



Halifax BID

Annual Report

2021-22

discoverhalifax.co.uk
#discoverhx

It's been another busy and challenging year for Halifax BID, but we've moved with the times and demonstrated our value, and now we have exciting new plans to look forward to.



There's no doubt that this has been another difficult and unusual 12 months for BID. This time last year, none of us could have known that the COVID pandemic would have lasted so long, and this uncertainty inevitably made all of our jobs harder.

Despite this, BID rose to the challenge, introducing, delivering and adapting a range of new and existing measures to support our many Halifax businesses and help them cope with the impacts of the pandemic. Side-by-side with this, we continued to deliver many of the activities and programmes which had been successfully established through the first few years of the BID's initial term. The final few months of 2021 saw us undertaking the business planning, addressing the legal requirements and implementing the promotional campaign to secure a second term for Halifax BID. And the good news is that a majority of levy payers voted YES in the Ballot held in November, and we are now gearing up for an exciting five years ahead.



As we approach the start of our second term in April, it is beginning to look and feel as though the very worst of the pandemic might be behind us. Whilst our work over the past 18 months has helped businesses survive the impact of lockdowns and restrictions, we are gradually shifting our focus to putting in place strategies to help our levy payers thrive in the context of a "new normal". All the while, remaining alert to the fact that circumstances could change at any time should a new variant emerge and government requirements come back into play.

Although issues related to COVID predominated our agenda, 2021 also kept us busy with a wide variety of activities and events, and the year ended with a series of significant achievements under our belts. One major initiative was the installation of our public information HUB in the Woolshops area of town: a move expected to help drive extra footfall to businesses by making visitor information more visible and accessible.

As always, we ran a busy and creative marketing and events programme, designed to promote the town and its facilities and business. We shared news and information through the website and social media, as well as producing the usual selection of popular printed and online communications. Photo-based campaigns helped keep levy-paying businesses in the spotlight, and we made wide use of our overarching Shop Local message. Our town centre app and Gift Card both played a part, improving the visitor experience and generating more trade for local businesses.

We worked hard to ensure many of the town's most popular festivals and events still took place, keeping a close eye on public safety and compliance with rules around social distancing. The Heritage Festival is a good example, while our successful Christmas programme took a new but necessary direction with its focus on family atmosphere as opposed to a single headline event.



In line with our remit, we spent time and money making sure the town centre remained smart, attractive, welcoming and safe. Notable BID successes here included the town's flower arrangements which always add to that welcoming feeling, and an increased security presence around the town. We also nurtured and developed our strategic collaborations with numerous public and private sector partners, and this pooling of resources helped us to maximise our overall impact.

The positive result of the ballot completed a challenging year on a high note. As well as proving an organisational success, winning enough support to continue our work was an enormous boost: quite literally a vote of confidence. Ultimately, we are delighted that a majority of levy-payers have felt the benefits and value that BID brings to the town centre and voted in favour of our continuation for the next five years. Thanks to all for the continued support, and we look forward to working closely together to achieve our bold and ambitious plans.

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



Welcome to the Halifax BID Annual Report for 2021-22.



Communication

We put a lot of time, thought and energy into our communications last year: this was more important than ever in the face of such challenging and rapidly-changing circumstances. We made great use of our website and social media accounts to share news and updates about events, businesses and the ongoing COVID response. Our team made it their business to keep abreast of government guidelines too, sharing the latest news on these with levy-payers. We also continued with our e-newsletters, and produced adult and child versions of our attractive summer and Christmas magazines, for distribution to the public. In fact, the children's Christmas magazine proved so popular that we needed to reprint it.

Ambassadors

Our Ambassadors had a busy year and were very helpful as always, although they were less visible than usual in line with the need to limit face-to-face contact keeping businesses updated by phone and email, continuing to report street based incidents and ASB.

Relationship Building

We continued to develop our working relationships with a variety of different agencies, always with a view to strengthening our knowledge base and pooling our creative, strategic and logistical resources. Among others, we worked closely with Cultural Destinations, Calderdale Council, Visit Calderdale, West Yorkshire Police, Halifax Town Development Board and Tourism Recovery. We liaised closely with levy-payers too, of course, canvassing their opinions and inviting them to be involved in the decision-making process on a number of different topics.

LoyalFree

Not surprisingly, our LoyalFree town centre app proved popular again in 2021. In all, 194 business have signed up to the app, which helps direct users to special deals and promotions at participating businesses around Halifax. The app isn't just useful for promoting local businesses: it's also a great way for us to capture useful data which helps inform our future activities.

Discover Halifax Hub

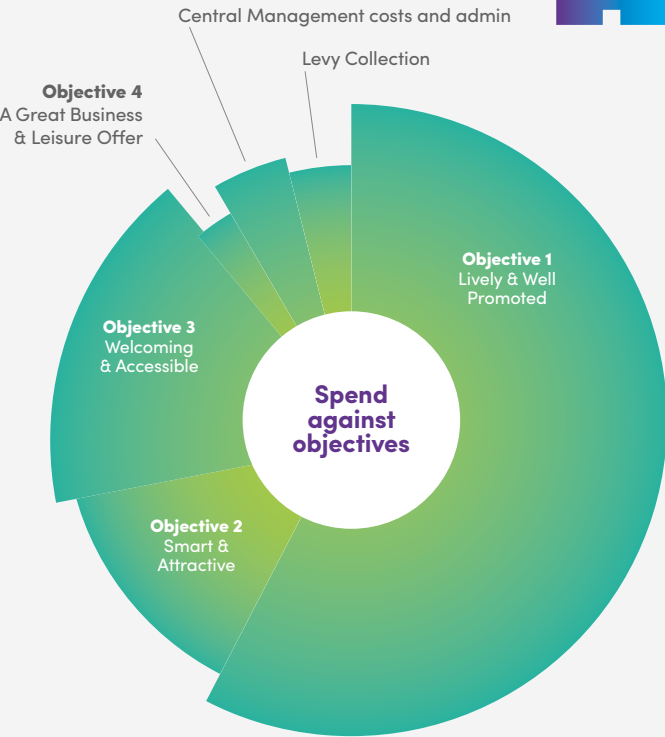
One of the year's biggest and most exciting changes was the move to our new HUB space in the Woolshops. Well-located for excellent visibility and footfall, we're expecting this new public information venue to drive a significant boost in business for local traders and events. Dedicated staff will help the public with up-to-date information about everything Halifax has to offer, including one-off events and special business promotions. They'll be happy to answer questions too, as well as helping with navigation and encouraging people to explore the town centre more fully. Meanwhile, attractive Discover Halifax branding will strengthen BID's public profile.

Heritage Festival

Even COVID couldn't stop the Heritage Festival being a success once again in 2021. Tours and activities remained online for safety and peace of mind, and appropriate precautions were taken at venues where physical visits took place. As always, we were responsible for coordinating the event and producing a popular Heritage Newspaper packed with festival information. Overall, online and physical participation was as high as we could have hoped for, and feedback from the public has been overwhelmingly positive.

Unaudited accounts including estimated accruals as at January 2022

Total income	£480,065
Committed Expenditure& Actual	
Objective 1 - Lively & Well Promoted	£162,262
Objective 2 - Smart & Attractive	£22,254
Objective 3 - Welcoming & Accessible	£43,048
Objective 4 - A Great Business & Leisure Offer	£8,381
Central Management costs and admin	£19,547.91
Levy Collection	£13,000
Total expenses	£268,492.91



Levy collected will be spent against projects and activities in line with the BID Business plan objectives.

Halifax BID financial year runs April to March, full audited accounts will be available to BID members at the AGM in July.



Gift Card

Our Gift Cards really came into their own in 2020, as a way of helping local businesses when footfall was drastically down. In 2021 they did extremely well again. Right now, we're looking at ways to integrate the Gift Card scheme with Apple Pay: another example of our determination to modernise and simplify the shopping experience, as well as extend it to as many people as possible.

£27,186
Value Purchased

1024
Cards Purchased

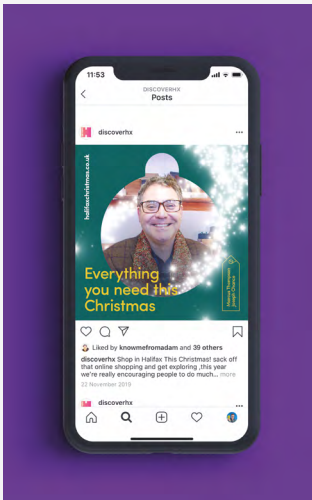
Business Promotion

Traders of all types have needed our support more than ever since the start of the pandemic, and last year we undertook two major photo-based campaigns to help promote individual businesses and spread a general 'shop local' message. In total, our photographer visited around 40 businesses, and we then created engaging written and illustrated 'profiles' which were used to promote them in our wide-ranging PR, marketing and social media campaigns. The exercise has helped to raise public awareness of the sheer variety of shops, services and eateries available in Halifax, giving participating venues the chance to introduce themselves to potential new customers.

Christmas

Given the uniquely challenging circumstances, our 2021 Christmas programme was a big success. By planning meticulously and taking some tough but necessary decisions, we managed to reconcile public demand for festivities with our duty to keep people safe and relaxed. We changed the focus of the festivities from a crowded switch-on event to a more low-key, family-friendly atmosphere based around a series of safe activities and performances, many of them outdoors.

We also stuck to traditional favourites that we knew would work well and prove popular despite COVID, delivering Halifax classics like the Painted Windows, Gifting Trees, Elves Workshop, Animatronic Reindeer, Letter to Santa and Costumed Characters, as well as competitions and musical performances. All in all, the figures and feedback have been very encouraging, and we're confident we helped make this Christmas as successful as it could be in such a challenging situation.



Welcoming & Safe

In response to some levy-payers' concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour, in 2021 we experimented with a uniformed security presence to act as a deterrent. The exercise proved a success, with anti-social behaviour reduced and businesses saying they felt reassured by having a dedicated and visible individual patrolling the streets. Going forwards, we're looking at creating a new, street-based BID role to continue this approach, and we'll continue our policy of always reporting to the relevant authorities problems like graffiti, littering and anti-social behaviour.

77%
of businesses wanted cleaning and litter control in 2021

Covid Recovery

Inevitably, COVID recovery was the focus of a significant portion of our work in 2021. The town's businesses entered their second year of having to navigate and respond to restrictions, so it was essential that we played our part in supporting them. As well as sharing government guidance and keeping them informed, we helped to promote their individual businesses whenever we could.

We also made a compelling Shop Local theme central to our promotional messaging, especially at Christmas. Even small practical gestures have helped levy-payers stay safe and feel supported, like our policy of supplying COVID-related graphics and stickers for use in their premises.

Smart & attractive

Last year we again provided hangers for businesses to use with hanging baskets, simultaneously helping to save those businesses some money while making the town centre look more appealing. We're looking into the possibility of more strategic and sustainable planting in the future too, meaning that public areas will be sewn and cultivated with upkeep in mind. This will help to avoid them looking unkempt after the initial planting and blossoming stages.

No two ways about it: winning the ballot was a great end to a challenging year. Although the final result was closer than ideal, we're delighted that enough levy-payers voted for us to continue our mission. The difference we've made to their working lives and commercial performance has earned us this support, but we can't rest on our laurels: there's important work to do.

We've already put together a comprehensive and ambitious plan for the next five years. We did this by listening to levy-payers and surveying them in detail, analysing their answers to make sure our latest strategies and projects will address their needs. We've organised our future work into three key objectives.

Vibrant & Promoted
Expected 5-year spend: **£686,562**

We'll continue building Halifax's identity as a vibrant destination, promoting its offer in terms of culture, leisure, business and social activity.

To achieve this, we'll use a range of tools and activities including: developing new events; investing in digital marketing; improving our customer-facing provision; growing our market intelligence; improving our communications; creating new award schemes to recognise and publicise quality.

Welcoming & Safe
Expected 5-year spend: **£818,600**

We'll intensify our efforts and initiatives around making Halifax clean, safe, accessible and attractive.

Activities we'll invest in include: providing a visible uniformed presence on the street; working even more closely with local Police; improving pedestrian flow; investing more in open-air art and floral decorations; improving inter-agency communications and monitoring/CCTV facilities.

Grow & Invest
Expected 5-year spend: **£264,065**

We want to encourage the growth, development and investment of businesses which complement and build on Halifax's strengths.

To do this, we'll focus on activities including: working with Calderdale Council to represent levy-payers' interests in decisions about local economic development and the public realm; facilitating networking between appropriate businesses and organisations; liaising with agents and commercial landlords to encourage inward investment; raising extra capital to help finance our plans.

Measuring Our Impact

The difference we make needs to be measurable, not anecdotal. From using imaging and footfall technology to carrying out surveys - we'll make sure our activities are making the best possible use of every penny levy-payers invest in us. Ultimately, we'll refer to Key Performance Indicators for evaluating each project's success, and we'll report any results with total transparency.

For more information

You can read about our bold new plans for Halifax and its business community in our downloadable Prospectus.

Financials

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.

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.

Visit us online at
discoverhalifax.co.uk

#discoverhx



[fb.com/DiscoverHxUK](https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverHxUK)



[@DiscoverHx](https://twitter.com/DiscoverHx)



[discoverhx](https://www.instagram.com/discoverhx)

