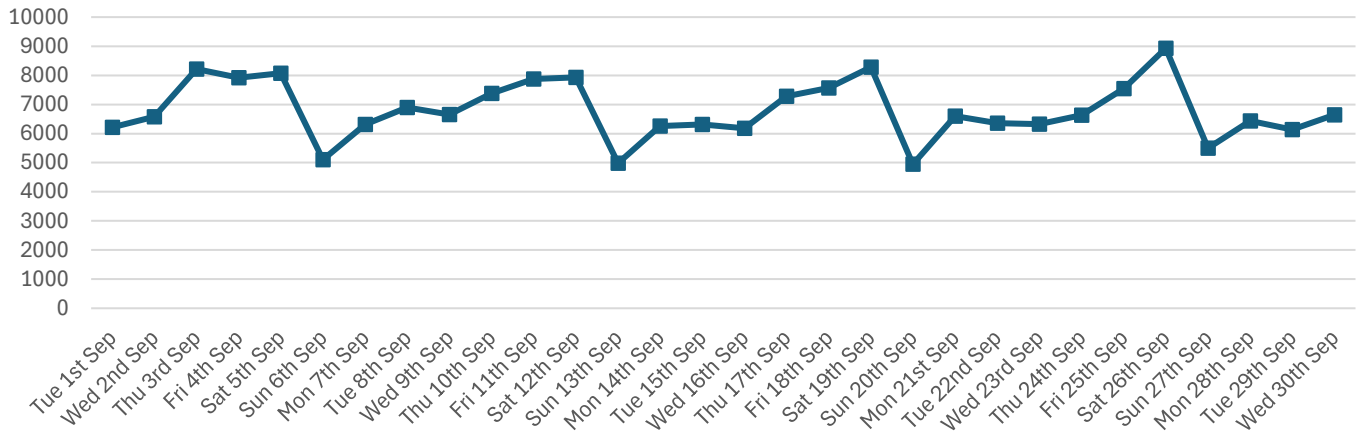
1 September 2026 – 30 September 2026

Monthly Footfall Report for: Ripon

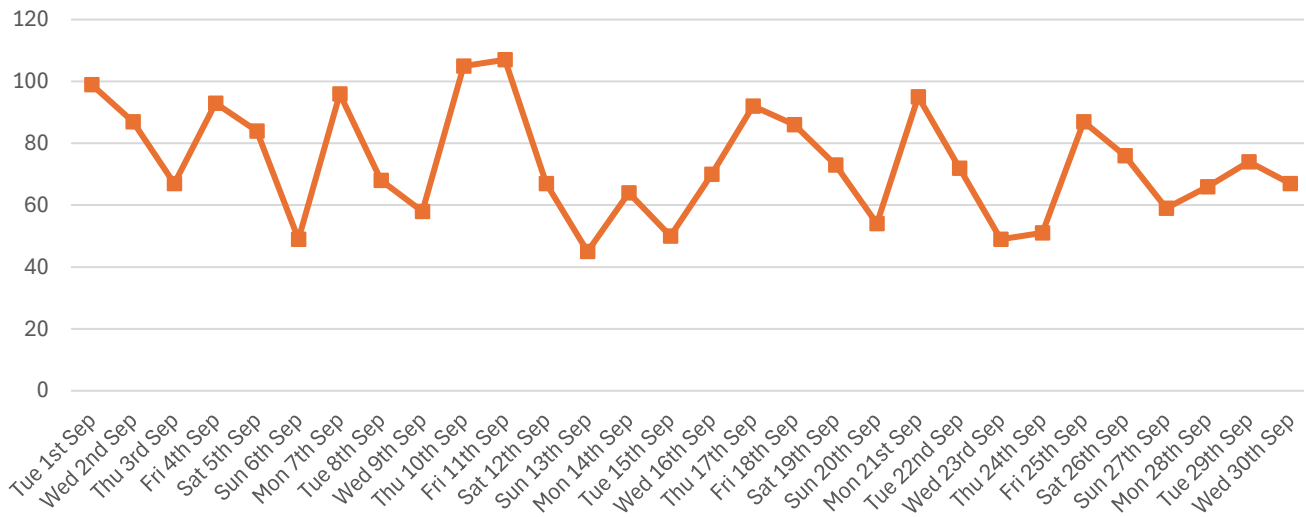
Footfall summary table

	Total footfall this month	Year on Year +/- %	Year to Date +/- %	Month on month +/- %
Ripon town centre	206,292	-2.8%	-2.8%	-2.6%

Footfall by day for the month – domestic visitors



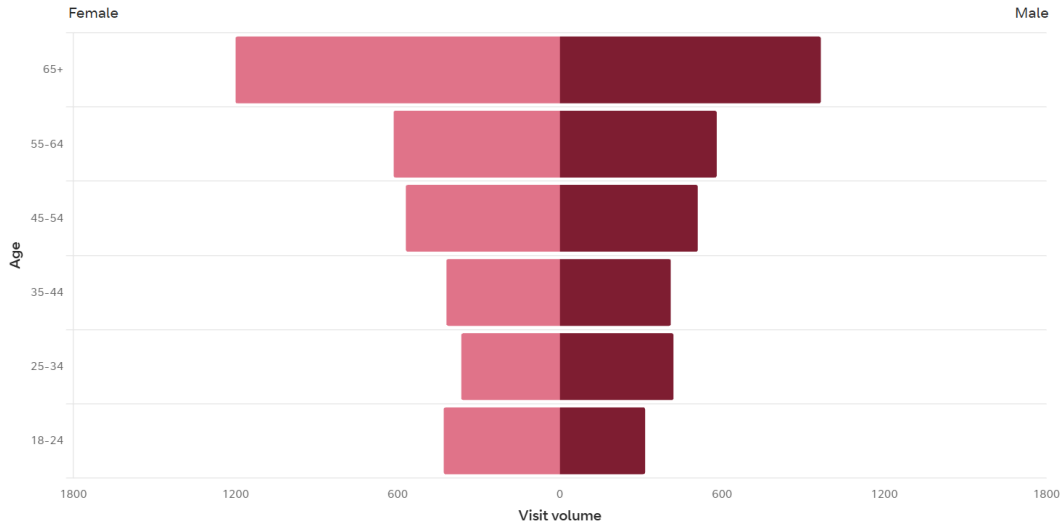
Footfall by day for the month – international visitors



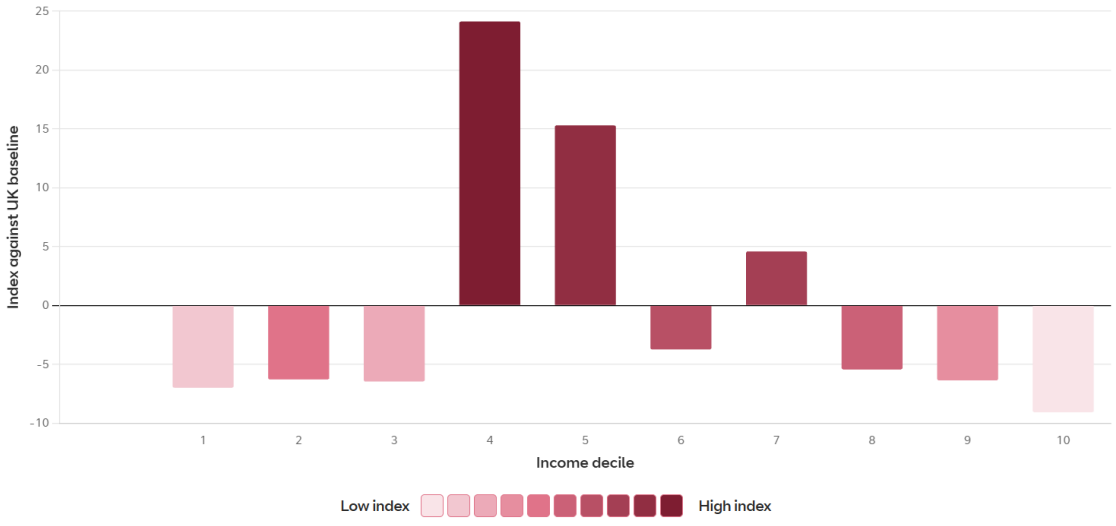
'Ripon Footfall Report' is a Partnerships for Better Business Ltd initiative. Data sourced from BT Active Intelligence anonymised and aggregated mobile network data and analysed and interpreted by Partnerships for Better Business Ltd (pfbb UK) on behalf of Ripon BID. pfbb UK and BT working in partnership.

Peak visitor hours

Age and gender



Income distribution



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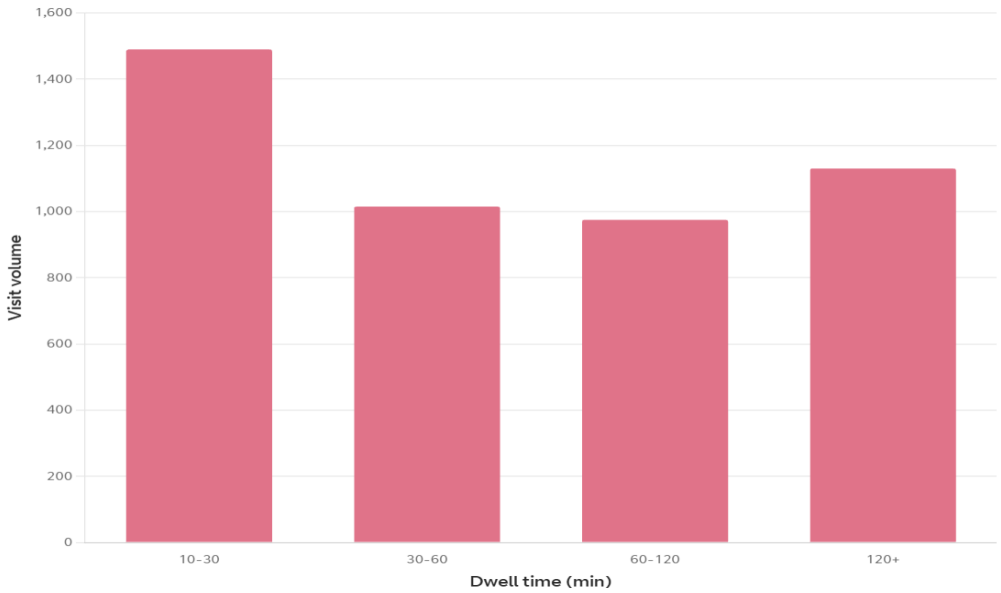
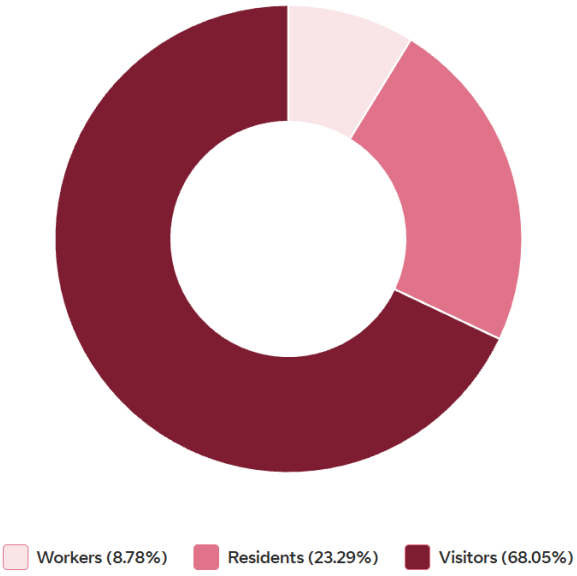
Dwell time



Visitor purpose



September 2026 commentary

Overall performance
Footfall across Ripon town centre totalled 206,292 during September, representing a 2.8% reduction year-on-year and a 2.6% fall compared with August. Year-to-date performance was also 2.8% below the equivalent period in 2025. The relatively modest month-on-month reduction should be viewed in the context of the normal transition from the summer visitor season into autumn, while the year-on-year position suggests that underlying footfall remains slightly softer than last year.

The daily profile, however, shows that September was far from uniformly subdued. Saturdays remained particularly important to Ripon, averaging approximately 8,300 visits, compared with around 7,700 on Fridays and 7,400 on Thursdays. Sundays were substantially quieter, averaging only around 5,100, reinforcing the importance of the Thursday-to-Saturday period to town-centre activity.

The importance of Saturdays and events
The strongest day of the month was Saturday 26 September, with 8,930 visits, approximately 8% above the average Saturday in September. This coincided with the final race meeting of the season and at Ripon Racecourse and the Theakston Beer Festival with live music.

This is particularly interesting because the racecourse sits outside the core town-centre measurement area and the weather data indicates a noticeably cooler spell over the final weekend of the month. Despite that, Saturday 26 September produced the highest town-centre footfall of the entire month. This suggests that major destination events outside the immediate monitored area can potentially generate wider benefits for the city centre, through visitors arriving before racing, using hospitality businesses or spending time in Ripon before or after the event. It should not be interpreted as proof of causation, but the strength of the result makes the relationship worth noting.

Saturday 19 September was the second-busiest Saturday, recording 8,287 visits. This coincided with Disco in the Park in Spa Gardens, running from 6pm to 10pm, as well as activity associated with the Heritage Open Days period. The weather was also relatively warm around this point, with temperatures reaching around 22°C on 19 September, creating favourable conditions for an outdoor event. Together these influences are likely to have helped support activity, although in this particular data set, the precise contribution of the disco cannot be isolated from the daily data.

Markets and the Thursday pattern
Ripon's traditional Thursday market appears to remain an important element of the weekly footfall pattern. Thursdays averaged around 7,380 visits, appreciably higher than Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday averages of around 6,400-6,500.

There was, however, considerable variation between individual market days:

3 September: 8,216
10 September: 7,383
17 September: 7,277
24 September: 6,635.

The particularly strong Thursday 3 September is notable. At 8,216 visits it was the third-highest daily total of the entire month, exceeded only by the Saturdays of 19 and 26 September. This indicates that

the market can materially affect town-centre movements, while the variation between Thursdays also demonstrates that simply having a market does not guarantee the same uplift each week. Weather, visitor demand and other activity are likely to influence how successfully market footfall translates into wider town-centre activity.

Heritage and cultural activity

The middle of September also coincided with Heritage Open Days activity across Ripon. Visit Ripon's promotion of the 2026 programme emphasised the opening of historic buildings and normally inaccessible places around the city, including new participating venues and the rarely opened Gazebo.

As many of these attractions were outside the area plotted by the BT data, it would be inappropriate to attribute the town-centre figures directly to the Heritage Open Days programme. Nevertheless, the period demonstrates the role that Ripon's heritage offer can play in generating reasons to visit the wider city. Saturday 12 September recorded 7,928 visits and Saturday 19 September 8,287, although the latter was also influenced by the Disco in the Park and favourable weather.

The Greatest Shows event at Ripon Cathedral on Friday 4 September may similarly have contributed to activity at the beginning of the month. Friday 4 September recorded 7,921 visits, the highest Friday of September, although the difference from the other Fridays was relatively small and it would therefore be unwise to attribute the result to the Cathedral event alone.

Visitor profile and dwell time

The data also indicates that Ripon's measured audience is overwhelmingly domestic. The international visitor series equates to only around 2,210 visits during September, approximately 1% of the month's town-centre total. This is consistent with Ripon's role as a small historic city and rural market centre whose core market is predominantly regional and domestic rather than strongly dependent upon international tourism.

The visitor-purpose analysis reinforces Ripon's role as a destination rather than simply a workplace location. Visitors account for 68.05% of the measured audience, residents 23.20%, and workers 8.78%. That is significant for the BID because it highlights the importance of giving people reasons to choose Ripon and then encouraging them to stay longer and use more businesses once they arrive.

The dwell-time chart also shows a meaningful spread between shorter and longer visits rather than activity being dominated solely by very brief trips. For a compact market centre such as Ripon, this makes the relationship between events, attractions, hospitality, retail and the public realm particularly important. Generating additional visits is valuable but extending the time visitors spend in the centre can be equally important commercially.

The hourly profile similarly shows activity building through the morning and concentrating primarily through the late morning and afternoon, with Saturday displaying the strongest daytime intensity. This fits Ripon's visitor-led profile and suggests there may be scope to examine how events and hospitality can extend activity later into the day.

International visitors remain a relatively small component of measured town-centre footfall. The data records approximately 2,210 international visits during September, equivalent to only around 1% of

overall measured footfall. Daily international numbers were generally between around 50 and 100, with the highest recorded daily figure being 107 on Friday 11 September.

There is also no obvious weekend-led pattern in international activity. Indeed, the busiest international visitor days included Thursday 10 September (105), Friday 11 September (107), Monday 7 September (96) and Monday 21 September (95), while several Sundays recorded some of the lowest figures of the month. This differs from the much stronger Thursday-to-Saturday pattern evident in domestic footfall.

Demographic and income profile

Ripon has a notably older visitor profile. The age distribution is weighted towards the older age groups, with particularly strong representation amongst people aged 55-64 and 65+. This is a more pronounced older-age profile than we typically observe across the town and city centres monitored by pfbb UK and is therefore a distinctive characteristic of Ripon's town-centre audience.

This is important commercially. It is consistent with Ripon's character as a small historic cathedral city and market centre serving a predominantly rural hinterland, combined with its appeal as a heritage and leisure destination. The profile suggests that older consumers form a particularly important part of the town-centre market, potentially influencing the types of retail, hospitality, services, events and experiences that perform well. At the same time, the presence of younger and middle-aged groups means that the town centre is not exclusively dependent on this older audience.

Ripon's income profile shows a noticeable concentration within the middle income brackets, where representation is above the UK baseline. This suggests that the town centre attracts a relatively established, middle-income consumer base. When considered alongside Ripon's unusually strong representation of older age groups, it provides a more distinctive picture of the town's audience: relatively mature, with a strong middle-income component. This has implications for the types of retail, hospitality, services and experiences likely to resonate with the town's core market, while also highlighting the importance of maintaining an offer capable of attracting younger audiences.

Overall conclusion

September therefore presents a more positive picture than the headline -2.8% year-on-year figure alone might suggest. Ripon's underlying weekly pattern is clear: Thursday's market provides an important midweek draw, Fridays are consistently strong, and Saturdays are the most important day for footfall, while Sundays remain considerably quieter.

Perhaps the most useful finding is the apparent relationship between strong reasons to visit and exceptional days. The two busiest Saturdays coincided with identifiable activity: the Disco in the Park/Heritage period on 19 September and the Ripon Races season finale and Theakston Beer Festival on 26 September. The race-day result is particularly noteworthy because the racecourse itself is outside the core town-centre area, suggesting that a major event can potentially generate wider benefits for central Ripon.

For a small historic cathedral city and market centre such as Ripon, the implication is not simply that "events increase footfall", but that a combination of regular market activity, heritage and cultural programming, major destination events and opportunities to extend dwell time can help strengthen the town centre against an underlying year-on-year decline.