



Christmas Lights Switch On - Bury St Edmunds

‘Tis The Season To Be Jolly!

The launch of the Christmas Season in Bury St Edmunds kicks off this year on St Edmunds Day! with the Switching On of the Christmas Lights at 7.00pm on Thursday 20th November. This year the lights will be switched on by BBC Radio Suffolk presenter Mark Murphy who is a staunch supporter of St Edmund and who has led the campaign to reinstate St Edmund as the patron saint of England! He will be joined on stage as usual by Santa Claus!

The whole event will commence at 2.00pm with the Charity Market in the Buttermarket and the Fun Fair in the Cornhill. From 3.00pm there will be a variety of schools and students from West Suffolk College performing on stage as the excitement builds to 7.00pm.

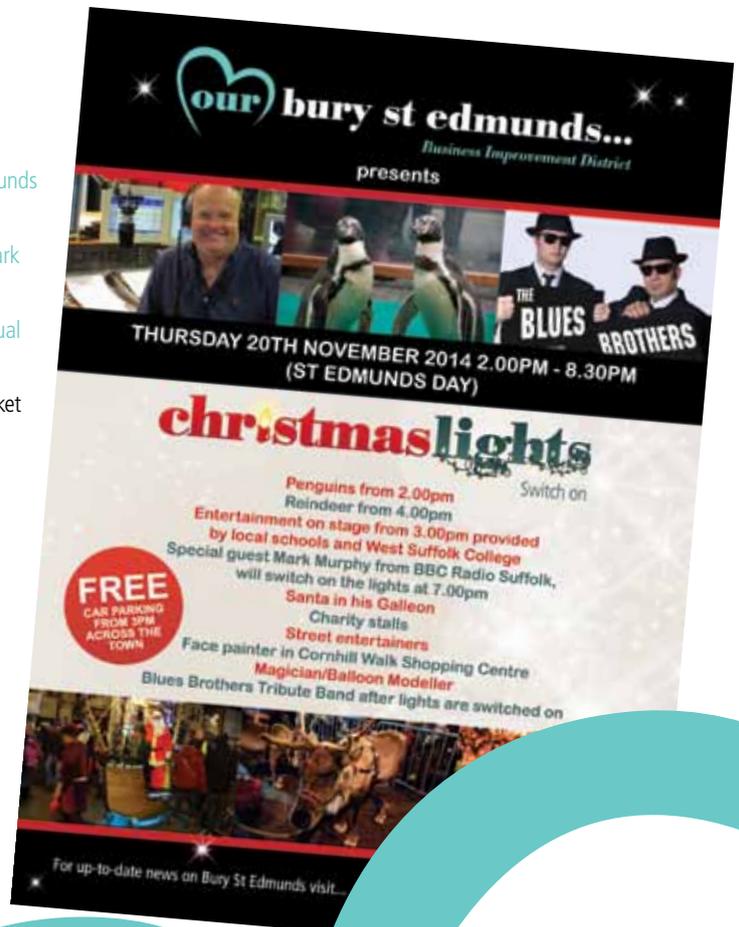
Immediately after the lights are switched on the top "Blues Brothers tribute band" in the UK will be welcomed on stage to entertain the crowds beyond 8.00pm.

Earlier on in the day we will be welcoming back to town the international celebrities that are our penguins that first appeared in Bury in 2011. They will be in town between 2.00pm and 5.00pm and from 4.00pm will be joined by a pair of reindeers. As usual we will have a variety of street entertainers in town as well as a small selection of food and drink stalls.

The BID has considerably increased the quality and quantity of Christmas Lights in town over the past three years and the coverage is now right across the BID area which was not the case when the responsibility for the lights was in the hands of others.

The BID believes that it is very important to ensure that the town looks fabulous in the run up to Christmas which is such an important trading time for so many of our businesses and make the town attractive to visitors.

In addition the Christmas Lights is the contribution the BID makes, on behalf of our businesses, to ensure that the town looks fabulous during the Christmas Fayre weekend, which again this year will open on the Thursday afternoon and this day will be specifically marketed to local people.





Mark Cordell | CEO Ourburystedmunds

thoughts of the chief executive...

When asked by one of our members, what can the BID do for my business I tend to talk about the six areas that we focus our activity upon. These are marketing and promotion, where we use the ourburystedmunds brand as the foundation stone of our marketing strategy by utilising our website, social media channels and our smart phone app to promote the town as a whole, as well as individual businesses. We liaise regularly with the Police to ensure that the town centre is a safe environment for all who work and visit there. As mentioned on the front page the BID has revitalised the Christmas Lights in town on behalf of our businesses and we have done the same in regards of the floral displays in the town throughout the year, as well as joint funding additional litter bins and providing a prompt free graffiti removal scheme for our businesses. We also organise and deliver some high quality events in the town that attract large numbers of visitors to Bury such as the Whitsun Fayre, Food & Drink Festival and also the Christmas Lights Switch On event. Additionally we provide a number of services free

to our businesses to assist them in enhancing their staff and/or reducing their costs. This is predominantly done by the provision of free training in areas such as social media, customer service, selling skills, first aid and more recently food safety training. So these are all services and activities that will be lost if the BID is not voted back into office in the BID renewal ballot that runs from 5th November to the 3rd December inclusive.

In addition to all of the above though, what will also be lost is the role we have created for ourselves and that is to ensure that the key authorities consider the impact of their decisions upon businesses and this has not always been the case! The stance we took on your behalf in regards of car parking charges demonstrated how important the views of our businesses are and this led to the termination of the automatic annual rises and the introduction of the "three from 3" initiative every Tuesday. We are also now playing an integral role in the Council introducing a "Pay on Exit" regime in town centre car parks.

I am very confident that our members will recognise all that the BID does for them and will vote Yes in the forthcoming renewal ballot. I am though slightly concerned that businesses may forget to vote or think there is no need as others will.

I want the BID to continue supporting our town centre businesses and ensuring that we work with others to make the town a very positive and profitable place to run a business and the best way to ensure this is the case is to vote yes in the forthcoming ballot.

a word from the chairman...

I joined the Board of the Business Improvement District in May 2011 and subsequently became Chairman in November of that year. I decided to get involved because I fervently believed and still do that our town centre businesses should have a greater say in what is happening in our town and felt that through the BID improvements to the general business infrastructure could be better achieved.

I was conscious that our retailers were facing challenges from internet trading and out of town retail parks and felt that the BID was an organisation that could represent our businesses and deliver opportunities for our businesses to prosper and thrive.

Since becoming Chair of the Board I have worked closely with the other Directors and with our Chief Executive Mark Cordell and our Events Manager, Jackie Regan to ensure that the BID is providing a wide variety of services and events to ensure that all of our members businesses can achieve value for money from their membership.

It was clear when I joined the Board that a large number of our businesses felt that their views and interests were not being best served by the BID so we improved communication through the use of technology, meetings, both personal and on a larger basis, and ensured that we had a far greater and more prominent presence within the local media. We listened to the concerns of our membership in regards of our Street Rangers and took prompt, positive action to address this issue.

During the life of the BID the Country has suffered one of the worse and longest periods of "recession" and of course Bury St Edmunds has not been immune to the impact of this but when one compares our town with others in the County, the Region and nationally I think we can all see how well Bury is doing by comparison. In order for the BID to continue making the town an even better place to run a business we need you, our members, to support the BID in the forthcoming renewal ballot. So please vote Yes, when you receive your ballot papers early next month to ensure that the town continues its success.



Andrew Speed | Chairman Ourburystedmunds

what we have done...



Food & Drink Festival 2014 | Bury St Edmunds

Food & Drink Festival

The third Food & Drink Festival was held on the Sunday and Monday of the August bank holiday and was a great success yet again. On the Sunday the weather was wonderful with the beach in the arc and the Display Kitchen being the favourite locations of the thousands of visitors. Unfortunately the following day brought with it grey skies and persistent rain but still the attendance was about two-thirds of that of the Sunday which we were very pleased with. Our restaurant and cafes were very busy on this second day and we were delighted that so many BID businesses either had a stall or did a demo on the kitchen.

Magna Carta Bollard Trail

In the summer the BID, in conjunction with the Bury Society and Bury Round Table, created a Magna Carta Trail around town, whereby 26 bollards were wrapped with the coats of arms of the Barons who met in Bury in 1214 which led to the drawing up of the Magna Carta. There were prizes to be had by anyone who could find all 26 and we were amazed that over 130 correct answers were submitted.



First Aid and other training

By the time you are reading this article we will have held our fifth training session this year with the Red Cross and this has led to 55 people achieving a first aid qualification which will last for 3 years and all funded by the BID. We have also held another social media course in October. Don't forget to get in touch with us if you have any training needs that you think the BID could deliver for you.

Networking Evening

We held a networking event in September at the Farmers Club where nearly 40 of our businesses attended. As well as getting an up to date briefing from the Chairman and Chief Executive it was an opportunity to meet other BID business folk in a convivial location. Our next event is at Cafe Del Mar from 6.00pm on Tuesday 28th October.



BID Customer Care Award

At the annual Business Festival Awards dinner at the Apex, Kevin Wilcox of Prezzo won our prestigious award with Carole Warner from the Regency Hotel and Jackie Cook from Marks and Spencer also making the short list. We were all delighted though when Jackie won the "Unsung hero" award later in the evening.



Radio Stations



The BID continues to raise the profile of our town and our businesses with regular appearances on both RWSfm and Zack fm. In regards to the former our CEO is a regular guest each month on the Mid

Morning Show where he updates the listeners about events and the goings on in town. In July the whole show was dedicated to BID Independent businesses where 11 businesses were featured live in the studio. The station also held a "who is the best independent business in Bury" competition which was won by The Bay Tree Cafe. On Zack fm our CEO hosts two "Our Bury St Edmunds" shows a month and on each occasion he interviews a BID business person.

What are we going to do..?

Best dressed Christmas window

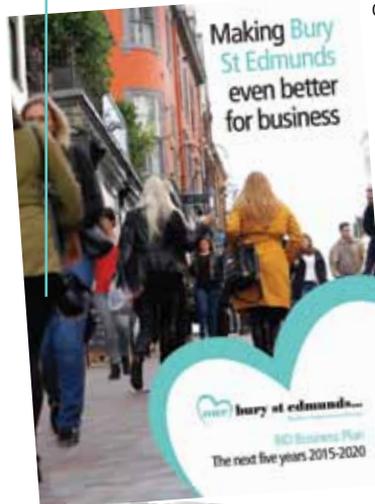
It's that time of year again! when we decide upon which business in town has the best dressed Christmas window. Judging will be carried out during week commencing 8th December and we will endeavour to ensure that the judge looks at all the business windows, but if you particularly want your window to be considered in this competition then please let us know.



Renewal Ballot

All 424 BID businesses will be given the opportunity to participate in a BID renewal ballot that will commence on Wednesday 5th November and will conclude on Wednesday 3rd December. The ballot papers should arrive with each business in early November and businesses will have a 29 day period in which to register their vote by post. The ballot is being independently

overseen by the Electoral Reform Services. If the majority of businesses who vote are supportive of the BID continuing then this is what will happen and I trust that the vast majority of you can see the businesses benefits that you have been able to enjoy since the BID has been in existence. We have recently issued our Business Plan which you should have received a copy of which outlines our intentions for the next five years. But in essence we want to continue doing all that we currently do and lots more! Thereby ensuring that you get all the support and help you require whilst running a business in our lovely town centre.



download our app now



Xmas Fayre

This year the Christmas Fayre opens on the Thursday afternoon again and this day will be promoted wholly towards encouraging local people to come into town. The event runs from 27th – 30th November inclusive and large numbers of visitors are again anticipated so ensure you have sufficient staff and products to meet the anticipated demand!

Late Night Shopping Evenings

Late night shopping evenings will commence this year on Switch on night i.e. 20th November and will be on every Thursday from thereon up to and including Thursday 18th December. Both Councils have generously agreed to allow "free from 3" parking across town (multi-storey and Ram Meadow car parks excepted) on each of these five Thursdays.



 **our bury st edmunds...**
Business Improvement District