

# Inside Kingston First

## Keeping You Informed

It's been a busy few months here at Kingston First, here's a few highlights of what we've been up to.

## Christmas in Kingston

Every year, throughout the Christmas period, Kingston First deliver a comprehensive programme of events, marketing initiatives and street dressing to bring festive cheer, encourage footfall and increase dwell time in the town centre.

Activities kicked off on Thursday 15 November with the switch on of our Christmas lights and opening of the Christmas Market which saw over 5,000 people flock to the town centre. Following its success last year, the 'Candy Cane Forest' entertainment area for children will also be returning, popping up on 15 December, just in time for the school holidays! To help promote the town and its Christmas offering, we have distributed over 65,000 leaflets to local homes and invested in a large advertising campaign to encourage visitors to the town.



Also, as part of the campaign you may spot a few sneaky penguins on your way around town. These seven penguin clues form a trail for families to follow around the town for the chance to win a very special prize!

To find out more about our Christmas activity, visit [kingstonfirst.co.uk/christmas2018](http://kingstonfirst.co.uk/christmas2018)

## Celebrating Kingston's Small Businesses

To help drive awareness of the large number of independent shops, cafes and restaurants in the town, this year we have compiled a complete guide listing all of the town's independent retailers.

The booklets were first created in the summer for Independent Retailer Month in July along with a voucher booklet offering discounts at a number of shops and restaurants. We distributed over 2000 of each in a uniquely designed tote bag to happy shoppers.



Due to the fantastic public response to the first campaign, we've recently updated the guide and repeated the bag giveaway on Saturday 1 December in celebration of 'Small Business Saturday' and again received an overwhelming response from members of the public eager to pick up their bespoke tote bag and directory.

## Ranger Report

In recent months, along with the help of some wonderful volunteers, our Rangers have been replanting a number flower beds in the town centre and it's made a noticeable difference. As well as adding some colour, the plants have been specifically chosen to maximise sustainability and pollution reduction, and support pollinating species.

We'd like to give a big thank you to all of our volunteers from Barclays, Yellow Zebra Safaris, and Moogsoft for their help.



## Introducing Streets of History

This autumn saw the launch of a new campaign from Kingston First designed to celebrate the rich history of the town with a series of on-street mini exhibitions.

The first exhibition marked the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War, highlighting Kingston's remarkable contribution to the war effort. Kingston First have compiled a collection of stories, newspaper clippings and photos in collaboration with local historians and organisations including Kingston Aviation Society, the war memorial association Local Hero, local funeral directors FW Paine, Kingston Council and the Kingston Museum and History Centre to create a small outdoor exhibition available for all to see for free.

We're looking forward to presenting our next 'Streets of History' exhibition in late spring to celebrate Kingston's photography pioneer, Eadweard Muybridge.

# What's Coming Up

## Start planning your Thumbs Up activities

The ever-popular Thumbs Up its Thursday initiative continues to prove a huge hit amongst local families with attendance at the event in October one of the biggest ever seen. With parents actively looking for fun and educational ways of entertaining children during the school holidays, it's a great way of driving footfall into businesses.

Soon into the New Year it will be time to submit your event details for the February half term event. If you would like to take part, please ensure you send over the activity details by Friday 18 January.



To find out more about Thumbs Up, for inspiration on what sort of events you could hold and for all dates and deadlines, visit [kingstonfirst.co.uk/thumbsup](http://kingstonfirst.co.uk/thumbsup) Alternatively, please get in touch with Eleanor on **020 8547 1221** or email [eleanor.swan@kingstonfirst.co.uk](mailto:eleanor.swan@kingstonfirst.co.uk)

## Reinvigorating 'Out of Order'

The town's much-loved 'tumbling telephone boxes' on Old London Road are very much looking the worse for wear of late and are in need of more than a quick lick of paint.

We're delighted to announce that Kingston First have commissioned for this renowned sculpture to be completely refurbished in early spring 2019.

More details are to follow once we have confirmed dates, and we're really looking forward to seeing the installation returned to its former glory.

## Introducing our Training and Business Events schedule for 2019



Since launching in 2017, our programme of complimentary training workshops have been a resounding success with many Kingston First members taking advantage of the free sessions for their staff including Conflict Management Training, Emergency First Aid, Fire Marshal Training and presentations on Employment Law and Social Media.

Included with this newsletter you will find our programme for 2019, which includes more of the popular everyday training sessions along with a few new additions following feedback with our members.

In July, we're delighted to welcome former Special Forces Soldier Matt 'Ollie' Ollerton for a motivational talk: Mindset for Mission Success in Business'.

To book this and any other sessions, please get in touch with Lucy Button on **020 8547 1221** or email [lucy.button@kingstonfirst.co.uk](mailto:lucy.button@kingstonfirst.co.uk)

# Keep It Kingston

The Keep it Kingston scheme continues to grow with over 11,000 cards distributed and offers valid in over 180 businesses across the town centre.



## Introducing KIK Bingo!

**This autumn we're excited to have launched KIK Bingo!**

Each month, we'll be giving away one amazing prize, which has been kindly donated by one of our participating Keep It Kingston businesses! To be in with a chance of winning, you must ensure that:

- 1. You have a Keep It Kingston card;**
- 2. You have opted-in to receive our monthly email detailing offers and updates.**

If you already have a card but have not opted in to receive our emails, go to [keepitkingston.co.uk](http://keepitkingston.co.uk)

If you don't yet have a card, it's easy to apply for one. If you are a permanent member of staff, working within the Kingston First boundary, simply pop in to our office with your latest pay slip (for Kingston Council staff, you are required to bring along your RBK pay slip and staff ID pass) and we'll issue you a card.

*Good luck!*

The offers just keep coming! Here's some of the latest businesses to have added a new offer

Virgin Holidays  
Topshop & Topman  
Offspring

Rush  
Hair Associates  
Lipault

Millie's Cookies  
Karen Millen  
The Souvlaki

To ensure you're keeping up to date with all the latest offers, go to [keepitkingston.co.uk](http://keepitkingston.co.uk) and make sure you're signed up to receive the monthly emails.



# Kingston Children's Literary Festival

This October half term saw the Kingston Children's Literary Festival return for a second year with an impressive line-up of famous authors and illustrators.



The festival was opened by Adam Hargreaves; best known for writing and illustrating the Mr Men and Little Miss books, since taking over from his father and Mr Men creator, Roger Hargreaves. The line-up also featured the 2018 Oscars Book Prize winner John Dougherty, children's favourite Ross Montgomery, World Book Day Illustrator of 2016 Sophy Henn and up and coming local writing duo, Doodles & Scribbles.

The festival was received fantastically amongst local families who attended with all events full to capacity. Our thanks to All Saints Church, Waterstones, Ultimate Outdoors and the Library who hosted the events.

- Parents rated the events **4.5/5 stars**
- **15%** of families attending the events were visiting Kingston for the first time
- **90%** of families attending the events spent time in other shops and places of interest during their visit
- **52%** of families attending the events ate a meal in the town centre as part of their visit



## Town Centre Police Update

In April this year, changes took place to the town centre policing team following the ending of local government funding, which paid for additional town centre police officers. Businesses have been in contact with us about this and we have been working with the Met Police to help focus resources where town centre businesses require it the most. We've also met with local MP, Sir Ed Davey, and Councillors to discuss business concerns.

Following consultation with members, we are piloting a street patrol scheme in the town centre over the Christmas period. Our Kingston First Marshals will be operating each weekend over December and will be available via the town centre Radiolink. If you have any feedback for us, please do contact us.

# Your Kingston First

## In Focus: Your Free Daily Recycling Service

Are you taking advantage of our free daily recycling service? We know it may sound too good to be true, but you really can sign up to a daily recycling service with leading waste management providers First Mile and it won't cost you a penny.

To get started, you will need to register with First Mile as a Kingston First member. They will then provide you with specially-marked mixed recycling bags and some stickers. Into the bags you can place a mix of paper, cardboard, plastics, metal tins and glass (up to 5% of the total bag contents can be glass). You can also fold down your cardboard boxes and bundle up to 10 large boxes together, then place one of the Kingston First stickers onto the bundle of card.

You then simply place your bags and bundles of card outside in the designated spot per your scheduled timeslot with First Mile and they'll pick it up for free, seven days a week.

If you want to find out more, call Lucy Caller or email [lucy.caller@kingstonfirst.co.uk](mailto:lucy.caller@kingstonfirst.co.uk)



## Tea with....

**Kirsten Henly,  
Chief Executive**

Getting to know your  
Kingston First team over  
a quick cuppa



### Firstly, what's your drink of choice?

*I drink plenty of cups of tea throughout the day! In the pub, I enjoy a beer or a gin and tonic.*

### How long have you been at Kingston First?

*I've been working for Kingston First for nearly two years. I'm from Solihull, just outside of Birmingham originally, and moved from the Midlands to the area then, too.*

### What do you enjoy most about working at Kingston First?

*Working with a great team who are passionate about what they do and meeting so many different businesses and organisations across Kingston.*

### What's your favourite thing about Kingston?

*There's so much to mention, from shopping and dining, to our history, culture and architecture. For me, the cherry on top of the Kingston cake is spending time by our riverside watching the world go by, especially when the sun is shining! The river and Canbury Gardens are fantastic assets for the town.*

### Tell us something about yourself that some people might find surprising!

*I am currently taking woodwork lessons so I can build my own furniture!*

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