

Rochdale  
Town Centre



**BID**

# Rochdale BID Investing in Rochdale Town Centre

August 2020

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[www.rochdalebid.co.uk](http://www.rochdalebid.co.uk)

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**Rochdale is Greater Manchester's premier town  
and great things are happening in Rochdale.**

**If you are looking to start a new business, relocate or are  
expanding your business, Rochdale town centre is a town  
of opportunity and inspiration, where innovation and  
enterprise is embraced and welcomed.**

**With over £400m of investment going into our town centre alone  
to create extended retail, leisure and hospitality offerings, improved  
public transport links plus so much more, we are a town centre that  
is transforming. But why take our word for it, the evidence is there  
for all to see – these are not proposed plans or ideas on paper –  
in Rochdale we turn dreams into reality, you can really watch  
our town grow and you could be part of our exciting journey.**

**Our businesses are proud to be associated with Rochdale town  
centre, they work together to secure the future of the town as a  
competitive and thriving centre. The town centre is a Business  
Improvement District (BID) which will see an additional £1.2m  
being invested. Our businesses led on this, working together  
to ensure Rochdale has a positive future.**

**Rochdale is a town on Manchester's doorstep but not  
in its shadow. It is a town of opportunity –thriving and  
transforming – if you are interested in being part of the  
Rochdale town centre story contact us at Rochdale BID.**

# Background to Rochdale

Rochdale is one of the best located and connected destinations in the North of England. Fast connections to the motorway network – alongside frequent train, tram and bus services – help make Rochdale town centre an ideal location for business. The town offers a large and skilled workforce, and a highly competitive cost base. It is a leading centre for logistics, construction, manufacturing and advanced manufacturing businesses, and has a fast growing digital and creative sector. With spellbinding countryside on its doorstep, a rejuvenated town centre and fast and frequent links to Manchester, quality of life in Rochdale is amongst the best in the region.



## The changing face of town centres

Rewind ten years and a trip to the town centre on a Saturday would have seen it packed with people shopping. Fast forward to today and internet shopping, changing shopping habits and COVID-19 have fundamentally changed town centres. These changes are happening everywhere and cannot be ignored.

Thankfully the investment over the last 10 years means that the town centre is in a strong place to recover. The BID and its partners will lead the long-term transformation and evolution of the town centre. The transformation stage will attempt to improve the town centre – to do more than just recover but to innovate and address new challenges. The overall aim is to reinvent the town as a community hub designed around health, education, culture, housing, leisure, art and crafts, along with retail.

# Rochdale Town Centre

## CURRENT INITIATIVES & MAJOR PROJECTS

### Rochdale Business Improvement District (BID)

Rochdale Business Improvement District (BID) started in April 2019 after a successful ballot of the businesses in a specified area of Rochdale Town Centre. The BID is a not for profit company limited by guarantee, managed by a Board of Directors made up of representatives of the local business community.

Rochdale BID has four strategic aims which clearly lay out the direction of the BID. We work with businesses on marketing the town centre, improving operational issues, creating a better environment as well as providing a strong strategic voice and platform for Rochdale Town Centre.

The BID will be reinvesting over £1.2m back into the town centre between 2019 and 2024.

### Current major development projects

#### Riverside Phase 1

Phase 1 of Rochdale Riverside is now open. The scheme which comprises 24 retail and leisure units and 520 car parking spaces, will boost the local economy by an estimated £17m a year. The scheme will provide an improved quality retail and leisure offer, with a greater variety of shops, as well as boosting the local economy.

#### Town Hall

Heritage Lottery Fund has been secured to redevelop and restore the Grade 1 listed building. The proposals include a full-scale restoration of large sections of the building and its historic rooms and features, including the Great Hall's Magna Carta mural, ceiling tiles and extensive stain glass windows. To complement these works Town Hall Square will be enhanced through public realm improvements. The scheme is expected to commence early 2021.

#### Station Gateway Masterplan

The Station Gateway area is defined as the area extending from Drake Street/Milkstone Road to the north-west as far as the Oldham Road / Durham Street junction to the south. The masterplan proposes: -

- To create over 1000 new homes
- New road layouts and the removal of traffic from the front of the station to create a new public square
- New commercial development for the area
- Improved pedestrian and cycle links between the station and town centre, as well as Milkstone & Deepdish
- Significant expansion of the park and ride facilities at Miall Street
- Physical improvements and new facilities to improve the passenger experience in the station
- The transformation of the former Fire Station into the Greater Manchester Fire Station Museum

#### Lower Falinge

Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH) has prepared a spatial strategy for the Lower Falinge neighbourhood and adjacent areas to identify possible options for investment in College Bank and Lower Falinge, to improve the quality and mix of homes, creating places where people want to come and live, and maximising the opportunities created from the regeneration of Rochdale Town Centre through better access to retail, leisure, transport and jobs. The vision for Lower Falinge and College Bank includes:

- a better quality and mix of housing choice to meet the needs of the community now and in the future.
- a safe neighbourhood where attractive, energy efficient homes combine with well-proportioned streets, open spaces and landscaping to create distinctive and sustainable high density design.
- an accessible neighbourhood with pedestrian and cycle friendly links and routes within and across the area and strong connections with the wider surrounding areas including Rochdale Town Centre.
- high quality public and green spaces which enhance the existing outdoor environment and recreational activities for people of all ages.
- a neighbourhood which manages the public spaces and creates opportunities for social interaction and activities.

"The team at Rochdale BID are a huge asset to Rochdale and its businesses! I have had the pleasure working with them for the past few years and they consistently come up with new ideas to help the local economy. Recently they have offered local businesses 360 photography for their venues and it has really helped to drive sales"

John Stoner, Medicine Tap

### Business Support

To help boost business and create a more vibrant town centre, Rochdale Council is currently offering 2 big benefits to new independent retailers opening in selected empty units:

- Massive business rates discounts AND
- Start-up grants of up to £5,000

Whether you're setting up in business for the first time, trading outside the town centre and looking for a high street base, or thinking of expanding, there's never been a better time to bring your business to Rochdale Town Centre.

#### Business rates sale

Businesses opening in selected empty units can save a massive 80% off their business rates in their first year of trading, followed by 50% off in year 2 and 30% off in year 3.

#### Start-up grant

Start-up grants can be used for new doors, windows and signage, as well as other permanent work such as internal improvements. The grants cover 50% of the cost of the work, with grants of up to £5,000 available.

# Planning for the future

As we emerge through the recovery stage of COVID-19, the BID and its partners will lead on the long term transformation and evolution of the town centre. We will improve the town centre – do more than just recover but to innovate and address new challenges.

## Future projects:

- As it stands the town centre does not benefit from a residential community and Riverside Phase 2 offers the opportunity to create one. The benefits of residential delivery as part of Riverside Phase 2 are well-understood; it will result in the redevelopment of brownfield land and at an increased density, it utilises land that is in easy access of Rochdale Interchange and it will provide new homes which will support the vitality of existing and new services.
- There are a number of underused and vacant sites located around the town centre, which are appropriate for housing development. New residents will further increase the footfall in the town centre, creating a need for shops to service and support new leisure and entertainment investment.
- The redevelopment of the former M&S site offers a unique opportunity to provide a mixed use development providing retail, residential and commercial uses. The scheme could transform Yorkshire Street by creating a mini urban economy in the town centre where people can live, shop and work all under one roof. Perhaps a crucial element of this development could be the provision of affordable workspace for entrepreneurs who will create new community based businesses that would define our new high street.
- Opportunities exist to bring more cultural activities into the centre which support and complement the activities associated with Touchstones Museum, The Rochdale Pioneers Museum and The Town Hall. To become a place truly recognised for being culturally centred, we will identify areas within the town to display art, creativity, and innovation.
- Rochdale's burgeoning food and drink scene places a firm emphasis on the finest in local produce from around the region and authentic ingredients and this coupled with talented chefs has proved instrumental in the success of the towns long standing hospitality venues. The town also has a well-deserved and growing reputation as a hub for craft Ale and Beer aficionados. With award winning food and drink on offer across a range of exciting and unique venues, the continued growth of the sector is seen as key driver for the towns transformation.
- As it stands there is an oversupply of retail space across the majority of urban centres. Vacant retail space has a significant socioeconomic consequences for communities and in Rochdale's case vacancy rates remain high within the two shopping centres. Oversupply is a challenge, but it also presents opportunities for reimagining the town centres retail space that isn't correctly in use and no longer fit for purpose. There are examples both in the UK and internationally that demonstrate how creatively adapting retail space for other uses – such as leisure, fitness, food and drink, office space and housing – can have a positive impact on the wellbeing of communities and turbo-charge local economies. The BID will continue to proactively work in collaboration with stakeholders to identify the next steps in repurposing empty retail space to fulfil the needs of local communities



Riverside Phase Two



Greater Manchester Fire Station Museum



# The Town Centre – a snapshot

## Riverside

Major retailers including M&S, H&M, River Island and JD Sports as well as a six screen Reel cinema.

## Touchstones

Is the Borough's Arts and Heritage Centre and includes: Museum, Art Gallery, Local Studies Centre, Learning & Participation, Visitor Information Centre and Art Café.

## Pioneers

The Rochdale Pioneers Museum is housed in the building where the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society started trading on 21 December 1844. The museum is regarded as the birthplace of the modern co-operative movement.

## Food and Drink

Rochdale's burgeoning food and drink scene places a firm emphasis on the finest in local produce from around the region and authentic ingredients and this coupled with talented chefs has proved instrumental in the success of the towns long standing favourites like La Mancha and Vicolo Del Vino and exciting new eateries like Bombay Brew. The town also has a well deserved reputation as a hub for craft ale and beer aficionados.

## Educational Quarter

Rochdale Sixth Form College and Hopwood Hall College have a tireless dedication to improving the standards of academic achievement for their students and a passionate commitment to the on-going revival of the town centre.

## Broadfield Park

Rochdale's town centre park, the oldest in the borough, is of great historic interest and contains the statue of John Bright MP. Of considerable landscape beauty and charm with significant views of the area, the park extends into the town centre.

## Public Realm

Over £7m invested in the public realm in the last 5 years.

## Transport Interchange

Excellent public transport links – two town centre Metrolink stops and a modern bus station.

## Rochdale BID

The BID will be reinvesting 1.2m back into the town centre between 2019 and 2024.

## Shopping Centre's

The Exchange Shopping Centre and the Wheatsheaf Centre are home to many High Street retailers which include New Look, WHSmith and Clarks.



# Rochdale Facts



## TRAIN

15 minutes from Manchester City Centre



## PEOPLE

35 million within a 4 hour drive



## TRAM

Part of the UK's largest light rail system



## NEW HOMES

2000 new homes in and around the town centre.



## CAR

4 motorways and 3 major junctions straddle the borough



## TOWN CENTRE

£400m being invested to help repurpose the town centre



## ROCHDALE 360

Home to the UK's first website which combines a custom interface with virtual tours of businesses and places of interest allowing users to learn more about the town's attractions using their computer, smartphone or in virtual reality.



## CULTURE

Home to the award winning Rochdale Pioneers Museum and Touchstones Museum, Art Gallery, Local Studies Centre and Café



## HOSPITALITY

The town centre has some of the best food and drink venues in Greater Manchester.



## ROCHDALE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)

Town centre business community investing £1.2m into the town centre.



## TOWN HALL

Heritage Lottery Fund has been secured to redevelop and restore the Grade 1 listed building



## EDUCATION QUARTER

Home to the outstanding Sixth Form College and Hopwood Hall College



**Rochdale Town Centre is thriving and transforming. If you are interested in being part of the Rochdale town centre story, please get in touch.**

**Paul Ambrose | Rochdale BID Manager**

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