Promotion for the Mighty Millers

Rotherham hosted a big ‘town centre thank you’ last month following Rotherham United’s triumphant victory in the League One play-off final at Wembley.

Fans of the Mighty Millers flocked to show their appreciation, when the triumphant team travelled on an open-top bus from the New York Stadium around the town centre to All Saints Square and on to Rotherham Town Hall for a civic reception. Loyal fans joined in the party at the end of yet another amazing football season for the Millers gathering to hear short speeches and interviews with the players, manager Steve Evans and chairman Tony Stewart.

The promotion is great news for the town with match-days proving to have a positive influence on footfall in the town centre; more high profile matches have the potential to further increase crowds and visitor numbers in the 2014/15 season.

‘Royal’ seal of approval

April saw Mary Portas, Queen of Shops, return to Rotherham as part of a high profile visit by Brandon Lewis MP to officially open the Makers Emporium on High Street.

The Minister was due to cut the ribbon, meet the local makers taking part in the project and to take a look at how some of our Portas money has helped businesses here in Rotherham as part of a brief visit to the town; a last minute call notified us that Mary Portas was also keen to come and see the progress we have made and wanted to bring other Portas towns with her to look at what we’ve achieved!

Prompting some fantastic media interest, the visit ensured Rotherham hit the headlines for all the right reasons and amongst other things showcased the transformation of the town’s historic High Street. Once a marker for the town’s decline with the derelict buildings frequently publicised in national news, following her visit in 2012 Mary vowed to come back if those buildings were successfully brought back into use and she was clearly impressed with what she saw, commenting “I’m bursting with pride at everything that’s been achieved in Rotherham. The town team have done an extraordinary job increasing footfall and reducing vacancy rates but most of all producing a place people want to shop in and feel at home in. They have huge competition from some of the UK’s biggest shopping malls right on the doorstep but they are bearing out the national statistics that people prefer High Streets.”

The visit also allowed representatives from Rotherham Council, partner organisations, other Portas towns and businesses themselves to highlight the continuing challenges facing our town centres and what further support is needed from central Government. Despite the visit being scheduled for less than an hour and primarily focussing on the opening of the Government funded Emporium project on the High Street, both Mary Portas and Brandon Lewis stayed longer than expected speaking positively to the media and meeting as many businesses as they could, with Mary escaping the press to make a shopping trip to the Markets. Whilst its clear there continues to be challenges in our town, the day provided a good opportunity to highlight these and ultimately the visit helped get the word out there that Rotherham is on the up and a place to do business.

Following the visit and 2 years on from her initial work with Government, Mary Portas also published a report ‘Why our High Streets Matter’ which features Rotherham as a good example of a town that has a vision to regenerate its retail offer providing further coverage for the town at a national level.
The High Street project also brings two new Pop up Shops to Rotherham town centre with Miele Delicatessen being the first tenant to open their doors. Offering authentic Italian meats, cheeses and pastries, pastas, oils and condiments the deli also provides customers the opportunity to sample freshly brewed coffees, an olive bar and a range of continental delicacies.

Owners Andrew and Franca Pinkney are delighted with the response so far "We've had a very positive response from our customers and already have regulars who visit us daily or weekly. We've also heard so many encouraging comments from new or returning Rotherham shoppers who have been impressed with the transformation of the town centre and High Street itself.

Pop up Shops offer competitively priced, flexible retail space for an initial 12 month period helping new businesses test trade and build their customer base before taking on permanent premises in the town centre.

The second Pop up Shop at number 30 High Street has just been let-so watch this space for yet another new retailer opening their doors this summer.

Miele Delicatessen

The Makers Emporium was officially opened for business on 15th April when 30 local makers showcased their products in Rotherham for the first time. The project offers low cost shared and professionally managed retail space to a mixture of makers, crafters, artists and designers. The project focuses on providing locally designed and hand crafted items with an array of pieces available to suit all tastes and budgets. Products for sale include handmade bags and clothing, quality skincare products made from local honey, home-ware, recycled metal art, gifts, and hand crafted fine silver jewellery.

Store Manager Matt Webster said: ‘The feedback from customers has been fantastic and we hope to encourage more shoppers to come and not only see our store, but the unique quality offer in Rotherham town centre.”

A taste of the Italian

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For a limited period and subject to completion of all 3 Digital High Street modules, businesses satisfying eligibility criteria can access funding for this training so enquire today to take advantage. For further information or to check your eligibility please contact Laura Vincent on 0114 2635650 or email laura.vincent@thesourceacademy.co.uk

Would you like to get involved in a free scheme to support a young person into employment?

British Land and The Source Academy are funding an Apprentice in Rotherham and we are looking for up to two independent Retail businesses to be involved in the project. As the host employer, the Apprentice will work within your organisation for up to 12 months on a part-time basis (at no cost to you) to enable them to complete a Retail Apprenticeship qualification and support you in your business.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact George Elliott on 01709 828717 or pop into The Source at 15 High Street, Rotherham.
Parking

Rotherham Council are keen to help provide competitively priced parking for those working in the town centre and are currently exploring the option to provide parking permits for designated car-parks (where payment is made in advance by direct debit). The forthcoming business survey will provide an opportunity for businesses to register interest.

In addition, Parking Scratch Cards are also currently available for purchase from Rotherham Council; the cards offer 2 hours parking in designated off-street car parks and can be offered to shoppers to use on their next visit in exchange for their loyalty or based on a minimum spend in store and are intended as an incentive for shoppers to make a return visit to the town centre.

The shopper simply brings the card with them on their next visit, scratches off the date and time and enjoys 2 hours FREE parking in designated car-parks. Depending on popularity, the scheme has potential to be rolled across the whole town centre but there are still plenty of scratch cards available for businesses to purchase (at a cost of £1 each) as part of the ongoing trial.

Interested businesses should contact the Parking Services Team on 01709 822929 to find out more.

Congratulations to Dawns Ink & Media

A business that began life as a “little acorn” market stall is now celebrating ten years of successful trading in Rotherham. Dawn Ordish, proprietor of Dawn’s Inks, now sells printer inks and other computer consumables from her Howard Street shop after expanding her business from a smaller location within Rotherham’s Markets.

“When I started out ten years ago my friends said the business would never pay for itself and Rotherham town centre was dead,” said Dawn. “With this in mind I took a small unit in the market and then within 18 months had moved up to Eastwood Lane due to demand for our services. “Markets Manager, Robin Lambert, and the markets team have always been there to support me and along with the town centre team have helped along the way to build my business.

“The Eastwood Lane shop turned into another stepping stone to then move my business premises into our current location at Howard Street, where we have been able to offer much more to our customers, including an internet cafe.

“From little acorns we have come a long way and certainly proved any doubters wrong.”

The Council’s Markets Manager, Robin Lambert, added: “We’d like to congratulate Dawn on her ten years trading with us in and around the markets here in Rotherham. We have a number of loyal traders such as Dawn that are the lifeline of the markets and have helped us become such a fixture for the people of Rotherham.”

New to the markets

Shakes, Cakes & Strings,
Unit 15 Indoor Market
Rotherham’s one and only music and milkshake bar is now open; customers can grab a custom shake or sample the tasty slushies, cakes and hot drinks. Plus if you create an unusual flavour combination milkshake, it will be named in your honour and added to the menu!

The store also offers a chance for shoppers to pick up strings and other musical accessories too.

Frontline Gaming,
Unit S8 Indoor Market
Having recently moved from the outdoor indoor market, Frontline Gaming specialise in current, rare, vintage and collectible games.

Welcome to…

Reborn Babies,
34 High Street
Specialising in lifelike baby dolls and full doll kits. The only store of its kind in Rotherham is already proving popular with collectors and doll enthusiasts alike. The shop also offers hand knitted and vintage clothing and accessories.

Yorkshire Tactical Airsoft Armoury,
23 Wellgate
Rotherham’s only specialist suppliers of airsoft and army surplus.

Barber Gurlz
hairdressers,
20 Wellgate
Offering colours, cuts and blow dries as well as styling for proms and weddings.

Snooze Time Beds & Mattresses,
11/13 Wellgate
Stocking a wide range of quality beds, mattresses and bedroom furniture suitable for all tastes and budgets.

Dearne Valley Baby Store,
2 Wellgate
Stockists of new, ex-display and pre-loved baby clothes, shoes, toys, bouncers, prams, and much more.

On the Move…
Blue Velvet, 139 Wellgate
To accommodate the growing selection of retro/vintage jewellery, clothing and collectables, Blue Velvet have now moved from Eastwood Lane to bigger premises on Wellgate.

Warncliffe Restaurant Officially Opened

Top football official Howard Webb, MBE, the Mayor and Mayoress of Rotherham, loyal customers and suppliers, joined with staff and students to officially open the refurbished Warncliffe Restaurant

Part of a £2.4m scheme at the town centre campus RCAT has developed its Catering and Hospitality Department with a new exterior and refurbished interior of the restaurant. The redevelopment has created a new restaurant on Percy Street that is all on one level allowing more flexibility for bar, restaurant, coffee bar, banqueting and conference type uses.

Behind the scenes, all the kitchens have been enhanced with additional industry standard equipment for the benefit of the college’s catering and hospitality students.

Howard Webb said: “I’m taken aback by what a fantastic facility it is. It’s really modern and I feel very proud that I’ve been invited. It’s clearly going to be a wonderful new asset for the town of Rotherham.”

Open to the public Monday to Friday (term-time only). The Warncliffe has also recently joined in partnership with the nearby Rotherham Theatres to offer two course pre-theatre dining for £7.50.
EVENTS

28th June – Popped Art
Local art groups are putting together a free day of surprise arts activities, workshops, guided tours and exhibitions for Rotherham town centre. Representatives will be visiting shops in the next week with leaflets and information about the event. For more information, please visit www.poppedart.org, www.rotherhamroar.com or Facebook page ‘Arts in Rotherham’.

4th July – Independent’s Day
The aim of the day is to encourage shoppers to support our independent businesses by shopping local with a range of PR, promotions and activities. We will also be launching our ‘Independent of the Year’ competition. More details to follow soon.

5th & 6th July – Slam fest music festival
The biggest and best free music festival comes to Rotherham Town Centre with live music in All Saints’ Square and at venues throughout (including The Bridge Inn and Trades Club) from 11.30am to 8pm. Stalls are also available for businesses at Clifton Park on Sunday 6th July. For further details on participating, please contact Amanda Taylor on 07751 780078.

4th to 16th August – Rotherham by the Sea
Back for 2 weeks of sun, sand and plenty of fun including a different theme every day with games, competitions, entertainment and much more!

HelloCity!
HelloCity! is a new global Digital Visitor Guide launching in Rotherham on 15th August.

The aim is to use the latest technology to promote the town centre to both existing and new customers, ultimately driving footfall and spend. The digital platform uses QR codes, allowing smart phone users to access information on shopping, places to eat, visitor attractions, events and real-time travel information.

We are giving you the opportunity to list your business for free on HelloCity! which will be accessible to anyone that interacts with the giant 3D-printed signposts by scanning the QR Codes that will be mounted in 50 prominent locations around the town centre.

Not only will you benefit from free advertising, but you can also send special offers and promotions direct to shoppers Smartphones, complementing the current paper-based ‘Shop Local scheme’. Participating stores will include the HelloCity symbol in their windows to let shoppers know they are taking part and will then display a QR Code at the till point, allowing shoppers to scan in store and claim their discount.

No additional software is needed and it’s really as simple as that, ensuring every business has the chance to get involved. Reports can also be provided letting participating businesses have data on the shoppers claiming discounts.

Creating a HelloCity! profile is FREE, and in just a few clicks you will be benefiting from an effective new Digital Marketing Tool.

If you would like your business listed on the HelloCity! Platform, then please email info@hellocity.co.uk for more details and to ensure your businesses takes advantage of this FREE opportunity. Look out on the town centre website and social media accounts for more information prior to the launch on 15th August.

Rotherham Show
Rotherham Town Centre once again has the opportunity to be represented at Rotherham Show in the Pop Up High Street Marquee. Not only will the team be there to spread the word to the 80,000+ expected visitors about what the town centre has to offer and sign new members up to the Shop Local Scheme, but retailers will have the chance to set up stall, promote your products and make sales on the day. As before applications are invited from interested retailers and should there be sufficient demand, the Pop Up High Street will be included in this year’s Rotherham Show programme.

Look out for…
Business Surveys will be making their way to retailers shortly. Capturing information on performance, communications & marketing and prioritisation of issues affecting town centre businesses, the surveys will be carried out by an independent company with all responses being kept confidential.

The surveys will be sent out in July to all Town Centre businesses, providing you with a chance to provide invaluable feedback and help shape future plans and spend.

Business Crime Portal
Businesses are reminded of the new, free website now available to all town centre businesses which allows secure access to information on known and unknown offenders, as well as providing information on persistent offenders who have been issued a banning order from public houses/bus stations or businesses etc.

If you wish to access the free Business Crime Portal website, please email your details to richard.kearney@southyorks.pnn.police.uk

The Business & Retail Investment Team is a service within Rotherham MBC. Contact the team with your news on 01709 254888

If you or someone you know needs help to understand or read this document, please contact us:
☎ 01709 254888
towncentre@rotherham.gov.uk

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