



Press Release/ October 2011

THE FALMOUTH BID'S HIGH STREET CAMPAIGN TAKES TO WESTMINSTER

BID Manager invited to attend All Party Town Centres group meeting at Houses of Parliament following letter from the BID to the Prime Minister and launch of Save the High Street Campaign

The Falmouth BID's Save the High Street Campaign reached the corridors of power in earnest this week following an invite to Richard Wilcox, the Falmouth BID Manager from Sarah Newton, MP for Falmouth & Truro to attend an All Party Parliamentary Town Centres Group meeting at the Houses of Parliament on October 18th, to discuss key issues in which Government appointed High Street Advisor Mary Portas will be present. Truro BID Manager Neil Scott will also be joining Richard Wilcox and Sarah Newton at the meeting.

The Save the High Street Campaign launched by the Falmouth BID, aims to raise awareness of the main areas that currently affect or inhibit economic growth in Falmouth and is a direct response to the appointment by the Government of Mary Portas, to undertake a review on what is needed to save the British High Street as well as raising awareness of initiatives running in Falmouth that have been instigated by the BID and other organisations.

The Falmouth BID is lobbying the Portas team, the Government and regional authorities, to recognise and initiate change on a number of key restrictions that are affecting growth and these are contained in a letter sent to her and the Prime Minister and centre around five key points:

- 1) The need for free or low cost, innovative and flexible car parking schemes that are attractive for people to visit, dwell longer and spend money in town centres rather than acting as a barrier**
- 2) Co-ordinated, imaginative and well-integrated local public transport which meets the needs of customers and POTENTIAL customers**
- 3) Well-funded and professional town management which can form proper retail strategies and plans for the development of the high street and the improvement of the shopping experience**
- 4) Business rates that need to have a greater effect locally with businesses having a real say on how the business rates are spent. Successful businesses should not be penalised with massive rate increases and the success of schemes like BIDs should be recognised and expanded by being funded from existing rates not as an additional levy**
- 5) Cut VAT in half to 10% on retail/restaurants/hotels/tourism businesses**

The Save the High Street Campaign has seen the BID consult extensively with senior Cornwall Council Executives and Councillors, pressing for regional policy change as well as liaising with Sarah Newton, MP for Falmouth & Truro who has agreed to take up a number of the issues at Government level.

Richard Wilcox, Falmouth BID Manager said:

“The current trading environment is of course extremely challenging for all Falmouth businesses. That’s why the Falmouth BID has worked tirelessly over the past two years to introduce a raft of innovative schemes and projects that support businesses, raise awareness of our great destination, drive footfall, increase dwell time, improve the public realm and instigate partnerships with key bodies to enable Falmouth to be competitive and very much on the front foot. But there are a number of current national and regional policies that need reviewing so that we can further stimulate local economic growth. That’s why we launched the Save the High Street campaign – in response to the positive news that the Government is cognisant of the vital need to focus on the high street and the appointment of Mary Portas to undertake a high street review. I’m delighted that our Five Point Plan for the High Street has been recognised at such a key strategic level and I look forward to discussing the finer points of our proposals to Mary Portas and the Town Centres Group on the 18th October.”

Sarah Newton, Conservative MP for Falmouth & Truro said:

“I am looking forward to participating in the All Party Parliamentary Group for Town Centres meeting, and to the contribution of the Falmouth and Truro BID teams to the discussion on what more needs to be done to support our town centres. I appreciate Falmouth BID’s commitment to the Save the High Street campaign. It is also important that the Cornwall Development Company and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP continue to work in partnership with Cornwall Council, to further support our high streets.”

Ends

Richard Wilcox, the Falmouth BID Manager can be contacted on 01326 313553 or via richardwilcox@falmouth.co.uk

Notes to editors:

The five year Falmouth BID initiative has four priority areas, as laid out in its mandate - Marketing, Events, Physical Improvements and Business Support.

So far in 2011, Falmouth BID has instigated a new early season event, the very well received Falmouth Spring Festival in a drive to increase footfall and spend, instigated a cruise ship visitor initiative, worked in partnership with Cornwall Marine Network to roll out an extensive business training and support programme and provided substantive funding to enable growth for all major Falmouth events.

Further info:

www.falmouth.co.uk – official destination website for Falmouth

Facebook - ‘Falmouth – [spirit](#) of the sea’ – official Falmouth Facebook page

Twitter - [@FalmouthBID](#) – official Falmouth BID Twitter page

About Falmouth BID

The Falmouth Business Improvement District (BID) is a not-for-profit company that is charged with delivering a number of unique projects that aim to improve the trading environment of Falmouth.

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a flexible funding mechanism that improves and manages a clearly defined commercial area. It is based on the principle of an additional levy on all defined ratepayers, following a majority vote. Following a successful vote, the levy becomes mandatory for all defined ratepayers.

All local businesses now pay an annual levy of 1% of their rateable value, which gives a figure of £100k per year for five years to fund activity designed to increase footfall in the town, with a particular focus on marketing activity. Richard Wilcox is the BID Manager who oversees and drives forward the programme along with a Board of Volunteer Directors:

For more information about the Falmouth BID visit www.falmouth.co.uk/media.