

# Kensington High Street

## Retail Forum Newsletter

August 2010

### Christmas 2010

So far we have commitments amounting to £14,500 for this year's Christmas lights. We need £16,000 to provide lights in the street trees, £25,000 to provide lights in the street trees and Christmas trees on light columns and £46,000 to provide all of this plus an enhanced display on the Barkers and Roof Gardens Buildings' canopies.

Time is now running out so if you are able to contribute please contact Jo Hammond (details below). We achieved a lot last year and it would be a real shame not to have lights this year.

### Farmers' Market

The possibility of holding a weekly Friday Farmers' Market in Derry Street to add to the vitality of the High Street is being investigated. There are a number of hurdles to overcome including consulting residents and businesses. If businesses have any views or concerns about this proposal please let Jo Hammond know (details below)



The scary bit – Neil Clark, former Chair of the Retail Forum and the previous Manager of M&S Kensington abseiling over the parapet last year

### Mass abseil from the Roof Gardens Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September 9.00am to 5.00pm



Last year Marks and Spencer's staff and poverty charity Elizabeth Finn Care surprised passing shoppers with a mass, SAS-style abseil from the Roof Gardens to the High Street as part of the M&S 125th anniversary celebrations. This year Virgin Roof Gardens and Elizabeth Finn Care have got together to re-run the abseil and they are looking for up to 160 adventurous people prepared to take this 100ft challenge.

It costs £25 for the abseil and participants need to have a minimum of £100 sponsorship. This is a professionally run event and participants will be given training on the day. If any business is interested in sponsoring the event £3,250 would cover the cost of the abseil organisers and insurance.

If you are interested contact [abseil@elizabethfinn.org.uk](mailto:abseil@elizabethfinn.org.uk) or call Lynn Chambers on 07958 773272 – places are limited so please sign up quickly.

### RBKC Visitor website

The Council is developing a new website for visitors that is intended to be an insiders' guide to the borough. If anyone has any interesting snippets of information about Kensington High Street or photos that could be used on the website please contact Jo Hammond (details below). The website launched is planned for December and will include shopping maps of all the borough's main town centres, including Kensington High Street.

In spring 2011 this website will be made available in a mobile phone friendly format which should really help visitors to find their way around the borough.

### Commonwealth Institute

The s106 agreement for re-development former Commonwealth Institute to provide a new home for the Design Museum has now been signed but the schedule for completion of the project is not yet known. Details of the planning permission can be seen on the planning section of the Council's website <http://www.rbkc.gov.uk> case year 09 ref.839

### Fit for Work Pilot

Fit for Work is a new service operating across Kensington and Chelsea for the benefit of employed people who are off sick, and their employers. It offers quick free access to personalised services designed to support employees back to work more quickly, and to support employers in making the return to work as effective as possible. Services include counselling, acupuncture, physiotherapy, osteopathy, clinical exercise, housing support, employment support and training, and debt advice.

To access the service, individuals must live in Kensington and Chelsea, and be employed / self-employed. Clients can self refer, or may be referred via their GP or their employer with the client's consent.

To find out more, or to make a referral:

- website: [www.kc-pct.nhs.uk/fitforwork](http://www.kc-pct.nhs.uk/fitforwork)
- telephone : 0208 962 7690 (8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday - Friday)
- Email : [FFWSKC@nhs.net](mailto:FFWSKC@nhs.net)

### Next Retail Forum Meeting

The next meeting of the Retail Forum will be held 10.00am 8<sup>th</sup> September at the Town Hall. All businesses in the High Street and surrounding streets are welcome. Please come to the Customer Service Reception and ask for the Planning Help Desk, the meeting will be held in room 8.

# Shopwatch meeting

On 15<sup>th</sup> July the Safer Neighbourhood team hosted a meeting for shops participating in the Kensington High Street Shopwatch scheme.

Sgt. Annalisa Andrews who set up the scheme in 2007 said the original aim was to reduce retail crime by 10% reported it has actually fallen by 18%. There are currently 40 shops in the scheme although not all shops log on every day.

PC Phil Jackson of Counter Terrorism gave a presentation on the current threat which is Level 4 – severe. This means the Police are aware that people are planning a terrorist attack in London but there is no specific information on where or when. He asked retailers to look out particularly for people who might be carrying out reconnaissance. He also pointed out that all businesses should have a business continuity plan to deal with the consequences of a major event because 60% of the businesses based in the Trafford Centre, Manchester went bust after the IRA bomb. The Police can help with these plans.

PC Jeremy Osborne said crime has come down in the High Street but problems remain with smash and grab of high value items. The Police can give free advice on security and crime prevention which may be particularly useful if a shop re-fit is being planned. Credit card fraud and counterfeit £20 notes are a particular problem, only 20% of fake notes are identified in store. The Business Crime Reduction Partnership meeting is held on the second Tuesday of each month, generally in the Town Hall (check with Jo Hammond if you want details), to share information on criminals who are active in the area.

PC Rob Johnson urged retailers to tell the Police if they are experiencing particular crime problems and stressed that when using the Shopwatch radios accuracy (where you are and what is happening), speed and brevity will help the Police to respond appropriately. The Police need details of distinctive features like colour of bag or shoes to be able to identify people quickly.

Steve Allen from Resound, who provide the radio link equipment, said they would be changing over from analogue to digital radios within a year which will increase the security of the system. Radios should be held close (a couple of finger thicknesses away from your face), and talk across the radio at normal level. The aerial needs to be in good condition. Radios need to be used and charged every day, the battery is designed to last for up to 8 hours – if it doesn't it may need replacing. Resound are willing to check and refurbish any type of radio. A covert kit with an earpiece is also available from Resound costing £25-£40, and any store wanting to hire or purchase more radios should contact Resound on 01296 330568.

## Visitors' views of Kensington High Street

In 2006 Visit London conducted research that identified that there are some places like Portobello Road, Soho and the West End that are very strong place brands. These are places that are recognised across the world and people know what to expect when they go there. They also identified a second tier of places that had the potential to become brands in the future. Kensington High Street was one of those potential brands. The analysis of Kensington High Street identified:

### • Positive associations:

- the Roof Gardens
- shopping
- Ladies that lunch
- Princess Di
- Pavement cafes
- A nice cappuccino
- People-watching

### • Negative associations:

- Soul-less
- Long and straight and boring

The research suggested a potential brand personality of Kensington High Street as **Expensive. Exclusive. Urbane.**

The research concluded that the issue for Kensington High Street is the lack of any really sharp positive imagery. Most people have heard of it but have great difficulty in connecting that to anything concrete. Only the Roof Gardens punch through to any degree. It's overriding image is one of 'exclusivity'.

Research by TEAM Tourism Consultancy, commissioned by LDA 2006.

## Fraud Prevention Week October

The Police will be holding a fraud prevention advice day in the Royal Borough on 18<sup>th</sup> October. At this stage the plan is to split the day into two sessions:

- 1) Fraud prevention measures for local businesses;
- 2) Fraud prevention measures for the public.

If there are any particular issues businesses would like to see covered please email

[joanna.hammond@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:joanna.hammond@rbkc.gov.uk)

## Research comments about Kensington High Street

"I know one young lady that likes to spend the whole day there." [man - referring to his daughter's shopping habits].

"It's another good place to go and watch people."

"I quite like the pavement cafes - but they always seem to put me so close to the road."

"The Roof Garden is supposed to be very nice - just I've never managed to get in."

"I'd associate it with the Royals - and Princess Diana..."

## What do you think about Kensington High Street?

- Do you agree with this analysis?
- What do you think are the strengths of Kensington High Street?
- Where do you think the High Street is going?
- What do you think the Retail Forum should do to promote the High Street?

If you have any views you want to share come to the next Retail Forum meeting or email

[joanna.hammond@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:joanna.hammond@rbkc.gov.uk)