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Torbay Town Talk

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Christmas Season – kicks off on Saturday November 21st!!

Torbay Carnival and switch on day is Saturday 21st November. Father Christmas will be leading the traditional carnival through the streets of Torquay, from Lymington Rd Coach Station through town along The Strand doing a loop around the clock tower. The carnival will end at the Pavilion and Father Christmas will return to Fleet Set to switch on the lights before going to his beautiful grotto in Fleet Walk. This kicks off Christmas 2009 in Torquay.

!!LATE NIGHT SHOPPING IN TORQUAY IS ON THURSDAYS THIS YEAR!!

Don't forget that the Retail Networking Group decided that Torquay late night shopping opening would be on the 4 **Thursday** nights before Christmas starting on 26th November until 9pm. The diary below lists the trading hours and activities in the town over Christmas and New Year.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Close</i>	<i>Event</i>
Sat 21 November	09.00	19.30	Christmas Carnival/ lights switch-on
Thurs 26 November	09.00	21.00	Late night shopping
Sunday 29 November	10.00	15.00	Food & Gifts Market Vaughan Parade.
Thurs 3 Dec	09.00	21.00	Late night shopping
Thurs 10 Dec	09.00	21.00	Late night shopping
Thurs 17 Dec	09.00	21.00	Late night shopping
Sunday 20 th December	10.00	15.00	Food & Gifts Market Vaughan Parade.
Thurs 24 Dec	09.00	17.00	Christmas Eve
Fri 25 Dec	Closed	All day	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec	09.00	17.00	Boxing Day
Sun 27 Dec			Sunday opening hours
Mon 28 Dec			Bank holiday
Friday 1 Jan	09.00	17.00	New Year's Day
Saturday 2 nd Jan			Normal trading hours
Sun 3 Jan			Sunday opening hours
Mon 4 Jan			Bank holiday

Christmas Competitions –windows and treasures!

Your last chance to enter these competitions, it is a great way to get customers to your shop. Why not have a bit of fun and enter our window display competition? It will also brighten up the town during the dreary dark days of December. We are asking you to dress your window using the theme of the 'pantomime' – You can choose to interpret any panto you like.

We will be asking an illustrious panel to judge the very best windows, and we shall also be asking the public to choose their favourite by publishing the names of all who take part in the Herald Express and on the radio. We will want you to have your window dressed and ready for judging on 1st December There will be prizes.....!

Christmas Treasure Hunt

We are also organizing a Christmas Treasure Hunt sponsored by Wilkinsons. You will need to decide what you will give as a prize. We will provide the treasure for you to hide and we will provide clues for the public to follow the treasure trail. We will produce a list of participating stores on an entry form. The public have to follow the clues, find the treasure and list it against the store name. The person/s who gets most right will win the prize/s.

You can of course enter both these competitions if you like!! Please fill out the form below, the more stores we have joining in the better the competition. Please return to us by November 19th.

Christmas Window Competition/ Treasure Hunt* (**delete as appropriate unless you are entering both*)

Name.....

Business.....

Address..... tel

no.....email.....

Treasure hunt only:

Prize..... Value.....

Park for a £1 this Christmas

Following the success of the £1 car parking promotion in April, Torbay Council is repeating this offer for every weekend during December starting on December 4th. It is a simple scheme. You can buy a car park ticket for £1 after 6pm on a Friday evening; you can then use that **same** ticket at any Council car park in Torbay until Monday 10.00. The only car park where you have to buy a ticket for a £1 each time is the pay on exit Harbour car park in Torquay. Fleet Walk car park is joining this scheme and parking at their multistorey will be just £1 per visit regardless of how long you stay.

This is a really good deal and we hope it will encourage more people to shop in Torbay this Christmas. Please would you display the enclosed flyer in your staff room, behind the till or better still in the window?

Latest BID News



We are finalizing the Business Plan for the Torquay Business Improvement District. We are using the information gathered from the questionnaires you completed. We asked you what you would like us to do to make your trading environment better. You have asked us to improve 4 very broad areas of service in the town centre:

1. Marketing and Events to increase customer numbers and to raise Torquay's profile.
2. To clean up the streets and improve the look of the town.
3. To increase town centre security.
4. For you to have more say in how the services are delivered

The BID Business Plan, which you will receive in the next few weeks, will reflect all those priorities.

Marketing: We want to put on more events in the heart of the town centre, some very large and other smaller ones to keep our customers interested and to encourage them to come to town more often. We will put together a town map and directory so that people can find you. We will improve the website so that you can advertise on it. We will run advertising campaigns to get new customers into town. We will have more and better Christmas lights in the whole of the BID area, and we will look to improve the signage around the town

to guide people to your door. We will carry out regular market research so that we know what your customers want.

Cleaning and improving the look of Torquay: we will give the town a thorough scrub up once every year removing all the gum and stains from the pavements. We will wash down the hot spots regularly and we will be working very closely with the Council to make sure they deliver their services. We will also dress the windows of empty shops to improve the look of the street where businesses have moved out.

Security: we want to employ 2 BID Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who will work from a town centre office with the existing team. They will be specifically working for you to help reduce crime and the fear of crime. They will carry a mobile phone specifically for rapid response to your needs. They will not be taken out of the BID area, these will be your PCSOs paid for by the BID. The Police NET team will also be badged up as part of the BID police team, to help the night time economy businesses. You will be able to access weekly updates on security issues, what is going on, who should you look out for etc.

Listening to you: as part of the BID management we shall be setting up a BID steering group where you will elect your own representatives to make sure we deliver the BID plan and to bring to us issues that you may have about any aspect of the town. Voting for the BID gives you a collective opportunity to influence decisions about how Torquay develops.

Just to give you a taste of what the BID will deliver- we have already trialed some of the projects on a small scale.

Gum Busters!!

Last month we finally got rid of years of disgusting chewing gum which coated The Strand and the lower end of Torwood St. It took the contractors 144 hours to steam off over 129,000 pieces of gum from the pavements. The Town Centres Company managed to secure some Home Office funding to clean this small portion of the town's pavements of this disgusting mess. The businesses and customers in the area are delighted with the result. If you vote for the BID the whole BID area will get the same treatment, without the BID the likelihood is that the gum will stay on our streets and continue to be walked into your stores and offices.



Before the gum busters attack

after their work was done

Torquay Food & Arts Festival

Last month we held the first ever Torquay Food & Arts Festival in Union Square Shopping Centre. We worked with Taste of the West, Creative Torbay and The Grand Hotel to fill Union Square and the Market Forum with wonderful food, drink, music, arts and crafts. The event was such a success that it increased the customer numbers on Saturday 10th in Union Square by 22%! Many of the stall holders sold out of stock and the businesses in the centre had an excellent trading day. This Christmas we are planning two Christmas Food and Gifts Markets on Vaughan Parade to bring customers to this end of town

With the BID we can repeat these events and plan much bigger attractions for the town. Without the BID our ability to plan marketing campaigns and promotional events will be sporadic and ad hoc as they are now.



Richard Hunt in the Cookery Theatre

Business is very brisk for local fudge

Mystery Shopping

Last summer we reported that the Town Centres Company had commissioned some research part of which was a survey of small businesses to be mystery shopped. We held the Retailers' Mystery Shopping Awards evening at The Imperial Hotel for over 100 independent and small retailers across the Bay.

Our town is the number one location for customer service in the UK according to this survey. This is clearly a great accolade for retail in the town but we need to ensure that we maintain that standard. The BID will help us to repeat this survey and to ensure that we are giving our customers the service they deserve and that business gets recognition for doing a good job.

It is your choice.

These are just a very few examples of the things we plan to do to help business in the town centre to thrive and grow if we win the BID vote in February. You will have the full business plan in the next few weeks so you can judge for yourself if it is worth investing a very small amount of money in this scheme.

The levy rate we have set is 1.5% of rateable value (based on 2005 values) for the majority of businesses this equates to a very small amount of money per year, (see the table below). There are over 600 business premises in the BID area which will give us a total of £244,000 per year for the 5 year lifetime of the BID; we will use that fund as seed corn to attract additional funding to grow that budget for **Torquay BID area only**.

Rateable value	@1.5%	Cost per month	Cost over 5 years
£5,000	£75	£6.25	£375
£10,000	£150	£12.50	£750
£20,000	£300	£25	£1,500
£30,000	£450	£39.16	£2,250
£50,000	£750	£62.50	£3,750
£100,000	£1500	£125	£7,500

We have worked hard to visit as many of you as we can to talk about this scheme. If you want to talk to us about it please get in touch, it is very important that you have your say.

Please contact us on 01803 212270 or email: torbaytowncentres@btconnect.com.

Wishing you a happy and prosperous Christmas and 2010!

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