



HUB INSIGHTS PROJECTS THAT INSPIRED IN 2025

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Thought Leadership Spotlight: A Five-Point Agenda

This e-book is a written extension of the “What Inspires You” session, hosted by the Revo Hub Committee at the Revo Conference 2025.

The challenge facing the retail-led built environment is how to evolve, stay relevant, and positively impact the communities we serve. As the next generation of placemakers, our committee speakers wanted to share their unique, forward-looking insights on the future of place and what is currently inspiring them in their work across the industry.

This publication brings together five powerful presentations, providing a definitive Next-Gen Agenda on the crucial themes of destination marketing, social value, design, and consumer evolution:

- **Georgie Manly, Landsec**
Play For All: The Next-Gen Driver for Destination Value
- **Gina Colley, Threesixty Architecture**
Making an Impact: The Transformative Power of Smart Moves
- **Jonathan Jones, Chapman Taylor**
Community at the Heart: Designing for Connection
- **Matilda Farmer, LM Real Estate**
Evolving Destinations: Meeting The Demands of Today's Consumer
- **Ben Hammond, Toolbox Marketing**
Destination Marketing and Opportunities That Sing



Turn the page
to read the five
visions shaping
tomorrow's
places.



Georgie Manly,
Consumer
Experience Director



Location
Westgate

Play Initiative
Modular Play

**Commercial
Results**

Footfall, Total Sales,
and Like-for-Like (LFL)
Sales all saw an increase
in the target area.
The Play Area's NPS+
score ranged
between
95 - 100.

Play For All: The Next-Gen Driver for Destination

Giving Your Customers an Extra Decade

Imagine being able to grant your consumers an extra ten years of life. Not only is PLAY a profound impact on wellbeing, but it translates directly into ten extra years for them to spend time, and their wallets, in your destination. This is the commercial proposition behind prioritising PLAY and how it's inspiring me.

As the Consumer Experience Director at Landsec, I focus on creating the most frictionless and memorable day out at our retail and leisure destinations. The one note I want the industry to take away is simple: PLAY is good for Business. PLAY is not just about typical playgrounds and toys; it's a fundamental human mechanism for connection, exploration, and de-stressing, for everyone regardless of age or capabilities. In a world dominated by screens and stress, PLAY provides a necessary moment of joy and emotional reset. Research supports this: creating places where consumers can PLAY is literally giving them extra time to spend and enjoy our destinations.

The opportunity is vast: by age 29, over 40% of people report losing touch with their sense of PLAY due to responsibilities, yet 64% wish they had more time for it. As placemakers, we have the opportunity to give our consumers time to PLAY.



Location
Bluewater
(opening soon)

Play Initiative
Permanent infrastructure

Commercial Results
Expected to boost Footfall, Dwell, and Spend with target family brands, catering to both locals and visitors from afar.

The Three Imperatives for Integrating Play

Play is more crucial than ever for the viability of retail and leisure destinations for three key reasons:

1. The Experiential Expectation

Consumers are fundamentally changing their expectations. Retail is no longer merely transactional; it must be experiential. People need a clear reason to visit, it must be worth their time and money. Consumers want to create lasting memories with loved ones, and the experience must offer something for everyone. No one is happy to simply sit on the sidelines anymore.

2. Emotional Value and Community

Playful experiences forge a powerful emotional attachment to spaces and brands. This transforms traditional retail hubs into genuine community hubs, making them more meaningful and integrated into people's lives.

3. Play is Good for Business (The ROI)

The commercial returns are undeniable:

- Happy people = deeper pockets.
- Providing more reasons to visit translates directly into more footfall, more time spent (dwell time), and a higher spend per visit.
- It supports brand distinction, attracting occupiers who want to be part of a thriving ecosystem.
- It opens up opportunities for new types of brand sponsorship.



Location
Southside

Play Initiative
Seating and Play

Commercial Results
Dwell time LFL saw an increase.

Designing Play for All: Landsec Case Studies

Delivering PLAY should not be a “cookie-cutter” approach. We have designed PLAY concepts tailored for different locations and audiences, but with a Landsec handprint across the portfolio, proving that flexible, integrated solutions drive measurable commercial uplift.

The Future of Play: Catering to the Gen Alpha Consumer and Families

Our focus must evolve to meet the specific needs of today’s families and consumers. Future placemaking must acknowledge key trends:

- **Augmented Outdoors:** With 68% of the world’s population expected to live in cities by 2050, Gen Alpha is growing up in an urbanised world, often spending less time outdoors. At Landsec, our opportunity is to create more playful outdoor spaces where possible, without compromising lettable space. We are working collaboratively with city councils and local schools to design them.
- **Tactility and Creativity:** While Gen Z grew up on iPhones, Gen Alpha is showing a passion for tactility, enjoying a mix of the online and the real world. Brands are encouraging screen-free, creative activities. We need less “do not touch” signage and more features that encourage imagination and creativity through “please do touch and play”.
- **Family Trends & Wellness 360:** Parents are highly concerned about children’s screen time and sedentary behaviour. The focus is on mind, body, and soul. This means we should create multi-generational play areas where both children and guardians can engage, supporting physical and mental wellbeing, not just distraction.

Play is the strategic tool that connects emotional well-being to commercial viability. By investing in integrated, imaginative play, we are not just giving our guests incredible memories; we are securing the sustained relevance and success of our destinations.

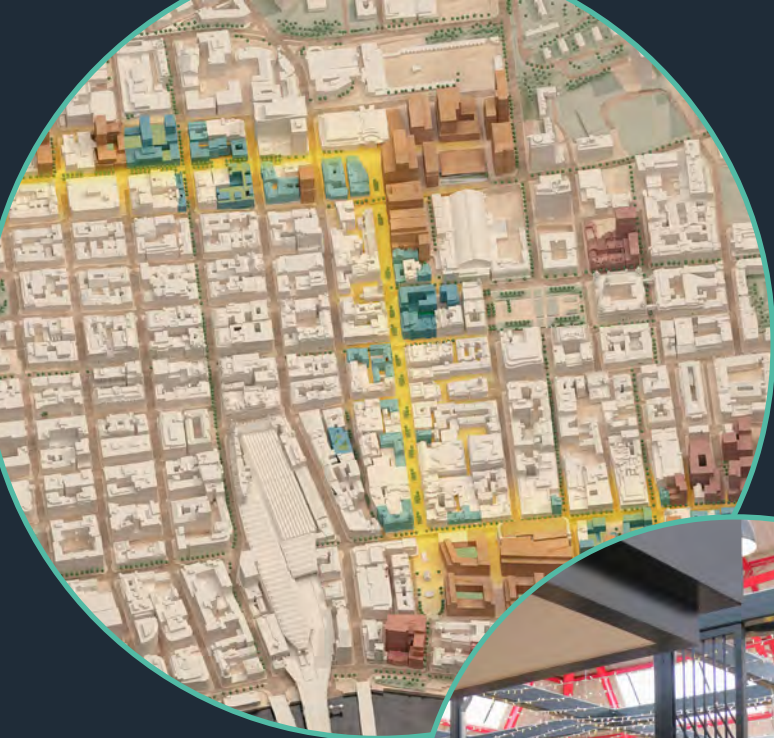
Are we going to give our guests an extra 10 years of incredible memories of time spent in our destinations? Hopefully yes, because PLAY is good for business.

Location
White Rose

Play Initiative
Extended Play Area

Commercial Results
Saw a +56PTS uplift on NPS+.





Gina Colley,
Architect
Associate Director



 Threesixty
Architecture

Making an Impact: Transforming Destinations

The greatest source of inspiration in the built environment is the moment when ambition meets reality. Our work in town and city centre regeneration focuses on making thoughtful, smart moves that unlock transformational impact for failing assets and entire communities. It is about creating vibrant, alive spaces where design truly serves the whole community.

Small Moves, Big Impact: The Inverness Victorian Market

Sometimes, the most profound regeneration begins with minimal investment and a clear vision. The 150-year-old Victorian Market in Inverness was a much-loved, but rapidly declining, asset located in the heart of the city. It was being used for ad hoc retail and was failing to meet modern standards.

Through a minimal investment of approximately £1.5 million from the Common Good fund, the space was dramatically transformed. The main hall was opened up to reveal the impressive roof structure, and the space was reorganised to accommodate 15 small, independent food businesses around a central seating area.

The results of this tactical retrofit were immediate and staggering:

- A tenfold increase in footfall from pre- to post-development.
- It became the shared space the city lacked, hosting kids' clubs, music events, and even the city's first Pride Hub.

This project shows how, with the right vision and partnerships, a failing asset can be revitalised to become a vibrant, multifunctional destination again.



The Hero's Journey: Repurposing Failing Shopping Centres

While shopping centres are often blamed for high street decline, at their lowest point in the value cycle, they offer a critical mass that makes them ideal catalysts for large-scale regeneration. This is an opportunity to turn a perceived “villain” into a community “hero”.

A powerful example is in my hometown of East Kilbride, which saw its enormous shopping centre decline following years of growth and the final blow of Debenhams' exit during the pandemic. This decline, however, created the chance to build a real town centre - not just a shopping mall.

Through a public-private partnership between the Local Authority and Asset Managers, our bold, phased vision was developed to shift the trajectory of the entire town centre. This plan introduces:

- Over 400 homes
- A new town square with an Arts and Education Building.
- Much-needed permeability, public realm, and green space.

This demonstrates how one bold move can shift the trajectory not only of a building, but of an entire town centre.

Visions Become Real

Another example of turning vision into reality came from our Golden Z study - Buchanan Galleries. Located at the top of Buchanan Street, this is a significant example of taking a tactical approach to retrofitting and layering in new uses, rather than demolition.

This is now one of the most significant retail interventions in the UK from Landsec, collaboratively designed with Threesixty Architecture. The vision is a sustainable retrofit that is transforming the dark, blank frontages into an active, dynamic, and impactful destination, fit for the next phase of retail.

A key part of this layered use will be a new rooftop destination foodhall with views over the city. This strategic intervention will enhance street-level activity and transform upper levels into leisure and hospitality spaces. Our experience shows us the transformational impact £1.5m of investment for a foodhall in Inverness can have, imagine what is possible with nearly 4 times the space on the busiest shopping thoroughfare outside of London.



Feminist City: Designing for the Whole Community

Perhaps the most inspiring move in placemaking is Glasgow's pledge to embed a feminist approach into Planning. Approved unanimously in 2022, this acknowledges that women and marginalised genders have a right to cities that were historically planned and designed by and for men.



Glasgow is the UK's first self-declared Feminist City, and the council has backed this vision with significant investment and action:

- Upfront Capital Investment: Including a £1 million Feminist Action Fund over two years for projects like improved lighting and public toilets.
- Infrastructure Commitment: A separate £12.5 million commitment to improve roads, streetscapes, and lighting based on the findings of a Women's Safety Survey.
- Active Co-design: Initiatives include co-designing playparks with teenage girls to ensure the spaces are genuinely inclusive and accessible.

This commitment is driven by the Feminist Urbanism Political Oversight Group and ensures a gender lens is applied to all aspects of city development, planning, and budgeting. This is not just about safety, but about applying an intersectional and inclusive approach to create public spaces that truly work for everyone.

Threesixty Architecture is seeking sponsorship for a research project to rethink retail and urban spaces to truly work for women and girls, aiming for a highly visual publication with practical spatial design guidance for developers and policymakers. This will ensure that our visions move beyond theory and become real, implementable designs.

The lesson is clear: when we put the diverse needs of the community at the heart of our design and planning, we unlock transformational, equitable, and sustained impact.

So to sum up, what inspires me are the moments when ambition meets reality. When empty spaces become alive with activity. When design serves the whole community. And when we make thoughtful, smart movies that unlock transformational impact.



Jonathan Jones,
Architect,
Associate Director



Community at the Heart: Designing for Connection

Successful placemaking is simple: it is where people want to gather, connect, and return. Our ultimate goal is to create not just a space for transaction, but a place that seamlessly becomes a part of everyday life. Achieving this authenticity requires a fundamental shift in our design process: putting the community at the heart of every decision.

The Imperative of Authentic Listening

Listening is an essential and non-negotiable step in successful placemaking. The best outcomes occur when design is directly shaped by the people who will actually use the space. Taking the time to listen, regardless of the proposal's scale, ensures that real community needs are addressed.

Consultation must be more than a formal hurdle; it must be truly informative. The promise must be tangible: "You said this, we've listened, and the design has responded". This process requires making sure that the data collected is a true reflection of the community, actively engaging key stakeholders and active community groups.

While common challenges like empty units, poor navigation, and a lack of character or greenery are often the necessary first steps to address, it is the small details informed by the community that ultimately make the real difference, ensuring each place feels tailored and personal.



Designing with People in Mind: Diverse Examples

Our work demonstrates that putting the community first can be applied to projects of any scale, from temporary interventions to major capital projects:

Pepper Street, Chester: Testing the Waters

Here, the task was to bring pop-up vibrancy to a car park rooftop. To do this, we introduced the concept of 'Meanwhile Communities' on the rooftop. Meanwhile uses are a crucial part of the placemaking puzzle, offering a low-cost way to test community engagement and fit. By making space for local community groups, these temporary ideas can then inform and validate longer-term plans.

Trinity Leeds: Repurposing Existing Assets

The challenge at Trinity Leeds was how to enhance an existing destination while balancing the constraints of repurposing a major structure with the aspiration for a more animated social space. By reconfiguring inefficient layouts, our proposal was able to unlock new opportunities within the building for a defined social hub, with space for interaction.

Soapworks, Bristol: Anticipating Future Needs

When designing a major mixed-use development that includes office space and apartments, the challenge lies in capturing the needs of an anticipated community. For this project, a massive effort was made to capture more than 6,000 responses to anticipate what future residents and workers would need. This extensive feedback shaped a design focused on flexibility - creating spaces that meet today's requirements but can evolve to suit tomorrow's.

In summary Authenticity and Bespoke Placemaking

Listening and responding to the community is the common thread connecting all these design examples. When we design with people in mind, we create places of real connection. By putting community at the heart, we ensure our placemaking efforts are authentic, bespoke, and built to last.





Matilda Farmer,
Senior
Surveyor



Evolving Destinations: Meeting the Demands of Today's Consumer

Retail has faced unprecedented challenges, from global events to the accelerated tech boom, causing many to question the future of physical destinations. However, the market's response is clear: demand for in-person interaction with products and staff still remains strong. Brands are adapting - even Topshop is making a comeback through strategic partnerships!

In my opinion, for retail destinations to stay relevant and successful in this dynamic landscape, they must master three core requirements:

1. Unique Selling Point (USP)
2. Staying Ahead of Consumer Trends
3. Amazing Placemaking & Customer Experience



The Blueprint for Relevance: Covent Garden

To illustrate how to master these three requirements, I recently spoke with Jenna Slade, Director of Operations and Customer Experience at Shaftesbury Capital, about how they keep Covent Garden relevant amid rising competition.

The USP: Heritage and Curation

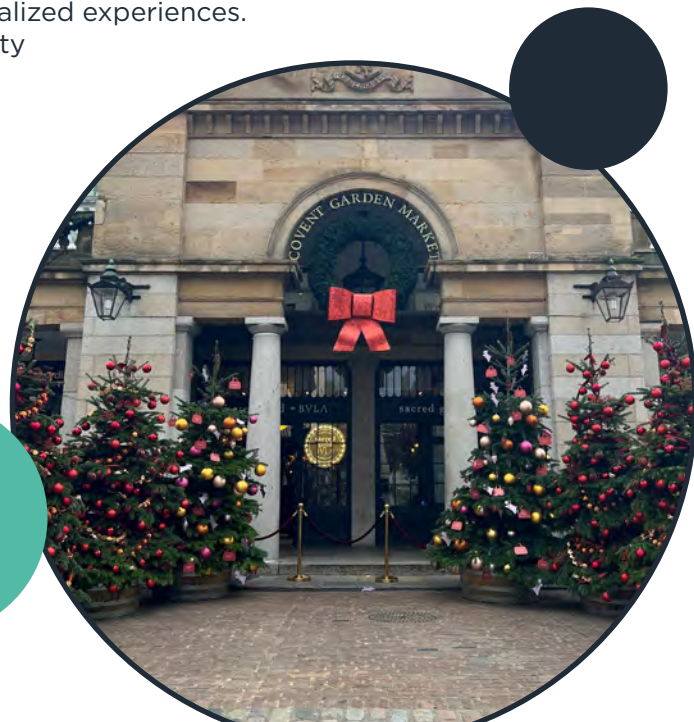
Covent Garden's USP is anchored in its rich heritage and iconic architecture. The strategy is to carefully select brands that reflect this historic charm, creating aesthetic and immersive spaces. This unique mix is supported by high standards of pedestrianization, cleanliness, and security.

- **Walkability:** The successful part-pedestrianisation of Monmouth Street and the Piazza is a significant factor in enhancing the customer experience, allowing shoppers to explore the area in a relaxed, traffic-free setting. It is a lead that other major destinations, like Oxford Street, are now beginning to follow.
- **Brand Mix:** The area continues to attract exciting names like Alo Yoga, Charlotte Tilbury, Saucony, and Brother Marcus in 2025 alone.

The Placemaking: Experience and Curation

Placemaking is central to Covent Garden's success, with Shaftesbury implementing a curation strategy across the entire estate:

- **Experiential F&B:** Henrietta Street features bold, experiential F&B brands (El Takoy, Ave Mario) that draw footfall.
- **Distinct Zones:** Floral Street, dubbed "the most stylish street in Covent Garden," is distinguished by its colourful lamp posts and premium fashion brands (Free People, Ganni).
- **Event Integration:** The Piazza and Seven Dials regularly host seasonal events and brand collaborations with names like Chanel and Charlotte Tilbury, often tied to cultural moments (Pride, Wimbledon), creating interactive and personalized experiences. This was perfectly demonstrated at a July street party with brands offering exclusive discounts and personalised experiences, deepening customer connection with their products.
- **Sustainability:** This remains a key priority for Gen Z. Covent Garden actively supports this by partnering with brands like Pangaia, L'Occitane, and Vintage Threads, which offer environmentally conscious products and recycling programmes.



Staying Ahead of Consumer Trends: Health, Tech, and Values

At LM, we are seeing these trends materialise across our own portfolio, particularly in health, technology, and next-gen consumer values:



Health and Wellness Surge

There has been a significant shift towards health and lifestyle-focused retail. This goes beyond traditional fitness:

- **New Anchors:** At Metrocentre, a 60,000 sq ft Community Diagnostics Centre has recently opened, expected to attract over 145,000 appointments annually, acting as a powerful new footfall anchor.
- **Influencer-Driven Fitness:** The rise of social media influencers has pushed sectors like matcha, fitness tracking (e.g., Garmin's Pros athlete community powered by their store in Westquay), and athleisure to the forefront.

Digital and Immersive Technology

Gen Z and Gen Alpha consumers value a blend of digital engagement and in-person interaction.

- **"Instagrammable" Aesthetics:** Brands like EL&N and Glossier resonate with Gen Z because their aesthetics are highly 'Instagrammable', reflecting personal values and lifestyles.
- **Influencer Collabs:** Influencer collaborations and digital marketing have fueled the resurgence of brands like UGG and Crocs, with more retailers now integrating TikTok, Reels, and creator partnerships into their campaigns. Brands like Sides, backed by influencer KSI, leverage mass followings to drive product demand.
- **Immersive Experience:** Tech innovation is fueling new formats, such as the competitive socialising concept Activate at The O2, which launched in December 2024 and has seen strong footfall, boosting surrounding retail and F&B spend.

Brand Resilience

While new trends emerge, traditional high street staples continue to thrive, proving resilient. M&S's largest basket shop store opened in Cabot Circus on 13th November, showcasing its full range of food, clothing, beauty hall and own dedicated café. Openings like these continues to demonstrate the confidence in anchor brands and physical retail.

It is an exciting time for retail and leisure, and agencies must continue to work with clients to stay ahead of these evolving consumer trends.



Ben Hammond,
Growth & Performance
Manager

toolbox
MARKETING

Destination Marketing and Opportunities That Sing

Ben Hammond, Growth & Performance Manager, Toolbox Marketing

Don't Look Back in Anger at Missed Opportunities

Tens of thousands of additional visitors are heading for your destination for one night only. How do you best prepare for that, and, crucially, can you keep them coming back? This year we saw the incredible impact of the Oasis tour on destinations. Closer to home, the town of Ipswich inspired me with their activity, as Ed Sheeran returned home for a gig weekend to remember.

The Power of Cultural Magnetism: National Data

Major cultural moments act as powerful, temporary magnets for an entire region. The recent UK concert activity of a band like Oasis illustrates the staggering scale of this economic lift. According to Barclays Wonderwallets Research, their activity drove a £1.06bn surge in economic activity. For destinations, the impact is immediately measurable, as data shared by MRI showed:

- Central London Footfall: Experienced a 14.9% uplift.
- Manchester Arndale: Saw a 15% footfall increase.
- Cardiff: Noted a 25.1% footfall increase.

**These are no longer
seen as just concerts
- they're being positioned
as once-in-a-lifetime moments
that ultimately drive retail,
leisure, and community
engagement.**

*Jenni Matthews,
MRI Software*

Case Study: Ed Sheeran Returns to Ipswich

A perfect example of an entire town successfully capitalising on a cultural event is the return of Ed Sheeran to Ipswich for a series of concerts on one weekend. Toolbox Marketing worked with both The Buttermarket Shopping Centre and the All About Ipswich BID to support elements of their coordinated activity across the town. The goal was to create a unified, vibrant town experience that engaged visitors from the moment they considered their trip.

Key Digital & Physical Activation:

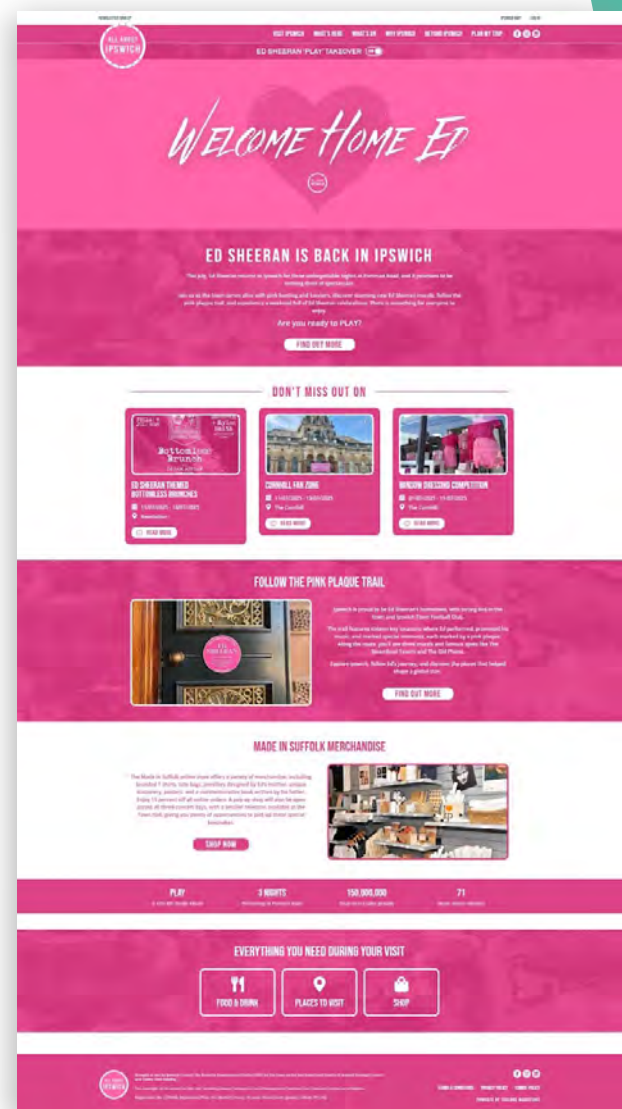
The fan experience began online with a core focus on digital integration. The BID set up a unique user experience on their website with a tailored homepage takeover, featuring content designed to promote the activities of the week and encourage visitors to get the most out of their trip, including:

- Activities and events taking place across the town during the concert week for all to enjoy.
- Handy information, such as where to shop, eat, drink, park and stay.

The physical experience was orchestrated with the “Paint the Town Pink” campaign led by the BID, encouraging organisations to put up pink posters and bunting, with some even changing their lighting for maximum impact. The BIDs efforts also included:

- An official Ed Sheeran Fan Zone set up on Ipswich Cornhill.
- A pink plaque trail designed to drive visitors to key areas of the town relevant to Ed Sheeran’s history there.
- Social media campaigns during the concert week to drive continuous awareness, which included content that was shared by Ed Sheeran’s team.

The Buttermarket Shopping Centre contributed and delighted fans by hosting an Ed Sheeran Ipswich Club t-shirt photo opportunity, the commission of a brand new Ed Sheeran mural for the town, and creating a dedicated website page for information and special offers.



Commercial Impact: Converting Excitement into Revenue

The real measure of success is the commercial impact, which demonstrates the powerful return on investment when marketing and operations are coordinated. The coordinated effort resulted in dramatic uplifts across the town:

All About Ipswich Town Centre Stats

+72%
Town Centre Footfall

200 Tenants participated
in Paint The Town Pink

+226% site homepage engagement time

+300% Instagram reach

Pubs & Restaurants
tripled drink sales

International recognition
from tourists

The Buttermarket Shopping Centre Stats

+5.8%
Car Park Usage
and **+29.4%** Car Park Income

+15% Footfall increase over
the concert weekend

F&B Tenant Performance:
Prezzo **+27%**
Superbowl Wet **+25%**
Krispy Kreme **+16.5%**
VQ rest. **+38%**

£30,500 PR Value
Non-paid, including;
BBC, ITV, Local Papers



The key takeaway, brilliantly articulated by Lee Walker, CEO of Ipswich Central and the All About Ipswich BID, is the shift in strategic mindset: “Stop thinking that you need to create the moment, but create the idea that becomes the moment”.

By identifying the massive opportunity and layering it with smart, integrated destination marketing, the town converted a one-off event into a week-long, measurable commercial triumph. This model provides the blueprint for destinations everywhere looking to turn cultural opportunities into sustained economic growth



Under 30s Can Join The Revo Hub For Free

About the Revo Hub: Our Next-Gen Community

Welcome to the Revo Hub, the dynamic network where the Next Gen (under 30s) of retail, leisure, property, and placemaking professionals gather, connect, and collaborate.

Revo Hub is a buzzing network dedicated to sparking fresh ideas and bold insights that inspire the next generation, positioning members not as spectators, but as insiders, doers, and trailblazers in the wider Revo community.

What We're About

The Hub is designed to help you dive in, learn, and grow with peers who are passionate about transforming spaces and reimagining the future. Benefits of joining include:

- Epic Events: From unique site tours to networking socials and thought-provoking talks.
- Influencing Content: Opportunities to write articles, join the Revo Hub Huddle Podcast, or curate fresh topics.
- Skill Development: Professional development events to power up your skills, from mastering market insights to developing leadership skills.

How to join the
Revo
Hub

The best part?
If your organisation is already
a member of Revo, access to the
Revo Hub is absolutely FREE.

All you have to do is register for
Revo Hub membership to dive into
this vibrant collective that nurtures young
talent and builds lasting connections.

To find out more or to join
the committee, contact
hello@revocommunity.org today.