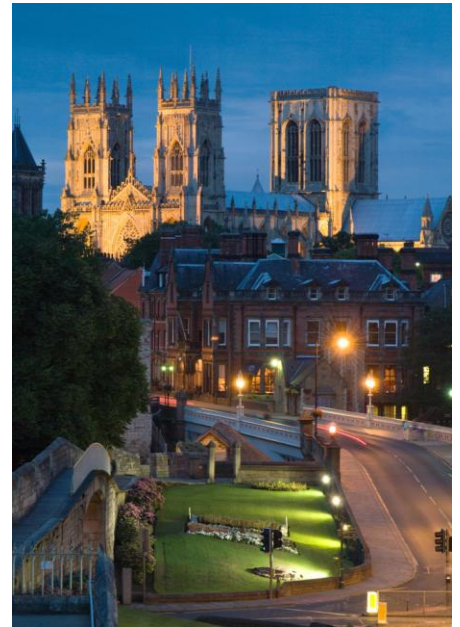


# Independent Retail in York City Centre

Sophie Ashmore and  
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# Headlines

**“Urgent plea over York city centre's 49 empty shops and restaurants”**

**“Campaign to help save the high street in York”**

**“Call for 'visionary' thinking to tackle empty shops in city centre”**

# Objectives

- Find out the views of local independent businesses
  - Develop an understanding of what it is like being an independent retailer in York
  - Develop a picture of city centre retail from an independent perspective
  - Find out the council can work with businesses and adapt their approach to support independent retailers in York.
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- 125 surveys were sent out
  - 17 feedback sessions in total

# Encouraging findings

- Praised work of Council partnerships such the York BID
- Praised the work of Indie York and the Indie Map in promoting local businesses
- Acknowledged that hen and stag dos, although not ideal are a large source of income for the city centre and licensed premises.
- Sending out business rates updates to businesses in the city centre was seen as forward-looking approach
- Identified York as an ideal location for independent businesses, due to the small, quirky nature of buildings.

# And our retailers said...

“If you don’t support our local businesses they’re not going to be here.”

“Monday is the busiest retail day now for local people”

“Would relocate [from York] when we outgrow our site”

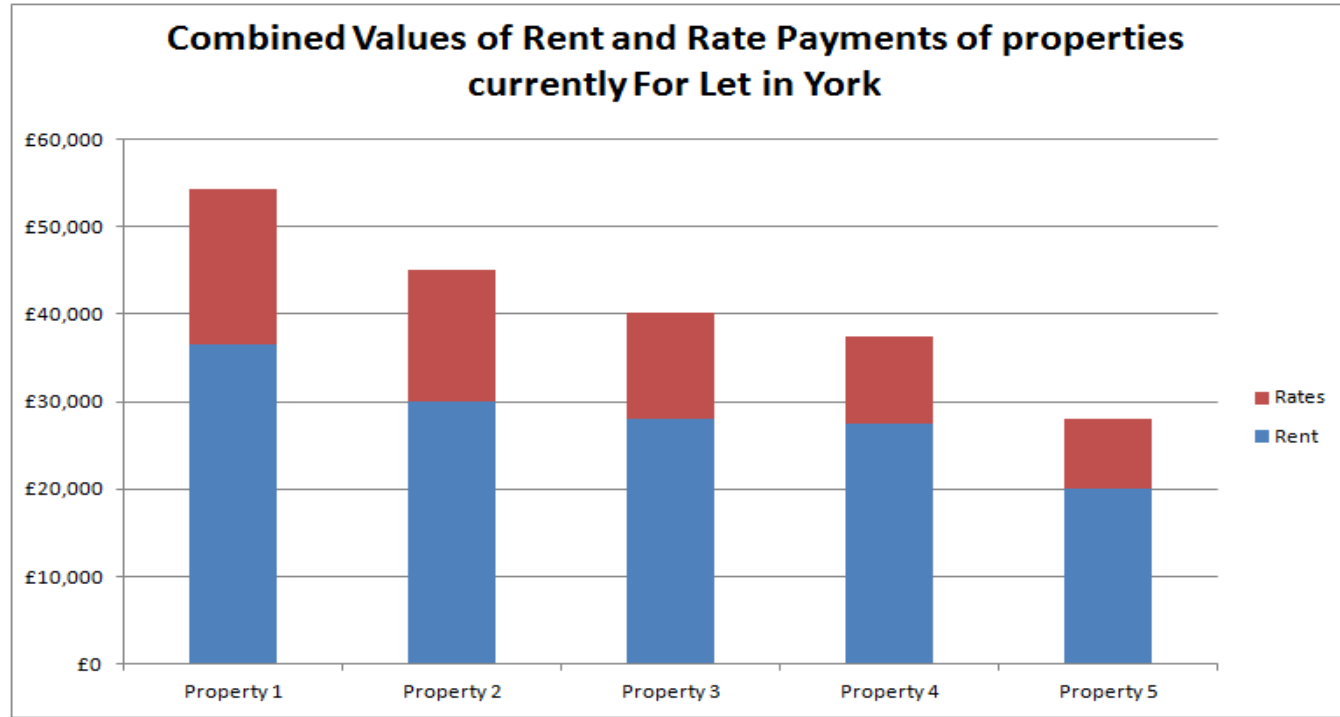
“There are no regular local customers”

“There is no clear vision that is open minded and for the people of York”

# Key issues

- Business rates
- Lack of communication/consistency
- Stag and hen dos
- Change in retail day
- Markets
- Circular investment
- No clear City vision
- A boards
- Pedestrianisation

# Business Rates



- Many businesses are on a 'knife's edge' when it comes to business rate payments, with many paying the equivalent to another half of their rent in business rates

# City Experience

- Many businesses recognised that stag and hen do's provide a high income for licensed premises in the city.
- However they have a detrimental effect to retail on the weekends, with Monday becoming the main shopping day for locals in York instead of Saturday.
- Structure of markets





# Communication and Consistency

- Many businesses found a lack of clarity and consistency regarding Council policy.
- Lack of interdepartmental communication within the Council.

# Suggestions for consideration

- Staggered business rates
- Business leaflets
- Internal training between Council services
- Staggered market prices
- Increasing circular investment
- Market the USP of the City for independents
- Increase in general support

“York is not safe- the long term can be tough...

But it can be fantastic.”

-Bill Grimsey  
York

*Business Week*

*13/11/2018*

