

# STRAT > FORWARD

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

# NEWSLETTER

Issue 26: 6th July 2017

## Record-breaking River Festival!

HUGE crowds soaked up the sun as record numbers packed into Stratford throughout the weekend to make the 2017 River Festival the busiest one to date.

Footfall figures smashed previous records, 70,000 - 80,000 people coming into Stratford over the weekend, compared to 60,000 last year.

It was the ninth annual event, organised by Stratforward – **Stratford's Business Improvement District** – pulling in the crowds to enjoy live music, food and drink, a huge selection of stalls and plenty of fun and games celebrating all things river-side on the Recreation Ground.

Stratford was packed throughout the two days as visitors from home and abroad soaked up the atmosphere - and the sunshine - **at what has rapidly become one of the region's leading free festivals**, and one of the biggest events in the local calendar.

Since it started in 2008 the River Festival has grown and grown. Back then there were six stalls – this year there were more than 120; a unique opportunity for local businesses and organisations to showcase their town.

Traders have reported 2017 as their best year yet, thousands of people browsing and buying at the craft market and sampling the huge variety of food and drink on offer, from pancakes to prosecco.

**"It was just a fantastic weekend, with a great atmosphere throughout,"** Joe Baconnet, Stratforward's Director said.

**"We were pleased and astounded by the attendance figures, no doubt helped by the glorious sunshine. Our traders reported it was their best year ever - on both sides of the river - and what's really important is the long-lasting impact this event has too; it showcases Stratford far and wide and encourages visitors to come back again and again. Next year is going to be our 10<sup>th</sup> River Festival and we're already looking forward it. Thank you to the public and businesses who have taken it to their heart and**



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helped make it the huge success it is."

The 10th River Festival will be held on June 30<sup>th</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> in 2018 – so get the dates in your diaries now!



## Food and drink in full flow!

FINE food and drinks were in full flow throughout the weekend.

At the One Elm's pop-up pub, business was booming.

"It was a record-breaking year for us." Mat Faulkner said.

"The Saturday was absolutely packed - I have never seen anything like it in all my years in hospitality. It was just awesome."

Demand was in fact so high that the pop-up pub had to very quickly re-stock its supplies of Purity and Church Farm ales, coming close to running out on day one.



## Super sales on both sides of the river!

THE tills were ringing over in the craft market too with Jo Sainsbury, owner of Henley Street gift shop Bright Ideas, also saying it was the busiest year she had ever seen. And not only was she making sales from her River Festival stall, but over in town too.

"We've done the River Festival eight times now and this was by far the busiest," she said. "Sales were up at our shop in town too."



## In the name of charity



THE River Festival also attracted more charities than ever before.

More than 30 attended to set out their stalls and fundraise through plenty of fun and games. Many other charities were **there as part of a 'Volunteer Village'** funded by Stratford Town Trust, giving them a presence and an opportunity to chat to and recruit potential volunteers.

Rachel Key, Hub Manager at Tyler House, said it meant a lot to be involved.

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**"We had a fabulous weekend as part of** Stratford Town Trust's Volunteer Village, recruiting for Stratford Samaritans and the other groups that use Tyler House. It was great to see old friends and meet so many new ones interested in giving their time to be a lifeline for someone else."

**Paul Thompson from Springfield Mind added: "It was a great event and we very much enjoyed** being alongside partner organisations. We had a pledge tree on our stand where we asked people to pledge to do something to improve their wellbeing. This was very popular – we received 87 pledges in total."

## Let us entertain you!



THE family area was packed, youngsters making the most of the face-painting, swing boat rides and climbing wall.

On the Avon itself, more than 80 boats were moored up, flags and bunting proudly flying.

World-class live music played throughout the weekend too, on the Bandstand and on the Acoustic Community Stage, sponsored by Costco.

Cotswold based 9-piece funk and soul band Kinky Farnham, returned to headline on the main stage on the Saturday night, before the town was lit-up with a fireworks extravaganza.



## Hunting for clues

ALSO new for 2017 was the Town Centre Treasure Trail, organised by BID Business Magic Alley. "The Great Stratford River Festival Treasure Hunt" took participants around the town and to local businesses picking up clues.



Entries are still being collected – but Magic Alley's Dave Matthews is expecting big numbers.

**"We certainly saw a lot of people taking part and coming into town. We set ourselves high targets for what we wanted to achieve over the weekend and we reached those targets on both days. The River Festival was an astounding success."**

## Safety first

SECURITY had been stepped up throughout the weekend – with additional staff and random vehicle and bag checks. Organisers worked closely with Warwickshire Police to ensure safety and reassure festival-goers.

**Joe Baconnet, Stratforward's Director, said: "We had a lot of favourable comments about the additional security and how appreciative people were. The event was a great success and the security presence was a key part of that. We also had a lot of lovely comments about the police presence all over town."**

## What our businesses said!!

### Barry the Butcher

The sizzling didn't stop on either day for the team from Barry The Butcher.

They sold 2,000 hot dogs and 2,500 burgers – as well as supplying meat to a whole host of other festival traders.

**"Everything was just right** – the weather was perfect and the whole event was perfect," Adam Lucock said.

**"We were very well-**organised this being our second year and it was a good job we were – that queue, it was there all day, it never backed off."

Despite being there from dawn to midnight on the Saturday, Adam was back at 7am on Sunday morning to cook-up free bacon butties for the voluntary force of litter pickers – and has high praise for their efforts.

**"When we left at midnight on the Saturday, the litter was unbelievable. By 7.30am the next day, the place was immaculate, I couldn't believe what an incredible job they had done."**

Adam sizzled around 50 bacon butties for the team.

**"Once the smell of bacon was in the air people started coming off the boats and asking for a butty, so I put a sign-up and had a queue by 8am!"**



Adam Lucock, Owner  
of Barry the Butcher

### For Something Different

There was a sales surge over at the For Something Different stand too – with raffia hats and bamboo fans proving particularly popular in the July heat.

**"Our novelty pirate flags did really well to** – we came close to selling out." Dayna Edwards said.



### Shabby Chic Sister

The team from Shabby Chic Sister were busy making sales throughout the weekend

**"It was just jam-**packed, it was great, really good atmosphere and everyone was enjoying themselves," Kate Harrison said.



## Food Festival 2017 September 23rd and 24th

Our Town Hosts are busy distributing application forms to businesses to get involved in the Taste and/or Ale Trails. The deadline for their return is Friday 15th July.

Visit [www.stratforward.co.uk/events/stratford-town-centre-food-festival/get-involved-2017](http://www.stratforward.co.uk/events/stratford-town-centre-food-festival/get-involved-2017) for more information or email Tor on [tor@stratforward.co.uk](mailto:tor@stratforward.co.uk).

## NEXT STRATFORWARD NETWORKING MEETING

Our next quarterly networking meeting for BID members is Tuesday July 11th, giving you the chance to meet with fellow businesses and the Stratforward team.

The meeting will take place in the Circle Bar at The RSC starting at 12 for 12.15 with refreshments. The meeting will be an opportunity for an update and feedback on the River Festival, and to find out more about up and coming events – including the Food Festival and, Christmas (the nights are drawing in).

**We'll also have an update on the work of our cost reduction consultants, Meercat Associates Ltd, and other work.**

For catering purposes please let us know if you intend to join us - [sandi@stratforward.co.uk](mailto:sandi@stratforward.co.uk)

## HAVE YOUR SAY ON STRATFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

**Don't forget to have your say on the Stratford-upon-Avon Neighbourhood Plan.**

Consultation on the plan, which sets out a vision for the future of Stratford, closes on Friday (July 7).

While it covers areas like housing developments across the town, there are also areas that are relevant to businesses - including the role of the new Bell Court development, the Rother Street Market, car parking, bus stops and taxi ranks in Bridge Street and potential pedestrianisation of an area of High Street.

**Stratforward director Joe Baconnet said: "It's really important that businesses engage and are aware of the neighbourhood plan. Once adopted it will have significant weight in decisions, so now is the time to make your voice heard"**

To have your say on the Neighbourhood Plan [CLICK HERE](#)



**Stratford-upon-Avon**  
*neighbourhood plan*

*Your Town, your Plan... it's time to write the future*

## LIBRARY RETURNS TO HENLEY STREET HOME

Stratford Library is set to reopen next Wednesday (July 12th) at its permanent Henley Street home, following months of essential building works.

The library closed in January, with services moving to the ArtsHouse while essential building works, including piping and electrical work were carried out.

The Henley Street site will now boast a new and improved look, longer opening hours and will also house the service for registration of births, deaths and marriages.



## STRATFORD LEISURE CENTRE SCOOPS INDUSTRY AWARD

Stratford Leisure Centre has been named Leisure Centre of the Year in a prestigious industry awards.

The centre, which is managed by Everyone Active on behalf of Stratford-on-Avon District Council, was handed the gong at the 2017 Flame Awards - the health and fitness sector's largest celebration of innovation and excellence.

The award recognises the quality of the centre's facilities and its commitment to improving health and wellbeing in the local community. Stratford Leisure Centre underwent an extensive refurbishment in 2015, followed by a recent £250,000 upgrade to its fitness suite.



Gareth Wagg, Everyone Active's contract manager at the centre, said: "We are absolutely delighted to be named as Leisure Centre of the Year. There were some great centres on the shortlist, so it is a huge achievement to have won and a testament to the team's tireless hard work.

"All of our colleagues strive to give customers the best service and experience possible, and we're over the moon that their efforts have been recognised by others in the sector. 2017 is a poignant year for Everyone Active, and I'm delighted that we have been able to mark it by taking home this accolade."

Everyone Active's contract with Stratford-on-Avon District Council is the operator's longest-established partnership, making 2017 a significant year for Stratford Leisure Centre to receive the award.

For more information about Stratford Leisure Centre, call 01789 268826 or visit [www.everyoneactive.com](http://www.everyoneactive.com).

## ROWING ROYALTY SET FOR FUN REGATTA

We're welcoming rowing royalty this weekend, with Olympic Gold Medallist Matt Gotrel the guest of honour at Stratford upon Avon Boat Club's Fun Regatta.

Local businesses, villages and groups of friends are all taking part in the Fun Regatta, which takes place on Sunday - many in fancy dress.

The regatta, now in its 15th year, started on the Sunday following the main regatta but grew so much in size and popularity that it's now a standalone event.

This year around 26 crews, with just three hours' training in the club's 'learn-to-row' boats, will take each other on in a series of side-by-side races.

The event will include a barbecue with BID member Barry the Butcher as well as a bar and tea tent.

Guest of honour Matt, who won gold in Rio in 2016 in the men's eight, had hoped to compete at the regatta with his sponsor Robert Welch Designs but has had to withdraw from rowing due to shoulder surgery.

He will be at the Fun Regatta all day and will be presenting winning crews with their medals. Racing starts at 10am, with the victors hopefully crowned by 5.30pm.



## Events around town.....

**fred**

Fred Theatre presents

# THE DUTCH LADY

London: Fuscara, the Dutch lady, finds herself broke and needing to marry for money. Follow her exploits in this hilarious **Restoration comedy** unseen for over 300 years.



STRATFORD UPON AVON  
6-7 July 2017 at 7pm (matinee 6 July at 2.15pm)  
**The Shakespeare Institute**  
Church Street, CV37 6HP  
0845 680 1926 · [www.oxboffice.com](http://www.oxboffice.com)

LONDON  
9 July 2017 at 6pm

## THE COCKPIT

Gateforth Street, Marylebone, London NW8 8EH  
Book online at: [thecockpit.org.uk](http://thecockpit.org.uk) or on 020 7258 2925  
(10.30am-6pm Mon to Fri, 12noon-6pm Sat)

BIRMINGHAM  
11-12 July 2017 at 7pm  
**AE Harris**  
110 Northwood Street, B3 1SZ  
0845 680 1926 · [www.oxboffice.com](http://www.oxboffice.com)

The production supported by:



FOR MORE INFORMATION: [WWW.FRED-THEATRE.CO.UK](http://WWW.FRED-THEATRE.CO.UK)

COMING TO STRATFORD  
THIS WEEK

# DOMINO

UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

**Barbour** COCCINELLE J BRAND  
SAMSØE & SAMSØE  
*Alce* *Kovacs*  
SELECTED  
TWINSET  
SIMONA BARBIERI  
U  
PUBLIC  
HALE BOB  
FORREST LINTAS  
CARA **Freddy** CLUSE

JULY 6TH 2017 9.30AM - 5.30PM

63 HINLEY ST, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, WARWICKSHIRE, CV37 6PT T: 01799 204 009  
[WWW.DOMINOSTYLE.CO.UK](http://WWW.DOMINOSTYLE.CO.UK)

Local florist Shabnam Ghezelbash has opened her second shop Bardia. It is located at the High Street entrance to Bell Court.



## Dates for your diary!

If you have an event you would like us to list here please email Sandi - [sandi@stratforward.co.uk](mailto:sandi@stratforward.co.uk)

### July

3rd to 16th	Wimbledon
6th & 7th	The Dutch Lady @ <a href="#">The Shakespeare Institute</a>
7th & 8th	Stratford <a href="#">Beer &amp; Cider Festival</a>
7th to 9th	British Grand Prix @ Silverstone
8th & 15th	Free <a href="#">Stratford Town Walk</a> 15th Anniversary Charity Walk
9th	Stratford Boat Club <a href="#">Fun Regatta</a>
11th	<a href="#">Stratforward Networking Event @ Circle Bar, RSC</a>
12th - 15th	4 Plays and an Interval @ <a href="#">The Bear Pit Theatre</a>
13th	Marie Curie Information Evening @ Shakespeare Street Cocktail Bar
15th	Bhangra Dance Workshop @ <a href="#">The Shakespeare Centre</a>
16th	Stratford Races
20th	Showcase Stratford @ <a href="#">The Artshouse</a>
20th	Shipton & Co Summer Gemstone Event (See BID Card Newsletter)
<b>20th</b>	<b>Closure of applications to participate in the 2017 <a href="#">Food Festival Trails</a></b>
21st to 4th Sept	<a href="#">Warwickshire schools summer holidays</a>
23rd	Stratford Lions Club Raft Race
23rd	Stratford Races Ladies Day
26th to 4th Sept	Birmingham schools summer holidays

### August

3rd & 24th	Stratford Races
10th to 13th	Bulldog Bash (TBC)
12th	Book Binding Workshop @ The Shakespeare Centre
26th	Stratford Rotary <a href="#">Duck Race</a> in aid of Shakespeare Hospice.
28th	Bank Holiday



23rd to 24th September 2017

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



6th & 7th May 2018

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



30th June & 1st July 2018

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

**Stratforward**  
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Stratford-upon-Avon  
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**Contact Us - Give us a  
call for more information**