

MEDIA RELEASE

Independent retailers and small businesses across Warwickshire are to be given a seasonal boost thanks to a new social media campaign launched by Warwickshire County Council.

The council has launched a new campaign – the A to Z of Christmas - to celebrate businesses across the county and encourage residents to seek out services and products from their local retailers in the lead-up to Christmas.

It follows on from the successful #BuyEatLocal campaign which ran earlier this year and will initially be highlighting businesses offering delivery or click n' collect before lockdown ends in December.

The business community is also being encouraged to support each other on social media using #Warksmas and also tagging the town the retailer or business is located in for example #Nuneaton, #Leamington or #Alcester.

This will include contributing to the #Warksmas A to Z List, which will highlight businesses, products and services beginning with the corresponding letter – creating the perfect Christmas gift list from independent retailers across the region.

The A to Z will start on Friday 20th November and run through all the letters of the alphabet over the following 26 days.

The Warwickshire Towns Network social media accounts will be sharing updates from all businesses that get involved, profiling them on the county council's social media channels.

It is hoped that the campaign will raise the digital profile of small businesses and independent retailers across all towns in Warwickshire and drive footfall when government restrictions are lifted.

Cllr Izzi Seccombe, Leader of Warwickshire County Council and portfolio holder for economic development, said: "We want to celebrate everything that is good about our independent retailers and provide some valued support during these most difficult of times.

"The digital profile of a retailer is more important now than ever before, particularly during lockdowns where click and collect services have become the norm.

"This is a time for retailers across our region to come together and support the development of other independents in their communities, and we hope that this campaign can create a positive culture of sharing for a mutual gain.

"62 Warwickshire businesses have recently taken part in the 'Warwickshire Towns Network Digital Skills for Retailers' programme and have gained skills to support this campaign and other businesses.

"Not all small retail businesses are geared up for e-commerce but many are offering click and collect, and we hope the campaign will see more of them adopt social media an effective marketing tool.

"So join the conversations on the #Warksmas hashtag, promote yourself, promote your neighbours and the County Council will help you to reach thousands of potential new customers."

Follow @WarksTN on Twitter and Instagram or like Warwickshire Towns Network on Facebook for more updates and join the conversation.

To find out more about the campaign visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/buyeatlocal