

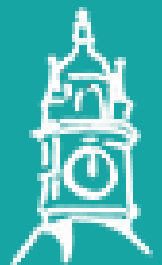


NEWBURY

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

CEO'S REPORT

9TH FEBRUARY 2021



NEWBURY

Business Improvement District

Long-Term Vision

For Newbury to be a go-to destination for businesses and visitors from all around the world, with the BID leading the way on place-shaping and town centre transformation

Key Objectives

- (1) Increase visitor footfall and engagement with town centre businesses by shaping, positioning and promoting Newbury in line with what our natural and desired visitors want now and in the future
- (2) Increase business retention and investment in Newbury by working with partners to deliver projects and initiatives to support existing businesses and attract new businesses

MARKETING & PROMOTION

RECENT ACTIVITY

Aim of Marketing & Promotion = People from near and far know about Newbury and everything the town centre has to offer

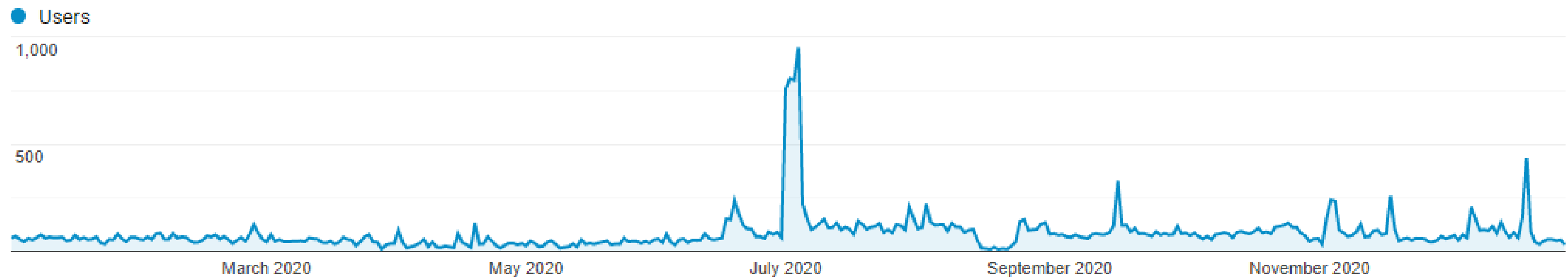
Recent Activity

- **Ongoing locally-focused campaign to encourage people to support their local businesses during lockdown**
- **Promotion of businesses operating during lockdowns** – regularly updated web page listing all business operating in some form, including essential retail, takeaways, click & collect, delivery – promoted via social media and press
- **Christmas Window Trail** – follow-up social media and press release announcing the winners of the competition (unfortunately we had to stop actively promoting the trail once we became a ‘Stay at Home’ area)
- **Blog posts promoting local businesses** – variety of blog posts promoting products and services available from local businesses to tie in with events, e.g. gifts for Christmas, Veganuary, Valentine’s Day – highlighting how you can still support local during lockdown
- **Regular social media posts promoting Newbury and local businesses** – including scenic photos, local initiatives, delicious food, important news, etc.
- **Great West Way podcast** – interview with U.S. travel podcast talking about the history of Newbury and everything the town has to offer as a tourist destination
- **Highlighting B2B services available within the BID area** – inclusion in Members Pack, shout outs within weekly email comms

1. Website traffic– More than 10,000 unique monthly users visiting visitnewbury.org.uk by 31/5/21

Benchmark: May-20 = 1,138, Jul-20 = 5,933

- Traffic is currently declining (only 1,156 users in Jan-21, down from 2,733 users in Dec-20) and traffic generation will need to be a huge focus for us over the next few months
- **Challenges** = fewer people seeking information on things to do in Newbury whilst lockdown is in place; website has poor design and responsiveness and a poor user experience (especially on mobile); website content is limited, e.g. business directory listings are poor, visitor information is poor; website is inferior to similar ones for other towns and cities
- **Opportunities** = strong blog content since Jul-20 has caused spikes in traffic numbers each time a new blog is released (see graph below); integrated marketing campaigns we have planned will drive new traffic to the website from different channels; improving the content on key pages will improve SEO performance

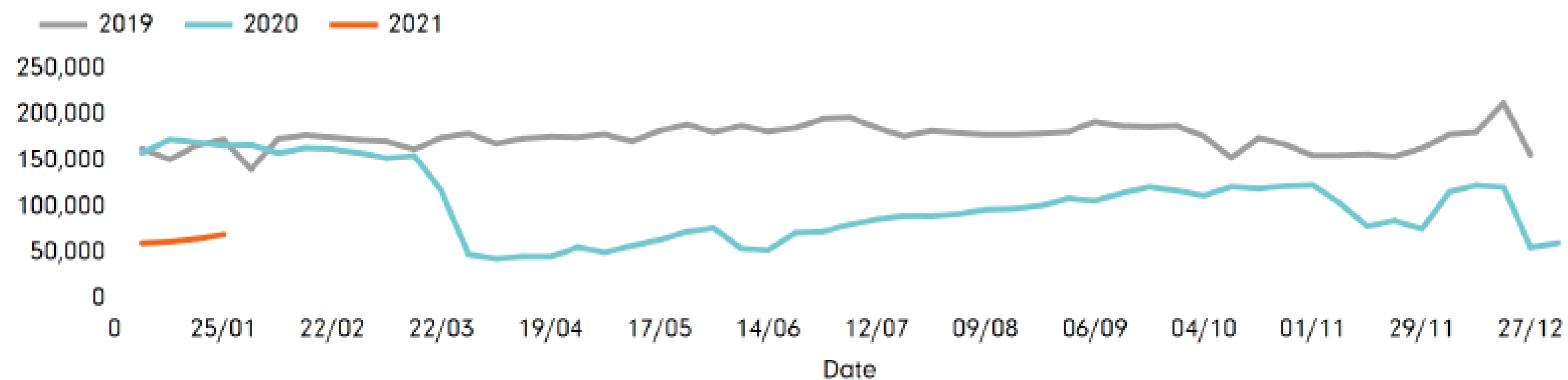


2. Footfall – More than 160k weekly footfall by 31/5/21

Benchmarks: May-19 = 179k, May-20 = 65k, Sep-20 = 120k

- Busiest weekly footfall of 2020 was 173k in week 1 (Jan-20). Busiest weekly footfall since start of pandemic was 123k in week 43 (Oct-20). Footfall is currently at 75k (first week of Feb-21) which is up from 56k during the first week of Jan and on a par with end of May-20
- **Challenges** = unknown what level of restrictions will still be in place by May-21 and to what extent businesses will have reopened; unknown how cautious visitors will continue to be even if all businesses have reopened; unknown how long it may take for footfall to return to normal levels
- **Opportunities** = when lockdown does end, there's likely to be a real thirst/demand from visitors and shoppers; people are lockdown-weary and want to visit and support local businesses; likely people won't need much reason to get out of the house once it's safe to do so!

Footfall by week



Key Projects Feb-May 2021

- 1. Visit Newbury Website Development*** – improve design, content and user experience to ensure the website clearly markets Newbury’s USPs and the story of the town (Project Owner = Melissa)
- 2. “Support Local” Campaign** – ongoing integrated marketing campaign promoting Newbury town centre and its wide range of businesses to our local audience (Project Owner = Kirsty)
- 3. Staycation/Tourist/Visitor Destination Campaign*** - targeted SEO and integrated marketing campaign to promote Newbury as a staycation/tourist/visitor destination through content marketing and both video and written storytelling; linking up with Great West Way opportunities where appropriate (Project Owner = Kirsty)
- 4. Evening Economy Campaign*** – integrated marketing campaign to launch once hospitality and leisure venues have fully reopened – promoting what to do in Newbury in the evenings (Project Owner = Kirsty)
- 5. “Bringing People Together” Campaign*** – integrated marketing campaign to launch when it’s safe to do so – encouraging people to choose Newbury town centre as the place to come together with friends and family post-lockdown (Project Owner = Kirsty)

*Key projects to aide recovery post-COVID

Aim of Attractive Town Centre = The town centre is a safe, clean and welcoming place for people to visit

Recent Activity

- **CCTV** – huge amount of work completed by Alison to visit other towns and scope out alternative options for Newbury's CCTV; follow-up meeting with TVP and NTC scheduled for tomorrow
- **Grimebusting** – meeting with potential new Grimebuster scheduled for tomorrow
- **Void Units** – initial strategy in first draft stage following discussions and research; next steps are to finish and share strategy and discuss joined-up approach towards implementation; there are currently **97** vacant/non-operational premises in the BID area = **15.8%** of all units (up from 96 and 15.5% at last meeting in December); there's currently some positive interest in commercial premises and several are under offer

Closures (since last meeting)

Altran UK (office)

New Openings (since last meeting)

Crepe O'Clock (hospitality)

Indigo Bay (hospitality – under new management)



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BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

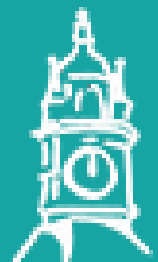
KPIs

1. Void units – Strategy planned and shared for promoting and improving void units by 31/12/20

- Deadline missed due to reactive work needed, but outline strategy is roughly drafted and will be ready to be shared later this month
- **Challenges** = some tricky void units which need imagination and vision to make work; no easy way to find out about all commercial premises available in Newbury; no clear USP for why Newbury is a great place to open a business; planning approvals are too slow
- **Opportunities** = findings from town centre masterplan; “meanwhile” use to attract pop-ups; commercial rent has declined in recent times; every reason to believe Newbury will come out of the pandemic strongly; end of 2019 = 81% of spend still taking place in stores not online; community uses and activities; building one location online to find out about opening a business in Newbury:
<https://completelyretail.co.uk/destinations/guildford>

2. CCTV– Strategy planned and shared for improving CCTV provision by 31/10/20

- Initial report completed and meeting took place with key stakeholders in early November. Follow-up meeting taking place tomorrow to discuss capital ex needed to upgrade system
- **Challenges** = management of CCTV is very time-consuming; current system not fit for the future; cap ex expenditure is needed to introduce modern, fit-for-purpose system
- **Opportunities** = may be able to reduce number of cameras (pending survey); may not need 24/7 manning



NEWBURY

Business Improvement District

Key Projects Feb-May 2021

1. **“Keep Newbury Tidy” Campaign** - develop a "Keep Newbury Tidy" campaign to promote responsible disposal of litter (involve local community, e.g. schools, in design of campaign) (Project Owner = Kirsty)
2. **Commercial Website Development - thisisnewbury.co.uk*** – develop a website listing all available commercial units with content promoting Newbury as a business destination; introduce a points-based scheme to show types of business that would thrive in town; include information to help businesses with feasibility studies; look at possible funding sources to offer units for “meanwhile” uses (Project Owner = Melissa)
3. **CCTV Project** – complete next steps and finalise project outcomes once solution has been agreed (Project Owner = Alison)
4. **Christmas Lights Tender** - review Christmas lights provision and put together a proposal for once the current contract expires (Project Owner = Alison)

*Key projects to aide recovery post-COVID

Aim of Out & About = Visitors have a fantastic experience when they're in Newbury and want to keep coming back

Recent Activity

- **Street Ranger Scheme** – scaled back during lockdown, but whole BID area being visited weekly and support being provided to visitors and businesses where required
- **Events** – Christmas Window Trail delivered in partnership with Parkway & Kennet Shopping (although promotion had to stop due to move into Tier 4); plans being considered for joint post-lockdown chocolate trail; Crafty Craft unfortunately cancelled but online alternative being discussed; events industry predicting September onwards for return of larger events
- **Markets** – SLAs drafted and issued for Artisan Market and Vegan Market; awaiting confirmation of dates from organisers
- **One-to-One Business Visits** – taking place online where possible, with variable levels of take-up and engagement during lockdown

1. Business visits – Every BID member receives an in-person visit at least once a quarter

- Business visits being recorded as of Jan-21 and virtual meetings are taking place where possible
- **Challenges** = constrained by lockdowns/restrictions from 5th November onwards; half of BID team have been on reduced hours during lockdowns so limited resources; many members hard to engage online
- **Opportunities** = BID Members Information Pack to be hand-delivered post-lockdown to all businesses, which will ensure every business is visited

2. Visitor satisfaction – An average score of 3.5+/5 achieved for all BID-organised events and activities in 2020-21

- No scores currently available, however anecdotal feedback about the Halloween Trail and Virtual Christmas Lights Switch-On has been very positive
- **Challenges** = no in-person events have taken place that we've been able to conduct official exit polls or follow-up surveys for
- **Opportunities** = post-lockdown people are likely to be excited for any and all events and engagement should be high; Alison has huge amount of events experience and will bring some fantastic events to the town; BID, Parkway & Kennet Centre working brilliantly in partnership on joint events

Key Projects Feb-May 2021

- 1. Specialised Markets Plan** – finalising plans with Artisan Market and Vegan Market organisers; looking into other options to bring specialised markets to the town (Project Owner = Alison)
- 2. Events Plan*** – preparing events and activations ready for the return of visitors to the town; working with third party providers to draw external events into Newbury; working with Parkway and Kennet Shopping to deliver partnership events (Project Owner = Alison)

*Key projects to aide recovery post-COVID

Aim of Business Support & Income = Existing town centre businesses achieve commercial growth and new businesses choose Newbury as their home, thereby increasing local employment and bringing even more people to the town

Recent Activity

- **Business Support** – huge amount of support provided throughout second lockdown/changes in local tiers/third lockdown to help businesses with grant information, interpreting Government guidance, raising issues with WBC & Laura Farris, promoting services, etc.
- **Cardboard Recycling** – weekly collection has continued throughout lockdown and is being well managed by Shaun
- **Email Comms** – weekly updates continue to be sent to all businesses on email database with latest news and guidance, plus additional important COVID updates; improvements have been made to content and readability; currently finalising plug-in to use for open/click stats
- **Online Business Webinars / Meetings** – two Q&As have taken place with Laura Farris (one for hospitality sector, one general Q&A); Pubwatch and Shopsafe meetings continue monthly; BID members regularly invited to key webinars hosted by partners, e.g. recent webinar about the town centre masterplan
- **Car Parking** – Alison has made contact with several other BIDs/local authorities and is preparing a report/evidence-based case to put forward with ideas for parking schemes
- **Members Pack** – completed and PDF distributed via email, printed versions will be hand-delivered post-lockdown

KPIs

1. Business satisfaction & value for money - An average score of 3.5+/5 achieved by 31/8/21

Benchmark: Aug-20 = 2.88 & 2.39

- Business survey will be repeated in August 2021 to gauge satisfaction and value for money scores 12 months on
- **Challenges** = lack of opportunities for face-to-face meetings/discussions with businesses due to lockdowns, inability to deliver some aspects of Business Plan, e.g. events
- **Opportunities** = new Board Members should help us to better understand needs of different sectors, process of planning for next 5-year term will inevitably result in even greater engagement with businesses and wider understanding of what we do/how we can help

2. Commercial revenue - £0.20+ of revenue generated for every £1 of levies received in 2020-21 financial year

Benchmark: 2019-20 = £0.11

- Currently £0.13 of commercial revenue has been generated for every £1 of levies received
- **Challenges** = no commercial street trading possible for 50% of year so far, no specialist markets have been viable, no external events have been possible, fewer BusinessWatch members due to lockdown closures
- **Opportunities** = potential new online commercial revenue streams being investigated, likely to be demand post-COVID for event bookings, specialist markets, commercial promotions, etc.

Key Projects Feb-May 2021

- 1. Newbury BID Website Development** – aiming to build commercial revenue opportunities into this; opportunity to showcase B2B and professional services businesses within BID area; opportunity to highlight and promote BID services (Project Owner = Melissa)
- 2. Crime Reduction Scheme Review** – full assessment of BusinessWatch scheme and review of potential alternatives (Project Owner = Alison)
- 3. Commercial Agents & Landlords*** – building relationships and sharing information to be given to prospective tenants/buyers (Project Owner = Melissa)
- 4. Car Parking Scheme Report** – producing a summary report of parking schemes in other towns which are a win-win-win for local authority, visitors and businesses (Project Owner = Alison)
- 5. Members' Forums, Networking & Training** – including Newbury Indies network, Talk of the Town, and appropriate training courses; look at opportunities to offer solutions to help small local businesses deliver online services (Project Owner = Melissa)

*Key projects to aid recovery post-COVID