



CHRISTCHURCH CHAMBER CHAT

Issue 10 - December 2023

Festive fun for all the family

Traders and business leaders reported a hugely successful Christmas light switch on in Christchurch on November 25.

“The atmosphere was fantastic”, says BID Operations Manager Louise Berkhauer. “The town was buzzing!

Mayor Vivienne Charrett opened the proceedings with the Town Crier at 11am, and a full day’s programme of events followed, including choirs, urban bike displays, DJs and The Hush Club. There was a Christmas market and entertainment for the children.

The switch on itself suffered a slight delay as technical gremlins intervened, but the crowd took this in good spirits and there were smiles all round when it proved third time lucky!

This year’s event was delivered by Stir Events and Christchurch Town Council, with support from the BID and Christchurch Chamber.



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Sign of the times

Chamber committee members brushed up their decorating skills to update the Bargates sign in Pound Lane recently.

Bargates traders had long complained that the old sign was outdated and dilapidated, so the Chamber stepped into action and, with help from BCP, updated the design and applied a fresh lick of paint to the structure.

The design will be updated periodically, with the future possibility of sponsorship available. Feedback from Bargates traders themselves has been very positive.

The underpass itself was also given a spruce up shortly afterwards, as the Town Council organised a clearance of weeds and debris from the steps and thoroughfare.

Below, Chamber committee member Bob Atkins applies finishing touches - right - the final version



President's thoughts

Team work makes the dream work!

We're all about developing partnerships here at the Chamber. We pride ourselves in being a business to business organisation, helping each other grow and building from each other's experience.



Happily, a few stories in this issue of Chamber Chat highlight how such partnerships come to fruition. We were delighted to support the annual Christmas light switch on event with the Town Council which is always such a pleasure to be involved with.

On a more practical level, we worked with BCP council earlier in the year to restore the "Bargates" sign enticing shoppers to that part of the town.

Tim, our Vice President and Sue, our Secretary, as well as Richard from the committee attended the second Christchurch Conversation recently, which saw another opportunity to develop partnerships among community organisations. This was organised by the Christchurch Community Partnership and was host to many representatives of the business, public and charity sectors.

Of course, we also work with the Christchurch BID (Business Improvement District) and have done so since August 2021, when town businesses voted for its inception. The BID's prime aim is to promote businesses to consumers using a variety of imaginative methods, whereas here at the Chamber, we see ourselves more as a business to business organisation, and provide support for local businesses as well as networking opportunities, such as the social events we are so pleased to offer - more news on this on Page 5.

Above all, though, success in business is about building partnerships. Whether that's with suppliers, customers or local authorities, we're here to support you through thick and thin.

Wishing you a wonderful Christmas and prosperous New Year!

Andy Barfield

President Christchurch Chamber of Trade and Commerce

Introducing Davina Houlton: Local Leadership Coach

I was brought up in Christchurch and I love living here. I moved away in my late teens but the pull of the sea & the forest was ultimately too strong, and I moved back 15+ years ago.

I've always worked in the private sector and have been in a variety of HR Leadership roles. My passion for learning & development led me to qualify as a Business & Personal Coach in 2017 and I haven't looked back since. I help people & teams develop personally and professionally, either through skills training, through facilitating ways of working conversations & relationship building activities or through leadership coaching. I focus on developing self-awareness and believe this is key to performance.

Outside of the corporate work I do, I run retreats in partnership with another local Coach & HR Consultant, Kelly Taylor, and my husband, Paul, who is a Tai Chi & Bodywork therapist. Our next retreat 'Nurturing You' is on the 27th January at The Retreat. It will be a blend of activity and coaching tools and is aimed at anyone looking to reset after the Christmas festivities. It should be a great day and I'm really looking forward to it!

If you'd like to find out more about what I do, or the retreat, or just say Hi then please drop me an email Davina@talkpeople.co.uk or connect with me on LinkedIn.



Winter Wellbeing boosted at free Christchurch event

Bridge Health and Wellbeing invited local residents to prioritise their health this winter by attending a free event at their clinic on Bridge Street in November.

A range of local experts were on hand to provide advice and support on winter wellbeing. Alice, a personal stylist from Buddy and Noo, offered style tips and ways to revisit your wardrobe during winter. Claire from Dorset Coast Wills advised preparing for the future and financial wellbeing. Nurse Caroline from Eartech provided consultations on the often painful and debilitating issue of ear syringing.



Remedial massage therapist Sharon delivered some relaxing and invigorating hand and shoulder massages. The wellbeing studio hosted free taster sessions of Pilates and Mindfulness for those keen to try a new way of boosting their wellbeing.

The event had a festive feel, with Beaulieu Candle Company on-site selling their Christmas candles. Visitors could also get ready for Christmas with a range of Tropic skincare gift sets to choose from.

Louise O'Connell, Pilates teacher and co-founder at Bridge Health & Wellbeing said, "Thank you to everyone who came to our Winter Wellbeing event. It is always a pleasure to welcome other local businesses that complement our health and wellbeing approach into our space. There was a lovely atmosphere on the night, and guests seemed to enjoy dropping in for a glass of bubbles and a chat with some of the fabulous experts in the clinic."

Winter can be a challenging time with colder weather and longer, darker nights. It's important to find ways to boost our health and wellbeing. If you didn't make it along to the event but would like some wellbeing advice, please give our friendly team a call at 01202 473800. We will be happy to help. Why not pop along to our free weekly wellbeing walks on Wednesdays? Book your space online or email info@bridgehw.com."

Why did the printer cross the road?

After almost 29 years of trading, PP Printing of Bargates will close the doors at 31A for the final time on 19 December.

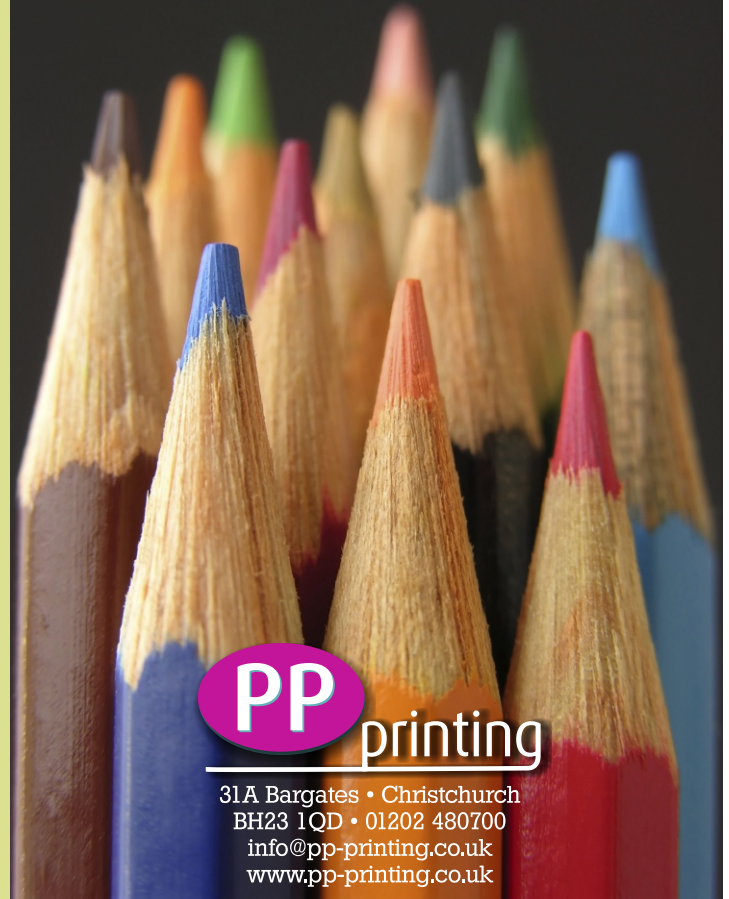
Don't fret, though - they will be re-opening on 2 January just across the street at Number 20!

Owner Richard Oswald explains, "Like most of our neighbours, we were so sorry to see The Coffee Pot close a year ago. To see it empty for almost 12 months has been such a shame. We've recently invested in new digital presses, and frankly space at 31A was becoming tight! So when we were offered the lease to number 20 it suited us down to the ground."

Richard confesses that the old premises were starting to look a bit tired and untidy, so is really looking forward to moving across the road. Number 20 is being refurbished for the project, with a dedicated finishing room replacing the kitchen and a fresh studio environment for clients.

They look forward to seeing clients old and new in 2024!

quality design & print



PP printing

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As we approach Christmas, we can reflect on a turbulent year for tourism across BCP. With the council budget deficit forcing cuts to the event offering, it seems that we are becoming much more self sufficient with the Town Council stepping in to put on our annual Christmas lights switch on event and together with the Christchurch BID support the improvements to Christmas lights.

It has been a settling down first year for the Christchurch BID (Business Improvement District) and they are looking forward to supporting the food festival in May 2024 with a Christchurch local food festival weekend on the High Street and in Saxon Square to enable its BID levy payers to trade on the High Street with food and drink related offerings, together with fantastic entertainment. Levy payers have been introduced to what is happening and have started to engage with organisers through a series of workshops held in November. A working group has been set up and includes local stakeholders.

October saw the second "Christchurch Conversation" led by the Christchurch Community Partnership where all manner of groups came together. (The last one was pre-pandemic in 2018). One person I met with in my working group was Hannah Rees who is the engagement leader for the charity Community Action Network who support other voluntary and community sector groups (VCS) across BCP and Dorset. Hannah helps them to run legally, to find volunteers, to find funding and to network with each other for mutual support. One of their ambitions is to set up a business supporter member model (BSM) to bring businesses and the VCS together on an equal footing. By that she means they are not looking for businesses to donate but rather to gain expertise and support from the VCS through the provision of training or services, or through catering for events etc.

Talking of food, the Christchurch Food Festival Education Trust is working closely with Year 9 students at the Grange school to deliver enhanced cookery sessions. The trust has appointed Liz Hagger from Flavours Cookery School to deliver the sessions across November, December, and January. Liz was a former food lecturer at Bournemouth and Poole College for many years. This course involves reaching out to all 60 Year 9 students and will take the form of delivering food demonstrations. The aim is to enhance the learning of essential food techniques for their GCSEs, to engage the students using new ideas in presenting food and along the way all students learning more about eating healthily. My fellow trustee, Mary Reader, is also working on a programme of supporting the Year 10 students at Tynham School.

As Christmas will be fast upon us, please remember to support the Shop Local campaign. There is a great retail offering across our area as well as many fine food and drink establishments, all with a warm welcome and full of Christmas cheer!

Tourism Update

By Tim Lloyd

MD Captain's Club Hotel
and Vice President Chamber of Trade



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Hello from Christchurch BID!

Who can believe we are rapidly approaching Christmas and the end of another year! With Christchurch in full Christmas mode and the festive season in unstoppable swing, it's a good time to let you know our upcoming plans as we round off 2023 and head into the New Year.

Christmas at Christchurch BID saw us launch three exciting activities for our business community to get involved in; Elf on the Shelf fun, the BID bauble hunt and the Christmas Wreath Competition. You may well have seen an Elf waving a golden BID flag or a special BID bauble swinging in a shop window ready for customers to enter the free prize draws leading up to Christmas.

This year the BID has focussed on promotion of our town and all that our businesses have to offer over the Christmas period. The production of the Christmas brochure, in conjunction with Christchurch Town Council, included a Christmas what's on guide and was distributed to 7500 residential homes in the local area, helping to promote the town as much as possible over Christmas.

The Christmas light switch on event, organised by Christchurch Town Council, was a huge success with large crowds attending on the day to witness gravity defying bike displays, dance to the Hush Club Disco, and enjoy the traditional Christmas market and light switch on countdown. We hope that you enjoyed the day as much as the crowds that attended!

Looking forward, Christchurch BID is pleased to announce the recent planting of the wrought iron flower pedestals in Bargates and the High Street with winter planting. Once established, we will be able to enjoy the spring flowers coming through with a burst of colourful tulips brightening up the town. We are sure you will agree that beautifying the town is hugely positive for all of us that work, live and do business within Christchurch.

We are also pleased to announce our new training partnership with the Christchurch Chamber of Trade and Commerce. The BID is offering a limited number of discounted places on training courses for BID levy payers. The first thirty businesses to book on a course will receive a £50 credit towards the cost of the course (one credit per business). Courses include Emergency First Aid at Work and Awareness of First Aid for Mental Health and will be held in January 2024. Please get in touch with Sue Harmon Smith, Christchurch Chamber of Trade & Commerce Secretary via info@christchurchchamber.co.uk for more information.

We hope that you enjoy some festive cheer this Christmas and wish all our Christchurch businesses and levy payers a happy and prosperous 2024!



Louise Berkhauser
BID Operations Manager



Chamber social events - back on the road

The Chamber of Trade & Commerce felt it was important to start our very popular social events again, where members and those thinking of joining, can get together for an hour or two over a glass of something and a bite to eat.

So that members can give us a practical insight into their business, we have decided to go "on the road". Several businesses have offered their excellent premises and we would be pleased to hear from you if you would like to host a Chamber Social, which will be held from 5pm on the dates below:

- Thursday 18th January at Avon Reach, Mudeford
- Thursday 15th February
- Thursday 21st March
- Thursday 18th April
- Thursday 16th May
- Thursday 20th June
- Thursday 18th July
- Thursday 19th September
- Thursday 17th October
- Thursday 21st November

The next Chamber Social will be held on Thursday 18th January at Avon Reach, 1 Farm Lane, Mudeford, Christchurch BH23 4AH.

This luxurious Colten Care Home often has events for local businesses and are especially keen to welcome the Chamber and it's members to enjoy their lovely surroundings.

We look forward to welcoming you to this event, and if you would like to come please let us know at info@christchurchchamber.co.uk or call Sue Harmon-Smith on 07801 519380

Successful Conference at SmartBase Attracts Over 140 Attendees



SmartBase played host to a highly successful conference on Wednesday October 4th 2023, bringing together over 140 attendees for an engaging and informative event. The conference provided a platform for a prominent local business to connect, collaborate, and discuss key topics.

The event took place in SmartBase's SkyLounge, renowned for its modern design and spacious atmosphere. Attendees were treated to a morning of enriching discussions, knowledge sharing, and wonderful cakes and refreshments. The event closed with a prizegiving ceremony for outstanding contributions within their organisation.

The event received overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees, who praised the quality of the content, the exceptional venue, and the seamless organisation.

Karl Fuller, Centre Manager, expressed gratitude for the successful conference, saying, "We are thrilled with the turnout and the enthusiasm of our attendees. The SkyLounge was the ideal setting for the conference, offering a unique and inspiring atmosphere. This was a great opportunity to help one of our valued customers with a large event."

The conference at SmartBase was a resounding success, reaffirming its status as a premier venue for gatherings of this caliber. SmartBase looks forward to future collaborations and opportunities to host similar events that bring together industry leaders and professionals to drive progress and innovation.

For more information about the conference or to enquire about future events, please contact Karl Fuller at hello@smart-base.co.uk or 01202 149189

About SmartBase - SmartBase, located near Bournemouth Airport, offers flexible workspaces, coworking, meeting rooms and event space. The SkyLounge is a premier venue known for its upscale atmosphere, and versatile event space. Whether for conferences,

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Tell us your news

Chamber Chat is all about Christchurch businesses small and large. If you are a Member of the Christchurch Chamber of Trade & Commerce and have business news you are happy to share, please do tell us.

If you are a new member and want to tell the rest of us about your business, then we look forward to hearing from you. Remember, Christchurch Chamber covers the whole of the old Borough and we welcome members from Hurn to Highcliffe and all places in between.

As well as being widely distributed electronically and on social media, this issue of Chamber Chat is being physically delivered free to businesses across Christchurch, Highcliffe, Somerford, Mundeford, Burton, Barrack Road, Fairmile and up to the airport. Its printing is paid for by its adverts—with any surplus funds going towards the Chambers future's activities.

If you would like to advertise in future editions, contact Sue Harmon-Smith on sueharmonsmith@gmail.com. Not only will you be supporting the Chamber, your advert will reach a targeted local business audience.

If you have a contribution you would like to make to the next edition, then contact me on andrew.barfield@gervis.co.uk.

Andy Barfield, Editor.

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Training course opportunities

Christchurch Chamber and Christchurch BID working together to support Levy Payers with effective training and an exclusive offer! The first 30 people to book on the courses will receive a £50 credit towards the cost!

Emergency First Aid at Work (Minimum 6 delegates, up to maximum 12 delegates)

Course price £100 – register quickly and it will cost only £50.00 per person.

Venue – Port Suite, Captain's Club Hotel Date - Monday January 15th, 2024.

Course delivered by Jo Polden, 1st Response Training and a Chamber of Trade member.

This QA Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (RQF) qualification is designed for individuals who wish to act as an emergency first aider in their workplace.

Upon successful completion of this qualification, candidates will be equipped with the essential skills needed to give safe, prompt, and effective first aid in emergency situations. An E-certificate and book will be issued, and the qualification is valid for three years. The course covers the roles and responsibilities of an emergency first aider, assessing of an incident, managing an unresponsive casualty, CPR and defibrillation, recovery position, choking, seizures, shock, wounds and bleeding, minor injuries.

Course programme: -

8.45am	Arrival tea, coffee, and biscuits
9.00am	Course introduction
10.30am	Morning coffee and pastries
10.45am	Course
12.30am	Light lunch (Dietary requirements needed)
1.00pm	Course
2.30pm	Afternoon tea and cake
2.45pm	Course
4.00pm	Course finishes

To book your
place on a course
email
info@christchurchchamber.co.uk
or call
Sue Harmon-Smith
on 07801 519380

Awareness of first aid for mental health training course (Minimum 6 delegates, up to maximum 16 delegates)

Course price £80 -register quickly and it will cost only £30.00 per person.

Venue – Port Suite, Captain's Club Hotel Date – Wednesday 24th January, 2024.

Course delivered by Jo Polden, 1st Response Training and Chamber of Trade member.

This RQF Level 1 Award in Awareness of First Aid for Mental Health (RQF) is aimed at providing learners with the knowledge to identify suspected mental health conditions and the skills to start a conversation and be able to signpost the person towards professional health. A range of first aid for mental health related subjects are covered including What is First Aid for mental health?, Identifying mental health conditions, providing advice, and starting a conversation, stress, and mental health conditions. Upon completion of the course and subject to assessment, a qualification will be issued that is valid for three years.

Course Programme: -

8.45am	Arrival tea, coffee, and biscuits
9.00am	Course introduction
10.30am	Morning coffee, tea, and pastries
10.45am	Course
12.00pm	Light lunch (Dietary requirements needed)
12.30pm	Course
1.30pm	Course finishes.

The basics of HR and Employment law for small business owners and managers

Course price £100 register quickly and it will cost you only £50.00 per person.

Venue – Port Suite, Captain's Club Hotel Date – Monday 22nd January, 2024.

Course delivered by Yvonne Phillips, Olyvetree HR (Total People Solutions) and chamber of trade member.

As owners of small businesses, we all must deal with the opportunities and challenges that arrive when you expand and start to employ people. This training session has been designed to give you some practical help and understanding so that you can start and/or continue this journey successfully and confidently.

Course programme: -

8.45am	Arrival tea, coffee, and biscuits
9.00am	Course introduction. Employment status, contracts of employment (T's and C's), rates of pay and working time directives.
10.45am	Morning coffee and pastries
11.00am	Key employment policies (Absence, disciplinary, grievance, performance), Handling cases using your policies.
12.30am	Light lunch (Dietary requirements needed)
1.00pm	Discrimination, unfair dismissal, ACAS, employment tribunals.
2.30pm	Afternoon tea and cake
2.45pm	Restructures, redundancies, changing t's and c's, hybrid working.
4.30pm	Course finishes

Business partners invite support for hospice in it's 50th year



Three of Christchurch's most popular venues are urging other businesses to join them in getting behind the Mac Unit hospice in its 50th anniversary year.

With the Macmillan Unit hospice celebrating its 50th year, the owners of three Christchurch venues have issued an invitation to other businesses to join them in support of the charity.

Jason Giddings and Dave Burns are owners of The Thomas Tripp and Bodega in Wick Lane. Jason is also co-owner of Tuckton Tea Gardens.

The team at The Thomas Tripp and Bodega organise the popular Xchurch Music Festival and has chosen Macmillan Caring Locally (MCL) the local charity which supports the 'Mac Unit', as its headline charity in 2024.

Jason and Dave have also introduced Mac 'n' Cheese to their menus at the Thomas Tripp in honour of the Mac Unit and will be donating £1 to the charity for each dish sold.

Tuckton Tea Gardens recently hosted the charity's inaugural Light up the Sky event on October 13th, in memory of people who have been cared for by the hospice.

The Mac Unit is situated in the grounds of Christchurch Hospital and has provided end of life care to thousands of people since it was formed in 1974.

Jason said: "The Mac Unit means a lot to a lot of people in Christchurch, including members of our staff and loyal customers. We will do whatever we can do to drum up extra support for such a deserving charity."

Dave agreed: "The Mac Unit is a real haven for the patients and families it supports. We are very proud at the Tripp, Bodega, and the Xchurch Music Festival to be supporting such a great cause.

"Some of the team from Macmillan Caring Locally came along to try out the Mac 'n' Cheese at our launch and gave it their seal of approval. We now hope other businesses will come on board with fundraising and support the unit during its golden anniversary year too."

Neal Williams, Trust Secretary of Macmillan Caring Locally said: "Dave, Jason, and their fabulous businesses, are, like the Mac Unit, part of the fabric of life in Christchurch, and we are immensely grateful for their support.

"During 2024, we will be looking back at what the Unit has achieved and forward to what it can become, with the help of sponsorship and fundraising. The guys' support, together with that of other local businesses will be key to our success.

"We hope to hear from other companies who may be able to support us in any way they can, from one-off fundraising events, to taking us as their charity of the year or becoming a Golden Partner."

Businesses, groups, and organisations forming a Golden Partnership with Macmillan Caring Locally can take advantage of a host of branding, marketing and staff engagement and volunteering opportunities. For more information please email: Lin@macmillanlocal.org or phone: 01202 477628.

Tickets for the Xchurch Music Festival are on sale now via www.xchurchmusicfestival.co.uk



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