

Development Managers Report

July 2023

Artisan Market

Following on from our discussions at the last meeting about the Artisan Market, we have had some very good news. We have met with CCDC who have agreed to pass control of the Market Charter to us to manage. They are aware of negative PR with Rugeley and the viewpoint that Cannock seems to benefit from everything, and feel that this is something which would work better if it is managed by us.

The market licensee is not renewing his contract as you are aware, and the stipulations of the 'Right to hold a market in Rugeley' stipulates that there must be a Market on a Thursday in Market Square.

We have been in touch with a company called Bescot Promotions who we briefly mentioned at the last meeting, to discuss the option of them taking on the Thursday market, but to also take on responsibility for the Artisan Market on the first Saturday of each month.

Bescot come with glowing references and an excellent track record.

We have a meeting on 7/7/23 to discuss the finer details of this arrangement, but we have verbally agreed the following:

- Bescot will source traders, administrate and manage the Thursday general market in Market Square with a view to growing it and raising its profile. This will not be able to commence until the end of August, however due to them taking on 2 additional markets over the next few weeks.
- As part of that agreement, they will manage the Artisan Market – but retain the current cost to traders, and follow our rules that no more than 2/3 stalls are present who sell similar products, but they will prioritise our regular traders on that day, and add to their number from their vast database of traders.
- Should they find that the Saturday Market is successful, they will also look at the possibility of holding regular general markets on a Saturday also.
- They will trial the Artisan Market for us on Saturday 5th August.
- We will verbally update any further details from our meeting

Promotion

We will need to have revised Artisan Market banners produced to promote the new location of the Artisan Market – but suggest we also have some banners made to promote the general Market on a Thursday.

Councillors to discuss available budget for promotional activity

Crime Rates

CLlr Cooney has shared with us some disturbing data on the increase of Crime rates in the Rugeley which we feel we should share. There is a significant increase in the number of anti-social behaviour posts on social media also.

Historical Crime Rates for Rugeley

Year - ▾	Crime Rate per 1,000 people - ▾	Total Crimes - ▾
2022	67	1,198
2021	47	844
2020	22	383
2019	49	871
2018	53	950
2017	64	1,131
2016	58	1,030

Rugeley is among the top 10 most dangerous small towns in Staffordshire, and is the 44th most dangerous overall out of Staffordshire's 197 towns, villages, and cities. The overall crime rate in Rugeley in 2022 was 67 crimes per 1,000 people. This compares favourably to Staffordshire's overall crime rate, coming in 14% lower than the Staffordshire rate of 78 per 1,000 residents. For England, Wales, and Northern Ireland as a whole, Rugeley is the 373rd most dangerous small town, and the 2,084th most dangerous location out of all towns, cities, and villages.

In May 2022, Rugeley was the worst small town in Staffordshire for bicycle theft, with 1 crime reported and a crime rate of 0.06 per 1,000 inhabitants. December 2022 was also a bad month for Rugeley residents, when it was Staffordshire's most dangerous small town for burglary, recording 9 crimes at a rate of 0.51 per 1,000 residents. Rugeley recorded 16 reports of criminal damage and arson during March 2022, making its crime rate of 0.90 the worst small town for criminal damage and arson in Staffordshire that month.

The most common crimes in Rugeley are violence and sexual offences, with 595 offences during 2022, giving a crime rate of 33. This is 34% higher than 2021's figure of 444 offences and a difference of 8.49 from 2021's crime rate of 25. Rugeley's least common crime is bicycle theft, with 4 offences recorded in 2022, the same as 2021's figure of 4 crimes.

Councillors to discuss impact of crime and what we can do as a council to attempt to minimise anti-social behaviour in our town.

Business Survey

I am in the process of preparing a Business Survey for all retailers in Rugeley Town Centre. With a view to setting up a 'Town Team', I will be inviting members of the retail community to join a proactive, positive group to share ideas, best practise and look at other successful high street campaigns, that we can trial here.

For information

AOB

Any other updates will be shared verbally.