

Seven is a great number isn't it? There's the Rugby super sevens and The Magnificent Seven. Arguably the best footballer ever, Kenny Dalglish wore the number 7 shirt for Liverpool back in the day. Now, there are seven BIDs in Northern Ireland. We are delighted that Belfast CBD BID was successful at Ballot on 27th October 2017. It was a great result with 78% of Belfast's CBD businesses voting 'yes' by number with 94% voting 'yes' by rateable value. Congratulations to all the team! We look forward to working with them as they drive forward on their priorities for the area.

Also want to introduce and welcome Gareth Neill, the new BID Manager for Destination CQ BID. Gareth joins the BID at the heart of Belfast's Cathedral Quarter from NE1 BID in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Gareth is a native of Belfast and has been delighted not only to get the job but to get to back to living in his native Belfast.

The ranks swell even further with two new managers appointed to two new emerging BIDs in NI. Delighted to welcome Heather Carr as Ballyclare BID Manager and Jamie Hamill as Coleraine BID Manager. Both Managers are based in the heart of their towns and are spending the initial weeks connecting with businesses and other BIDs across NI.

Since the last newsletter we have learnt of the significant success of the Gift Card scheme in Enniskillen. Noelle has been working hard developing and promoting the scheme with Miconex. The Enniskillen Gift Card can be used in over 110 local businesses including cafes, restaurants and service providers. The card is a Visa-based gift card which can be used across Enniskillen. The card works in the same way as department store / shopping centre gift cards but for the whole town of Enniskillen. Feedback so far has included its ease of use and that it is ensuring money is spent locally, supporting local businesses whilst enjoying the complete Enniskillen experience.

As always, we look forward to positive developments for the re-establishment of an Executive here locally. Not least so that consultation can begin on a city deal for Belfast. Global evidence suggests that cities increasingly drive our economies. The better a city is run and managed, the better its infrastructure, cultural offerings and education system, the more successful it will be. We know that cities in England, Scotland and Wales have a head start on us. It's time to catch up.

It was great to have a really productive 'Leadership for BIDs' training session in Antrim on 21st February. Fantastic to meet all the BID Board members and Chairs who took time to come along. Feedback was positive and everyone liked the practical emphasis of this second session. Looking forward to seeing you all again on 21st March.

See you soon

Mo

Mo Aswat

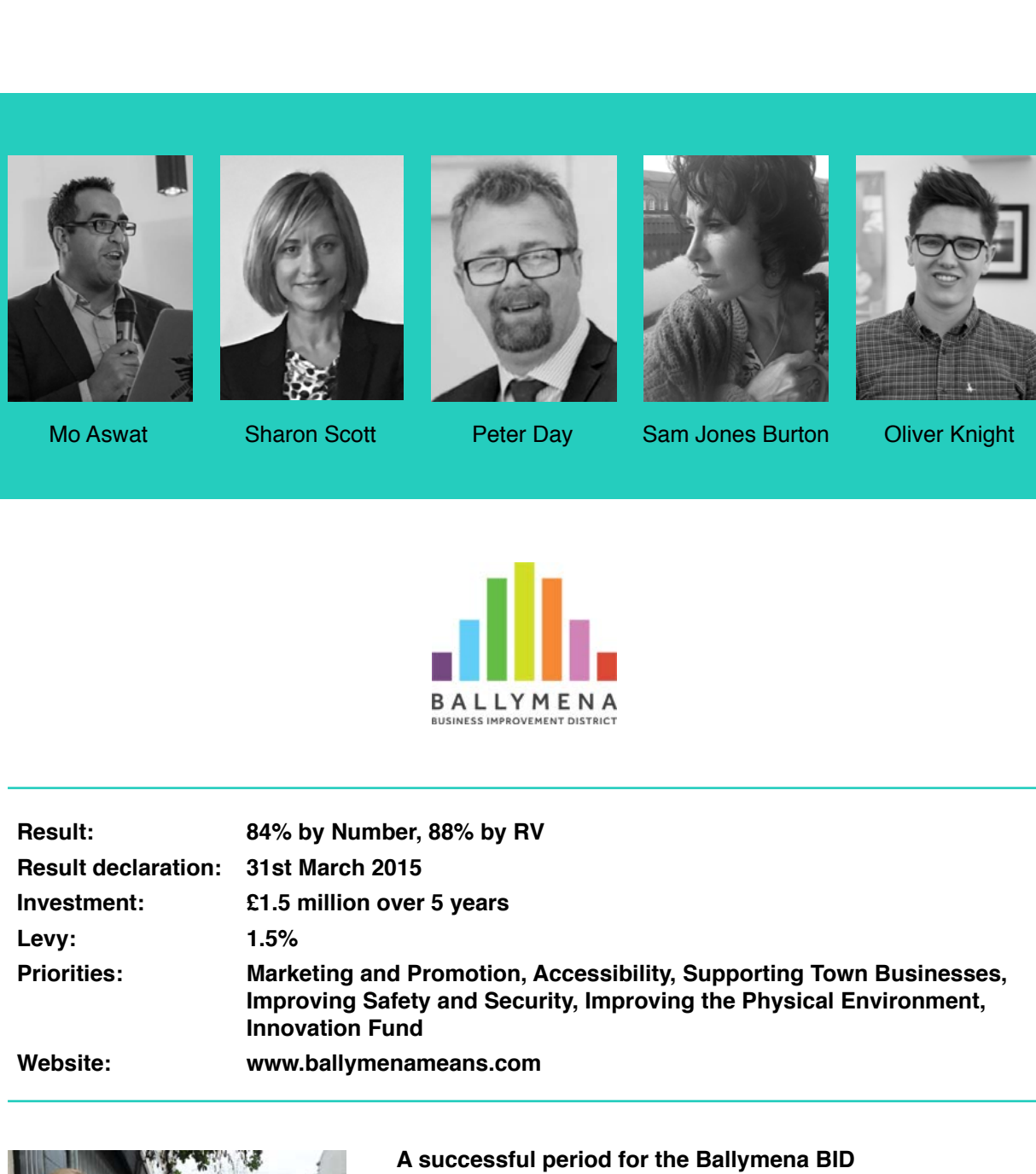
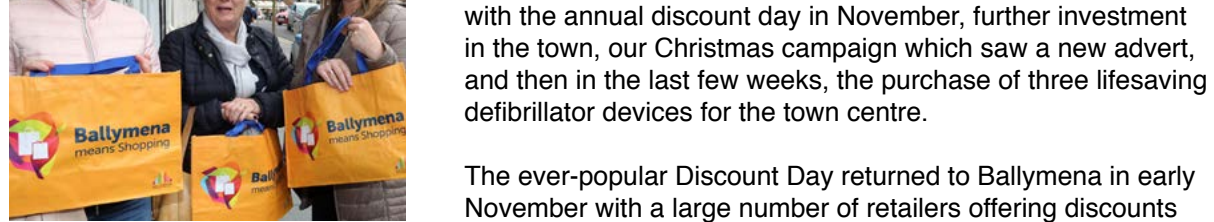
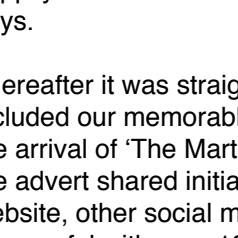


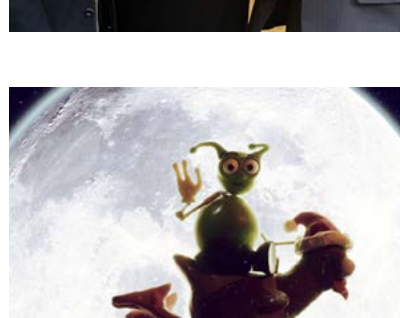
Photo of Mo Aswat and other team members in a meeting.



Mo Aswat, Sharon Scott, Peter Day, Sam Jones Burton, Oliver Knight

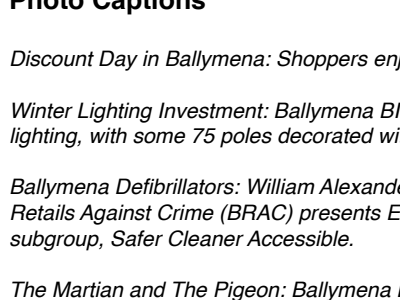


Result: 84% by Number, 88% by RV
Result declaration: 31st March 2015
Investment: £1.5 million over 5 years
Levy: 1.5%
Priorities: Marketing and Promotion, Accessibility, Supporting Town Businesses, Improving Safety and Security, Improving the Physical Environment, Innovation Fund
Website: www.ballymenameans.com



A successful period for the Ballymena BID

Now that the Christmas period is over, we can look back on what has been a very busy three months for Ballymena BID with the annual discount day in November, further investment in the town, our Christmas campaign which saw a new advert, and then in the last few weeks, the purchase of three lifesaving defibrillator devices for the town centre.



The ever-popular Discount Day returned to Ballymena in early November with a large number of retailers offering discounts and special offers to the many visitors to the town. With music and a Cool FM roadshow, in the town centre, it really was a fantastic day for shoppers and traders alike. Footfall was up 23% for that day compared the previous year and traders happily remarked that it was one of Ballymena's best discount days.



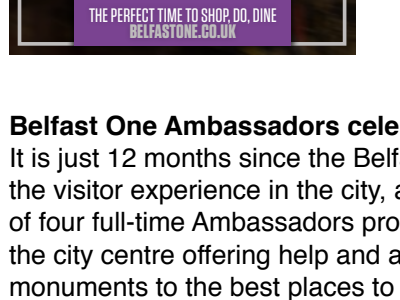
Thereafter it was straight into our Christmas campaign, which included our memorable Christmas advert. This year saw the arrival of 'The Martian and The Pigeon' to the town with the advert shared initially on Facebook and then on the BID website, other social media and news platforms. It was very successful with over 100,000 views, seen as far away as Canada, and with the Irish Examiner purporting that Ballymena was giving John Lewis a run for its money with their Christmas advert we definitely had a smile on our faces!



The Ballymena BID also invested heavily in the town in the last quarter with a substantial investment made to the winter lighting with 75 poles decorated with wrap round lights, which will remain on until at least February. Many flower planters that are situated around the town were replanted with the kind assistance of the local council. The investment and the work of the BID would seem to be paying off with Springboard figures showing a steady growth over that period. This coupled with the vacancy rate remaining static, all bodes well for the town and the BID.



In January, the Ballymena BID became the first BID in Northern Ireland to purchase a range of potentially lifesaving defibrillators. The three devices, purchased by the Safer Cleaner Accessible group, have been placed in various locations throughout the town centre in the event of a cardiac arrest emergency.



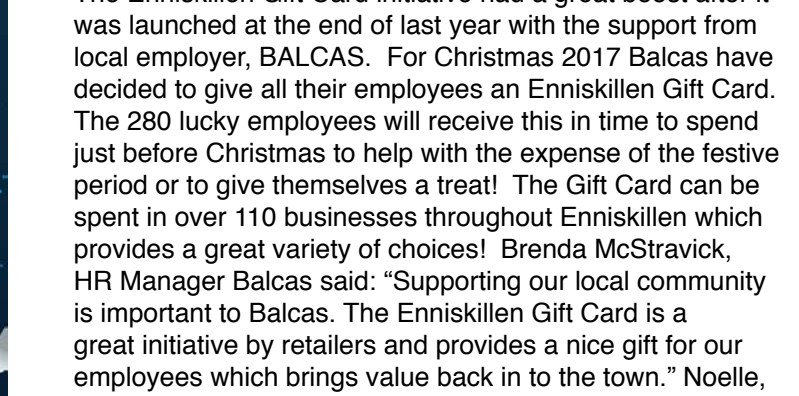
Looking ahead, Ballymena BID is currently preparing to launch their first ever music event in association with Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and the local Braid Arts Centre. Midtown Sounds will take place on Friday 23rd February in Follow Coffee with some 20 shops and eateries hosting local music on Saturday 24th February.

To find out more at www.ballymenameans.com

Photo Captions

- Discount Day in Ballymena: Shoppers enjoyed another successful Discount Day in Ballymena*
- Winter Lighting Investment: Ballymena BID has recently invested substantial monies in the town centre including new winter lighting, with some 75 poles decorated with wrap round lights that will be in place until at least February 2018.*
- Ballymena Defibrillators: William Alexander, Ballymena BID Director and Trevor Parker, Development Manager of Ballymena Retailis Against Crime (BRAC) presents Eleanor McKay from Cameron's Store with the defibrillator provided by BID subgroup, Safer Cleaner Accessible.*
- The Martian and The Pigeon: Ballymena BID's Christmas Advert seen the arrival of 'The Martian and the Pigeon' to the town.*

Result: 84% by number, 88% by RV
Result declaration: 30th October 2015
Investment: £6.25 million over 5 years
Levy: 1.5%
Priorities: Promote, Enhance, Support
Website: www.belfastone.co.uk



Belfast One Ambassadors celebrate first anniversary

It is just 12 months since the Belfast One Ambassadors took up their role of enhancing and improving the visitor experience in the city, and in that time, they have welcomed over 45,268 visitors. The team of four full-time Ambassadors provide a warm welcome to visitors, tourists, workers and residents in the city centre offering help and advice on anything from street directions, names and meanings of monuments to the best places to eat and shop.

The ambassadors also provide a vital link between Belfast One and the businesses as they feed back any issues, concerns or ideas that can help us in our goal to transform Belfast City Centre into a clean, safe, bustling twenty-four hour culture full of people loving it.

The Belfast Experience Christmas marketing campaign

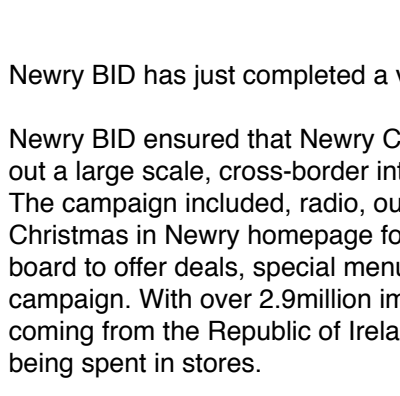
The Belfast One Christmas campaign launched in early November 2017 across outdoor, digital, radio and social media. The campaign targeted consumers within a 90minute drive time to Belfast to come to the city to shop, do and dine this Christmas, with 96% of businesses saying they thought it had a direct value to Belfast City Centre. We were also a partner of the Find Your Belfast This Christmas city-wide campaign that is delivered by Visit Belfast across NI and ROI.

To spread the Belfast festive cheer this Christmas the Belfast One elves campaign was launched with Q Radio in early December. The elves were out across Belfast and Northern Ireland to encourage people to visit the city by giving out vouchers for Belfast One businesses. The elves campaign had a reach of over 350,000 on social media and over 7,000 engagements.

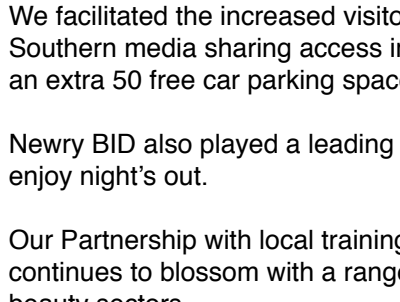
Three new projects launched

In late 2017 we launched three new projects – our energy partnership with Utilitywise, additional street cleansing team and pest control partnership with EcoLab. These projects are in addition to our waste management partnership with ISL, merchant services partnership with BOIPA UK and our Belfast One ambassador programme.

Result: 85% by Number, 82% by RV
Result declaration: 15th October 2016
Investment: £1.2 million over 5 years
Levy: 1.5%
Priorities: Boost, Entice, Enhance
Website: www.enniskillenbid.co.uk



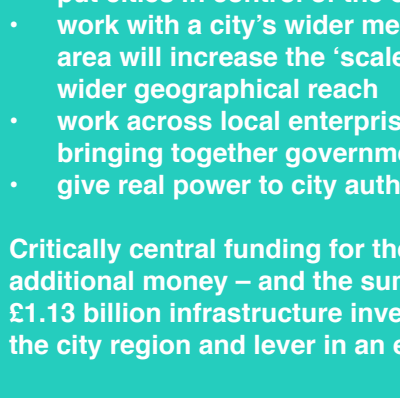
The Enniskillen Gift Card initiative had a great boost after it was launched at the end of last year with the support from local employer, BALCAS. For Christmas 2017 Balcas has decided to give all their employees an Enniskillen Gift Card. The 280 lucky employees will receive this in time to spend just before Christmas to help with the expense of the festive period or to give themselves a treat! The Gift Card can be spent in over 110 businesses throughout Enniskillen which provides a great variety of choices! Brenda McStravick, HR Manager Balcas said: "Supporting our local community is important to Balcas. The Enniskillen Gift Card is a great initiative by retailers and provides a nice gift for our employees which brings value back in to the town." Noelle, the Enniskillen BID Manager welcomed the support from Balcas "We developed the Enniskillen Gift Card to promote loyalty and encourage spend within our town. Balcas deciding to use the Gift Card as a Christmas gift for their staff is wonderful and we think it is the perfect present."



The Enniskillen Gift Card is a Visa-based gift card which can be used across Enniskillen. The card works in the same way as department store / shopping centre gift cards but for the whole town of Enniskillen. The Enniskillen Gift Card is the perfect present for friends, family and colleagues. The lucky recipient doesn't need to redeem the full value in one go and they can spend their spend by using it for a delicious meal, some great new clothes, a fabulous new haircut and much, much more.

The Enniskillen Gift Card can be purchased online at enniskillengiftcard.co.uk or it can be purchased in Dolans Centre, The Diamond, Rooney's, Cornagrade or in the Belmore Court & Motel.

Result: 87% by number, 92% by RV
Result declaration: 8th November 2015
Investment: £1.8 million over 5 years
Levy: 1.5%
Priorities: Marketing our City, Supporting Business, Better Access, Improving how we look, Innovate Newry Fund
Website: www.newry.com



Newry BID has just completed a very busy year end with a range of successful initiatives completed.

Newry BID ensured that Newry City was the place to shop, dine and stay this Christmas by rolling out a large scale, cross-border integrated marketing campaign, with a large focus on ROI shoppers. The campaign included, radio, outdoor, print, online and social media Newry BID had a dedicated Christmas in Newry homepage for the duration of the campaign. Numerous members came on board to offer deals, special menus and extended opening hours which were highlighted across the campaign. With over 2.9million impressions alone online and with over half of all visitors to the website coming from the Republic of Ireland. Traders noticed a rise in the number of shoppers and the amount being spent in stores.

We facilitated the increased visitor numbers to Newry with a partnership with AA Road Watch and Southern media sharing access information with Christmas Car Ireland visitors. Newry BID also provided an extra 50 free car parking spaces via our Republic of Park.

Newry BID also played a leading role in the renewal of Newry's Purple Flag status as a safe place to enjoy night's out.

Our Partnership with local training providers (Southern Regional College and Health Matters) continues to blossom with a range of training facilitated in the hospitality, retail, professional and beauty sectors.

Our Partnership with Public Sector continues with two very successful events held. Newry BID hosted an information evening on the Joint Emergency Services Inter-Operability Plan (JESIP) with PSNI, Fire and Rescue, PCSP and Security Industry trainers. We also facilitated a bespoke event for the Chinese business community.

Other News

City Deals

To briefly explain - City Deals are struck between central and local authorities. Their central purpose is to boost the economy of cities and their environs. Local authorities work with the business community and the community and voluntary sectors in partnerships to ensure that optimal conditions are achieved for the region's success.

There are four principles underpinning city deals, which are that they:

- put cities in control of the economic opportunities and challenges they face as a city
- work with a city's wider metropolitan area – encouraging deals across the wider economic area will increase the 'scale of deal', meaning City Deals will reach more people through a wider geographical reach
- work across local enterprise and local authority boundaries, sectors, and professions – bringing together governments, cities, neighbouring authorities and local business leaders
- give real power to city authorities so they can create economic growth

Critically central funding for them is outwith the Barnett formula and therefore genuine, additional money – and the sums involved are formidable. Glasgow, for example is getting a £1.13 billion infrastructure investment fund, which is estimated to deliver around 29,000 jobs in the city region and lever in an estimated £3.3 billion of private sector investment.

The deals are proving so successful that cities across England, Scotland and Wales are queuing round the block for them.

So it was exciting then that when Chancellor Philip Hammond announced a consultation on a city deal for Belfast. This could be far more significant than the extra £600 million Hammond pledged under the budget. However, there is a caveat – on page 57 of the official budget statement it reveals that negotiations on it can only start once an Executive is in place.

This is yet another important reason why we need a government back. Time waits for no one.

You always need a Bigger Telly

Regionally based, Big Telly is the longest established professional theatre company and one of the largest theatre employers in Northern Ireland. We design and deliver theatre productions, interactive workshop programmes and community creativity projects, which tour throughout Northern and Southern Ireland.

With a few shows in England, Serbia, Thailand, Denmark, Germany and the Outer Hebrides. Our unique approach gets us unique invites.

Expressing the visual potential of theatre through fusion with other art forms such as dance, music, circus, magic and film, Big Telly creates a unique sense of spectacle. The company is driven by a determination to offer audiences entertainment that surprises, stimulates and ignites the imagination.

Innovation is at our heart. Our recent work has purposefully taken performance out of the theatres, off the stages and into public spaces. Our new mission is to use immersive performance to bring places to life. We fill places – town centres, heritage sites, shopping centres – with stories and legends, characters and intrigue.

Some things we play with are.

Immersive Games

A game takes groups of people – interactive, shoppers, families, locals, on an adventure. The players are immersed in a live-action game, moving between strange and wonderful characters to solve a mystery, find a villain, save a prisoner. Our professional actors bring multiple locations to life – in local shops, libraries, car parks and secret passages. Players never know where they'll end up next. An immersive game is a unique way to enliven a town centre, and get everyone involved – locals, traders – limos kidnap you, characters abseil down the town hall, we've even had the police make a few arrests (a bit of craic obviously!).

Trade Secrets

Trade Secrets was a huge success. A project the traders in Coleraine loved and still talk about. Artists were commissioned to create small arts installations – which told the history, or story of each participating shop in a beautiful, charming and visual way. The traders were delighted with the art pieces, but more that people and customers would come in to see the "box" – and tell stories and memories.

Creative Shops

Where we take over an empty shop, install a Creative Director and make things happen – installations, exhibitions, workshops, and performances. It is sometimes used to grow interest and community involvement in the build up to a local festival – for example City of Merchants, Newry and Big Sunday, Portstewart.

Creative Shops is about engaging local people, local shops, livening up areas that need it most. Creative Shops can be fully or part funded, leveraging in additional funding for a place. This project works best when there is a strong strategic partnership and the will to make something different happen.

Beach Huts

Beach Huts will launch for the British Open in Portrush in 2019. The concept is like Trade Secrets but, in beach huts located all over the town. Each one will be filled with a wonderland of memorabilia, objects and art creatively telling the story of a local business or organisation or history. Several businesses already want to sponsor their own beach hut. We have schools who want theirs too. Beach Huts is already looking like a beautiful town project, with much potential to be transferrable and adaptable to towns and places everywhere.

Tourism

We bring immersive theatre, games and concepts to tourist and heritage sites. The question to us was, 'what can we do that isn't a plaque or a re-enactment'? Our view? Create another parallel universe where visitors to our already amazing heritage sites experience the truly unexpected, the wonderful, the 'other-worldly'. Big Telly is developing a range of immersive experiments to surprise and enchant visitors. To produce a tourism product big enough to be amazing, small enough to be personal, to create conversation, a buzz and a must-see experience.

For more info and contact details www.big-telly.com

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