

Lincoln BIG
Business Improvement
Group

Annual Report

**July 2023 –
June 2024**

Making a difference to
Lincoln now and in the future

www.lincolnbig.co.uk

Chair's Report

Welcome to our 2023/24 Annual Report which is bursting with activity that the team have delivered to ensure we continue to make a difference to Lincoln now and in the future.

The High Street is continuing to experience economic uncertainties from external factors, but I am delighted that our city appears to be bucking the trend with our low vacancy rate in both the uphill and downhill areas and our members saying that they have had a good year of trading.

As an organisation we have been prudent with the levy and additional external funding to ensure that we were able to continue to deliver a programme of activity that was essential to keeping the city at the forefront to entice more footfall to the city from visitors and residents alike, whilst continuing to attract new businesses to the area. With every £1 of the levy we have been able to attract £2 of external funding.

With the voice of our members through our business survey in January, we were able to ascertain what we have been doing right and what we can do better for you going forward. Thank you to all those that took part in this survey it was valuable.

To ensure that we continue to give value to our members for the levy, the team delivered a programme of activity that brought atmosphere, vibrancy and footfall to the city. We also worked with Partners to deliver several new safety and security initiatives namely

- Introduction of the role of Civil Investigator collating shop theft statements
- Re-introducing enforcement for vehicles that access the High Street between 10 am and 4 pm

More detail can be found within this Annual Report.

Our Security Group gained the BCRP (Business Crime Retail Partnership) National Standards Accreditation from the NBCC (National Business Crime Centre) which is recognised



by the Police, local authorities and retailers alike. This accreditation is valid for two years and is highly regarded by many organisations.

Our events became bigger and better in scale and content throughout the year. We introduced Restaurant Week for the first time, which was well received by businesses during the quieter post-Christmas / New Year period. We organised more free training courses for members and their employees.

The BIG Team looks forward to working with you, our members, in the coming years to continue creating a vibrant, lively and successful city centre. I hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report.

John Latham
Chair

Governance

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Lincoln BIG is the trading name for the Lincoln City Centre Partnership (Company number 04662323)

It is controlled by a Board of Directors representing city stakeholders. It trades as a small business – paying VAT and filing Companies House returns. Lincoln BIG does not distribute profit. It reinvests surpluses into delivering its Business Plan to improve Lincoln City Centre and operates under The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004. Our board was made up of the following stakeholders:



Founder Members

Councillor Richard Metcalfe
to 4 May 2024

City of Lincoln Council

Councillor Naomi Tweddle
from 13 November 2023

City of Lincoln Council

Councillor Anita Pritchard
from 5 May 2024

City of Lincoln Council

Simon Beardsley

Lincolnshire Chamber of
Commerce

Kevin Kendall

Lincolnshire Chamber of
Commerce

Lincoln BIG Levy Payers

Carl Jacklin

Agatha Boutique

Nicola Lockwood

Bells Tea Shop

John O'Donoghue

Carousel, Craft, Home &
Original Bierkeller / Void

Mark Brewer

Imp Travel

Matt Hayden

From 16 January 2024

Nationwide

Stan Matthews

Thompson & Richardson

Investor & Co-opted Members

Dr Tracy Buckby

From 18 September 2024

Lincoln Cathedral

Nicola Hall

Lincoln College

Councillor Tom Dyer

Lincolnshire County Council

Freddie Chambers

Lindum Group

David Lewis

Siemens Energy

Dave Skepper

Stagecoach East Midlands

John Latham

University of Lincoln

Observers

Simon Walters

City of Lincoln Council

Kyra Nettles

Lincolnshire County Council

Company Secretary

Tom Hickingbottom

Wilkin Chapman LLP

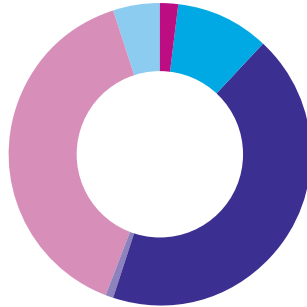
Financial Figures

For the year ending 30 June 2024

INCOME total:

£28,778	2% Welcome
£111,002	10% Experience
£497,357	43% Value
£16,965	1% Projects
£449,672	39% BID Levy
£62,383	5% Membership

1,166,158 Total



EXPENDITURE total:

£341,127	23% Welcome
£387,499	26% Experience
£537,919	37% Value
£68,182	5% Projects
£130,234	9% Overheads

£1,464,960 Total



Accounting Period: Our Financial Statement is for the year ending 30 June 2024, approved by Directors on 5 November 2024 and will be presented to our Annual General Meeting on Monday 25 November 2024.

Our Funding: Approximately one-third comes from the BID levy, with the remaining two thirds coming from both our trading and other fund-raising activities. Therefore for every £1 our levy payers pay us, we work hard to multiply and gain a further £2 to spend on improvements for the city.

BID Levy: In line with national legislation (BID Regulations Act 2004 and Local Government Act 2003) and our BID levy rules, the BID is not permitted to discount the levy without an alteration ballot.

BID Levy Collection Rates in 2023/4 were 97.3%.

Founder and Investor Members



CITY OF
Lincoln
COUNCIL



Lincolnshire
Chamber of
Commerce

P.C. Coaches

Lincolnshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

Working for a better future

SIEMENS
ENERGY

Stagecoach

Priority 1 Welcome

What we delivered in 2023 - 24

Our Focus: As our commitment to our levy members continues, our primary focus will be on neglected spots and places of high footfall. This includes activities like graffiti removal and general maintenance aimed at enhancing the overall appearance of the city. The cleanliness of Lincoln city centre remains a priority for Lincoln BIG and our stakeholders. We will continue our efforts to elevate the quality of the public environment, creating an inviting atmosphere that encourages people to stop, work and visit.

“The support that Lincoln BIG has given over the years has been incredibly beneficial to us, particularly the security side. Having a radio helps us to know what may be around the corner and we know we can call in for assistance or CCTV monitoring.”

Louise Woolley, Lincoln Central Library

Warden Service & Street Management

We continue to deploy uniformed City Centre Wardens to conduct patrols in the city centre. They play a crucial role in enhancing security of businesses and maintaining the city centre’s welcoming ambience for both visitors, employees and residents. They also act as ambassadors.

Our Wardens have continued to use a range of specialised cleaning equipment and our electric vehicle to complete deep cleans in the BID area; this included focused cleaning of key footfall areas over and above the statutory remit of the City Council. Public realm issues in the area were reported to the appropriate authority.



“Your City Centre Wardens are fantastic. We do have in store security, but the hours do not cover every trading hour that the store is open. We have often contacted your team when we have had instances of violence and aggression in store and they have rushed over to store to help us contain the situation. We have also contacted your team when we do have a guard, and they need a little back up or support with an issue. The Lincoln City Centre Wardens are always a huge help, and this helps our colleagues to feel safer working on Lincoln high street.”

Charlotte Skinner, Boots Store Manager

Security & Safety

2023 saw the relaunch of our Security Group with an increase in members and an increase in members accessing the DISC app for reporting of incidents and receiving the latest security alerts. In 2024 the Security Group gained the BCRP (Business Crime Retail Partnership) National Standards Accreditation from the NBCC (National Business Crime Centre) which is recognised by the Police, local authorities and retailers alike, actively assisting in deterring and preventing shoplifting incidents.

In February 2024, working with Lincolnshire Police, Danny Mason, one of our Wardens, took on the role of Civilian Investigator which involves gathering evidence packs from businesses for the Police to enable them to charge and prosecute offenders. This position and closer partnership working has achieved excellent results.

145 Logged onto the app

153 leased an encrypted Security Group Radio

119 Evidence Packs submitted (February – June)

In July, with the start of the summer holidays, the Lost Child Safety Scheme was introduced for key locations. Wrist Band distribution boards were provided to participating businesses so parents can write their contact details on the wristband in case their child gets separated from them during their visit to the city.

To keep the city safe, Lincoln BIG remains responsible for seven operational defibrillators situated throughout the city, accessible for public use.

- The Terrace Reception, Grantham Street LN2 1BD

- Cube and Triangle, 40 Silver Street, Lincoln LN2 1EH
- Doubletree by Hilton, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln LN1 1YW
- St Marks Management Office, St Marks Shopping Centre
- Home Nightclub, 4 Park Street, Lincoln LN1 1UF
- Waterside Centre (Between O2 and Goldsmiths), High Street, Lincoln LN2 1AP
- The Visitor Information Centre, Castle Hill LN1 3AA

This year, we have also introduced Trauma kits that are located at:

- Doubletree by Hilton
- Waterside Centre
- Home Nightclub
- Visitor Information Centre



Hospitality & Evening Economy

The Safer Venue Pack continues to be offered to hospitality businesses. The initiative includes Ask Angela providing customers with a discreet means to exist uncomfortable situations in venues. The 'Check Your Drink' campaign continues to be promoted to prevent and reduce the risks associated with drink spiking.

67 Ask Angela venues

130 Check your Drink strips distributed

Licensing Security and Vulnerability Initiative (License SAVI) is a confidential self-assessment tool aiding licensed premises in ensuring a safe environment for managers, staff and customers.

8 re-accredited

12 accredited for the first time

Lincoln BIG continues to act as secretariate to Lincoln Pubwatch for their six-weekly meetings.

Representatives from our Security and Evening Economy team attend bi-weekly Tasking Group meetings, hosted by City of Lincoln Council. The group discuss issues around security and safety within the city and how to enhance the overall well-being of the city.

Street Dressing

Lincoln BIG maintained its commitment to provide a diverse range of street dressing. This plays a vital role in welcoming visitors and residents to the city and ensuring that Lincoln is the 'go to' place with a lively, vibrant environment.

210 Hanging Baskets

1,000m Approx Bunting

210 Solar Christmas Trees



Priority 2 Experience

What we delivered in 2023 - 24

Our Focus: We recognise the significant effect of hosting vibrant and memorable events that ensure visitors and locals have an enjoyable experience, enticing them to return time and time again to experience the hidden gems of our historical city. Throughout the year we have constantly organised and supported popular and new events, generating excitement within the city.

Dino City

Dino City & Dino Dig returned ready for families to unearth an amazing T-Rex fossil at our DinoDig site and say hello to the Dino Rangers & the baby Rex at the meet and greet. There were also amazing lifelike animatronic T-Rex at the Dino Paddock to be approached with caution. Various businesses on the Cornhill Quarter also put on fun dinosaur themed activities.

Kickstart at the Castle

Delivered by Lincoln BIG and Robbo's Scooter Rally saw Castle Square come alive with music and entertainment for all scooterists. There were trade stalls and custom scooter show along with a full entertainment programme of bands and DJ's including Dave and Minxy Porter of Scooterist Internet Radio who kicked the weekend off with some great tunes to keep visitors entertained in between the great bands that were lined up.

1940s Weekend

Did you experience the spirit of 1940s Britain with our two days of vintage performances, activities and classic vehicle displays in Lincoln's historic Cathedral Quarter and across the city? The event was as popular as previous years with a packed schedule of entertainment throughout the weekend, including live music, singing and dancing, local craft markets. Lincoln was full of atmosphere and tastefully decorated with our patriotic bunting for our biggest 1940s celebration. Winston Churchill also came to visit – portrayed by Derek Herbert.

Cornhill Cove

Lincoln BIG teamed up with Open-Air Events and Place Immersive to offer summer excitement at the Cornhill with a seaside style pop-up bar featuring tasty street food and free crazy golf. There was also pop-up entertainment including live DJs, family friendly bands, live music and street theatre.





Lincoln Restaurant Week

We celebrated our first Lincoln Restaurant week from Saturday 27 January to Sunday 4 February 2024 to celebrate the great restaurants of Lincoln! From sizzling Independents to the tastes of national favourites. A unique event that united the city's popular eateries and hidden gems. 30 of the city's favourite restaurants participated to offer exclusive set menus, special offers and delightful discounts.



Sightseeing Tour Bus

Our Sightseeing Bus is split between two Annual Reports. For this Report, we operated 7-days a week from July – September with weekends only during October, March – June. We recruited six new Tour Guides who soon became valuable members of the team delivering live commentary of the city's 2,000 years of history from the Normans and the building of the Castle and Cathedral, the signing of the Magna Carta, the Roman era to Aviation Heritage in Bomber County and much more.

We increased our private hire bookings and welcomed visitors who were attending reunions, conferences along with WI groups, university and school parties.

7,009 Tickets sold

146 reviews rated

4.5 on TripAdvisor

In July 2024 we were proud to be awarded the Visit England Visitor Attraction – Tour accreditation. We had the Lead Assessor from Visit England take a trip on the Sightseeing Bus as a mystery passenger and awarded us 95% which was excellent for our first ever assessment.



“Our group visit to Lincoln was very successful, largely due to assistance given by the staff at Lincoln Big. They helped us to buy the correct tickets at short notice which helped the day to run smoothly. The group enjoyed using the tour bus and all agreed that it made their visit to Lincoln worthwhile. They found it both interesting and educational. We had such a great experience that we will be using the tour bus on our next visit with a different group. We would highly recommend the bus tour, which is good value for money. Thank you to the staff at Lincoln Big!”

Amanda, Glenn Coaches, York

The BIG Spook

The Bailgate had a spooktacular transformation with a range of puppets, musicians, performers and parades through the historical streets.

The Waterside Centre hosted the popular Pop-up Pumpkin Patch allowing local and visiting families the opportunity to pick a pumpkin to take home or carve on the spot.



“The BIG Spook was a brilliant event. It brought lots of people to the Bailgate area and there was an excellent atmosphere all day, despite the rain. The parade itself was visually and musically stunning, and everyone visiting the Uphill area was excited to experience it.”

Sasha Drennan, Lindum Books

Our Sightseeing Tour Bus was hijacked for two Halloween Ghost Tours giving a frightful journey past the city’s landmarks telling the stories of Lincoln’s haunted past.

Christmas 2023

The **Lincoln Light Christmas Trail** kicked off in late November and ran throughout the festive period, filling the air with holiday cheer and illuminating the city with a dazzling array of intricate light displays and enchanting large scale installations on St Paul in the Bail, Brayford Waterfront and the Transport Hub. As night fell, the city came to life with a mesmerizing display of light, creating a truly magical atmosphere.

The **Nutcracker trail** saw 20 Nutcracker Kings located around Lincoln for families to find in various businesses and enter

the draw for the chance to win a family day out in Lincoln!

The **Digital Advent Calendar** returned to exclusively promote Lincoln’s shops and businesses giving everyone the opportunity to win some brilliant festive offers and prizes for free. Promotional offers and competitions were entered behind 24 doors of the advent calendar and each day, a new offer and / or competition was revealed through a fun animated ‘door opening’.

The original and ever popular **THOR’S tipi** landed in its usual residency on the Cornhill as part of the Lincoln Christmas festivities. They had all the classic THOR’S fun, with two giant tipi’s, roaring log fires, live music with local bands, an exciting drinks menu and delicious festive feasts.



Priority 3 Values

What we delivered in 2023 - 24

Our Focus: We acknowledge that businesses continue to face many challenges, therefore we are committed to providing support, value and a high return for your levy through our services whilst expanding our activity.

“I will be retiring and wanted to say many thanks for all your help over the past 7 years with my bus pass.”

P Brooks, Bus Pass customer

BIG Bus and Car Parking Deals

We maintained our collaboration with Stagecoach East Midlands and City of Lincoln Council providing levy members and their employees with a cost-effective deal to save money on commuting into the city centre for work. These collaborations ensure our city keeps moving, carbon emissions are reduced, and a cleaner environment can be enjoyed by all. The introduction by Lincolnshire County Council and Stagecoach East Midlands.

26% increase in car parking permits

20% increase in bus passes

Park & Ride

In partnership with Stagecoach East Midlands, Lincolnshire County Council and City of Lincoln Council, we have entered into an agreement with Waitrose to extend the Park & Ride service until February 2026. This 15-minute service remains an affordable and convenient method of travel into the city, ensuring less carbon emissions and a safer environment. Operating 6 days a week with free parking at Waitrose (off Nettleham Road) to Lincoln Central Bus Station.

53,301 used the Park & Ride service in 2023/24



“Lincoln BIG’s Future High Street meetings have helped to bring awareness of the library service to others and feel we have become part of a wider Lincoln business community who are working together to develop the future of Lincoln’s High Street and support each other.”

Louise Woolley,
Central Library

Our Future High Street

We have evolved the Healthy High Street group to our Future High Street group to provide a communication platform for all businesses in the city centre who are interested in the growth and prosperity of Lincoln, to receive information and provide feedback to key stakeholders on key initiatives.

Training Courses

We have provided several training courses across the year to cover a range of subjects from Ask Angela, ACT Awareness (both e-learning and in person) and Emergency First Aid at Work to name a few.

Marketing Campaigns

We use our virtual voice through our marketing channels such as social media and e-shots, as a place where we advertise business news to provide them with more attraction. This included International Women’s Week where those business ladies interviewed unanimously agreed that this important day remains important and relevant. They describe it as a vibrant celebration that honours the remarkable achievements of women worldwide, both past and present, inspiring and motivating others to pursue their goals.

Over 110 years after the creation of International Women’s Day, there is still a need to educate and inspire young women to understand their potential in this world.



“When I took a 3-year gap in my career to have children, having a group of women to support me was vital. They supported me through the challenges of being a first-time mum which can be very isolating, but they also gave me the boost I needed to return to the working environment.”

Respondent



Working with Partners

In response to growing concerns over safety and visual clutter on the busy high streets of Lincoln, we worked with partners (City of Lincoln, Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Police) to address the challenges created by delivery vehicles navigating crowded pedestrian areas throughout the day and thereby posing a threat to public safety and causing a visual eye sore. This is despite the Traffic Regulation Order's clearly stating that within Lincoln City Centre, there is no loading or unloading allowed from 10am – 4pm every day.

It is understood that delivery drivers play a crucial role in ensuring goods reach their destinations promptly, whether that be hospitality or retail, chain or independent businesses. However, there has clearly been a rise in the number of delivery vans and trucks present on Lincoln's High

street during active pedestrian times, with CCTV recording between 12 – 16 delivery vehicles in the city centre every day in breach of the traffic regulation order.

Steps were taken to bring about change including:

- Signage being updated to ensure enforcement can take place
- The number of official drop off points being increased and proactively promoted to delivery companies
- Enforcement restarted in June 2024 with an initial period of informing those who continue to misuse the area. Strict enforcement will restart at the beginning of July 2024.

Secretariate

We continue to support and act as the secretariate for Bailgate Area Guild and Lincoln Pubwatch.



Student Voucher Booklets

We continue to subsidise a booklet of vouchers encouraging students to experience hospitality, retail, leisure and healthcare at a discounted price. 10,000 were printed and distributed at the University of Lincoln's Freshers Fayre and the Waterside Centre's student lock-in event.

Wayfinder Finger Signage

We updated all the green and black finger signs across the city to refresh and update venues and attractions to ensure visitors can easily find their chosen location.

GEM Awards

To recognise the success of the businesses in the city and using our voice to further enforce this, the GEM (Going the Extra Mile) Awards were introduced. The Awards recognise members for their high level of customer service and those who go the extra mile for their customers.

83 businesses
nominated

86.5% Average
Customer Service score

Health, Beauty, and Wellness

Newland Chiropractic
& Neurology Centre

National Retailer

LUSH Cosmetics Lincoln

Independent Retailer

DAS Electrical

Food on the Go

Burnetts Sandwich Co

Restaurant

Tortilla

Coffee Shop, Tea Room, and Café

Caffè Portico

Bar, Club, and Late-Night Venue

Lion & Snake

Professional Services

TSB

Experience and Entertainment

Tension Twisted Realities

“Just wanted to say well done to Lincoln BIG for hosting a great event for local businesses and congratulations to all the winners and nominees.”

From a shortlisted businesses in the independent category

“Fantastic night thank you Lincoln BIG for hosting such a great event so much effort & thought making everyone’s night special. Roll on next year!!!”

From a shortlisted businesses in the professional services category



“Thank you for such a great well run evening. My whole team loved it, it was great to see some old friends and make some new contacts. It made it even better taking home an award, thank you again.”

Winner from Entertainment

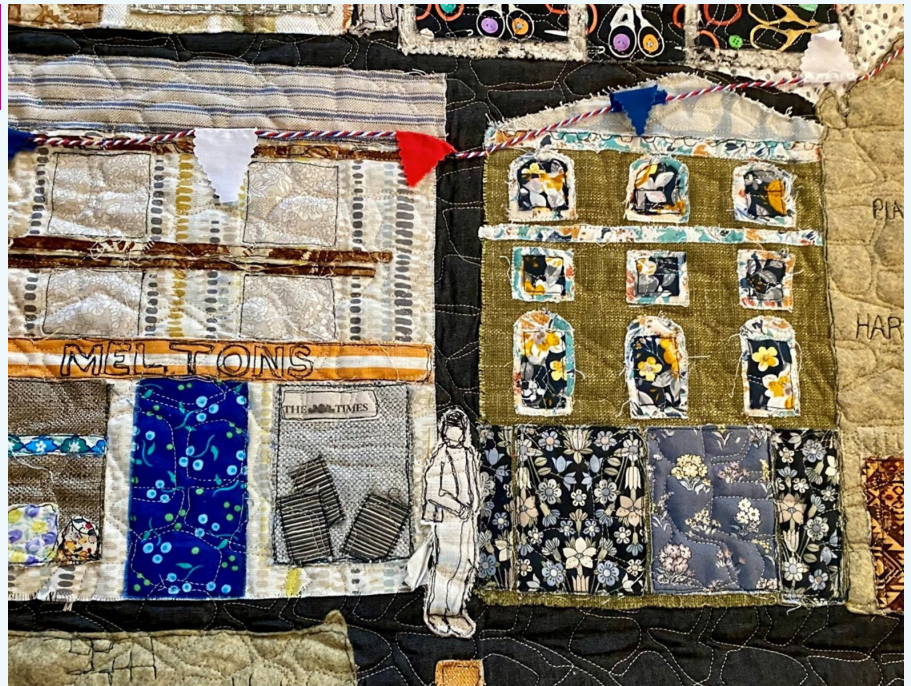
Lincoln Creates

Lincoln Creates is a Lincoln BIG initiative which was developed to build on the success of Lincoln BIG's Art Council funded Cultural Lincoln programme. Its objective is to provide small grants, ranging from £500 - £5,000 to artists and local businesses, encouraging projects that invigorate the city centre and cultivate collaborative partnerships between creative practitioners and local enterprise.

Building on the achievements of previous years, we're passionate about enhancing the city using captivating art projects that bring ambience and atmosphere including imaginative murals, sculptures, installations and events.

Over the past year, we have awarded grants to bring the following to the city:

- Forgotten Shops quilt in the Cornhill Market with The Fabric Quarter £2,135 Grant
- Garlic Pots for the Vegan Market with the Pot Shop £2,475 Grant
- Marine Mural with the Tattooed Arms £3,550 Grant
- Watery Views with The Brayford Trust/Professor at the Uni is currently ongoing £5,000 Grant.



Lincoln has a 1000-year history of trade. For a millennium people have bought & sold; brought jobs and services to the city and quietly supplied the people around them with what they need. But how many of them do we remember? They are lost in the stitches of time.

To help us remember a piece of textile art which celebrates Lincoln's long and uniquely special place for trade and strongly features pictorial depictions of individual shops and traders from both the imagination and research was created. This is a celebratory and education piece of artwork reminding shops and traders that they have a place in the city's

rich heritage plus illustrating to visitors that Lincoln offers a proudly creative and historic tradition of interesting and engaging trade / shops. At a time when the high street is facing its own pressures, it focusses on how important shops are to culture and using fabric / stitching in a digital age reminds us of traditional techniques that many previously used.

This piece of artwork was commissioned from The Fabric Quarter in the Bailgate together with an infographic explaining each part of the quilt. The quilt is on display within the Cornhill Market.

Getting involved

Are you interested in any of the projects or activities detailed in this Annual Report? Do you have ideas that you would like to put forward? Would you like more details or to get involved? If yes, please contact info@lincolnbig.co.uk

Simon Beardsley, Managing Director

Lee Roberts, Head of Operations

Sharon Stone, Corporate Manager

Danielle Hairyes, Relationship & Operations Manager

Marion Cooney, Hospitality Manager

Yvette Mills, Project Manager

Courtney Harrison, Marketing Executive

Rebecca Johnson, Office Administrator

Danny Mason, City Centre Warden

Wayne Nettleton, City Centre Warden

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