

BID team and Free Press join forces in local economy support initiative

Town rises to the challenge



Andrew Hopkins and Graham Sizer from the Minehead BID team.

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STREETS all but deserted, cafes, restaurants and pubs closed to locals and tourists alike, and most shops firmly shuttered – but for some Minehead traders life carries on, if not quite as normal.

They have found a way of working with all the restrictions of social distancing to keep their businesses turning over and customers happy.

Now they have won the backing of the Minehead BID team which is teaming up with the Free Press to offer over the next four weeks a weekly Lockdown Directory of those still actively trading, together with their contact details.

The Minehead BID consortium was set up in 2018 with the support of more than 240 local traders to raise the town's profile as a resort and organise regular entertainment events.

This year the April eat:Minehead food festival had to be postponed and next week's May Day celebrations and the town's second steampunk festival are both cancelled.

Also put on ice until next year has been a major investment in new hanging baskets and bunting in Bancks Street, Blenheim Road, Holloway Street, Summerland Place/Road and The Avenue.

But Minehead BID manager Andrew Hopkins said a number of traders had been determined not to see the town's commercial life put completely on hold during the virus emergency.

"Local shoppers are naturally grateful



Some Minehead traders have found a way of working within social distancing guidelines to keep their businesses turning over and customers happy.

that the town's supermarkets have adapted to the stringent demands of social distancing and are continuing to operate pretty much as normal," he said.

"But there are a number of independent traders who are equally determined their customers won't suffer unduly during these extraordinary times.

"In many instances it has been a real challenge for them to adapt to the demands of carrying on a business with so many restrictions on movement and human contact.

"But they have found ways of working around the problems in order to avoid disappointing their clients – and we hope

in return that customers will recognise their efforts and repay that loyalty.

"Over the next few weeks, we will be promoting these businesses through the Free Press and ask everyone to shop local and support Minehead at this crucial time."

LOCAL BUSINESS?

Would you like to be included in the next local economy support initiative page? Phone Ria Rickward at the West Somerset Free Press on 01984 632731 or 07800 606822 (mobile).

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