

PRESS RELEASE

Excellent customer service in Northampton town centre

26th January 2018: Town centre businesses that are delivering outstanding and exceptional customer service were recognised at a Mystery Shopping Awards ceremony this week.

Businesses that took part in Northampton town centre Business Improvement District's (BID) new Mystery Shopping Scheme were assessed by undercover representatives in November and December last year.

All participating businesses were awarded with certificates during the prestigious event, which took place at Borjia in Castilian Street on Wednesday 24th January. 32 businesses scored more than 90% in the scheme and scooped an extra special gold certificate to show they provide an excellent level of service to their customers, while 24 businesses scored over 75% and were awarded with silver.

Six businesses were also named overall category winners – each scoring more than 97.4%. **78 Derngate** and **Errol Flynn Filmhouse** were jointly presented the Culture & Leisure category award, **Aflora Luxegifts** won overall in the Independent Retailer category and **Waterstones** was crowned overall winner of the National Retailer category. **A Plan Insurance** was named Professional Service category winner and **Brooklyn Pizza Bar** took the honours in the Dining category.

Rob Purdie, BID executive director said: "This project was all about celebrating and showcasing the many businesses that continue to provide superb shopping experiences through their fantastic customer service, as well as providing support and guidance for businesses who want to improve too. It is the first time the BID has run this scheme and we

were delighted with the interest and results. The scheme shows that Northampton town centre businesses and shops place great importance on their customer service and recognise how it impacts on sales profits and customer loyalty. These are all things that help promote Northampton's town centre. Well done to all the winners and all those businesses who took part."

Overall winner in the Independent Retailer category, Aflora Luxegifts in Market Walk scored top marks in the scheme for their 'extra diligence' and 'empathetic customer service'. Shop owner, Shomaila Ali said: "We were absolutely thrilled to have scored 100% and to be awarded with an overall category award. We have the certificate up in our shop window and I have been telling all my customers – it really does mean a lot for us to win this. The assessor noted that we went the extra mile, that our shop was very well maintained and that we had a good variety and choice of products which is fantastic. I think the BID's scheme is great as it encourages businesses to provide good customer service and also shows people that Northampton town centre is an excellent place to visit and shop."

The scheme was delivered by national mystery shopping experts, Storecheckers. Businesses have also received reports and feedback.

Does your town centre business want to get involved? Email info@northamptonbid.co.uk or call the BID office on (01604) 837766.

Overall category winners

Independent Retailer - Aflora Luxegifts

Culture & Leisure - 78 Derngate AND Errol Flynn Filmhouse

National Retailer - Waterstones

Professional Service - A Plan Insurance

Dining – Brooklyn Pizza Bar

Gold category winners – scoring over 90%

Elecromist

Game

Mooch
Dorothy Perkins
Abraxas Cookshop
Abington FX
Chata Cottage Inn
Bonds Jewellers
The Plump Partridge
Warren James
Moss Bros
St Giles Cheese
Praca Café Ltd
Royal and Derngate
Brownes Old Sweet Shop
Professional Music Technology (PMT)
Bias Gift shop
Voni Blu
Jack Haddon Florist
Bohemian Finds
Georges Café/Bistro
Northampton Health Store
Quiz Clothing
Thorntons
Accessorize
Burton Menswear

Silver category winners – scoring over 75%

Next

Timpson (Abington Street)

Lush

St Gyles Jewellers

Select (Abington Street)

The Church Restaurant

DW Sports

Berties

Timpson (Market Square)
Zara Health and Beauty
Ecigwizard
Select (Grosvenor Centre)
WH Smith
Cardmarket
Edinburgh Woolen Mill
The Hub of Northampton
Timpson (The Drapery)
Istore Northampton
Lucci Leather
O'Neill's
HMV
Akasaka
Trespass
Chelton Brown Ltd

Notes to Editors

Northampton town centre Business Improvement District (BID) Northampton town centre BID was officially launched in 2011 following a successful vote by businesses to make Northampton town centre a designated Business Improvement District. The BID status was renewed in October 2015 for five more years until 2020. A BID is a defined area where the rate-paying businesses decide on improvements to their area, they then vote on the plans and agree to invest in the delivery of activities which directly impact upon their business turnover and profit. This money is then ring-fenced to provide the improvements agreed through the BID plan and can be used to generate other revenue to boost the pot of money available to deliver the plan. Business representatives in Northampton have developed a five year action plan around the key objectives of promoting the area. pfb UK is a specialist BID Project Management company which develops and manages a wide range of Business Improvement Districts across the UK including town centres and industrial estates.