



## Town Centre Partnership activities expand

As we approach the busiest time of the year for many of our members, the Town Centre Partnership are also very busy making headway on a number of our key projects.

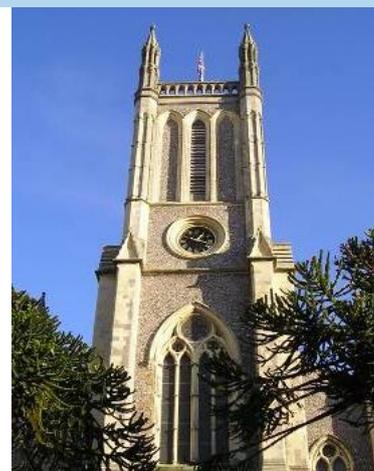
We hope that this newsletter provides a flavour of our range of activities and wish all of you all the best for a great Christmas!

## Marketing update

As part of our ongoing work to promote the town, we recently produced our marketing campaign for Christmas, which has seen 10,000 leaflets distributed within and beyond the town centre area. We also continue to work up a new promotional map & guide for the town centre.

## Christmas Prize Draw

As a further promotional initiative to drive footfall to Town Centre Partnership businesses, we have also organised a free prize draw, which runs throughout December. This will provide one lucky shopper the Christmas treat of £250 to spend within the town and is designed to be used by businesses to promote customers shopping with them – please contact Chris Gregory if you would like to register to be involved in this.



## Christmas Activities and Events

The Town Centre Partnership are delighted to announce the following events within the town over the festive season:

- Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November – Christmas Food & Gift Fair – 10am-3pm  
Food & Gift stalls featuring local producers at The Lights.
- Saturdays 5<sup>th</sup> December, 12<sup>th</sup> December & 19<sup>th</sup> December – 11am-3pm  
Festive fun & entertainment in the Time Ring, including performances by local choirs, theatre groups, bands and dance schools.
- Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December - Speciality Market - 9am-4pm  
Local speciality traders and food producers join the Saturday market as part of Small Business Saturday.
- Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December – Farmers' & Craft Market – 10am-2pm  
Popular monthly event taking place in the High Street.

## Festive Window Competition

All businesses are encouraged to dress their windows in the run up to Christmas and to enter our Christmas window competition – with the winner being able to nominate a sum of £50 to the charity of their choice.

To enter your display, and for terms and conditions of the competition, please contact Chris Gregory using the details below.

## Newsletter sponsors

We are very grateful to Mark and the team at Cartridge & Personalised Print World on Bridge Street for their sponsorship of this newsletter.



## Recent Members

We are delighted to welcome Enham Trust and Lockrite as new members of the Town Centre Partnership.

For a full list of all of our members, please see

[www.andovertcp.co.uk](http://www.andovertcp.co.uk)



## Advertising and Marketing

Every Edition, we feature at least one of the members of the Town Centre Partnership.

If you or your business would like to be featured in one of the forthcoming editions of the newsletter, please contact the Editor, Lee Chong at:

[Leec@talbotwalker.co.uk](mailto:Leec@talbotwalker.co.uk)

## An Interview with Chris Gregory, Town Centre Manager for Andover

*Chris brings a wealth of experience to Andover, having worked as a Town Centre Management practitioner for over 15 years within a number of diverse locations. As a Town Centre Manager as well as a professional Business Improvement District Director, Chris has developed and led award winning projects including events, marketing campaigns and place management plans and maintains a cutting edge knowledge of the industry.*

1. You are an independent freelance Town Centre Manager and working as the Town Centre Manager for Andover part time. Are you the Town Centre Manager for any other towns?

My work is pretty varied and I work with a number of associates, many of whom are long-term industry colleagues. As well as Andover, I am currently helping to work up proposals for a Business Improvement District (BID) in Cheltenham and am advising Letchworth Garden City BID on their interim Management arrangements.

2. How does one become a Town Centre Manager?

By being VERY bad in a former life - or, in my case, being seconded into a temporary role within the Solihull Town Centre Management Team over 15 years ago and never looking back - including stints within Town Centre Manager roles for Solihull, Walsall, Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon along the way!!

3. What are the special qualifications and qualities needed to be a good TC Manager?

Tenacity, tenacity, tenacity!

4. Are there any special challenges in Andover in relation to your role?

Many - although I think that we would probably need a bigger newsletter !!

5. What are your personal milestones or objectives that you would like to achieve for Andover and how close are you to that?

I would like to help take Andover to the next level of Town Centre Management - if we're honest, we are only just scratching the surface, but we have the potential to achieve much better things in Town Centre Management terms and I am only a small part of the required solution.

6. Describe an amusing incident that occurred to you as the TC Manager of Andover.

Not quite so amusing for me, but probably for others. This was when I was carrying out my first session in Andover as a Digital Skills Trainer. I stood up in front of several local businesspeople to demonstrate the ease and opportunities in embracing digital technology although the session started late because I was having problems in connecting the laptop to the projector!

## In the spotlight

### Briscoe French - Finding the right words

Briscoe French is a Hampshire-based PR, marketing, communications and copywriting agency staffed by award-winning and business journalists, former in-house press officers and experienced PR specialists.

Our clients include national and international organisations that value the newsroom know-how and press office experience we bring to their accounts.

We specialise in media relations – achieving coverage for our clients in the right publications and with the right broadcasters for their target audience – and we have extensive experience in managing crises. We also produce marketing communications materials, create strategic campaigns that get people talking, offer consultancy services and put our expertise to good use to offer training in traditional media relations and social media.

As a regional agency we can be especially responsive to the needs of our local and national clients, which currently include Southampton-based global air traffic solutions company NATS, Andover-based bathroom accessories manufacturer Croydex, Fareham engineering firm Aqua Cooling, and the University of Winchester.

We are all full members of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (last year our co-director Kevin Briscoe was made a CIPR Fellow) so we work to a strict code of conduct and are happy to be measured against the institute's high standards in everything we do for our clients.

The Briscoe French team includes communications specialists who have managed major press offices for Hampshire Police, Ordnance Survey, air traffic control company NATS, Southampton City Council, and children's hospice Naomi House amongst others.

## Business column

### Franchising – the next generation business model?

By Lee Chong

Franchising as an alternative business model is rapidly gaining ground. There are currently 8,500 distinct franchise brands operating in the European Union, with the UK seen as one of the strongest European markets for franchising. *(Figures by the European Franchise Federation (EFF), which represents the national franchise associations from Europe).*

It's hardly surprising that the franchising model has expanded exponentially in the business world. From the franchisor's point of view, it is a very fast and effective way of expanding into territories with little capital contribution required from the franchisor, it is a way of enforcing and boosting brand recognition, reputation and it is the only model to get someone to work hard for you and yet pay you for the privilege! Risks can be lowered with safeguards to some extent built into processes and damage limitation clauses can be incorporated into franchise agreements.

From the franchisee's perspective, with an established brand, they are to a large extent insulated from failure and the uncertainty of success in building up a new brand and business, they get the cachet and pulling power of an established brand, they can draw on the experience, assistance and support from the franchisor, bulk discounts may be available in operating under the umbrella of a large organisation, a tried and tested business format and they can be considered as "owner manager" and the flexibility of an owner provided they stay within the confines of the operating manuals and system. Finally, funding is more readily available as major banks are more supportive of good franchising.

But before rushing off to be a franchisee, a wannabe franchisee should take stock of the situation. Franchise agreements are, without exception, weighted very heavily in favour of the franchisor and most would not entertain any proposed amendments to their so called "standard" documents on the basis that it is their brand and business that they are letting you share, logistically it will be impossible to monitor so many standard agreements and therefore this justifies imposing extremely onerous obligations.

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Briscoe French has been shortlisted for the Most Out-standing Small PR Consultancy for the South of England region in 2014





## Continued

### Franchising – the next generation business model?

Franchisees are often locked into a franchise for a certain number of years (typically five) with little possibility of unilateral termination and a franchise renewal (on terms that may be even more onerous) with the knowledge that if a franchisee leaves, it would be with nothing as all the assets, the goodwill, the brand and even the modus operandi would belong to the Franchisor. There are usually heavy penalties for breaches by the franchisee. Generally, any improvements introduced by the franchisee is contractually expressed to belong to the franchisor without compensation to the franchisor.

#### Key points

Close attention needs also be paid to the provisions to deal with the premises from which the franchise is run and these be reflected in any leases of the premises so that the lease can be assigned in the event the franchise is to be sold or transferred. The worst result is that if location is important to an assignee and if you will not or cannot transfer the lease/premise, you will find that the business cannot be sold!

The above are some of the issues that a potential franchisee needs to be aware of. Specialist advice is highly recommended as there are many complex areas to allow an informed decision. Some Franchisors will allow limited negotiations. That said, many franchisees have been very successful but a franchise is often for life, not just a business vagary!

It is almost certain there will also be the mandatory personal guarantee or indemnity (which is wider than a guarantee) or both, for the principal(s) of the franchisee company to indemnify the Franchisor for all losses and costs and expenses if the franchise company is in breach and for some reason does not pay. There is sometimes no discharge clauses if the Franchise is sold so until discharged, the indemnity can theoretically continue.

Consequently, it is vital that a potential franchisee satisfy themselves whether the above underlying assumptions are accurate. This would include the commercial justification for them to be comfortable to enter into such transactions eg is the brand established enough to justify the payments that the Franchisor is imposing, whether the proposed location appropriate for the type of business and whether the various payments (ensure all details are obtained as there are often several streams of payments applicable) that the franchisor is entitled to, would in the final analysis be worth the commercial investment in being a franchisee with the franchise. These payments are generally (and one could argue unfairly) payable even if the business is not operating due to events beyond the franchisee's control.

The potential franchisee may also want to investigate or even ask the franchisor for details of profitability of their other franchisees, the current number of franchisees, the level of profits of a start up franchisee of equivalent size to your intended business, their business plans, references of other franchisees or even to speak to other franchisees under the same brand and possibly to look into the finances and talk to your accountant on what level of sales are needed to break even with the outflows to the Franchisor. You should also ask the franchisor of the nearest other franchisees to your outlet to prevent unwelcome competition. There is of course the British Franchise Association which has the ambitious aim of promoting ethical franchising where one can unearth useful information.

In most Franchise agreements, there are generally also provisions that compels the principal to work full time in the franchise so this is not just for an inactive investor. Typical restrictions apply, such as not to set up competition or inveigle an employee of the franchise. This would be an issue if it is a family member working in the business (as often is the case in convenience stores franchises).

### Your Town Centre Manager

Chris Gregory is a freelance Town Centre Manager, who is contracted for 22 hours per week for Andover.

Chris is usually in town on Wednesdays and Thursdays and wants to talk to all businesses, so please contact Chris using the details below to arrange a visit.



**Andover**  
TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP