

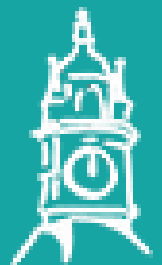


**NEWBURY**

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

# CEO'S REPORT

## 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 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

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

### Update on Key Projects:

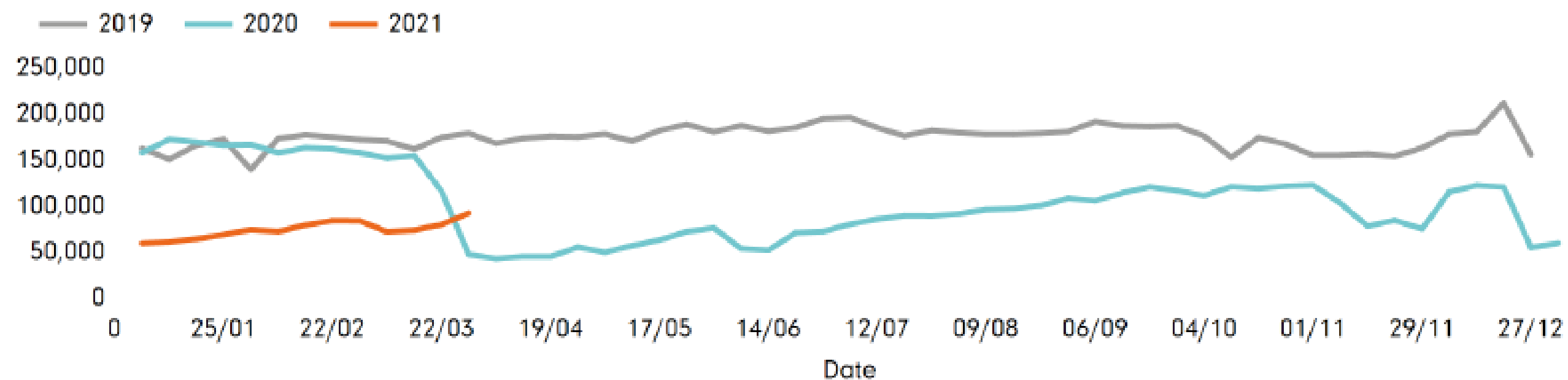
- 1. Visit Newbury Website Development** (Project Owner = Melissa, Project Liaison = Ross Drake?) – first phase complete to improve design, content and user experience and now live (few minor tweaks/issues/additional content to be sorted before announcing); will begin to collate ideas for second phase and formulate project/priority plan over coming weeks; community content competition
- 2. “Support Local” Campaign** (Project Owner = Kirsty , Project Liaison = Valarie Jerome?) – “Re-Visit Newbury” campaign launched to draw local people back into town; will expand campaign over coming weeks and run as an integrated campaign for next few months as we move through phases of reopening; aims to re-introduce local community to everything Newbury has to offer
- 3. Staycation/Tourist/Visitor Destination Campaign** (Project Owner = Kirsty, Project Liaison = Andy Marmot & Harriet Collins) – preparing plan (now website is ready) for 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
- 4. Evening Economy Campaign** (Project Owner = Kirsty, Project Liaison = Ian Batho?) – integrated marketing campaign to promote what to do in Newbury in the evenings; will soon be working on ready for 17<sup>th</sup> May
- 5. “Bringing People Together” Campaign** (Project Owner = Kirsty, Project Liaison = ?) – integrated marketing campaign to launch once social contact restrictions are lifted – encouraging people to choose Newbury town centre as the place to come together with friends and family post-covid

### 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 93k (5<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> Apr-20) which is up from 56k during the first week of Jan and on a par with Aug-20.
- **Challenges** = unknown how long it may take for footfall to return to pre-pandemic levels now reopening has commenced
- **Opportunities** = it was buzzing in town yesterday and there seems to be a real thirst/demand from visitors and shoppers, with footfall up 123% vs. last Monday (total footfall for 12<sup>th</sup> Apr-20 = 20k = 15<sup>th</sup> busiest day since Mar-20 (footfall for 15<sup>th</sup> Jun-20 at end of Lockdown 1 was only 11.7k); if that continues throughout the week, we'll be on c. 140k for this week and it will be the busiest week since the pandemic began!); we can now start to introduce some activations and small-scale events to attract people into town over the late spring & summer months

Footfall by week

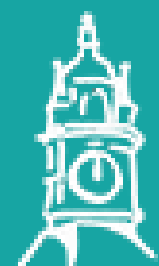
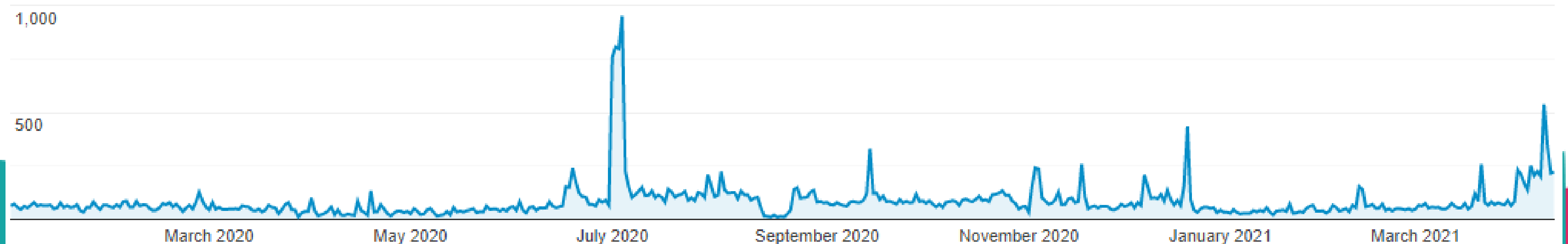


### 1. Website traffic— More than 10,000 unique monthly users visiting visitnewbury.org.uk by 31/5/21

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

- Traffic has been rising steadily in 2021 (1,156 users in Jan-21, 1,524 in Feb-21, 2,140 in Mar-21) and traffic generation continues to need to be a big focus for us
- **Challenges** = fewer people seeking information on things to do in Newbury whilst lockdown has been in place; SEO was greatly damaged when new site was launched in early 2020 due to duplicate content being used, poor user experience, and poor level of content compared to previous iteration of website
- **Opportunities** = traffic continues to spike when good quality blog content is shared; integrated marketing campaigns will drive new traffic to the new website from different channels; the improved content on key pages will improve SEO performance over time (SEO is a long-term strategy and the domain will suffer in the short-term as Google crawls the new site and picks up changes)

● Users



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

## Update on Key Projects:

- 1. “Keep Newbury Tidy” Campaign (Project Owner = Kirsty, Project Liaison = Andy Murrill?)** - develop a "Keep Newbury Tidy" campaign to promote responsible disposal of litter (involve local community, e.g. schools, in design of campaign); will be looking at in conjunction with “Great British Spring Clean” 28<sup>th</sup> May – 13<sup>th</sup> June
- 2. Commercial Website Development - [thisisnewbury.co.uk](http://thisisnewbury.co.uk)?** (Project Owner = Melissa, Project Liaison = WBC Rep) – had to be put to one side whilst focusing on main Visit Newbury website; more thought needs to go into best way to achieve a central online source of information about commercial opportunities in Newbury; WBC employing Business Engagement Officer to lead on producing a prospectus to attract inward business investment – makes sense to pool resources and work in partnership on this
- 3. CCTV Project (Project Owner = Alison, Project Liaison = Richard Farley & Lindsey Finch)** – agreed with NTC and TVP to continue with current provision for one more year; meeting with TVP tomorrow to discuss specialist technical support they can give in helping to decide most suitable future provision
- 4. Christmas Lights Tender - (Project Owner = Alison, Project Liaison = Alastair Chapman?)** – appears we’re still in contract for 2021 but Alison is negotiating cost

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

- No further progress on this yet (ideas are still roughly drafted, but additional thought needs to go into it)
- **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

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

- This was achieved, but decision has been made to continue with current provision for one more year whilst specialist help is sought to understand what the right solution is for the town moving forward
- **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

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

## Update on Key Projects:

- 1. Specialised Markets Plan (Project Owner = Alison, Project Liaison = Martin Colston)** – Vegan Market to take place quarterly from Aug-21 with same organiser who previously delivered it; Artisan Market organisers can no longer deliver – Alison meeting with another market organiser tomorrow to discuss taking on Artisan Market brand and organisation so market can return monthly soon
- 2. Events Plan (Project Owner = Alison, Project Liaison = Jason Palmer)** – still major risks associated with organising large-scale events; focus will be on trails, activations, and small-scale events for now; chocolate trail in May with Parkway & Kennet; proposals being formulated to put in bid to WBC for Welcome Back Fund for activities to draw people into town



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

- Progress has been challenging during lockdown, but full steam ahead now businesses have reopened, with lots of businesses visited yesterday and this will continue throughout week and onwards
- **Challenges** = constrained by lockdowns/restrictions from 5<sup>th</sup> 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 will be hand-delivered to all businesses this week and over coming weeks, 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 was 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

**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

### Update on Key Projects:

- 1. Newbury BID Website Development** (Project Owner = Melissa, Project Liaison = Tejo Kaur?) – area on website has now been improved and offers far more information; next steps include posting regular news, adding business offers for BID levy payers, adding useful information e.g. local advertising opportunities, potentially adding a forum for businesses to share information and insight
- 2. Crime Reduction Scheme Review** (Project Owner = Alison, Project Liaison = Warwick Heskins) – full assessment of BusinessWatch scheme and review of potential alternatives
- 3. Commercial Agents & Landlords** (Project Owner = Melissa, Project Liaison = Shane Prater) – actions scoped out to engage with commercial agents and landlords and work will start over coming weeks
- 4. Car Parking Scheme Report** (Project Owner = Alison, Project Liaison = Sebastian Court?) – information gathered and report will be finalised over coming weeks; other options to be investigated, e.g. Parking Perx
- 5. Members' Forums, Networking & Training** (Project Owner = Melissa, Project Liaison = Graeme Leech?) – trial marketing workshop held, reopening Q&As held with Public Protection, Talk of the Town/Meet the Board/AGM event to be organised for late June/early July

## 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. (starting to see some commercial space bookings coming in)