

Northampton town centre can fly the Purple Flag

11th May 2018: It is official – Northampton town centre boasts an ‘entertaining’, ‘diverse’, ‘safe’ and ‘enjoyable’ nightlife.

Judges from the Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) have just awarded Northampton town centre ‘Purple Flag’ status – a sought after accreditation for towns and cities that provide a vibrant mix of dining, entertainment and culture, while promoting the safety and wellbeing of visitors and residents.

Northampton is now one of over 70 town and city centres in the UK and Ireland with the award, which is comparable to the ‘Green Flag’ for parks and ‘Blue Flag’ for beaches.

During the assessment by ATCM judges in March was a tour of the town centre and key businesses, as well as presentations by Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire Police, Northampton Pubwatch, East Midlands Ambulance Service and Northampton town centre Business Improvement District (BID).

Rob Purdie, executive director Northampton town centre BID – the BID funded the Purple Flag application and joint-led the process with Northampton Borough Council – said: “Receiving Purple Flag status for our town centre’s evening and night time offer is a massive boost and we are absolutely thrilled with the outcome. It is a message to those who have negative things to say about our town that it’s not as bad as people think it is.

“Achieving this accreditation is no easy feat and there has been many many months of hard work behind the scenes by key town centre organisations and businesses, all working together to prove how our town meets stringent standards of excellence.

“We will be flying our Purple Flag with pride to really promote just how much Northampton comes alive after 5pm. It doesn’t mean we are going to stop with the many projects we have in the pipeline

to keep on developing the town's evening economy though, particularly those around improving safety and choice."

Councillor Anna King, Cabinet member for community engagement and safety at Northampton Borough Council, said: "Northampton's night life has so much to offer and we are delighted to gain this Purple Flag status. It's a clear indication of all the hard work that takes place to make the evening visiting experience as safe, positive and enjoyable as possible, and demonstrates what can be achieved when partners and businesses work together for the best interests of the town.

"The award also builds on our 'Out tonight? Do it right' personal safety campaign, launched in March last year, which reminds people of simple advice, such as going out with a fully charged mobile phone and understanding how to identify a licensed taxi or private hire vehicle."

Northampton town centre BID Project Manager, pfbb UK's Chris Barker said: "Leading on projects that help transform and promote the night time offer in Northampton town centre has been one of the BID's key focuses and will remain that way. We are absolutely delighted with the news which shows that all our hard work with partner organisations has a huge benefit to and recognition for the town centre."

The town centre tour by ATCM judges included the CCTV Control Room at St Johns, an Operation Nightsafe briefing at Campbell Square Police Station, and visits to Albion Brewery, St Giles Ale House, Nuovo, The Platform (The University of Northampton's Students' Union) and Fever & Boutique Nightclub.

Sam Live, Deputy Manager at Phipps NBC said: "Of course we jumped at the chance to be involved in the Purple Flag application, anything that helps encourage people into Northampton town centre, day or night, is a real positive. It was great to welcome the judges and for them to see how the Albion Brewery Bar contributes towards the town centre's evening entertainment. What a fantastic result and a real boost for us and other town centre businesses to be awarded the Purple Flag."

The Purple Flag programme is managed by ATCM which works alongside a partnership of key stakeholder groups backed by Government, police and businesses.

The application for Northampton town centre was funded by the BID and jointly prepared by all partners with Northampton town centre BID and Northampton Borough Council leading.

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.