



Annual Report

**2017–
2018**

CONTENTS

- 04 Working Together
- 12 Building Kingston’s Destination Offering in 2017
- 22 Financial Statement
- 23 The Year Ahead: Projects for 2018

WE ARE KINGSTON FIRST

We have been supporting Kingston for over 13 years and consistently work to support the commercial success of the business community in Kingston. In 2017 we have continued to deliver projects and services that ensure Kingston is a thriving and attractive environment to do business in, as well as a vibrant and exciting destination for people to work, shop and live.

This Annual Report covers our activity and achievements from January 2017 - March 2018.

INTRODUCTIONS

SAM EASTWOOD

Chairman, Kingston First – Centre Director, Bentall Centre



“It’s with great delight that I take on the role of Chairman of Kingston First. I’ve worked in Kingston for a number of years and have seen the positive impact Kingston First has and continues to have on our town centre. The sustained success of Kingston will be determined by our competitiveness in attracting businesses, visitors and clients. Therefore Kingston First’s strategic role in supporting this is as important as ever, continuing to ensure we have the representation, ideas and initiatives to help continue to keep Kingston a strong, diverse and vibrant town centre.

It’s a privilege to have the opportunity to work with local businesses and I’m particularly looking forward to working with you to shape Kingston First’s fourth business term, as we look ahead to the next decade and the opportunities the 2020s present to the town.”

KIRSTEN HENLY

Chief Executive, Kingston First



“Over the past year we have delivered a host of new programmes and services, high-profile, campaign-led marketing and PR activity and essential everyday support activities which keep the town centre a clean and welcoming place to spend time. In particular, we’ve built on the success of our business support programmes which benefit all sectors, including the Keep it Kingston Card, staff workshops and unrivalled insight into the town’s performance. Our profile raising marketing campaigns have received fantastic feedback, and we continue to provide valuable services which keep the town centre clean, green and a pleasure to spend time in.

I’d like to thank our members for their support and input over the year which has helped shape our success and ideas. In addition, I’d also like to thank our many partners who collaborate and assist us with progressing many of our activities in the town centre.

We’re looking forward continuing to work with you to maintain the success of Kingston as a place people want to visit and do business in.”

WORKING TOGETHER

We are committed to supporting, enhancing and marketing Kingston. In 2017 we introduced a number of new initiatives as well as continuing to deliver the events, business support and cost saving initiatives that our members have come to rely on. We work constantly to promote Kingston, solve problems, communicate with businesses and help our members save money.



WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING

To help upskill workers and educate businesses in Kingston, last year we introduced a new series of free business workshops and trainings. The workshops and training sessions provide local employees with important skills and knowledge, at no cost to their business.



235
EMPLOYEES
ATTENDING SESSIONS

Organised nine workshops, including:

- Emergency First Aid at Work
- Fire Marshall Training
- Employment Law Briefing covering GDPR
- Social Media Skills Workshop
- Counter Terrorism Briefing

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I just wanted to say how impressed I was with the speaker. I thought the presentation was excellent and she obviously really knows her stuff but as a person of that age, with a slight tendency to want to avoid all things tech, she certainly caught my attention and made it a very interesting and thought provoking hour."

Janet Hoyle, Notary Public



KEEP IT KINGSTON CARD

To reward Kingston employees and encourage them to spend time in Kingston, in May 2017 we launched the Keep It Kingston Card.

The discount card has been a phenomenal success, with over 9,000 cards distributed over the 12 months. The card enables Kingston employees to save money, while providing local businesses with a platform to promote their services, products and offers.

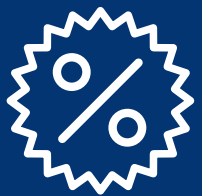
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Frangos has been part of the Keep It Kingston scheme since its start and it has proven to be a great success for us. Our lunchtime and weekday sales have had a considerable increase and this has also helped to promote awareness of our brand and image within the local community and beyond. We look forward to being a part of the scheme and hope it grows to make it successful for all businesses in these challenging times for the retailers."

Puja Chadha, Frangos



9,280
CARDS DISTRIBUTED ACROSS
403 BUSINESSES



160
BUSINESSES HAVE
PLACED AN OFFER

Offers
listed on a
dedicated web
page and mailed
to card holders
each month



48,413
VISITS TO THE KEEP IT
KINGSTON WEBSITE



THUMBS UP IT'S THURSDAY

As a family-friendly destination, we aim to provide events and activities specifically for this audience.

In 2017 we continued to grow Kingston's extremely successful Thumbs Up Its Thursday initiative with 20 businesses regularly taking part. Aimed at 2-11 year olds and their families, Thumbs Up Its Thursday gives businesses the chance to host a fun activity over the school holidays and drive footfall directly through their door.

Shining the Spotlight on Thumbs Up It's Thursday:

- Leaflet about the event distributed throughout the town
- Large-format posters around Kingston
- Adverts in parent magazines
- Digital advertising across parent-led social sites, Facebook and Twitter

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Thumbs Up It's Thursday was just great. We had loads of kids with parents come to dine with us, pushing up both our lunch and dinner sales. We will continue to participate on Thumbs Up activities in the future."

Roland Fazekas, Las Iguanas



KINGSTON BUSINESS AWARDS

Celebrating success matters, so we work collaboratively with Kingston Council and Kingston Chamber of Commerce to reward the achievements of Kingston businesses and allow them to benefit from the improved awareness entering the awards will bring. In 2017, we were delighted to celebrate that category and overall winners of the awards included our Kingston First members.

CREATING COST SAVINGS

In 2017 we continued to deliver innovative services that enable businesses in Kingston to save money, time and resource.

Last year we saw a 10% increase in the number of businesses accessing our invaluable recycling and trade waste scheme and helped more than 25 businesses save over £26,000 across utility bills, telecoms and core costs.

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Cappadocia uses the Kingston First recycling service and I highly recommend it to other BID Members; it has great benefits for businesses. The service is free, easy to use, it saves us money and operates 7 days a week, but most importantly, it helps to protect our environment.”

Jimmy Gizli, Cappadocia



209

BUSINESSES SAVED MONEY
USING OUR INITIATIVES



6,116

TREES SAVED THROUGH OUR
FREE RECYCLING SCHEME



1,111,895kg

WASTE RECYCLED



Exclusive Parking Discounts

To further support Kingston First members and their employees, we secured a number of exclusive parking discounts and season ticket deals.

The discounts included daily parking rates over half the standard cost per day, and reduced costs for season tickets.

Results

- 117 people using the daily parking deal
- 17 people taken advantage of season ticket rates



REPRESENTING OUR MEMBERS

In 2017 we worked to put forward the views of the town centre to ensure Kingston’s business agenda is represented locally and across the capital.

Policy areas we have commented on include:

- The Draft London Plan
- Kingston Riverside Supplementary Planning Document
- Business rates
- Mayor of London’s Transport Strategy
- Attended a visit with the Mayor of London’s Night Czar



SHARING TOWN CENTRE INSIGHTS

It’s critical that our members have a clear understanding on the performance of Kingston, which is why we produce our Town Centre Insight Report each month. The monthly report covers footfall, sales, car parking, crime and occupancy in the town.



MAINTAINING SAFETY

In 2017 we continued to work in collaboration with Kingston Council and Metropolitan Police to ensure our streets feel safe and welcoming. 711 incidents of anti-social behaviour were dealt with in 2017 and Kingston First also funded additional police patrols over the busy Christmas period. We also facilitated 10 terrorism briefing sessions to retailers.

RANGER RESPONSE SERVICE

Our team of town rangers work behind the scenes to maintain Kingston's streetscape and be on hand to support local business and visitors.

Introducing our new ranger response vehicle

- To allow Kingston's rangers to respond even more effectively, we introduced a new clean and green electric-powered ranger vehicle
- The ranger response vehicle is small enough to be permitted throughout pedestrianised areas, allowing our rangers easy access to every area in town

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I would like to thank your Ranger Team who promptly came to remove graffiti from our wall, without me even reporting it and are coming back to paint it. They have been ever so polite and helpful."

Monique Fulford, Joules Ltd



10,000

INCIDENTS DEALT WITH BY OUR RANGERS FROM JAN 2017-MAR 2018



704

PIECES OF GRAFFITI REMOVED



2,495

POSTERS & FLYERS REMOVED



AN ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

Clean, vibrant streets are key to building a positive town perception. We contribute significantly to the look and feel of the town, ensuring it is attractive and welcoming. As well as this we continually work to de-clutter the streets and provide a twice yearly deep clean.



COORDINATED

4 days

OF CLEANING PROJECTS WITH VOLUNTEERS TO REMOVE WASTE, PERFORM WEEDING AND OTHER GENERAL MAINTENANCE TASKS



MORE THAN

260

FLORAL DISPLAYS AND HANGING BASKETS WERE INSTALLED IN THE TOWN



98,000

SQUARE METRES PAVEMENT DEEP CLEANED

BUILDING KINGSTON'S DESTINATION OFFERING IN 2017

We understand that to drive investment and footfall in our town centre we need to present a strong brand identity to visitors and businesses. In 2017 we continued to build our destination offering in Kingston, leveraging key moments such as summer and the festive season.

OUR ANCIENT MARKET PLACE

As managers of Kingston's Ancient Market Place, we worked to ensure it remained a key footfall driver and highlight of our destination offering in 2017 and beyond.

By investing in new grass, picnic benches, parasols and colourful deck chairs, a sense of vibrancy and fun was added to the Ancient Market Place area, increasing visitor dwell time in town.

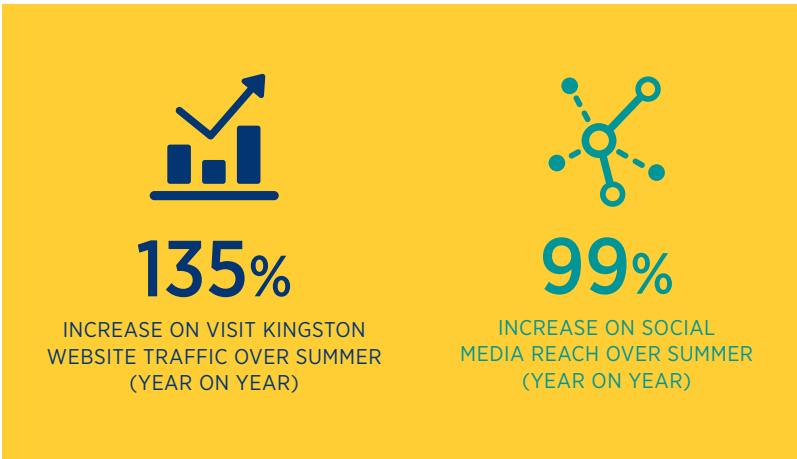
We also held two summer evening markets to encourage late night trading and supported local community events such as the International Youth Arts Festival and Carnival to take place in the area.



SUMMER IN KINGSTON

2017 saw the launch of our biggest summer campaign to date. To add eye-catching summer colour to the town centre we invested in street dressing and lamp column banners. We also introduced new wayfinding tools, helping our visitors navigate the town and find nearby events and activities.


65,000
SUMMER LEAFLETS HAND-DELIVERED TO LOCAL HOMES



- Shining the Spotlight on Summer:**
- Summer adverts across local magazines, bus routes and town centre poster sites
 - Editorial media coverage on summer in Kingston in London Evening Standard, The Londonist and more



CHRISTMAS IN KINGSTON

Christmas is one of the most important moments of the year for Kingston. In 2017 our aim was to build on the success of previous Christmas activity, by delivering an improved Christmas market, launching the Kingston Children's Literary Festival and Christmas trail, and introducing our 'Make it Christmas' initiative.

- Invested in street entertainment to bring festive cheer during late night shopping evenings and on weekends
- Delivered the Christmas lights switch on event, which was attended by over **5,000** people
- Feedback in 2016 requested more children's activities so in 2017 we introduced a dedicated children's entertainment area with festive rides to the Christmas Market
- To further drive footfall around the town we installed a Children's Trail to find the 7 hidden Kings



19%

INCREASE ON VISIT KINGSTON
WEBSITE TRAFFIC (YEAR ON YEAR)



67%

INCREASE IN PR COVERAGE VALUE
(YEAR ON YEAR)



42%

FELT THE CHRISTMAS MARKET HAD
IMPROVED ON 2016



Shining the Spotlight on Christmas:

- Over **535,000** commuters reached via carriage adverts across South Western Railway network
- **65,000** Christmas leaflets hand delivered to local homes
- Editorial media coverage on Christmas in Kingston in Visit London, Time and Leisure and more
- Christmas adverts across local magazines, bus routes and town centre poster sites



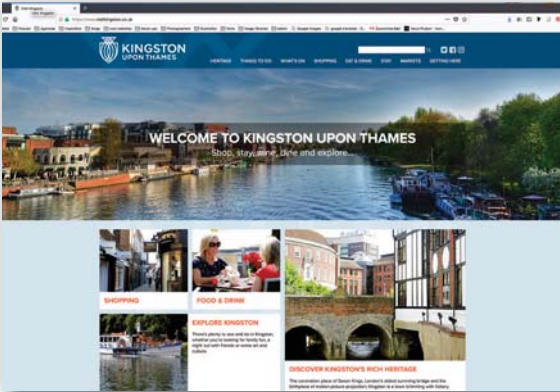
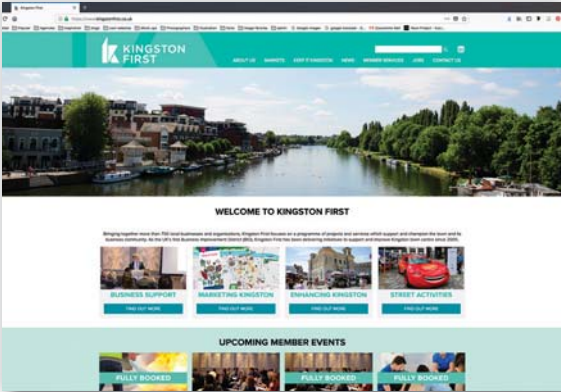
Introducing the Kingston Children's Literary Festival

- Our first Children's Literary Festival grabbed the media's attention, drawing their focus away from competitor destinations during our key Christmas period
- Engaged with 15 of the UK's best loved children's authors, including Olaf Falafel and Ross Montgomery, with 7 businesses across Kingston took part
- Over **30** pieces of editorial media coverage secured, including London Evening Standard, to promote the event and Kingston as an idyllic Christmas destination

GROWING OUR ONLINE PRESENCE

Websites

In 2017 the Kingston First kingstonfirst.co.uk and Visit Kingston visitkingston.co.uk websites had a complete refresh to ensure both sites were easy to navigate and search engine optimised to make it easier to find information and ‘things to do’ in Kingston.

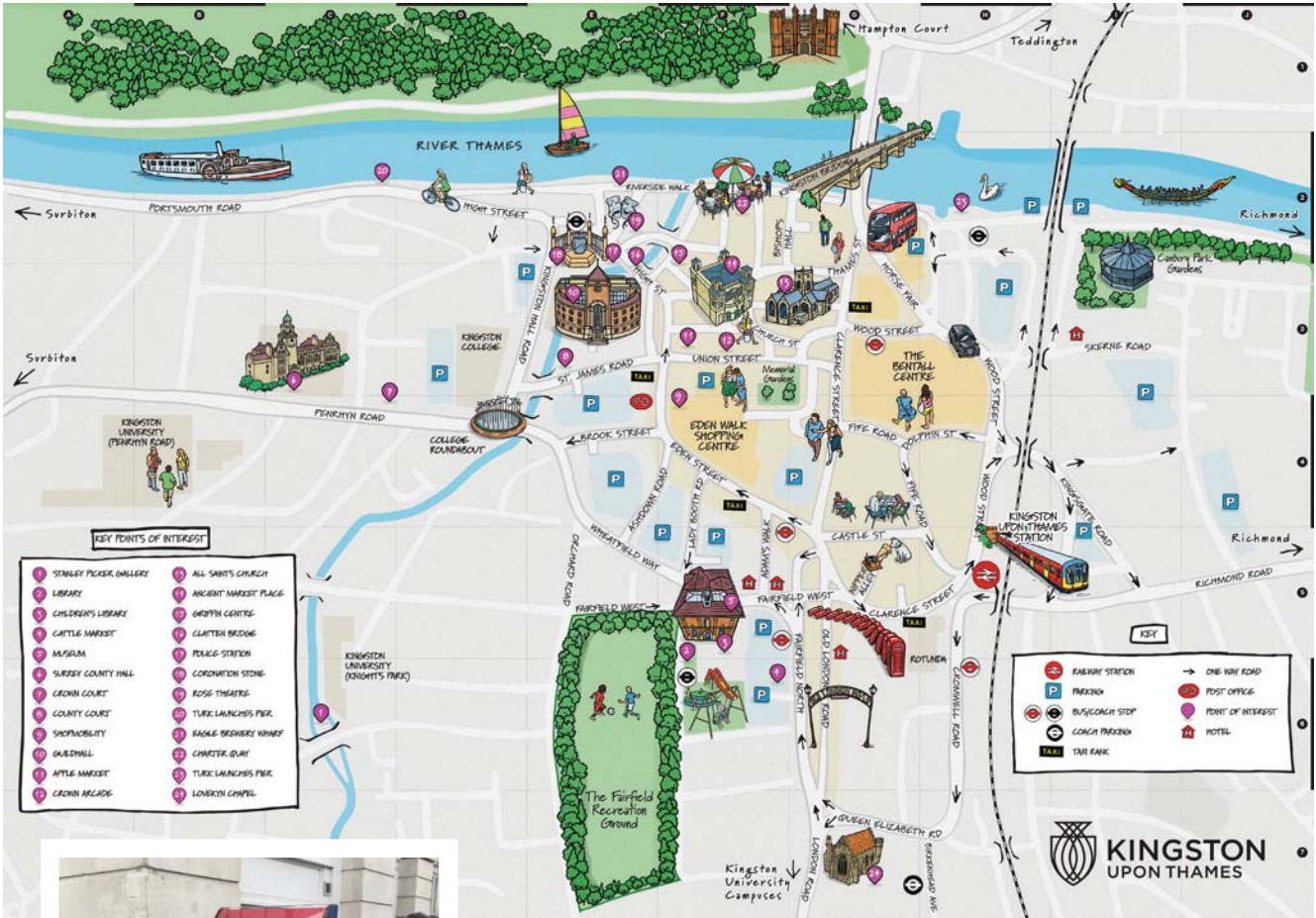
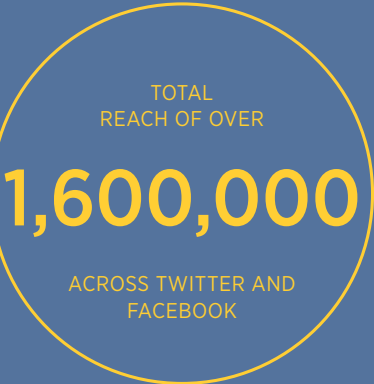


▲ **107%** INCREASE IN KINGSTON FIRST
WEBSITE VISITORS

▲ **50%** INCREASE IN VISIT KINGSTON
WEBSITE VISITORS

Social media

Social media became an important voice of Kingston, sharing town centre events and increasing awareness of our town. In 2017 we increased our presence on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.



15,000
MAPS ALREADY DISTRIBUTED

NEW VISITOR MAPS

To drive visitors to Kingston and promote local businesses, we launched a new visitor map. The map was designed to capture consumer interest, with colourful illustrations and quirky ‘did you knows’ about the town, encouraging visitors to discover new areas and learn about Kingston’s rich history.

Three new leaflet rack units were installed in the town centre to house our new maps, as well as what’s on listings and tourism-led collateral such as seasonal summer and winter leaflets.



PR FOR KINGSTON

Driving awareness and stimulating interest in Kingston amongst consumers remains central to our marketing strategy. In 2017 we appointed an expert PR agency to support us to establish our tone of voice and increase consideration of Kingston through the creation of engaging events and quality media coverage.

In December 2017 we launched the first Kingston Children's Literary Festival, to elevate Kingston's position as a family-friendly destination. The festival involved 15 authors, 7 local businesses and generated over 30 pieces of top-tier media coverage.

We also invited a host of influential London and local press and bloggers to experience Kingston. Working with Kingston businesses, we tailored itineraries that showcased the town's destination highlights. As well as achieving media and social media coverage, we now have a group of local influencers who have become ambassadors for Kingston, with a combined following of over 13,000.



VISIT LONDON SUBSCRIPTION

To further help drive awareness of Kingston as a 'must-visit' London destination and raise our tourism profile, last year we initiated a membership with London & Partners. This new membership means Kingston is regularly featured on London & Partners' Visit London channels such as website and social media to promote the town and our events.

In conjunction with Visit London we ran two exceptionally successful competitions promoting the town as a destination, which generated 2,500 new subscribers to our email database.



OVER
60
PIECES OF EDITORIAL MEDIA
COVERAGE SECURED FOR KINGSTON
(including the Evening Standard,
Time and Leisure and Visit London)



ADVERTISING VALUE
EQUIVALENT OF OVER
£200,000

The Visit London
Subscription
has already delivered:



REGULAR TWEETS PROMOTING
THE TOWN AND EVENTS



2,500

NEW EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS



LISTED AS ONE OF LONDON'S
TOP 7
CHRISTMAS MARKETS IN LONDON
ON VISITLONDON.COM

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2017-18



INCOME		NOTES
Levy	£1,109,498	1
Other funding and contributions	£214,528	2
Transferred services income	£667,853	3
Total	£1,991,879	
EXPENDITURE		
Enhancing Kingston	£329,847	
Marketing Kingston	£366,417	
Supporting Kingston	£265,987	
Transferred services Costs	£575,344	4
Overheads and operating costs	£290,796	5
Total	£1,828,391	
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year 2017-18 (after tax)		
	£163,488	
Net surplus brought forward from 2016		
	£290,766	
Net surplus carried forward into 2018-19		
	£454,254	6

Notes		
The financial statement covers an extended period of 15 months, from January 2017 to March 2018 inclusive.		
1. Levy collection rate of 98%.	Place and Monday Markets and commercial space management.	Kingston First's voluntary board of directors represent sectors from across the town's business community. They are responsible for the financial oversight of the company and oversee the delivery of the business plan. You can find out details about the board and the Kingston First team on our website.
2. Includes grants, sponsorship and project contributions.		
3. Includes income related to the running of the Ancient Market	4. Costs of running and servicing the Ancient Market Place, Monday Markets and commercial spaces.	
	5. Overheads at 15% of total income.	
	6. Surplus is allocated towards projects and services for the remainder of the BID term.	

THE YEAR AHEAD: PROJECTS FOR 2018

Summer

Floral installations and an integrated marketing campaign will arrive in Kingston in the summer of 2018, promoting the destination and encouraging social media sharing.

Children's Literary Festival & Halloween Comes to Kingston

In 2018, we will build on the success of our Children's Literary Festival, with an even bigger and better festival to take place in the October half term. In addition to this, we will introduce Halloween activity to Kingston's town centre capturing the already anticipated holiday session.

Christmas Market

In 2018 we will continue to improve the Kingston Christmas Market and will also deliver another integrated Christmas marketing campaign.

Business Support

We will continue to develop our programme of events and workshops to upskill local workers, and will introduce a new town centre job board to the Kingston First website.

Research and Insights

We will be commissioning a research project to inform and shape our plans for the future and install additional footfall counters to further educate us on the health of Kingston

Renewal

Our 2019 BID Renewal ballot means we will be working with you on our plans to shape Kingston in 2020 and beyond. We will be in contact later this year with more information.

Kingston First

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Kingston First is the brand
name for Kingston Town Centre
Management Ltd

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