This year there is lots planned in terms of marketing and promoting the town centre, not least through the 2013 ‘I Shop Locally’ campaign. Building on the success of the ongoing Shop Local scheme and its recognised brand and 16,000 cardholders, a year round campaign using local personalities or celebrities to act as ambassadors and set an example of why people should shop local and support their local town is to be launched this Autumn.

The November/December months of the annual campaign will be given over to ‘Christmas Shopping… Rotherham, the independent alternative’ and will include amongst other things:

- Development and print of a Christmas Gift Guide (offering direct advertising opportunities to town centre businesses and including up to 40,000 print-run)
- Creation, print and distribution of a new Markets Leaflet (with map and store directory plus details of the daily themed markets)
- Circulation of weekly E-newsletters (to a database of thousands of shoppers and town centre based employees)
- Daily promotions through Facebook (2900 friends) & Twitter (2025 followers) and regular updates and promotions through our Website(s)
- Regular issue of press releases and news stories
- Host of a networking event aimed at giving retailers the information they need to cross-sell each other in the run up to Christmas
- Implementation of a number of family friendly festive events and markets including the annual Christmas Lights Switch-on Event, popular Real Reindeer Parade and a new Sunday event to tie in with extended trading hours.

Marketing the Town Centre

Rotherham Advertiser and local press coverage and advertising, Rother FM Radio campaign, Web and Social Media links and promotions (including videos), Press releases and general PR. Funding from the Portas Pilot initiative is helping to support this high profile advertising campaign and it doesn’t stop there. Throughout this newsletter you’ll find details of a variety of other activities and promotions Rotherham Council is funding and implementing in 2013 including:

- Update, reprint and circulation of the Town Centre Shopping/ Store Directory
- Daily promotions through Facebook (2900 friends) & Twitter (2025 followers)
- Hosting of a networking event aimed at giving retailers the information they need to cross-sell each other in the run up to Christmas
- Implementation of a number of family friendly festive events and markets including the annual Christmas Lights Switch-on Event, popular Real Reindeer Parade and a new Sunday event to tie in with extended trading hours.

Events

Christmas Lights
Switch On
All Saints’ Square, Thursday 14th November, from 4.30pm
The count down to Christmas begins in Rotherham with this annual festive spectacular! Join us for music, fun and of course the official switch-on of Rotherham’s Christmas lights at 6pm all hosted by Rother FM.

Festive Fun and Skate
Rotherham Town Centre, Sunday 1st December, 10am – 4pm
This year the town will host an additional festive family event including a synthetic ice-rink in All Saint’s Square plus walkabout entertainment across the town centre.

A Dickens Christmas
Rotherham Town Centre, Saturday 7th December, 10am – 3pm
Rotherham travels back in time for a fantastic Dickens Christmas celebration this year. With music, entertainment, Dickensian craft workshops & much more!

Magical Reindeer Experience
Rotherham Town Centre, Saturday 14th December, 12.45pm – 3pm
One of the most popular events of the year returns as Santa and the real reindeer parade through the town centre. Staring at 12.45pm, the procession will travel on a route around the town centre before entering a viewing area (location to be confirmed).

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THESE EVENTS AND HOW YOUR BUSINESS CAN GET INVOLVED, CONTACT THE EVENTS TEAM ON 01709 835904. FOR UPDATES PLEASE VISIT THE TOWN CENTRE WEBSITE OR FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER.

EXPOSED SHOPPING HOURS, CHRISTMAS 2013
Thursday 14th November until 8pm, Sundays 1st December, 8th December, 15th December & 22nd December

@RothTownCentre www.rotherhamtowncentre.co.uk rotherham.towncentre
Free Gift Wrapping & Personal Shopping Service is Back

This year, with the launch of the 2013 Christmas Gift Guide, it is an ideal time to bring back the popular Gift Wrapping & Information service provided two years ago by the town centre team and The Source. If your business can help in any way by sponsoring the project (for example by offering gift wrapping or decorations etc.) or if you have any members of staff who have a talent for gift wrapping who could offer to help for an hour or two to help out, we’d love to hear from you.

We’ll make sure your involvement is promoted and together we can help as many Christmas shoppers find the right gifts and have a great experience in the town centre this year.

We hope to be able to confirm the location of the service shortly. For more information or to find out how your business can get involved contact the team on 01709 254444.

Extended Christmas Shopping Hours

As in previous years, it is vitally important to ensure a consistent and accurate message is promoted in relation to any extended Christmas shopping hours that retailers are planning to open, as the town centre builds a reputation for late night and/or Sunday trading to draw shoppers in.

Following past experience of inconsistent support for the extended hours and feedback from shoppers and businesses, the marketing and events zone reps have consulted businesses in their areas to discuss the additional days and hours that could be collectively supported this year, which in turn can be promoted in conjunction with town centre marketing publications and advertisements.

Based on feedback provided from a good number of national retailers in the town centre including W H Smiths, and Wilkinsons and an encouraging number of independent retailers, it is suggested that the following Sundays will be promoted:

1ST DECEMBER, 8TH DECEMBER, 15TH DECEMBER & 22ND DECEMBER.

However, due to a likely lack of support for Thursday late night opening, other than Switch-on Night (14 November) late night Thursday shopping will not be promoted.

As agreed, to show support for those agreeing to open and to celebrate the start of Sunday trading during December, the Council’s Events team are hosting a festive event on 1st December. Please see the events calendar for details.

In order to ensure your business is included in the website and social media promotion each week (listing the businesses that will be open on the forthcoming weekend), please email confirmation of the dates and times you will be open to: towncentremanagement@rotherham.gov.uk

Similarly if businesses confirm opening times for the period Boxing Day to New Year’s Day the information will be added to both the retailers and shoppers’ pages of the website plus social media sites.

New for 2013 - Rotherham Town Centre Gift Guide

Following retailer suggestions, this year the main promotional publication for the town centre offer will be a comprehensive Gift Guide. Mirroring similar successful publications by Boots & WH Smiths, the town centre wide publication intends to identify specific products as gift suggestions, and retailers are invited to showcase products that they sell illustrative of the range and quality of goods for sale across the town centre (thus universally driving footfall) but also providing inspiration to shoppers looking for gift ideas and ultimately encourage them to visit your business.

With appropriate interest and support from retailers / traders, plans are for up to 40,000 copies to be produced with gift categories including ‘Gifts for Her’, ‘Gifts for Him’, ‘Stocking Fillers’, ‘Tinsel and Trimmings’, ‘Seasonal Party-wear’ and others. It would also include a general summary of the town centre offer this Christmas, including shopping, leisure, markets, events, parking etc.

At least half the total number of copies will be posted directly to households in target postcode areas whilst other copies will be placed in public buildings, hotels, libraries, information points etc. in the town centre & across the region.

The publication will be jointly funded; 50% by Rotherham Council and 50% through the sale of space to town centre businesses. Full details can be found on the accompanying information leaflet & application form. All applications should be returned by no later than Friday 11th October 2013.

Networking Event

It is widely recognised that one of the best and most cost effective ways to promote town centre businesses, is the cross-selling of each other. For example, every bridal gown sold should come with a recommendation on where to buy flowers, rings, stationary etc.

Following a suggestion from one of our own town centre businesses, a fun and informal evening is planned for Monday 21st October, 6pm - 9pm at Rotherham United’s New York Stadium. This will give retailers a chance to meet new faces and catch-up with old friends, promote their own business and learn something they didn’t know about what the town centre has to offer just in time for the start of the festive season. Refreshments and buffet will be provided.

In addition the updated Town Centre Shopping Directory will be available in time for Christmas to help retailers direct customers to the right shops and the Marketing and Events Zone reps will have draft copies in order for you to check your details are correct before we reprint.

To register your interest please contact the team on 01709 254444 or by emailing towncentremanagement@rotherham.gov.uk

Town Centre Website Retailers Login

To find minutes of Rotherham Voice, Events and Marketing updates and other useful information visit: www.rotherhamtowncentre.co.uk
Click on the retailer section: Username: RothRetail Password: RTC0313