



Owen Cleugh
Consumer Protection Manager
Neighbourhood Services
Durham County Council
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Dear Owen

Durham BID is keen to work with all stakeholders of Durham City as we strive collectively to develop the local economy. A beautiful city with assets afforded World Heritage status, Durham's charm is evident for all to see. Indeed, the visitor economy to the city is one that is of crucial significance. However, during recent years, greater reliance has been placed on the tourist economy as local residents change their shopping habits.

Footfall is falling across town and city retail centres across the country, especially in areas with out of town retail developments in close proximity. Durham is no exception and numerous retailers have expressed concern at the steady decline in local shopper footfall to the city. This is in part as result of shifts in retailing habits. With over 60% of adults engaging in some form or retail through their smartphone, the traditional retail experience is rapidly being consigned to history.

Durham BID is working with levy payers to improve engagement with local consumers, promoting the city as being a preferred destination for them to conduct their business and to shop. Whilst this can help to arrest the decline in footfall, the homogenisation of the high street across the country provides little incentive to return to the city. Therefore it is feared that footfall and the all-important average spend may, at best, plateau rather than increase.

Consequently, Durham BID is keen to develop business focussed activity to promote footfall and spend in the city. One way of doing this is to open the city to trade in areas where trade is currently prohibited. Durham BID is keen to work with local schools and similar organisations to deliver a series of summer fetes on Framwelgate Bridge and Elvet Bridge. This activity would not only enable local charitable organisations such as PTAs to raise funds but it would develop footfall to areas of the city that are often excluded from event delivery. To do this we would ask that Durham County Council considers re-designating Framwelgate Bridge and Elvet Bridge as consent areas where authorised, controlled trading could be permitted, allowing appropriate trading activity. The BID is aware of the historic and cultural nature of Durham City and would not wish for the proposed areas to be open for anyone to trade at any times so we consider an element of control could be applied by the re-designation from prohibited to a consent area would allow for permissions to be granted in accordance with the Street Trading Policy.

Yours sincerely

Adam Deathe
Business Engagement Manager