

# What's On **Hebden Bridge**

## **Annual Report**

Sep 2024 — Sep 2025

**Prepared by:** Mike Stephens



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It's been 12 months since we launched the What's On Hebden Bridge platform – the go-to, free, community-run online events calendar for HX7 and beyond. Since the launch, **over 26,000** people have used the platform to discover more than **800 local events**, with 42% of visitors making return visits to the platform.

## The Platform

Developed in partnership by **Hebden Royd Town Council**, **Hebden Bridge Community Association** and local software developer **Mike Stephens**, unlike other event platforms, we make it easy for individuals, venues, and organisers to share their events across our partner websites. This means more people hear about local events—fast. With a range of search and filtering tools, residents, visitors and tourists can quickly discover what's on by exploring the listings.

But it's not just about events. Our vision is to help build a stronger, more connected community. By offering a free and accessible space for events of all kinds, we're making it easier for people to connect, get involved, and feel part of the community. We hope to play a part in reducing social isolation, improving wellbeing, and fostering a resilient local economy by bringing people together to enjoy all that HX7 has to offer.

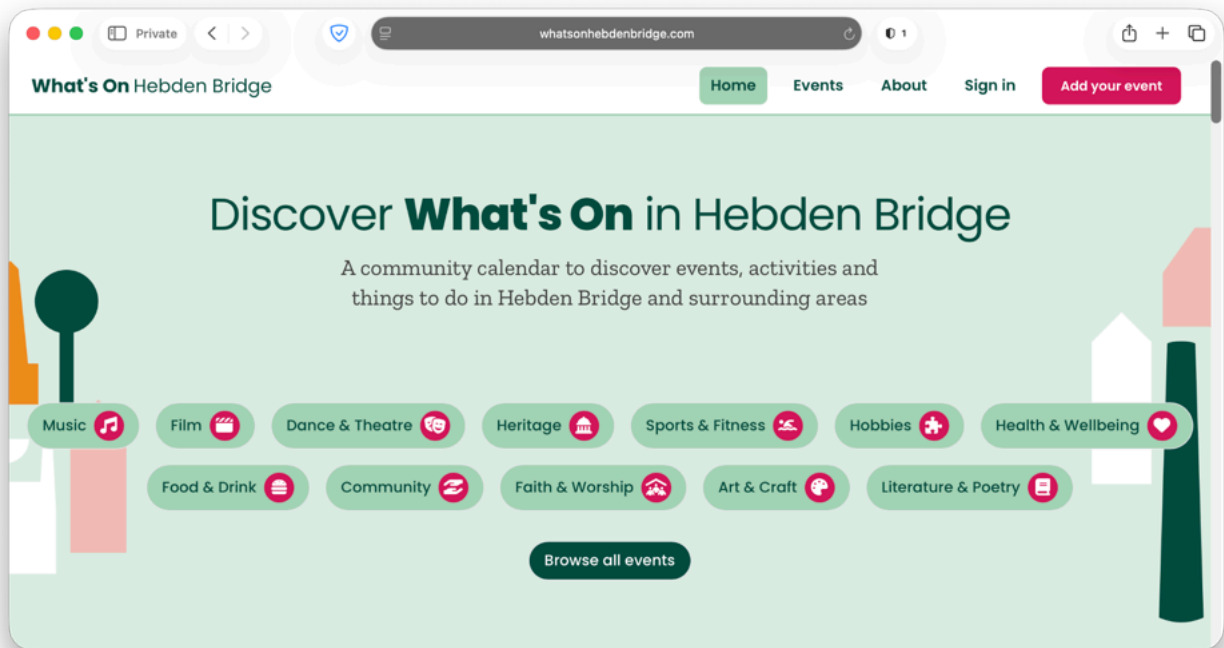
## Key features and differentiators

- Community backed for **long-term sustainability**
- **Self-management** of event information via online portal
- **Automatic sharing** of events onto partner websites
- Providing a **central platform** to promote event listings
- **Search and filtering** tools for users (*e.g. area/location, date, category and access filters*)
- Availability of **website widgets** to allow partner sites to pull real-time event listings
- **Completely free** to list / search events
- Easy access to **event listing statistics** for event organisers (*e.g. number of views, impressions or click-throughs to event links*)
- **Accessible and efficient** for event organisers to list and promote events (*e.g. through central platform, platform integrations and easy to use interface*)
- Promotion of events in physical spaces
  - **Digital screen** in shop window on Market Street
  - **Interactive kiosk** in the Town Hall foyer

## What we've done

### Platform Launch

We officially launched the platform back in September 2024, after a previous 12 months of research, planning, co-production, user engagement, development and testing. Ensuring we built a platform that would be easy to use, fit for purpose and sustainable long-term were crucially important.



We held two launch events, one in the morning and one in the evening, to ensure we'd reach everyone who was interested in the initiative. Over 60 event organisers and local residents attended and provided some positive feedback and validation, with more than 20 events being added within the first 24 hours.

We continued to hold community engagement events every week up until Christmas, within the Town Hall foyer as an opportunity to promote the platform to the public, as well as being a central point to help any local event organisers list their events there and then. We spoke with and promoted the platform to over 150 people.

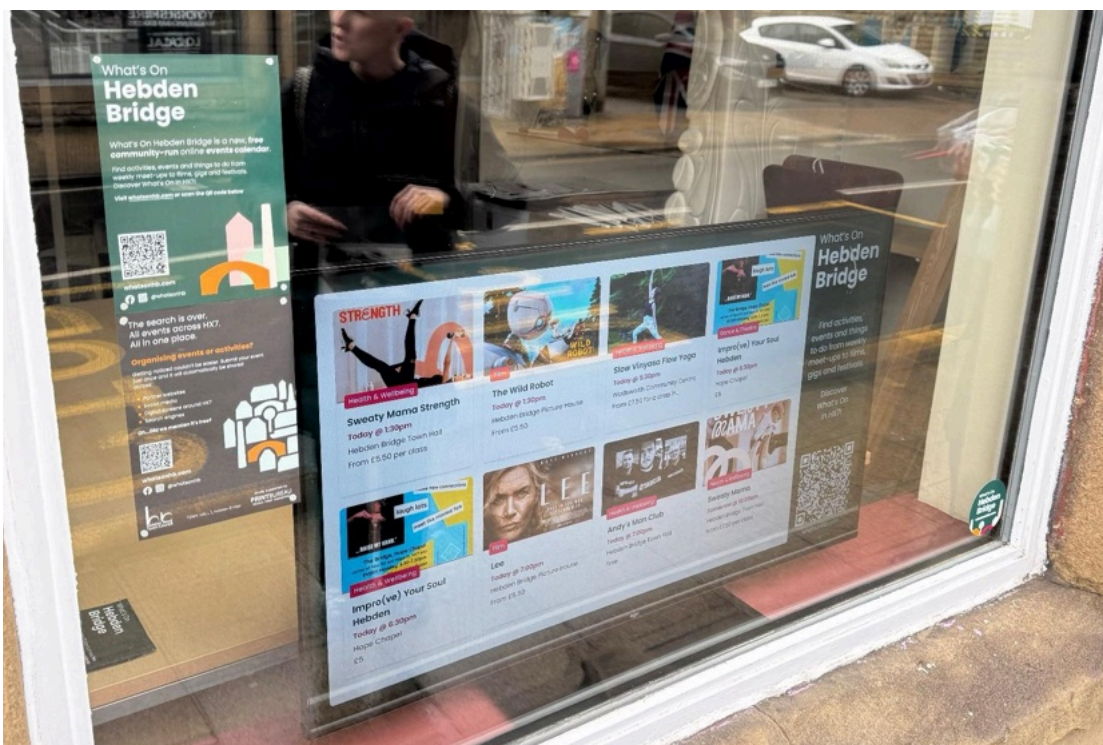


## Physical Interfaces

Whilst the main platform operates as an online website for event discovery, it has been built from the outset to allow for other applications/interfaces to pull data and display event listings. Two such applications that we have explored in the first 12 months are **digital screens** and **interactive kiosks**.

An interactive touch kiosk has been installed in the Town Hall foyer, a prominent location to encourage locals and visitors to the town to explore what's happening. The kiosk displays a custom version of the online website and routinely gets used by visitors to the Town Hall.

A large digital screen has been installed in a shop window on Market Street located next to a bus stop, that promotes and features events happening today. The feed is automatically updated throughout the day and is switched off during the night. Key event information is displayed (date, time, location, cost), along with a QR code so anyone viewing the screen can easily transition to their phone and discover more events.





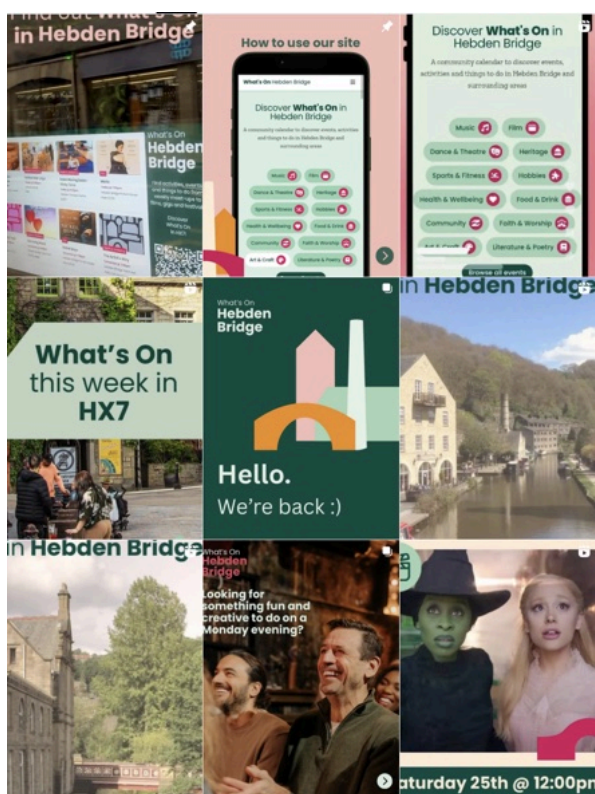
## Local Promotion

Within the last 12 months, we have re-established the "What's On Hebden Bridge" brand. Formerly the name was used elsewhere before becoming dormant. We obtained and repurposed the brand identity, then invested time and resources into rebranding and relaunching it through the help of designer and illustrator Emma Charleston.

Since the launch, we've run social media campaigns to promote the site locally amongst the community, although our resources to do this consistently have varied over the last year. We have worked to build upon the multi-channel social media accounts that we inherited via. The WOHB brand to increase followers and expand our reach. To date our social media campaigns have been focused on promoting event listings through "what's happening this week" style posts, as well as promoting the platform to event organisers to encourage new listings.

A dual purpose A5 leaflet along with vinyl stickers have also been produced to promote the site to users and event organisers - these continue to be distributed around HX7 and at local events.

Search engine optimisation and keyword research has also been a focus, ensuring that the platform ranks highly in search engines for common search terms (e.g. "hebden bridge events", "whats on in hebden bridge", "things to do in hebden bridge"). This work has resulted in over 50% of traffic to the platform originating from a search engine.



## Extended Reach

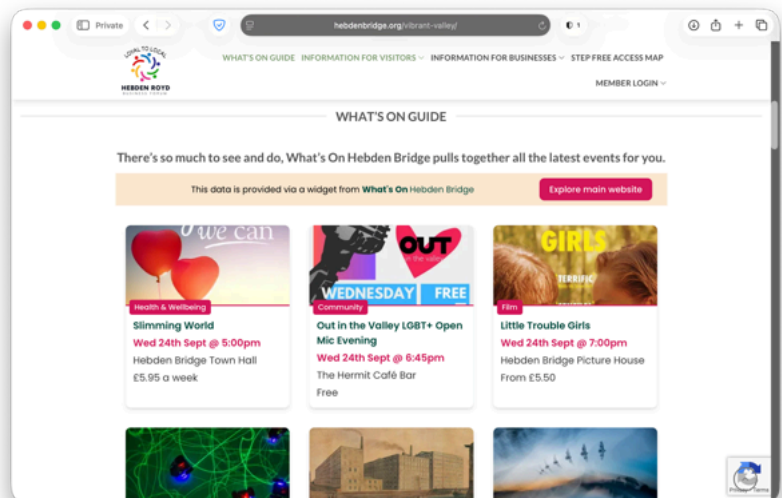
We have also started to forge partnerships and relationships with other websites and platforms in the area and built a "widget" that external websites can use to pull a real-time data feed onto their own site, automatically, with no routine effort required. This extends the reach of event listings added to What's On Hebden Bridge as events are automatically populated onto partner sites too.

The widget is currently being trialed on [HebdenBridge.org](https://HebdenBridge.org), [Hebden Royd Town Council](https://HebdenRoydTownCouncil.org) and [Hebden Bridge Town Hall](https://HebdenBridgeTownHall.org) and is built to be flexible so that:

- The full calendar of events can be displayed anywhere
- Venues can display a filtered list of everything occurring at their physical location
- Event organisers can display a filtered list of just their events if they prefer

Further adoption of the widget is planned for the next 12 months as we plan to make this available to all and create simple resources to help other platforms, venues and event organisers integrate with minimal tech expertise needed.

We have also completed a technical integration with the Hebden Bridge Picture House system. All film listings are therefore automatically pulled from their system into What's On Hebden Bridge - furthering our aim to have a single platform for event discovery within HX7 and to increase promotion and awareness. We'd like to explore other integrations with similar venues that have a constant and large volume of events over the next 12 months.



## Impact

Over the last 12 months we've been working hard to ensure the platform has an impact locally and starts to deliver against our vision of helping to build a stronger, more connected community. Below is a snapshot of the impact What's On Hebden Bridge has had so far:

### Platform usage

**81,000+**

page views

**26,000+**

unique visitors

**800+**

unique events listed

**42%**

returning  
visitor rate

**50%**

visitors find us  
through search  
engine

**10%**

visitors find us  
through print, kiosk  
or digital screens

**2 minute**

average visitor  
duration

### Engagement

**5.4k**

followers on  
social media

**200+**

event organisers  
signed up

**150+**

people engaged at  
info sessions

**60+**

people attended  
launch event

### Organiser feedback

**90%**

users would  
recommend the  
platform

**91%**

organisers felt  
confident using the  
platform to add  
events

**57%**

organisers use the  
platform more than  
once to list an event

**80%**

organisers found  
self-management of  
their events the most  
useful feature

“ good clear profile of the event: impressive and eye-catching layout which certainly increased our audience numbers

“ our listing resulted in new members to the group



## 12 Month Roadmap

So what's next for What's On Hebden Bridge? We've identified the following priority areas which have largely come from user feedback and engagement work for us to focus on for the next 12 months:

Now (0-3 months)	Next (4-12 months)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Add functionality to enable "exhibition" and "festival" listings</li><li>• Engage with the community to increase festival and exhibition coverage</li><li>• Review event organiser survey results and feedback</li><li>• Identify tweaks and improvements from feedback and implement</li><li>• Continue social media and marketing efforts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore options for additional integrations and interfaces to reach more people (digitally and physically)</li><li>• Wider "widget" adoption and supporting resources</li><li>• Further engagement and promotion of the platform, including at local events</li><li>• Targeted efforts to increase coverage of regular events</li></ul>

**i If you have any feedback, ideas or comments that you'd wish to share with us, please do so via email, we'd love to hear from you: [info@whatsonhebdenbridge.com](mailto:info@whatsonhebdenbridge.com)**

## Thanks

What's On Hebden Bridge has been made possible thanks to a passionate group of people and a range of supporters, partners and associates along the way. We express our thanks to everyone involved, in particular:

Hebden Royd Town Council, Hebden Bridge Community Association, Mike Stephens, Ebony Andrews, Verity Herrington, Bryony Moore, Graham Mynott, Helen Meller, Upper Calder Valley Ward Forum / Calderdale Council, Emma Charleston, Giles Dring, Dave Smith-Markl @ Visit Hebden Bridge, Scott Borrows @ Totally Screwed Hardware, Jan Scott, Georgia Cook, Hebden Royd Business Forum and Hebden Bridge Picture House.



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