

Indie Durham City

Update report for City of Durham Parish Council (#4)
17 November 2020



Social media overview for @IndieDurhamCity

Platform	Total followers	Reach/ impressions		Definition
	612 (+190)	7,294		Number of people seeing at least one @IndieDurhamCity post (last 28 days)
	692 (+187)	Aug	29,500	Number of times @IndieDurhamCity tweets were seen
		Sep	16,400	
		Oct	16,700	
		Nov (so far)	6,146	
	435 (+248)	269		Instagram accounts reached in last 7 days

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

Headlines

Support your Durham city independents this lockdown

- ✓ Visit independent essential retailers in the city
- ✓ Use click-and-collect and takeaway services
- ✓ Find and shop with local traders and producers online
- ✓ Share positivity on social media

Stay up to date by following @indiedurhamcity on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

- We have been promoting a "Support your Durham city independents this lockdown" message on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (see for example <https://www.facebook.com/IndieDurhamCity/posts/178836640507774>), with the intention of building a simple webpage that gives an overview of what businesses are trading, and how customers can access them.

- We continue to promote Durham nationally! Various good-practice examples from Durham's independent retailers featured in a webinar that we gave as part of Mid Ulster Enterprise Week on 16 November (<https://ndevents.co.uk/mudcenterpriseweekwebinar2/>). We have also been able to bring in mentions of Durham Markets in interviews with Retail Week (<https://www.retail-week.com/people/local-heroes-the-retailers-benefiting-from-the-rise-of-localism/7036031.article>) and the Financial Times (<https://www.ft.com/content/840d3ae9-84b0-4f41-b7b1-b2a80248d460>).
- Using our existing BBC contacts, we helped The Parish Council secure live coverage on Look North of the Town Hall poppy installation, with Cllr Elizabeth Scott interviewed.
- It is positive to see Durham BID starting to actively promote the Roam app as part of its new "Life in Durham" campaign, and we have started to ramp up our own promotion of Roam to complement and support what the BID is doing. We have just emailed all the retailers that we have worked with so far, inviting them to claim and use their Roam listings.
- This month, we have contacted all the businesses we've worked with so far, reminding them of the opportunity to claim their free three-month Durham Business Club membership.
- At the request of the Parish Council, we drafted a response to the government's business rates consultation, suggesting a sales tax as an alternative to business rates, and highlighting the negative impact that the current business rates system has on businesses that are trading, or that want to trade, in a city like Durham.
- The erroneous BBC article about Durham being the "second worst" in the country for vacant shops (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-54572668>) caused a lot of rumpus, and we welcomed being able to contribute to Durham Markets' more optimistic press release (<https://durhammarkets.co.uk/not-as-grim-up-north-as-portrayed/>) in light of the data errors being exposed. We used our existing contacts to get the BBC to add a correction note to the article – rather than just changing it – and Retail Week, The Guardian and the Chronicle, which had cited the BBC's data, all updated their own reports at our request.
- With the LDC keen to make amends after the BBC's error, it was useful to be able to see the raw data on which their assessment was based. We have been scrutinising the LDC data, and comparing it to what we see on the ground, and do have concerns about quite a few inaccuracies. Obviously, any data is only a snapshot, and it is to be expected that some units will have been filled since LDC's survey, while others that weren't empty then now are. However, there are some premises on the list that do not seem to exist, and some listed as vacant that have remained occupied throughout. We are awaiting further clarification from LDC, and in due course intend to write a blog post for the CannyInsights.com website regarding our analysis. From a local and

national point of view, LDC data is widely cited by the media, usually entirely uncritically, so it is important that data with such potential to damage places through negative headlines is, at the least, accurate and robust.

- In some positive news, a Twitter contact who works at Yorkshire Trading Company (<https://www.yorkshiretrading.com/>) has confirmed that the company is taking the ex-M&Co/M&S site, initially on a short-term lease. Shopfitting work was due to start on 16 November, with an opening expected towards the end of November. This news is still confidential for now, but will likely be revealed by "Opening soon" posters on site in the next few days. The store will be a positive and useful addition to the city, given the lack of another large general merchandise retailer since the closure of Wilko.
- The second lockdown has, once again, made it appropriate to limit unnecessary travel, though we are intending to once again visit Durham during the week commencing 16 November. Previous visits took place on 30 October, to gather further material for social media content, and verify the LDC's data on the ground; on 23 October, which included a visit to the Town Hall; 15 October and 3 September, to visit and photograph Malin & Mac; and 27 August, which included a visit to Circle Vintage.
- In September, we responded to an email query from Cllr Esther Ashby, asking about the measures that Durham's businesses had put in place to mitigate against COVID, particularly given the large number of students that were about to arrive in the city.
- We are still keen to see a @CityofDurhamPC Twitter account, to help further amplify our positive messages! We are happy to set up, if useful.
- In August, we proactively messaged, via their Facebook pages, the three businesses featured in a Northern Echo story (<https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/18677745.durham-firms-hit-new-elvet-bridge-closure-call-action/>) about the negative impact of the New Elvet Bridge closure, to alert them to help available via the Indie Durham City project. All three could help themselves a little more: at the time of contact, Dunelm Foodstore had not posted on Facebook since May, and has still not posted since; Durham Ginstitute had forgotten to update the "About" section on its Facebook page, which still said it was closed (we flagged this, and they updated it); and the Dun Cow had last updated its Instagram in 2018 and its Facebook page in July (but has been more active on Facebook since), and gave a "We can't respond from Facebook" reply when messaged (so we followed up by email). All received and saw our message, but only the Dun Cow responded.

Durham businesses contacted/supported since last update

Independent businesses helped up to previous update:	17
New businesses contacted/helped since then:	8
Total independent businesses contacted/helped so far:	25

This section logs businesses with which we have had direct contact of some kind, but numerous others have also benefited from exposure on the Indie Durham City social media channels, such as Moon Jewellery, The Station House, The Waiting Room, CoHo, Ink Cell Tattoo Studio, and The Coffee House, among others.

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points since last update (with GS next actions in blue)
Buttons and Fairies	Sarah Hind	30 October: Submission via IDC website	Durham Outdoor Markets trader. GS engaging on Facebook and Instagram already. Zoom TBA . GS emailed with evaluation form 16 November.
HedKed Handicrafts	Kevin & Heather Edwards	30 October: Submission via IDC website	Durham Outdoor Markets trader. GS engaging on social media already. Zoom TBA . GS emailed with evaluation form 16 November.
Fieldhouse Pottery	Kathy Cann	29 October: Submission via IDC website	Durham Outdoor Markets trader. GS engaging on Facebook already (Kathy is not active on Instagram or Twitter). Zoom TBA . GS emailed with evaluation form 16 November.
Emily Charlotte Yoga	Emily Osborne	24 September: Email forwarded from Adam Shanley	Emily is opening a new yoga studio in Durham city centre. GS and Emily had Zoom on 30 September, with ongoing social media follow-up. GS emailed with evaluation form 16 November.
Dun Cow	Jill Carey	28 August: GS follow-up to Northern Echo story	GS made initial contact to offer support. To call in when possible .
The Mugwump	Jean Jackson	27 August: Email via CannyInsights.com website	GS followed up on 17 November.
Chapters	Gary Summers	25 August: Submission via IDC website	GS called in on 27 August, but Gary unavailable to speak. Ongoing social media engagement since. GS followed up on 17 November.

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points since last update (with GS next actions in blue)
Circle Vintage	Patty O'Boyle	24 August: Query via IDC website	GS visited on 27 August, and later featured Circle Vintage as the Indie Durham City cover stars (https://www.indiedurhamcity.co.uk/2020/10/01/our-social-media-cover-stars-chloe-and-claire-at-circle-vintage-in-durham/). GS secured coverage for Circle Vintage in the Roam app video that was filmed in Durham in September (https://youtu.be/llr2zQ74rrl). GS previously followed up on 1 October. GS emailed with evaluation form 16 November.
Brooklyn Pizza Slice	Rob Morris	7 August: Submission via IDC website	Ongoing contact between GS and Rob as he looks for new premises, and regular updates being shared on the Indie Durham City social media. GS emailed with evaluation form 16 November.
Durham Soap Company	Julie	16 July: Referral from Discovering Durham	GS emailed evaluation form on 17 November.
Print-it Stitch-it	Zoe	16 July: Referral from Crafty-Nook	GS followed up on 2 September – no meeting yet. GS chased again on 17 November.
Silverbird Photography	Emily Carey	16 July: Submission via IDC website	What appears to be a home-based business within the Parish Council area. GS still chasing to arrange a Zoom – last emailed 16 November.
Health Barn	Jefferson Riley	29 June: Submission via IDC website	Jeff continues to be more active on social media, after GS prepared a well-received report on his current activity. GS is sharing Health Barn's updates regularly via the Indie Durham City channels. GS emailed evaluation form on 16 November.
Tealicious Tearoom	Alison Harnett	23 June: Submission via IDC website	GS followed up, and sent evaluation form, on 17 November. Ongoing promotion via Indie Durham City social media.
Sustainable self-catering accommodation	James Hope Wilson	22 June: Via GS Facebook	Continuing follow-up, most recently on 28 August. GS emailed evaluation form on 17 November.

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points since last update (with GS next actions in blue)
Crafty Nook	Susan Platten	19 June: Submission via IDC website	GS emailed evaluation form on 17 November.
The Picnic Basket	Tony and Kinnie Moss	18 June: Submission via IDC website	GS previously followed up on 2 September. GS emailed evaluation form on 17 November. GS to suggest Picnic Basket as next Indie Durham City cover stars.
Durham Vintage	Poppy Solari	17 June: Via Adam Shanley	GS previously followed up on 1 October. Poppy now on maternity leave! GS emailed evaluation form on 16 November.
Prince Bishops Shopping Centre	Richard Toynbee	21 May: Intro from Adam Shanley	Regular contact with Richard ongoing, as well as Eileen from the shopping centre's marketing company. Catch-up TBA. GS emailed evaluation form on 16 November.
Claypath Delicatessen	Angie and Rory Handy	20 May: Direct message from Angie on Twitter	Ongoing social media engagement, especially Instagram. GS emailed evaluation form on 17 November.
Marla Jones Jewellery	Jacqueline Lamb	18 May: Both tagged in Facebook post by Debbie Simpson	GS visited on 16 July, with email contact and social media promo since. GS emailed evaluation form on 16 November. Zoom still TBA.
Malin & Mac / Tiny Acorn	Mark Taylor	18 May: Email from Mark following press coverage	GS visited Malin & Mac after it opened, and has extensively promoted the shop on social media. Mark has also been the Indie Durham City cover star (https://www.indiedurhamcity.co.uk/2020/10/23/our-social-media-cover-star-mark-at-malin-mac/). GS emailed evaluation form on 16 November.
Durham Markets Company	Emma Hignett, Colin Wilkes, Alice Wilkes	15 May: Intro from Adam Shanley	Social media mentions and shares (in both directions), and regular email contacts, are continuing. GS has particularly plugged the Markets and Zmove home delivery collaboration, and achieved mentions of this initiative in Retail Week and the FT. A Zoom took place on 6 October to discuss the Virtual Christmas Festival. GS emailed evaluation form on 16 November.

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points since last update (with GS next actions in blue)
Bojangles Coffee / Coffee Coal	Justin Messenger	14 May: LinkedIn message from Justin following press coverage	Justin now has the keys to his new premises. GS followed up on 17 November - to check if this is still the ex-Blaze – also including evaluation form.
Discovering Durham CIC	Liza Johnson	13 May: Existing contact of GS	GS continues to engage and visit regularly. GS emailed evaluation form on 17 November.

Contacts planned

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points (with GS next actions in blue)
Ashley Smith Chartered Surveyors	Lewis Smith	Existing contact – follow DBC member	GS to contact re. Durham lettings and premises availability.
Walkergate Durham	Alan (Surname?)	18 May: Via Adam Shanley	GS is regularly sharing Walkergate updates on social media, but is still to contact in person.
Fowler’s Yard	TBC	14 May: LinkedIn	GS still to pursue , possibly via Owen Weightman intro to Graham Hopper. Notably, LDC lists three empty units at Fowler’s Yard, even though there appears to be only one (unit 5).
Riverwalk	Adam Hall	n/a	GS continues to engage with Riverwalk on Instagram. GS to email .

Other useful conversations had or in progress

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points
	Emma Cowley	28 September: Intro via Adam Shanley	Emma is a commercial artist, looking for creative space in the city, but with no need for a shopfront. GS followed up 16 November; Zoom scheduled for 18 November .
Glow Creative	David Elliott	14 September: via Indie Durham City website form	Glow Creative is the marketing agency used by Prince Bishops. GS shared an Umbrella Street via the Indie Durham City social media channels at David's request. GS emailed evaluation form on 16 November.
Durham Group Estates	Gurpreet Jagpal	7 August: Email from GS (but existing connection)	Nothing new to report.
Durham County Council	Graham Wood	7 August: Email from Graham W (but existing connection)	GS sent follow-up 17 November – catch-up meeting TBA .
Stick Marketing	Sarah Greenwell	6 August: Twitter message from Sarah (but existing connection)	Sarah had been interested in virtual Christmas market – GS not sure if she ever spoke to Colin Wilkes in the end. GS sent courtesy follow-up 17 November.
CDC Enterprise Agency	Joe Murray (CEO)	23 July: Email from Joe (but existing connection)	Enquiry about space for a client's new retail business. GS followed up with Rawstron Johnson on 17 November to see if anything came of it.
Zmove	Nick Mason	22 July: Email from Nick, following LinkedIn conversation	GS continues to engage on Twitter, and promote Durham Markets delivery service.

Business	Person	When and how initiated	Key points
Creative Heritage Studios CIC	Corinne Lewis-Ward	15 July: Email from Corinne to GS (but existing connection)	GS courtesy follow-up on 17 November.
Groundhoppers Blog	Andy Potts	3 July: Via IDC Twitter	Article that GS was interviewed for seems to have stalled – no update since GS chased in August.
Durham BID	Adam Deathe	29 June: Email to Adam from GS, inviting a conversation	The BID is now more active on social media again under its new “Life in Durham” brand, so GS is engaging positively with that content on social media.
Visit County Durham	Michelle Gorman	26 June: GS contact via LinkedIn (Michelle already aware of GS work)	Continued interaction via Twitter and LinkedIn.
Empty Shop	Nick Malyan	18 June: Via Alice Highet	GS followed up on 17 November.
Alice Highet	Alice Highet	9 June: Via Adam Shanley	Ongoing contact re. potential Durham art spaces. GS emailed evaluation form on 16 November.
Rawstron Johnson	Anthony Jackson	5 June: Contact with GS via Twitter	GS queried the Local Data Company data with Anthony, who confirmed on 5 November that the actual number of unlet units is seven, not 16. GS emailed evaluation form on 15 November.
Durham City AFC	TBC	23 May: Contact with IDC via Twitter	Keen to work together and promote Durham. GS still to follow up.
Landlord of Topshop building	John Paleomyllites	22 May: Message received via LinkedIn	GS emailed follow-up and evaluation form on 17 November.
Durham Pride	TBC	22 May: Contact with GS via Twitter	No further response after GS chasing.

Comments, thoughts, questions? Drop us a line

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