

Vibrant, Vital and Sustainable



Regenerating Dublin City
Centre's Commercial Core
for the 2020's and Beyond

Renewal Proposal for Dublin
City Business Improvement
District for the period

01JAN23
31DEC27

THE RENEWAL OF DUBLIN CITY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT T/A DUBLINTOWN

The Dublin City BID Company Limited T/A DublinTown (Company Registration Number 404961) with a registered office at 43-45 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1 submits the following proposal in accordance with Section 129C of the Local Government (Business Improvement Districts) Act 2006 to Dublin City Council the relevant Rating Authority proposing to re-authorise a Business Improvement District (BID Scheme) for the period commencing 1st January 2023 and terminating 31st December 2027 in Dublin’s commercial core of Dublin 1 and 2. The Dublin City BID Company CLG is a company limited by guarantee.

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TEN REASONS FOR VOTING YES

1. The DublinTown team are always available, accessible, ready to find solutions and resolve problems. Before DublinTown businesses had no such support and without DublinTown, businesses will be on their own again. With DublinTown in its corner city based businesses always have a trusted partner to fight for their collective interests. No other grouping will do this. We will engage with all comers including Government, Gardaí and Council on behalf of city businesses to help ensure a better city for all.
2. The world is changing rapidly. Covid accelerated trends that were going to challenge us as the 2020's progressed. What was anticipated over 10 years happened over 10 months. Interventions are required to regain city vibrancy and maintain businesses in business. Most of these interventions are commercial in nature. Nobody other than the business community has the expertise and insight to understand and promote these commercial solutions. Our collective insight must be harnessed and utilised. Only a BID is placed to undertake this essential task. DublinTown has a reservoir of research data in relation to the attitudes and preferences of Dubliners. We will use this data to enhance decision making in the city and to seek better, practical and workable solutions to issues arising.
3. Business people have enough to do in running their own businesses. They need an organisation to work on their behalf to continually enhance the business environment. DublinTown will consistently challenge all stakeholders to ensure Dublin remains a destination of choice for customers, visitors and investment. Investment decisions currently favour locations beyond our city, we need to fight to keep Dublin's position.
4. The pandemic has highlighted the integrated nature of the city economy. We know that people like to both shop and socialise while in the city; they do both when attending cultural events; office workers are a core customer base for shops, restaurants and pubs; in turn these quality consumer facing outlets are key to the recruitment and retention of office staff. A key strategic consideration for DublinTown in the coming years will be to strengthen the links and mutual benefits between all sectors. We will advocate for the full utilisation of the city's office space and will encourage city workers to enjoy the full city experience. We will develop and promote our key point of differentiation, the quality, extent and diversity of the city offer.
5. DublinTown has an extensive marketing and social media reach throughout Dublin. Each of our communication channels is freely available to members. Furthermore, we participate on Failte Ireland's working groups to better market Dublin internationally.
6. DublinTown actively supports appropriate investment in the city. We work with members to protect their interests during large scale construction and ensure that the city remains connected and vibrant. This contrasts sharply with the pre-DublinTown experience, when independent business owners were left to fend for themselves.
7. Christmas lights now provide a warm welcome on many city streets during the festive period. Before DublinTown only a handful of streets had Christmas Lights. Independent Irish businesses met the total costs of these lights on a voluntary basis. We now have electrical infrastructure on our streets and will use this to provide additional lighting all winter long. This will enhance street visibility, perceptions of safety and create a better ambiance during the dark winter months. The summer and winter floral arrangements will continue to brighten the city while additional cleaning will continue to provide a more welcoming environment for our customers.
8. We have previously worked with all parties to enhance perceptions of safety within the city. This fight now needs to be renewed. We will continue to work tirelessly to ensure

that Dublin city centre receives its fair share of capital and revenue funding including the allocation of Garda resources.

9. DublinTown has accurately predicted and planned for many of the changes now being experienced within the city centre, changes which have caught others off guard. This prescient planning allowed us react quickly to emerging circumstances and helped us influence others to better future proof the city. The Dublin One Project is an example of such planning and influence.
10. DublinTown is a respected voice within the international place management industry. We have influenced and advanced the international debate on promoting safe and vibrant Evening & Night Time Economies (ENTE) and have spoken globally on the development of integrated successful urban destinations. We are active in international networks at board and committee level. We have learnt from others and others have learnt from us. We have won several prestigious international awards recognising the innovation demonstrated by our analysis and initiatives. Ultimately, we always bring this expertise home to Dublin for the benefit of city businesses and their customers.



DUBLINTOWN 2023-2027: THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This is a time of rapid change and uncertainty for many businesses. In formulating this plan DublinTown has considered the external environment and has assessed all available research data. We have liaised closely with members and have developed resultant guiding principles and policy positions that will help inform our activities and decisions in the coming years.

1. The pandemic has demonstrated the fragility of our way of life. People are ready for change and know that they can change rapidly and in unison. Environmental sustainability and technological innovation will continue to impact on how people live, where people live and how they spend their time and money. In this rapidly changing paradigm, we need to ensure that Dublin remains a sustainable and innovative destination of choice. This will be DublinTown's central motivation over the next 5 years.
2. We need to significantly enhance the city's customer experience to ensure repeat visits across all demographics. Issues undermining the city experience must be systematically addressed through collective action and with business input. This includes actively addressing safety and cleanliness in the city.
3. Changes in customer spending patterns are impacting on city vibrancy throughout the world. This will accelerate as Gen Z comes to adulthood. Retail will continue to be a core component of the city's business and land use mix but we will need to fight harder for every euro of spend. We must better package and market the city with an emphasis on its quality and diversity and the fact that the city caters for all tastes and budgets. We will actively cross-promote the city's retail, hospitality, leisure and cultural/entertainment offerings.
4. We can expect further growth in the city's Evening & Night Time Economy (ENTE). DublinTown believes that we must protect our cultural and entertainment venues. We have advocated changes to licensing laws in order to enhance the economic viability of smaller venues, particularly those which provide live music, arts and entertainment.
5. As we exit the pandemic we face increased vacancy. This must be addressed constructively and inclusively to create a city that is relevant for 21st century needs. We need to address planning constraints and ensure that the business mix and the residential/commercial balance is conducive to sustained vibrancy and viability. Commercial uses must be maintained at ground floor level. We further believe that there is scope for developing residential uses in currently under-utilised back lanes and above the shop. The juxtaposition of residential and ENTE commercial units must be considered to avoid conflicts between residents and late night businesses and their patrons. New uses must be viable. The Dublin One and Creative Quarter projects show how we can develop inclusive long-term strategic plans that imaginatively and successfully address vacancy. We will develop a working group comprising business and property owner representation to address vacancy successfully.
6. A key barrier to the success of the city is the very poor perception of public safety, particularly at night. This must be addressed strategically rather than operationally. Better city management can mitigate against negative perceptions. We believe that the Better City For All process should be updated to take account of social issues facing the city at this time. Solutions that respect the dignity of all are required and must form part of a holistic plan and active case management. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles are being used around the world to make city spaces safer and more welcoming. DublinTown believes that these principles should be incorporated into public and private development.

7. DublinTown advocates the blending of commercial buildings into the public domain to create a more welcoming environment. This includes outdoor customer seating, parklets and use of shared space.
8. Research clearly shows that Dubliners want to see more inter-connected pedestrian zones within the city. DublinTown will support this along with public domain upgrades.
9. Pre-pandemic two-thirds of office workers regularly shopped in the city. Their absence is sorely missed. Similarly, quality shops, restaurants and pubs assist in the recruitment and retention of city based office workers. We will continue to support measures that see office workers return to the city, albeit on a hybrid basis.
10. Increased emphasis must be given to sustainable transport. The delivery of the NTA's 2035 programme should be consolidated into a tighter timescale. Adding further delays is unacceptable. There is scope for increasing bicycle/scooter use for commuters through enhanced safe, segregated cycle routes. To facilitate anticipated growth in the ENTE, DublinTown believes that we should have a 24 hour public transport system.
11. Economic and environmental progress are intertwined. The public in general and Gen Z (the generation now coming to adulthood) in particular, wish to see a clear programme to address climate change and a move towards a low carbon economy. DublinTown supports measures to assist businesses migrate to renewable energy options. We see a role for technology usage in achieving these objectives. We further believe that we must change how we do business to meet the climate challenge and customer expectations. We will continue to promote last mile and shared delivery using zero emission vehicles. We believe that emission free commercial vehicles should be allowed use bus lanes off peak to encourage the migration to these vehicles by city businesses. We support investment in Green Infrastructure. More planting can help mitigate against flooding, assist carbon capture as well as creating a more aesthetically pleasing environment. We will establish a Sustainability Committee to promote pro-business climate change policies.
12. The technological revolution continues apace. In the next 5 years we expect to see increased digitalisation, the progress of the cashless society and increasing use of Artificial Intelligence within our society and economy. Dublin Town will work with members through training and workshops to equip them with the knowledge and skills to make the most of the opportunities presented by these new technologies. We will continue to support Smart City initiatives and will monitor technological innovations which may impact either positively or negatively on city use and our member businesses.
13. The safe provision of public toilets and the success of the Dublin Bike scheme demonstrate that Dublin is capable of providing and maintaining services and facilities that people want. Fear of mis-use must not be allowed prevent us from doing the right thing.



CHAIRPERSON'S STATEMENT

When the DublinTown board sat down to consider its five-year strategy in 2017, we could never have imagined the personal and business turmoil we would all experience as Covid 19 swept across the globe bringing lockdowns and lasting change in its wake.

In 2017 we concentrated on changes in consumer spending patterns that were then emerging, the growth of the evening & night-time economy, and the fallout of ever-increasing online retail activity. The plans then developed have proven to be prescient and are very relevant to our work now as we seek to reactivate and regenerate the city post Covid.

We are an organisation created by and comprised of city traders. We work together on behalf of our neighbours and colleagues. As members, we are acutely aware of the city's challenges. In this context, I am proud to lead a dedicated and diligent board of city professionals from diverse backgrounds who bring their collage of skills and experience to the table voluntarily. The membership of DublinTown, as evidenced by its board's composition, is an inclusive church. There may not always be a consensus between sectors, still, the board is a constructive vehicle for informed and respectful discussions and voices to be heard. It allows us to represent the most beneficial positions for the majority of members and, more importantly, to present a united and clear vision to external stakeholders.

In my business life, I run a family business. You will no doubt appreciate that we don't always agree on everything. We do share a common bond, and we are committed to seeing Dublin and Bewley's thrive. As a family, we have generations ago concluded that we are better when we work together. DublinTown works on this same principle of partnership. At this time of challenge, it is immensely beneficial to have business people on the board working alongside senior Council and Garda representatives. We believe that engaged partnership is crucial to ensure that the decision-making process is informed by customer needs and that commercial insights and real-time information are brought to bear as we reposition the city for the 2020's and beyond.

I have considered the alternatives to the business improvement district model. I have concluded that no other options offer the same scope for working together. The BID model has the reach, budget, and influence to get things done. Because we need to work together now more than ever, I urge members to vote yes for the organisation's renewal.

As chair, I have had the chance to observe the passion and commitment to the city displayed by the staff of the organisation, the long hours they put in and their readiness to respond to city needs at any time of the day or night. They have endured the economic pain wrought by the pandemic along with members and have adapted like us with great fortitude. I know we will be able to rely on this commitment and dedication in the coming years.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the members, for your continued engagement. Your insights and opinions have been invaluable as we have faced the challenges of recent years. I am confident that the city has a bright future where we co-operate to re-imagine, re-invent and regenerate a safe and welcoming city for all.

Cól Campbell
Chairman



INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that we are living through unprecedented times. However, this provides us with the opportunity to re-imagine Dublin city centre as a social and economic hub that will serve as an exemplar for the 2020's and beyond.

There is no guarantee that the city will remain a commercial destination. In order to maintain that status, we must make insightful and timely interventions.

While we predicted change in 2017, nobody could have anticipated the rate of that change. The sheer acceleration of trends and whirlwind challenges left in its wake has focused minds amongst all key stakeholders and has elicited an understanding of the requirement for co-ordinated action.

As a Business Improvement District, DublinTown was conceived by the city's business community as a forum for such collective collaboration and engagement. The Dublin One project, a partnership between DublinTown and Dublin City Council, foresaw the need to re-imagine the northern commercial core and proposed a realistic road map for future development. The roll out of this project is now essential as we future proof our city for both residents and visitors.

The pandemic has left us with a legacy of vacancy and consequent opportunity. We must fill remaining voids with viable, commercial enterprises that ensure repeat visits and intensified city use.

We envisage further increases in the importance of the Evening & Night Time Economy (ENTE). Between 2016 and 2019 we experienced a 20% increase in the number of restaurants in the BID area which were all housed in premises that had previously served as retail premises. ENTE activity has been augmented by increased engagement with the arts and entertainment sectors. We see this trend continuing and believe that it can be further developed as part of the Dublin One project through engagement with the proposed cultural quarter on Parnell Square and a redeveloped Abbey Theatre.

DublinTown has continued to advocate for and has supported new and appropriate public and private investment. We need to transform the city in order to meet emerging public needs and expectations. In line with continental experience, we are seeing people wishing to use the city as a meeting point for family and friends. This necessitates additional recreational spaces such as those proposed by Hammerson as part of the Dublin Central Development.

There has been much discussion regarding the future of retail in the city. Consumer surveys undertaken on behalf of DublinTown show a 50% increase in those engaging in on-line retail weekly during the pandemic; while those who never shop on-line reduced by one-third. We also know that the customers increasingly opt for experiences over material goods. While it will remain challenged, we believe that retail and in particular independent and unique retail, will remain core to the overall city experience. However, we will have to work hard to ensure that the city enjoys a growing share of a reducing market. This will entail enhanced marketing and promotion and better communication of the city's Unique Selling Point, which is its diverse and unique quality offering.

As Gen Z comes to adulthood, we can anticipate further disruptive change. International research suggests that we can expect this generation to value city experiences. We can expect them to live and work in city centres, use active travel and engage fully with city opportunities. This generation of technology natives view the world very differently from their parents. They are demanding and have little tolerance for the mediocre. Therefore, to remain relevant the city must simply up its game. The city must be better managed and maintained and visitors must be made to feel safe and welcome.

Everyone must understand that well educated technology savvy workers have options. They will vote with their feet where we fall below the standards expected by them.

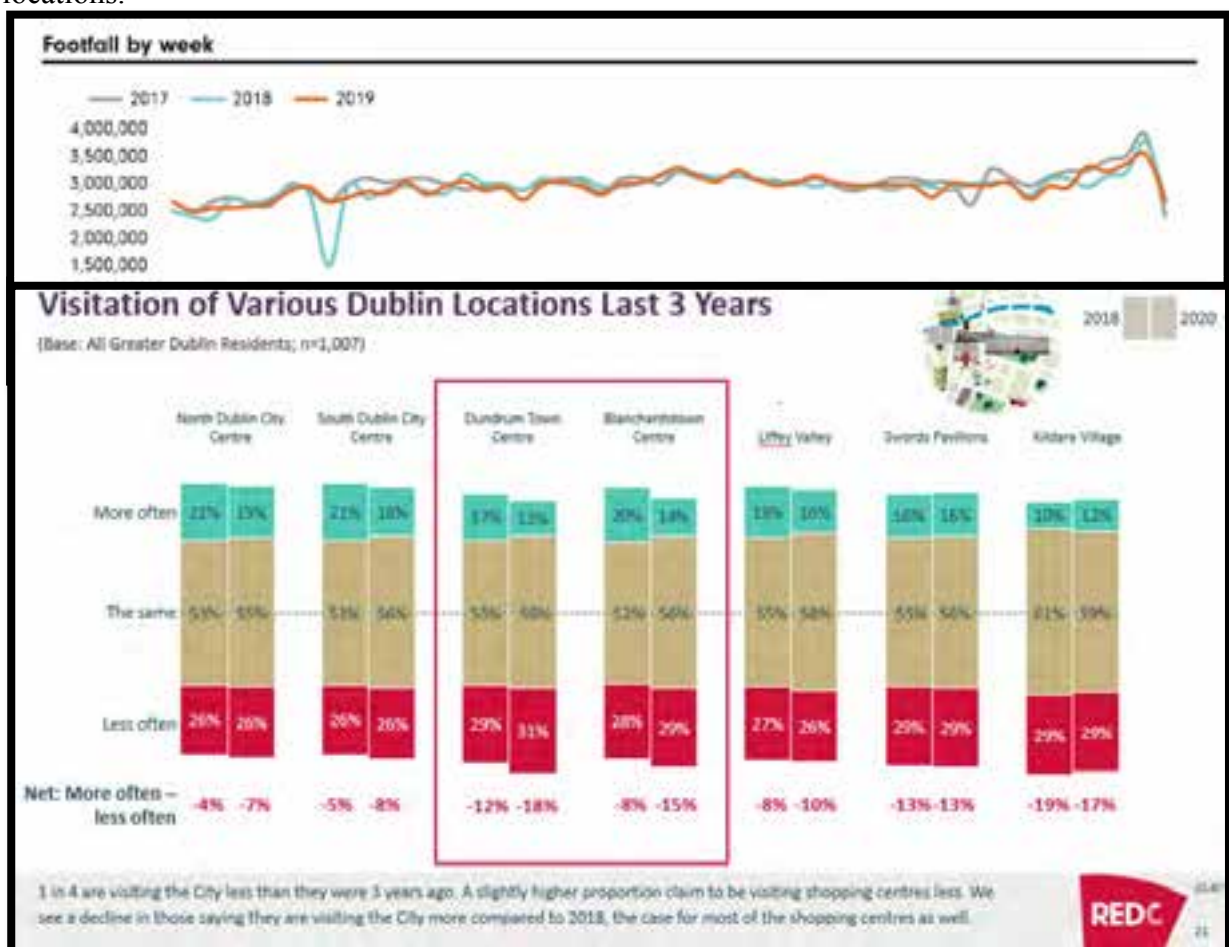
This need to improve the city experience is also required in order to maintain and retain inward investment. Changes to the international tax code will necessitate a more broadly based appeal which will increasingly include the quality of life and opportunity offered by city centres. As Dublin is the engine of economic growth in Ireland this means that there is a national imperative for Dublin to meet its potential.

We can succeed and remain a key European destination but we must equally accept that ad hoc responses will no longer suffice.

The Business Improvement District model allows us harness the diverse strengths in the city and create cross sectoral opportunities. This ability is key to securing our city’s future.

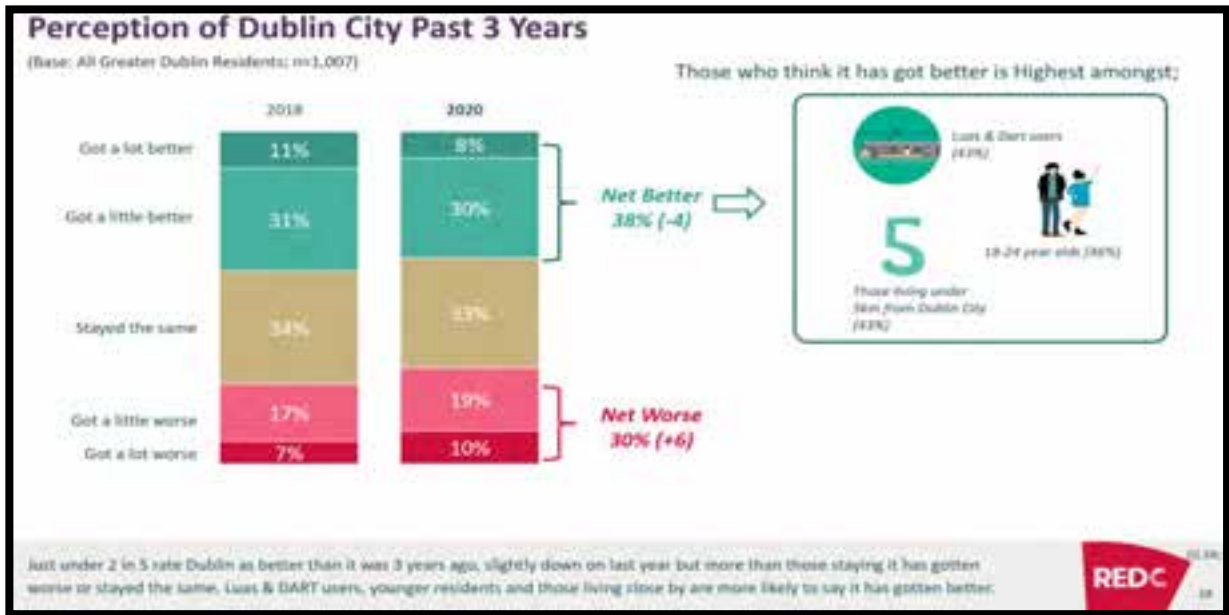
CITY PROGRESS

Pre-pandemic the city was more than holding its own. Footfall was stable while the diversity of offer was assisting us in retaining retail customers to a greater extent than out of town locations.



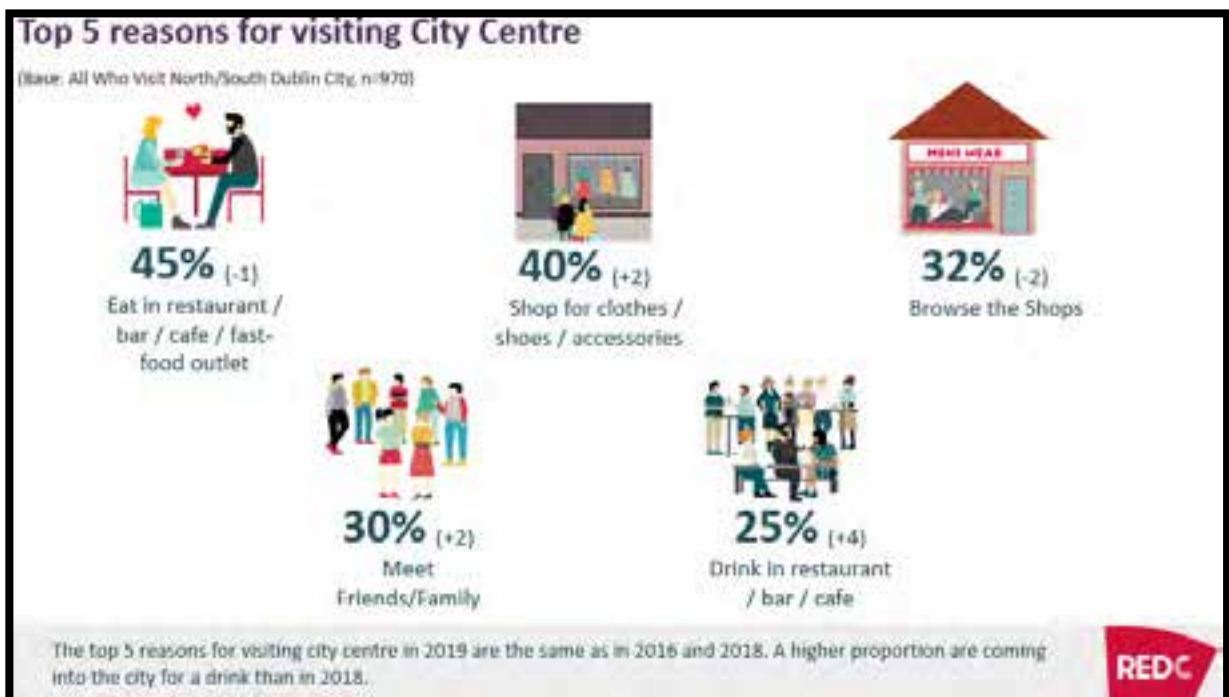
Similarly, perceptions of the city were continuing to improve albeit that we would like to have seen these perceptions improving at a faster rate. After improving consistently between 2011-2016, we began to see a reversal in perceptions of safety in 2018. This reversal weighed against overall perceptions of the city.

It is essential that we address the underlying reasons for a reduction in perceptions of safety. This can be achieved in a systematic and strategic way through a Better City For All Approach that brings together all relevant stakeholders in collective and co-ordinated action. This approach was successful in 2012 and can be again, where there is honest, open and respectful engagement.



One area where perceptions were continuing to improve significantly was in the range of commercial offer in the city. Understanding and building on this strength while addressing the reasons for negative perceptions provides us with a framework for enhancing engagement with the city and increasing footfall.

The importance of the city's diverse offering can be seen below. Since 2016, more people have dined in the city than have engaged in any other activity.



Reasons To Visit

A survey undertaken in May 2021, further demonstrated the importance of the city as a meeting place. We also witnessed a sharp rise in the number of people who expressed the view that they would like to visit the city to engage in the arts and entertainment.



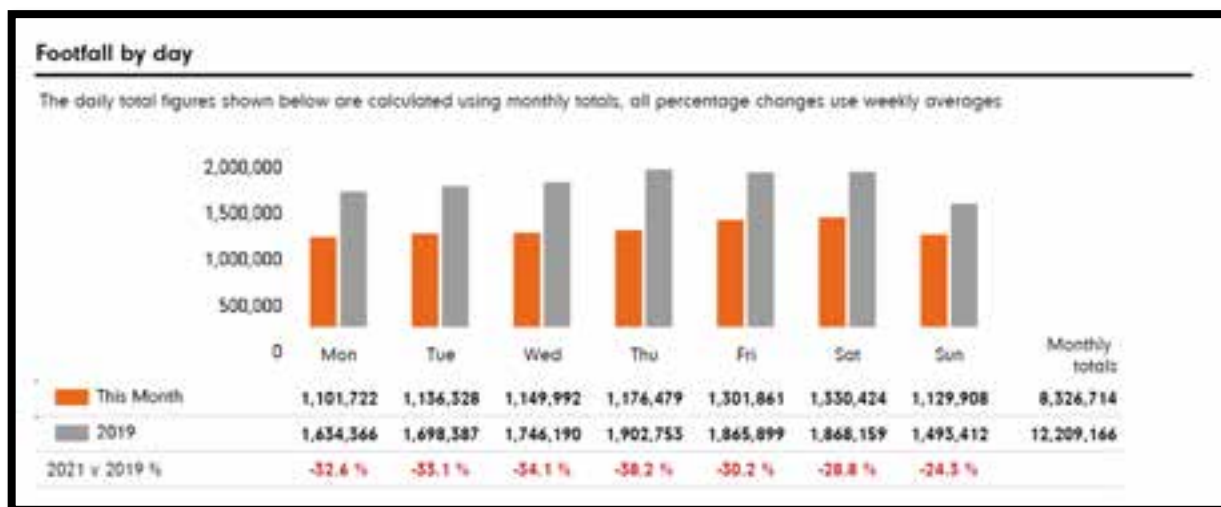
CORE SECTORAL STRENGTHS IN COLLABORATION

The Covid 19 pandemic has shown the integrated nature of the city economy and the manner in which each of the city's economic sectors fit together. Before the pandemic we knew that people increasingly shopped and socialised on the same trip. From research conducted by Fitzpatrick & Associates for DublinTown and the Abbey Theatre we could see that people attending arts events were also significant contributors to the city's retail and hospitality businesses.

The diversity of offer is what differentiates the city from out of town options. People attracted by one business will spend in others.

The pandemic experience highlighted the importance of the city's office workers for both retail and hospitality businesses. Their absence Monday to Friday was acutely felt in both footfall and city spend.

The table below compares footfall patterns in August 2021 with those of August 2019. It is clear that weekday footfall was more impacted by the pandemic than at weekends.



In the next term, regaining footfall by attracting office workers back to the city and developing a more balanced tourist offering will be core considerations.

This will entail reaching out to employees and encouraging their engagement with the city, promoting retail, hospitality and entertainment opportunities available to them. We will work with businesses and property owners in promoting the city as a working location. We will address barriers to city engagement including the promotion of viable transport options, including micro personal transport, and will promote flexible working opportunities.

Our ambition is to see a restoration of office occupancy to at least 60% of the pre-pandemic level.

We will also encourage a more balanced city-wide tourism offering. Pre-pandemic tourism spend was 5 times greater in the city's southern core. We can re-balance this to the benefit of the full city, providing more reasons for a Dublin visit and providing Failte Ireland with more inviting messages. The completion of increased hotel accommodation in the northern core, the addition of quality hospitality offerings, combined with new attractions will assist in this regard. We will promote attractions such as the GPO Museum, National Monument on Moore St., the existing cultural offerings of Abbey, Gate and Ambassador Theatres together with the proposed Cultural Quarter on Parnell Sq. We will support the filling of voids with unique and engaging offerings that we believe will attract Dubliners and overseas visitors alike.

MAINTAINING RELEVANCE: GEN Z

Gen Z (those born in the late 1990's and early 2000's) are now coming to adulthood. We must ensure that we prepare the city to be fit for their needs and expectations. There is little available research regarding Gen Z's in Ireland but there is mounting evidence from other locations, particularly UK and US.

Gen Z is an environmentally aware generation. They will live with the consequences of climate change and will suffer from inaction. They will want to see interventions that make the city more environmentally friendly. They are likely to want more pedestrianisation, investment in cycling infrastructure, better public transport and sustainable last mile deliveries. They will take a negative view of excess waste and in particular plastic waste and will expect those that they do business with to share their values.

There is growing evidence that they will make judicious purchases of quality goods, with an intention of making them last. We can expect to see more repair and renewal businesses flourish and vintage shops selling quality product. They will seek leisure and social experiences to an even greater extent than their older millennial siblings. They are educated and are likely to engage with the arts and cultural pursuits.

Research from the UK notes their wish to pursue a work-life balance even at this young age. Therefore, we can expect quality of life issues to come to the fore and a willingness to forgo material wealth for a more sustainable enjoyable life. The city is well positioned to meet those demands where we make the right decisions now and where we ensure that the on-street experience matches the in-store appeal. Getting this balance right may not be easy. Compromises will be required and budget will have to be allocated. However, when we get it right the benefits will outweigh the costs. To remain relevant all stakeholders, from both the public and private sectors, will have to understand and plan for the new and emerging city. Upon these decisions will future city success depend.



DUBLINTOWN: A STRATEGIC VISION

Covid accelerated and consolidated changes that we had anticipated. The city that emerges from the Covid crisis will be different from that which went before but it is unlikely to be different from that anticipated. Dublin will continue to benefit from its reputation as a city that is welcoming, friendly and authentic, attributes that we consider to be increasingly core to the city's identity.

The key strategic challenges for Dublin city centre include:

- **Rebuilding footfall**
- **Addressing vacancy by establishing the right business mix within our districts**
- **Strategic development of city districts and augmenting the city identity**
- **Protecting city retailers by improving the city's share of the total retail market**
- **Creating a viable, vibrant and safe evening & night time economy (ENTE)**

In responding to these challenges DublinTown will rely on the experience and insights that it has gained through our international contacts. DublinTown has played an increasing role in the international discourse on town centre management, participating in organisations such as the Association of Town and City Management, The Responsible Hospitality Institute, Purple Flag, International Downtown Association and the Global Business Districts Innovation Club. We have contributed to conferences, published reports and shared our insights with our colleagues from China, Australia, Singapore, North America and Europe and have learnt from their experiences and responses also. At a time of such rapid change, these international connections are of vital importance.

At home we continue to engage with other towns and cities through the Irish Town Centre Development Association.

REBUILDING FOOTFALL

The city has lost footfall and market share during the pandemic. At the time of writing footfall is below the level required to sustain many businesses in situ. Rebuilding footfall is therefore, an urgent priority.

As people have become used to working from home there has been a tendency to stay local for both retail and hospitality purposes leaving larger cities struggling to regain footfall and trade. This phenomenon is known as Localism and is likely to be a key challenge to the city in the short term at least. Pre-Covid the city had successfully held onto a higher proportion of retail spend. However, evidence emerging in the aftermath of the pandemic has highlighted the appeal of staying close to home. This appeal has been enhanced through positive local and political messaging. The table below demonstrates the extent of the challenge that we now face.



We will simply have to work harder to regain our position. City retailers do not have the luxury of time to wait for trade to return so we need to be pro-active in securing footfall and spend. We need to understand new shopping psychologies and ensure that Dublin city is upper most in the customer mind.

In addressing this challenge we will focus on our key USP which is the depth, range and diversity of the city offering. This diversity is also core to the city identity and is a major contributor to the city's liveability. International city branding experts advise that liveable cities are more defined by programmed diversity than design.

We have core strengths that must be celebrated, communicated and utilised like never before. Dublin avoided the excesses of homogenisation that were experienced internationally in the 1980's and 1990's. We largely maintained our architectural heritage and unique character. We have a strong independent offer housed in unique buildings which research indicates will appeal to Gen Z as much if not more so than it does to millennials. Espousing these strengths will be core to our marketing programmes.

Authenticity will also be a core strength when facing the on-line retail challenge. A phone cannot compete with human engagement in a real environment. At a time of increasing environmental awareness we will emphasise that purchasing an item which is flown from the other side of the world wrapped in excessive plastic packaging, is not environmentally sustainable.

Pre-pandemic, 70% of products purchased on-line by Irish customers were sourced from overseas websites. We will highlight the bureaucracy and very significant additional costs of purchasing on-line from outside the Single Market. During the periods of lock down we encouraged Dubliners to shop from DublinTown members when purchasing on-line. We will continue this activity.

ADDRESSING VACANCY BY ESTABLISHING THE RIGHT BUSINESS MIX WITHIN OUR DISTRICTS

The Covid pandemic has left us with unprecedented levels of vacancy across the city. It is obvious that the business community, both property owners and traders have a key role to play in resolving this crisis.

We are likely to see new uses not only in districts and streets but also within buildings. Planning measures will have to consider the interaction of multiple uses on separate floors of former retail stores.

In addressing vacancy we will use the experience gained from the Creative Quarter.

During the recession of 2008 to 2012, the area between Clarendon Street and South Great George's Street suffered significant reductions in footfall and increased vacancy. Working with local businesses, the Creative Quarter brand was developed. The district's independent retail and hospitality offering was promoted to young adults using burgeoning social media platforms. The district soon developed a following. Footfall increased as young entrepreneurs took advantage of low rents and short leases offered by the state receiver, the National Assets Management Agency. These new entrants further developed the district's brand identity. Footfall grew by double digit levels year on year and many of the entrants that began at the time are now key city businesses. In 2019 the Institute of Urbanism named South William Street, at the heart of the district, its International Street of the Year recognising the application of historic buildings for new and vibrant uses. Indeed, this use of historic buildings for new purposes was a large part of the district's appeal for its target audience.



Dublin Fashion Festival event on South William Street
You can read more about the Creative Quarter here
<https://www.dublintown.ie/creativequarter/>.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF CITY DISTRICTS AND AUGMENTING THE CITY IDENTITY

The Dublin One project was in the implementation phase as the pandemic hit. The project anticipated many of the changes that we are currently experiencing and given current challenges we believe its roll out is now significantly more urgent.

REALISING THE DUBLIN ONE VISION

Research available in 2015 suggested the beginnings of serious shifts in consumer behaviour that would result in long-lasting structural change within the city economy. DublinTown considered the city's northern core to be vulnerable to these changes. Interventions were required to secure the district's future.

We sought to work with Dublin City Council to repurpose the district and make it relevant for 21st century needs. Through Dublin City Council we invited the American Institute of Architects to work with us to re-imagine the district. Simultaneously we worked with members on devising a Dublin One brand and message.

You can read more about this project here:

<https://www.wearedublintown.ie/the-final-vision-report/>

In summary the goals of the Dublin One project are to:

- Consider the appropriate business mix within the district
- Assess the current and potential customer base for the district and develop clear marketing and communications for it
- Create better connectivity between streets within the district and allow for greater interaction between large retailers, which were concentrated on Henry/Mary Street, with hospitality and independent retailers which were mainly concentrated on side streets
- Re-imagine the district's lane ways as locations which could attract footfall rather than deter engagement
- Encourage greater connectivity with the southside, through the development of a more welcoming interface along the Quays
- Enhance pedestrian movement and develop a greater spread of footfall throughout the district
- Facilitate use of the district as a meeting space for friends and family and increase dwell time by creating recreational areas
- Encourage investment into the district, with new uses that would bring additional footfall and engagement. We are particularly interested in developing a tourism offering within the district.
- Upgrade of North Earl Street and Talbot Street and repurposing of those streets with O'Connell Street to create a more balanced and engaging district.

Steady progress has been made in realising the ambitions of the project including:

- Redevelopment of Wolfe Tone Square
- Plans to upgrade the Liffey Street public domain and creation of a pedestrian plaza.
- Mary Street pedestrianisation – linking Henry/Mary Street to Capel Street
- Upgrade of Jervis Street
- The district brand identity is formulated and in use
- The district is being marketed as a cohesive unit
- Laneways study with proposals for better use of the lanes ([Layout 1 \(wearedublintown.ie\)](#))

The following are excerpts from a publication prepared by Sean Harrington Architects for Dublin City Council as part of the Dublin One project. This publication details how we can transform the district's back lanes into locations that enhance the overall area and generate increased footfall.

The image below shows how we can turn Jervis Lane from a 'no go' area to a residential street.

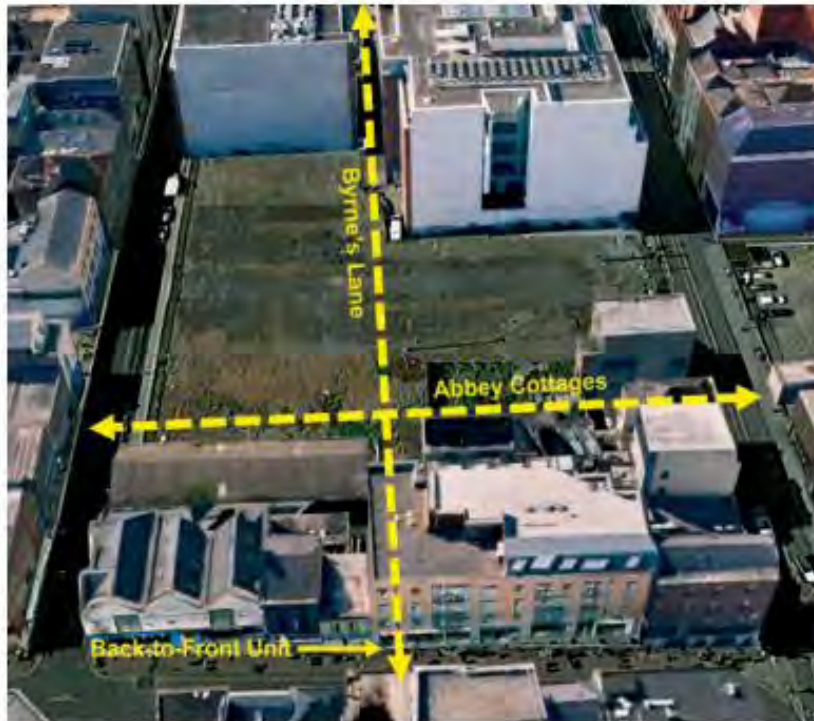


The image below shows how we can take Cole's Lane, an uninviting laneway, and turn it into an attractive addition to the city at relatively minor cost.



Over the years laneways have lost their permeability and have become dark and dangerous dead ends. SHA have demonstrated how with a little imagination these lanes can be repurposed to increase permeability and use.

Abbey Cottages and Byrne's Lane are both part of the urban block which is located between Abbey Street Upper, Liffey Street Lower, Strand Street Great and Jervis Street. Millennium Walkway bisects the block in north-south direction. As described in the previous chapters, Abbey Cottages and Byrne's Lane are currently separate utilitarian cul-de-sacs. However we recommend reviewing their layouts jointly, in context with the future development in the entire block.



The wider vision for this inner urban block focuses predominantly on the development of the vacant former CIE site. We envisage a mixed-use block with a vibrant pedestrian network at ground floor level, with numerous opportunities for retail, services and gastronomy. Abbey Cottages and Byrne's Lane would become integral parts of this network. A transformation of Abbey Cottages into a vibrant and inviting laneway can be anticipated already, taking into account the recent proposals for commercial development to the east, west and south of this short appendage to Abbey Street Upper. Byrne's Lane on the other hand had been a connecting laneway between Jervis Street and Liffey Street Lower in the 18th century. Its historic function as an active link between main streets should be re-established.

Above: Aerial view of proposed laneway extensions illustrating proposed block and cross-town permeability.

In addition to the Council's investment in the district, we are now seeing very significant private sector investment and proposals. These include Hammerson (Dublin Central) and Clery's Quarter (Press Up Group). Both of these projects are sympathetic to the principles of the Dublin One project and represent the type of investment envisaged by it. For example, the Hammerson development proposes recreational areas, the development of the national monument on Moore St., and pedestrian links from O'Connell Street to Moore Street through to Henry Street which will facilitate pedestrian movement within the district and onto adjacent neighbourhoods.

In addition, the Dublin Central Development proposes new uses including the development of high-quality offices, which will add to the customer base of adjacent retail and hospitality businesses, the housing of a Metrolink station which will facilitate movement into the heart of the district, new hospitality development together with bespoke retail. This is precisely the business mix that the district needs to attract.

The Clery's Quarter will also see high end hospitality, retail and office uses introduced into the district. There will be a complete overhaul of Earl Place creating a destination from what was previously a dark back lane. These uses will combine to generate new and sustainable footfall into the district. The rooftop restaurant proposed for the site will, we believe, provide an attraction that will add to the district's appeal.

There are 6 hotels in construction or planning in the area. When these are combined with proposals for new hospitality businesses we believe that the district will become increasingly attractive for ENTE use and tourism development.

We believe that these proposals dovetail with the Council's plans for the development of a cultural quarter on Parnell Square. We envisage a pedestrian link between Henry Street, through Moore Street to O'Connell Street and Parnell Street and onto Parnell Square. We believe that this will result in a more attractive and engaging district that will generate footfall and activity for local businesses.



Proposed Parnell Square Cultural Quarter Design Images

We are confident that we will be able to achieve our goal of attracting increased tourist numbers to the district by combining the existing arts offer with the GPO museum, National Monument on Moore Street with the Parnell Square Cultural Quarter. This cultural quarter includes the Hugh Lane Gallery, Writers' Museum and City Library.

We see the Clery's Quarter connecting footfall through North Earl Street and Sackville Place with the proposed redevelopment of the Abbey Theatre which will provide a welcome boost for a part of the city that has been neglected for far too long. We believe the uses will add to the over engagement in the district which in turn will be supported by the Luas Green line and what we believe will be the increasingly important Marlborough Street stop, adjacent to the Moxy Hotel.

We see the creation of a pedestrian plaza on Liffey Street as serving as an attraction into the district and will assist it in retaining a higher proportion of the 32,000 people who crossed the Hal'penny bridge on a daily basis, pre-pandemic. It will also assist in better distributing footfall in the area.

We believe that the momentum created by these investments will encourage additional investment in the general Dublin One district, which will in turn create opportunities for Talbot Street and its environs.

TALBOT STREET DISTRICT: A SITE FOR FUTURE REGENERATION

Talbot Street has been ignored for too long. With investment in the general Dublin One area, DublinTown will work with local businesses and property owners to ensure that Talbot Street is given its chance to shine.

Despite challenges in recent years, we know that the district has core strengths. We know from research and international experience that arts and cultural uses are likely to grow significantly in the coming years. With the Abbey, Gate and Ambassador theatres in the area and together with the Savoy on O'Connell Street, there is scope for developing arts opportunities in the local environs.

We believe that the building stock can be upgraded and repurposed for new uses and we have begun to lobby Government for supports to encourage this. There has been considerable discussion regarding the promotion of living over the shop (LOTS) in areas like Talbot and Marlborough Street, however, we are conscious that previous schemes have not met expectations. We believe that there is now scope for re-examining the reasons for this failure and for an honest conversation as to how we can bring more of this space back into productive use.

It may be possible, for example, to support office development and also artist/writer studios at upper floor level while creating new gallery spaces at ground floor. These uses would augment the general arts offering in the area and would help us redefine the district. It would also assist in attracting tourists into the area and would support the district's hospitality trades which in turn would assist in developing a symbiotic relationship with the strong retail offering on Henry/Mary Street.

GRAFTON & CREATIVE QUARTER DISTRICTS

The business mix in the southern commercial core was proving very successful pre-pandemic. We witnessed a good spread of footfall over the course of the day as people engaged in both retail and hospitality.

The strong retail mix on Grafton Street was augmented by the hospitality and independent retail mix in the Creative Quarter.

We are confident that the district will once again return to a position of strength as the pandemic fades into memory.

We are experiencing what we trust will be short term additional vacancy on Grafton Street. We believe that it will be necessary to change the Category 1 and 2 retail street designations in the area to allow for new and vibrant uses to be introduced.

However, the district has a clear identity and we believe that as tourists and office workers return, the district's footfall will rise and business opportunities will re-emerge.

The office use in upper floors on Grafton and surrounding streets is strong and augments the general area well. There is little under-utilised space within the overall district. We will work to maintain this appropriate balance.

COLLEGE GREEN

As people are reluctant to walk more than 250m and very unlikely to walk more than 500m from where they alight from public transport, serious consideration needs to be given to the placing of bus stops currently on College Green and Dame Street, if and when the district is pedestrianised. We will work with all parties to ensure that appropriate proposals emerge in this regard and that the overall vibrancy of the district is maintained.

Managing Construction

As the city adapts and changes we are likely to see significant construction taking place. DublinTown is committed to working with its members during these construction phases to ensure that footfall and trade is not impeded. We have significant experience in this regard having worked with TII and developers across the city on major demolition and construction projects. These have progressed without undue impact on neighbouring businesses and it would be our expectation that future projects will be similarly successful.



CREATING A VIABLE, VIBRANT AND SAFE EVENING & NIGHT TIME ECONOMY (ENTE)

As the decade progresses we can anticipate further ENTE uses in the city. Pre-pandemic footfall was rising post 5pm but declining before this time. We anticipate an acceleration in this trend. This must be planned for in line with the report produced by the San Francisco based Responsible Hospitality Institute in conjunction with DublinTown. This assessment was part of a Diageo funded project that considered international night-time trends. It provides detailed insights into the city's ENTE and outlines how its growth can be fostered and managed to ensure a safe, welcoming and vibrant destination after dark. DublinTown was one of 3 destinations considered for this exercise. The others were Toronto and Cancun.



RHI Report Available here:

http://www.rhiweb.org/global/dublin/report/dublin_report_final_march_2019.pdf

Among the key considerations in this report are:

- An overhaul of licensing laws which have built up over many years and are now no longer fit for purpose
- The protection of the agent of change to ensure that the ENTE remains attractive and engaging
- 24 hour public transport and use of car parks at night as safe and secure taxi ranks which can accommodate taxi marshals, seated areas, CCTV, and food services
- Enhanced late night policing and cleaning regimes
- Balanced development that avoids potential conflicts between residential and ENTE uses

The RHI report details the appropriate strategic direction for the city's ENTE. Operationally, we will continue to follow the Purple Flag process.

DublinTown in partnership with Dublin City Council, An Garda Síochána, Fáilte Ireland, local businesses and other stakeholders have secured Purple Flags for both the northern and southern commercial districts.

It is our intention to expand the areas in which the Purple Flag operates during the coming term so that the whole BID district is covered. We have found Purple Flag to be an excellent mechanism to benchmark progress in the city's Evening & Night-time Economy (ENTE). The process provides standards to be maintained and details aspects of ENTE management where improvement is required. This provides each stakeholder with work to do in order to maintain the city's Purple Flag designation. The re-application process is required on a bi-annual basis when progress against stated targets is externally assessed.



MEETING CUSTOMERS' CLIMATE CHANGE EXPECTATIONS

Covid 19 has once again highlighted the fragility of our global way of life. This fragility will be further exposed as we face the growing consequences of climate change.

We have already experienced regular flooding in the Grafton/Suffolk Street/College Green area but we can expect further increased difficulties as temperatures rise and extreme weather events become more frequent.

The public increasingly supports investment in addressing climate change and the move to a low carbon economy. These views are especially prevalent amongst younger demographics. The city's business community will have to embrace this changed mindset if it is to remain relevant and in tune with the city's customer base.

International research suggests that Gen Z interests stretch beyond climate change to include reducing waste. We can expect this increased environmental awareness to be a factor in determining lifestyle choices and ultimately spending decisions in the coming years.

Therefore, in order to retain our relevance, we need to plan and implement change now. A failure to do so will not only have damaging environmental consequences but is also likely to have significant negative economic consequences for city based businesses.

DublinTown advocates for the greater use of green infrastructure within the city core:

- a. Reducing flooding through active measures to stem the flow of water into the drainage system
- b. Supporting carbon capture through tree planting
- c. Creating a more pleasant and aesthetically pleasing environment with the use of re-wilding and on-street flower arrangements, utilising pollinating plants.
- d. The creation of green spaces is good for mental health and can be expected to encourage more frequent and longer stays in the city.

DOING THE RIGHT THING ENVIRONMENTALLY MAKES ECONOMIC SENSE.

There are practical steps that business can take to achieve environmental objectives and meet customer expectations.

DublinTown has long supported last mile and shared deliveries. We were a partner in the Council led initiative spearheaded by UPS to have shared delivery hubs for city centre businesses. We continue to advocate for this programme to be extended and made permanent. We will continue to work with members to find additional suitable locations for consolidation hubs and related infrastructure.

In addition to the environmental benefits of shared zero emission deliveries, the programme also frees up valuable road space enabling wider pavements and public domain enhancements. We also support the creation of a home delivery service again using emission free vehicles and are currently working with partners to establish the feasibility of such a scheme. The establishment of shared home deliveries would facilitate customers using sustainable and, in particular, active travel to access the city. It would also facilitate ENTE customers engaging in retail as part of their trip thus enhancing the full enjoyment of the city's diverse offer. We see such a scheme building on the experience gained through the Shop N Drop bag minding service which we operated over many years at Christmas time.

Support for increased active travel is reflected in public support for more cycle lanes and increased pedestrianisation.

To encourage the use of zero emission commercial vehicles and to further reduce congestion we believe that commercial vehicles should be allowed use bus lanes off peak. Traffic congestion has resulted in missed delivery deadlines. This is costing valuable sales. A sensible pragmatic approach can help resolve this issue.

In order to further facilitate road management and ease congestion, DublinTown supports the management of deliveries within time appropriate windows and is committed to working with all parties to achieve workable solutions for the benefit of all.

GREENING AND RE-WILDING

DublinTown proposes to devote an increased proportion of its budget to support green infrastructure. We will support and assist plans for the wider greening of the city, including the introduction of pollinating flowers and shrubs.

We will support the integration of green roofs and walls throughout the city such as those included in the Clarendon Street redevelopment works.

We believe business owners should be facilitated in developing green roofs and walls, energy conservation, renewable energy options and rainwater harvesting and will work to ensure that such supports become common place. London BID's have worked constructively with their Local Authorities in advancing this agenda. We can do the same in Dublin.



DublinTown supports the reintroduction of wild-flower gardens in city parks and in other locations such as the front of Trinity College. We support simple and effective initiatives such as the “bug boxes” installed as part of the Dublin One public realm works on Wolfe Tone Close. These initiatives help to protect and promote the city’s biodiversity. To aid this further we support incentives to introduce beehives on city rooftops. Examples such as the Belvedere College urban farm have shown that this can be successful. The farm creates its own honey which is sold at local markets while also keeping bees as important pollinators in the city.



Following successful projects in San Francisco, we believe there is greater scope for housing urban farms in the city centre



Green roof in Copenhagen

Technological developments now mean that hydroponics can be used successfully and cost-effectively for concentrated vegetable growth indoors, in areas like storage units, basements and carparks. These vegetables can then be delivered to city restaurants using emission free vehicles, creating a sustainable, low carbon supply chain for fresh food.



Hydroponic Herb and Vegetable Growing by a DublinTown Member Business

Recently announced plans to incentivise residents and businesses to install solar panels could support power generation and resale of power to the national grid.

We will arrange a comprehensive series of workshops aimed at reducing energy use through technology and enhanced systems as part of our overall BID Business School training programme.

WASTE COLLECTION

DublinTown will continue to support the roll-out of segregated waste and recycling bins.

DublinTown further believes that an overhaul of waste collection services within the commercial district is required. We have seen an increase in evening and night-time activity and the presence of commercial waste, presented at 5pm and not collected until mid-night is extremely problematic. These difficulties did not arise when Dublin City Council collected waste directly. We are of the view that the current waste collection bye-laws favour service providers rather than the city’s business community and the public. Waste needs to be collected from the streets by 7pm to appropriately facilitate the growing evening economy.



Dublin City Councils Bag Bin Trial Supported by DublinTown

RECREATION IN THE CITY

Research pre and post pandemic has shown Dubliners increasingly using the city for recreational purposes in a more continental style.

Investment in place-making and creating an attractive *Third Space* where people can dwell, and enjoy the city is the hallmark of a modern, welcoming city. The importance of place-making has been further highlighted by Covid-19's health requirements which have intensified the use of public space and outdoor areas, such as public parks, public seating etc. This gives added weight to the pre-pandemic call for more urban parklets, green spaces and seating within the city. The re-purposing of Bryant Park in New York serves as an example of what can be achieved. Known colloquially as *Needle Park* in the 1980's, the park was avoided by most New Yorkers. However, when its railings were removed and the space was opened up for inclusive uses it became a valued asset. Real estate values surrounding it rose, reflecting the district's desirability.

Similarly, though on a smaller scale Wilton Park in Dublin has created recreational opportunities. We believe that this experience can be built upon to further increase dwell time in the city.



Bryant Park, New York



Wilton Park, Dublin

TURNING STRATEGY INTO DELIVERY

It is essential that DublinTown maintain a strategic vision and work with all relevant stakeholders in order to realise that vision. However, we are equally conscious that many member businesses measure success by delivery on the ground. For these businesses the fact that DublinTown is always available and always ready to resolve problems provides comfort and enhances engagement.

For DublinTown operational delivery takes the form of:

- a. Additional cleaning and street washing via the DublinTown Clean Team
- b. Graffiti removal
- c. Lobbying Government, Council and state agencies on their behalf
- d. The provision of floral arrangements to brighten the city
- e. Marketing via events, advertising and social media activity
- f. The production of promotional videos
- g. Liaison with Gardaí to promote perceptions of safety
- h. Provision of Christmas Lights to 30 streets
- i. Provision of additional general lighting on streets throughout the city
- j. Provision of staff training for member businesses through the BID Business School

MANAGEMENT OF THE CITY – CLEANING & MAINTENANCE

The cleanliness of the city was always an important consideration but given increased health awareness and associations with personal safety, this has become an increasingly important consideration. Public expectations regarding cleanliness have increased and they are demanding that those expectations are met.



DublinTown has renegotiated its baseline agreement with Dublin City Council which guarantees a level of cleaning for the BID district that must be met by them. We will continue to monitor the implementation of this agreement and ensure that it is honoured.

During the pandemic many member businesses found it difficult to meet their DublinTown contributions. We adjusted our budgets accordingly. One result of this reduced budget was a reduction in the number of cleaning crews available to the company.

It is testament to the output and efficiency of the DublinTown Clean Team that many business members and members of the public noticed the reductions in cleanliness in the city when the number of operatives was reduced.

It is our intention to re-engage the full cleaning compliment on the successful outcome of the BID vote. This will allow for the full re-instatement of street washing, lane cleaning and night time cleaning which has been sorely missed by members during the pandemic.

We will also maintain our graffiti removal activity. This activity comprises DublinTown staff members who remove graffiti on routine basis and specialist contractors who remove graffiti from heritage sites and from stone facades.



DublinTown will continue to maintain gated lanes under its care. Without DublinTown these lanes will be re-opened and will again become locations associated with anti-social behaviour.

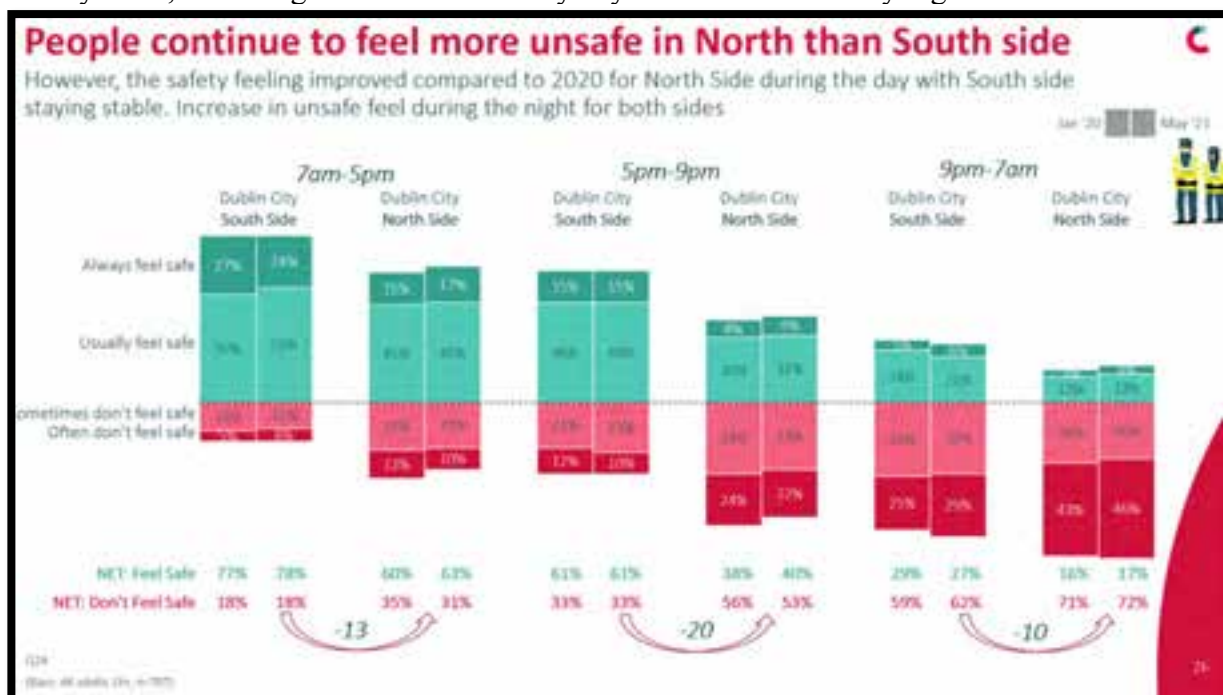
PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

Dublin city centre has struggled with perceptions of safety for some time. Consistent progress was made in enhancing these perceptions between 2011 and 2016, however, we have seen this momentum reversed in recent years.

This is a matter that must be addressed strategically rather than operationally, so that the reasons for poor perceptions are finally resolved.

It is important to put context on the perceptions of safety in Dublin City Centre. Internationally comparable cities note that 95-99% of their population feel safe by day while 75-79% do so at night. The table below which was compiled by Red C based on research conducted for DublinTown notes that Dublin's figures fall well short of these levels.

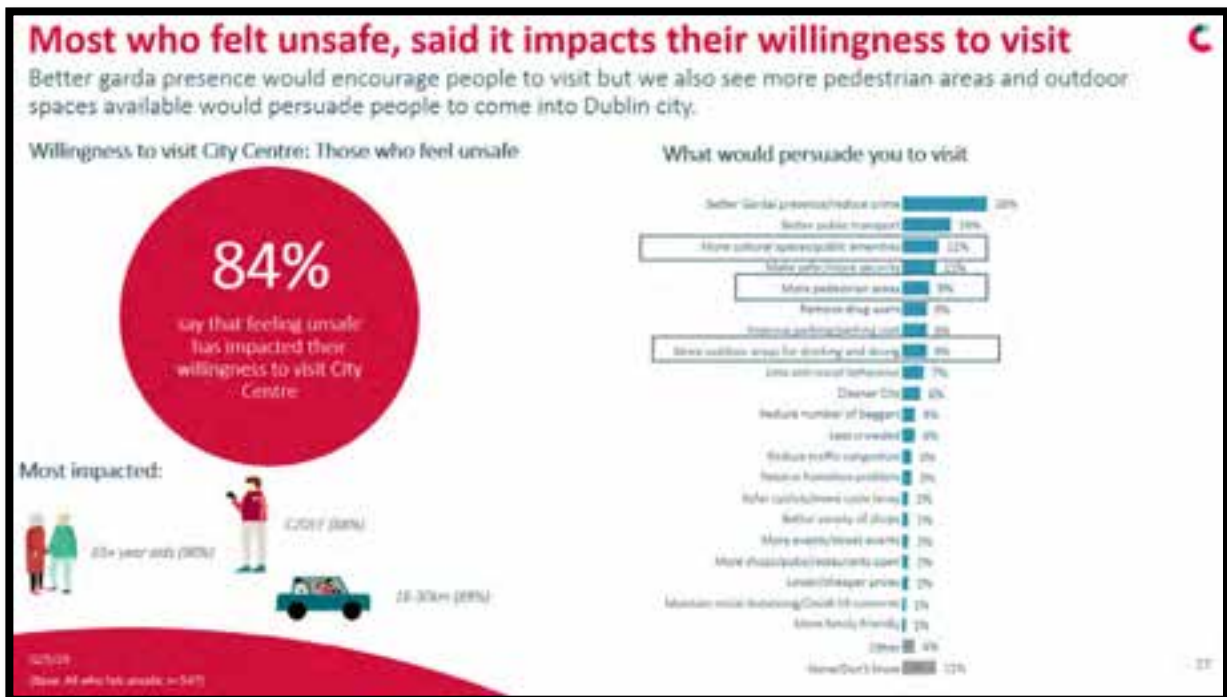
In May 2021, an average of 70% felt safe by day while 22% did so by night.



A particular point of concern is the dramatic reduction in south side perceptions. As recently as 2016, 91% felt safe by day and 50% felt safe by night in the southern city core. While below international standards these were still at levels which could be worked with. However, the sharp reductions in recent years have left us with a lot of catching up to do.

It also particularly concerning that the most frequent reply to the question what would persuade the public to visit Dublin city more often is not better shops, restaurants or cultural venues but rather a greater police presence. This is cited by 28% of Dubliners in research conducted by Red C on behalf of DublinTown. Police presence should be a hygiene factor. It should not be uppermost in people's minds. The fact that it is demonstrates the level of anxiety felt by Dublin residents when visiting their city.

As can be imagined this is having very real economic impacts. Dubliners admit that they deterred from visiting the city due to safety concerns. Dublin city businesses are very vulnerable at present and can ill-afford customers choosing to stay away. Therefore, it is not surprising that when DublinTown members are asked how the city could be improved that they also request more Gardaí.



While DublinTown has continuously called for greater Garda allocation to Dublin city, we believe that the addressing of safety perceptions is not a matter solely for the Gardaí. We must also consider the causes of poor perceptions. Addressing these causes will most likely require an all of city approach. In 2012, we were successful in addressing poor perceptions of public safety arising from drug related activity. This was done holistically and comprehensively through the better city for all approach. We strongly advocate for a similar approach at this time to address street management and the issues which are giving rise to poor perceptions. It is clear to us that Dublin City Council has a key role in enhancing perceptions of safety. Any actions arising from such a holistic approach must work to protect the most vulnerable in our society while respecting their dignity.

In addition to addressing the city's complex needs, consideration should also be given to CEPTD principles. CEPTD or designing out crime provides for interventions that make the public domain more accessible and which reduce fear and crime. These techniques such as strong lighting, removal of darkened recesses and dangerous spaces are increasingly utilised internationally and have a clear role to play in Dublin.

DublinTown has provided additional CCTV in key areas in the city and will continue to examine additional opportunities for enhancing the CCTV network. We have used the Christmas Lights infrastructure to provide additional lighting for example on Dame Lane and other locations. We are committed to advancing this programme in our next term, providing additional lighting throughout the winter months.

DublinTown has made these points to Government and the Policing Authority. We expect results. Dublin is the beating heart of the Irish economy. If the city centre is allowed to fail it will take considerable effort and money to revive it. Interventions are required now.

In the past Dublin has successfully used Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO's) to address persistent intimidating behaviour by a small number of people which has a disproportionate effect on the wider community. We have seen how ASBO's have persuaded people to moderate their behaviour. We believe that the concept should be reconsidered and introduced more systematically in the context of addressing perceptions of the city.

It is the view of DublinTown and member businesses that Dublin city centre has been seen as a location where many of the country's social difficulties can be housed anonymously.

However, the over concentration of social challenges is known to exacerbate rather than resolve issues. This was a clear finding of the Better City For All report in 2012.

MARKETING

There has never been a more important time to market the city and get our message heard. The pandemic has challenged Dublin city centre more than any other location in the country. If we are to regain our footfall, we will need a sustained and concerted effort.

Diversity & choice – the city’s unique selling points

The city has unique strengths that will help us in marketing it. We must maximise all the opportunities available to us including:

- The diversity of the city offering which includes the strongest retail, restaurant, theatre, arts/culture attractions in the country. We know that people like to shop and socialise on the same trip. Encouraging this will remain central to our messaging.
- Customers increasingly value unique and independent offers. The majority of Dublin traders are independent family owned businesses with a strong customer focus. Collectively these businesses provide Dublin with a unique character and identity.
- Dublin is a friendly, informal, progressive and inclusive city with no shortage of humour. We will work with these attributes to strengthen the city’s identity in the coming years.
- Dublin is accessible by sustainable transport means including public transport and active travel.
- The city is compact and traversable. Its newly pedestrianised streets will facilitate this further.
- Dublin City Centre has the most comprehensive ENTE in the country and is developing late evening and night transport routes to get people home safely.
- Dubliners love their city; that affection can be felt on the streets.

No local village or town centre can match our range and diversity. We have a personality that cannot be matched by an out of town shopping mall. There is always something new and exciting to sample in Dublin city centre. We propose to fully promote this strength.

The convenience of on-line shopping provides stiff competition to bricks and mortar businesses. This is a challenge that we should not seek to dismiss or diminish. Instead, we need to emphasise our strengths, the benefits of engaging with real and knowledgeable staff, who can provide assistance and insight. Furthermore purchasing from a locally based retailer is significantly more environmentally friendly than purchasing on-line.

DUBLINTOWN A RESERVOIR OF KNOWLEDGE

DublinTown has conducted regular research and analysis for over a decade. We use professional firms to ensure that the data we use is statistically reliable. This has allowed us develop a clear understanding of trends and how customer perceptions and preferences are evolving. By comparing our results with findings of our international colleagues we have been able to assess the Dublin market and have also made accurate predictions in relation to future trends including the increased support for pedestrianisation, the level of growth in on-line retail and its impact on city retail together with the likely growth in ENTE patterns.

This has enabled us to develop concepts like Dublin One and the Creative Quarter while assisting us in developing policies and programmes aimed at promoting the ENTE including our Purple Flag initiatives.

As lobbyists we are taken seriously because our positions are researched and credible. We back up our insights with clear data and analysis. This has been used to present clear and cogent arguments in our submissions to Government, Government Agencies and Dublin City Council. Our 5 point plans on the re-opening of the economy in May 2020 and again in May 2021 are a case in point. We clearly laid out the steps required to re-establish city trade which have proved to be particularly on point.

<https://www.wearedublincity.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/DublinTown-5-Point-Plan.pdf>

CONSISTENT MESSAGING

Dublin is at its best when there is co-ordination of key stakeholders and singularity of message. An example of this was during the 1916 celebrations. At that time there were clear messages to the public and to the business community. The Road to Rising in 2015 and the celebrations of Easter Weekend 2016 gave us our best ever footfall and people enjoyed themselves in a safe and welcoming environment. There were no public order issues and we presented the best impression of Ireland. We can repeat that experience. It takes co-ordination and willingness to engage. DublinTown is fully committed to working with all parties to achieve similar successes.

EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

DublinTown has effectively used events and festivals to promote footfall and generate positive messaging for the city. We have found that our events have allowed us generate very positive PR for the city and enabled us to develop strong links with media platforms.

We intend re-initiating our events programme in 2022 and will create a calendar that engages the public all year round. We intend to increase our engagement with the city's arts and culture sector and will develop themed activities that resonate with Dubliners and visitors.

Amongst the events that we will host during our next term will be:

- a. Purple Flag Week (a celebration of our ENTE businesses across food, drink and entertainment)
- b. Dublin Fashion Festival
- c. Unique to Dublin (a promotion of the city's independent outlets)
- d. A day to remember (promotion of things to see and do in Dublin city centre)
- e. Dublin at Christmas

It is proposed to adapt the Dublin Food and Drink Festival (formally Dine in Dublin promotion) into a **Purple Flag Week** celebration that will see the promotion of the city's entire ENTE. This celebration is likely to become a feature of the city's September calendar and will coincide with Purple Flag celebrations across and Ireland and internationally. The festival will not only celebrate our excellent hospitality sector but will also promote our arts, cultural and entertainment offering which is increasingly adding to the city's identity and footfall.



This promotion will be combined with new promotions such as **A day to remember** – an ongoing promotion of things to see and do in Dublin. Our messaging will centre on taking the opportunity for shopping, socialising, beauty and treating yourself in one of the city’s great hotels. We will run competitions with media outlets that celebrate Dublin while providing prizes that encourage a stay in the city and engagement with its offer.

Given the increasing importance of the city’s independent traders we will further develop the **Unique to Dublin** promotion combining unique city experiences across all sectors. We propose to centre this promotion in the February/March period.

We are working with city fashion retailers to develop new concepts to re-energise the Dublin Fashion Festival with a specific focus on promoting the city’s cutting edge designs.

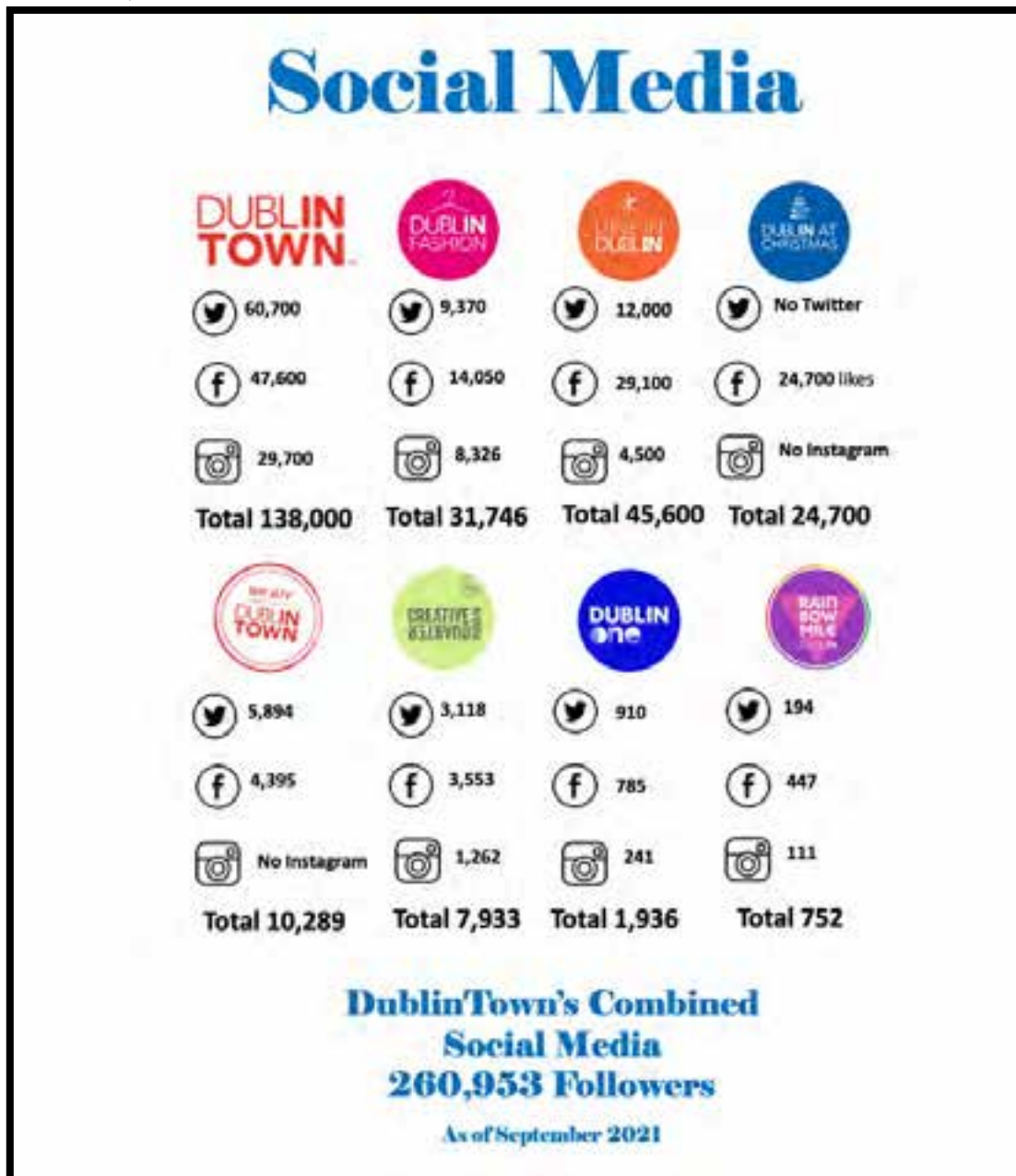
We will also continue to work with the organisers of other events and festivals to ensure a city centre element is developed and utilised to generate footfall all year round. In the past we have worked with Rock N Roll Marathon, One City One Book, Bram Stoker, Culture Night, Giro d’Italia, UEFA, Tall Ships amongst many others. We will continue to involve city businesses to make the most of ongoing events and festivals and to add to the overall city experience while events are in progress.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Social Media

DublinTown were early adopters of social media, utilising it as a marketing opportunity. The early marketing of the Creative Quarter was largely based on a highly successful social media communication strategy.

Since those early days we have grown our collective social media following and now have in excess of 260,000 social media followers across our various channels.



While certain social media platforms have come in and out of vogue, social media still offers us the opportunity to amplify members messages and create momentum for city activities. Our social media activity is closely linked to the content on our suite of websites. These sites include DublinTown, Dublin Fashion, Dine in Dublin and Dublin at Christmas. Pre-pandemic we were achieving 2.2m hits to our sites annually, particularly around major events and festivals.

On renewal DublinTown will invest in a total overhaul of our digital marketing and communications. We will rebuild our websites, consider new platforms (particularly in relation to video content) and will invest in our on-line communications.

We will once again work with members to devise an overall customer communication strategy that promotes the city and encourages extended visits.

Vlogging

DublinTown were vlogging pioneers, using videos and channels such as YouTube to promote members and their districts. We will continue to use these platforms and will constantly seek new channels to further extend our reach and engagement.



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND DISPLAYS

Each year DublinTown erects Christmas lights on 30 streets. On re-election we intend developing an integrated and themed approach to Christmas lights and will aim to have a consistent high-quality display across the city.



In addition to providing Christmas lights, we will continue to market the city as a destination at this critical time of the year through the integrated Dublin at Christmas programme.

As part of our investment in Christmas lights we have upgraded the lighting infrastructure and on-street wiring. We will use this infrastructure to provide lighting displays in the city from October to March. These lights will be attractive, will brighten the city and add to perceptions of safety over the long winter period.



DUBLIN CITY CENTRE GIFT VOUCHER INITIATIVE

At the suggestion of restaurant members, DublinTown began selling Dine in Dublin gift vouchers in 2014. These vouchers, now accepted by more than 60 hospitality businesses provide sales in excess of €100,000 per annum for members. This success prompted us to broaden out the scheme to include all retail and hair & beauty business members in an overall DublinTown Gift Voucher. DublinTown will continue to meet all administration and marketing costs, redeeming vouchers at full face value to members. There has been very strong initial interest from members in the scheme and we are confident that many retail members will see a strong return from the initiative.

The perfect gift for anyone who enjoys shopping or socialising in Dublin City Centre

These gift vouchers were created by DublinTown to support DublinTown members - City Centre Businesses

100% of The Voucher Value Goes To The Business
Voucher valid for 5 years and does not depreciate during that time

DublinTown gift Vouchers and Dine in Dublin gift vouchers are accepted in participating businesses listed on

DublinTownVouchers.ie **DineinDublinVouchers.ie**

INTERNATIONAL PROMOTION

We will continue to work with Failte Ireland on tourism development and promotion. We will work with members to develop our tourism offer, particularly in the northern core. This, we believe, will facilitate a larger and more comprehensive package to encourage tourists to Dublin bringing greater tourism spend to the city.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE CITY

As noted previously, we are living through a period of great change. It is timely to consider the city’s positioning and likely uses in the coming years together with the adaptations that will ensure we remain relevant to the needs of Dubliners and visitors in the 2020’s and beyond.

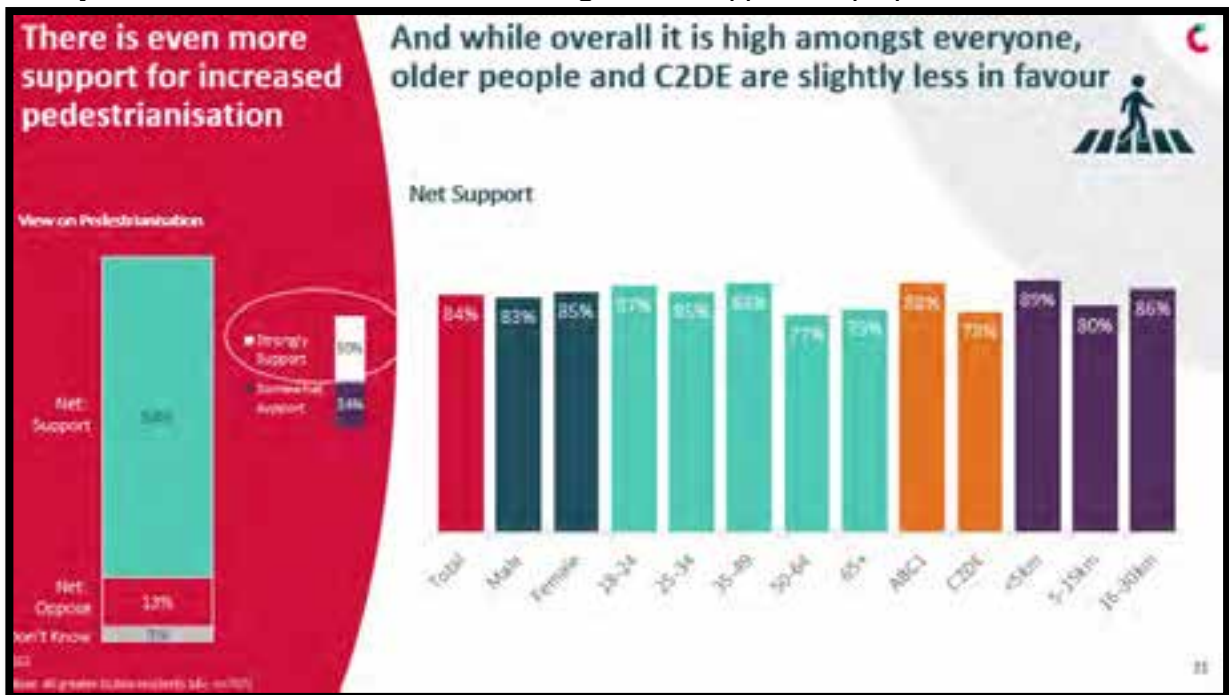
PEDESTRIANISATION

Support for pedestrianisation of city streets has grown remarkably in recent years. Dubliners consistently express their desire to see the creation of pedestrian zones where people can roam safely with their friends and family. There is overwhelming support for the creation of a pedestrian zone from College Green to Stephen’s Green taking in the Grafton and Creative Quarters. Support for pedestrianisation is largest amongst the ABC1 population and is likely to result in additional spend in the city. We had a glimpse of this during the trial pedestrianisation of south side streets in the summer of 2020. Footfall rose during the trial and spend improved on the relevant streets. This finding was consistent with research conducted by Red C on behalf of DublinTown in 2016. This research compared the spend of those who are more likely to visit following increased pedestrianisation compared with those who say they would be dissuaded from visiting. The result was a clear endorsement of additional pedestrianisation.

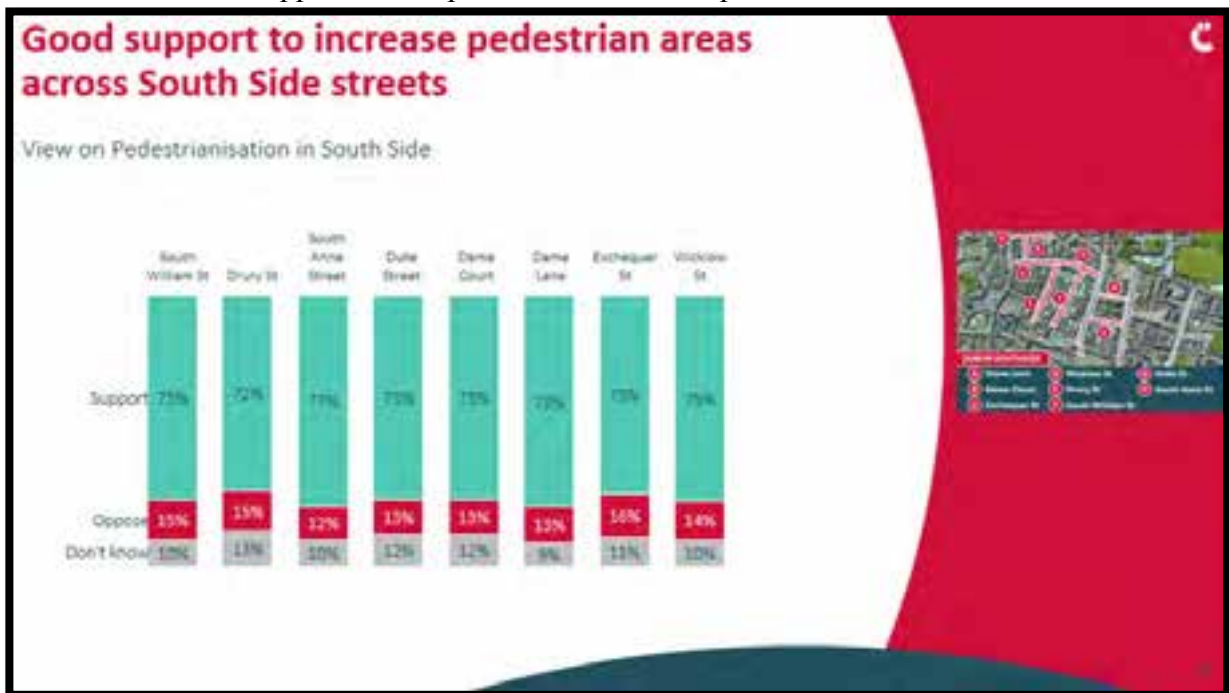


We believe that car access should be maintained into the city centre. We further believe that city car parks have an important role to play in the city economy. However, 24 hour vehicular access is not necessarily required on every street.

In May 2021 we asked Red C to test the current level of support for pedestrianisation within the city. The table below demonstrates the significant support the proposals had.



This translates into support for the pedestrianisation of specific streets.



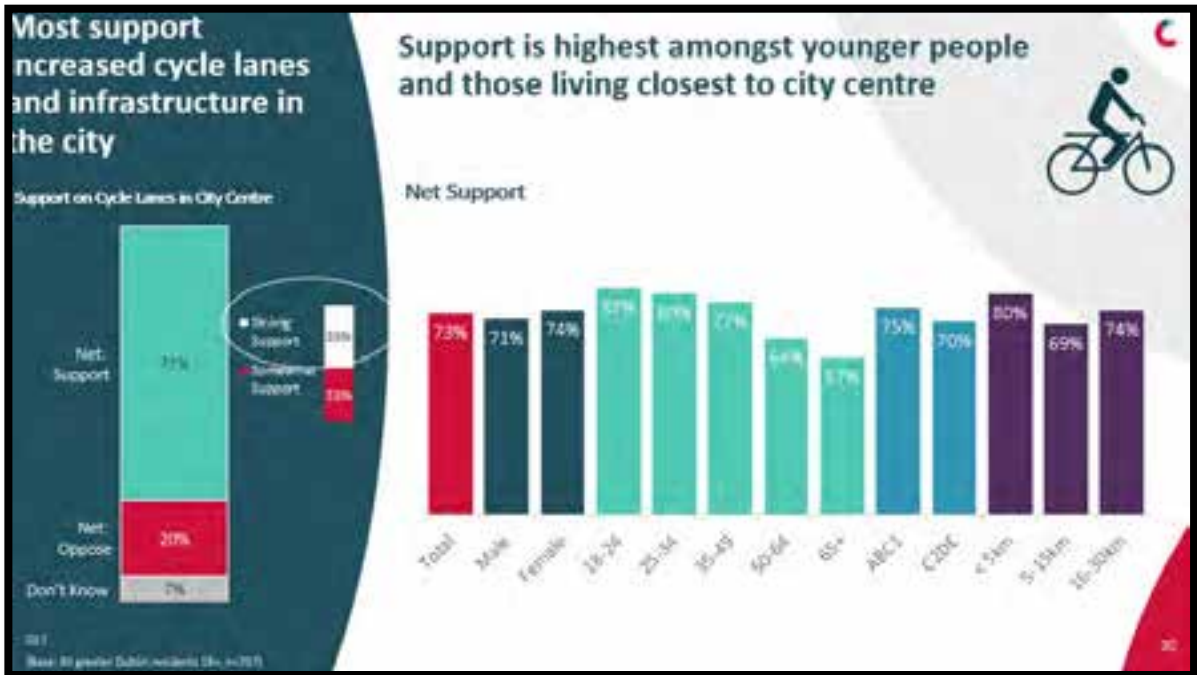
While there was support for the pedestrianisation of Capel St. this was not at the same level as for other streets, perhaps due to the fact that it is seen by many as a primary city artery.



We further believe that on-street parking should be restricted to allow for widening footpaths and facilitating outdoor dining within the core commercial district.

We believe that we can make increased use of car parks at night, when demand is lower, for use as taxi ranks and delivery hubs. The provision of taxi ranks in a safe and rain protected environment has obvious advantages and would also enable the redeployment of road space for outdoor seating and wider footpaths.

In line with increased environmental awareness we are now beginning to see the public favour the increased provision of cycle lanes and related infrastructure. We anticipate that the trend will strengthen as Gen Z come to adulthood.



Two-thirds of city customers used public transport to access the city pre-pandemic. DublinTown will continue to advocate for appropriate investment in enhancing the city's public transport network. We believe that Metro Link, DART and Luas expansions are

required and should be prioritised. We cannot wait any longer for vital infrastructure that was required decades ago.

As was the case during the construction of Luas Cross City we will work with members, NTA, TII and construction companies to minimise the disruption caused during the construction phase of any large scale projects.

As previously noted, in the context of an increasing level of ENTE, we will advocate for 24 hour public transport. It is important that patrons and workers are able to get home safely and affordably at night as they can during the day.

PUBLIC TOILETS

After many years of lobbying, which appeared to fall on deaf ears, we managed to persuade Dublin City Council to provide public toilets in May 2020. The high level of use on Stephen's Green and Wolfe Tone Square has shown that these facilities are needed. We are pleased that permanent toilets are now being proposed. We believe that these should be provided within welcome centres where a concierge service is provided. We have consistently argued that much needed public seating and public toilets should be provided and that fears of mis-use were not sufficient reason for denying the public basic services that are available in comparable cities.



Dublin City Council Toilets installed on St. Stephens Green in 2020

DublinTown advocates for the intensified use of the public domain. We believe that businesses should be enabled to use outdoor furniture without incurring excessive license fees. We have produced proposals that would enable the Council to license outdoor seating at reduced rates where cleaning, maintenance and good quality furniture is provided by the business. See our paper presented to Dublin City Council in 2016 for greater detail.

We further support the blending of commercial buildings into the public domain to create a welcoming environment as proposed by Sean Harrington Architects for Coles Lane. This model could easily be adapted for other locations across the city and would enhance perceptions of public safety by providing additional eyes and ears on the ground.

DublinTown believes that quality curated markets can add vitality to a district. A key attribute of a successful market is that it must have goods that the public wish to purchase and be able to attract additional footfall to the area. Research shows that spend outside of markets is generally 3 times that spent inside the market adding to the overall district economy. The goods on sale should complement district brands and could include items such as handcraft jewellery, toys, craft goods, art, books, antiques etc.



Paris art & book market

The market and stalls should be of a consistent quality and have a common look and feel. Additional lighting should be provided for Night Markets. The additional footfall and activity generated by Night Markets would assist in enhancing general perceptions of safety in the city at night.

DIRECT MEMBER SUPPORTS

We will continue our training programme which has been very well received by members. Before the pandemic we trained several thousand staff members many of whom received beneficial certified training for free. Amongst the training programmes rolled out by the organisation were:

1. Health and safety including manual handling
2. Fire safety compliance including Fire Warden training
3. Legal updates including GDPR compliance
4. Waste management and reduction
5. Covid compliance
6. On-line and digital marketing and sales including targeted Facebook advertising
7. People Management
8. Presentation skills
9. Negotiating skills
10. Disability awareness
11. Pensions and investment
12. Mortgage clinic
13. First Aid
14. Risk management
15. Energy management
16. Currency management
17. Customer care

We will support our retail members in the professionalisation of the industry in order to assist them in competing with out of town destinations and on-line platforms.

We will offer customer service and up-selling training to staff of members.

We will provide workshops and training on environmental topics. We will assist members, migrate to more sustainable energy and delivery solutions. We will augment this with waste management and green infrastructure training.

We will engage international speakers to discuss emerging customer trends and preferences to assist our members make the right product and marketing choices.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

Democracy is at the heart of the BID process and DublinTown. The business community decide if there will be a BID, they decide to extend the BID term or not, they determine the board membership, and they determine the size of the BID budget and its allocation.

With 2,500 businesses members it is unlikely that we can achieve universal opinions on complex matters, however, we will always strive to ascertain the majority view.

This democracy extends to local district level, where the local businesses decide on priorities. Significant decisions are being made in the city. DublinTown, given its universal membership is better placed than any to listen to the diverse business opinions, harness its strengths and develop a democratically determined plan.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The DublinTown board takes its Corporate Governance obligations very seriously. The board's ethical code and standards of behaviour are available to view on our website.

We will evaluate our success through consumer surveys which will allow us assess perceptions of the city in terms of the quality of experience; safety; and its ability to meet expectations. We will also evaluate footfall patterns and income generation within the city.

We contract with our members that our administration costs will remain below 15% of our total budget and that we will generate additional income to augment our programme of activities.

The success of DublinTown is made possible due to the support of members. Since the establishment of the BID, to the beginning of the pandemic, we have had very health collection rates of contributions. The team is very grateful for this. We are also very appreciative of the support provided in 2020 and 2021 during the pandemic, which allowed us to continue to represent members and provide important services including cleaning and floral displays together with Christmas Lights in both years.

DUBLINTOWN BOARD

The DublinTown Board consists of the following members:

Col Campbell (Chairman)	Bewleys
Ross Mc Mahon (Secretary)	David Mc Mahon & Co., Solicitors
Claire Byrne	Dublin City Council
Alan Campbell	The Bankers
Deirdre Hayes	Irish Life
Peter Hyland	Carroll's Irish Gifts
Derek Kelly	Dublin City Council
Mark Limby	Brown Thomas Arnotts
Derek Mc Donnell	Jervis
Fergus Mc Namara	Tax Assist Accountants
Karl Mitchell	Dublin City Council
Cat O' Driscoll	Dublin City Council
Eva Pau	Asia Market
Billy Reid	ILAC

Anne Marie Cagney, Garda Assistant Commissioner DMR, is an observer on the board.

HOW THE BID MODEL WORKS

The BID model works on the principal that the majority of businesses choose to establish a BID in their area. Each business then contributes to the common good of the district in question. In Ireland, the rates system is regarded as the fairest mechanism for establishing appropriate contributions for each business.

The level of contribution is decided by the business community at the BID's AGM each year.

HOW THE BID LEVY IS CALCULATED

The method of calculation of the BID levy is the same for every business.

The formula is:

Rateable Valuation x BID Levy = Annual BID Contribution.

The Dublin City BID levy has been between 4% and 5% of general commercial rates but it is not fixed at this level.

DublinTown gives an undertaking not to increase the contributions expected from members over the life-time of this current plan, other than to cover exceptional inflationary increases in the unlikely event that such was to take place. The levy has remained unchanged since 2014 and is at broadly the same rate struck in 2008. The increase in activities undertaken have been financed through additional earned income by the organisation and a steady increase in the rate of collection of contributions.

BACKGROUND TO BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

DublinTown is a Business Improvement District (BID) permitted by statute, and is in effect a Public Private Partnership process. The DublinTown board contains representatives elected by the business community who form a majority, elected officials from Dublin City Council and also Council executives. The Assistant Garda Commissioner, Dublin Metropolitan Region, is also an observer on the board.

The BID concept originated in North America in response to the ‘donut’ effect, whereby commerce was sucked out of city centres to the suburbs following a flight of the middle classes from the 1950’s onwards.

The business community initiate the BID process through the generation of a costed plan aimed at increasing trade in their district. If agreed by the Local Authority, the plan is then put to a vote of the relevant rate payers, and if accepted, a contribution levy is imposed on them for a fixed term. In Ireland the maximum term for a BID is 5 years, at which time the business community can vote on a renewed plan. DublinTown is in its third such term, having secured agreement of its plans in 2007, 2012 and 2017. We want to continue working on behalf of the business community for the next 5 years.

COMMUNICATION

DublinTown communicates with members through various means. We have a weekly update, regular additional messages issued to our data base via email, members meetings which we have re-initiated following the pandemic and our member liaison staff of Dave and Fran.

Dave and Fran call into members to discuss and hear any concerns and to inform members of developments. They are available at any time to engage face to face with members.

In addition we have the social media channels of We are DublinTown and the related website to keep our members and stakeholders informed.

PROPOSED BUDGET 2023-2027

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Income					
Levy Receivable	3,087,025	3,087,025	3,087,025	3,087,025	3,087,025
Other Income	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Total Income	3,387,025	3,387,025	3,387,025	3,387,025	3,387,025
Expenditure					
Cleaning & Maintenance, Landscaping	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Marketing, Events & Promotion	825,000	825,000	825,000	825,000	825,000
Christmas Lights	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Visitor Assistance and Hospitality	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Research & Policy	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000
Capital Projects and Improvements	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Community Gain	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Income Collection	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
Bad Debt & Write Offs	308,703	308,703	308,703	308,703	308,703
Administration	443,322	443,322	443,322	443,322	443,322
Depreciation	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Total Expenses	3,387,025	3,387,025	3,387,025	3,387,025	3,387,025

KNOW THE FACTS BEFORE YOU VOTE

There will be a vote in 2022 on the renewal of DublinTown.

In 2017, there were a large number of false statements made by those opposing the renewal of the BID. Our advice to businesses is interrogate the claims, arguments and positions presented and make your own informed choice. There are many in the UK who voted for Brexit who now wish they had considered all its implications but it is too late. The time to ask questions and ensure you are happy with your choices is before you vote.

In the vacuum after DublinTown, who will look after your interests and fight your corner?

The only group to be found on the ground fighting for you is DublinTown.

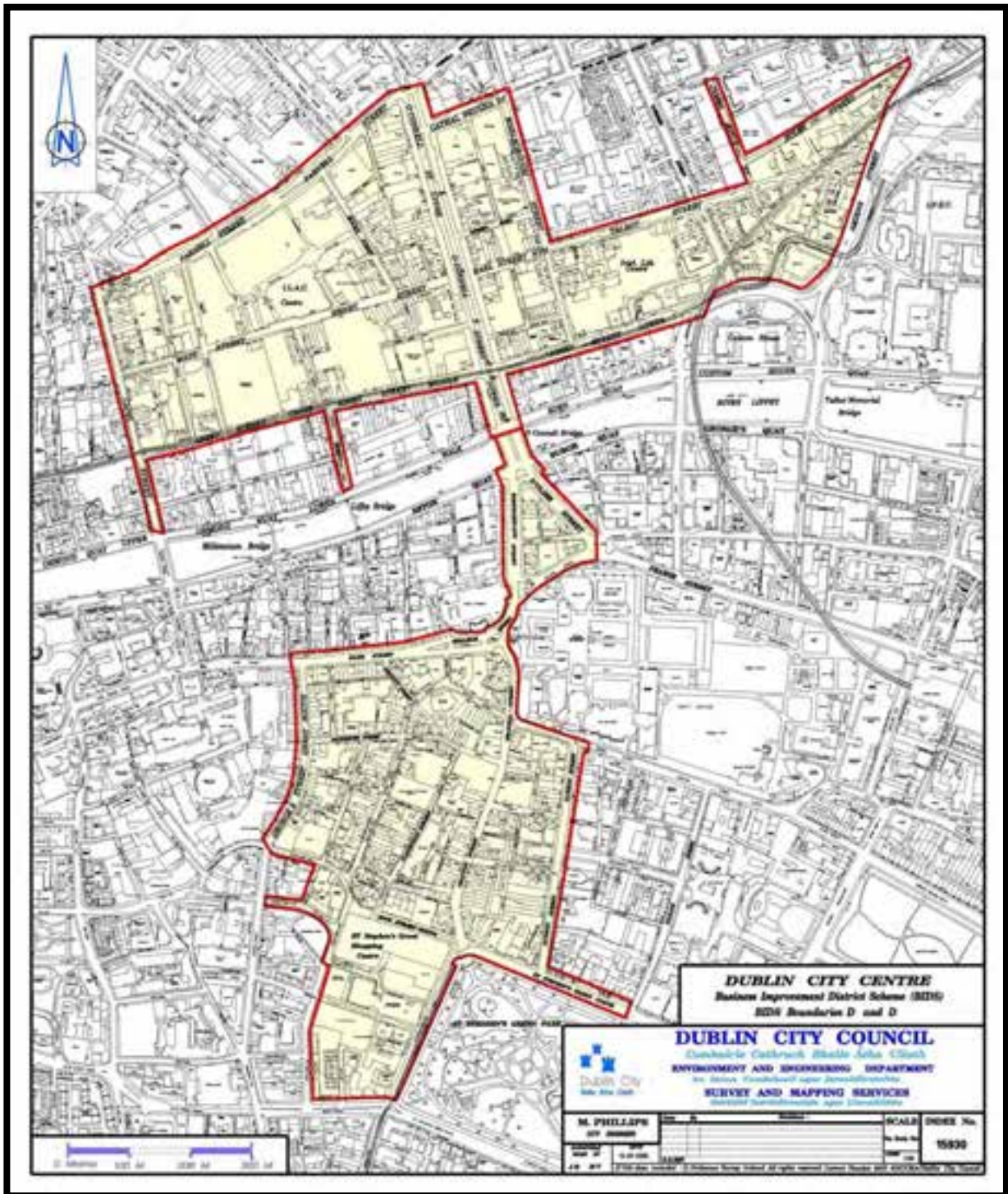
APPENDIX

APPENDIX ONE:

DUBLIN CITY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT INCLUDED STREETS

South City		
Adam Court	Dame Street	Mercer Street Lower
Andrew's Lane	Dawson Lane	Mercer Street Upper
Andrew's Street	Dawson Street	Nassau Street
Anne Street South	Digges Lane	Noel Purcell Walk
Anne's Lane	D'Olier Street	Prouds Lane
Balfie Street	Duke Lane/Duke St/Duke Lane Upr	King Street South
Chatham Lane	Exchequer Street	South William Street
Chatham Row	Fade Street	St Stephen's Green West/North
Chatham Street	Fleet Street	Stephen Street Lower
Church Lane	Foster Place South	Suffolk Street
Clarendon Market	Glendenning Lane	Swan's Yard
Clarendon Row	Glover's Alley	Tangier Lane
Clarendon Street	Grafton Street	Grafton Street
College Green	Harry Street	Westmoreland Street
College Street	Johnston's Court	Johnston's Court
Coppinger Row	Johnston's Place	Wicklow Street
Culle Lane / Culle St	Joshua Lane	York Street
Dame Court	Lemon Street	
Dame Lane	Little Longford Street	
North City		
Abbey Street Lower	James Joyce St	O'Connell Street Upper
Abbey Street Middle	Jervis Lane Lower	O'Rahilly Parade
Abbey Street Upper	Jervis Lane Upper	Parnell Street
Amien's Street	Jervis Street	Prince's Street North
Beresford Lane	Liffey Street Lower	Proby's Lane
Beresford Place	Liffey Street Upper	Sackville Place
Capel Street	Lower Gardiner Street	Sampson's Lane
Cathal Brugha Street	Marlborough Place	Spencer Row
Cathedral Street	Marlborough Street	Store Street
Chapel Lane	Mary Street	Talbot Lane
Earl Place	Moland Place	Talbot Place
Foley Street	Moore Lane	Talbot Street
Frenchman's Lane	Moore Street	Thomas Lane
Henry Street Arcade	North Earl Street	William's Lane
Henry Place	Northumberland Square	Wolfe Tone Memorial Park
Henry Street	O'Connell Bridge	Wolfe Tone Street
Hotel Yard	O'Connell Street Lower	

APPENDIX TWO:
DUBLIN CITY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT MAP





Corporate

www.wearedublintown.ie

Consumer

www.dublintown.ie

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