

January 2013

TAP INTO LINCOLN BIG'S SUPPORT

WELCOME to the January edition of City Talk which comes with Lincoln BIG's best wishes for a successful and prosperous 2013.

Last year may seem a tough act to follow, after the euphoria surrounding the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and London 2012 – both of which brought an extra dimension to events in Lincoln.

But although the economy continues to give many businesses and organisations a bumpy ride, we have lots of initiatives and projects in the pipeline which are designed to attract more shoppers and visitors.

Our sister organisation, the Visit Lincoln Partnership has also been busy developing the new www.visitorlincoln.com website, which aims to deliver a boost in the number of Lincoln's day and longer-staying tourists.

Against this backdrop, Lincoln BIG is keen to encourage both its newer and longer-standing levy payers to make the most of its business support initiatives, which include free Security Group membership, low-cost radio hire, In Bloom, street decoration packages, transport and access deals.

We warmly welcome levy payers to meetings

of the various groups which we facilitate, which give traders the chance to network with fellow business owners and managers, discuss general business issues and, more specifically, proposals or initiatives which may improve their trading area.

These supportive groups, which offer a strong voice to businesses based in different parts of the city, are:

- **Bailgate Area Guild** – meets on the last Tuesday of each month, with the exception of August and December when there are no meetings. Meetings start at 6pm at various locations within the Bailgate area. The Chair is Mark Hollingworth (Flowers by Suzanne)
- **Sincil Street/City Centre Traders** – the next meeting is on Tuesday, January 22, at 4pm in Lincoln BIG's offices. This group may be expanded and renamed and we are looking for new members – a key issue for discussion will be High Street signage. A chair is to be appointed.
- **Brayford Business Forum** – the next meeting is on Tuesday, January

22 at 11am at the Holiday Inn Express. Further dates to be organised. The Chair is Darren Spencer-Phillips (Holiday Inn Express).

- **The Bottom of the Hill group** is interested in The Strait and Upper High Street and meets regularly. The Chair is Richard Baxter (Goodies of Lincoln).

Please do come along to the meetings. For information on all of the groups contact Sharon Stone on (01522) 545262 or by email at: Sharon.Stone@lincolnbig.co.uk



ONLINE TOURISM DRIVE!



VisitLincoln.com has been launched by the Visit Lincoln Partnership, and is a powerful, user-friendly website which highlights all that Lincoln offers as a destination.

Aimed at driving more day and staying visitors to the city, the website showcases the benefits of the city as a place to visit, meet, stage corporate events and conferences, or to study.



This dedicated site has been designed to be appealing, engaging and easy to use, as well as to

offer a wealth of useful information for people who know Lincoln, as well inspiring those who don't.

www.visitlincoln.com features events listings with further listings being supplied by www.loveLincoln.co.uk through a widget on the site, and accommodation listings in partnership with Stay in Lincoln. Online booking will soon be included, as well as lists of what to see and do in Lincoln.

There are also suggested itineraries, information about places to study and a venue search service. The shop sells souvenirs and products from the Lincoln Visitor Information Centre, in addition to tickets for events and attractions.

The website will continue to be developed, with the addition of new content on an ongoing basis. It is also available on mobiles and hand-held devices. Once a user is in Lincoln the getting-around map tool will

provide handy directions.

Businesses can get listed in various ways:

- Lincoln BIG levy payers are entitled to a free standard listing
- Members of the Visit Lincoln Partnership (Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce) are entitled to an enhanced listing
- Visit Lincoln Corporate Partners & Destination Members will get a featured listing that includes profile in the Meet Lincoln venue-finding section of the site (where business applies)

For more information about joining the Visit Lincoln Partnership, please contact VLP Manager Emma Tatlow on (01522) 545233.

VisitLincoln.com was developed with funding from Lincoln BIG and the ERDF Revival Lincoln project.

BOOST FOR CHILD SAFE ZONES SCHEME

THANKS to the co-operation of its levy payers, Lincoln BIG has extended the Child Safe Zones scheme which it successfully launched last Summer.

Families visiting the city centre, uphill and St Mark's areas will now find it easier than ever to benefit from the scheme, which aims to provide a simple and effective way of reuniting lost youngsters with their parents or guardians.

The initiative features the use of special information posters, Child Safe Zone stickers and Child Safe wristbands, which can be found at many more places around the city.

Information boards have been posted at Mothercare, Toys R Us, Argos and Debenhams at St Marks, at the Visitor Information Centre in Castle Hill and at Ruddocks in High Street, in addition to the

Central Railway Station, Lincoln Bus Station and the Waterside Shopping Centre.

And parents can pick-up free cards and Child Safe wristbands at these locations too.

The posters and cards display a low-cost helpline number – 08444 48 42 33 – which quickly connects the caller with a member of the Level 1 security team, who can get information about a missing child out to the city's Radio Link users.

If a child becomes separated from its parent or guardian the security team will immediately begin its search procedures.

Shoppers can write their own mobile telephone number on the Child Safe wristbands, giving anyone who finds a missing youngster an easy way to reunite them with their family.



LOOKING AT THE YEAR AHEAD

LINCOLN is in a good position to build on its strengths as 2013 gets underway.

Whilst the economic picture remains challenging, our latest findings reveal that there are few empty premises in the Lincoln Business Improvement area – which stretches from St Marks to Newport Arch – with a vacancy rate of just 7.2 per cent, compared with 11.3 per cent nationally.

New names continue to move in and it is good to see well-established, independent traders investing in their businesses, in addition to the millions of pounds which are currently being spent in the university and leisure sectors.

Examples include the University of Lincoln's new School of Pharmacy, being built on the Brayford Campus and the Premier Inn (due to open in February), which is breathing new life into a rundown area of Broadgate.

At the same time, a major push is underway to bring in more day and staying tourists, through the development of www.visitlincoln.com – which aims to make it much easier for tourists and conference visitors to access a wealth of information and, ultimately, book their stays.

2012 will be a tough year to follow. London 2012 and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee lifted the mood of the nation and provided the perfect foundation upon which to organise some fantastic celebration events which will be remembered for a long time to come.

But, by working with partners, we hope to bring back many of our well-established events, including the Children's Festival, Beam, Discover Lincoln Weekend, Sausage Festival and, funding permitting, our Christmas Ice Rink.

We have also sought greater business involvement in the running of next year's Christmas Market, which continues to be Lincoln's premier commercial event.

Working in partnership with other agencies

and organisations, sharing bright ideas and good practice and continuing to bid for external funding streams are core to our efforts to promote Lincoln and drive local wealth.

Successes on this front, mean that we are continuing to put £615,000 of European Regional Development Fund money to work, under the Revival Lincoln project.

This will make a difference in a number of areas during the year, including the provision of city centre information and signage and the development of our digital infrastructure, to better inform and assist our visitors.

As a Town Team Partner, under the Mary Portas initiative – which aims to revitalise town and city centres across the UK – we have been allocated £10,000, which we are using to

explore ways in which we can make the most of Lincoln's markets offer, including the daily covered markets and regular street markets.

Finally, a highlight for us will be when we welcome over 200 town centre managers to Lincoln for three days in July.

The Association of Town Centre Management has chosen Lincoln as the host for its 2012 Summer School. I believe that will give us a great opportunity to not only gather fresh ideas, but also showcase how much Lincoln has to offer as a clean, attractive, safe and vibrant city centre in 2013.

Lincoln BIG
Chief Executive
Matt Corrigan



LINCOLN'S BIOBUSES ARE "THE BUSINESS!"

Stagecoach East Midlands and Lincolnshire County Council celebrated after Lincoln's BioBuses were announced runner-up in the environment category at the prestigious UK Bus Awards.

The eye-catching green vehicles – which serve uphill Lincoln – were honoured at a special ceremony at London's Park Lane Hilton.

The BioBuses, which use a combination of diesel and bio-methane produced from landfill, have become a familiar sight on Lincoln's streets following a £350,000 conversion programme.

The project, which is a partnership between Stagecoach and the council, is estimated to have saved over 170 tonnes of Carbon since its inception and it has made the bus, already a green way to go, even more environmentally-friendly.

BioBuses have been particularly welcomed in the Cathedral Quarter where improvements in air quality are considered vital. Customers have also given the thumbs-up to the greener buses – passenger numbers increased by more than 10 per cent in the first year of the trial.

Stagecoach East Midlands MD Gary Nolan said: "Our recognition at the UK Bus Awards is fantastic acknowledgement of the hard

work that has gone into the BioBus project. Working in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council has produced great results for both customers and the environment. We always say that going by bus is the greener, smarter way to travel and the judges obviously agreed.

Executive Support Councillor for Highways and Transportation, Ken Milner, said:

"We're really pleased to have done so well in this category. This accolade gives much wider national recognition to the partnership approach we have here with our bus operators, to come up with innovative public transport solutions that are not only extremely popular with commuters, but tackle climate change too."



Representative of Lincolnshire County Council and Stagecoach East Midlands following the presentation of the award. (l-r): Chris Briggs (LCC), Ian MacDonald (SEM), Anita Ruffie (LCC), John Taylor (SEM), Richard Kay (SEM), Matt Corrigan (Lincoln BIG) and Councillor Ken Milner (LCC)

ARE YOU READY FOR THE "WHITE STUFF?"



LINCOLN BIG is urging levy payers to be prepared for the onset of winter weather, by picking-up one of its special snow shovels.

In a bid to avoid a repeat of 2010 - when business takings were hit when deep snow prevented shoppers from visiting some businesses for a long time – we have a stock of 50 shovels to give out on a first-come, first-served basis.

Lincoln BIG Operations Manager Mick Lake said that when traders were caught out in 2010 it became clear that clearing ice and snow from footpaths in the city centre was not a priority for County Council Highways.

"The Government advises that the most effective way of dealing with snow is to clear it before it becomes compacted, but it is important to have the right tools for the job," said Mr Lake.

For more details about the snow shovels email Mr Lake at: mick.lake@lincolnbig.co.uk

SHARING GOOD PRACTICE AND BRIGHT IDEAS

ABOUT 200 managers from towns and cities across the UK and Ireland can look forward to attending a top-flight conference in Lincoln this July.

Preparations are well underway for the Association of Town Centre Management's Summer School, which is taking place at the University of Lincoln's School of Business and Management.

Lincoln BIG will be playing host to the gathering and sharing what the BusinessImprovement District has been doing to support the city's economy.

The event, which will give managers a superb opportunity to network and share best practice, will explore the challenges facing town and city centres in the fast-changing 21st Century.

Delegates will hear from influential guest speakers about topics as diverse as Government policy, the latest research, planning issues and the importance of tourism, events and having a vibrant evening economy.

WAYS TO GET A GOOD DEAL

LINCOLN BIG has negotiated deals with the City of Lincoln Council, NCP and Stagecoach for parking and bus passes and employees of companies within



the Business Improvement District are eligible to benefit from these.

The City of Lincoln Council offers a range of discounted passes, either full-time season ticket, part-time season ticket or flexible pre-paid parking pass, in its "commuter" car parks – Broadgate, King street/Chaplain Street, The Lawn and Langworthgate.

Prices vary, depending upon the chosen option, but the full-time pass costs £53.17 per month and a book of pre-paid parking scratch cards is £20.53 per book.

NCP offers a full-time annual season ticket for its St Rumbold Street and St Mary's Street car parks, at a cost of £53.17 per month.

In addition, annual season tickets are available with Stagecoach. An inner pass is £27.50 per month and an outer pass costs £44 per month.

Forms can be downloaded from:- <http://www.lincolnbig.co.uk/what-we-do/access>

For further details, please call Fiona Harvey on 01522 545262

SPORTING DEAL FROM THE IMPS!

LINCOLN BIG has kicked-off 2013 with the backing of a new investor member – Lincoln City Football Club.

And the Club has made a great tactical move, by offering levy payers an exclusive deal. It's a brilliant opportunity to show your support for the Red Imps at what is a crucial point in the football season!

In celebration of its decision to "sign-up" to Lincoln BIG, Lincoln City is offering levy payers the chance to claim a free ticket to enjoy a T&R VIP Club match day experience at its home ground, Sincil Bank.

A limited number of complimentary tickets are available for Lincoln City Blue Square Bet Premier home games between now and April 13, 2013 (subject to availability).

Additional T&R VIP Club tickets are available to buy, at a cost of £35 per person.

To check availability and reserve your ticket, please email the Club's Chief Executive Officer Stephen Prescott at: steve.prescott@redimps.com

For more information about the VIP Club and to check fixture dates visit www.redimps.co.uk/commercial/vip



MAKING MARKETS A TRADING FORCE FOR THE FUTURE



LINCOLN BIG is to commission an experienced consultant to help to develop a future strategy for the city's covered indoor and outdoor street markets.

Together with the City of Lincoln Council, Lincolnshire Co-operative and Traders, Lincoln BIG is using £10,000, awarded to the organisation as a Portas Pilot Town Team partner – to come-up with a plan which ensures that markets play a key role in enhancing people's shopping experience.

Lincoln, which is renowned for its striking fusion of old and new, has a mix of markets. They include two long-standing covered

markets next to each other, with over 100 traders – the Central Market (owned and operated by the City of Lincoln Council) and the Cornhill Market (owned by Lincolnshire Co-operative)

Additionally, the city hosts many street markets, notably the world-famous Lincoln Christmas Market, as well as about 100 other outdoor themed markets throughout the year.

The strategy aims to explore general market trends, the sustainability of markets and how a balance might be struck between traditional, permanent, six-days-a-week markets and occasional outdoor and specialist markets.

FARMERS MARKETS TO GET THE YEAR OFF TO A GREAT START

LINCOLN BIG'S growing range of colourful markets are now a key feature of the city's busy events scene.

2013 gets off to a typical start with the return of our Farmers' Market, which helps to attract extra footfall into the city and which is good news for everyone who has vowed to rethink their diet and buy fresh, locally-grown produce in the future!

The Farmers' Market takes place in High Street on January 9 and in Castle Hill on January 19.

The Farmers' Market returns to City Square on February 1, in the High Street on February 13 and in Castle Hill on February 16.

Please see the enclosed Lincoln BIG Year Planner for dates of future events. You can also visit www.lovelincoln.co.uk for other events information.

TRAFFIC-BUSTING ROUTE A STEP NEARER

NEW YEAR news is that Lincoln has been given the green light for the important East West Link Road and a start on work is expected as early as Spring 2014.

The Government has approved a Conservation Area Consent which means that that work on this traffic-busting route can commence in earnest. The road will replace Tentercroft Street with a new, four-lane carriageway, running from the High Street to Pelham Bridge.

This will mean that traffic will be able to cross the City East to West at this point, as an alternative to crossing via Silver Street or St Mary's Street.

A consequence of the scheme will be the

opportunity to pedestrianize the South High Street, between St Mary's Street and St Mark's Street, although plans by Network Rail to build a major new footbridge are likely to impact on this.

County Senior Projects Leader Les Davies said: "This means we now have full planning permission for the road (subject only to any objections on legal grounds, which would give rise to a judicial review).

The new road will bring many opportunities for economic growth and regeneration to the city, and also relieve congestion on the existing road network, particularly with the level crossing barriers being set to be down even

longer in the near future.

The next steps include completion of the detailed design, the preparation of contract documents and the appointment of a contractor. (A planning condition means that the authority will have to rebuild the "conservation" building at the same time as the new road.

The County Council has already begun the process of completing the relevant land and property acquisitions. Side Road Orders, giving the authority the power to stop-up unused side roads or, where necessary, private means of access, will also be served.

The road is expected to take two years to complete.