

Business LIFE MARKET RASEN

A MIX OF SUNSHINE AND SHOWERS DIDN'T DAMPEN THE SPIRITS OF VISITORS TO THE GARDENER'S FAIR AT MARKET RASEN LAST JUNE. HELD OVER TWO DAYS, THE SHOW PROVED EXTREMELY POPULAR AND DREW CROWDS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTY.

Market Rasen – racing ahead

Business in Market Rasen has been brought into the 21st Century thanks to the hard work of a proactive community group. Since the Market Rasen Development Trust (MRDT) was founded in 1999, the town has gone through an impressive regeneration and there is still more to come...

Words: Alison Sandilands Photographs: Scott Murray and Keith Skingle

IMPROVING THE TOWN FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

'Proud of the past. Providing for the future,' is the quote used by the Market Rasen Development Trust to highlight their key objective – to improve the town for future generations.

Up to now the group has worked on numerous projects to benefit the area in a bid to help out the local economy and bring in more visitors.

A few years ago King Street and Queen Street, the main business centre in the town, was refurbished benefiting many local organisations. A CCTV system was installed, local bus services were extended, a coach park was built and a new community and business website was produced, along with tourism resources – opening up the town to tourists.

The group, which originally consisted of fifteen voluntary directors, was supported by West Lindsey District Council and managed to obtain the majority of the funding for the above work and much more from East Midlands Development Agency.

Chairman, Carole Skye, has been involved since the very beginning. "In 1999 Market Rasen town was pretty desolate and grim with many shops closed," she explained.

"The voluntary groups who were trying to get the support and involvement of the community were struggling for survival. Market Rasen Development Trust sprang into existence in response to many community voices wanting to make a difference to their town. We set up as a social enterprise to improve the quality of life for local residents."



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RASEN HUB AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

One of their current and ongoing projects is the Rasen Hub – a multi-use centre for the community. Located on Union Street, this former block of flats is a base where people can access help and support on anything from searching for employment to finding out what is going on in the area with local businesses, activities and events.

Providing an incentive for local start-up businesses, this useful building also contains three units available for lease at the cheapest possible price.

Stella Tuplin, coordinator at the Rasen Hub, said there are currently three aspiring entrepreneurs making full use of this affordable space.

“The businesses usually stay for around two years and then move on,” she said.

“We are looking to expand further and are currently seeking

funding. It is like a mini job centre, a support place and a tourist information point. People can also come here to hold meetings.”

The local branch of Mencap, a charity offering support to people

with learning difficulties and their families, is an example of an organisation which takes full advantage of this meeting space.

Making laptops available for community use at Rasen Hub is next on the agenda for the MRDT.



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MARKET RASEN METHODIST CHURCH



QUEEN STREET

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO BOOST BUSINESS DURING HARD TIMES

The MRDT is seeking volunteers to support current projects and help implement new ones to improve business and tourism opportunities in the town.

Three directors are needed along with a treasurer and general volunteers.

There are plans to bring in new services to help people through the credit crunch, with the formation of a credit union consisting of volunteers.

Help is also needed with writing out

grant applications and sourcing funding.

GREEN EXTRAVAGANZA GETTING BIGGER AND BETTER

An event which has deeply embedded its roots in the county's social calendar is the annual Gardener's

Fair. The MRDT is the brain behind this two-day green extravaganza which has brought huge crowds to the town for the past several years. The last fair featured more than fifty stalls spilling out of the Market Place and Festival Hall selling anything from bulbs and plants to art and crafts.

There is always live entertainment and a tasty selection of food. Local gardens are also opened up for people to appreciate. There are already fourteen gardens signed up for the next event, thanks to the hard work of volunteers.

The next fair will be held on 30th and 31st May.



THE GRANDSTAND AT MARKET RASEN RACECOURSE

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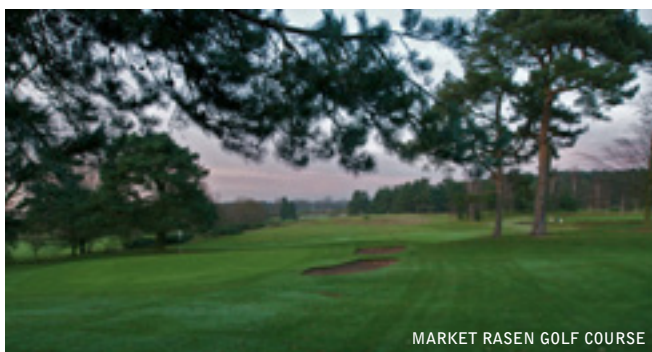
SHOPS AND MARKETS, HORSE RACING AND GOLF

Like many market towns, the independent shops are a very important part of Market Rasen's character and charm.

There are a number of locally run businesses located around the town centre and a Tesco store is situated on Linwood Road, which is used by the townspeople and also brings in people from the surrounding villages.

The market days are Tuesday, Friday and Saturday between 8am and 4pm, with a farmer's market on the first Tuesday of each month and a weekly auction on Tuesdays from 10.15am.

The only racecourse in Lincolnshire is located here. Market Rasen Racecourse, a Jockey Club racecourse, organises more than twenty events every year, bringing a lot of business into the town.



MARKET RASEN GOLF COURSE

There is also a golf course sitting right in the centre of the race course, providing a challenging course in beautiful countryside surroundings.

A number of restaurants and pubs are located on site and nearby.

Market Rasen & District Golf Club

Market Rasen & District Golf Club established in 1912 moved to its present site on Legsby Road in 1923 and now has the reputation of being one of the finest courses in the county. Although not long by modern standards (6239 yards), it is a picturesque heathland course offering a challenge to golfers of all abilities by virtue of its tree lined fairways and natural hazards including the River Rase which meanders through the course. Other facilities include a practice ground, a four hole pitch and putt area and practice putting greens. The resident PGA professional offers tuition and keeps a well stocked shop where both members and visitors can purchase the latest equipment and clothing. The Clubhouse offers full bar and catering facilities in comfortable surroundings overlooking the 18th green. Casual green fee players and Societies are always welcome on weekdays with prior booking.

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