



Town Centre Management Report Wilmslow Town Centre

July - September 2022 Update

Highlights:

- **Wilmslow BID is approved by a majority of town centre businesses, and becomes the first BID in Cheshire East.**
- **Year on year footfall has increased**
- **The WWB website has made 319,000 impressions in 12 weeks**
- **A successful 'Superhero Summer Camp' was delivered in August**
- **An Ice Rink will form part of the Christmas 2022 events.**

Business Engagement and Town Centre Recovery

- The following businesses / groups have engaged Groundwork with activities in the town centre and promotion of the town centre during the past 6 weeks:

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Playdemic | • Hoopers | • Quarrybank Boutique |
| • Sainsburys | • Potyo | • Wilmslow Library |
| • Black White Denim | • Halifax | • Wood fire smoke |
| • The Rex | • Vodafone | • Fibre Wilmslow |
| • Suburban Green | • Harrington & Hallworth | • Olivers club |
| • Café on Water lane | • Alfred Peters | • Aplan insurance |
| • Revolution | • CIBO | • Home Library |
| • Cheeky Tikka | • The Grove | • Crew clothing |
| • Unico Lounge | • The Emerson Group | • Wh smith |
| • Starbucks | • Buzzy Bee Bakery | • Space NK |
| • Mailboxes | • RISE | • Easy Fish Co |
| • Claire and Illingworth | • Pure Fashion | • UK Phone Fix |
| • James Doyle | • S&G response | • Viet bowl |
| • Nolte Kutchens | • TT Games | • Nourish |
| • Electric Bike Shop | • Smoke | • Unagi |
| • Everybody Leisure | • The Wine Cellar | • Clarks |
| • Caroline Charles | • Steve The Flowerman | • Mi Lash Pro |
| • King William | • Waitrose | • Wilmslow Mortgages |
| • Jordan & Halstead | • Sharps Bedrooms | |

Footfall





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- Footfall figures have shown that dwell time and total number of visits are up both month on month and year on year. Total number of visits are up 17% based on year on year figures, which is above the average national benchmark of 15%.
- Five of the seven days throughout August 2022 were at recorded footfall levels higher than 2019
- Businesses have also now stopped reporting on occupancy levels in offices as of February 2022. They felt that although things are returning to 'normal' they were trying to compare current data to 2019 data when realistically we need to consider that things have changed and will not operate as they did in 2019 this year.
- Some of the larger corporate offices are operating hybrid working policies with more staff slowly returning to office based working on a regular basis. Challenges are being reported though due to the ongoing issues with the poor road condition and illegal parking on Kings Close. This is being reported as a barrier to getting more staff into the buildings serviced by Kings Close as they are struggling to access their car parks.

Marketing

- Instagram followers is currently at 1511, Facebook followers at 1463.
- In August the Instagram account reached over 273% more accounts compared to July - introducing the Wilmslow's Way Better brand to over 1000 new profiles.
- Total Story views 4439 with reels show casing town centre businesses recording views of over 5.5k



- The website has had 319k impressions during the past 90days with 4.3k new unique visitors from search and an overall of 5.5k visitors to the site. It has produced 22 news stories during this period and hosted information about 29 events since the beginning of June, with events featured through the remainder of 2022. A blog post entitled 'Treat yourself to a trip to Wilmslow' published on the 24th August was viewed 688 times in the first 2 weeks its publication.
- 106 businesses have published listings on the website.
- We have sent newsletters containing news and event stories to a website subscriber list of over 500 members.

Events

Summer Events

- In a bid to increase footfall through the historically quiet summer holiday period we applied for the remainder of our free parking days to be used on Wednesdays throughout August. We also hosted a 'Superhero Summer Camp' in Bank Square that was free for families to attend. In looking at the footfall data this had the desired effect with Wednesdays being the highest performing day throughout the month.
- At the superhero event over 150 children, received medals for taking part during the day and we also linked up with Wilmslow library who kindly came along on the day with a selection of adventure themed books and comics to read to the children.
- Feedback received across social media and on the day was very positive. One post online read "My little one loved this today – thank you so much!" with another commenting "Great idea we loved it!"
- Visitors to the event especially liked that they were free and family focused with the cost of everything else rising and children's school holidays being a very expensive time for some families. Several families commented that with the event and parking being free it meant they had more time and money to browse the shops and then grab a bite to eat making a full day of it.





Autumn/Winter Activities

- **September – Festival of Nature.**

The festival of nature team have been supported with planning and promotion of the Car Free Festival. Providing an important link with the organisers and businesses to ensure the smooth running of the day. We liaised with the hospitality venues to make sure they were able to maximise their profits and take advantage of the increased footfall on the day.

- **Autumn Half Term/Halloween.**

A meeting is being planned with the marketing and events team to discuss whether we will be doing any activities during autumn half term and Halloween.

- **Christmas.**

Support has been provided to Matthew Jackson with plans around the Christmas light switch on day. An artificial ice rink has been booked for the weekend of 9th December, which is already causing a real buzz around the town centre.

Work is also underway organising a '12 day of Christmas' event, which will see various festive themed events taking place in various locations across Wilmslow involving lots of different community groups and venues.

Ongoing work within the community

- We have been working with the Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan Group and supporting work around the pocket park project
- We have been working with St Barts Church musical director Tim Harvey for the '12 days of Christmas' plan.
- We have worked with the festival of nature team for the Car Free Street Festival.

Business Improvement District

The Business Improvement District for Wilmslow Town Centre was approved with 74% voting in favour representing 85% of rateable value giving a strong mandate for a first time BID.

Strong support was shown from town centre businesses, built from the engagement work that has been completed developing and delivering the Wilmslows Way Better brand throughout the past year.

The BID is the first in Cheshire East Council and is due to start in November focusing on the three main themes:

- Way Better Experience for consumers - Delivering more events and festivals, enhancing the look and feel of the town centre, tackling crime and delivering innovative projects that will revitalise the town centre.
- Way Better marketing & promotion - Building on the success of the Wilmslow's Way Better brand launched in 2021, Wilmslow town centre will be marketed and promoted to more than 500,000 consumers across the North West.
- Way Better Business - Ensuring that businesses have a stronger voice in the day to day management of the town centre, this work will also provide valuable business support and training opportunities whilst lobbying for improvements across the town centre.

The next steps for the BID will focus on set up processes by Cheshire East Council and Groundwork CLM along with the formation of a private sector led BID Board.

The BID is expected to raise around £1million of new investment in Wilmslow town centre over the next five years.

The delivery of the BID will be managed by Groundwork CLM who also manage BIDs in Northwich, Burnley and Warrington Town Centre's. Groundwork CLM will also be appointing a BID Manager which will be a full time resource focusing on delivery of the BIDs projects and services.