

# Q1 Report

## Local independents provide strong foundation for city centre



Darren Bamford of The Audio Room with colleagues Jack Bamford (left) and Spencer Towner (right).

Small independent businesses across Hull city centre are underlining the commitment to quality and customer service which makes them stand out from the competition.

Some have adapted what they do in an attempt to increase online sales, and those whose services need a personal touch are enhancing their collection and delivery services.

Joe Mallinson of Bronx Clothing in Paragon Square said the city centre retailer had survived the impact of lockdown by expanding a delivery service which dates back to the days of Hull's infamous orange barriers.

He said: "We started the deliveries in 2016 when people didn't want to come into the city centre because of the orange barriers and we've been really busy with them this year when we couldn't open the shop."

"We've built up a big international customer base and we've seen a big increase in local orders this year as people found they had spare cash because they weren't spending on pubs or meals out or holidays. We're delivering free within the HU postcode but we're also working hard to encourage people to come into the shop."

"It is difficult for all businesses but we have some great independents who have been here a long time. Hull is a great place, there are people around with money to spend and we hope they will come into the city centre."

The Watch and Clock Hospital in Carr Lane has been offering sales and repairs since 1985 and is counting the days, hours and minutes of life under lockdown in readiness to get things ticking over again.

Paul Seaward, director of the business, said: "We do the simple things like battery replacements, we specialise in antique clocks and we do high-end watch brands with genuine parts. We are still here because of our customer service, and we keep getting new customers because other places can't do the specialist work, or because even if they can it takes weeks or possibly months."

The latest lockdown has seen The Audio Room in Savile Street close for demonstrations and walk-ins, but the renowned hi-fi retailer remains busy with mail order, direct shipping, click and collect and home delivery.

Owner Darren Bamford said: "We opened in 1996 and we are still here so we must be doing something right. We are purely a hi-fi retailer. We don't sell TVs or home cinema and we are an old school bricks and mortar shop with old fashioned values of customer service. That's really important to us."

"We have an incredibly strong reputation within the industry and I don't think you will get the level of customer service we offer anywhere else in the country. We are committed to offering the best in class product to go with best in class service – we pride ourselves on after sales and customer care."

Kathryn Shillito, HullBID Executive Director, said: "It is important to recognise that one of our city centre's great strengths is its foundation of independent businesses operating in so many different sectors including retail, hospitality, personal care, professional services and so much more. They are locally-owned and locally-run, able to make their own decisions about investment and expansion and flexible enough to bring so much quality, creativity and character and to adapt when times are hard."

# HullBID Introducing

## Going for gold with new city centre gym

A former city centre supermarket has been unveiled as the latest project by the Fit24 gym company and the first in partnership with Hull's Olympic boxing champion Luke Campbell.

Coolhand Fit24 draws on the nickname of the man who won gold at London 2012 and, under the founder of the business Jack Burton and gym manager Mike Webb, is promising to bring something different to the city centre.

A members-only centre, the gym aims to offer a full professional environment for serious trainers as well as a full range of equipment and advice to suit the casual user.

Facilities include a state-of-the-art large free weight area with a full strength set included, plate-loaded resistance

machines and a full cardio set up with more than 40 machines.

A centre-piece functional boxing area features a full ring, bags, strength area and specialised equipment, with classes designed by Luke.

A bar area, which will be open to members and the public, will offer nutritional meals, shakes and smoothies.

Speaking during the build-up to the opening, Luke told the Hull Daily Mail that the investment for the project has come through his charitable foundation, Everyone's Fight. He said: "Through the gym, I want to show the people of Hull how passionate I am about the city and I want it to be a place where everyone can come together through sport.

"The gym is not going to be just your average gym as I will be adding my own touches.

"There will be a real focus on mental health as well as physical fitness through healthy competitions and we

will use the cafe as a place to talk as everyone goes through problems.

"I want to make it a community gym and involve families so that they can come and train together."



Jack Burton and Mike Webb outside the new gym. Picture courtesy of Hull Daily Mail.



Sam Salon in King Edward Street.

## Sam Salon raising a few eyebrows

A woman who has built a career in the beauty therapy sector is raising a few eyebrows with the transformation of a former jewellery shop in King Edward Street.

Samreen Sagheer, known as Sam, has lived in Hull for nine years and has worked in a variety of salons in the city centre and at Superdrug stores, building up a strong client base.

Her latest venture - which opened in December - is Sam Salon, where she specialises in eyebrow treatments. Her specialist services

include training and shaping eyebrows with microblading and waxing available.

The salon is open Monday to Saturday from 9.30am until 5.30pm. Sam will soon launch a Facebook page for the business and can be contacted for bookings on 07482 194048.

Sam said: "It has been a really difficult year for the beauty industry and it will take time for things to change but I have been doing this for a long time, people like my work and I have a lot of customers who are looking forward to coming in.

"The new salon is in a great location, right in the city centre with a lot of footfall so I am looking forward to welcoming people."

## Takeaways add to vegan ventures

Hull city centre has welcomed two new names to the area's takeaway scene.

In Jameson Street, the popular Fries R Us has been re-branded as No 29. In Trinity Square, Doner Summer has opened its first Hull outlet, adding to branches in Leeds, Manchester and York.

No 29 is under the same management as Fries R Us and they report that the biggest-selling item on the menu is still chips - particularly with chip spice.

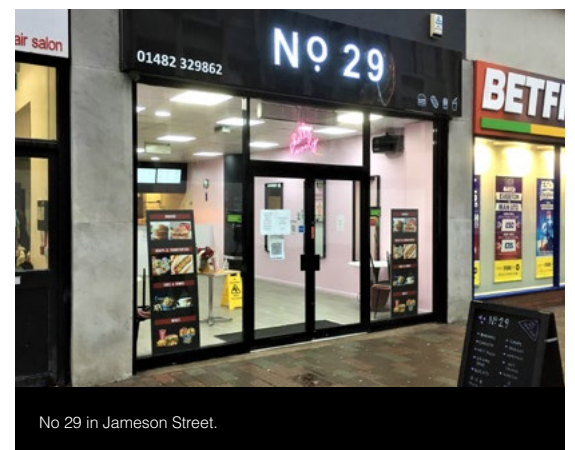
Other options include burgers, hot dogs, chicken and a great selection of sides, wraps and an expanding range of vegan dishes.

The current focus is on takeaways but, when restrictions permit, No 29 will have seating for up to 26 people inside and a further 16 outside. To find out more look up No 29 on Facebook and Just Eat.

Huge crowds descended on Doner Summer when it opened in the autumn as a specialist vegan-friendly kebab shop with their alternative to chicken, doner from seitan, and vegan ice cream.

All the food except the bread is made by Doner Summer and was inspired by the street food of Berlin.

To find out more look up Doner Summer on Facebook and Deliveroo and visit [www.donersummer.com](http://www.donersummer.com)



No 29 in Jameson Street.

# HullBID Introducing

## Wrecking Ball plans new cultural hub

The team behind a musical and literary collaboration have taken a big step towards creating a new cultural hub in Hull city centre with the opening of Wrecking Ball Music Books Café at an historic site in Whitefriargate.

Gary Marks, who sold records, CDs and merchandise from various different outlets as GJM Music, and Shane Rhodes of independent publishers Wrecking Ball Press, joined forces two years ago.

They always had plans to expand the product range, improve the browsing experience and host events and they now have the space to do that after moving to a two-storey property.

Gary said: "We had been looking for suitable premises to house the vinyl and books and expand that to add a café and an area which is big enough

to bring in some live events. This is perfect because it's got the first floor venue.

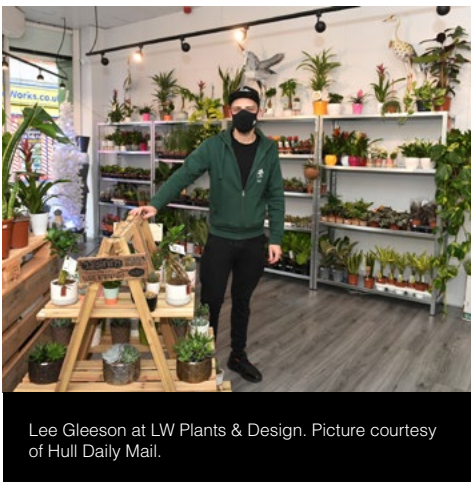
"It's by far the most space we have ever had. We wanted to expand and we were confident in what we were doing. We also have space for a lot more products. People will be able to relax, listen to records, browse books. We are putting together a website now which will enable us to sell online."

The venue will have a PA and stage built in and, with a seated capacity of about 120, will be used for events featuring spoken word, plays, poetry and other entertainment. It will also be available for hire. There will be a projection screen upstairs and a pull-down screen downstairs to allow anybody who can't go upstairs to see the performances.

Gary said: "We are grateful to a lot of people for their help including Trinity House, the City Council and the Arts Council. We're aiming to create a cultural hub not unlike Kardomah in Alfred Gelder Street, and it's interesting that we're on the site of the original Hull Kardomah."



Wrecking Ball Music Books Café in Whitefriargate.



Lee Gleeson at LW Plants & Design. Picture courtesy of Hull Daily Mail.

## LW Plants aims for growth in new home

A business selling plants for homes and gardens has relocated to a prime site in Whitefriargate after blossoming during a year in Trinity Market.

LW Plants & Design has been growing its customer base since relocating in the autumn to the former Ann Summers premises and is now developing its online offer.

The business was set up more than two years ago by Wayne Graves and Lee Gleeson after they were inspired by the reaction of guests to a festive table decoration.

Lee said: "We made a cactus bowl for the middle of the table and people said they really liked it so we made some for family and friends, started selling them at markets and then we added some garden décor products.

"We took the stall in Trinity Market as a trial and everything became a big trend so we took it from there. We're excited about these premises. We managed to get a good deal and there's a lot of footfall in Whitefriargate so we hope people will find us interesting enough to call in."

Products include plants and pots of all sizes for indoor and outdoor use, as well as decorative animals, birds and other garden ornaments.

## City centre opening for national retailer

A major national retailer invited a local food bank to share in the celebrations as it opened a new store in Hull city centre.

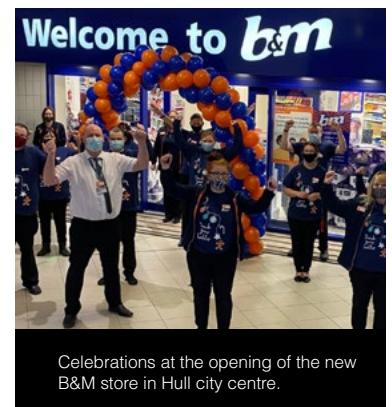
B&M unveiled its new location in the Prospect Shopping Centre with representatives from Hull Food Bank attending as VIP guests. As a thank you for helping the local community throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the charity team were invited to cut the ribbon on opening day and they also received B&M vouchers worth £250.

The new B&M store is the company's first in the HullBID area and brings the variety retailer's wide selection of branded and own label products to a prominent and busy city centre site.

Rob Wilson, manager of the store, said: With everything from toys and homewares to groceries and pet supplies, there's plenty of items for visitors to the B&M store to shop.

"We're feeling really positive about the creation of more jobs for local people and we hope customers are going to be delighted with their new store.

"We are all really excited to get the doors open and welcome our new customers this morning."



Celebrations at the opening of the new B&M store in Hull city centre.

# Q1 News

## HullBID redoubling efforts to help businesses survive and thrive



Bert's Pizzeria in Queen Street – one of the venues which took part in the successful Dine Wednesdays scheme.

HullBID is stepping up to help city centre businesses survive and thrive by driving a partnership approach to tackle the impact of Covid-19.

Kathryn Shillito, HullBID Executive Director, is updating businesses with the latest information on grants and other support from organisations including Hull City Council, British BIDs and the Association of Town and City Management.

Kathryn and the team are also working on plans for promotional events which can be activated quickly to attract people into the city centre to support local businesses as soon as restrictions are lifted.

She revealed that the BID team has been buoyed by positive responses from city centre businesses, ranging from small traders to local branches of national brands, which have sent messages of thanks and endorsed the work of HullBID by paying their levy promptly.

Kathryn said: "We've left one very difficult year but it's clear that huge challenges remain so we will be redoubling our efforts to support the city centre businesses. We know that many of them are really struggling, but they have shown tremendous resilience and we hope to see them bounce back as soon as they get the chance."

HullBID has been working on all fronts since the start of the first lockdown, with the focus switching to meet the needs of the businesses. In addition to helping businesses in all sectors secure revenue by accessing Government grants via Hull City Council, BID also helped the bottom line by giving a 25 per cent discount on the levy.

With the programme of HullBID events badly hit by the restrictions, Kathryn and her team concentrated on fast and flexible projects which could be launched at short notice to bring people into the city centre.

The Monster Hero trails for summer, Halloween and Christmas presented a fun, family initiative which gave businesses a great opportunity to engage directly with customers. The Dine Wednesdays campaign promoted hotels, restaurants, pubs and cafes who offered diners a two courses for £10 package to tempt people to their tables.

Kathryn said: "All the initiatives worked extremely well and we received very positive feedback across the board. The Monster Hero trails for Halloween and Christmas were organised in response to businesses telling us about the success of the summer trail.

"Dine Wednesdays made a big difference to so many food and beverage businesses. The aim for 2021 will be to work with our various partners to bring back some of the big events which are unique and so valuable to the city centre, but we're not going to wait for things to happen.

"Our strength is our knowledge of how the city is performing generally, and our ability to deliver vital information quickly, particularly about access to funds. We spend a good proportion of time speaking to individual businesses seeking a quick route to find answers to their queries, and our close partnership working with Hull City Council, the LEP and other organisations has enabled this.

"Our newsletter always provides an interesting snapshot of what's happening in the city centre business community and, in spite of all the challenges, this edition again shows that people are pulling together to help each other, new businesses are setting up and there is a sense of optimism."

Kathryn added that HullBID would welcome the chance to speak with any business on a one to one basis. If you would like to set up a meeting on Zoom or MS Teams please send an email to [info@hullbid.co.uk](mailto:info@hullbid.co.uk)

**Do you have a story you'd like to share?**

For more information about how to share your news or ideas, email [catherine@hullbid.co.uk](mailto:catherine@hullbid.co.uk) or call on 07739 759783. [www.hullbid.co.uk](http://www.hullbid.co.uk)

## RFD making a statement with Old Town projects

A business which has built a reputation for excellence in designing other people's properties is now making its own interior design statement and supporting job creation by modernising buildings in Hull's Old Town.

RFD Interior Architecture – widely known as Red Frog Design – has completed the renovation and spectacular fit-out of Salters House in High Street. Now it is working on a similar project in nearby Bishop Lane having partnered with Hull-based Thompson Construction to create Jenneson-Thompson, offering turnkey solutions to regenerate dilapidated buildings.

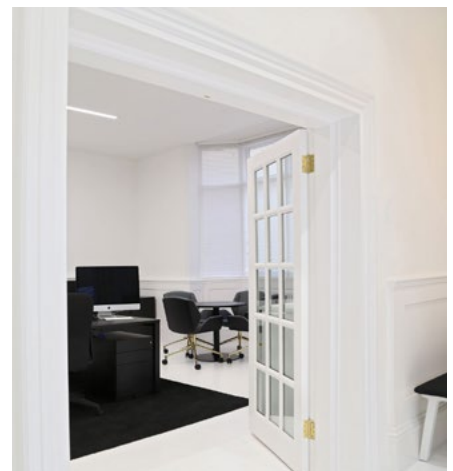
The two sites could end up supporting 30 jobs each with a mix of tech based start-ups and established businesses such as IMS Global who have relocated from Leeds to Hull. RFD was incorporated 12 years

ago by Alex Jenneson and has since moved from the original office on Beverley Road to two sites in the city centre before taking up residence at Salters House.

Clients over the years have included the City Health Care Partnership, Allenby Commercial, Horncastle Group, Sewell Group, SGS International and Radar and, from originally focusing on office design, RFD now has a wider brief.

Alex said: "We've moved into doing everything from concept through to the finished article and we're now investing in dilapidated properties. We bought Salters House and turned it into an upmarket office building with six studios for between four and 10 people, making it as ground-breaking as possible with eye-catching interior design and modern technology, fully cabled with wireless, access control and CCTV.

"We're modernising the Bishop Lane property now having bought it about three months ago and we're in discussions with a potential occupier with a view to opening their new headquarters in the summer. The Old Town is attracting more interest and private investment alongside the incentives offered by the Hull City Council who are always supportive."



Striking designs by RFD Interiors at Salters House.

## Volunteers step up to support HullBID members

City centre businesses which are looking forward to a resumption of outdoor events and activities in the city centre include a number of voluntary members of HullBID.

If the rateable value of the property they occupy sits below the £5,000 threshold the traders wouldn't qualify for automatic membership of HullBID. To benefit from BID's services, they pay the levy voluntarily and their inclusion helps support other city centre businesses.

Anna Beaumont, who opened Cone Queen in Trinity Market just over three years ago, said: "I became a voluntary member of HullBID because they are just great to have around. Hull Street Food Nights and the Yum! Festival are brilliant for business and the



Anna Beaumont at Cone Queen in Trinity Market.

BID team are always able to help when I ring them for advice or to find out about things going on in the city centre."

Gemma Carter of Carters Bars said: "We do festivals and weddings and if people want private events at home we can provide the equipment and the stock they need.

"We met HullBID through our work at events including Freedom Festival and Humber Street Sesh, and we've worked with them on the Yum! Festival and Hull Street Food Nights. The last year has been really difficult and it's now a case of wait and see but we've got the experience and the contacts to organise events at the last minute so we can move quickly when people have the opportunity to put things on again."

Cock of the Walk, another voluntary member, hit the headlines during 2020 by using their specialist tailoring skills to provide more than 3,000 surgical gowns after HullBID activated its network of contacts to introduce them to key people in the NHS.

## Latest arrivals add more variety to Humber Street

Humber Street has added yet more variety to its array of businesses with the recent openings of Light & Scent, Flour and Feast and Andersbrowne.

Light & Scent is a family venture run by Christine Little and her daughters Jade Talbot and Claire Little, and showcases their love of home fragrance and luxurious bath products, including hand-picked bath bombs, candles and wax melts. All the products are animal cruelty-free and most are handmade.

Christine said: "It's the first time we've done anything like this, but we've had the idea for a long time.

"It's bringing something a little bit different to Humber

Street. It's an up and coming area and exactly where we want to be in a thriving community."

Artisan bakery Flour and Feast has brought its range of bread, cakes, bakes, savouries and pastries to the area after two years in Trinity Market, with owners Roxy Avery and Joe Roper needing more space for their delicious food and drink options to eat in or take away, as well as on-the-go favourites of sandwiches, soups, salads and sausage rolls.

Roxy said: "As a business we're ready to progress and take that next step. We're most excited about the community spirit. All the businesses have a unique offering, so it all works really well together."

Online vintage furniture business Andersbrowne is based in Beverley and has expanded to Humber Street with its original 20th Century furniture from mainly Scandinavian, British and European manufacturers.

The new shop stocks a handpicked selection of design pieces including on-trend vinyl record storage, retro cocktail cabinets, and mid-century fabrics.



Jade Talbot (left) and Christine Little at Light & Scent in Humber Street.

## Glass House set to raise bar for city centre living

A landmark city centre building is now welcoming its first residents after completion of a striking redevelopment, and another prominent property is to undergo conversion from offices as demand continues to rise for urban living.

Iguana Developments, owners of The Glass House in Queen's Gardens, expects to welcome at least 250 people into the apartments and penthouses which are part of the company's £42m investment in three city centre sites.

The property is unrecognisable as a former police station and now offers amenities including in-house gym and cinema, private dining, co-working space and large atrium with concierge service.

The company also recently completed the conversion of Liberty House in Liberty Lane into 25 apartments for sale

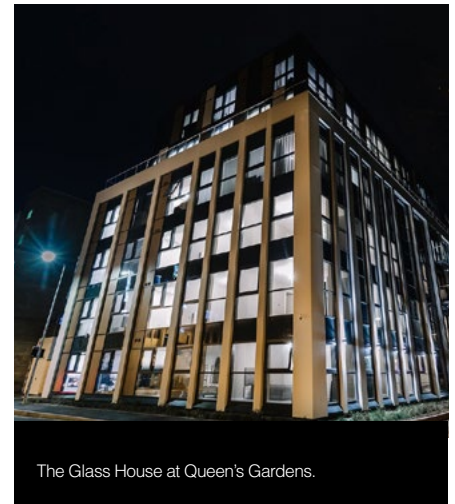
featuring the same high specification, and it has renovated HU1 at Essex House on Manor Street, turning a ten-storey office block into 45 one and two bed apartments.

Jason Coleman, Managing Director of Iguana Developments, said: "We are thrilled The Glass House is now ready for residents to move in. The apartments and penthouses appeal to young professionals and downsizers and the ease of city living is high on the list of priorities.

"We have delayed the grand opening until after lockdown but viewings are available by private appointment with My Agent, who is managing the sales."

An office building in Alfred Gelder Street which in recent years also housed the Kardomah94 arts and culture hub is to be converted into apartments.

The building has been bought for an undisclosed sum by an unnamed Sheffield-based-developer and Tim Powell of agents Scotts Property LLP said the intention is to convert the upper floors into self-contained flats while retaining the ground floor space for future commercial use.



The Glass House at Queen's Gardens.

## Crime prevention measures are producing results

A partnership approach is having a major impact on the fight against crime in Hull city centre with more businesses signing up to the DISC scheme, a bespoke system for city businesses to report crime and anti-social behaviour.

HullBID's street team is reporting significant achievements with Senior Support Officer Mark Andrews telling of two incidents which resulted in arrests with DISC, the HullBID radio system and Civic CCTV all playing a part.

The first incident involved theft of property worth about £3,000 from a city centre business. DISC displayed pictures of the thieves and two days later another business owner reported spotting them near his premises.



The HullBID street team. From left, Martin Foster, Mark Andrews and Raich Orr.

Mark said: "The trader used the BID radio to contact us and we used Civic CCTV to monitor the suspects. We liaised with the police, who arrested the men.

"The second incident involved someone causing trouble across the city centre, being abusive to people and generally committing antisocial behaviour.

"He went to court and was released on bail with a condition banning him from the city centre. We saw him and knew he was in breach of the order and, again, we used the BID radio and CCTV to follow his movements.

"Both cases show how the various crime prevention measures work well together and are very effective. We've recommended DISC to other towns and cities because it really is invaluable."

In addition to the security roles of Mark and his colleague Support Officer Raich Orr, HullBID also keeps the city centre streets free of graffiti and other overnight mess with Cleaning and Maintenance Operative Martin Foster hard at work even before businesses have opened their doors for the day.

The system was launched in November 2019 and now has more than 320 members who can access DISC to view the details of over 370 offenders. To sign up, email [catherine@hullbid.co.uk](mailto:catherine@hullbid.co.uk).



### Chair's statement Jim Harris, HullBID Chairman

These are strange times for the UK high street in general and yet, as is often the case, we seem to be able to show a positivity and resilience that is unique to Hull city centre and our amazing businesses.

I know trading is difficult for us all, yet we are able to welcome some great new businesses to our numbers and also during these continuing tough times Kathryn and the team are always there to help; either directly via Hull BID or to point you elsewhere.

### Got a question?

For more information about how to share your news or ideas, email [catherine@hullbid.co.uk](mailto:catherine@hullbid.co.uk) or call on 07739 759783.

[www.hullbid.co.uk](http://www.hullbid.co.uk)

## The HullBID team

To find out about our board directors, visit [www.hullbid.co.uk](http://www.hullbid.co.uk)



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