



PRESS RELEASE

DATE

MARY QUEEN OF SHOPS WORKSHOPS COME BACK TO TOWN

The greatly anticipated Mary Portas 'Guide to Successful Retailing' workshops are coming back to Falkirk; and with external funding available local retailers could potentially benefit free of charge.

Retail adviser and television presenter Mary Portas' prestigious courses will take place in The Falkirk Stadium week commencing Monday 20 February. Offering local businesses three bespoke interactive workshops, all will cover the fundamental issues that businesses face, together with valuable advice designed to inspire shopkeepers to become even better.

Following the success of last year's events, the workshops have now been revised and will cover three concise subjects: Retail, Finance and Business Planning, Buying and Merchandising and Sales and Marketing.

All will be aimed at small to medium sized business owners and managers in the area and will be tailored to suit the individual needs of each organisation.

Speaking today, Douglas Duff, Head of Economic Development at Falkirk Council said:

"We are fully aware of the constant changes within the retail sector and, indeed, the difficulties the industry faces. The Guide to Successful Retailing workshops aim to inspire and motivate small retailers in all the key areas that make a small retail business a success and their track record throughout the country speaks for itself.

"We feel this input is such a valuable mechanism for our local businesses and, as such, we have managed to secure funding from Skills for Scotland towards implementing all three workshops. As such, the courses have been significantly reduced in price to just £85, compared to last year's events which cost £225. However with ILA's available to many, we are hopeful everyone attending will not have to pay at all."

The workshops will be delivered by a specially trained team taken from the franchised master-class series inspired by Mary Portas. Best known for her 'no nonsense' and practical approach to improving Britain's small high street retailers in her persona as BBC TV's 'Mary Queen of Shops', the Mary Portas 'Guide to Successful Retailing' covers every stage of creating and running a successful retail business, from building and maintaining a vision for your business to creating a great looking shop that sets you apart from the rest.

Alastair Mitchell, Falkirk Delivers Manager added:

“In May 2011, Mary Portas was appointed by the Prime Minister David Cameron to lead an independent review into the future of the high street. Her long awaited report ‘The Portas Review’ was only just published last month. The Falkirk training courses will be designed to complement many of the recommendations she makes within the report, and we are very fortunate to be one of the first areas to benefit from this.

“These workshops are highly sought after throughout the country, and we are delighted to have the opportunity to bring them back to Falkirk.”

The workshops will commence Tuesday and Wednesday 21 and 22 February and will run for three consecutive weeks. Several nights are available to choose from, and each course will run from 6.30 – 9.00pm.

To find out more about the sessions or to book a place, please contact Jacquie McArthur on (01324) 590973, e-mail jacquie.mcarthur@falkirk.gov.uk or visit www.falkirk.gov.uk.

My Future's in Falkirk is an innovative economic development initiative which is transforming the Falkirk area into a diverse and modern economy and a desirable place to work, live and visit. Launched in 2002, My Future's in Falkirk is a public and private sector partnership between Falkirk Council, BP and INEOS.

About Falkirk for Business:

Falkirk for Business was formed in September 2009, merging the activities of Falkirk Enterprise Action Trust (FEAT), which has been delivering support to businesses in the Falkirk Area for over 26 years, and the Falkirk Business Panel.