



Northwich BID Annual Report 2017-2018



www.visitnorthwich.co.uk



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About Northwich Business Improvement District

The Northwich Business Improvement District (BID) is a defined geographical area in Northwich. Within this area businesses collectively invest in, and enhance Northwich as a trading environment. The BID commenced on 1st September 2014 and will run until 31st August 2019.

The Northwich BID funds and delivers added value projects and services within the town which focus on creating a destination of choice for residents, visitors, employees, shoppers and service users to make Northwich a location where businesses and the community can thrive. The BID will not, and cannot be

used to fund services that the council or other public bodies have a statutory duty to provide. The details of what the BID has delivered in 2017/2018 are detailed in this annual report.

The added value projects and services that the BID enables, is managed and controlled by the business community who part fund the BID. The entire project is business led, with the BID's funds coming from an additional, mandatory levy. For Northwich this levy equates to 1.5% of individual businesses rateable values on all businesses with a rateable value greater than £6,000.



Message from the Chair - Michael Thomas

2017/2018 has been a truly incredible year for Northwich, and I feel a real sense of pride when I look back on everything that we have achieved.

The Visit Northwich brand has gone from strength to strength over the past year, reaching thousands of people across social media and in local and regional media communications and spreading the word that Northwich really is a destination with a difference.

Our impressive and high quality schedule of events throughout the year continues to wow all those in attendance, with entertainment and performances that can only be likened to those usually found in a city centre. A particular highlight of mine was the homecoming of the now world famous band the Charlatans, an incredible feat that saw the town come alive for the week as the band played intimate gigs in all our local venues.

Summer 2018 saw Northwich scoop a Silver Gilt award in our first ever entry into the RHS in Bloom competition, an impressive result that can only be improved on as we

march forward with our ambitions to transform Northwich in to a town centre awash with colour and incredible floral blooms – let's see 2019 as the year that Northwich achieves gold!

More recently we also scooped the runner up position in the "Rising Star" category of the prestigious Great British High Street Awards – a fantastic achievement for our town.

The next 12 months will see the BID again deliver a very ambitious business plan with investments into new events and festivals, further development in Marketing and PR, improvements into a greener and cleaner town centre, support with improving public transport provision and further investments in crime prevention and security.

Finally, as we move forward in to our fifth year of BID delivery, I strongly urge every one of our businesses in Northwich to really get involved, embrace the support of the BID Team and make a real difference in strengthening the image that Northwich is a town to be proud of.

Message from the BID Manager - Jane Hough

The past 12 months have been very positive for Northwich with a number of events, projects and initiatives delivered to really put the town on the map.

The BID team, and partners, endeavoured to bring new and exciting offerings to Northwich in 2018 which included the spectacular Now Northwich festival and the Northwich Festival of Arts. Both events brought new demographics into the town, as did the CW Nine Festival which was headlined by The Charlatans. The challenge will now be to try and top 2018's activities but we are confident of helping to deliver more great events for the people of Northwich.

Northwich also made strides on a regional and national level with success in two different competitions as Michael has alluded to. Receiving recognition when up against other towns around the country shows how far Northwich has come in recent years and we'll be looking to build upon these successes in 2019.

The BID team are also looking forward to working even more closely with the town's businesses over the coming months after developing and promoting a number of initiatives in 2018 such as the Northwich Independent video series. We have a brilliant business community here in Northwich with a fantastic spirit and I'm sure they will all go from strength to strength this year.

Our goal for the coming months is to continue marketing Northwich as a destination with a difference and trying to ensure that the environment in the town enables businesses and the community to thrive.



Jane Hough
Northwich BID Manager



Michael Thomas
McDonald's Franchise Owner
and Northwich BID Chair



How we deliver the BID

The Northwich Business Improvement District is governed by the Northwich BID Group. The BID group have elected an Executive Board to oversee the delivery of the Business Improvement District. The Executive Board work on a voluntary basis and are responsible

for guiding and directing the Groundwork BID Team in the delivery of the projects and services contained in the Northwich Business Improvement District Business plan. The Executive Board in office for 2017/2018 are featured below.

Your Executive Board

Chairperson

Michael Thomas

McDonald's

Vice-Chairperson

Carol Simms

Marks and Spencer

Treasurer

Ann Johnson

Santander

Board Members

Michelle Cash

Boots

Gerry Rooney

mosshaselhurst Solicitors

Wendy Batey-Gray

Solutions 24-7

Chris Mundie

The Salty Dog

Lina Higuera

Barons Quay

Ian Massey

Sainsbury's

Phil Bower

Northwich Art Shop

Supporters/Advisors

Catherine Fox

*Area Programme Manager
– Cheshire West and
Chester Council*

Chris Shaw

*Northwich Town Clerk
– Northwich Town Council*

Cllr Andrew Cooper

*Northwich Town
Council – Bridge Ward*

Mark Simmons

*Senior Locality Officer
– Cheshire West and
Chester Council*

Sergeant Kevin Davies

Northwich Police Unit

BID Team

Jane Hough

*Business Improvement
District Manager*

Mark Henshaw

*Business Improvement
District Officer*

Stephanie Leese

*Business Improvement
District Marketing and
Events Co-ordinator*

“Northwich BID has had a huge impact on the town centre over the last few years. The BID team have supported in ensuring the town is clean and welcoming for all visitors. Through the use of social media Northwich BID share/post about events/offers in the businesses within the town to help attract more customers/visitors. The biggest impact I feel the BID team have made is when it comes to the Christmas light switch on. The events arranged

around the whole town centre are great and drives a huge footfall for the day. In previous years only the area around Weaver Square would have the events which had little impact on driving footfall but since the BID team took over now every part of the town has something going on. The Easter event also has a positive impact on footfall which yet again is organised by the BID team.”

Store Manager - Superdrug



What we have delivered in 2017 - 2018

Theme One – A Vibrant and Co-ordinated Town

Investments in the marketing and promotion of Northwich

Website, Advertising, Communication and PR, Social Media, Consumer Competitions

The last 12 months has seen a whole host of PR & Marketing initiatives delivered by the BID. The Visit Northwich brand has gone from strength to strength with investments made in further developments to the Visit Northwich Website, social media presence and regular features in local, regional and national publications.

The social media accounts hit an all-time high during 2017/2018 with the Visit Northwich Facebook page receiving nearly 1,500 new likes, Twitter hitting over 150,000 impressions per month and Instagram having 200 likes per week on average, with businesses reaping the benefits by promoting their events and offers on these important platforms.

Regular news features appeared in the Mid-Cheshire Guardian Series, So Cheshire, Mid-Cheshire Independent, Marketing Cheshire and Chester Chronicle throughout the year, and Northwich has continued to feature in a number of news articles in the national place magazine, Revive and Thrive.

The Visit Northwich website (visitnorthwich.co.uk), which has recently been revamped, continued to be the central point for shoppers featuring regular news stories, competitions and dedicated sections to retail,

leisure and culture, while a brand new dedicated Northwich BID website was also created for Northwich businesses, containing information on training courses, meeting minutes and details of all the projects and services that are beneficial to businesses in the BID area.

The bi-monthly e-bulletins and quarterly hard copy newsletters kept businesses in the loop over the past 12 months, while the popular twice monthly consumer e-bulletin kept shoppers up to date with the latest stories, offers and events, heavily promoting Northwich BID businesses.

During 2017/2018 the Northwich BID funded a portfolio of professional photographs to aid in marketing Northwich as a destination of choice for shoppers and visitors alike, while a series of videos capturing the very best of Northwich were commissioned, including the Northwich Christmas Extravaganza highlights and a promotional advert for Witton Street stores. 2018 also saw the hugely successful Northwich Independents Video campaign, where 12 independent stores in Northwich took up the offer to have a video produced, each one highlighting the fantastic goods and services they have to offer.

Visit
Northwich



Events and Festivals

2017/2018 saw Northwich host a whole number of exciting events and festivals designed to pull in the crowds and increase footfall in our shops.

May 2018 saw the worldwide phenomenon of the Charlatans return to their hometown of Northwich to put on a series of intimate gigs in town centre venues in what was a week-long celebration, while the July festival of Arts proved to be a big success with a range of local artists putting on workshops, displays and craft activities for children and adults alike.

The Christmas and Easter Extravaganzas continue to go from strength to strength achieving the best footfall

figures to date, while the school holidays in July and August saw the BID put on a range of activities for families in partnership with Barons Quay, including the hugely popular “Beach on the Quay” situated outside the Odeon cinema.

In July 2018 the Northwich BID aided in the successful delivery of the Northwich River Festival in partnership with Northwich Rotary Club while the summer months were awash with colour thanks to the ongoing activities of the Northwich in Bloom campaign.

The Northwich BID Team

Over the past 12 months the Northwich BID Team has delivered a number of significant projects, services, events and festivals to enhance Northwich Town Centre – the details of which are documented in this report.

The team has also acted as your first point of contact with a number of partners and agencies including Cheshire

West and Chester Council Economic Development and Regeneration, Highways, Estates, Regulatory Services, CCTV and Streetscene departments, Northwich Town Council, Barons Quay, the Environment Agency, Cheshire Police, Cheshire Fire, community groups and commercial property agents.

Theme One - An investment of £139,307 in 2017/2018



Social Media & PR Stats

Visit Northwich Website

September 2017 - August 2018

80,000 page views

36,000 new users

Combined Twitter and Facebook Impressions and Reach

September 2017 - August 2018

5.9 million

1.9 million impressions on Twitter

Total Facebook Reach - Over 4 million

Over 50 Business and Consumer Bulletins released to promote Northwich and the BID.

Over 250 BID press released featured in a range of different publications locally, regionally and nationally between September 2017 and August 2018.



Twitter

3,718 followers

3,000 Tweets



Facebook

7,208 likes

3,500 Posts



Instagram

1,633 followers

300 posts



“Waitrose is part of the John Lewis Partnership and we value better ways of doing business and building long-term relationships. As the leader of Waitrose in Northwich, I both recognise and respect the relationship that Northwich BID has built with us and others. The BID has also been a fantastic catalyst and connector for better ways of doing business in Northwich. I think it would be disingenuous and an unnecessary risk to the current business development and trajectory for Northwich if the Northwich BID was to cease after one term. I think the second term is just as important as the first term and hope the good people and businesses of Northwich will understand that too.”

Craig Lancaster - Northwich Waitrose Partner & Brand Manager



Theme Two – A Supported Environment for Business

Training, Knowledge and Skills

A packed schedule of training courses was delivered by the Northwich BID throughout 2017/2018, covering essential and beneficial topics for businesses in the town. The Quallsafe Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work training courses proved to be as popular and valuable to employers as ever, while the Leadership Skills and Management training course funded by the Northwich BID was fully booked on every occasion.

55 Northwich BID delegates covering 31 businesses have received free training in the fourth year of the Northwich Business Improvement District, with all First Aid Training Certificates validated by Quallsafe.

The high uptake of courses demonstrates the real value that businesses in Northwich place in keeping their employees highly skilled and well-trained.

Specific courses that were delivered in 2017-2018 were as follows:

- Quallsafe Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work
- Principles of Risk Assessment
- Leadership Skills and Management Training



“55 Northwich BID employees were upskilled through the BID training programmes in 2017/2018.”

Theme Two - An investment of £3,569 in 2017-2018

“ *The Northwich BID is a huge supporting network for the community. It has encouraged and allowed businesses to flourish in the local area. The BID encourages involvement and provides opportunities for both businesses and the public with events such as the seasonal Extravaganzas, Northwich in Bloom, amongst many, many, other events which have been beneficial to all and has increased the footfall of Northwich. Whatever business you are it provides an opportunity for all and Northwich BID allows you to participate in what is suitable for you. The Northwich BID team are always on hand to assist with marketing such as social media, newsletters and training courses.*

Director - Dixon Rigby Keogh

It has allowed businesses to make connections and network. It is always encouraging to know what the next project is going to be, as well as providing the traditional Northwich annual events. From an independent business point of view, the Northwich BID has provided DRK with exposure and has allowed us to communicate to an audience of who we are and where we are. An example of this is the Northwich Independents spotlight campaign. It also has allowed DRK to keep up to date with what is happening in the local area with regular emails and correspondence which has been essential for business growth and development. **”**



Marketing and PR Support

Through the Northwich BID, Northwich businesses can benefit from specialist Marketing & PR support to help gain exposure online and in the media. Working with Northwich based Marketing and PR Agency Solutions 24-7, news from Northwich and the town's retailers has featured over 200 times over the past year in local publications, including the Northwich Guardian, Chester Chronicle, Mid Cheshire Independent, Marketing Cheshire, So Cheshire and Cheshire Life. All of these publications are read weekly by thousands of people which has given the businesses featured a great platform to spread their good news.

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Joint Procurement Scheme

During 2017-2018 the BID Team also established a free Joint Procurement Scheme with Power Solutions that identifies cost savings within each individual business with relation to electric, gas and water. Offering a free energy review, the service has seen a number of businesses save money over the past year.

Brio Leisure Discount for BID Members

During year 4 of the Northwich BID, the popular partnership with Brio Leisure continued allowing Northwich BID businesses and their employees to take advantage of a 20% discount on full membership at any Brio Leisure centre. Extending to family members in the same household, the scheme gives Northwich BID business employees access to 12 fantastic Leisure centres with unlimited use of all facilities, and to date 43 individuals have signed up and taken advantage of the offer.



Theme Three – Safe and Secure

Crime Prevention Partnerships

Cheshire Police and the Northwich BID working together in an innovative partnership has contributed to developing a safer and more prosperous environment for traders and consumers to work and shop in alike.

The BID has continued to work with the dedicated Policing team in Northwich town centre throughout 2017/2018 with the team conducting visits to individual businesses to discuss any crime related issues and support with agreed action plans to combat crime. In addition, the BID Team continue to work with Cheshire Police to deal with any issues that may arise relating to shoplifting, theft and anti-social behaviour in the town centre.

Northwich BID has also sustained strong working relationships with both the Licensing & Enforcement department at Cheshire West and Chester Council and CCTV supervisor Keith Parsonage. These close links and relationships enable the BID Team to be kept well informed with regards to any criminal or unauthorised activity in Northwich, which in turn allows for information to be distributed to businesses in a timely manner as well as generating a prompt response whenever assistance is required to uphold the rules and regulations in the town whenever a problem arises.



Theme Three - An investment of £243 in 2017-2018

Theme Four – Greener and Cleaner

Image Improvements

Throughout the fourth year of the BID, the Northwich BID team have once again worked continuously to improve Northwich's image, constantly looking at ways to improve how both visitors and businesses perceive and view the town. Significant investments have been made in floral displays, planting schemes and additional maintenance and cleansing in the town centre above the statutory obligations of the local authority.

Enhanced Cleaning

Throughout the fourth year of the BID, the BID Team once more maintained their partnership with Northwich Town Council to deliver an extensive and enhanced town cleansing programme. Creating a noticeable difference where the cleansing efforts have been taking place, the funding allows for daily litter picks and regular stone paving washing in addition to the previous baseline as set by Streetscene and Cheshire West and Chester Council. During the festive season, the Northwich BID also funded the installation of 52 hanging solar powered Christmas Trees, decorating the lampposts in the town centre and providing a seasonal glow for shoppers in an evening.

Northwich in Bloom

During 2018 the Northwich BID entered Northwich in to the prestigious RHS North West in Bloom competition under the Large Town and BID Categories. The project saw the Northwich BID Team work in close partnership with a number of organisations and volunteer groups, and after a huge effort Northwich was awarded with a Silver Gilt Award – a great achievement for a first time entry.



Floral Displays and Planting Schemes

The Northwich BID Team have invested significantly to enhance the floral displays in the town centre throughout Year 4 of the BID. In a partnership with Northwich Town Council, additional funding was provided to improve upon the previous level of raised bed planting all throughout the town, and as a result Northwich was awash with colour over the spring and summer months.

The BID also invested in additional double sided hanging baskets that were installed during the spring, adorning lampposts throughout the town centre and up along Leicester Street, Venables Road, Weaver Way, Chester Way and London Road which consequently saw Northwich blossom in to a riot of colour. A number of extra railing baskets were also funded outside the Memorial Court on Chester Way, further enhancing the aesthetics of the approaches and exits of the town, while 12 bright and bold new railing baskets were funded and installed on Dane Bridge.

During the festive season, the Northwich BID also funded the installation of 52 hanging solar powered Christmas Trees, decorating the lampposts in the town centre and providing a seasonal glow for shoppers in an evening.



Theme Four - An investment of £35,866 in 2017-2018



Income and Expenditure

BID Income	Budget – Year 4 September 2017 – August 2018	Actual – Year 4 September 2017 – August 2018
BID Levy Income	£185,000	£208,919
Income from Voluntary Members	£5,000	£562
Grants/Fund Match (Financial)	£65,000	£16,351
Bank Interest	Nil	£37
Surplus (Year 3) +/-		£5,970
Total Income 2017 - 2018	£255,000	£231,839
BID Expenditure	Budget – Year 4 September 2017 - August 2018	Actual – Year 4 September 2017 - August 2018
Theme One – A Vibrant and Co-ordinated Town	£92,136	£139,307
Theme Two – A Supported Environment For Business	£25,000	£3,569
Theme Three – Safe and Secure	£56,000	£243
Theme Four – Greener and Cleaner	£42,000	£35,866
Project Management & Administration Costs	£23,500	£30,246
Accruals – Annual Audit	Nil	£250
Total – Expenditure 2017 – 2018	£238,636	£209,481
Actual Surplus +/-		£22,358

Note: In addition to the financial income received by the Business Improvement District in 2017/2018 there has been additional investments made of £50,000, which have supported the Christmas Campaign, Image Enhancements and Training Courses and Seminars. This additional investment along with the Grants/Fund Match financial contributions has been secured through Cheshire West and Chester Council, Northwich Town Council, Councillor Members Budgets, Tesco Bags of Help Scheme, Roberts Bakery and the Gadbrook Park BID.

The surplus generated in Year Four of the BID, will be utilised to deliver a number of added value projects and services in the town centre during Year Five above and beyond the current baselines delivered by the public sector.



What we plan to deliver in Year 5 of the BID

Theme One - Marketing and Promotion

Production of a high quality promotional video for Northwich as a destination of choice for shoppers.

Portfolio of professional photography showcasing Northwich and promoting it as a visitors destination.

Entering Northwich in to the Great British High Streets "Champions" Category Awards to further raise the profile of the town.

Continued development and maintenance of the Visit Northwich website.

Continued maintenance of the Northwich BID website.

Continuation of the weekly and quarterly business news bulletins.

Continuation of the Visit Northwich bi-weekly Consumer Bulletin.

Increase the presence of Northwich in regional and national publications, including newspapers, magazines and newsletters.

Dedicated photography and videos of events and festivals in Northwich.

Dedicated Marketing support for Northwich events and festivals to include:

Christmas Extravaganza, Easter Extravaganza, Now Northwich Festival, Northwich River Festival and other events and festivals that drive footfall into Northwich.

Facebook Live videos to engage with social media audiences during Northwich events.

Regular blogs online to encourage visitors to shop local.

Looking at a Northwich Nationals campaign to tie in with the Northwich Independents campaign the BID ran in 2018.

Looking at a Visit Northwich Youtube channel.

Monitoring of the BID Footfall Counters throughout Northwich.

Continuation of competitions and trails to raise awareness of Northwich and collate consumer data.

Current 2018/2019 Events and Festivals

Now Northwich Festival	Saturday 6th October 2018
Christmas Extravaganza	Saturday 24th November 2018
Health and Wellbeing Festival	Saturday 16th March 2019
Easter Extravaganza	Saturday 20th April 2019
Northwich Festival of Arts	July 2019
Northwich in Bloom	July/August 2019
Northwich River Festival	Summer 2019
Summer Holiday Activities	Summer 2019

In addition to the events listed above the BID Team are working with a number of partners to introduce additional events during the year, the details of which will be released once finalised.

BID Team

The BID team will continue to be a central point of contact for your business, for any issues or opportunities that may arise in Northwich. In addition to providing support, the team will be responsible for the delivery of the projects and services contained within the business plan and exploring opportunities for bringing additional external funding into the Business Improvement District.



Theme Two

Current 2018/2019 Training Courses and Seminars

Emergency First Aid at Work	Monday 22nd October 2018
Leadership Skills and Management Training	Tuesday 20th November 2018
Emergency First Aid at Work	Wednesday 9th January 2019
Leadership Skills and Management Training	Monday 14th January 2019
Risk Assessment	Thursday 7th March 2019
Emergency First Aid at Work	Tuesday 12th March 2019
Fire Risk Assessment	Tuesday 30th April 2019
Leadership Skills and Management Training	Tuesday 14th May 2019
Emergency First Aid at Work	Monday 10th June 2019
Emergency First Aid at Work	Tuesday 9th July 2019

Additional investments will be made throughout the year in Training Courses and Seminars dependent on business requirements. This information will be collated through our client feedback forms and surveys that we periodically conduct with the business community. New course dates will be communicated to businesses as and when they are released through email and newsletter campaigns.

Joint Procurement Schemes

The BID will continue to work with Power Solutions to help reduce the costs of telecom, utility and water bills that Northwich traders are paying. In addition to this service, the BID will continue to explore the feasibility of introducing other joint procurement suppliers, these could include trade waste, pest control and handyman services.

Theme Three - Crime Prevention Partnerships

Throughout 2018/2019 the BID will continue to build on new and existing relationships with key partners to achieve low levels of crime in Northwich. The BID will work with Cheshire Police, Cheshire West and Chester Council Licensing/ Enforcement Team, Cheshire West and Chester Council CCTV Team and the new Managing Agents Savills at Barons Quay to ensure that retailers and business owners are kept informed and updated on key issues that affect the town.

Theme Four - Landscape, Cleanliness and Signage Improvements

2018/2019 will see a number of additional investments in to planting and signage schemes across Northwich Town Centre, Chester Way, Leicester Street, London Road, Upper Witton Street, Venables Road and Albion Road.

The Northwich BID will once again look to install a number of hanging baskets across Northwich during the summer months, as well as festive solar powered hanging Christmas trees during December. Two winter planted flower towers will be installed in Weaver Square and by Dane Bridge during the winter months to add a splash of colour, while the BID will look at introducing several vibrant flower towers during the summer months in a number of locations across the town. The Northwich BID will also once again fund the planting of additional railing baskets in the town and additional planting in raised beds.

The Northwich BID will look to have colourful bunting

installed across the town centre during the summer months.

A number of "grot spot" areas have been identified around Northwich where improvements can be made. A clear action plan will be drafted and the Business Improvement District where possible will work with key partners to enhance these areas. One such area is St Pauls Square on Witton Street, where the BID will look to create a Sensory Garden.

During 2018/2019 the BID will fund additional street cleansing in targeted areas in Northwich Town Centre while regular image audits will also be undertaken by the BID Team throughout the year.

In July/August 2019 the Northwich BID will once again enter Northwich in to the RHS North West in Bloom competition.

Northwich BID works with a number of partners and stakeholders:



**For further information on the Northwich
Business Improvement District please contact:**

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Business Improvement District Manager

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Mark Henshaw

Business Improvement District Officer

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