

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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ALCESTER'S INDEPENDENT HIGH STREET... ONLINE

This week will see the launch of a new virtual high street for Alcester - www.alcester.totallylocally.shop

Shoppers can browse and buy from one or more of Alcester's shops in one place, select Click & Collect or delivery (if applicable) and pay with one easy payment. This means that if you buy online, but want to support Alcester's local independent businesses you can now do both!

The online high street website is an initiative by Totally Locally, an award winning, grass-roots campaign that promotes independent businesses, high streets and towns. Their latest initiative allows independent businesses in each town to register, upload their products and have them all to browse and purchase online in one place, it's like Amazon but for our local high street. The initiative is supported by Visa.

Changes in shopping habits have accelerated hugely over the last year and Visa's research has shown that 63% of shoppers now want to browse products online before they consider buying them, even for local shops. At the same time, businesses have scrambled to start selling online in any way they can.

59% of shoppers have also used more local shops and services during lockdown and most want this trend to continue. Visa has been supporting Totally Locally in this initiative to help develop the site and get businesses online as part of their "Where you shop matters" campaign.

It's not just for shops though, any independent business can register on the website, trades and services too.. showing everything available locally in one place

Chris Sands, founder of Totally Locally "*This is all about making it as easy to shop locally with independent businesses as it is online with larger chains and multinationals. We want this to be like a virtual walk down your high street, you'll go there looking for specific things then find other great products and shops whilst you're browsing that you might not have realised are local. As we say, if you shop online, you can now shop local too.*"

"We are delighted to have Totally Locally in Alcester. We hope it will help local business get back on their feet after the difficult time we have all had in COVID. We felt Totally Locally was a great fit for our market town and are pleased with the initial sign ups from local businesses and know that this will just continue to keep growing. Totally Locally is open for any independent business in B49 to sign up to, and thanks to the generous support of the local council is completely free for the first year. We hope it will become a much used directory of the town and help boost visitors and trade to our town while making it easier for local customers to shop too."

Jude Hough and Sara Palmer

Other Totally Locally initiatives such as the popular National Fiver Fest (previously run successfully in 130 towns across the UK) will be shown on the site too.

For further information about the wider Totally Locally campaign see www.totallylocally.org

You can browse and buy from this site at alcester.totallylocally.shop

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITOR

Totally Locally was founded in Calderdale, West Yorkshire in 2010 by award winning brand and marketing expert Chris Sands.

There are now over over 100 towns in the UK who have gone 'Totally Locally' with the full 'Town Kit', and the initiative has reached as far as New Zealand, USA and Australia. Chris decided to give away the campaign, after he was inundated with towns after the success of the campaign in Calderdale, where he lives. "I just wanted to see what would happen!" he said.

Totally Locally is a marketing & place-making kit for any town to use to promote their independent businesses using key marketing messages including 'The £5 Message', 'The Magic Tenner', 'Fiver Fest' and to encourage a new way of working together for independent businesses. Fiver Fest started as part of this, but has now become its own national event.

Totally Locally Towns have won High Street of The Year Award in Crickhowell in 2019, Hebden Bridge in 2018 and Belper in 2014. Other Totally Locally towns have won national and regional awards.

Totally Locally was listed on the Independent's *2021 Happy List Covid Heroes* (top 5 for spreading Happiness and Positivity) and the *Top 100 Big Issue Changemakers* recognising those who used their skills and resources to do some good in the depths of lockdown.

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