

Foreword

As York BID enters its eighth year of operations, we are both reflective of the work accomplished to date and optimistic about what might be achieved in the future. Since its launch in April 2016, the BID has continued to support businesses with core services such as Street Rangers, Rapid Response Cleaning and Winter Lights. During the last year, we have also introduced a number of new and innovative projects aimed at attracting footfall to the city centre and improving trading for local businesses. The sections below offer a few highlights from the last 12 months.

Celebrating the city through Light

During the dark winter months, the BID introduced two new and innovative light displays to the city. The first and most popular was named 'Colour & Light' which featured a family friendly, immersive projection experience on the South transept of York Minster. The ten minute long show was free to attend and played on repeat every evening between 6pm and 9pm. It is estimated to have attracted over 45,000 viewers during the two week period it took place, including the February half term.



The second brought an interactive light display named 'Reunion' to St Sampsons Square, which featured a number of multicoloured archways, inviting the public to gather and interact in the space. The installation was in situ between 16th January and 6th February.

Shouting about York's Future Developments

York BID and strategic partners have recently commissioned a short promotional film entitled 'It's All York', to showcase some of the exciting commercial developments planned

for York in the near future. A business breakfast event took place in January 2023 to celebrate the launch of the film which attracted over 170 attendees from the local business community. During the event, representatives behind the commercial developments were invited to present on their progress.

A stakeholder pack is available for download from the York BID website, which we welcome organisations to share among their networks and use to promote York as a destination for business or leisure purposes.



Businesses Cost Saving & Advice

In response to the emerging economic crisis, the BID has launched several support initiatives designed to assist businesses through periods of financial difficulty. These include the offer of a free annual memberships to the British Independent Retail Association (BIRA), a 50% subsidy (of up to £500) against the cost of switching to LED lighting, as well as links to local and trusted utility consultants. Since October 2022, the BID has delivered support worth over £9,000 to its levy-payers through these initiatives.

Skills School

York BID has partnering with York St John University to offer levy paying businesses a wide variety of fully funded and subsidised training courses, aimed at upskilling employees of local businesses. Some examples of courses are, Customer Service, First Aid Training, Mental Health Awareness, Marketing, Leadership & Management Skills, and many more.

Since the initiative launched in October 2022, the Skills School has provided 13 fully funded courses and subsidised training for 120 employees in the city. We have also provided first aid training to 288 individuals during the last year.

York Restaurant Week

York Restaurant Week is now a popular and much-loved feature on the city's calendar. The event is aimed at boosting trade for food and drink based businesses during March and October, which are typically quieter months of the year for hospitality. Our most recent event, which took place between 6th and 12th March, attracted 81 participating restaurants, cafes, bars and pubs, and secured a record-breaking number

of voucher downloads, worth a monetary value of nearly £235,000.

Cumulatively, during the seven events delivered to date, around 65,000 vouchers have been downloaded, worth a monetary value of over £891,000 for local hospitality businesses.

York Gift Card

Every York Gift Card sold locks spend into York's city centre economy. Since its launch in October 2019, the scheme has rapidly grown to become the third largest in the UK, based on sales, with over £209,000 of gift cards sold to date. All levy-paying businesses are eligible to participate in the scheme and there are currently over 310 businesses in the city centre who accept the gift card. Plans are in place to launch a new digital gift card this year. Visit the York Gift Card website to see the full list of locations and/or to purchase a card. www.yorkgiftcard.com

Levy Collection (2023–24)

The start of the new financial year marks the beginning of a new billing year for York BID. As a business occupying a commercial premises both based within the BID's geographical area, and with a rateable value (RV) of over £17,500, you have been identified as eligible to receive a levy bill which is charged at 1% of the RV on your property.

You should find your levy invoice for the period April 2023 to March 2024 attached to this letter. Details of how to make payment can be found on the reverse of your bill. An electronic copy of your bill can be provided if needed. For more information about the levy, please refer to our website: www.theyorkbid.com/about/the-bid-levy

There are currently 922 existing BID members who collectively help to raise around £800,000 every year which the BID uses to deliver essential investment and improvements for York city centre. On average, for every pound raised by the levy, the BID leverage a further 20p of additional income for specific projects. We are extremely grateful to our members for their support and for making the work we do possible. If you would like to find out more about BID projects and services, or have any specific questions please contact our team on **01904 809970** or info@theyorkbid.com