





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 first BID for Northwich commenced on 1st September 2014 and ran until 31st August 2019.

In June 2019, businesses voted overwhelmingly for the Northwich BID to continue for five more years, with 77% of those who took part in the ballot backing another term for the BID. This will allow the BID to continue investing in the town centre, supporting businesses and ensuring Northwich can continue to thrive as a destination of choice for consumers and shoppers.

The Northwich BID funds and delivers added value projects and services within the town. These projects are managed and controlled by the business community and the entire project is business led. The BID's funds come from a mandatory levy which equates to 1.55% of an individual businesses rateable value (on all businesses with a rateable value greater than £6,000). 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 2020 - 2021 are detailed in this annual report.





MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

MICHAEL THOMAS

2021 saw Northwich face some of its biggest challenges in recent times, with flooding hitting our town for a second year and businesses requiring more direct support than ever before. But we must look back and be proud of how we dealt with it, by working together as businesses to come back stronger. We have many challenges to face over the next few years, as we recover from the pandemic and the increase in online retail, however we will adapt and offer a destination for visitors to eat, drink & shop.

We saw some normality in the summer, with the Artisan Market returning to the High Street bringing back a regular monthly event to support the traditional town centre.

Events have also started to be delivered again, with the towns first Pina Colada Festival taking place in August, with national recognition from BBC Radio 2.

Looking back at the second year of BID 2, we can be proud of the way we worked together for our town, to help it bounce back to be a thriving and bustling place to visit and 2022 will see us continue that journey.

It's more important than ever to take advantage of what the BID offers and I encourage all our fantastic town centre businesses to be part of shaping the future of Northwich. I hope to see a report full of even more positive news in 2022, good luck to you all.



MESSAGE FROM THE BID MANAGER

ADAM GERRARD

Northwich is my hometown, I remember sitting in Weaver Square on those square benches - where you couldn't risk standing up to put something in the bin, because your seat would be snapped up. That is my recollection of what Northwich was and although high streets across the country are changing, I want to help my town to continue bucking the national trend. That's why I took this role, to work for my town.

After a full year in post, I've seen the many challenges businesses face and I'm working to deliver the BID business plan that I know will help make Northwich the place to live, do business and visit.

My promise to businesses is simple, I will work hard to make Northwich a success. My only request from businesses is for you to work with me to achieve this.

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. For more details about the Executive Board, please visit www.northwichbid.co.uk.

WHAT HAVE WE DELIVERED IN 2020 - 2021

THEME ONE

A UNIQUE SHOPPER AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

During the year we delivered several successful marketing campaigns to continue highlighting Northwich as a destination with a difference. The aim of the campaigns took various roles, all of which worked to drive footfall back to high street or (where only essential businesses were open) to encourage people to continue shopping local online. Northwich Creates Together was a way for local people to celebrate their town in a creative way, with photography, poetry and songs and all submitted from people who love our town.



Welcome Back To Northwich was our key campaign following the easing of restrictions in April 2020, with free gifts handed out to people visiting the town & promotional material around the town. Spotlight videos on a range of business sectors were created to showcase how they're working hard to make visits safe and enjoyable.

Coinciding with the reopening of businesses, Northwich welcomed a new events space, Apple Market Place - located on the site of the former outdoor market. The BID have set themselves a priority of taking full advantage of the space for events and to support this we have purchased a canopy to provide an all weather cover, alongside 20 festival tables with benches - these are now assets of the town. Ensuring BID members get the best value for money, we took advantage of an available grant that reduced the capital cost of these items by 80%.

For Christmas 2020 things were very different, and with no Christmas Extravaganza we looked at ways to bring the Christmas feeling to the town. A significant PR & social campaign was delivered and videos played a key part in this. Many businesses got involved in our Virtual Light Switch countdown while the "Shop Local this Christmas" video proved to be a hit at showcasing the fantastic range of businesses in the town centre.



In August 2021 the BID team delivered the towns first ever Pina Colada Festival, which saw over 2000 cocktails sold, live music, street animation and free children's activities. Gaining national recognition on BBC Radio 2, it's proved to be something that's only going to get bigger and the BID will be leading the way.



Alongside Northwich Town Council & Barons Quay, the BID purchased a town centre PA system & generator. This shared resource has already been used for outdoor music events in Apple Market Place and the generator has been utilised for music events in Barons Quay. Purchasing capital assets for the town provides a great resource to encourage more events to take place.

KEY STATISTICS

COMPARED TO 2019/2020



Once again, the BID funded a number of planting schemes and image enhancement projects in the town centre in a partnership with Northwich Town Council. Projects included the installation of summer hanging baskets, railing planters, town centre bunting and planting schemes across the town centre - ensuring the area was bright and welcoming for shoppers, workers and visitors alike.

Local artist Jim Stanley was commissioned to refurbish the art boards in Apple Market Park, with a brief that he should ensure the theme of poppies remained but to also tie in the local area. The boards now look fantastic and have featured in press articles, Christmas cards and provide an eye catching image as people drive past and walk into the town centre.



Following the fire at the Outdoor Market, the town lost a dedicated set of public toilets. With a permanent replacement unlikely until the redevelopment of Weaver Square, the BID team worked hard with Northwich Town Council to look at options for the town centre. In May 2021 the town took delivery of a brand-new toilet block, which will provide a temporary solution until Weaver Squares completion.

After a gap in 2019, Northwich In Bloom ran again in 2021, with the town awash with colourful plants and lots of businesses taking part in the In Bloom Window competition. We teamed up with local businesses Dante's Boutique and Craft Stitches to croquet bomb the town centre. The town was awarded Silver Gilt by the RHS Judges.



A SAFER TOWN CENTRE

The BID has continued to work with the dedicated Policing team in Northwich town centre throughout the year to deal with any issues that may arise relating to shoplifting, theft and anti-social behaviour in the town centre. The innovative partnership between the two teams has contributed to developing a safer and more prosperous environment for traders and consumers to work and shop in alike.

The BID Team have 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.

THEME THREE

BUSINESS SUPPORT

BID funded training courses were provided throughout the year when safe to do so, in the following topics:

- Emergency First Aid at Work
- Window Dressing Consultations
- Leadership Skills and Management Training
- Fire Risk Assessment
- Level 3 Mental Health in the Workplace
- Digital Marketing for Business

The BID team have provided a dedicated line of enquiry for businesses throughout the ups and downs of restrictions. Ensuring businesses were the first to know as grants became available, with emails, phone calls and personal visits to offer advice and support to businesses applying. Our good working relationship with the local authority allowed us to provide a line of support for businesses needing to appeal or find out what's happening with their grant.

"Thank you for all the support I received from the BID team during the last 12 months, the information on grant support available to me was both up to date and accurate. Not to mention helping me understand the jargon and supporting with appeals it has been invaluable to my business."

Paul, Northwich Dry Cleaners

January 2021 saw flooding in Northwich at levels not seen since 1928, and the BID team were on the ground working with partners to provide advice and support to businesses. Post floods we helped facilitate waste removal and property spray sanitising from the local authority. The BID led briefing sessions for businesses affected and helped to bring in a £100,000 grant support pot to help towards the replacement of capital items. The BID also helped establish connections between businesses and other partners, for example we facilitated the liaison between Northwich Town Council and businesses where they were offering a 2 week free hire of dehumidifiers. We continue to push for more communication from the local authority and other flood risk partners to provide updates on what actions are being taken to prevent future flooding.



THEME ONE - A UNIQUE SHOPPER AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- ✓ Multi-annual £100,000+ dedicated marketing and promotional campaigns to continue to raise the profile of Northwich town centre as a great retail, leisure, night-time economy destination and a fantastic place to do business.
- ✓ Continue to re-introduce festivals and events in to the town centre when safe and appropriate to do so.
- ✓ Northwich BID Team – a dedicated team with the focus of helping and assisting businesses in Northwich Town Centre.
- ✓ Added value cleansing of the town centre, improved litter collection and cleansing, over and above the services provided by Cheshire West and Chester Council.
- ✓ Investment in enhancements including hanging baskets, floral arrangements, landscaping and striking visual features to enhance specific locations.
- ✓ Work with the local authority to improve wayfinding around Northwich Town Centre and establish a permanent historic town trail.
- ✓ The BID will lead on the entry into the RHS North West In Bloom campaign.
- ✓ Delivery of campaigns and projects that support better accessibility and sustainability in Northwich.

THEME TWO - A SAFER TOWN CENTRE

- ✓ Work with our partners Cheshire Police and the Cheshire West and Chester Council CCTV Team through delivering initiatives and activities that continue with the reduction of crime in the town centre
- ✓ Look at the feasibility of introducing Purple Flag Status to Northwich Town Centre

THEME THREE- BUSINESS SUPPORT

- ✓ Provision of BID funded Training courses and seminars to upskill staff and workers in necessary topics
- ✓ Continued support regarding help and assistance with any Covid-19 support and grant applications during the ongoing pandemic
- ✓ The Northwich BID Team will continue lobbying to create new opportunities and tackle barriers to growth for businesses/organisations in the town centre.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

BID Income	Budget - Year 2 (BID 2) September 2020 - August 2021	Actual - Year 2 (BID 2) September 2020 - August 2021
BID Levy Invoice	£192,300	£147,957
Income from Voluntary Members	£0	£979
Grants/Partner Contributions	£0	£11,924
Bank Interest	£0	£7
Surplus (Year 1, BID 2)	£0	£13,255
Total Income 2020 - 2021	£192,300	£174,122
BID Expenditure	Budget - Year 2 (BID 2) September 2020 - August 2021	Actual - Year 2 (BID 2) September 2020 - August 2021
Theme One - A Unique Shopper & Visitor Experience	£134,750	£115,351
Theme Two - A Safer Towner Centre	£11,000	£5,632
Theme Three - Business Support	£21,350	£14,402
Project Management & Administration	£24,250	£25,093
Accruals - Annual Audit	£0	£250
Total Expenditure	£191,350	£160,728
Surplus +/-	£950	£13,394

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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www.northwichbid.co.uk

www.visitnorthwich.co.uk



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BRIO LEISURE MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT

20% OFF FOR BID MEMBERS IN NORTHWICH

Take advantage of our exclusive Northwich Memorial Court deal with Brio Leisure for all Northwich BID members.

In partnership with the Northwich BID, Brio Leisure are offering their Brio Corporate Membership package at a specially discounted rate of 20% off for all employees, business owners and family members of any Northwich BID business.

Take advantage of the many incredible features the complex has to offer, with the venue boasting a 95 station gym, a fully functional training area, 2 huge swimming pools, a sauna, stream room, Jacuzzi and a whole range of fitness classes to join up to.

Getting involved with the deal is simple, just get in touch via:
Stephanie.leese@groundwork.org.uk or call 01606 723175.

Once registered we will then post you your very own Northwich BID Members Leisure Card for use at ANY Brio Leisure location – not just the Memorial Court! (Please remember that on your first visit, a form of identification will be required to determine you are from a Northwich BID business – ie a work badge or payslip).

So why not relax and take a break after work by taking a dip in the pool, a trip to the Jacuzzi or burning off some excess energy in one of over 60 fitness classes that are held at the centre. It really couldn't be easier - don't miss out on this great opportunity!



Visit
Northwich
A DESTINATION WITH A DIFFERENCE

MARKETING AND PR SUPPORT

Through the Northwich Business Improvement District, your business can benefit from Marketing & PR support to help you gain exposure online and in the media.

Working with our Marketing and PR team who operate our Visit Northwich brand, news from Northwich and the town's businesses has featured over 200 times over the past year in local publications.

These include the Northwich Guardian, Cheshire Live, Mid Cheshire Independent, Marketing Cheshire, So Cheshire and Insider Media North West to name but a few. 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.

Through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, the Visit Northwich also has an online audience of over 20,000, with the reach on many posts going well into the thousands. So whether it's news of an offer, event or job vacancy, the team will get this out on social for you to reach people all over Mid Cheshire and beyond.

On top of this, there are fortnightly newsletters published to the business community and monthly newsletters sent out to consumers with the latest news from around the town. With over 2,500 subscribers across the two publications, they offer a brilliant chance for businesses to get their latest news, offers and events out there.

Simply email marketing@visitnorthwich.co.uk with your information for either PR or social media support.