

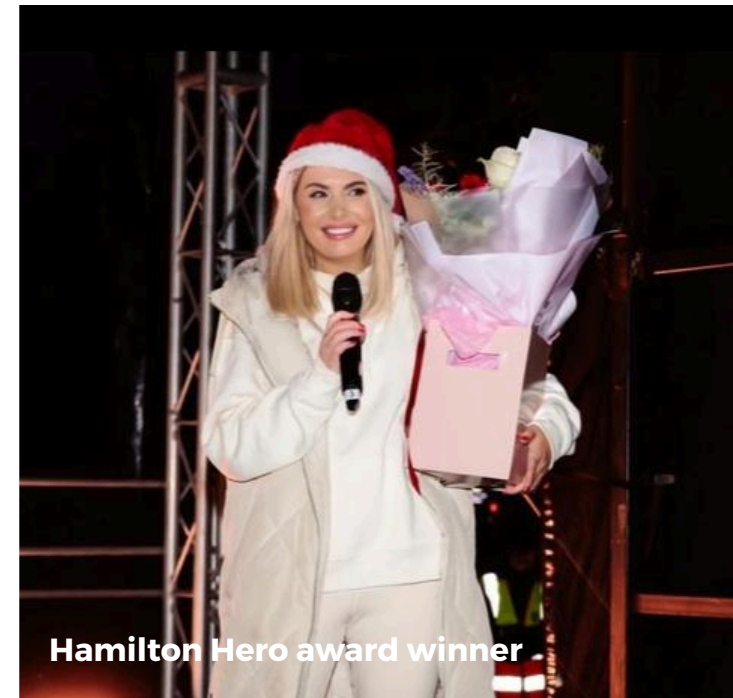


# HAMILTON

OUR TOWN  
AGM

22.04.26

## ANNUAL REPORT



Hamilton Hero award winner

# Contents:

- Introduction
- The year in review
- Finances
- Footfall & activity
- Life in our town
- Spotlight on our town
- Voice and Pride in our town
- Plans and objectives



≡ Welcome ≡



# Introducing Hamilton Our Town...

Hamilton Our Town leads the promotion and animation of Hamilton town centre, delivering events, marketing and business engagement activity that supports local businesses, increases footfall and enhances the town's overall offer.

Funded primarily by local organisations and businesses, it provides a collective, business-led approach to investing in activity that supports the town centre, improves the economic environment and drives footfall. Hamilton Our Town delivers the only sustained, coordinated programme of marketing and promotion for the town centre.

Town centres continue to face significant challenges, including changing consumer behaviour, economic pressures and a shifting business landscape. In this context, collaboration and proactive delivery are more important than ever. Hamilton Our Town brings stakeholders together to deliver coordinated activity, ensuring the town centre remains visible, active and competitive.

The area includes 379 businesses, with the majority contributing an average of £200-£350 per year, supporting a modest operating budget. This is supplemented through additional grant funding and commercial income, enabling further activity to be delivered. The organisation is supported by a voluntary Board of Directors alongside a small operational team, delivering a high level of impact through a cost-effective and efficient model.

## Volunteer Board members 2024 / 2025

Mrs J M Smith - Chair - Excel Sales and letting

Rev J C Hood - St John's Church

Mr M W Logie - Bluebird Care

Mr D McLachlan - Councillor

Mr M W Meyerhoff - Hang on climbing centre

Ms H Laurie - Lets let

Mr C Dewar - Councillor

Mrs Jeanette McCormack - Primark



# HAMILTON OUR TOWN

## Our Year at a Glance - 2025 activity



### SPOTLIGHT

#### Marketing, promotion & visibility

- 176 businesses promoted online
- 1,403 Facebook posts published
- 3,546 professional images produced and shared
- 7.4 million Facebook content views
- 500,000 social media engagements
- 4 week long radio campaign
- 2 BBC Scotland radio appearances
- 25,000+ estimated website visitors

### VOICE

#### Business voice, partnership & influence

- Quarry Street road opening success
- Weekly town centre checks and reporting
- Town Centre charity space / hub launch
- Host of the Monthly Pub Watch meetings

### LIFE

#### Events, footfall

- 16 event days delivered, estimated attracting 34k additional visits
- SummerFest new 2025 festival launched
- 58 Free event stalls for BID area businesses
- Estimated +226k increase in visits versus 2024 – Quarry Street
- Estimated +48k visits to the BID area versus 2024

### PRIDE

#### The look, feel & care of the town centre

- 20 planters maintained
- £2,438 awarded in shopfront improvement grants
- 13,000 users of free town centre Wi-Fi
- 15+ fly-tipping issues reported - All cleared
- 1 Hamilton Hero award winner

# Financial summary...

We continue to operate within a challenging funding environment, with a reduction in overall income during the year. Despite this, through strong financial management and an efficient delivery model, we have maintained a broad and impactful programme of activity in line with the business plan.

## Key Performance

- Turnover: £231,379 (↓ 5.5%)
- Operating Surplus: £18,120 (+105%)
- Reserves: £71,129 (+34%)

## Income

- Levy: £153,126 (↓ 4.0%)
- Grants: £57,367 (+16.6%)
- Stall Hire: £12,515 (↓ 23%)

## Investment by Theme (2024/25)

- Life – Events & Animation: ~£71k
- Spotlight – Marketing & Promotion: ~£32k
- Pride – Town Centre Improvement: ~£19k
- Voice – Business Support & Engagement: ~£10k

*Delivery supported by a lean operational structure.*

## Markets Events & Commercial Approach

Stall hire income has reduced (↓ 23.0%) as part of a deliberate shift to prioritise accessibility and long-term sustainability that includes:

- Free stalls for BID businesses
- Lower pricing to support and entice local traders
- Focus on encouraging new businesses into the town

Markets and events continue as a key footfall driver. Prioritising a market trader-led event model has enabled **commercial income generation**, supporting a more financially sustainable approach to events.

## Efficiency & Delivery

- Expenditure reduced (↓ 9.7%)
- Increased in-house delivery of events and marketing reducing costs while maintaining quality and impact

## Funding Context

Levy income remains lower than in previous years. This reflects ongoing structural changes within the town centre, alongside challenges in levy collection. In response, we have actively evolved the operating model – placing greater emphasis on income diversification, partnership working and cost efficiency to ensure continued delivery, long-term sustainability, and the generation of a small operating surplus and strengthened reserves.



Check out  
Companies House  
for our full set of  
results...

# Footfall & Town Centre Activity

Our work continues to deliver measurable impact through increased and sustained footfall, supporting the town centre during an ongoing period of precarity.

Visitor figures for 2025 show an estimated **increase of +48,477 visits (+0.7%)**, to the BID area. This builds on strong performance in 2024, where footfall increased by +143,911 visits (+2.2%), as reported by Place Informatics. This represents **two consecutive years of growth**, despite significant structural challenges. Importantly, Hamilton's performance in 2025 is in line with the national trend, with both Hamilton and Scotland recording +0.7% growth. Source Placeinformatics.

## Driving Footfall Growth

A key contributing factor has been the **reopening of Quarry Street to vehicles**, alongside the introduction of free 30-minute parking on Quarry Street, Townhead Street and areas of Cadzow Street. These changes have improved accessibility, encouraged short-stay visits and increased overall activity. This has been supported by a continued programme of events, markets and community activity, which remain important drivers of visits and vibrancy.

**Alongside this, Hamilton Our Town continues to deliver the only sustained, coordinated programme of marketing and promotion for the town centre.**

## Context & Impact

This performance must be viewed within a challenging local context, including:

- The closure of the New Cross shopping centre
- Town centre transition from national retail and context in reference to the area masterplan

**Against this backdrop, maintaining and growing footfall is significant.** Without improvements to accessibility, parking and sustained promotional and event activity, it is likely that visitor numbers would have declined. Instead, the data shows that **footfall has been stabilised and grown** over a two-year period, demonstrating the impact of proactive town centre management and continued investment.

**48K  
EXTRA  
VISITS**



**Footfall has been stabilised and grown...**



# Visitor Behaviour & Catchment Insights

## Visitor Behaviour (Dwell Time)

Visitor patterns show a strong concentration of 20–40 minute visits, which represent the largest share of activity. This indicates purpose-led, short-stay visits, such as shopping, hospitality and service use. This trend aligns closely with the introduction of free short-stay parking, demonstrating how **accessibility improvements may directly influence behaviour**. Longer visits (40–60+ minutes) remain stable, particularly at weekends, reflecting the role of events, hospitality and leisure activity in encouraging extended stays.

## Unique Visitors & Growth

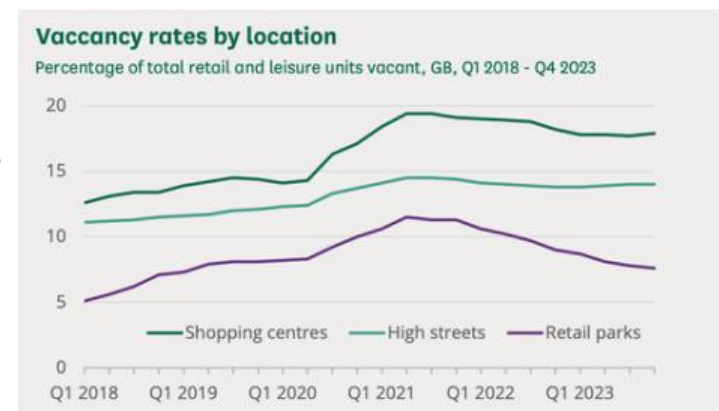
Unique visitor data shows a +1.1% year-on-year increase, indicating that the town centre is attracting new visitors as well as repeat visits. Growth has been consistent across the year, with all months showing positive performance. This demonstrates that increased activity is not limited to specific events, but reflects a sustained and ongoing uplift in engagement.

## Catchment & Market Reach

Data indicates, that the town centre continues to perform strongly within its core catchment (ML3), which remains the largest contributor of visitors. At the same time, data highlights significant potential in surrounding postcode areas, including ML1, ML2 and ML9. Information provided by Placeinformatix

## Vacancy rates

Hamilton Our Town continues to monitor retail vacancy through regular on-the-ground audits, providing a current and locally accurate picture in the absence of consistent Scotland-wide data. Overall vacancy levels remain stable and broadly in line with UK high street averages based on best available data.



Source: Local Data Company

UK retail data shows vacancy rates rose sharply during the pandemic and have since stabilised, with high streets consistently experiencing higher vacancy than retail parks (House of Commons Library, 2023).

# Life in our town (Events)

## Events as a Strategic Tool

Events are a core part of the current business plan and a key component of the town centre's marketing and positioning strategy. The town centre functions as a destination, shaped by its retail, hospitality, services and public space. **Events play a vital role in enhancing that product, creating reasons to visit, increasing dwell time and strengthening overall perception.**

**They are not standalone activities.** Events are delivered as part of a coordinated approach to place marketing, supported by digital promotion, social media and regional campaigns, ensuring consistent visibility and engagement.

## Performance & Delivery

During the year, 16 events were delivered across the town centre, including markets, gala days and major partnership events such as Pride. These generated an estimated 34,000+ additional visits, contributing directly to increased footfall and town centre activity.

## Key outputs included:

- 16 town centre events (markets, gala days & partnerships)
- 34,000+ additional visits generated annually (estimated)
- 58 free stalls provided for levy-paying businesses
- 3 sold-out community panto performances
- SummerFest 2025 - a month-long programme featuring ~40 events

## Events were delivered in partnership with:

- Local businesses and traders
- Community and third sector organisations
- Hamilton Information Project (youth engagement)
- Cultural partners, including Comic-Con activity



**Events, a coordinated approach to place marketing...**

We're proud to host ongoing community focused activities such as our annual community Panto!



School Choir competition...

# Life in our town (Events) - strategic impact

Events contribute to the town centre by:

- Driving footfall and supporting local spend
- Encouraging longer visits and repeat activity
- Enhancing vibrancy and overall perception
- Positioning Hamilton as a destination through coordinated marketing and promotion
- Supporting place-making and community benefit
- Activating vacant and underused spaces
- Providing opportunities for local businesses and traders

Importantly, events support a shift towards a more **experience-led town centre**, reflecting changing consumer behaviour and reducing reliance on traditional retail alone.

## Case Study: Pride 2025

Lanarkshire Pride, delivered in partnership with Hamilton Our Town, returned for its second year and brought a significant number of visitors into the town centre.

Key insights (Place Informatics):

- 24,000 visitors across the town centre on the day
- +5,000–6,000 additional visits compared to a typical Saturday (+28% uplift)
- 10,460 attendees identified as new visitors
- 1,000 visitors travelled from up to 25 miles away

**This demonstrates the ability of events to:**

- Attract new audiences into the town centre
- Extend the town's regional reach
- Generate significant uplift in activity within a single day

## Visitor Spend Insight

Town centre visitors typically spend £30–£50 per visit, with Scottish day visitors averaging £52. Events play an important role in increasing this spend by encouraging longer visits and wider engagement across the town centre (VisitScotland).

## Overall Insight

Events play a critical role in ensuring the town centre remains active, relevant and competitive. By enhancing the town centre “product”, attracting new visitors and encouraging longer stays, events form a key part of a wider strategy to support economic activity.



28% event day  
visitor uplift



     
**HAMILTON**  
CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON

**We are proud to host monthly events and activities...**

**Hamilton Hero Award winner 2025  
Lesley Robertson**



# LANARKSHIRE PRIDE

**+5,000-6,000 additional  
visits compared to a typical  
Saturday (+28% uplift)**



All photography produced by Gavin McCourt for Hamilton Our Town

# Spotlight on our town (Advertising)

## A Coordinated Approach

Hamilton benefits from a structured, always-on marketing programme, ensuring the town centre is consistently promoted as a vibrant destination. In many comparable towns, promotion is delivered through a mix of organisations and campaigns. In contrast, Hamilton benefits from a **coordinated and sustained approach**, providing continuous visibility for businesses, events and activity. This is achieved with a very modest budget, utilising in-house production, digital focus and robust value led decision making.

## What We Delivered

- 176 businesses (signed up) and featured every 6 weeks
- Town centre focused posts
- 1,403 social media posts
- 3,546 professional images created
- 7.4 million content views
- 500,000 engagements
- 25,000+ website visits



This represents a highly active and consistent programme, significantly increasing the town centre's visibility.

## Supporting Local Businesses

Our Digital Marketing Scheme provides:

- Professional photography (every 6 weeks)
- Dedicated social media promotion
- This delivers real value to businesses signed up, with photography alone typically worth £200-£300 per session, while improving the overall quality and perception of the town centre.

## A Planned & Strategic Approach

Marketing is delivered through a structured annual programme, aligned to seasonal campaigns, events and national activity.



# TRAILS & LIVE READS

## WHAT WE PROMISED

120 X 30 SECOND PROMOTIONAL TRAILS  
40 X PRESENTER LIVE READS

## WHAT WE DELIVERED

127 X 30 SECOND PROMOTIONAL TRAILS  
54 X PRESENTER LIVE READS



@THISISGORADIO

#GLASGOWSOWN



2025 Month long campaign -  
promoting the town centre and  
our new festival...



# GO AFTERNOONS PROMOTION

WE GAVE LISTENERS THE CHANCE TO WIN SOME FANTASTIC PRIZES ACROSS THE SUMMER WITH HAMILTON OUR TOWN AND SUMMERFEST!

TO WIN THE LISTENER HAD TO IDENTIFY THE TRACK CONTAINING THE WORD 'TOWN'

YOU RECEIVED 568 ENTRIES



@THISISGORADIO

#GLASGOWSOWN

# Spotlight on our town (Advertising)

## Events as a Marketing Driver

Events are a core part of the marketing approach – generating content, increasing visibility and encouraging visits. This ensures marketing and events work together.

## Multi-Channel Promotion

- Paid social media campaigns
- Radio advertising
- Press and media coverage
- Town centre banners
- Website and email communications

Campaigns are aligned to key periods including Easter, Summer, **Scotland Loves Local** and the festive season.

## Audience & Performance

Our approach is data-led and audience-focused, with strong engagement from an age 35+ demographic and consistently high interaction levels. Performance is monitored and reviewed to ensure continued effectiveness.

## Strategic aim

This sustained approach supports:

- Increased footfall
- Greater awareness of businesses
- Stronger local spend
- Improved perception of the town centre

## Looking Ahead

We will continue to:

- Grow digital reach and engagement
- Expand business participation
- Align marketing with events and campaigns



**Ensuring Hamilton remains visible, competitive and well-positioned.**



All photography produced  
by Gavin McCourt for  
Hamilton Our Town

# Spotlight on our town (Advertising)

All photography produced by Gavin McCourt for Hamilton Our Town





## Voice and Pride in our town (Communication engagement and look of the area)

(Representation, engagement and town centre environment)

A core part of our role is to represent businesses and ensure their **views and priorities are heard** and acted upon.

### **Working with the local authority:**

We maintain regular engagement with the local authority, raising issues and supporting improvements. This includes environmental matters as well as contributing to key changes such as the introduction of 30-minute free parking and the reopening of streets to vehicles. In 2025, we also brought businesses and the local authority together to support communication around the town centre masterplan.

### **Communication and visibility:**

We keep businesses informed through a monthly online newsletter, regular website updates and active social media channels.

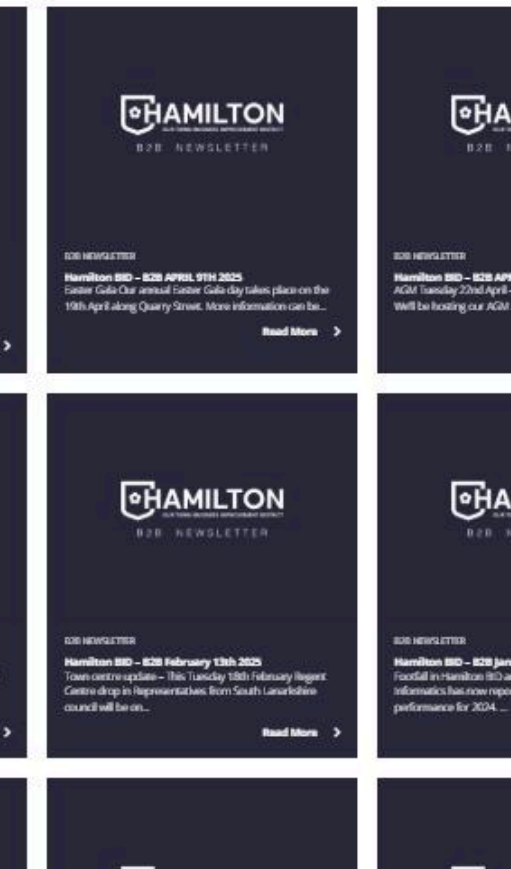
We are also visible within the town centre, with regular on-street presence, monthly activity days and clear contact points, ensuring businesses can engage with us easily.

### **Town centre environment:**

We carry out regular walkabouts to identify and report issues such as fly-tipping and waste. We also maintain town centre planters in partnership with GP Plantscape, helping to enhance the overall look and feel of the area.

### **Free public Wi-Fi:**

We currently provide free public Wi-Fi across the town centre, supporting visitors, businesses and events.



# Plans & objectives for the year...

We will continue to deliver against our 2022-2027 Business Plan, building on the strong performance in 2025 while responding to ongoing change within the town centre. We have already started the year strongly, delivering:

- A new **International Women's Day** event in partnership with Hamilton Information Project for Youth
- A successful **Easter Gala Day**
- Continued strong performance across our **social media** platforms

We will also....

## **Drive Footfall & Economic Activity**

- Deliver a programme of events and campaigns to increase town centre visits
- Build on 2025 performance and aim to exceed 34,000 additional event visits
- Continue provision of FREE stalls and event engagement for BID area businesses

## **Promote Hamilton as a Destination**

- Deliver an enhanced marketing and PR programme, including radio, digital, press and our pro photography scheme
- Continue to challenge perception and showcase Hamilton as a vibrant, high-quality town centre
- Build on campaigns such as SummerFest and Scotland Loves Local

## **Support Place-Making & the Town Centre Environment**

- Continue to activate vacant and underused spaces with community activity
- Support community use of the town centre through partnerships
- Undertake regular town centre checks, including monitoring fly-tipping and environmental issues
- Monitor for safety issues, engaging with local police where required
- Engage with the local authority on the town centre Masterplan and Pride in Place opportunities and collaboration





## Plans & objectives for the new year...

### Financial Sustainability & Delivery

- Continue to adapt and prioritise activity in line with available income
- Maximise levy collection and overall income performance
- Explore additional funding and partnership opportunities to support delivery

### Looking Ahead: BID Renewal

- **Begin structured engagement with businesses and stakeholders**
- **Gather feedback to shape the next BID Business Plan (2027-2032)**
- **Ensure future priorities reflect the needs of the town centre and its businesses**





# HAMILTON

OUR TOWN