

Foreword

As York BID celebrates the start of its 10th year, we also approach a key milestone – in September 2025, the BID will undertake a ballot, in which all levy-paying businesses will have the opportunity to vote on whether the BID should renew for a further 5-year term. If successful, the new BID term will commence in April 2026. We encourage your support in securing a positive result and ensuring five more years of investment and innovation for York city centre. More information about the ballot will be sent out in due course.

Over the past 12 months, our dedicated team has worked tirelessly to deliver improvements for York city centre, focusing on keeping streets safe, clean, and attractive, while boosting business profitability and stimulating the local economy. Collectively, our projects have successfully attracted hundreds of thousands of additional visitors, often during typically quieter times of year. Our Spring Bulletin highlights some of our biggest and most impactful initiatives from the past year.



Colour & Light,
York Minster

Colour & Light

This stunning light projection show returned for its 3rd year at York Minster over the February half-term (12th Feb – 2nd March), celebrating York's rich wildlife through the ages. The project is estimated to have attracted a record-breaking 100,000 viewers, with widespread media coverage from local and regional press, helping to spread awareness for York's status as a UNESCO Media Arts city. York BID were successful in attracting a grant from central Government to fully fund this year's event.

Shop York

Delivered in partnership with Indie York, 'Shop York' was launched to encourage local shopping throughout February 2025. Shoppers spending £5 or more at any of the 101 participating businesses received a special sticker. Collecting five stickers from different stores entered them into a prize draw for a chance to win one of 12 fantastic hampers, packed with over 50 prizes generously donated by local businesses. The campaign proved to be a huge success, with debit card spending in retail businesses soaring by 19% compared to the previous

year, and customer visits up by 4.1%. A winning experience for both shoppers and local retailers.

Public Art

York BID is committed to increasing the provision of public art in York and, in the last year, commissioned murals in North Street Gardens, Back Swinegate, Coppergate, and the Stonebow. The BID's Mural Trail animates York's shopping streets and tells stories that reflect York's unique identity through art. As part of this, the BID commissioned renowned street artist HazardOne to paint 12 exchange boxes on the Stonebow in celebration of York's stained-glass heritage. Not only did this creative intervention discourage vandalism, it also completely transformed the look and feel of the street. The project was fully funded by the National Archives.



Outside the Box,
Stonebow



Ghosts In The Gardens

This award-winning, family-friendly trail returned in Autumn 2024, featuring 46 striking ghost sculptures across 21 city locations, drawing thousands of visitors eager to find the figures depicting York's rich history. In addition, the BID introduced Ghosts After Dark, a ticketed experience at York Museum Gardens, as a unique opportunity to see the entire ghostly line-up with dramatic lighting, sound, and atmospheric effects. The event was a sell-out success, with over 5,000 tickets sold. Customer feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with a 9.6/10 satisfaction score. Notably, two-thirds of visitors dined or enjoyed a drink at city centre businesses, highlighting the event's significant economic impact.

Restaurant Week

This highly anticipated event made a triumphant return in March 2025 for its 11th edition, expanding to an extended two-week format for the first time. A remarkable 124 venues participated, showcasing an impressive 255 exclusive food and drink offers, making it one of the largest events of its kind in the country. Enthusiastic attendees downloaded 32,545 offer vouchers, generating an outstanding £579,770 in value — a 46% surge from the previous record set in October 2024. Looking ahead, the event will permanently adopt its new two-week format, with potential brand evolution on the horizon.

Purple Flag

York BID proudly manages York's Purple Flag accreditation and has spearheaded a number of initiatives aimed at making York a safe, clean, and vibrant destination. The BID launched Best Bar None, a safety accreditation for licensed venues, and delivered four Family Friendly Saturdays to create safe and vibrant experiences and change the use of city centre spaces. In September, the BID installed permanent festoon lighting in seven Snickelways as part of an ambitious initiative to improve the appearance and use of York's Snickelways. Artistic signage showcasing the area's history will be installed in Summer.

of paint in total! The volunteer-led project is unique in bringing together businesses, residents, and community groups as a collective to make things happen. It has been instrumental in enhancing the appearance and vibrancy of York city centre, transforming nearly 60 streets.



Rejuvenation Days

The BID has coordinated 12 Rejuvenation Days since January 2024, cleaning and repainting tired-looking street furniture such as bike racks, benches, and bollards. The project was born in response to the detrimental impact of reduced funding for towns and cities. In total, 1,100 pieces of individual infrastructure have been rejuvenated thanks to nearly 300 volunteers – that's 48 litres



Levy Collection (2025–26)

As the ratepayer of a business occupying commercial premises within York BID's geographical area, you are eligible to pay the mandatory levy, charged annually at 1% of the rateable value on your property (based on the 2017 property valuation). Your levy invoice for the period April 2025 – March 2026 is attached to this bulletin. Details of how to make payment can be found on the reverse of your bill. For more information about the levy, please refer to our website:

www.theyorkbid.com/about/the-bid-levy.

There are currently over 350 BIDs operating across the UK, which are

estimated to have secured more than £1 billion of investment for towns and cities over the past 20 years. York BID is a not-for-profit organisation, independent from the local authority, with a membership of 910 businesses which annually raise around £800,000. This year, York BID has raised an additional £412,453 from external sources, generating an extra 55p of investment for every £1 raised through the levy. We sincerely appreciate our members for their support and for making our work 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.