Luton BID – Luton News column January 2022

**Feeling positive about 2022**

Written by Julia Horsman, Luton BID Manager

We talked last month about how we were taking time over the festive period to pause and reflect on the past 12 months, and to look ahead to 2022.

As we approach the end of January, the BID team is taking that same theme forward, and with a positive vibe emerging from the many town centre business owners and workers we speak to.

Last January we were in lockdown and things felt very different. This time around, despite the ongoing uncertainty and challenges, there definitely feels like there is renewed resilience and strength. Businesses are bouncing back with vigour and excitement for the future which is wonderful.

In the BID team we are working with town centre partners on a number of new projects and initiatives, whilst also continuing with our existing schemes. We have many announcements to look forward to in the coming months, and are also pleased to start work on our Enjoy Luton project - part funded by Welcome Back Fund – which is due to be launched in March / April to showcase all things great about Luton.

Our much-loved food and drink directory will continue to promote our town centre hospitality venues, our BID student discount webpage will be updated, and our ‘What’s On’ guide is continuing to encourage footfall back into the town.

The safety initiatives we support alongside other town centre organisations, such as night-time safety officers and business crime intelligence sharing, are continuing to make a positive difference in reducing antisocial behaviour.

It also feels great to carry forward other important projects to improve the local environment and generate further growth and investment in the town centre – again, we encourage people to look out for announcements about these.

The return of much-loved annual events like the St Patrick’s Day celebrations and Luton Carnival are in the pipeline, and the BID will continue to support the organisers to promote these.

Luton Council’s new monthly markets will be starting as well, kicking off with the Vegan Food Fest this month – already promising to be a superb event.

It really is great to start the year with such hope and enthusiasm about the future, whilst listening and engaging with businesses to understand what they want from Luton BID in the coming year.