



Q&A with **JAMES TOOTLE**

**Senior Retail and Leisure Manager,
Bruntwood Works/
Altrincham Business Task Force**



Tell us a little bit about your business?

Bruntdwood Works is a family-owned, Manchester-based property company that in partnership with Trafford Council, owns and manages the Stamford Quarter Shopping Centre.

Our team of specialists work with many operators including independent shops, restaurants, bars, cafes, street food traders as well as national retailers, gyms, and hotels.

Our aim is to harness the power of retail and leisure to accelerate innovation, economic growth and create increasingly vibrant destinations across our towns and cities.

What are you doing to keep the businesses in the Stamford Quarter at the forefront of the community's mind during lockdown?

We are working with the retailers and the wider Altrincham community to bring positive stories, sustainable activities and information to our community through our social media channels.

It's about providing genuinely useful information to inspire people who are in an unprecedented situation. As well as supporting our retailers by creating relevant and positive content around their products (tailored to 'at home' situations) we've also been sharing information from across the wider community and our neighbouring businesses. Our role right now is to be a positive force for all of Altrincham, because we're all in this together and it will take a united effort on behalf of the businesses and the community to keep the town thriving beyond COVID-19.

So far this activity has ranged from posting regular workout videos from instructors at Orangetheory Fitness and Pure Gym, and sharing regular information from Trafford Council; to sharing information on local, independent food and wine delivery and creating our own virtual Easter Bonnet Parade!

We have also launched Rainbow colouring activities, a mindfulness drawing template, 'Birdy Buggy Bingo' and we're about to launch a bank holiday activity pack too.

Where are you up to with putting plans in place for our High Street reopening when it is safe to do so?

We're monitoring and evaluating the situation on a daily basis and we are of course led by government policies and recommendations.

We are working closely with Altrincham BID and with leading industry bodies such as the Institute of Place Management, Revo and the British Retail Consortium to identify policies and best practices, adapting these to best fit our local circumstances. In addition, we are also working closely with our retailers to ensure we can support them as much as possible in these uncertain times.

When the high street is able to reopen, it will be a fine balancing act between ensuring that our high street can thrive as much as possible, alongside keeping everyone safe.

How can other business owners contact you, if they want to know a bit more about what you've been doing?

I'm very happy to talk. Just drop me an email:
james.tootle@bruntwood.co.uk



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