



A New Year message from the Town Centre Manager

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2009.



In this issue, you will find news about the first of our new events for this year – kicking off with a charity Pancake Race on Shrove Tuesday, 24 February; regular features such as member news (including our new membership cards); and news about our continuing programme of networking events.

We at the Partnership will be doing everything within our power to help businesses – and our members in particular – through a year that is likely to be more difficult than anything we have experienced in the last few decades. If your business is not already a member, join with us now and help strengthen our community as we face the challenges ahead.



Letchworth Garden City
Town Centre Partnership

New member: Beautiful Tiffany style lighting from Zhi Mei Ltd

Tucked away in The Gallery, there is a tiny shop with a bright future!

Run by Zhimei Bush, Zhi Mei Ltd sells an amazing range of reproduction Tiffany style lamps to personal shoppers and over the internet. To see more of their products, follow the link from www.shopletchworth.com and visit their website at www.zhimei.co.uk

We welcome another specialist independent to the growing number of businesses who have joined the town centre partnership to work together to support one another and the local economy.

Store closures and other changes

2009 has got off to a disappointing start with national decisions impacting on life in the Garden City – the closure of **Woolworths** and **Card Warehouse**, and the announcement that Marks & Spencer plans to close its **Simply Food** outlet. While these are personally worrying for the staff involved, and will bring some short term challenges for the owners of Garden Square Shopping Centre, there is still a lot

to look forward to this year, including relocation into spanking new premises for two businesses within the redevelopment zone of The Wynd: Argos and HBOS plc. We also expect the Streetscene improvements to Eastcheap and Leys Avenue to begin within the next few months – **Trading Up** will be keeping you informed about a start date and progress throughout the works.



Have you seen this man?

Hopefully, you answered “yes” to this question, because the photograph shows our town centre police constable, PC 1176 Rob Oldaker.

At our December breakfast, Chief Inspector Geoff Camp of Hertfordshire Constabulary exchanged views with those at the meeting about retail crime in the Garden City.

One of the more surprising things to emerge was that not everyone has seen Rob on duty in the town. In fact, Rob and his colleagues, including the town's PCSOs Roxy Cramp and Dawn McIntyre, are very active in dealing with shoplifting, anti-social behaviour and a host of related problems – often in partnership with the CCTV control room based in Stevenage. So that more people can put a face to the name, Rob will be our guest at the next breakfast meeting at the Broadway Hotel; 7.30am on Tuesday 3 February.

For all non-emergency calls to Hertfordshire Constabulary, the number to use is: 0845 3300 222

Partnership town centre events 2009

We plan to create a buzz in the town centre with our events programme, details of which are still being finalised. The following is a listing of our events for the first five months of 2009. There will be more details available in due course.

January 17: Farmers' Market
Leys Square 9.00am to 1.00pm

February 21: Farmers' Market
Leys Square 9.00am to 1.00pm

NEW! February 24: Charity Pancake Race
Eastcheap 10.00am (see entry form/flyer enclosed with this newsletter)

March 21: Farmers' Market
Leys Square 9.00am to 1.00pm

NEW! April 6-13: Easter Egg Hunt town centre

April 11: Easter Fun Day



Farmers' Market: filled pots and hanging baskets on the popular plant stall

April 18: Farmers' Market
Leys Square 9.00am to 1.00pm

NEW! May 2: Maypole Dancing Leys Square 2.30pm

NEW! May 8-17: Space & Science Fiction week events

May 16: Farmers' Market
Leys Square 9.00am to 1.00pm

Later
in the
year

On 1 and 2 August, **Letchworth Arts Centre** will be holding their Industrial Heritage Festival events on Broadway Gardens. The town centre manager will be working with the organisers and other interested groups to build in some associated complementary events in the week before the main weekend. If you have ideas for such items and/or would like to be involved, contact the tcm or William Armitage at David's Bookshop (01462 684631).

Partnership introduces membership cards

Businesses that are members of the town centre partnership have a new reason to be glad they belong – membership cards!



Showing the card will enable members to claim a brilliant range of discounts from fellow members. Those members currently offering a discount include the following:

- Arena Stationers 10% (minimum spend £5)
- Broadway Hotel & Carvery 10%
- Campbell & Toft Delicatessen 5% (minimum spend £10)
- Moon's Sandwich Bar 10% (food only)
- Nomad Graphique 20%
- Prontaprint 10%

We hope that eventually all members will take part and, by doing so, help to keep business within the town to the benefit of the local economy.

Each member business will be entitled to a maximum of two cards, and a new card will be issued upon renewal every July to ensure that only fully paid-up members can continue to take advantage of the deals on offer.



Networking events

In addition to our popular breakfast meetings, we have decided to provide a further opportunity for local business leaders to meet in a relaxed setting on an occasional basis. With some of our members, we are planning to host gatherings every other month – some at lunchtime, some in the early evening – in their premises to allow them to showcase their products or services, as well as providing a great meeting point.

We have been pleased with attendance at our first two lunchtime events, and believe they are useful for the informal exchange of ideas between businesses and other bodies, such as the local authority. We were delighted to note that North Hertfordshire District Council and the Heritage Foundation reinstated free parking in the town's car parks on the two Saturdays before Christmas after it was discussed at one of our meetings. It pays to talk!

Not a member yet? Join now!

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Partnership policy is determined by our members, and all our activities are planned and executed for the benefit of our members and the town as a whole. Core costs (overheads, running expenses and our office space) are covered by our main sponsors: Archant plc (The Comet); Garden Square Shopping Centre; Letchworth Garden City Council; Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation; and North Hertfordshire District Council. All subscriptions contributed by member businesses and organisations are used to market and promote Letchworth Town Centre.



Member News

Membership Join us today!

Please contact Martin Fletcher if you wish to become a member of the Partnership. Outstanding subscriptions: if you've received a renewal form, please settle payment with us!

New year, new look for Prontaprint

Prontaprint Letchworth is celebrating 20 years of service to the local community, and has been rewarded with the company's new £3million brand identity after being recognised as one of Prontaprint's outstanding performing centres.

Since husband and wife team **Ray and Heather Robbins** took on the business in 1988, the centre has gone from strength to strength. The six-strong team provides design, print, display, copying and finishing services to over 400 local businesses and fully live up to Prontaprint's promise: "trusted to deliver, every time".

The centre on Leys Avenue was chosen to receive the new corporate identity,



and service delivery - was rated as excellent.

Heather Robbins: "Over the last 20 years we have seen more and more Letchworth businesses turn to Prontaprint for all their design, print and copying needs as our range of services grow. Our repositioning

development training programme and enhanced business services following a stringent audit where its performance - in terms of its business standards

is further confirmation that Prontaprint has moved away from the 'high street copy shop' label and is now a provider of advanced business services.

"The introduction of our new brand identity is not just about smartening up our look and fascia, but evolving our brand positioning to ensure we continue to meet the needs, and exceed expectations, of local businesses now and in the future."

Partnership member?

Got a news item that you want to share? Contact the town centre manager now!

Town Centre Dates for your Diary

February 3 Business Breakfast

Broadway Hotel 7.30 a.m. Our guest will be P.C. Rob Oldaker, our town centre constable. £6 payable on the day. To book a place, telephone 01462 650266

February 21 Farmers' Market

Leys Square 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. For details telephone 01462 486999

February 24 Charity Pancake Race

Eastcheap 10.30 a.m. Have fun and raise money for Garden House

Hospice. For details telephone 01462 486999

March 3 Business Breakfast

Broadway Hotel 7.30 a.m. £6 payable on the day. To book a place, telephone 01462 650266

March 21 Farmers' Market

Leys Square 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. For details telephone 01462 486999



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