

— milton
keynes

BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

June 2023 -
May 2024



UNITY PLACE

— MILTON KEYNES —

OPENED SEPTEMBER 2023



Company information

Registered business address

Sovereign Court, 215 Witan Gate, Milton Keynes, MK9 2HP

Company registration number

04260537

Accountant

MHA Chartered Accountants

Contact details

Email: info@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

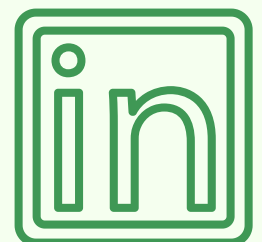
Tel: 01908 395099

Corporate website: www.mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

Consumer website: mymk.cc



@mkcitycentre



@mymiltonkeynes

MyMK: the story so far...

MyMiltonKeynes BID is a business led not-for-profit company funded by 422 businesses and in Milton Keynes City Centre.

One of over 330 BIDs across the UK, MyMiltonKeynes was established and began trading on 1 June 2017, following successful ballots of the City Centre's businesses in February 2017 and again in November 2021.

In June 2023, we began trading for our seventh year, delivering against the BID Business Plan 2022-2027.

It is the employed team who are responsible for the delivery of the Business Plan and day to day management of the company.



Chief Executive

Melanie Beck (retired Sep 2023)

Jill Farnsworth (from Sep 2023)

Place Management

Matthew John, Place Management Director

Rob Boiling, Public Realm & Operations Manager

Marketing

Charlotte Pearson, Marketing Director

Joanne McClaren, Marketing Manager

Finance & Office

Cassy Staal, Finance & Office Manager



Our CEO says:

This year has been all about listening, learning and building a solid foundation for the future. I'm incredibly proud of the dedicated team we have in place and how they've adapted to change. We're committed to improving MK City Centre for the businesses that trade here. As well as delivering so much this year, we have put in the groundwork required to enable us to deliver new activities, in line with our Refreshed Business Plan 2024-27, from 1 June 2024. **Jill Farnsworth**

Board Members 2023-24



The Board provides the BID team with leadership and direction. It also provides an insight into the sectors working across the City Centre.

All Board Directors contribute on a voluntary, unpaid basis.

During this BID year we welcomed Simon Martin, the Centre Manager for Midsummer Place, Adam Sciberras, the Special Projects Director of MKDP and Tom Miell the General Manager of Popworld and Chair of Barwatch to our Board. We said goodbye to Colm Feeley and Nick Coppock, as well as our former Chief Executive Melanie Beck.

Chief Executive

[Jill Farnsworth, MyMiltonKeynes](#)

Chair of the Board

[Paul Davis, Independent](#)

Vice Chair

[Kevin Duffy, centre:mk](#)

Directors - June to May

[Holly Dawson, Bidwells](#)

[Jo Lewington, Network Rail](#)

[Stuart Profitt, MK City Council](#)

Directors - June to March

[Nick Coppock, Xscape](#)

[Colm Feeley, Moxy Hotels](#)

Directors - February to May

[Simon Martin, Midsummer Place](#)

[Tom Miell, Popworld](#)

[Adam Sciberras, MKDP](#)

Chair's Statement



It is my pleasure to present the Chair's Statement for the seventh year of MyMiltonKeynes Ltd and the second year of our current five-year term. This year has been one of significant change, reflection, and progress as we continue to adapt and evolve.

In September 2023, we bid a heartfelt farewell to Melanie Beck, our long-serving Chief Executive, who retired after years of exceptional service and leadership. Melanie's dedication to Milton Keynes and the BID has been instrumental in shaping the strong, connected business community we are today. We are profoundly grateful for her tireless commitment and vision.

As we welcomed Jill Farnsworth as our new Chief Executive, we embraced a moment of transition. Jill's arrival has provided the organisation with an opportunity to pause and reflect on our journey so far. With her fresh perspective and leadership, we have carefully evaluated the BID's role and the services we provide to ensure that we continue to meet the evolving needs of our levy payers.

Shifts in economic conditions, consumer behaviours, and the overall market have prompted us to re-examine the projects and services we we planned to deliver via our 'Business Plan 2022-2027.' This review paved the way for a new, responsive three-year business plan that launched in June 2024. The Board believes it reflects the realities of today's trading environment and ensures we continue to deliver value to our levy payers.

This year we also said goodbye and thank you to some long-standing board members whose contributions have been invaluable to the BID's success. Their leadership and guidance will be missed, and we are deeply appreciative of their service. At the same time, we are pleased to have welcomed new board members, whose expertise and fresh perspectives will be essential as we move forward into the next chapter of our BID's evolution.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all our partners, stakeholders, and the wider business community for your continued support. Together, we will navigate the challenges ahead and continue to strengthen Milton Keynes as a vibrant place for business and our community.

Paul Davis
Chair - MyMiltonKeynes

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Achievements: June 2023 -

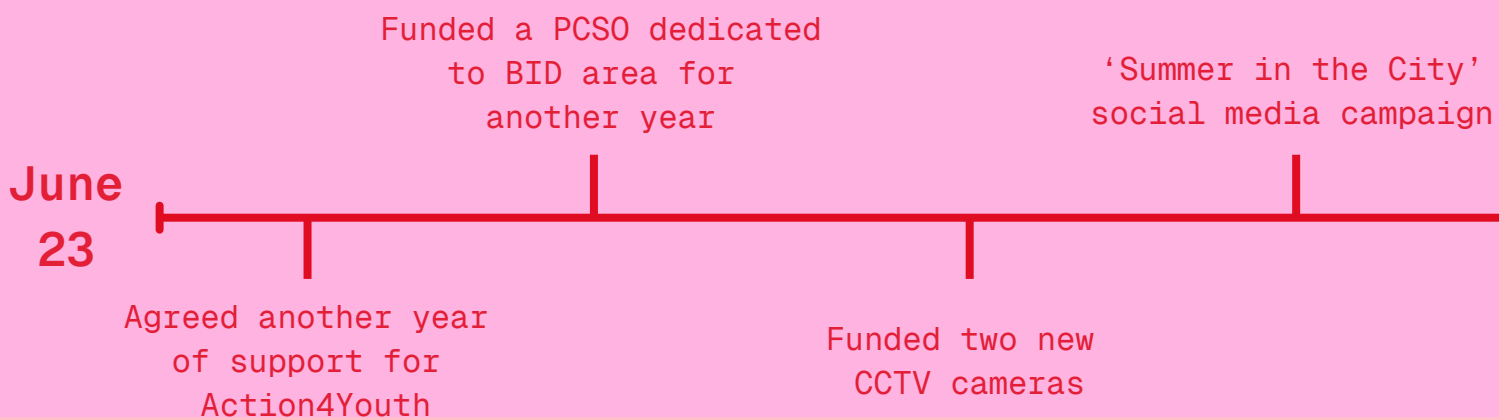
In the first quarter of the second BID year, MyMiltonKeynes played a pivotal role in supporting several key initiatives that enriched the community and enhanced the safety, vibrancy, and inclusivity of Milton Keynes.

One of the highlights of this period was our sponsorship of the prestigious **Milton Keynes International Festival (IF)**, which attracted visitors and showcased a diverse array of cultural performances and events. Alongside this, we were proud to support the **Milton Keynes Pride** event, celebrating the City's commitment to diversity and inclusion.



Our **'Summer in the City' social media campaign** highlighted the wide range of activities and experiences available throughout Milton Keynes. This campaign aimed to engage both residents and visitors by showcasing the city's attractions and encouraging people to explore everything Milton Keynes has to offer.

In terms of safety and security, MyMiltonKeynes continued to make strides by committing to another year



August 2023

of **part-funding for a dedicated Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)** within the BID area. Additionally, we funded the installation of new CCTV cameras and supported the enhancement of the City Centre's CCTV network, helping to improve security and deter crime.

We also reaffirmed our commitment to supporting **Action4Youth's Breakout and Inspiration Programmes**, which provide mentorship to young people, educating them on the dangers of gang culture and helping to steer them toward positive paths.



Lastly, MyMiltonKeynes continued to deliver essential **landscaping, planting, cleansing, and pest control services**, funded by Milton Keynes City Council. These services ensure that the City Centre remains a clean, green, and welcoming environment for all.

Sponsored IF:2023

Sponsored Milton Keynes
Pride Festival 2023

August
24

Continued to deliver landscaping
services and public realm improvements

Achievements: September

In the second quarter of the BID year, MyMiltonKeynes achieved significant milestones and transitions while continuing to drive impactful initiatives throughout the City Centre.

A key moment during this period was the retirement of our CEO, Melanie Beck, in

September. Melanie's departure was marked by a fitting recognition of her leadership, as she received the prestigious **SME Award for 'Business Woman of the Year.'** Her accomplishments have left a lasting legacy on Milton Keynes, and her leadership was crucial in shaping the BID's success.

Jill Farnsworth, who joined us from Watford BID, took over as **our new CEO.** Jill brings a wealth of experience and energy, that is shaping the future direction of MyMiltonKeynes.

In October, we participated in **Safer Business Action Week**, underscoring our ongoing commitment to supporting local businesses with crime and safety matters. We hosted a drop-in event, allowing businesses to meet with the local police team and discuss safety concerns. Our efforts extended into the digital space



Launched MyMK
on TikTok

British BIDs
Accreditation

Sep
23

Melanie Beck retires
as CEO and Jill
Farnsworth starts

Safer Business Action Week
programme of activities

2023 - November 2023

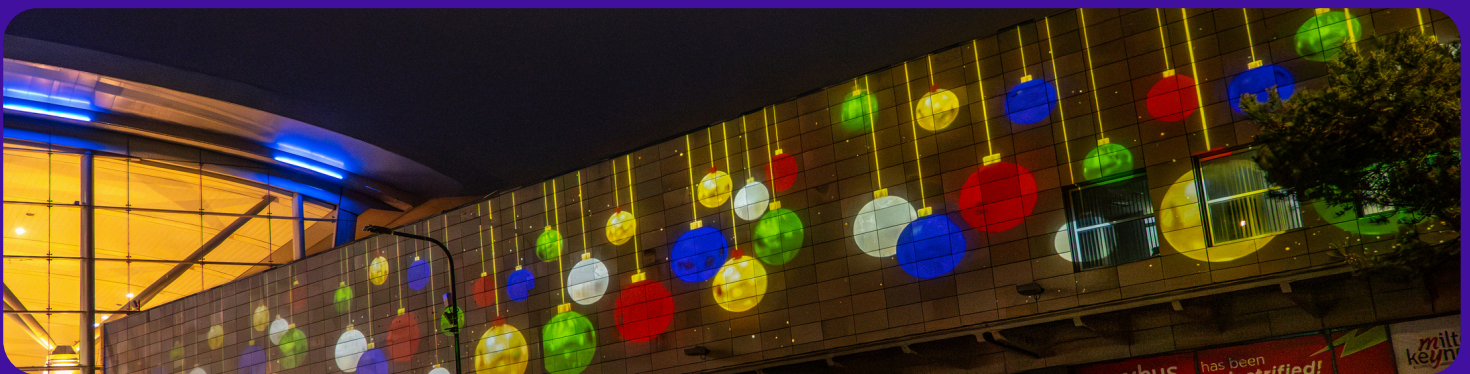
with the **ShopKind social media campaign**, which promoted kindness and respect toward retail and leisure workers. In tandem, we also promoted the Holly Guard app, a personal safety tool, and wrote to the Home Secretary, advocating for assaults on shop workers to be recognised as a standalone offence.

This period also saw us reach a meaningful milestone in our community efforts, **raising £20,000 for homelessness prevention services** through our Tap to Donate machines. Our dedication to addressing local challenges was further recognised when we achieved British BIDs accreditation, for being a well-run BID.

We also expanded our social media presence by **joining TikTok**, aiming to engage younger audiences and keep the City connected with modern platforms.

In November, we proudly took part in the **YMCA's Soupfest**, contributing a soup recipe and volunteering. We also marked **Remembrance Day with a large-scale projection** on the side of Midsummer Place.

We kicked off the festive season by changing the projection to a Christmas one and installing **Christmas lights** around the City Centre. We were joined by thousands of locals for our annual **switch-on event**.



£20k raised from
Tap to Donate machines

Remembrance / Christmas
projection on Midsummer Place

Soupfest fundraising
for YMCA MK

Festive lights installed
and hosted switch on event

Nov
24

Achievements: December

Over the third quarter of the BID year, MyMiltonKeynes played a central role in spreading festive cheer and addressing key challenges in the City Centre.

We sponsored a Christmas tree at **Midsummer Place's Christmas Tree Festival** and worked with social media micro-influencers to promote the City Centre's festive offer, creating engaging reels and running adverts on MKFM to ensure a wide reach.

We were also sponsors of the annual **Willen Hospice Santa Dash**, contributing to this vital organisation.

In January, our focus shifted to safety and security, providing **life-saving bleed control kits** to 14 venues across the city centre at the request of the City Barwatch organisation. We also installed **cigarette butt bins** around the Xscape to support a



cleaner and more welcoming environment.

Recognising the importance of tackling business crime, we worked with the police and the council to raise the profile of issues affecting our City, developing the **BID's Crime Strategy** that adopts a collaborative approach to addressing professional begging, shoplifting, and antisocial behaviour.

Christmas in the City
social media campaign

Provided bleed control
kits to City bars

Dec
23

Midsummer Place
Christmas Tree Festival

Sponsored Willen Hospice
Santa Dash

2023 - February 2024

Understanding the priorities of our levy payers is key to our ongoing success, and in this period, we conducted a comprehensive **independent survey** to gauge the concerns and focus areas for the remainder of the BID term.

After careful consideration, we also made the strategic decision to end the MyBus service, as it was no longer delivering sufficient return on investment for our levy payers.

Additionally, we **strengthened our leadership** by appointing Adam Sciberras from MKDP, Simon Martin from Midsummer Place, and Tom Miell from Popworld to our board of directors. These appointments brought new perspectives and experience, ensuring that we continue to drive positive outcomes for the businesses and community in Milton Keynes.



Installed 'butt bins'
at Xscape

Independent Survey of
BID levy payers

Feb
24

Ended the
MyBus Service

Developed the BID's
Crime Strategy

Appointed new directors
to the BID Board

Achievements: March 2024

In the final quarter of our seventh year, MyMiltonKeynes underwent a period of significant restructuring and strategic planning, setting the stage for future success.

The MyMK team saw important leadership changes, with Matthew John taking the role of **Place Management Director**, Rob Boiling becoming **Public Realm and Operations Manager**, and the appointment of Charlotte Pearson as our new **Marketing Director**. These key appointments have strengthened our ability to manage and promote the City Centre effectively, ensuring that we continue to meet the evolving needs of businesses.

During this period, we secured an **additional £85,000 of investment**, which will allow us to continue to carry out public realm landscaping work to enhance the appearance of the City Centre. We also hosted the first in our programme of **litter picking days**, which brought together local businesses. Continuing our commitment to corporate

responsibility, we proudly sponsored the **Milton Keynes Business Achievement Awards (MKBAA) Business Impact in the Community Award**, recognising businesses that have made a positive impact on the local area.

April marked a significant transition as we said farewell to our BID Ambassadors, ahead of the appointment of private security firm **My Local Bobby**, ready for their June 2024 start date.



£85K additional investment
secured for landscaping

First City Centre
litter pick

Mar
24

BID team restructure

Sponsored MKBAA
Business in Community award

- May 2024

This change reflects our ongoing commitment to maintaining a safe and secure environment within the City Centre.

Alongside these operational changes, we had a complete overhaul of the **MyMiltonKeynes corporate website**, ensuring it is user-friendly, up to date and aligned with our new objectives.

We also retired the MyMK app, shifting our digital focus to **creating a new consumer website dedicated to promoting the City Centre**. Following an extensive tender process, in May, we appointed evensix to build the website and create our visual identity, ready for a September 2024 launch.

We also geared up for the launch of our **Refreshed Business Plan 2024-27**, which saw us move away from our 'Safe City', 'Sparkling City', 'Mobile City', 'Intelligent City' and 'Amazing City' themes, and prioritised

work under new pillars: **Promote** our City Centre, **Manage** the public realm, **Support** our businesses and **Shape** our City Centre.

We took part in **Love MK Day**, showcasing our pride in the city, continuing to engage with businesses.

Another milestone was achieving **Real Living Wage** accreditation, demonstrating our commitment to fair wages and supporting the well-being of our employees.



Real Living Wage
accreditation

New BID corporate
website goes live

May
24

Appointed agency
to deliver City
Centre consumer
website & brand

Participation in
Love MK Day

MyMK Refreshed
Business plan
approved by Board

2023 - 2024 Accounts

(BID year 7: June 2023 - May 2024)

Funded by	BID levy income	£919,825.24
	Additional income generated	£141,101.00
	Voluntary membership fees	£2,750.00
	Non collectable debt (5%) / administrations	(£5,074.05)
	Total	£1,058,602.19

Expenditure	My Safe City (Crime and safety)	£145,856.38
	My Sparkling City (Public realm / landscaping)	£170,049.71
	My Mobile City (My Bus service)	£78,747.96
	My Intelligent City (Business engagement / support)	£15,637.00
	My Amazing City (Marketing, sponsorship, events, animation)	£361,637.88
	Operations & overheads	£279,086.08
	Total	£1,051,105.01

Reserves	Capital and reserves	£335,535.00
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Our commitments for 2024-25



Manage the public realm

My Local Bobby security team

Multi-agency Crime Task Force

Business Against Crime Scheme

Quality landscaping & public realm

improvements

Promote the City Centre

New consumer branding

City Centre website

City Centre Gift Card

Christmas lights switch-on

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Plus...

City Centre Insights reports

Quarterly business magazine

Employee awards

Purple Tuesday / accessibility training

...and so much more. Check out our Refreshed Business Plan 2024-27 on mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

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