

# Indie Durham City

Update report for City of Durham Parish Council (#3)  
20 August 2020



## Social media overview for @IndieDurhamCity

Platform	Total followers	Reach/ impressions	Definition
	422 (+67)	3,827	Number of people seeing at least one @IndieDurhamCity post (last 28 days)
	505 (+124)	31,300	Number of times @IndieDurhamCity tweets were seen (July 2020)
	187 (+58)	n/a	n/a

Change in followers is since the previous monthly update. Instagram does not provide monthly analytics.

## Headlines

- As lockdown continues to ease, we have started to gently increase our number of visits to Durham – on 16 July, 14 August and 20 August. These visits have included some face-to-face contact with traders, as well as being a useful opportunity to gather photos and videos for sharing on social media and the website. A further visit is planned for 27 August.
- It's becoming clear that one of the most valuable roles we are playing via the Indie Durham City project is connecting useful people together – not least those who have properties to let with those who might wish to occupy them. We have therefore been pushing this theme more prominently, including on LinkedIn ([https://www.linkedin.com/posts/grahamsoult\\_retail-durham-highstreet-activity-6696349388547072000-PpZ8](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/grahamsoult_retail-durham-highstreet-activity-6696349388547072000-PpZ8)) and on the website at <https://www.indiedurhamcity.co.uk/2020/08/06/keen-to-open-a-shop-in-durham-the-indie-durham-city-project-can-help/>. It's also a major theme in the Chronicle's excellent article at <https://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/news/north-east-news/defiant-message-durham-open-business-18792612>.
- Two more businesses – Discovering Durham (Liza and Matty) and Durham Soap Company (Julie) have so far featured as the Indie Durham City "cover stars" on Facebook and Twitter. These "cover star" posts are gaining excellent engagement, including plenty of likes and shares.
- An archive of all previous cover stars is now available on the Indie Durham City website at <https://www.indiedurhamcity.co.uk/category/news/cover-stars/>.

- Overall Twitter impressions for @IndieDurhamCity have so far reached 18,400 during August. We have suggested the idea of a @CityofDurhamPC Twitter account to help further amplify the positive messages!
- Website traffic remains modest but steady, with 182 views in July and 153 so far in August. The site is serving its intended purpose of being a place that people can be referred to for more information about the project, and to sign up for support.
- At the request of Graham Wood from Durham County Council, Indie Durham City was pleased to participate in the government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's #ShopLocal week (w/c 10 August), sharing positive content featuring BEIS's hashtag on both Twitter and Facebook. More recently, tweets have used the #EnjoySummerSafely hashtag that both the government and the High Streets Task Force have been pushing, with one tweet about Durham Markets (<https://twitter.com/IndieDurhamCity/status/1296122137846206464>) getting a retweet from the HSTF.
- It is positive to see others sharing content about the Indie Durham City project, notably this post by designer Corinne Lewis-Ward on LinkedIn at [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/clewisward\\_city-of-durham-parish-council-hires-award-winning-activity-6699984908254769152-cVuB](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/clewisward_city-of-durham-parish-council-hires-award-winning-activity-6699984908254769152-cVuB).
- We continue to regularly engage with the Parish Council on city centre-related issues, including: contributing a detailed quote to a Parish Council press release about the city centre retail situation; sharing some thoughts on the new economic recovery taskforce for County Durham, headed up by the FSB's Simon Hanson; expressing support for Visit County Durham's marketing activity around the retail and food and drink sectors; and agreeing to draft the Parish Council's contribution to the government's consultation on business rates (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hm-treasury-fundamental-review-of-business-rates-call-for-evidence>, ending 18 September).

## Durham businesses contacted/supported since last update

Independent businesses helped up to previous update:	12
New businesses contacted/helped since then:	5
Total independent businesses contacted/helped so far:	17

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points since last update (with GS next actions in blue)
Brooklyn Pizza Slice	Rob Morris	7 August: Submission via IDC website	Currently trading in Market Hall, but is looking to take on a small shop in Durham city centre. Rob concerned about empty shops – GS gave reassurance that Durham remains a good place to do business. In initial email, GS gave feedback on Rob’s profile on the Durham Markets website (which is missing his social media links), and suggested he resurrect his dormant Twitter account (which he’s done). Zoom to be arranged – <b>GS to reply to Rob’s 20 August email.</b>
Durham Soap Company	Julie	16 July: Referral from Discovering Durham	GS visited on 16 July and 20 August. Featured as social media cover star since 19 August. <b>GS to email link to IDC website.</b>
Print-it Stitch-it	Zoe	16 July: Referral from Crafty-Nook	GS dropped in on 16 July. Zoe keen to get help with Instagram. <b>GS to email.</b>
Silverbird Photography	Emily Carey	16 July: Submission via IDC website	What appears to be a home-based business within the Parish Council area. GS replied, then chased on 11 August, but still no reply yet. <b>GS will try messaging via Facebook</b> instead.
Health Barn	Jefferson Riley	29 June: Submission via IDC website	Jefferson and GS had Zoom chat on 24 July. Jefferson has started to tweet again at GS’s suggestion. Jefferson keen to grow visibility of business in NE, and attend more events, including Durham Business Club and the #NetworkNorthEast Twitter hour. <b>GS to complete review of Health Barn’s website and social media</b> , and then relay feedback.
Plant stall at Market Hall	Nigel	24 June: Referral from Susan at Crafty Nook	GS chatted during visit on 20 August. Nigel still intending to apply for DCC discretionary grant (at GS suggestion), but has not done so yet.
Tealicious Tearoom	Alison Harnett	23 June: Submission via IDC website	<b>GS still to follow up</b> with Durham Business Club details, and feedback based on an initial review of Alison’s Facebook page, following earlier Zoom chat.

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Sustainable self-catering accommodation	James Hope Wilson	22 June: Via GS Facebook	As mentioned previously, James, who lives in the parish, is setting up a “sustainable self-catering business” which will operate partly within the parish boundary, and will launch in early 2021 – GS has now seen the plans, and they are really exciting (but still confidential for now). He is also intending to produce a directory of local suppliers for his guests (which could benefit Durham Markets and Discovering Durham, for example). James and GS met in person on 14 August – <b>GS to respond to James’ follow-up email.</b>
Crafty Nook	Susan Platten	19 June: Submission via IDC website	Susan and GS had brief catch-up chat in person on 16 July. <b>GS to follow-up</b> to check on progress, and to <b>share further Crafty-Nook updates</b> on Facebook.
The Picnic Basket	Tony and Kinnie Moss	18 June: Submission via IDC website	<b>GS to follow up</b> to check on progress, and to <b>share further updates</b> on Facebook.
Durham Vintage	Poppy Solari	17 June: Via Adam Shanley	<b>GS to follow up</b> to check on progress, and to <b>share further updates</b> on Facebook.
Prince Bishops Shopping Centre	Richard Toynbee	21 May: Intro from Adam Shanley	Regular contact with Richard ongoing. Video chat held with Richard and Eileen Connolly (AL Marketing) on 17 July, to understand more about PB’s strategy for the future of the centre. <b>GS to continue sharing details</b> of potential occupants with Richard, and to generally emphasise how PB is open and flexible re. such enquiries.
Claypath Delicatessen	Angie and Rory Handy	20 May: Direct message from Angie on Twitter	GS continuing to share deli content on social media. Deli continues to be more active on Twitter now. <b>GS to follow up with in-person visit</b> soon, now that café is open again after lockdown and then refurb.
Marla Jones Jewellery	Jackie Lamb	18 May: Both tagged in Facebook post by Debbie Simpson	As explained previously, Jackie is a former start-up client of Debbie (who works at North East BIC), who she thinks would benefit from social media support via IDC. GS called in on 16 July – Jackie keen to sort her Google listing. <b>GS to email.</b>

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Tiny Acorn	Mark Taylor	18 May: Email from Mark following press coverage	Planned September opening of new Malin & Mac gift shop at Prince Bishops – work on site noted during 14 August visit. <b>GS to check progress and share social media update.</b>
Durham Markets Company	Emma Hignett, Colin Wilkes, Alice Wilkes	15 May: Intro from Adam Shanley	Social media mentions and shares (in both directions) are continuing. <b>GS to email Coilin with update.</b> Markets and Zmove collaboration (see below) will provide plenty of scope for sharing positive messages about the city.
Bojangles Coffee / Coffee Coal	Justin Messenger	14 May: LinkedIn message from Justin following press coverage	As reported previously, Justin has agreed a deal to occupy the former Blaze premises at 9 Saddler Street, following GS introduction to Richard at Prince Bishops. Legal work continuing – Justin hopes to occupy in “weeks rather than months”.
Host & Stay Northumberland and North East	Andrew Biggs	14 May: LinkedIn message from Andrew following press coverage	Still no reply following initial expression of interest, so GS to park for now.
Discovering Durham CIC	Liza Johnson	13 May: Existing contact of GS	GS visited shop on 16 July and 14 August. Liza and Matty featured as social media “cover stars” from 6 to 19 August. IDC accounts continuing to share Discovering Durham content on social media.

## Contacts planned

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points (with GS next actions in blue)
Walkergate Durham	Alan (Surname?)	18 May: Via Adam Shanley	<b>GS still to contact.</b> Do we know Alan’s surname?

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points (with GS next actions in blue)
Fowler's Yard	TBC	14 May: LinkedIn	Established that scheme is owned and managed by DCC. Owen Weightman (GS LinkedIn connection) knows Graham Hopper, who is a tenant, so that might be a useful way in. <b>GS to pursue.</b>
Riverwalk	Adam Hall	n/a	Existing GS contact, but not talked to in relation to IDC yet. Gs has engaged with Riverwalk on Instagram messaging, though (14 August). <b>GS to email.</b>

### Other useful conversations had or in progress

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points
Durham Group Estates	Gurpreet Jagpal	7 August: Email from GS (but existing connection)	Gurpreet owns commercial property across the city, including the building housing Claypath Delicatessen. There is potential for him to add to his city centre property portfolio. Gurpreet also knows the landlords of many other properties in the city centre – e.g. M&Co – so is a useful contact. <b>Gurpreet suggested GS speak to Lewis Smith</b> (another existing contact anyway), as Lewis's agency Ashley Smith market many of the city's commercial properties.
Durham County Council	Graham Wood	7 August: Email from Graham W (but existing connection)	Graham W keen to have a catch-up to discuss our respective work – GS agreed. Graham W always very supportive of GS work to date (e.g. in Chester-le-Street), which is welcome. <b>GS to follow up</b> with suggested date.

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points
Stick Marketing	Sarah Greenwell	6 August: Twitter message from Sarah (but existing connection)	Sarah keen to recreate the cancelled Durham Christmas Festival online: "not just for Christmas but to create a community between the traders online and give them a wider reach". Had Zoom with GS on 7 August – GS praised idea, but highlighted need to align with Colin and Durham Markets, and encouraged Sarah to contact Adam S at Parish Council (which she did). <b>GS to continue to help</b> make this happen! Zoom with Sarah, Colin and Adam S to be arranged.
CDC Enterprise Agency	Joe Murray (CEO)	23 July: Email from Joe (but existing connection)	Enquiry about space for a client's new retail business. Had been looking at other areas of County Durham, but GS suggested Durham city! Referred to Anthony at Rawstron Johnson (Riverwalk). Anthony and client in talks about potential unit (4 August). <b>GS to follow-up</b> to see if any progress.
Zmove	Nick Mason	22 July: Email from Nick, following LinkedIn conversation	Zmove (pronounced Zed-move) is a cargo e-bike delivery service, already operating in Newcastle and launching soon in Durham. Zmove will provide a local delivery service for Durham Markets traders (not public knowledge yet, so please keep confidential), and can potentially work with other independent businesses too (it is already talking to Claypath Deli). GS had Zoom chat with Nick on 4 August.

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points
<b>Creative Heritage Studios CIC</b>	Corinne Lewis-Ward	15 July: Email from Corinne to GS (but existing connection)	GS had Zoom chat with Corinne on 4 August. Corinne has worked as an artist and designer for the last 15 years, and runs British-themed gift brand Powder Butterfly. Corinne has just set up Creative Heritage Studios CIC "to carry out design-led public engagement, creative activities, and deliver revenue generator products and services in order to create stronger communities, organisations, and help rejuvenate our high streets". Durham could potentially be involved – interventions would likely involve using local artists to create window vinyls for empty shops, but does NOT envisage using those spaces for any kind of creative activity. GS introduced Corinne and Alice Hight to each other. Conversations to continue; <a href="#">GS to connect Corinne with potential landlord opportunities</a> .
<b>Groundhoppers Blog</b>	Andy Potts	3 July: Via IDC Twitter	As mentioned previously, Andy is a freelance journalist writing an article about Durham city centre's future, and especially the role of independent retailers. GS took part in video interview on 13 July. GS chased on 20 August – article still in progress.
<b>Durham BID</b>	Adam Deathe	29 June: Email to Adam from GS, inviting a conversation	GS and Adam D both invited by Graham Wood at DCC to participate in BEIS's #ShopLocal campaign during w/c 10 August. Adam D did not wish to participate or collaborate, despite GS's enthusiasm. Still no BID content for IDC to share on Instagram or Twitter either, despite GS encouragement. GS keeping Adam S at Parish Council updated with any developments.

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points
Visit County Durham	Michelle Gorman	26 June: GS contact via LinkedIn (Michelle already aware of GS work)	Michelle and GS had productive introductory Zoom chat on 28 July. Clear that IDC and VCD strategies – to promote Durham to a predominantly regional audience for now, and emphasise quality and distinctiveness in areas such as food and drink – are well aligned. No specific actions as yet, but Michelle and GS will maintain regular contact. <b>GS to continue sharing</b> relevant VCD content via IDC social channels; <b>Michelle to speak</b> at a future Durham Business Club event.
Empty Shop	Nick Malyan	18 June: Via Alice Highet	<b>GS still to introduce</b> Nick to Richard at Prince Bishops and Adam at Parish Council.
Alice Highet	Alice Highet	9 June: Via Adam Shanley	Alice interested in empty spaces in Durham for art gallery/studio use. Alice and GS had second Zoom chat on 30 July. Alice to continue exploring a range of options for art spaces in Durham – ranging from pop-up opportunities to potentially more permanent studios and/or galleries – and review funding opportunities, including Section 106 (Alice to discuss with Stephen Reed at DCC). GS introduced Alice to Corinne of Creative Heritage Studios CIC, given shared creative themes. <b>Alice to update</b> when back from holiday in September – GS happy to give feedback on any funding application.
Rawstron Johnson	Anthony Jackson	5 June: Contact with GS via Twitter	Rawstron Johnson are leasing agents for Riverwalk. Further email contact on 16 July. GS referred potential retail occupant – in talks with Anthony as of 4 August. <b>GS to follow-up</b> to see if any progress.
Durham City AFC	TBC	23 May: Contact with IDC via Twitter	Keen to work together and promote Durham. <b>GS still to follow up.</b>
Durham Pride	TBC	22 May: Contact with GS via Twitter	Durham Pride keen to promote Durham as an LGBT-friendly city. Video chat to be arranged – no further response since GS chased again on 14 July.

## Comments, thoughts, questions? Drop us a line

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