

Scrutiny Review of Welcoming and Safe Town Centres

Yarm Business Forum

- From Yarm Business Forum's perspective, what are the main issues regarding Yarm town centre safety, and what feedback is being received from businesses in terms of the Yarm town centre environment (from a 'welcoming' and 'safe' point of view)

To make the town more welcoming and easier to visit:

- a) Shoplifting - Although worse elsewhere, it is still an issue in Yarm. Would like more visibility of enforcement and / or PCSOs during daytime to deter shoplifting and begging (even if the officers are just coming to get a coffee!).
- b) Need signs on A19: Poor signage to Yarm from main roads - A19. No signs to Yarm at Southbound A19 exit. Would like 'brown tourist signs.
- c) Better and clearer signage for long stay car parks and parking on entry to High Street.
- d) Better information for local amenities - do we need a central visitors website with page for each borough town funded by SBC, or option for funding by SBC for 'Visit Yarm' information.
- e) More and clearer information for businesses and residents regarding begging and homeless issues and action plans. Could be on website. Contact numbers for enforcement, etc.
- f) More and clearer information for businesses (and residents) on mess and littering - Care for your area contact. Who to contact, etc. Ideally, 'Care for your area' should be monitoring litter and mess on side streets like central street.
- g) Car park payment machines need sorting. Out of use too often creating worry and stress for visitors.
- h) Better floral displays - hanging baskets - YTC reduced funding this year and halved number of baskets.

- What is Yarm Business Forum's relationship with SBC like – is this enabling / inhibiting progress on making Yarm town centre more welcoming / safe (please provide any examples)?

I would say the relationship with SBC is good particularly through High Street representative - Sara. However, I would say that communication with SBC as a whole has reduced in the last 18 months (with the exception of Sara) and could be improved. There has been no update on High Street improvement project, no consultation on parking charges. I think an annual meeting with the whole High Street team at Stockton should be a minimum.

- Are you aware of any funding which you can access to support town centre safety? Have you tried to access funding – if successful, what has this been used for?

Not aware of any funding.

- What should be the future priorities in making Yarm town centre as welcoming and safe as possible? Could your Forum / local businesses assist with any of these?
 - a) Bins. Removal of unsightly and unsafe bins on side streets - Central Street in particular. End up daily with loose and unsightly waste, broken glass on major thoroughfare for cars and pedestrians. Attracts vermin and is used as toilet on weekend nights.
 - b) More regular PCSO and enforcement visibility and visits during daytime.
 - c) Car parking machines.
 - d) Car parking signage.