

Littlehampton Town Centre

Local Commercial Agents Workshop

Wednesday 17 January 2024, 12:00 – 13:30
The Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EW

Action Points

Welcome: Councillor Tandy opened the workshop session.

Overview: Simon Matthews and Ben O'Connor, Matthews Associates, gave an appraisal which included the State of the Nation, local market dynamics, and Littlehampton investment and interventions.

Roundtable Discussion:

The following topics were discussed, and actions proposed:

1. Vacancies and Agency Boards

The group discussed shop window dressing and alternative options to agency boards.

Actions:

All - Explore window dressing options.
Arun District Council - Look into board compliance.

2. Public Realm, Vandalism and Anti-social behaviour

Local Action Team set up with police involvement and regular meetings. Clearly a lot of work has been carried out on the public realm. Arun District Council is looking at removal of some street furniture to reduce loitering etc. Using The Arcade as a cut through is an issue. PCSO also needs to be aware of more anti-social behaviour.

Actions:

Littlehampton Town Council - Follow up re police patrols. Liaison with Local Action Team
Arun District Council - Look at previous planning situation to allow shutters and investigate any grant funding.
All - Issues to be reported to Local Action Team.

3. Landlords

Agents work for different client groups. Local landlords are more proactive and might be more receptive, remote landlords less so.

Action:

Matthews Associates - to engage with Landlords not represented.

4. Websites and Marketing

Shared websites or marketing strategies e.g. listing agents that operate in the area with links. Noted that agents/ landlords would find an information pack helpful. This would be from the councils on the past, present and future work that is being done to improve the town.

Actions:

Matthews Associates and Littlehampton Town Council – Investigate setting up Commercial Property agents listings on Littlehampton Town Council website
Arun District Council and Littlehampton Town Council – Draft and design agents information pack

5. Pop Up Shops

These can have a very positive impact. The Town Centre team can assess demand and offer interest to agents. Vacant units could also be offered to small businesses looking to move out of working from home.

Actions:

Littlehampton Town Council - Explore future opportunity.
Littlehampton Town Council - Newsletter start-up units information.

6. Rustington and Bognor Regis

Rustington is mostly owned by one landlord who has controlled the tenant mix. This has changed a bit in recent years, although the location is still very popular. Multiples moved out of Bognor Regis, but this is slowly improving. The group discussed how the town improved and what lessons can be learnt from Bognor Regis Business Improvement District?

Actions:

Matthews Associates - Undertake comparative visit to Bognor Regis and to Rustington to look at mix and occupation levels.

7. Agents follow up

All agreed to continue in-person format for next session and recommended following up with agents/landlords not represented.