

Chairman's Report: December 2019

I would like to start this report by welcoming all of you and to thank you for attending.

This has been the second year of our latest 5-year BID term and as we look back, we have, as normal, continued to consolidate and build upon our earlier achievements. I do not intend to go through our achievements in detail but I do want to highlight some of our main successes since our last AGM.

Security

One of our major successes throughout this and previous BID terms has been the measures we have taken to reduce crime on the estates. The low crime figures this year have been particularly pleasing and our estates continue to be an area where crime is low when compared with similar industrial areas.

We are now ensuring that all of our CCTV cameras can deliver on-line access to the police and an additional CCTV camera has been installed on Segensworth East at the Brabazon Road and Brunel way junction. The new camera adds an extra level of cover and removes a potential blind spot that was identified during discussions with our partners in the local police.

Our security patrols run regularly and Oakpark now have over 50 clients on the estates, resulting in greater security visibility and an increased deterrent. Additionally, our text alert system now has nearly 40 participants.

We are really proud of our integrated crime deterrent that continues to ensure Segensworth is one of the safest industrial estates in the country.

We will continue to keep our security measures under review and implement any improvements we consider to be worthwhile and cost effective in order to maintain our low crime figures. Any ideas are always welcome.

We have Increased Member Benefits

This year has seen an increase in the number of benefits that we offer our members. These include our new free on-line training package that is available to all businesses on the estates. This is already proving popular with over 20 participant companies now taking advantage. Each company signed up can then load as many of their staff on the package as they wish for access to a large number of online training packages.

Our legal helpline continues to provide members with a free to use service that offers immediate advice on all employment issues as well as discounted rates for Segensworth Businesses who may then require further legal work to be undertaken. A number of companies continue to take advantage of this service and I hope it will continue to grow yet again in the coming year.

In 2019 we also partnered with a company called Meercat, with the aim to provide a free to use group buying platform for our members. This has not been as successful

as we were hoping for, but it has brought savings to a number of our members and we hope further savings will be generated, primarily in the areas of energy contracts, facilities services, telecoms, merchant fees etc.

We currently aim to continue this partnership for a little longer to see if we can increase interaction with our members, so please review this offer on our website if you would like to see if they can save your business money.

Our courses and events have continued to be popular, providing members with cost effective and local training courses as well as free to attend special interest events. Over 200 people have now attended our training courses alone, providing convenience and financial savings for a number of companies.

We will, of course, continue to run our special interest and training events and would welcome further ideas for new courses.

All of our member's benefits can be found on our website and I would encourage you all to take a few minutes to visit it.

On the Environment

Over the years we have made significant improvements to the pavements and footpaths throughout Segensworth. Many people now take advantage of this and use the outside areas for recreation and exercise. As a result, many companies asked us to make the estates areas even more user friendly by giving people somewhere to stop, eat their lunch or simply sit and rest. This year we have installed further outdoor benches and tables for use at locations throughout the estates. This now gives us 8 areas throughout the estates and all are widely used throughout the year.

As we move forward our most important priority for the coming year continues to be our proposal to re-open the north of Witherbed Lane into a one-way link between Concorde Way and Whiteley Lane.

This will reduce congestion at both the Witherbed Lane and main Segensworth roundabouts and prove beneficial to many people working in our businesses.

We are very aware that traffic issues along the M27 have resulted in severe impacts to outgoing traffic at rush hour with people taking up to 2 hours at times to exit the estate. This has been having an impact, not just on staff wellbeing, but also on staff retention.

After a number of setbacks earlier in the year, when the proposed costs rose significantly, we are now applying for funding through the M3 Enterprise LEP. They understand the importance of this scheme to the whole of Segensworth and initial feedback has been supportive. We are now working closely with Hampshire County Council to submit an expression of interest for funding from the LEP. There is still a fair way to go on this project, but if successful this scheme will provide a lasting legacy and may well prove to be our most significant achievement over our 12-year history.

Further to this, as part of our objective to improve access and ingress, we are investigating a system to improve the provision of travel information to the staff and visitors to our Business Park.

This project aims to provide on-line traffic information, tracking Bluetooth signals to build a colour-coded road mapping, and associated travel times between specific points around the estate. This would be made available on our website allowing employees to plan and manage their journey home depending on traffic conditions.

We are also proposing to increase our member interaction and networking in the coming year. Ideas currently under discussion include an estate trade fair, more member's offers and a web based environmental improvement page.

Our aim is to get companies closer, sharing ideas, best practices and even waste products! Freecycling between companies is one idea that can provide significant benefits, reduce impacts and improve our environmental credentials.

I have already tested this idea with Gemalto and it is working well, with some of our unwanted products taken for re-use by other companies on the estate, while other items have been voraciously taken by very thankful local schools.

Again, we would welcome any ideas to increase environmentally beneficial actions open to our members as this is a crucial area that business should be more involved with going forward.

Our executive group and project teams continue to meet regularly and are made up of volunteers from businesses on the estates. They have worked hard to make significant improvements to the area over the last 12 years. I appreciate that everyone has highly active business commitments and so the time given for the SBF and its overall support is genuinely appreciated. My thanks go to all the directors and committee members who have participated in the operation and management of the SBF, those who have given freely of their time to make us the success we are today. I also want to thank Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council for their continued support and give a special note of thanks to Fareham Borough Council for the work they have undertaken in the continued management of our BID.

There is, of course, always more to be done – especially to bring new views and ideas as how best to move forward. We look forward to continuing to work with you over the next 3 years. We actively encourage feedback and we would be pleased to hear from anyone on how we can improve our working environment, how we can enhance opportunities for collaboration between member businesses, and any specific areas of interest or projects you would like us to concentrate on over the following years.

There is an ongoing invitation to be part of the SBF committee. Any company wishing to take a greater role in the work of the forum are always welcome and if you would like to play an active part as we move forward please feel free to contact Martin or myself.

Craig Ormerod, our Financial Director, will cover the financial highlights in his report and you will again hear that we are in good financial shape, and I am convinced that you will feel assured, as always, by the level of governance Craig has again provided to the SBF.

Thank you for your support.

Steve Adamson, Chair Segensworth Business Forum