been noted in the press by Marks & Spencer's, Next and Arcadia group that there has been a shift in the way people are spending and that clothing is no longer the number one priority in terms of expenditure, instead people are choosing to spend their money on experiences such as going out, meals and holidays.

MB standing in for Rev Keith Teasdale noted they have been busy with lots of baptisms but not as many weddings. They've noticed a lot of visitors coming to the cities who are visiting St Cuthbert's, Carlisle Cathedral and Carlisle Castle. The Retail Chaplaincy is going well; they are now all trained and will be allocated at to stores at the beginning of September.

3. Security Threat Level

The current level of threat has fallen from critical to severe, but it is important that everyone stays alert and remembers Run, Hide, Tell.

We do practice evacuations in the centre but in some circumstances we may need to invacuate or evacuate a different way. An invacuation could mean staying inside and dropping the shutters on Grapes Lane, if this needed to happen we would need to rely on word of mouth and our staff telling people to stay in or that we are evacuating in a different way to the normal route. The City Council have been in touch and are coming to talk to us about evacuation procedures across the whole of the city centre.

4. Christmas Decorations Update

Many of you were involved in the process of picking the supplier for our new decorations from a selection of 3 different companies and taking into account both retailers feedback and management feedback we have selected Blachere. We will have a Christmas tree in centre square this year, along with a grotto and Santa on-site every Saturday in December from 11am-3pm.

5. City Centre Events

Carlisle Pageant	20 th August
Carlisle Fringe	21 st – 23 rd August
The Great Fair Proclamation	27 th August

6. **Marketing**

One Great Day was a success and we'd like to thank everyone for their help and support, the sponsor money raised is still coming in but we are currently over £3500. When we know the final amount raised we will send out a letter. The Saturday went really well with the extra entertainment in the centre which created a really good atmosphere, footfall was +10% against footfall for last year's One Great Day.

Summer activities will be held on every Wednesday from 26th July until 23rd August. These will be Superhero themed events and will include activities such as crafts, meeting a superhero, facepainting and even a climbing wall. These events will all be free with the aim being to get more families into the centre over summer.

Student Night this year will take place on Thursday 28th September, if you want to take part please get your student offer to us at the management suite so we can start to compile a list of offers available. We work with the University of Cumbria and we also sponsor Fresher's week and will be attending the Fresher's week to promote the student night, so we can use the offers to entice the students in. For the Student Night we will have the usual entertainment as well as a DJ and hopefully a bar.

7. **Lettings Update**

Nothing major to report on the lettings front, we are still waiting for Costa Coffee to sign for the ex Ed's diner unit, which will hopefully lead to an autumn opening.

Cook Shop Warehouse are now in the Ex Clark's unit hopefully until the end of August/start of September, with Calendar club due back in during September who will run the Halloween shop then move on to Calendars.

The Christmas Shop is once again taking the Ex phones4u unit after a successful Christmas last year.

8. **Any Other Business**

Music levels in stores

After some recent complaints from customers to the management suite regarding the music levels in stores we ask retailers to review the volume of their music.

Store email addresses

We have asked for store email addresses in the past to ease communication with management teams, if you do have an email address please let us know at the management suite.

Health and Safety/Housekeeping

Fire alarm system – The panels in all retail units are connected to the centre system via an interface box, the resistors in these boxes now need to be changed. We are arranging dates hopefully in September for our contractors to come on site and do this work, however some retailers may prefer to arrange for their own alarm contractor to alter the resistor within their panels. Please advise us if this is the case.

Sprinkler system – We do Flow tests on a regular basis through our contractor and we now have a new contractor called Nu Form who have identified a number of retailers they were unable to test due to drain down points being inaccessible or difficult to reach. We'll be discussing specific details with Nu Form then we will write out in due course to each retailer affected. Norman Holiday may be coming round the stores to take photos of the valve locations.

Christmas Hours

DJ has recently had a meeting with Marks & Spencer's who will soon be signing off their Christmas hours. In September we will be sending out the usual form to fill in your individual store Christmas trading hours, we would appreciate receiving this back as soon as possible. It is worth remembering Christmas Eve this year falls on a Sunday, and stores over 3,000ft can only trade for 6 hours.