

**RETAILERS' ASSOCIATION MEETING**  
**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 18**

Present

David Jackson	(DJ) Chair The Lanes	Savannah Middleton	(SM) VIP
Cassie Heal	(CH) Secretary/Minutes	Andrea Dawson	(AD) Grape Tree
Holly Woodhead	(HW) Marketing	Fiona Edwards	(FE) Library
Maria Beattie	(MB) Roman	Sarah	(S) Hotel Chocolat
Anne Hall	(AC) Eden Valley Hospice	Helen Nutter	(HN) Claire's
Rev K Teasdale	(KT) City Centre Chaplaincy		

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Ann Summers, Body Care, Card World, Peter Jackson & The Perfume Shop. No other responses received.

**2. Trading Review**

July this year saw very high temperatures, England were in the world cup until the semi-final and in general trading went well. There was very much a feel good atmosphere which had a positive impact on retail.

Footfall for July in the centre was 722,700 which was slightly down at -2% on the previous year, while national figure was -4%.

The British Retail Consortium retail index for July was +0.5% on a like for like basis although the 3 month rolling average was still down on non-food sales by -2.4%. The retailers in the centre on average were -1% against last year, within this slightly negative figure we saw some very strong figures from a number of our fashion retailers.

Footfall for August was 733,000 -2.1% on last year and level nationally.

Footfall figures at the moment are not 100% accurate as the system is old and a number of the cameras are not functioning so the counts in these areas are based on historic averages. A replacement system has been installed and is undergoing testing including comparisons to the current system where we still have data. Once we are happy with the new system we will close down the old system and be reporting via the new. It's a system called PFM and has been installed in most of the Intu shopping centres including The Trafford Centre and the Metro.

As an example of the data from our PFM system;- The PFM figure for August was 888,924 compared to our old system of 733, 000 and last year on the old system recorded 737,700. The 888,924 would represent an increase on last year of 15%

**3. Christmas**

• **Important dates**

Fire show – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2018

The Lanes Christmas Decorations will be installed on 7th and 8th November 2018

City Centre Christmas light switch on – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2018

First Late night Shopping (and Late Night Launch event) – Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018

Other late night shopping dates – 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018

In the next few weeks we will send out a letter suggesting the ideal Christmas trading hours for all and asking for your trading hours via a form. The opening times we recommend are the times that we will market so we would appreciate stores sticking to these times.

Please get it back to us as soon as you can.

Late night shopping runs until 9pm, this year Christmas Eve falls on a Monday, Christmas Day is a Tuesday and Boxing Day is a Wednesday – this is a normal trading day for the majority of retailers and it's a very busy trading day. New Year's Day falls on a Tuesday.

**4. Marketing**

Our free play park in centre square had a really good response; because it was so well received we will look to do the same next year, possibly longer term.

We also had a summer fashion campaign through video which is the first one we've done. The video was presented by a blogger from Manchester and included both make up and fashion, it was viewed over 20,000 times on the internet. We will be doing a similar video for autumn in the next few weeks and next month we will be looking at doing monthly videos.

For 'back to school' we ran our 'Back to School competition' to win everything they need for back to school, with stores such as Debenhams, Smiggle and Clarks donating prizes. Unfortunately the winner never came forward to claim their prize.

Coming up we have Student night on 27<sup>th</sup> September, the student numbers are low with only 1,000 fresher's coming into the city this year, so we've opened it up to both colleges and 6<sup>th</sup> forms and sent out posters. To get the footfall numbers higher we have lowered the age we market to, to 16+. We also sponsor fresher's week so we can attend the fresher's fair and be included in all there marketing and literature. For student night we have a bar coming in with free shots and music, pizza express are coming in with free pizzas and Nandos are also coming in. CFM will also be running a QR quest around the centre to spread activities throughout the centre.

We also have our autumn/winter photo shoot, which will be followed by our next video shoot which will be filmed on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October.

Week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> October we will be doing our Christmas Gift Guide shoot, we would like to get every retailer involved in this. The guide will be circulate to 26,000 homes and will also be online. This will be distributed the week before the late night shopping launch.

We have been having issues with the Wifi in the centre; we are now getting 2 new hubs in the centre at either end of the centre so the reach will go further.

We have had new digital screens installed in the centre; these can be offered to tenants with 20% off the advertising rates through the third party advertiser. For more details and information please see Holly.

Next year we will be changing the format of our Lanes Xtra loyalty scheme, at the moment we have an entry tier, 10 scans, 20 scans and 30 scans. We have 50 people in the 30 scan tier and they are currently spending on average 60% more than our other customers. We will be changing the tiers to have an exclusive VIP level, and entry level and a mid-level. This is to encourage people to get more scans and spend more. We have also got rid of the weekly incentive but next year we will be introducing a better incentive less often. Lanes Xtra currently has just less than 9,000 members. The total scans are nearly 14,000 and we've tracked £430,000 worth of spend.

## **5. Lettings Update**

Hawkins Bazar has now opened as a pop up, which is a good Christmas retailer; we also have a company called Sapphire moving into the ex-Milletts unit.

Calendar Club will be taking over the old Warren James Unit, opposite Toys R Us.

We hope to have a Carlisle jeweller relocate in to the unit next to Lush, this should be open by November.

Oak Tree Animals Charity also opened a store in the unit at the bottom of East Tower Lane steps

Next have closed their kids store on English Street and have moved Kids into the Peascod Lane store, they are also looking into putting a Virgin Holidays concession in the Lanes store by reclaiming redundant stockroom space.

After 15 years KFC have come to the end of their lease and decided not to renew but to move to a drive through on London Road and will be closing in late Sept/early October, tbc.

## **6. Any Other Business**

KT informed us that the weekend of remembrance this year will be extra special as it is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the First World War. On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November there is going to be a series of events, mainly around the castle, such as re-enactments, canteens will be serving as it would have been in the First World War era. In the city centre there will be market stalls and parades. House of Fraser is also decorating one window with a poppy display. There will be a re-enactment of when the end of the war was declared, and a procession that will culminate at the sands where the Festival of Remembrance will be held this year. The following day the parade and laying of the wreathes will take place in the city centre.

This year there will be no Christmas markets in the city centre.

**The Lane overnight closure - Please Note:**

You may have noticed that we are closing the centre down overnight on a more frequent basis due to complying with health and safety requirements when various works are taking place. This also serves as a taster as to how we will operate when the full planning application is finalised to close down the centre every night. Closure is between the hours of 7.00pm and 7.00am.

What does this mean for our retailers?

It means that you need to let us know in advance if you are doing any of the following:-

- Opening additional hours for special events
- Staying back late for stocktakes or instore maintenance

We need to know if you are planning to have staff/maintenance teams/auditors/etc. in your stores between the hours of 7.00pm and 7.00am. Thank you.

**The next retailers meeting will take place at 10am on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> November in The Management Suite.**