



Newsletter

EDITION 1

Altrincham Business Improvement District – the first six months

A warm welcome to our first Altrincham Unlimited newsletter. The first six months of Altrincham Business Improvement District's (BID) five-year term have flown by, so here is an update on what we've been doing and what you can expect to see over the coming months.

The BID's purpose is to enhance the performance of businesses across all sectors in Altrincham. And with that in mind, the team has been hard at work developing projects to do just that over the coming weeks and months. Not every project will benefit every business, but via a range of initiatives our aim is to ensure that the BID makes a positive difference to every business in Altrincham.

We hope you find this first newsletter a useful read, and welcome all comment, feedback and suggestions via info@altrinchambid.co.uk.



Katie Bland
Altrincham BID Manager

Martin Duff
Altrincham BID Board Chair

Our new brand – Altrincham Unlimited

One of our first tasks after the launch of the BID was to develop a new brand for the Business Improvement District. Why was that necessary? Well after 18 months of consultation it had become clear that the word 'BID' was always going to be a source of confusion with both businesses and the general public, with the most frequent question being 'what are you bidding for'?

So we set to work to develop a brand that is right for Altrincham as it is now. Not the Altrincham of six years ago, when empty units were everywhere and the town was at rock bottom, but the buzzing, confident destination that is now emerging – a town back on its feet and on the up.

The result is **Altrincham Unlimited**. Playing on the idea of a limited company, the new brand is all about what Altrincham can become. Unlimited potential, unlimited ambition, unlimited success for all its businesses. The logo is clean and contemporary and deliberately simple, so it can be used in different ways for different campaigns. The first example of this can be seen on the recent half term Pumpkin Trail, where our designers gave it a spooky feel – watch this space to see how it looks for Christmas!

Hot on the heels of the new brand, the next big launch will be the Altrincham Unlimited website – altrinchamunlimited.co.uk – a one-stop shop for Altrincham town centre news and events, as well as an information point for all Altrincham Unlimited projects. There will also be the opportunity for all BID levy payers to advertise job vacancies and offers at no charge. The website is currently in development and due to go live in mid-November, so please start sending details of any events, offers and job vacancies that will be valid from mid-November to info@altrinchambid.co.uk.

Pumpkin trail proves a hit!

A town-centre trail designed to get families exploring Altrincham town centre was a runaway success over October half term, with close to 1000 children picking up goodie bags and following the map to find specially decorated pumpkins around the town.



Businesses were delighted with the response, which took visitors to all corners of Altrincham, and introduced them to new retailers in the process.

Excellent feedback was received via both social media and the returned forms, with the vast majority of participants rating the trail 10/10, and this comment from Lyn Denny typical of many:

"Fab Pumpkin Trail today! Fun for kids and great to visit shops I didn't know existed. Thanks friendly shopkeepers and Altrincham BID".

Katie Bland said:

"The last time Altrincham ran a school holiday activity – the 2016 Easter Egg Hunt – there were approximately 150 participants, so we were blown away to see such an increase in the number of children taking part this time. It really demonstrates the appetite for family focused events in Altrincham during school holidays, and our Marketing & Events Group will be looking at how we can build on this success in 2017."

Save your business money with Meercat Associates

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) present a unique opportunity for their levy-payers to put joint buying power into action and reduce costs across all business sectors. With this in mind, Altrincham Unlimited has teamed up with Meercat Associates, a specialist procurement company with a strong track record of working with BIDs. Since its launch in 2007, Meercat has worked with over 80 BIDs across the UK, and during that time has identified over £2 million in savings for businesses.

Over the coming months, Meercat representatives will make contact with Altrincham businesses to set up 30-minute meetings, following which they will identify cost savings across a range of services including utilities, telecoms, testing, pest control and merchant fees.

This project was developed by Altrincham Unlimited's Business & Operations Advisory Group, with Mark Hope of High Street Medical taking the lead, and testing out Meercat's services in his own business.

He commented:

"Meercat Associates reviewed my running costs and very quickly saved me £276 on my utility bills, representing 234% of my BID levy payment. The process was quick and efficient, and we're delighted with the immediate return on investment".



Katie Bland, Altrincham Unlimited Manager added:

"This cost savings project will deliver real return on investment to levy paying businesses in Altrincham. I encourage as many businesses as possible within Altrincham BID to take advantage of this service that is now available to them and speak to Meercat about how they can reduce business costs."

The Meercat Associates service will be available to BID levy-paying businesses from early November. To arrange a meeting with a Meercat representative call **01444 416 529**.

Christmas is coming – and it's going to be special

With Christmas very much on the horizon, the Altrincham Unlimited team has been hard at work on a full Christmas programme that will move up a gear from previous years, and make this Christmas one to remember in Altrincham.

After several years of under-investment in Christmas lights and council funding no longer available, Altrincham Unlimited is investing in an enhanced Christmas lights display, with a mixture of cross street displays, lamp post designs and welcome messages at gateways to the town.

Christmas in Altrincham will begin with a fun-filled day of activity on Saturday 19th November, with live music, lantern making, street entertainment and Santa's Grotto, followed by a Parade of Light along the full length of George Street, and culminating in the switch-on show in Stamford Square hosted by Key 103 DJ Darren Proctor, with a fantastic line-up of family entertainment. Please help to spread the word and make it a day to remember!

The festivities will continue over the following weeks, with Altrincham's Great British Christmas Markets in full swing every Tuesday, Saturday & Sunday from 15 November, and a Santa's Grotto at Art with a Heart on Saturdays 26 November and 3, 10 & 17 December.

Thursdays in December will see the return of festive late night shopping (5-8pm) with street entertainment and instore events and offers. A great excuse to head out not home on Thursday nights! We'll also be getting traditional in Goose Green on Saturday 10th December, with a winter festival of carols, live music, street food and family entertainment.

Keep an eye on the new website altrinchamunlimited.co.uk from mid-November for more Christmas news, and keep us updated with your own festive events at info@altrinchambid.co.uk so we can help to spread the word.



FREE personalised travel planning with TfGM

Altrincham Unlimited is working with Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to offer more sustainable travel choices for people working in Altrincham, with free personalised travel planning (PTP) now available to all employees of BID levy-paying businesses.

All participants will receive information and incentives to help make sustainable travel choices. The scheme offers a number of advantages to employers, including a healthier, fitter workforce, improved productivity and morale, increased employee retention, reduced property costs through decreased parking requirements and progress towards CSR and environmental goals.

To complete the short online survey go to www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=147680048424.

All participants will receive a free personalised travel pack that can be used to help them get to work using sustainable travel modes (hard copies of the survey are also available), and will be entered into a prize draw to win a £100 shopping voucher.

We would encourage all Altrincham employees to take part in this free service, and employers to promote it to staff to identify the best travel choices on offer.



Altrincham businesses celebrate success

It was a good night for a number of Altrincham representatives at the Altrincham & Sale Chamber of Commerce awards last month, with the following BID businesses taking home the spoils:

Property Team of the Year: homes4u

Young Apprentice of the Year: Eleanor Finch (Jameson & Partners)

Provider of Professional Services: Informed Solutions

Leisure & Tourism: Altrincham Market Traders

Customer Service of the Year: Bluebird Care Trafford

Fingers are also crossed for Bell's Gym, who have been shortlisted in the category of 'Combat Zone Gym of the Year' at the 2016 National Fitness Awards. Good luck to Steve and team at the awards ceremony on 2nd December.

Do you have a good news story about your business? If so please get in touch via info@altrinchambid.co.uk and we will help to spread the word.

It's a team effort!

In this newsletter you will have seen reference to some of the different groups working on Altrincham Unlimited projects. So who is behind Altrincham Unlimited and how do they work together?

The BID Office

Altrincham Unlimited has two employees, Katie Bland (BID Manager) and Linda Roy (Communications Manager). Together they oversee the day-to-day running of BID projects and activity.

The BID Board

Katie and Linda report to the BID Board, which is made up of volunteer representatives from a range of sectors and locations across Altrincham town centre and meets monthly to guide the progress of the BID. The majority of Board members are from private sector businesses, alongside key stakeholders TfGM and Trafford Council.

Advisory Groups

Two Advisory Groups (Business & Operations and Marketing & Events), made up of volunteers from levy-paying businesses and local community groups, provide input and advice to ensure that effective projects aligned with the BID Business Plan are developed to benefit Altrincham's businesses.




Specialist sub-groups

In addition, sub-groups focused on specific projects; Marketing; Evening Economy; Retail; Parking and B2B have been formed, working on driving actions to improve the town in their respective areas.

Additional members are welcome to both the Advisory Groups and Specialist Sub Groups – if you would like to get involved call Katie Bland on **0161 791 0383** or email info@altrinchambid.co.uk.

Keeping in touch

If your business is on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram, make sure you follow us and keep up to date with all Altrincham Unlimited news:

-  @AltrinchamBID
-  Altrincham Unlimited
-  @altrincham_unlimited

Contact Us

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T: 0161 791 0383 E: katie.bland@altrinchambid.co.uk

Linda Roy – Communications Manager:

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Business rates set to fall in Altrincham

The recent draft revaluation of business rates has seen some significant reductions for businesses across Altrincham town centre, with some rates proposed to drop by as much as 40%. To check your draft revaluation (which will come into effect from April 2017) go to www.tax.service.gov.uk/view-my-valuation/search

Supporting our community – use your votes!

Two Altrincham representatives, Our Altrincham and Open Studios Altrincham are currently bidding for secure grants from the Aviva Community Fund. Our Altrincham are aiming to fund their 'Clean & Green' work, organising litter picks and bringing greenery and colour to the town centre via the Altrincham in Bloom. Open Studios Altrincham are planning a town-wide exhibition of contemporary art – Hidden Studios - in June 2017.

To vote go to www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk and search under 'Altrincham' to support two very beneficial projects for our town.

Blooming amazing news for Altrincham

The 'Altrincham In Bloom' team returned from the Britain In Bloom North West awards last week with excellent news for the town. Not only did two of Altrincham's parks receive 'Outstanding' awards, but the Stamford Quarter Shopping Centre and Old Roebuck pub also won 'Gold' for the second year running. The town itself was awarded a record-breaking third consecutive 'Gold' and as an extraordinary honour, will be representing the North West at the Britain In Bloom finals (Nationals) in 2017.



This is an extremely exciting opportunity for Altrincham to be showcased nationally so we are calling on all businesses to get behind Altrincham In Bloom and plan their contribution to the coming year's efforts. And there's no time like the present! Why not start now by replanting baskets and window boxes with winter flowering plants and give 'Our Altrincham' your fundraising support by voting online here: www.community-fund.aviva.co.uk/voting/project/view/16-2860

Photo L to R: Karen Wroe (Art With A Heart), Mayor of Trafford Cllr Judith Lloyd; David Rome (One Trafford Partnership), Mayoress of Trafford Ms Noelle Ryder, Sarah Walmsley (Our Altrincham).

-  info@altrinchambid.co.uk
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