

A photograph of the Halifax City Hall tower and surrounding street scene, featuring a prominent clock tower and a street lamp. The image is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent pink square and a large, semi-transparent orange square. The text 'ANNUAL REPORT' is overlaid on the image in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The word 'ANNUAL' is orange and the word 'REPORT' is pink.

# ANNUAL REPORT

---

**Halifax BID**  
**2018/19**

---

**Welcome**

**Welcome to this winter edition of our newsletter, where there's lots to report, some great success stories, and important details about future events and activities.**



**#discoverhx**



### **Contents**

- 04** Welcome from Board Chair
- 06** Lively & Well Promoted
- 10** Smart & Attractive
- 12** Welcoming & Accessible
- 14** A Great Business & Leisure Offer
- 18** Financials



# Board Chair Welcome

## Dear BID Members

It's been an action-packed second year for the Halifax BID with a significant amount of activity taking place across all four objectives. An annual programme of events ran throughout the year, some of which we organised, others we promoted but all successfully engaged the local community while also drawing visitors to the town.

Raising the town's profile is a significant part of what BID does to support local business and our new branding this year as #discoverhx has been a big step forward on this front. This new brand has been rolled out over several months and is still a work in progress but it's definitely getting noticed.

We work closely with many different partners to promote the town and generate interest both locally and from further afield. Some of these key partnerships include the Calderdale Tourism Board, the Town Development Board and Cultural Destinations. We work with Council on many initiatives ranging from public realm improvements to attracting investment from various sources. We are currently supporting the development of a Future High Street bid. This is a government fund designed to help address the challenges of declining trade, activity and occupancy of town centres. If funding is successfully secured, this would be a real boost for Halifax, and in particular for the top of town area.

In order to build a greater understanding of the BID and what it achieves for levy payers, we focussed a great deal more on getting out there and talking to the business people in the district. Part of this involved doubling the number of ambassadors who cover the BID area and extending their total hours out in the town by more than 30%. Not only does this provide a greater opportunity for businesses to share their views with BID, but it also goes a long way to supporting safety and well-being of everyone in the town. We work closely with the local Police Community Support Officers and other groups such as Pubwatch and Shopwatch to achieve this.



2018 saw us significantly ramp up our communications to keep everyone in the loop, publishing our weekly e-newsletter, monthly What's On guide and quarterly printed newsletter, in addition to a range of specialist publications such as the Food and Drink Guide and the Heritage Festival newsletter. Our use of social media expanded greatly this year with almost 3 times as many followers as in the previous year.

As you read through the report you'll find lots of information about what BID has achieved over the course of the year. Your continued support and engagement is critical to these achievements and I'd like to thank you for being involved and encourage you to take an active role going forward. We have an excellent team of staff led by Project Manager, Chloe McNeill, and she and the ambassadors will be delighted to hear from you at any time. It is through our collective efforts that we will ensure our town continues to thrive into the future.

**Leigh-Anne Stradeski**  
Chief Executive  
Eureka! The National Children's Museum  
Chair, Halifax BID

**By doubling  
the number of  
ambassadors,  
we extended  
the total hours  
out in the town  
by over 30%**



## Communications

We've been as busy as ever with communications, keeping our levy payers in the loop with various publications and bulletins as well as using social media to engage with all of our audiences. Our weekly e-newsletter goes to 360 businesses every Thursday at 3pm and features BID updates, upcoming meetings and a handy What's On guide.

Our separate monthly What's On is your chance to tell us about events and activities you'd like promoting, and this document is printed in local media, as an A5 flyer, and also a poster format for displaying in town. Once every quarter we produce a printed newsletter too, for postal or hand delivery.

We've worked particularly hard to take advantage of social media in the last 12 months, not just because it's an exceptionally cost-effective promotional tool, but because it's a great way to reach a growing number of users. Between Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, our combined followers have jumped from 1,270 last year to 3,425 this year; a fantastic result in terms of boosting audience engagement and providing best value to levy payers.

**In one year, our combined Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, followers have jumped from 1,270 to 3,425**

#discoverhvx



## Advertising, Branding, Loyalty Scheme

We've used a range of appropriate channels to promote the activities of levy payers as well as our own work. We also launched the #discoverhx brand – a massive development and one we'll be making sure works hard for us in 2019 and beyond.

We'll be updating our new business Welcome Packs soon too, so that they match the new branding we've rolled out elsewhere. Forty businesses are now signed to our loyalty scheme, now three years old and carrying the new #discoverhx branding. We promote the scheme however we can, through posters, print media, social media and even window stickers.

## Leeds TV

Leeds TV has now filmed five of its six proposed programmes about the town, covering some of our iconic locations and Christmas events. The films were shown on the Leeds TV channel and online, and we'll soon be including them on our own website and in social media, and making them available for the featured locations to use for themselves.

## Directory Guides

Our Food & Drink Guide has been such a big hit that we're now planning a series of directory-style booklets covering Business, Health, Beauty and Hobbies.

## Heritage Festival Newsletter

To help get the Heritage Festival noticed and attract more people into town, we produced 5,000 newspapers then distributed them throughout Calderdale and beyond. On top of that, we handled the Festival's social media activities and our busy Ambassadors supported the Hidden Gems Trails over an entire long weekend, working closely with Heritage Open Days.

## Food & Drink Festival

Food and drink is a key theme for attracting visitors to Halifax, and this year we supported a Food & Drink festival managed by Calderdale Council. We led the event's promotional activity with conventional printed and online media, but we also took a more inventive approach by producing and distributing branded cup cakes in the run up to the event, capturing people's attention and interest.

Staying with food and drink, we've just printed 5,000 copies of our latest Food & Drink Guide, complete with pop-up map. The guide features 90 of the town's eateries and showcases our new branding, and it's been very well received by local businesses.

## Tour de Yorkshire

This was a big one in our busy calendar, and it's set to become an annual event thanks to its continuing appeal and consistent success. In 2018 the Tour took in the town centre for the first time, so we supported and funded guides and promotions, and also took the opportunity to arrange yellow shop windows, yellow bikes and 1,000m of yellow bunting.

As well as making the town as eye-catching and photogenic as possible, we produced a special What's On guide to promote events and businesses for the Bank Holiday weekend.

## Halloween

We organised a fun Halloween trail for children at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, with stickers in shops windows for the kids to identify, and a prize made up of sweets.





### Christmas Activity

Christmas is always a great chance for us to showcase and promote the town centre, and this year was no exception. We planned, funded and managed an exciting programme of events packed with more variety and creativity than ever, from gift wrapping elves and a visit by The Snowman through to our world record attempt on the biggest gathering of people dressed as snowmen.

We also made great media mileage at every opportunity, with coverage in the conventional print and broadcast media as well as online, including social media. A seasonal highlight was the Christmas Lights Switch On, which attracted more than 31,000 people to the Woolshops that day, nearly 10% more than in 2017 – a major success.

---

### Handmade Parade and Festival of Words

We were heavily involved in financing and organising these popular events, which we're planning to repeat in 2019. Their success demonstrated the benefits of our close partnerships with the council and Borough Market. Staying with the Market, we've kindly been given a free piano by GSG Pianos, and we've now installed it in the Albany Arcade area of the market. The piano is for anyone to enjoy playing, and it should also help generate some fun PR.

---



**The Lights Switch On attracted over 31,000 people to the Woolshops , nearly 10% more than last year**



# Smart & Attractive

## Flower Power

As well as funding planters and boxes in the town centre, we also paid for hanging basket brackets to be installed at businesses that wanted one, saving them this initial expense. We attended the In Bloom judging day as well, where Halifax achieved 'Silver Gilt' level.

## Neat and Tidy

We've been involved in cleaning and painting activities to smarten up the town, and hope to have funding to repaint all lamp-posts, bollards and street furniture in time for Tour de Yorkshire. We've also invested in new kit to make our Christmas lights bigger and better in the future. We even brightened up Princess Street with colourful hanging umbrellas, which were then replaced with poppy umbrellas to mark Remembrance Day.

By the time this year's Tour de Yorkshire comes to town, we should have bike racks available to use in Halifax centre, with half of that cost paid by us. Alleyways were on our agenda too, and we've helped fund clean-ups and gate installations to keep alleys free from litter and fly-tipping.



We attended the In Bloom judging day where Halifax achieved 'Silver Gilt'



## Ambassadors

In response to positive feedback we've increased our Ambassador presence from two to four individuals, now working 115 hours every week instead of 75. Our Ambassadors walk roughly 5 miles and visit 6-10 businesses every day, and they offer levy payers an excellent opportunity to express any ideas or concerns face-to-face. They also make sure the town's visitor information point – occupying an otherwise empty unit – is always well stocked with all the latest leaflets and guides.

## Safety and security

Making Halifax safe and welcoming helps our economy flourish. We've continued to develop an excellent relationship with the town's Police Community Support Officers, and our partnerships with Shopwatch, Pubwatch and FLOB are all stronger than ever. We've also been distributing advice and information about preventing car crime.

In the last year we've introduced an Ask for Angela scheme here too: part of a nationwide initiative to combat sexual harassment and vulnerability. If someone feels threatened in one of our town's bars or venues, they simply 'ask for Angela' to receive immediate and practical help from the venue's staff. Our investment in 360° cameras will also help improve safety.



## Accessibility

Better accessibility is crucial for Halifax, both ethically and economically, although the steep hills and listed buildings can make it difficult to achieve in certain areas. We've made sure that the new Food & Drink Guide has handy wheelchair icons to identify accessible places, and we've asked local company, Imagineer, to audit and illustrate the town's accessibility using a simple traffic light system.

## Defibrillators

We've now had ten defibrillators installed in public places around town, and our Ambassadors will be checking them every week. We've also produced a map showing their locations, and these are available to all levy payers for displaying where their staff can see them.

## Homelessness

This is a complex and emotive issue, and one we're determined to address in ways that mix practicality with compassion, for everyone's benefit. It's important we work closely with our partners in the Council and the Police Force to come up with viable ideas, and one that we're currently considering is a Have a heart, give smart campaign.

This would work on the principle of so-called 'suspended giving', for example where a café customer can choose to pay for a hot drink which then goes to an individual who can't afford one. We're also looking at how we can encourage people to donate using facilities like Just Giving – a great way to make sure money gets used as effectively as possible.



**Our partnerships with Shopwatch, Pubwatch and FLOB are all stronger than ever**



# A Great Business & Leisure Offer

## Public Realm Influence

Over the last year we've continued working closely with Calderdale Council and the Calderdale Next Chapter road developments, always making sure businesses are kept informed. We also attend regular meetings – all part of our efforts to represent the needs of levy-paying businesses and help them stay profitable.

## Halifax Town Development Board

We've been working with the Development Board on things like signage and pedestrian maps, but also on an exciting new book designed to attract new business and investment into Halifax. It's all part of a long-term strategy to boost the town's profile and strengthen its economy so our existing businesses thrive.

## Future High Streets Fund

We've been carefully building our case to claim some of the £675 million available in this national funding initiative, specifically for projects aimed at helping and improving the 'top end' of town. Our application will be submitted in spring, and we'll keep you updated.

## Networking and LBU Courses

As well as busily networking on behalf of levy-paying businesses, we also arranged a series of six short courses delivered by Leeds Beckett University. Courses were aimed at small businesses and covered topics like IT, customer service and business finance, and their positive impact has made us keen to run them again this year.

We've been carefully building our case to claim some of the £675 million available





### Employability Readiness

We're involved in Calderdale's Enterprise Month this March, which includes supporting various events designed to give students better skills for the workplace and improve their entrepreneurship.

### Monitoring

Knowledge is power, so we've continued monitoring and recording information on areas such as footfall, parking, sales and vacant premises. We currently receive sales figure percentages on a weekly basis from participating businesses, and we record useful footfall information from areas including Woolshops, The Piece Hall and our own footfall cameras on Commercial Street and Southgate. We also get regional and national data from the experts at data intelligence agency, Springboard.

The information they provide is crucial for helping us to evaluate past events like the Tour de Yorkshire weekend, or the 2018 Christmas Lights Switch On, which saw footfall increase by 9.7% on the previous year's result. Most importantly of all, this information helps us plan our future activity more effectively, meaning we can really maximise the value and impact that comes from every pound contributed to the BID by levy-paying businesses.

### Want to get involved?

We'd love to hear from anyone who wants to contribute their ideas or help decide on which projects BID should undertake. If that sounds like you, come along to our working groups or various meetings. You'll find details in our Thursday e-newsletter.



**The Christmas Lights Switch On saw footfall increase by 9.7% on the result from the previous year**



## Paying Your BID Levy

Every business in the Halifax BID area is required to pay a levy as well as Business Rates, and the levy needs to be paid separately (regardless of how you pay the Business Rates).

Paying quickly will help us to make sure that the objectives that were voted on in the Business Plan, do in fact come to fruition.

You can pay the levy in the following ways. Please always quote your BID account reference.

## BACS, Telephone/Internet Banking

You need to contact your bank to make arrangements to pay this way.

- > Payments should be made to National Westminster Bank PLC.
- > The account to be credited is Calderdale MBC, Head Office Collection Account, Sort code 62:21:45
- > The bank account number should be formatted as 00000000 (eight zeros).

Please make sure that your BID Payment reference number is quoted in full, with no spaces.

## Internet by Debit & Credit Card

Pay online, 24 hours per day by debit or credit card at our website: [www.calderdale.gov.uk](http://www.calderdale.gov.uk). Please note that a surcharge will be made for credit card payments. No charge is made for debit card payments.

## By Telephone

To use the Council's 24-hour payment line, simply call 0161 627 9915.

## Payment by Post

Please make cheques payable to Calderdale MBC and send to Halifax BID Limited, PO Box 51, Halifax, HX1 1TP.

Please write your BID account reference number and property address on the back of the cheque.





SOCIAL MEDIA  
JOIN US ON  
**SOCIAL MEDIA**

 [fb.com/DiscoverHxUK](https://fb.com/DiscoverHxUK)  [@DiscoverHx](https://twitter.com/DiscoverHx)  [discoverhx](https://www.instagram.com/discoverhx)

---

**discoverhalifax.co.uk**  
**#discoverhx**