

Welcome Introduction

THE BID SO FAR...

Our Colchester Business Improvement District (BID) has now been running for two and a half years. The past year has been a trial for many businesses in the town centre. The BID has been working tirelessly to provide support with practical advice and tools for businesses to operate safely and confidently during the pandemic.

The BID has also worked with key town stakeholders, including Colchester Borough Council, to ensure eligible businesses received grant support and funding. With the latest government announcement, there is hope that the town centre can begin working towards recovery.

Sam Good
BID Manager



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TOWN CENTRE REOPENING

The BID is relaunching the Welcome Back Colchester campaign for the April 2021 lifting of restrictions. This will include a promotion of safety measures and celebration of the town centre.

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LEISURE RECOVERY BOARD

The BID has launched the Leisure Recovery Board to produce a focused and dynamic recovery strategy for the leisure sector.

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MIDTERM REVIEW

As the BID enters the midway point of its term, we are launching the Midterm Review alongside an accreditation review.

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CHRISTMAS REVIEW

A look back on the BID's 2020 Christmas campaign.

MEET THE BID'S OPERATIONAL TEAM

1. **Sam Good**
BID Manager
2. **Sophia Beckford**
Project Coordinator
3. **Jess Walker**
Marketing Executive
4. **Elche, 5. Ethan**
and 6. **Jarred**
Street Ambassadors



Our BID businesses identified the pride and positive energy across the town centre. The BID's assistance with local enforcement aims to reduce anti-social behaviour and aggressive begging.

Our Street Ambassadors patrol the BID zone daily, communicating with businesses and members of the public. They regularly report street issues such as paving hazards, graffiti and litter through our database system which will ensure these are solved quickly.

KEY FACT

The Ambassadors interacted with over 250 businesses in December 2020.



Reopening the town centre

TOWN CENTRE REOPENING CAMPAIGN



The BID is relaunching the Welcome back Colchester campaign in line with the roadmap out of lockdown and the re-emergence of the town centre.

This consumer facing campaign is focused on helping visitors prepare for their visit to the town as 'non-essential' businesses reopen. The BID has been corresponding with key stakeholders throughout the town, including Colchester Borough Council, to ensure the safety procedures and messaging in place throughout the town and online is cohesive and promotes the same message throughout.

The BID will be relaunching the Welcome Back Colchester video, alongside the reopening campaign which focuses on promoting the safety messaging and precautions throughout the town centre. We are confident that the footfall will be there for reopening, and therefore the campaign is focused more at letting consumers know that the town centre is ready for them when they are, rather than attempting to drive footfall.

This campaign includes promotion of the InColchester website and a focused support on promoting businesses in the hardest hit sectors. If you have any content you would like the BID to share to consumers, now is a great time to do so as there will be greater traffic to the website and InColchester social media channels.

Tag us in your posts on social media, including Instagram stories and email your content and promotions to marketing@ourcolchester.co.uk.



Supporting the towns' recovery

LEISURE RECOVERY BOARD

Our Colchester BID is launching the Leisure Recovery Board, a group of 25 stakeholders, to produce a focused and dynamic recovery strategy for Colchester leisure businesses.

The leisure sector across the UK has lost on average £90m a week. From severe restrictions and lack of funding pubs, eateries, cinemas, and theatres, all within the leisure sector, are estimated to be over a year behind in recovery from the effects of the pandemic. As other sectors within the town centre move into the recovery stage of the BIDs' 4 stage Covid-19 Recovery Framework, the Leisure sector is still facing the crisis stage and likely has a long journey of recovery ahead.

The strategy will work to support the sector through recovery and transformation. By working in collaboration with businesses and the local authorities, the BID will provide informed support aimed at accelerating the sectors recovery. The Leisure Recovery Board provides a key opportunity for hard-hit businesses to voice their concerns and work towards practical solutions and transformation.

The budget will focus on delivering, conversations with a leisure expert, research with leisure businesses and consumers, preparing for transformation with specific audience targeted offers, and adaptable solution development. By facilitating this board and recovery plan, Our Colchester BID is working towards sustaining a town centre with a wide offering for everyone and providing key individually tailored support for businesses.

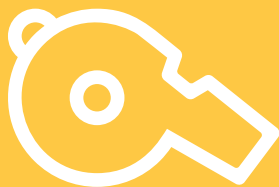
25

STAKEHOLDERS AND INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS.

The BID is bringing together 25 stakeholders and industry professionals to produce a recovery roadmap tailored to local leisure businesses needs.

KEY FACT

Our Ambassadors walk an average of 34 miles a week each. That's the equivalent of 4 marathons in total a week.



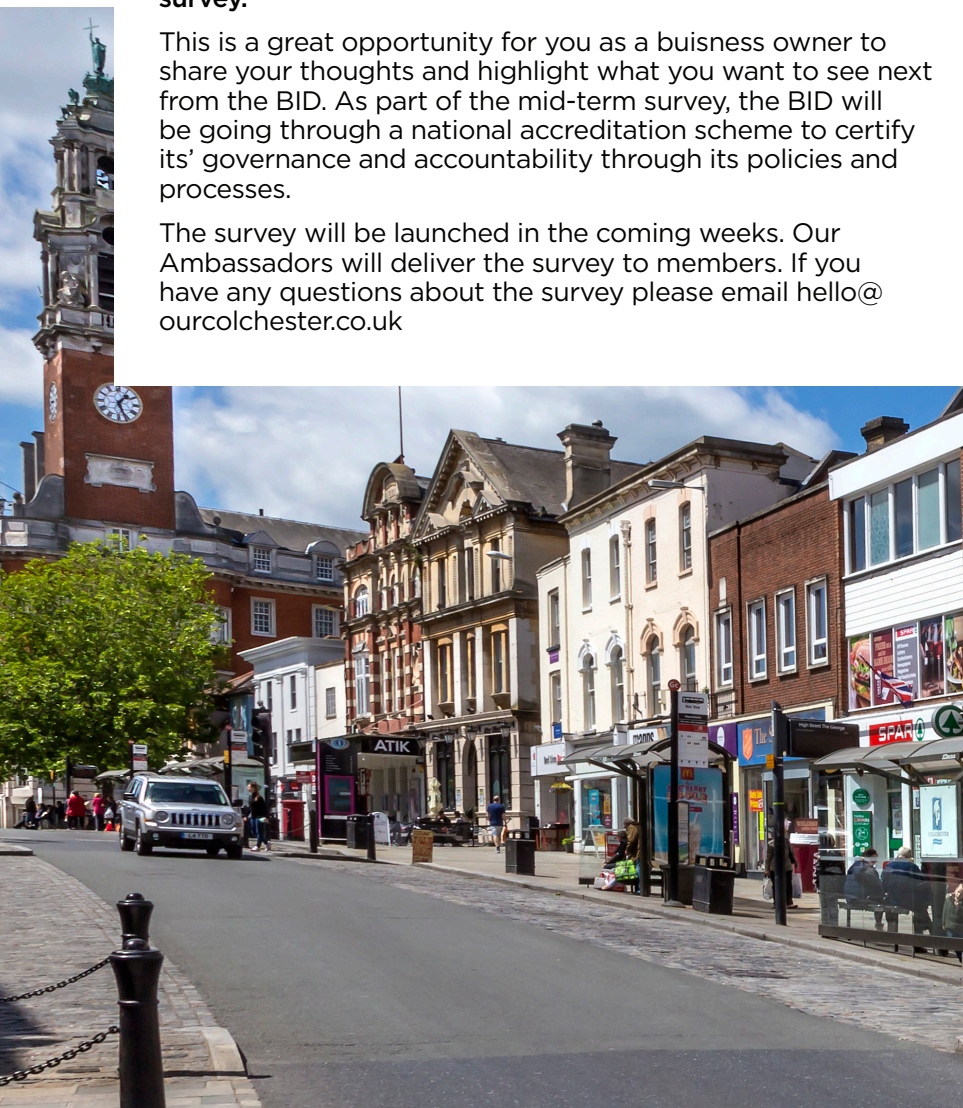
Continuing communication

MIDTERM REVIEW

The BID is coming up to halfway through its 5-year term and as part of this we are launching the BID mid-term survey.

This is a great opportunity for you as a business owner to share your thoughts and highlight what you want to see next from the BID. As part of the mid-term survey, the BID will be going through a national accreditation scheme to certify its governance and accountability through its policies and processes.

The survey will be launched in the coming weeks. Our Ambassadors will deliver the survey to members. If you have any questions about the survey please email hello@ourcolchester.co.uk



Driving spend

The BID has partnered with Colchester Borough Council to bring Click it Local to Colchester.

Click it Local is a virtual highstreet that enables shoppers to buy from local independent shops in Colchester, with delivery times comparable to large companies such as Amazon. This will enable those who don't feel comfortable visiting town to support the high street from home.



Have your say

LET'S HEAR FROM THE LEVY PAYERS THEMSELVES

"We cannot thank the Colchester BID team enough for their support over the past year, from practical tools for reopening post-lockdown, to their hard work in managing footfall in town. We look forward to the new and exciting things happening and building on that success this year!"

-Lush, Colchester

Creating Christmas in Colchester

REVIEWING CHRISTMAS 2020

Despite uncertainties with Covid-19 and lockdowns the BID delivered Christmas in Colchester 2020.

The key messaging for the campaign was “the most magical place to be” and focused on the experience of Christmas in Colchester. Effort was made to ensure the festive magic was seen in town from start to finish when visiting.

The media campaign consisted of a Christmas TV advert, a virtual light switch on video, late night shopping promotions, postcards to santa, and general christmas promotions.

100 postcards to Santa were recieved through the empty unit installations of Santa's Post Office and Elf Workshop. This campaign encouraged footfall into the town centre and addressed businesses concerns with vacant units visuals.

The BID is now in the process of planning Christmas in Colchester 2021.

“The most
magical place to
be....”



KEY FACT

During the Christmas in Colchester campaign the InColchester website recieved over 34,000 page views.





Celebrating women in business

COLCHESTER WOMEN IN BUSINESS.

Our Colchester BID invites Colchester's business women to celebrate and network with Colchester businesses.

This event is an opportunity to gather together and celebrate the achievements of women in Colchester. Our aim is to fundraise for Open Road who work in partnership with Next Chapter charity. With select guest speakers to inspire us all and the opportunity to meet local women in business, we want all guests to leave the event with the air of positivity and renewed depth of inspiration.

So don't miss it, save the date! Sunday 12th September 2021. The event will take place at the Co-op bank and refreshments will be provided.

Tickets will be on sale from May 2021.



MIPERMIT DISCOUNTS

The BID have partnered with North Essex Parking Partnership to bring the first of its kind scheme to Colchester. When using the MiPermit App visitors to the town can gain money off of their parking when visiting selected stores in town. If you are interested in taking part in this scheme please email projects@ourcolchester.co.uk.

Continuing communication

BACK TO BUSINESS

The BID is holding its second Back to Business webinar on the 22nd April at 3pm as part of the continued commitment to communicate effectively with BID businesses.

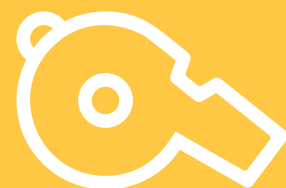
Join us in discussing town centre recovery, updates to the Colchester website, the Colchester Gift Card, Click it Local and conversations with the Council on town centre improvements.

It's important that you and your colleagues register to attend this webinar as individual links to watch the webinar will be sent out prior to the event.

You can register to attend at ourcolchester.co.uk/back-to-business-april

KEY FACT

500,000 bulbs will be planted in the town centre in April for the summer installment of the BID in Bloom project.



Communication



BUSINESS TALKS

The BID is launching the Business Talks podcast campaign to continue discussions with businesses and gain industry insight.

BID Manager, Sam Good, will be sitting down to have one-on-one conversations with members to discuss best practice, how Covid-19 has changed how they do business, and future plans.

The podcasts will be released on Our Colchesters' social media and available for all businesses to listen to.

COVID PACKS

The BID has produced Covid-19 graphic signage for businesses to use free of charge.

You can access printable versions of the signs on the Our Colchester website, alternatively if you would like these as window stickers our Ambassadors will be delivering these to businesses in the coming weeks.

Driving spend in the town centre

THE COLCHESTER GIFT CARD

The BID is launching the InColchester gift card in June 2021. Gift cards are a great initiative to drive income to the town centre, it has been shown that the average spend on top of a gift card is around 65% by participating in this scheme businesses have the opportunity to boost their sales and be featured on our dedicated gift card page on incolchester.co.uk.

The gift card technology works with any shop that accepts Mastercard so there are no extra technological steps to sign up to accept the gift card. This scheme is free for all town centre businesses to join.

If this interests you please email projects@ourcolchester.co.uk.



How to get involved

HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH IN COLCHESTER



Email us your blogs or ask us to come in and write one. Why not tell us about "What makes my business unique" or "Five interesting facts about my business".



If you have a new product or exciting news you want to share, let us know and we can share this on social media for you.



We can share offers, events and featured posts across our website.

SUPPORTING YOU THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

The BID has dedicated resources to support businesses and members in the town centre throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Below are some of the projects and initiatives the BID has delivered in addition to the mentioned campaigns in the newsletter to help businesses operating through this uncertain time.

- A dedicated and continuously updated Covid-19 resource tab on the Our Colchester website.
- The BID secured special pricing and quotes for businesses who were in need of special equipment, like perspex screens, in order to operate.
- The BID adapted the Create Fund to produce the Covid-19 Recovery Fund. A pot of funding for projects and initiatives designed to help and promote the recovery of the town centre.
- Assisting businesses with government grant applications. The BID have been in continuous communication with the Colchester Borough Council grants team and through this have been able to secure additional funds for businesses who would have not received this otherwise.
- B2C Communications throughout lockdowns and key events to ensure that visitors to the town are up to date with the procedures in place when visiting and the mandatory government guidelines.
- Covid-19 safety installations throughout the town, including hand sanitisers at key entrance points, messaging bollards and posters, and our Ambassadors are in place throughout the town to help visitors adhere to guidelines and receive support where needed.
- Promotion of town centre businesses through the InColchester brand, on the website and through social media.
- One to one business support and communication, to help guide businesses through the guidelines, applications and necessary safety procedures.



GET IN TOUCH

If you are a member in need of support, or have project or marketing suggestions please don't hesitate to get in touch via email

hello@ourcolchester.co.uk.



OUR COLCHESTER

A BID to make new history

For more information visit us online at
www.ourcolchester.co.uk, or email us on
hello@ourcolchester.co.uk



* InColchester marketing guidelines can be found on ourcolchester.co.uk