

SMALL BUSINESSES BIG PERSONALITY

SHOP LOCALLY AND INDEPENDENTLY AND DO YOUR BIT FOR YOUR CITY.

This magazine is brought to you by the Stoke-on-Trent City Centre Business Improvement District (BID).

We're a business alliance set up to promote and support a safe welcoming and engaging City Centre, endorsed by Stoke-on-Trent City Council. In July 2018, businesses voted in favour of the BID which from November later that year, began its 5-year term with the possibility of renewal in 2023. The BID involves over 400 businesses in the area who contribute an annual levy.

Priorities for the BID include

Place Management – to
improve the look and feel
of the area, make safer and
provide a warm welcome to
visitors; Place Management
– to increase footfall through
positive promotion and
events in the City Centre;
and Business Community

Support – to aid businesses
in the BID area through
networking opportunities,
training and growth strategies.



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CENTRE

SEVEN REASONS TO:



SHOP LOCALLY AND INDEPENDENTLY



#1: BOOSTS LOCAL ECONOMY

Did you know that by spending £1 in a small independent business, 63p stays in the local economy compared to 40p with a bigger, national business? It's a win-win.

#2: CREATES JOBS

Independent businesses creates self-employment and local employment and as a result, increases spending in the local economy.

#3: BRINGS INDIVIDUALITY, PERSONALITY AND AESTHETIC

Our independent businesses bring their own quirky style to our city with vintage fashion, jewellery, food and entertainment.

#4: YOU'RE BUILDING THE COMMUNITY

Local independent businesses are more likely to invest in other small businesses. Take a stroll down Piccadilly and feel the community buzz.

#5: IT CAN BE MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

Small independent businesses, especially grocers and butchers, are more likely to buy locally meaning the distance for stock to travel is much less than bigger businesses. Do your part to save the planet!

#6: YOU'RE MORE LIKELY TO FIND NICHE, QUIRKY, UNIQUE PRODUCTS

Shopping independently means more chances of finding unique and quirky products not usually found on a national business shelf. It's amazing what gems you can find.

#7: SUPPORT LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS

They're what makes the city innovative. Invest in their businesses and see your town thrive.

Come and visit 'The Indie Capital' of the City Centre:



THE CULTURAL QUARTER

The Cultural Quarter of the City Centre, with Piccadilly running down the middle, is home to some of the coolest indie businesses in town. Whether it's a slap-up brekkie you're after, a chilled lunch out, or some seriously cool evening vibes, you're onto a winner here...

Piccadilly, Stoke-on-Trent.



SLAM DUNK SOME SLAMWICHES

The Slamwich Club isn't your regular sandwich shop... think big, gourmet meal between two slices of bread kinda thing. And sandwiches aren't the only thing they do best look out for their regular events, from acoustic nights, Jazz Clubs and DJ nights, to arts and crafts classes and life drawing sessions. Check out the regularly changing specials and club nights.

QUINTESSENTIAL DINING (AND COCKTAILS!) AT THE QUARTER

A café by day and a quirky home-style bistro menu by evening, The Quarter provides a warm, safe and positive environment where you can 'eat, drink and listen.' Whether it's a nourishing breakfast, a light lunch, a three-course dinner or a refreshing cocktail you're after, a wonderful experience is guaranteed from the moment you walk through the door. The afternoon tea's are to die for, plus Tapas Thursdays gives you a real taste of the Med whilst Friday and Saturday nights are host to the best local singers.

GET KLAY-KLAY WITH THE BEST PIZZA IN TOWN

Perfect pizza, cracking cocktails and awesome beats, this is the perfect place to enjoy carb-overload with their famed Mac 'n' Cheese pizza. Useful tip: Tuesday's is Twos-Days here at Klay where you can grab two pizzas for the price of one!

SPOILT FOR CHOICE WITH 41 GINS

The clue is in the name! Bar 41 serves up – you guessed it – 41 gins from all over the world. And if gin's not your tipple then there's plenty more craft beers to enjoy in this cosy little bar.

SLOVAKIAN DELICACIES AT PETER'S TAVERN

This is one to Czech out... if you want a taste of Eastern Europe without leaving the city then Peter's Tavern is the place for you. With favourites such as pork neck and chicken schnitzel on the menu, all at very reasonable prices, you'll want to sample the whole menu in this homely family-style restaurant.

FOOD, GLOURIOUS FOOD AT NØRTH KITCHEN & BAR

A mecca for the freshest and most natural of food; NØRTH Kitchen & Bar offers an extensive choice of vegan and vegetarian food, without excluding the meat-eaters. Whether you visit in the morning, afternoon or evening, there's so many nutritious dishes to choose from, plus superfood smoothies. If you fancy something a little more indulgent, a myriad of cocktails are available tool

GET CRAFTY AT BOTTLECRAFT

Not only does Bottlecraft boast over 200 beers from around the world, making it the ideal venue for socialising over a beverage, there's loads of events on, such as tasting nights and open mic poetry sessions. You'll find a cool crowd here, particularly on a warm evening when drinkers enjoy their beers alfresco.

ENTREPRENEURS NETWORK: HUSTLERS OF CULTURE

The team at Entrepreneurs Network always keep it fresh with their toes tipped into a myriad of artistic projects at any one time, including creative commissions and large scale murals. If you visit their studio, you're sure to find cool prints from local talented artists to purchase, or maybe even one of their regular gallery shows. Look out for their frequent screen printing workshops too where you can learn to print your own custom designs onto merchandise! A must for the discerning creative...

PARTY AT PILGRIM'S PIT

This community arts hub, supported and ran by 20 volunteers, frequently plays host to a range of music and arts nights. Handmade murals adorn the wall in this creative space and you'll find a chilled, down-to-Earth crowd here with cool beats in the background and a licensed bar. It can be booked out by performers to facilitate grassroots community projects and performances; think open mic nights, comedy improv workshops, DJ sessions and ambient afternoons.

LEAVE REALITY BEHIND AT XP - VR

This new venue transports you to far away magical worlds where you can fight off zombies, hunt dinosaurs, lay down and fly on the back of a dragon and experience the thrill of being an epic racing driver all under one roof. Grab the squad and immerse yourself in over 40+ exciting virtual reality games.

CHILL AT THE CORNER

Food lovers rejoice in this café-bar plating up American-influenced food from eggs Benedict at breakfast, to loaded fries, Po' boy sandwiches and hand-made pies for dinner. You can wash all that down with a selection of drinks, including dozens of gins, spirits, beers, ales and cider.

UNWIND AT UNICORN INN

This small but welcoming traditional pub right in the heart of the City Centre is host to weekly-changing microbrewery guest ales and a really friendly atmosphere.

POTTERIES MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

Discover the story of The Potteries through exciting displays of art, local history including the world-renowned Spitfire, natural sciences and the world's greatest collection of Staffordshire ceramics; the Anglo Saxon Hoard.

BEVERAGES AT BLOOM

This brand new trendy cocktail bar and restaurant is the new kid on the block, having opened just this month. Boasting a beautiful botanical theme, there's quite the collection of show-stopping cocktails on the menu. Expect live music, DJs and a vast array of mouthwatering food too.

A TASTE OF ITALY AT LA BELLA NAPOLI

A firm favourite in the city since 1981, this family owned Italian restaurant has moved to a larger location along Piccadilly. Head here for the best authentic Italian dishes.



ROYAL MUSIC HALL (PALL MALL)

For a night out to remember, Royal Music Hall is a must. It sees a wide range of events take place, but perhaps most popular are its Sankeys club nights with top DJs such as Green Velvet, Paul Oakenfold, Roger Sanchez, MK, Solardo and techno queen Amelie Lens, as well as live music from up-and-coming bands and indie student nights.

THE SUGARMILL (BRUNSWICK STREET)

This nationally acclaimed live music venue and nightclub is a favourite in the city and beyond, having hosted thousands of bands over the years, many going to massive success, such as Coldplay, Muse, Elbow, Daft Punk, The 1975, Bring Me The Horizon, You Me at Six and The Libertines to name just a few. ELECTRIC FRIDAY's, the longest running alternative club night in Staffordshire, are a great night out and keep an eye out for THE MOVE on occasional Saturdays and every Bank Holiday Sunday, a club night which brings you the biggest names in international house music including Todd Terry, Skream!, Steve Lawler, Patrick Topping and Pete Tong.

THE UNDERGROUND (MORLEY STREET)

Head to The Underground to watch musicians from the local area and also many big name bands and DJs. With a line-up spanning rock and metal bands, acoustic acts, hip-hop nights, DJ sessions and so much more, it's a great place to enjoy a casual night out and really cool street art décor.

THE EXCHANGE (TRINITY STREET)

A restaurant and socialising spot by day, The Exchange transforms into a music venue in its own right on some evenings when the basement opens up to welcome punters from rock and indie fans to tech-house lovers. Look out for the monthly FREE Party where local DJs hit the decks for an intimate party.

PILGRIM'S PIT (PICCADILLY)

There's a guaranteed good time at this community venue and here, you'll find the best of all local music from impromptu jam nights and acoustic acts to heavy metal rockers and electronic DJ sets. If the music isn't your bag, the chilled out vibes and super-friendly crowd certainly will be.

THE QUARTER (PICCADILLY)

Every Friday and Saturday sees talented singers take to the microphone in this cosy lounge setting. Enjoy their soothing notes as you wile away the evening sampling the extensive dinner and cocktail menus.

THE BASEMENT (MARSH STREET)

From showcasing up and coming artists or worldrenowned DJs, this small, snug, no-frills venue delivers a bloomin' good rave and an atmosphere to boot. Basement nights and early mornings here are much-loved by garage, techno and house lovers.

FOR THE MAJORITY OF GIGS IN THE CITY CENTRE, HEAD TO MUSIC MANIA IN PICCADILLY ARCADE FOR THE CHEAPEST TICKETS.

ITO MISS ION

BARKER'S BRUNCH

THE EXCHANGE, TRINITY STREET

The Exchange is a firm favourite for its menu anyway but the frequent Barker's Brunch is just paw-fect for any dog lovers out there! A gorgeous brunch menu whilst enjoying cuddles from pugs, dachshunds and frenchies?! Count us in!

GET QUIZZICAL

THE EXCHANGE, TRINITY STREET

It's also worth noting that The Exchange plays host to frequent themed guizzes that are always a guaranteed laugh! Recent guizzes have included Harry Potter, Peep Show, Disney and Game of Thrones...

HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO ESCAPE?

ESCAPE STOKE, PICCADILLY & PARALYSIS, PALL MALL

Put your cognitive ability to the test whilst experiencing a real thrill at any of the City Centre's escape rooms, where you're up against the clock with only 60 minutes to make sense of a myriad of clues, eventually leading to your escape. Head to Paralysis for a terrifying experiences for true Horror fans only, and to Escape Stoke for all sorts of themed rooms, including Witchcraft & Wizardry, Area 51, The Da Vinci Code, Taken, Casino Heist and Escape the Seven Seas.'

CATCH A SHOW OR FLICK MITCHELL ARTS CENTRE

We have three quality theatres and a 9-screen Cineworld within a stone's throw of each other in the City Centre, but independent venue Michell Arts Centre combines the magic of both cinema and theatre in one amazing independent venue. With a line-up of amazing shows spanning musicals, operas and comedy, to name a few, the MAC also live streams West-End performances too, plus look out for their MAC matinees where you can watch all the greats like The Godfather & Jaws, as well as family favourites such as The Lego Movie.

POT SOME BALLS

VICTORIA LOUNGE, ADVENTURE PLACE

What better way to wile away a few hours than by playing some snooker whilst sinking a pint?

GO ON AN INDIE SHOPPING SPREE

HANI FY INDOOR MARKET

It's packed with indies here - 80 of them in fact, from stalls selling the freshest produce, clothing, footwear or homewares, to hobby shopping offering books, haberdashery and wool, to salon services and even an 'every flavour you could ever dream up' milkshake bar!

TAKE ON THE BID'S "OUR FRONT DOOR" TRAIL

- 1. Stafford Street Rich Keeling
- 2. Foundry Street
- James Rogerson
- 3. Lower Foundry Street
- Nick Roach
- 4. Lower Foundry Street Adam Madeley
- 5. Sampson Street
- Karl Burgess 6. Hillchurch Street
- Tom Addis
- 7 Market Lane
- Chioe Breeze
- 8. Stafford Street
- Dan Southward
- 9. Brunswick Street
- Katrina Wilde 10. Old Hall Street
- Know One
- 11. Piccadilly
- Ethan Lemon
- 12. Cheapside Tom Edwards
- 13. Morley Street
- Rob Fenton
- 14. Tontine Street & Parliment Row
- Dave Newey
- 15. Pall Mall
- Jasmine Simpson 16. Gitana Street
- Laura Swift
- 17. Broad Street
- Jovce Iwaszko
- 18. Marsh Street YMCA
- 19. Lower Foundry Street
- Holly Simone
- 20. Harvey's Building Kate Ackley



Student Catherine splits her time between Stoke-on-Trent and Kingston and explains why she loves her home town so much...





Although a few years ago I packed my bags and headed to London for the university life, I soon realised that I can't stay away from my roots for too long and I regularly come back to visit. Each time I come home, I'm welcomed by a new independent business flaunting its unique flair in the City Centre. Here's how I like to spend my Saturdays in the town centre, supporting them as best I can...

A proper Saturday morning starts with an oatcake from Munchies or Oaties Moston. Bacon, sausage, egg, black pudding – the full shebang, yes please!

Time to shop: For a vintage find to satisy my 'inner hippie and really make a fashion statement, Pentage on Brunswick Street is Hanley's best kept secret. I love anything bright and a bit different! Brassington's is the next port of call; always stocked with the latest pair of Dr Martens (and at a more competitive price!), the family run retailer also sells docs that have been discontinued for a while. Much to my mun's distaste, I've got quite the collection of facial piercings so I'll head to Rowfers on Stafford Street to stock up on body jewellery. Bright pink hair dye? Sure, I'll grab some of that too!

Once I'm all shopped out, I'll meet up with my friends and do something a little different. Forget the cliche catch-ups and outings, XP-VR on Piccadilly is a great way to escape real life for a little bit. They have games to suit any interest and ability. It'll take a few trips to get through them all so there's no way you could get

bored. Either that, or we'll take on an Escape Room (I'm not sure I'm brave enough for the horror-themed Paralysis so it may have to be the Harry Potter room at Escape Stoke for me!)

To recharge, I'll head to The Slamwich Club for an out-of-this-word sandwich. I recommend their High Steaks sarnie and if you're super ravenous, you must try the deep fried halloumi fingers - they are to die for.

It's not a proper weekend without a few beverages – for me, at least! The evening begins in BottleCraft. which has an exceptional selection so you're sure to find something that you like. Bar 41 is next on our list for a G&T, one of my favourite tipples. By this point, I'm probably feeling very merry and ready for a boogie at Pilgrim's Pit, a zany venue that showcases local talent as well as having a live DJ at weekends. And the rest, as they say, is history!

I love coming home to see independent businesses, old and new, thriving and adding personality to our streets. It's amazing what you can find to do in Stoke-on-Trent and with every visit home, I become even more proud to be a Stokie.



AS WELL AS FAVOURITES LIKE CHICAGO'S, FICTION AND REFLEX, THE CITY CENTRE BOASTS INDEPENDENT NIGHTCLUBS TOO FOR THOSE BIG NIGHTS OUT TO REMEMBER - OR NOT!

E11EVEN, TRINITY STREET °

Sport, beers and cocktails are on the menu at this City Centre bar which transforms into a nightspot when the sun goes down.

JNX. TRINITY STREET -

Head to JNX bar for urban music all night long and great drinks offers.

PINK, STAFFORD STREET .

LGBT friendly nightclub Pink hosts the very best in live entertainment with some of the UK's leading female impersonators and drag DJs playing a fabulous mix of music to cater to all tastes. This friendly venue provides a warm welcome to all and is a great place to relax and let loose, with free entry before midnight!

Billed as Stoke-on-Trent's premier gay venue, Gossip is home to three bars over two levels. Whether you're chilling in luxury in the Unity Lounge, enjoying alfresco drinks in the large paved garden, or throwing shapes on the central dance floor, good times are quaranteed.









Quick eats on the GO!



GYRO CITY (PICCADILLY)

DIXY CHICKEN (STAFFORD STREET)

SEAFARER FISH & CHIPS (CHEAPSIDE)

A OATIE MOSTONS (UPPER MARKET SQUARE)

You'll find this gem of a food trailer in Market Square selling the good old Staffordshire oatcake with a plethora of fillings to choose from. Try the **'Whopper'**; you won't be disappointed!



NØRTH KITCHEN & BAR (PICCADILLY)

Here you'll find an extensive selection of dishes to sample, all incredibly fresh and delicious. Health and nutrition is important to owners Steve and Gemma, so this is the perfect place to head to for feel-good food. From brunch to dinner, there's sure to be a dish you'll love from guilt free (and meat free!) hotdogs to Buddha bowls.

THE QUARTER (PICCADILLY)

The Quarter is a warm, welcoming space for everyone, including vegans of course! There's lots of tantalising dishes on the menu, from falafel, hummus, carrot and apricot salad, to mushroom and spinach curry and best of all, the staff are more than happy to adapt items on their menu to become vegan friendly by substituting ingredients to vegan cheese, dairy free spread and milk alternatives.

THE SLAMWICH CLUB (PICCADILLY)

If you thought delicious, two-hander gourmet sandwiches couldn't possibly be vegan, you thought wrong! The Slamwich Club caters for all, with the 'Yes You Mexi-Can' slamwich which is a mouth-watering combo of roasted squash, quinoa, avocado, vegan cheese, tomato salsa and tortilla crumble, and 'The Happea Chick' which is a delicious fusion of chickpea, coriander & cumin falafel, vegan cheese, grilled red pepper, hummus, house lettuce mix, fresh cherry tomatoes, red onion and balsamic glaze. Mmmmmmm...

KLAY (PICCADILLY)

Pizza is pretty synonymous with cheese, but at Klay, nothing is off the table as you can replace it with vegan cheese, and mix and match your topping to suit which means you could be chowing down on a 'Vegilante' pizza adorned with tomatoes, peppers, courgette and spinach, or a 'Stavros' with avocado, red onion, balsamic glaze, rocket and olives. Or get creative and make your own from a sizeable list of vegan friendly toppings. If you make a custom pizza to impress, it could even end up on the menu!

More food & drink



THE EXCHANGE (TRINITY STREET

Located inside the impressive and historic former Telephone Exchange building, this bar is a cool back drop for casual dining and drinking. Ingredients are locally sourced in this American influenced menu that boasts burgers galore (including one with bacon, cheese AND peanut butter!) and loaded fries, as well as classic favourites such as seared tuna steak.

RESTAURANT FAMILY (BROAD STREET)

Cooking up specialities from Czech Republic, Slovakia and beyond, Restaurant Family is the place to come if you're after hearty and nutritious comfort food. Hungarian beef goulash, brambowraps and langos burgers are all favourites on the menu and if you've got the stomach for it, or a load of peckish mates, there's also a selection of 24 inch pizzas.

PORTOFINO (MARSH STREET)

Portofino's focus is serving fresh and authentic Italian classics with a plethora of pasta, risotto, pizzas, meat and fish dishes to choose from.

DELTA CAFÉ (STAFFORD STREET)

Full English's, sandwiches, jacket potatoes, pies, fish, oatcakes and much more features on the menu of this small and friendly café.

HARLEY'S CAFÉ (FOUNTAIN SQUARE)

Harley's is Stoke-on-Trent's (better) answer to a Hard Rock Café where music instruments, records and memorabilia adorn the walls and ceiling. Rock up for a slap-up brunch that's easy on the purse strings.

POTTERIES PANTRY (STAFFORD STREET)

This café serves up food on the go and has plenty of space for you to sit in and enjoy your meal too, whether it's a light bite or a more substantial meal.

ROBERTO'S (PALL MALL)

Roberto and his family grew this restaurant from the ground in 1981, and are still ever-passionate about cooking delicious traditional Italian food. You can't get much more authentic than Roberto's, save travelling to the Med itself!

CITY CAFÉ (TOWN ROAD)

A little bit of everything you fancy on the menu here with traditional café fayre such as breakfasts, jacket potatoes, burgers, omelettes, roast dinners, and hot and cold sandwiches.

MUNCHIES (PICCADILLY)

This much-loved local café in a great location on Piccadilly and near to the museum and library serves hot and cold food and drinks. All-day breakfasts are popular here, as are the pair of oatcakes – you'll get change from a fiver too!

CAFÉ TOFFS (PICCADILLY)

This warm and inviting family-run café offers a pleasant resting spot on Piccadilly with outdoor seating to make the most of good weather, as well as a tasty breakfast and lunch menu.

MRS B'S MARKET KITCHEN (HANLEY MARKET)

Once you've checked out all the stalls in Hanley Market, why not take a moment to recharge at Mrs B's where you can feast on homely comfort food.

JAFLONG (LICHFIELD STREET)

This Indian and Bangladeshi Restaurant and Takeaway is highly regarded by locals and frequently described as one of the best in the city and beyond!

From family-owned authentic Italians, to small friendly cafs and everything in between, there's a little bit of what you fancy at these City Centre restaurants.

Hanley Market

Fresh, tinned, dried, takeaway foods, cafes, pic n mix, shakes and smoothie bar.

HD brows, LVL lashes, dermal fillers, nail bars, hairdressing, shoe repairs, key cutting, tailoring, personalised printing and bespoke art.

Clothing, shoes, bags, jewellery, cosmetics, perfumes, real hair extensions and fancy dress.

Home décor and supplies, mobile phones, accessories and repairs, vaping.

Plus additional outdoor traders.

Open Monday to Saturday 8am to 5pm **Intu Potteries Centre**





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BRASSINGTONS (PICCADILLY)

A real family affair, Brassingtons is currently run by the 4th generation of Brassingtons, having been trading since 1901. Famed for its high quality footwear and excellent service, you'll find many brands here but perhaps most notably, an extensive collection of Doc Martens.

TERRACES (MARSH STREET)

Terraces supplies premium designer brands for men internationally but you'll find the latest trends in their City Centre shop too.

POCKETS (PICCADILLY)

Shop here for men's luxury designer clothing from some of the world's leading brands including Stone Island, Moncler, Paul Smith, Hugo Boss, Canali and many more.

RIF RAF (STAFFORD STREET)

This family-run business has been trading in the most wacky gifts for the last 25 years. Watches, lighters, hippy and goth-style clothing and accessories and gifts from all the corners of the world can be shopped here. Rif Raf also does watch and jewellery repairs, key cutting and engraving.

ROWFERS (STAFFORD STREET)

Clothing, jewellery, body jewellery, hair-dye, incense, accessories and lifestyle/decorative items can be found here, all with a slightly alternative leaning.

RUBBERSOUL RECORDS (MARSH STREET)

You'd be hard pushed to find a genre of music not stocked at this indie record shop

GOODWINS JEWELLERS (HOPE STREET)

After 145 years of trading, it's safe to say that Goodwin's know their stuff! Selling a wide range of jewellery to match all price points and styles, the super friendly and knowledgeable staff will help you find that perfect piece.

PENTAGE (BRUNSWICK STREET)

This magical jewel of a shop retails a selections of vintage and retro iconic fashions and accessories alongside a plethora of interesting finds.



BAMBU (PICCADILLY)

Bambu gives its customers a taste of Bohemian culture and style with its gifts that are a little different, and all ethically sourced too, many being upcycled such as clothes, bags. scarves and wall hangings.

RIPPER (HOPE STREET)

This film and TV memorabilia store, ran by self-confessed 'geeks' Jamie and Lee, stocks collectable toys, artwork, action figure, masks and everything in between!



Dambell yourself

NATURAL BEAUTY DAY SPA

(TONTINE STREET)



BARNET GENTLEMEN'S
HAIRDRESSERS (TONTINE STREET)



BEAUTY LOUNGE (TONTINE STREET)



HAPPY NAILS (PERCY STREET)



CHARLIE BROWN'S HAIR STUDIO (CHEAPSIDE)



THE LAD'S PAD
(TRINITY STREET)



NAIL PERFECTION (STAFFORD STREET)





THE QUARTER, PICCADILLY.

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thequarterhanley



quarter_cafe



thequartercafe



Q. FIRST OF ALL, INTRODUCE YOURSELVES AND YOUR BUSINESS...

J: I'm Josef Bailey and I own The Quarter, a café, bistro and bar, on Piccadilly along with my wife Annmarie. We're open from 8am 'til late, six days a week, serving up breakfast, lunch, brunch, and a quirky home-style bistro menu for dinner, together with a large take-away menu! Whether you're after a relaxing cuppa and a cake, or a three-course meal washed down with premium cocktails, we cater for all audiences. We play host to live music and entertainment regularly too.

Q: WHY DID YOU START YOUR BUSINESS?

J: Piccadilly is bustling nowadays with independent business – particularly as new cocktail bar Bloom has opened and the much-loved Italian restaurant, Bella Napoli has relocated here, which is just fantastic to see – but prior to our opening, we thought it had a food establishment shaped hole which we hoped we could fill. We felt we had something a little different to bring to the table, to meet the culinary, drinking and entertainment needs to the city and beyond.

A: Opening a café had been my dream for over 20 years. I

A: Opening a café had been my dream for over 20 years. I adore cuisine and so my family and I have spent a lot of time travelling around the world, sampling different dishes and atmospheres, which has heavily influenced our decision to open The Quarter. It took a while for us to find the perfect location, but when we came across the Piccadilly venue, right in the heart of Stoke-on-Trent City Centre's Cultural Quarter, we knew it was time to just go for it!

Q. WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING AN INDEPENDENT BUSINESS OWNER?

A. Too many to mention! We feel incredibly very lucky to have a 32-strong team that share our passion and values, and they all work tremendously hard to give our customers the very best experience.

J: Our customers themselves are another reason why we do what we do; whether they're trying The Quarter for the first time, or they're seasoned regulars, the glowing feedback never fails to bring a smile to our faces.





Q: AND THE WORST?

A: As any business owner can tell you, it's hard work! Especially in the beginning when we spent every waking moment of the first three months renovating, renovating. However, the early mornings and the late nights are completely worth it when you love what you do, like we do!

Q: HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO SUPPORT INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES?

J: Very! As an indie business ourselves, we make it a priority to source local ingredients wherever we can – not only does that mean we can prepare fresher dishes, we're keeping the money in our local economy to help it to thrive. Plus, our cake selection is always stocked by TSP, an incredible local baking company – check them out!

A: It's great to support independents as they bring something a little different to an area and lots of personality and quirkiness, but it's important to note that without the support of our customers, we wouldn't be here. We also have the freedom to try new things and make our own rules so we're always happy to take on board any comments and suggestions from our customers!

J: Since opening we have always endeavoured to help the community utilise our space for free and this commitment to the surrounding areas is so vital in driving interest, diversity and footfall into the town centre. We support new businesses, entrepreneurs and community groups by providing a safe environment for them to explore their passions and ideas and continue to do so. It is a growing part of our business ethos and further builds our foundation as an integral independent in Hanley.

Q: WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HAVE IN STORE FOR THE QUARTER?

J: When we first opened 3 years ago, the initial identity of The Quarter was to be a café. However, the venue and our offering has snowballed into something much bigger; a bistro, a coffee shop, a events venue, a cocktail bar AND a stage for the best local musicians and artists. We also have a huge catering business that provides corporate food for lots of local businesses which has further grown our brand in the city. We have exciting plans taking place to expand our little QUARTER empire and have just signed for a mobile food vehicle which will be used at festivals and private events and we're on the hunt for a second venue so any requests for location are welcome! We're over the moon with the success of The Quarter and hope to continue down this path, dishing up good food and serving up cocktails to our lovely customers for many more years to come!

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When you think of our city, Robbie Williams, oatcakes and pottery are amongst the first things that you think about but there's more than meets the eye. Celebrate our City Centre's independent businesses; there's something for everyone...here's our A-Z:

AMBASSADOR:

Our Street Ambassadors are happy to recommend shops, restaurants and everything in between to City Centre visitors. They know our indie businesses like the back of their hands.

BOOTS:

Brassington's has been a staple in the City Centre since 1901 so you just know they're going to ooze the passion and expertise that's typical of an indie business!

CRAFT BEER:

Craft beer seems to be the new trend and rightfully so. With over 200 beers and ciders to sample, pop to Bottlecraft to find your new favourite ale.

DESIGNER:

From Armani to Barbour, Fred Perry to Stone Island, Lacoste to Pretty Green, Pockets and Terraces has designer men's fashion down to a tee (shirt).

ENTERTAINMENT:

It's impossible to get bored in our City Centre if you know where to look. Amazing food and drink, live music, escape rooms, virtual reality, cinema, painting classes... the list goes on.

FOOD:

Burgers, chicken wings, sandwiches, platters, salad, pasta, pizza, ice cream, paninis, steak, halloumi, oatcakes, tacos, Turkish kebabs, fajitas, tapas... is your mouth watering yet?

GIN:

Be-gin your weekend with a G&T from Bar 41. From sweet to spicy to... seaweed gin? There's a gin to suit every palate!

HAIRDRESSERS:

Whether it's a trim, a fancy up-do, or a very close shave, our City Centre is bustling with independent hairdressers and barbers. Pop in for an appointment and try out a new look.

INDUSTRY:

Our city has always had a reputation for its creativity; we were the heart of the Industrial Revolution after all. We've kept to our roots with some of our creative businesses too, like Entrepreneurs Network and Emma Bridewater.

JEWELLERY:

Whether it's a gift for your loved one or a treat for yourself (we all need those pick-me-ups), check out our Goodwins Jewellers or C J Skelhorne and see if you can find a gem...

KEEP IT LOCAL:

Supporting your local independent businesses not only improves our economy and provides more jobs, it helps with the aesthetic, individuality and personality of our town. Keep it local!

LOVE:

Love the town you're in. Love your local independent businesses and love your community.

MUSIC:

Our town is a hotspot for talent, especially when it comes to our local artists. Pilgrim's Pit, The Slamwich Club, The Quarter, Bottlecraft, The Underground, The Exchange and The Sugarmill are just some of the venues which are more than proud to showcase our city's best talents.

NAILS:

It's so easy to look and feel a million dollars with a variety of indie salons in the City Centre.

OATCAKES:

Any proud Potter will preach about oatcakes, it's a Stokie's staple diet! The best hangover food, or for brekkie, lunch or tea, oatcakes are the perfect food for any mood. Try Oatie Moston's or pay a visit to Munchies.

PIZZA:

Klay has stolen a 'pizza' our heart. Make your own custom pizza or sample one of their own creations – whatever you choose, you won't be disappointed.

QUIRKY:

Our independent businesses are the definition of quirky. There's life-drawing classes at The Slamwich Club, tarot readings at The Quarter and Slam Poetry at Bottlecraft.

RECORDS:

Rubber Soul and Music Mania are the perfect shops for music-lovers. From originals to new releases, have a gander and see what you can find. Just for the record, we think they're great!

SUPPORT THE HIGH STREET:

By visiting an independent, you're helping to support a real family and someone who's put their life and soul into their business

TRADE:

Supporting local businesses injects more money into local trade, raising the profile and economy of the area!

UNIQUE:

Every one of our independent businesses are unique, from vintage fashion to haberdashery to juices.

VIRTUAL REALITY:

Escape real life and become a Formula 1 racing driver, or ride on the back of a dragon... at XP-VR, everything is possible and there's many games to suit all tastes and interests.

WORDERAFT:

Consider it an open mic night for poetry. Share your best rhymes, sonnets and limericks and wash it down with a beer at Bottlecraft. Something a bit different!

X-FACTOR:

No explanation needed!*
*It's hard finding words beginning with X!

YOU:

We all want to see the high street thrive that's for sure, but it starts with YOU. We all need to support our local businesses... Remember, if you don't use them, you lose them!

ZANY:

If you're looking for something a little zany, head over to Entrepreneurs Network for large scale murals, printing workshops and a screen printing studio.



STREET AMBASSADORS

When you venture into the City Centre, you're likely to see our lovely team of Street Ambassadors roaming the streets. You can hardly miss them in their bright red jackets and caps!

April, Qamar and Rich are passionate and knowledgeable about the City Centre. They're there to give you a warm welcome and are on-hand for any questions you may have, whether you need directions to someplace, or a recommendation of where to lunch.

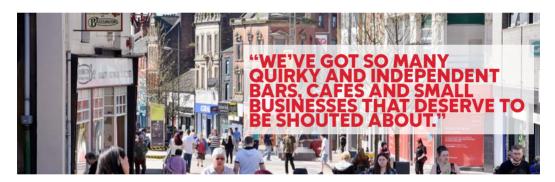
In addition to hitting the streets, our Ambassadors see to it that the look and feel of the area is constantly improving, be it through graffiti removal, reporting incidents to the Council for immediate resolution and tackling homelessness, an issue that unfortunately is spread nationwide.

"I've lived in Stoke-on-Trent all my life and know the City Centre inside and out, having worked here for 11 years. I think improving areas of the city and increasing footfall is really important; we've got so many quirky and independent bars, cafes and small businesses that deserve to be shouted about. I love getting out there and meeting new people so please feel free to stop me and say 'Hi' if you see me, or the other Street Ambassadors about!"

- April Jackson, City Centre Ambassador

The Ambassadors are just one of a number of significant projects that Stoke-on-Trent City Centre Business Improvement District (BID) has in place to make a real, positive difference to the area.

A full programme of initiatives is in the pipeline to help grow and mould the city including a series of events and festivals, major street art projects and installations, pop-up shops and business mentoring and training schemes.



KEEP UP TO DATE WITH ALL THINGS CITY CENTRE AND FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR THE LOW-DOWN ON EVENTS AND OFFERS.

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