

Hello
DORKING



**Dorking Business
Improvement District**



Hello Dorking in Action

**Our town. Our businesses. Our Dorking
Year in Review 2025 – 2026**



Thank you for taking a moment to read about Hello Dorking's work over the last 12 months

Over the past year, Hello Dorking has remained focused on supporting businesses, attracting visitors and securing investment that benefits the whole town.

At a time when many businesses are facing significant pressures, we have continued to work alongside businesses, local authorities and community partners to promote Dorking, deliver events, improve the town centre and champion the interests of our levy payers.

This review highlights the difference your BID has made over the past year and the foundations being laid for the future.

Hello Dorking is a shared investment made by more than 370 levy-paying businesses. Our role is to deliver the Business Plan, promote Dorking as a destination and create opportunities that benefit the town as a whole.

While we work hard to raise Dorking's profile and encourage people to visit the town, no one knows your business better than you. The greatest results come when businesses combine the opportunities created by the BID with their own enthusiasm, ideas and marketing. The more you can get involved, the more you are likely to get out of your BID.

Working together we can achieve far more to help create a thriving, welcoming town centre that benefits businesses, residents and visitors alike.



Make the most of your BID

Your BID is here to help your business

GET SEEN

Business Directory . Many Dorking businesses already have a profile on the Hello Dorking Business Directory. To create or update yours please email info@hellodorking.com

Social Media. Tag @hellodorking on your social media posts so we can share your content and hear about what you have going on. Or drop us a line if you have something special to share.

GET CONNECTED

Receive updates. We send a weekly update straight to businesses inboxes every Friday with news and details of initiatives, advice and campaigns you can get involved with. It can go to any number of people in your business, so if you are not receiving these or would like others in your business to receive them, please let us know.

GET SUPPORT

DISC and Crime prevention. If retail crime or ASB is an issue for your business make sure you are added to the DISC crime reporting system which connects directly to Surrey Police. To receive a short training session and a login for DISC please get in touch.

More Support. We also provide a number of other initiatives to support your business including training and networking events, a handyman scheme, access to Surrey Chamber of Commerce membership. We announce those via our Weekly Update so make sure you are signed up.

EMAIL info@hellodorking.com to be added to our weekly updates or to add or update your business listing



Figures are August 2025 - July 2026 unless otherwise stated

370+ levy
paying
businesses
represented

Over £1.25
million to be
invested in
our town
over 5 years



£125,000
external
funding
since 2024

Over £10K
sponsorship
secured
since 2024

60,000
active
website
users

4.6 million
social media
views

39,000
social media
interactions

41%
audience
growth

4 major and
12
secondary
town centre
events

10+ business
training and
networking
sessions

Promoting Dorking

Every campaign has one objective: to encourage more people to choose Dorking.

Throughout the year we have showcased the town's independent businesses and national chains, vibrant events, outstanding food and drink offer and beautiful surroundings through digital marketing, print, PR and destination campaigns. Our social media channels generated more than 4.6 million views and almost 39,000 interactions, extending Dorking's reach to new audiences.

The Summer and Christmas Guide, Festival of Good Living, weekly what's on and visitors newsletter, daily posts on social media championing individual businesses and the town in general, all encourage visitors to discover more of the town. While regular media coverage helped reinforce Dorking's reputation as one of Surrey's leading market towns.



Your voice heard at all levels

Hello Dorking is also part of Surrey BIDs Together, sharing best practice and support with other BIDs, and the Dorking Neighbourhood Area Committee, to ensure businesses voices are represented during Local Government Reorganisation.

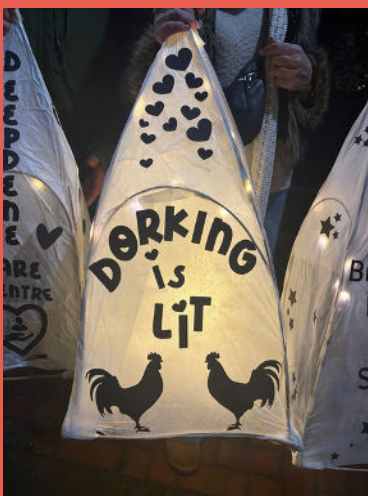
We meet regularly with the Police, Local Government and our MP to raise business concerns and ensure your voice is heard.

For more info on how to get the most out of the BID
email info@hellodorking.com

Bringing the Town to Life

A lively programme of events continues to bring energy to the town centre and support local businesses.

From Vintage Day and Roll Up Dorking Christmas Festival to Festival of Light, the Walking Festival, Artistic Trail and the launch of the Festival of Good Living, our events give people more reasons to visit, explore, spend time in and return to Dorking. Footfall increased by 66% during Vintage Day and 111% during the Christmas Festival, with some businesses reporting their best ever trading days. This demonstrates the impact these town-wide events can have. Alongside our public events, regular networking opportunities have also helped strengthen connections across the local business community.



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Supporting Businesses

This year we delivered training sessions covering Artificial Intelligence and First Aid, with businesses also coming together regularly through networking, which now attracts 40–50 businesses. Our website also has a growing library of practical business support articles.

We've introduced DISC crime reporting software with Surrey Police to help businesses report incidents, share information and stay informed, helping create a safer, more connected town centre.

We've also launched a Handyman scheme to help businesses tackle those small jobs, helped get broken street furniture replaced or relocated and organised extra litter picks to keep Dorking looking its best.



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Investing in Dorking

We secure external funding to bring additional investment into Dorking, over and above what is raised through the BID levy.

Over the last 18 months Hello Dorking secured more than £125,000 of additional funding, including £98,894 through the Community Infrastructure Levy for improvements to South Street Gardens and smaller grants to renovate the Pump at Pump Corner, remove obsolete street furniture and fund workshops for the Festival of Light. Seasonal planters, hanging baskets, Christmas trees, one off graffiti cleans and other environmental enhancements have also helped create a greener and more welcoming town centre.

Working with partners and sponsors enables us to deliver projects that would not otherwise be possible and maximise the value of every levy pound.



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Achievements in the last 12 - 18 months

Investment secured

- £125K in external funding
- £10K+ sponsorship

Footfall Impact

- Christmas Festival - 111% increase in footfall compared with a typical Sunday, with some businesses reporting an additional £1K in takings
- Vintage Day - 66% increase in footfall, with several cafés reporting their best day's trading ever

Profile/Reputation

- National BID Awards Gold Winner for Best Event (VE Day) and Silver Award for Community Initiative (Walking Festival)
- Media Coverage on BBC Surrey, Heart Radio, BBC Radio 2, Dorking Advertiser, Surrey Hills Radio

Business Support

- Launch of DISC and the Dorking Business Crime Reduction Partnership
- Over 10 jobs completed since launching our Handyman scheme in the Spring
- 10 + training and networking sessions for BID businesses

Marketing Reach

- 4.6m social media views/41% audience growth



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Building on Our Progress

Everything we do is guided by the same purpose: helping to strengthen Dorking as a welcoming and successful market town for businesses, residents and visitors alike.

As well as sustaining and growing the many successful initiatives developed over the last few years, below are some of the things we are developing over the next 12 months

Promoting Dorking

Continued development of our town centre events and campaigns programme including:-

- A larger Festival of Light to bring footfall to the town for workshops and the event itself during a typically quiet time.
- Building on our secondary events such as Meet & Greet and Pop-Up activations.
- Introducing map functionality to our website to highlight locations, different sector offerings and event and campaign participation.
- Targeted email sequences and social media advertising to encourage new and return visits.

Enhancing Dorking

- Continue to investigate and attract funding to renovate and future proof specific areas in our historic town.
- Work with partner organisations to improve services and grab opportunities for improvement and climate resilience.

Supporting Dorking Businesses

- Working with MVDC and other local BIDS on joint business support initiatives.
- Develop additional training and support programmes based on feedback and new industry trends.



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Dates for your diary

Good Living Festival 12th – 27th September

Two weeks of Flavour, Fresh Air and Feeling Good! Including :-

- Food and Drink Day on Sunday 13th September with Market and Show Kitchen
- Food and Drink offers and events
- Grape and Grain Trail
- Walking Week
- Creative, Cultural and Wellbeing activities.
- Plus exclusive events just for BID Businesses.

Over 50 businesses are taking part in over 75 events and offers so a great way to support local. If you can share any of our social media posts with your networks it all helps bring people into the town.

Christmas Festival Sunday 29th November

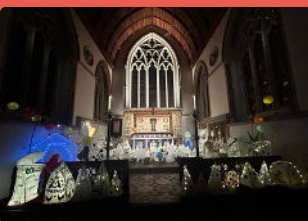
Our usual festive mix of entertainment, market stalls and seasonal cheer. There will be more activities taking place in the East End of town than before so this is a great opportunity to get involved wherever your business is. More details to come but do let us know if interested in taking part or want some help with ideas.

Festival of Light Saturday 30th January 2027

After the success of our first light festival we are running it again in 2027 with a bigger parade. This is a great opportunity for hospitality businesses to benefit on the evening and for any business to get involved by taking part in the parade or lighting up their windows and handing out information. More details to follow.

Vintage Day Saturday 8th May 2027

Vintage car displays, entertainment and more. This event saw 66% more footfall than an average Saturday so talk to us about how you can benefit.



For details of all events visit
hellodorking.com



Your BID. Your voice. Your town.

We're here to support your business, create opportunities, champion Dorking and help make things happen.

Have an idea? Need support? Want to get involved?

Get in touch — we'd love to hear from you.

Chief Executive Officer - jo@hellodorking.com
Community Manager - rosie@hellodorking.com
General Enquiries - info@hellodorking.com

Or visit our website - hellodorking.com for details of events, resources and support available