

Q4Report

HullBID embarks on exciting events programme backed by ballot success



Senior Support Officer Mark Andrews, HullBID Chair Jim Harris, Business Liaison Officer Francesca Wagstaff-Sharp, and Operation & Support Officer Raich Orr.

HullBID will hit the ground running next month as it starts its new term with a programme of events geared to attract families into the city centre and to bring businesses together to support each other and celebrate success.

BID will follow that with a schedule of new events and old favourites into 2027, with additions to the board and the operational team adding to the ideas, energy and passion.

Francesca Wagstaff-Sharp, HullBID Business Liaison Officer, said: "The official start of the next BID five-year term is the beginning of November, and we've already been working on exciting ideas and budgets that will allow us to build on our existing services and continue to enhance the support and opportunities we provide for our members.

"But there are some things we can do straight away so we're getting down to business with some exciting events and activities."

Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll find details of the HullBID Awards 2027, which will open for applications next month. You can also read about the new HullBID Media Team, with students from Hull University Business School connecting with city centre businesses to create content which can be used to promote products, services and events on social media.

The students have already played a big part in spreading the word about the hugely successful Dino Day. Next they'll be taking to the streets to highlight the Halloween Trail, which will feature 15 businesses dotted around the city centre, thereby encouraging families to visit them all with the incentive of winning prizes and claiming offers and give-aways kindly donated by HullBID Businesses.

Francesca said: "The Halloween Trail will run from Saturday 24 October until Sunday 1 November and is the ideal family-friendly activity to build footfall during the half term holidays."

Christmas activities will have a focal point of a four-day festival which will take place in and around King Edward Street and Queen Victoria Square, starting with the lights switch-on at Hull City Hall on Thursday 19 November and going through until Sunday 22 November with the Santa Parade, which will leave Princes Quay at 11am.

HullBID will support Hull City Council to deliver the events which will include an Christmas market and other festive attractions.

Francesca said: "The Santa Parade has been running for 20 years now and is as popular as ever, attracting a crowd estimated at 3,000 in 2025."

Hull City Council is bringing a four-day Christmas market to the city centre, with HullBID supporting the event alongside a programme of other festive activities. Together, these plans will help create a Christmas offer on a scale that gives city centre businesses a great opportunity to showcase their festive offers and encourages people to keep coming back to the city centre.

The programme of HullBID Supper clubs continued during the summer and now two more dates have been confirmed. The Brazilian in Humber Dock Street will host diners on Wednesday 28 October, and on Wednesday 25 November the venue will be the Living Room at Jubilee Central in King Edward Street.

Francesca said: "We'll be sharing details of all our events via email and through our social media feeds on Facebook, Instagram and Linked In.

"We're exploring all sorts of exciting ideas for the future and we'll be working closely with our member businesses to keep them informed and involved.

"The ballot outcome, with 94% voting to continue the BID, was our best result in the 20 years since BID was launched. We are grateful to everybody who backed us, we see it as a huge vote of confidence, and we'll make sure we deliver!"

HullBID Introducing

New bars connect to launch discount HUB

A family which has played a huge part in Hull's food and drink scene for more than 40 years has launched two new bars backed by an innovative app which connects all five of their venues.

Karl Jeffery, whose first venture was Coco in Anlaby, turned his attention to the city centre over the years and built up a business which includes Dirty Dicks, Rio Music Bar and Dexters Bar & Grill.

Now Karl's son Alex is leading with House of Finnigans, which has brought a bright new concept to the former Yates, and Trinity Tavern, a stylish development at the old Head of Steam.

House of Finnigans has brought Irish-themed entertainment with live music and DJs, live TV



Trinity Tavern.

sport and two private rooms with darts lanes which are proving a hit with party groups. There's also a varied drinks offer and an extensive menu of

sandwiches, small plates and main meals.

Trinity Tavern has a completely different feel with its initial offer of laid back live entertainment and quiz nights attracting an audience ranging from 30 to 70. The plan is to add monthly jazz and comedy nights with a menu of traditional bar food.

The new app is branded Hull United Bars – or HUB – and will operate across all five destinations, which between them employ about 100 people. Customers will be able to collect points from their food and drink purchases and get big discounts including live, up to the minute offers during a night out.

Alex said: "The Hull United Bars app is a hub for or five destinations and the new venues bring something completely different to what we do. It's all about giving people a reason to come into the pub."



Meer and Sadida Hashmi at 7th Heaven.

New franchise aims for sweet success

A new food experience has arrived in Hull city centre with 7th Heaven offering an array of delicious desserts and a selection of savoury options.

Directors Meer and Sadida Hashmi have taken on the franchise which emerged from India and has opened outlets in London and Manchester as it expands across the UK.

Meer is drawing on his vast experience of an MBA in 2007 and a career in retail which has spanned 21 years with Tesco and other big brands.

7th Heaven opened its doors in King Edward Street just in time to showcase its wares to the thousands of people who descended on the city centre for Dino Day.

On offer were spectacular and mouthwatering cakes, shakes, waffles and more plus a variety of coffees,

teas and juices. Diners can eat in with 16 seats available, or can use the take-away service, with Deliveroo and Just Eat also available.

Cakes can be made to order and special orders so far have included a Hull City design for a fan's 70th birthday and a first anniversary cake for the New Clarence pub.

Exciting innovations still to come include savoury items on a new breakfast menu and the chance to watch the chefs at work through one of the display windows.

Meer said: "We can create all sorts of special cakes for Halloween, Christmas, birthdays and other occasions. There's always something to celebrate.

"We design the cakes ourselves, with help from customers if they want a specific design, and we make everything in our kitchen."

7th Heaven is open seven days a week and has a social media presence on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

Hotel welcomes Ross as General Manager

The DoubleTree by Hilton Hull has welcomed Ross Blezard as its new General Manager as it prepares to unveil an exciting addition to its range of facilities.

Ross brings more than 25 years of hospitality leadership experience across Hilton Hotels & Resorts, luxury resorts and international destinations. He will lead all aspects of hotel operations, guest experience, team engagement and commercial performance, while overseeing the hotel's continued growth and development.

Ross joins DoubleTree by Hilton Hull following his role as General Manager at De Vere Latimer Estate in Chesham. He has previously held a number of senior leadership positions, including Resort General Manager at Macdonald Aviemore Resort and Director of Operations roles at Hilton Ramses Cairo, Hilton London Wembley and Hilton at St George's Park.

Preparations are under way now for the launch of The Horizon Suite, a new 300 square metre event space which is due to open later this year. The investment will expand the hotel's meetings and events offering, adding capacity for conferences, celebrations and large-scale events.

Ross said: "I'm delighted to be joining DoubleTree by Hilton Hull and welcoming the wider Hull community. The hotel has a strong reputation across business, leisure and events, and with the launch of The Horizon Suite ahead, I'm looking forward to working with the team to continue delivering great experiences for our guests and event organisers."

Ben Underwood, Chief Operations Officer at leaf HOSPITALITY, said: "We are delighted to welcome Ross to DoubleTree by Hilton Hull. He brings a wealth of operational and leadership experience and joins the hotel at an important stage in its development. With the launch of The Horizon Suite approaching, Ross is well placed to lead the next phase of growth for the hotel."



Ross Blezard.

HullBID Introducing

New man in charge as hotel plans big refurb

A career hotel professional has been confirmed as the new General Manager of the Holiday Inn Hull Marina as the destination gears up for growth and major changes.

Luke Grimwood said details will be revealed in the coming months about a refurbishment of the property, which brought a new hospitality concept to the city when it opened in 1987.

The Holiday Inn Hull Marina is Luke's third appointment with Valor Hospitality. He worked at the Crowne Plaza in Plymouth and then the 333-bedroom DoubleTree By Hilton in Leeds. Having gained plenty of experience across the IHG and Hilton brands, he



Luke Grimwood at the Holiday Inn Hull Marina.

brings the operational depth and commercial focus to drive the development in Hull.

Luke said: "There has been talk for a long time about a refurbishment. The commitment has been made and there will be an announcement later this year about the details, the duration and the difference it will make.

"This has always been a popular hotel with a great location next to the marina and convenient for the city centre. It's successful and I think it will be one of the best performing IHG sites in the country. The refurbishment will be a massive opportunity for everyone here and for the city.

"Since arriving I've focused on building the team, strengthening performance and laying the groundwork for a significant period for the hotel. There's no limit to what we can do here but for now we're concentrating on a big push for our Christmas programme and we will be putting a lot of energy into that."

"Brownie Wizard" to cast chocolate spells

A chef who is variously known among his customers as "chocolate man", "chocolate Jon" and "the brownie wizard" is to share his knowledge and experience after marking the 20th anniversary of setting up his business with a move to new premises.

Jon Collins had already been working in catering for four years when he opened Thomas Francis Chocolatier in Princes Avenue in 2006. He moved to the city centre as Cocoa Chocolatier and then, when the market was closed for refurbishment, to Humber Street and then back to Trinity Market.

Now he's back in Humber Street with a team of four and a new brand. Cocoa Alchemist Artisan Chocolate sells Jon's usual range of chocolate delights, with new ideas emerging all the time including a sweet and savoury eat-in service,

afternoon tea, and chocolate-making tuition.

John, the head chocolatier/baker and owner of Cocoa, said: "We have been waiting for a big space to become available and we've done a lot of work on it. We had to level the floor, full rewiring, shelving, decorating. It's the biggest project we have ever taken on.

"Alchemy is the process of turning something quite plain into something extraordinary. To live up to that we'll be launching chocolate making courses and chocolate-led afternoon tea, elevated compared with what we have done in the past."

Loyal customers who have followed Jon since his Princes Avenue days have been peering through the windows of the new premises, eagerly awaiting the opening. Businesses in the area have also been in touch about staff events.

He said: "Our first classes will be how to make your own Advent calendar. In the new year we'll



Jon Collins outside his new premises.

have ideas around Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Easter. We'll be releasing more details on those as we move forward."

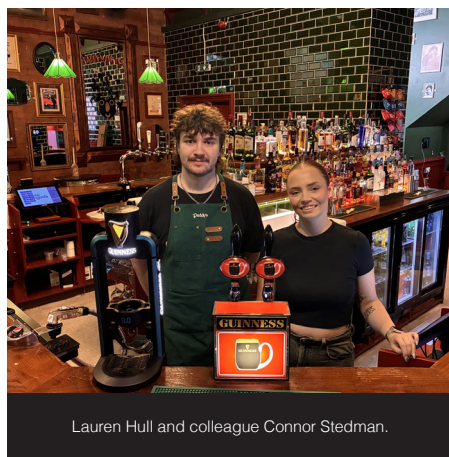
Irish music and sport on offer at new bar

Laid back weekdays and livewire weekends are promised by the owners of a new Irish Bar in the Old Town.

Paddy Mangan's, which has opened in Bowlalley Lane, is the twin of Molly Mangan's in Newland Avenue, with the company behind the brand also on the lookout for other opportunities further afield.

Lauren Hull, General Manager at Paddy Mangan's, started in the licensed trade at the Welly Club about eight years ago and has since worked at various venues including The Tower, Vox Box and Molly Mangan's.

She now leads a team of about 16 at Paddy Mangan's where the Irish theme extends across



Lauren Hull and colleague Connor Stedman.

the drinks, live TV sport and live entertainment. Sports coverage on the big screens extends from

such staples as football, rugby, cricket and Formula One, to Gaelic football and hurling.

But the big attraction is the programme of live music, much of it Irish-themed and all the work of local performers with a few guest artists from further afield and more likely to be on the way.

Lauren said: "During the week we mainly operate as a more relaxed venue for coffee and early evening drinks and the music, sport and atmosphere build later on.

"We have live music seven days a week in the evenings and during the afternoon at weekends. There are also plans for a Mangan's Festival which will bring in more bands which are new to the area.

"We'll be looking at other venues across Yorkshire for ideas that we think will work here and we'll be asking our customers what they want."

Q4News

HullBID Awards will celebrate another year of city centre business success



Finalists celebrating at the HullBID Awards 2026.

HullBID is counting down to the biggest night of the year for the city centre business community with the date set for Friday 26 February for the HullBID Awards 2027.

The spectacular celebration will return to the DoubleTree by Hilton Hull with demand again expected to be high from businesses looking to celebrate their own success, support shortlisted friends and colleagues, or just enjoy a great night out.

You can give yourselves a chance of bagging free tickets for the event by entering the awards. All the shortlisted businesses will receive four complimentary tickets to the celebration, which will include a three-course meal, wine and entertainment. Additional tickets will be available for purchase, so you can bring along as many cheerleaders as you can muster!

Full details of the awards will be confirmed during November to give businesses plenty of time to submit their applications with a closing date to be set for late January 2027. The panel of independent judges will then draw up their shortlists.

Awards will be presented in 10 categories including Stylish or Welcoming Premises, Outstanding Employee or Team, Customer Service Excellence, Contribution to the Community, and Best Place to Work.

We'll be announcing some categories which are new for 2027 and we're also drawing up a fun-filled programme of entertainment with live music and some new ideas for the ever-popular after party.

Businesses and other organisations will be invited to back the city centre business community and connect with a network of hundreds of potential customers as headline sponsor or by supporting individual awards categories, entertainment or other features on the night.

Sponsors will feature in marketing and press releases before and after

the awards, on the menus and big screen on the night itself and on the HullBID Awards 2027 video which will be shared on the HullBID website and social media channels.

Emma Hardy, MP for Hull West & Haltemprice, summed up the value of the awards in the 2026 video.

She said: "One of the great things about these awards is you find out not just about the retail businesses but also many others that you might not see directly in the High Street – what they are offering to the city and the depth that we have.

"The awards are competitive but everyone that comes is a winner. It's a fantastic night to celebrate and learn and maybe find out a little bit more about the huge variety and talent that we have right here in Hull."

Francesca Wagstaff-Sharp, HullBID Business Liaison Officer, added: "The HullBID Awards have been running since 2014 and have become a real highlight in the city centre business calendar.

"We know from talking to the judges that the standards continue to be incredibly high and the competition stronger than ever. We also know, from the hundreds of people who turn up on the night, how much they enjoy the quality of the venue, the fantastic food and drink, and the opportunity to come together and celebrate the achievements of our city centre business community."

Online entry forms will be available from Monday 30th November, and the HullBID team can deliver printed forms to your business upon request. Keep a look out on social media and the details will also be emailed to you closer to the time.

For all sponsorship opportunities please email Francesca on francesca@hullbid.co.uk or call 07719519314.

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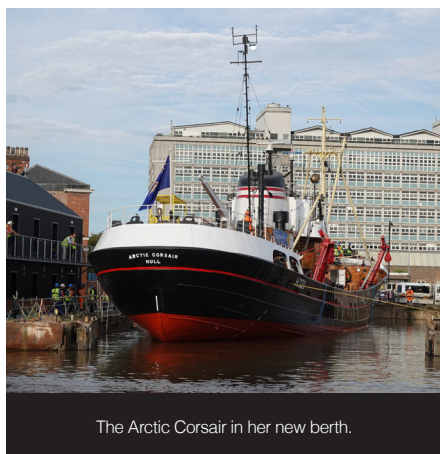
Maritime Museum and Arctic Corsair attract crowds into city centre

[Crowds flocked into the city centre to celebrate a double milestone in the Maritime Hull project.](#)

More than 3,000 visitors passed through the doors of the Hull Maritime Museum when it reopened following the completion of an extensive programme of restoration and redevelopment.

The following week hundreds of people were up early to watch the Arctic Corsair, Hull's last remaining sidewinder trawler, make her final voyage from Albert Dock via the Humber and the River Hull to her purpose-built dry berth at North End Shipyard.

The next phase of work will focus on installing the walkways and bridges that will physically connect



The Arctic Corsair in her new berth.

the visitor centre to the Arctic Corsair, with the attractions expected to open to the public in spring 2027.

Councillor Jackie Dad, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Culture, said: "Seeing the Arctic Corsair safely arrive at her new home was a hugely significant moment for Hull.

"It was lovely to see so many people line the marina and watch the trawler move along the Humber Estuary and River Hull – a true reminder of how much people cherish this significant vessel and what it means to the city.

"This successful move secures the future of one of our most important maritime icons and allows us to protect and celebrate the stories she represents for generations to come."

Councillor Mike Ross, Leader of Hull City Council, said: "The reopening of Hull Maritime Museum was a proud and significant moment for our city. This much-loved building has been carefully restored to ensure that Hull's rich maritime heritage can be shared and celebrated for generations to come."

T2 sets the standard with makeover that "means business"

[Leadership development consultancy T2 has completed a major transformation of its waterfront headquarters into a purpose-designed people performance centre.](#)

The £1.2m investment to buy and revamp the building in Hull's Fruit Market urban village reflects both the company's decade of growth and its ambitions for the years ahead.

Founded by CEO Martin Johnson, a former Royal Navy serviceman, T2 has grown from a single consultant working out of a shared business centre into a team of 12, with clients including Manchester United, the INEOS Grenadiers cycling team, and Specsavers.

The company bought its building in 2025 and has now invested in a comprehensive makeover

to create the T2 Performance Centre, a 6,000 sq ft three-storey facility designed to set a new standard for how leadership development is delivered and experienced.

The building has been refurbished throughout, with the makeover delivered by Hull-based commercial interior design business RFD. The work represents a major commitment by T2 to create exceptional facilities, enhancing the services and experience offered to clients and supporting leadership development, both within the Hull and Humber region and across the UK.

Mr Johnson said: "The vision for this building has always been to create somewhere that immediately tells delegates that we mean business – because we do.

"Owning this building, and now investing significantly to make it a perfect fit for our business, gives us the platform to deliver an exceptional client experience, to grow our team, and to keep pushing the boundaries of leadership development.



Martin Johnson of T2 with colleagues (from left) Becki Rookyard and Lydia English.

"We want this to be a genuinely great place to work. We've thought about the small things as much as the big ones – such as the library of psychology books, the roof terrace overlooking The Deep, and the greenery."

Yarina shares colour, quality and stories of South America

[A gift shop in Princes Quay will unveil the colour and quality of clothing and crafts from South America as part of its Christmas offer.](#)

Maricela Cushcagua said the products will go on sale this month at Yarina Native Crafts – the business named after her daughter, who has just returned from a buying trip to their native Ecuador.

Maricela added that visitors to the shop and to the new website will also be able to find out about the artisan traders from Ecuador, Peru and Colombia who are sending their wares to Hull.

She said: "Every product is different because they are all individual and handmade, with a story behind every one of them.



Maricela Cushcagua at Yarina Native Crafts.

"The plan was always to expose people to the beautiful things that people make in Ecuador, so many beautiful craft products that are not known

in the UK and therefore not appreciated. They are not big brand names but they are great quality."

Maricela and Yarina come from the town of Otavalo, a city surrounded by volcanoes in the Andean highlands.

They discovered Hull when Yarina came to the University to study business management. It was 2017 and the excitement around City of Culture encouraged her to develop her ideas in Hull.

Initially they opened their shop as a kiosk. Two years ago they moved into the current premises across from Primark.

Maricela said: "We used to travel to different cities and festivals as far afield as Plymouth and the Scottish borders and we felt Hull would be a nice place to establish ourselves. We found that people in Hull appreciate what we are doing - it's the people who have kept us here."

BID and University launch partnership with media team

HullBID has struck a partnership with the University of Hull Business School (HUBS) which will see students support city centre businesses as the HullBID Media Team.

The three-strong team, who are all final year students, made their debut at Dino Day and have since been out and about getting to know the business community and planning activities including vibrant social media campaigns..

Lizzie Somerville (ideas and strategy), Mariia Prakopchuk (visual creative content) and Jul Oginska (business communications and relationships) hope to recruit fellow students to expand their reach.

Fannie Yeung, Director of Student Experience at

HUBS, said: "The students will support HullBID, its businesses and events and help to tell the stories of the people, businesses and activities that make Hull such a brilliant place to work, live and visit.

"They will bring fresh ideas, enthusiasm and a student perspective to the city centre and that will give them the opportunity to enhance their skills."

Francesca Wagstaff-Sharp, HullBID Business Liaison Officer, said: "The students are very keen to learn and are very grateful for the experience. They have some innovative ideas for engaging with our businesses both in person and through our social media channels.

"They'll be learning about businesses across the city centre, showcasing their stories and experiences, and helping to strengthen the connection between students and the city centre business community.

"They did a fantastic job at Dino Day with only two days' notice and we're introducing them to businesses to ease them in. They are all confident,



Lizzie, Jul and Mariia outside HUBS.

with great enthusiasm and willingness to help support the BID Businesses.

"They also share a real passion for our city and are excited to get involved and gain some incredible real-world experience along the way."

Shipping company has ambitions for growth in new home

A worldwide shipping company which was set up in Hull 146 years ago has continued its commitment to the city centre with the relocation of its head office.

In completing the move, John H Whitaker (Tankers) Limited also confirmed the appointment of a new Managing Director, with Mark Stanley stepping up after the retirement of Mark Whitaker, who is now an ambassador for the business.

Both developments are closely connected to the history of the business, which dates back to 1880 when John Henry Whitaker set up a dry cargo business on the Humber.

The relocation takes the company back to the



Mark Stanley (left) with Mark Whitaker (right) and Director of Finance Duncan McGahey.

premises in High Street, next to the new berth of the Arctic Corsair, which it vacated some 90 years ago to move to Tower Street when a dry dock became available. The new MD also has plenty of history with

the firm, having joined as its first engineering cadet 35 years ago.

John H Whitaker (Tankers) Limited has invested around £500,000 in reconfiguring and refurbishing the offices for the team of 20. They support a fleet of seagoing tankers which provide specialist fuel bunkering services to vessels off the south east coast and from ports in Southampton, Milford Haven and Gibraltar. The company also manages a vessel for a client in Liverpool.

The business was acquired two years ago by global marine fuel supplier Lindsay Blee, which backed the move to High Street and has ambitious plans for the future.

Mark said: "Fleet renewal is a big priority, building on the reputation that Mark Whitaker and his predecessors have established over the years. We are also looking at taking on 15 cadets through our commitment as advocates for British seafarers."



Chair's statement Jim Harris, HullBID Chairman

Suffice, to say I am still buzzing from the fantastic HullBID Ballot result from the summer!

I need to say a massive THANK YOU to all the amazing businesses who believed in what the BID brings to the city and voted to retain those services for a further five years!

Francesca, Raich and Mark will be leading the operations team forward, and revealing exciting new future plans over the next few months. This will include a fabulous Christmas marketing campaign to help the city centre through this really important time.

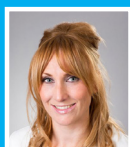
Got a question?

For more information about how to share your news or ideas, email francesca@hullbid.co.uk or call on 07719 519314

www.hullbid.co.uk

The HullBID team

To find out about our board directors, visit www.hullbid.co.uk



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