

Northwich Business Improvement District 3 (BID3)



BUILDING ON 10 YEARS OF SUCCESS

BID 3 could generate over £1m
added value investment in Northwich



This draft plan for a successor Business Improvement District in Northwich is open for consultation until Friday 16th February 2024. Businesses can feedback their views on this draft plan by: completing the online consultation at www.northwichbid.co.uk or by contacting the **Northwich BID Manager Nikki Halliday** on **07592 774163** or **Commercial & BIDS Project Manager Andrea Morley** on **07483 932667**.

WELCOME TO OUR PLAN FOR A THIRD TERM BID IN NORTHWICH

Our plan for a third term Business Improvement District (BID) for Northwich provides a great opportunity for businesses and stakeholders to once again, come together and continue to build on the success of the last 10 years.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHAIR

Northwich became the first town BID in the Cheshire and Warrington area back in 2014. Since then, the town has seen some significant changes in consumer shopping habits, navigated a global pandemic, dealt with Brexit and more recently businesses have faced the biggest cost of living crisis seen in decades but, despite this back drop, our businesses and organisations continue to work hard to ensure that Northwich remains a town that residents and visitors regularly visit to shop, support our ambitious events and festivals and enjoy their leisure time.

This plan has been produced by the Northwich BID Team, based on the feedback businesses provided to us through the BID 3 consultations during the Autumn of 2023.

The BID board has been established since August 2014, representing the views and opinions of the Northwich business community, with the aim of delivering a number of key objectives.

Those objectives have included delivering some of the most sought-after events seen across the region in our town, including the famous Pina Colada Festival and providing funding or support for the Christmas Extravaganza, Northwich River Festival, Northwich Artisan Market and Now Northwich – all of these events attract on average 20,000 visitors on event days.

We have continued to develop the dedicated consumer brand Visit Northwich and pulled together a robust marketing strategy that showcases everything that is fantastic about Northwich and the businesses that operate here. There have also been significant investments made annually into the aesthetics of the town, with an abundance of floral displays sweeping across the town creating a sea of colour throughout the spring and summer months.

Our quest to provide business support to our BID members has stemmed from providing free training courses to members of your staff, supporting

companies/organisations to navigate their way through grant/financial support throughout Covid, supporting with the development of the Northwich Flood Emergency plan, and general support and advice to assist trading through challenging conditions.

Through this business plan, we have set out our ambitious objectives to build upon the successes we have achieved since 2014. We want to continue to bring forward exciting opportunities to; engage consumers, create great experiences for visitors, and build a stronger more resilient business community.

As a BID team we are determined to deliver a plan that meets the current needs of the business community, by delivering added value and additional investments into our town.

In this draft plan we will represent the interests of you our BID levy payers - this is your opportunity to provide your feedback. Therefore, please take the time to read on and let us know your thoughts by completing the survey.



Ellis Wardle

Owner of the Salthouse NW and The Bull Ring NW and Chair of the Northwich BID Board



THE NORTHWICH BID2 BOARD

The Northwich BID2 Board was established in 2019 and has provided leadership and direction on the delivery of the Northwich BID2 5-year business plan.

Board membership is open to all eligible businesses in the town who are interested in working together to create a more vibrant and prosperous town.

Current members of the Board include:

- ▶ The Salthouse NW / Bullring NW
- ▶ Abda
- ▶ mosshaselhurst Solicitors
- ▶ Northwich Art Shop
- ▶ McDonalds
- ▶ The Salty Dog
- ▶ Next Level Virtual Range
- ▶ CRS Consultants
- ▶ Barons Quay
- ▶ Northwich Town Council
- ▶ Cheshire West and Chester Council



To find out more about Northwich BID 3 and the ballot process please scan the QR code to the left.

HOW IT WORKS

- ▶ All premises with a rateable value greater than or equal to £6k will receive a vote.
- ▶ If a majority vote in favour of the BID (by number and rateable value) the BID is approved for a 5 year period.

VOTE

BID BOARD

- ▶ Businesses within the Northwich BID area form a representative Board to govern the BID.
- ▶ The BID Board includes representation from companies across the Northwich BID area.

- ▶ The BID board guides and directs the BID team who are responsible for the delivery of the BID 5 year business plan
- ▶ New projects and services agreed by the business-led BID board are commissioned in line with the BID proposal.
- ▶ The impact and success of the BID is reported to businesses.

INVEST, BENEFIT AND REPORT

WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)?

- ▶ The BID is a unique opportunity for businesses across the town to take a lead in the management and improvement of Northwich.

ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT LED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR

- ▶ The BID could generate over £1m of further investment into Northwich between September 2024 – August 2029.
- ▶ This investment will be delivered through the Northwich BID Board of BID levy payers, who will be answerable to the wider business community who fund the BID.

WHERE DOES THE INVESTMENT COME FROM?

- ▶ The investment will principally come from a small additional levy paid by each premises (hereditament) within the town with a rateable value above £6,000.
- ▶ Together this could raise an investment of over £1m over 5 years, which we expect will lever additional funding from a range of sources.

WHO DECIDES IF THE BID IS TO BE INTRODUCED?

- ▶ All eligible premises will be able to take part in a 28-day postal ballot to approve or reject the proposal for a BID in Spring 2024.
- ▶ If a majority vote in favour of the proposal from the number of votes cast, and this represents a majority in level of rateable value from votes cast in favour of approving the proposal, the successor BID will come into operation from 1st September 2024, when all premises with a rateable value above £6,000 will pay an annual levy towards the BID.

HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT TO BUSINESS RATES?

- ▶ The BID levy is separate from your business rates. Business rates are a statutory local tax levied to fund expenditure by local and national government. Businesses have no direct control over how these funds are spent.
- ▶ The BID levies once collected will be ring-fenced, then paid over to the BID accountable body and invested in specific projects and services identified in the BID3 Business Plan. The BID funds are all invested under the direction of the BID Board of BID levy payers from across the Northwich BID area.

WHERE DO BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS ALREADY OPERATE?

- ▶ **We already have a Business Improvement District in Northwich which has been operational since September 2014 (BID 1 2014-2019 and BID 2 2019-2024),** however BID regulations limit the lifespan of a BID to five years. Businesses can then choose to develop a successor BID and conduct another ballot on whether to accept or reject the new proposal. Based on the feedback received from the Business community in Northwich during the Autumn of 2023, the existing Northwich BID Board have taken the decision to develop a successor Business Improvement District in Northwich, namely BID 3 to continue to support Northwich.
- ▶ BIDs have been embraced by business communities in Warrington, Wilmslow, Crewe, Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, Stockport and Altrincham where BIDs all operate.
- ▶ More than 350 BIDs exist across the UK, with the majority now being re-approved after five years.

**BID3
VOTE YES!**

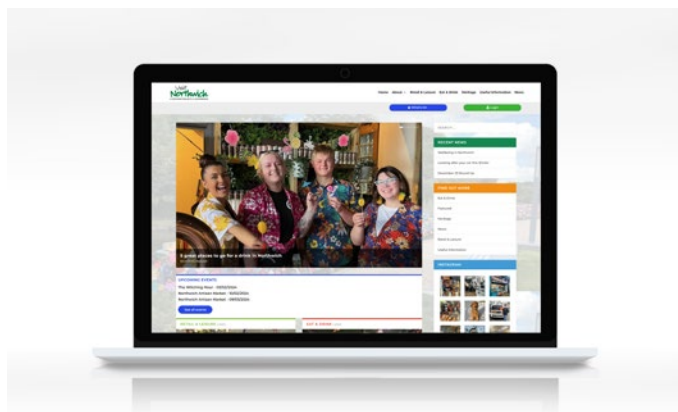


NORTHWICH BID2 SUCCESSES DURING 2019–2024

“WHAT HAS THE BID DONE FOR ME?”

BID Marketing and promotion stats

- Reach of more than 3.5 million consumers between January and December 2023 through our website and social media platforms



- Over 23,000 social media followers:



14,627 followers



4,653 followers



4,381 followers

- Distributed monthly B2B e-newsletters to BID members
- Distributed monthly B2C e-newsletters to consumers
- **Covid Recovery Campaign** – delivering various marketing campaigns and trader spotlights to encourage consumers to “shop local”
- Sustained and effective joined up work between the private, public and 3rd sector

Delivered or financially supported the following events between 2019 – 2023

- **Pina Colada Festival** – garnering national coverage of Northwich on Radio 2’s – The Claudia Winkleman show
- **Christmas Extravaganza** and Christmas and New Year promotions
- **Seasonal street performance and animation** across the town
- **River Festival**
- **Music Festival**
- **Krazy Races**
- **Now Northwich Festival** – a highly recognised event by Arts Council England
- **Artisan Market**
- **Northwich Food Festival**
- **Northwich Festival of Arts**



Safety and Security

- Developed a "Back to" Covid resilience plan for Northwich and distributed "free" hand sanitiser and various free social distancing kits/materials to BID members
- Distributed shopping safety kits for consumers
- Distributed UV scanners to retailers to reduce the distribution of forged bank notes
- Worked in partnership with Cheshire Police, Northwich Town Council, Barons Quay and Northwich Against Business Crime to **tackle anti-social behaviour**
- Funded youth-based activities in the town to tackle anti-social behaviour

Improving the Consumer Experience

- Joint funded annual planting, railing baskets and hanging baskets across Northwich Town during Spring and Summer
- Worked in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council to **develop the open green space** (where the indoor market was located)
- **Successfully entered the Northwest in Bloom RHS Awards winning Silver Gilt in 2021, Gold in 2022**, along with the accolades of Best Large Town and Best Art in the Community Awards, **and Gold in 2023**.



- Funded the Christmas Trees on Town Bridge and Weaver Square between 2019 and 2023
- Funded the refurbishment of the Poppy Installations by local artist Jim Stanley at Pocket Park on the High Street
- Part funded cleansing regimes of the public toilets in Weaver Square
- Funded ad hoc cleansing and proactively managed specific cleansing issues across the town
- Part funded and installed the outdoor canopy, tables and chairs located in Applemarket Place

Business Support

- Distributed £50k of government grant funding to hospitality businesses to enable alfresco dining through the Covid recovery period
- Provided extensive support to businesses with the Covid Government grants. This included support with the application process and the paperwork required to submit an application
- Provided support to the traders who were affected by Storm Christoff floods during 2021 and subsequent work on supporting the council to develop a flood emergency plan for the town
- Delivered 82 training courses and workshops for employees of BID businesses in subjects including:
 - Level 3 Emergency First Aid in the Workplace
 - Window Dressing Consultations
 - Leadership Skills and Management
 - Fire Risk Assessment
 - Level 3 Award in First Aid at Work
 - Fire Marshal
 - Level 3 Award in Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace
 - Energy Saving for your Business Workshop
 - Level 2 Award in Principles of COSHH
 - Level 2 Award in Health & Safety in the Workplace
 - Level 2 Award in Principles of Manual Handling
 - Level 2 Award in Principles of Risk Assessment
 - Level 3 Food Hygiene Course in Catering
 - Makaton Training



209 Delegates Trained



1580 Accredited Training Hours



£41,356 Combined cost saving for BID businesses

NORTHWICH CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

During the autumn of 2023 all businesses across the town had the opportunity to share their views on the Northwich BID through a Business Improvement District consultation. We received more than **90 responses** with businesses and organisations contributing their views, which highlighted the need to

develop additional investment into the marketing and promotion of Northwich, management and delivery of events, initiatives to manage anti-social behaviour and crime prevention, making investments to improve the aesthetics of the town and individual business support.

SOME OF OUR KEY FINDINGS FROM THIS CONSULTATION INCLUDE:



Sustaining and developing our current programme of festivals and events that could bring in over 150,000 additional visitors every year – 89% of respondents stated it is important for BID 3 to make investments to sustain and further develop the annual calendar of events and festivals to ensure we retain and attract new visitors and consumers to Northwich.



Continue to market and promote Northwich as a destination with a difference by raising the profile of the town, the businesses and organisations that operate here along with our history, heritage, greenspaces and waterways - It is imperative that we continue to promote everything about Northwich. Whether that be shining the "spotlight" on our individual businesses, promotion of events and special offers or shouting about the town's growth, we need to ensure that Northwich is seen as a place where you can shop, spend your leisure time, enjoy it's history, heritage, culture and open green spaces.



A good quality experience for our residents and visitors - The quality of the visitor experience can be further improved through investment in the town's aesthetics. 88% of respondents reported that they would like to see investment into town dressing, Christmas trees, planting schemes, hanging/railing baskets and public art installations. All these investments would be added value, above any schemes that are currently delivered by Northwich Town Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council.



Tackling crime, shop lifting and anti-social behaviour - Respondents have highlighted criminal damage, shoplifting and anti-social behaviour as prevalent in the town and impacting upon the consumer experience. We have identified a number of projects and initiatives to support us with managing anti-social behaviour in the town.



Through our consultation, businesses reported opportunities to improve the profile of the BID, and the work it delivers in the town - The BID will develop a communication strategy to raise the profile of its' work to its members and our consumers. We can do this by strengthening our communications through sharing intelligence, information and news across the business community and the Visit Northwich media channels, ensuring information is easily accessed and delivered in a timely manner. The BID will also look at introducing 'Welcome packs' for new businesses, along with improved communication around the benefits and opportunities the BID offers for its members.

BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Our draft plan outlined within this document sets out specific added value projects and services that we believe are needed to continue the work already delivered by the BID.

The plan also shows some of the benefits and opportunities that will exist through businesses supporting our plans for a successor Business Improvement District:

- ✓ £1m+ - Additional added value investment in Northwich
- ✓ Developing and promoting the profile of Northwich as a place for visitors to shop and spend their leisure time
- ✓ Retaining the strong partnership approach to managing the town with Cheshire West and Chester Council and Northwich Town Council
- ✓ Continue to be recognised for the quality of events and festivals that are delivered in Northwich
- ✓ Sustaining the investments into the landscaping and planting schemes across the town and introducing new projects at the key gateways into town
- ✓ Continue our business led agenda and a stronger voice for businesses
- ✓ Attracting new and retaining existing shoppers and visitors both locally and regionally
- ✓ Reducing anti-social behaviour, tackling shoplifting and other town related crime



BUSINESSES IN NORTHWICH REALLY BENEFIT FROM THE BID.

A well run and proactive BID can make such a huge difference to a retail town. In Northwich we are fortunate to have such a positive BID. They offer so much more, with effective and generous promotion of the town and its businesses through various channels.

PHIL BOWER

Owner, Northwich Art shop



WHAT COULD A SUCCESSOR BID FOR NORTHWICH DELIVER?

This draft plan has been broken down into three themes. Under each theme are a list of indicative projects and services that we believe are important in enabling the town to compete in an increasingly competitive and uncertain trading environment.

To enable us to prioritise the essential projects your input will be essential in supporting us to plan and decide which of these services will be funded.

The BID will also seek to attract additional investment from funders to further increase the level of investment in our town.



“I’ve seen the benefit that Northwich BID have provided to the town, specifically the hospitality sector. The Pina Colada Festival and the Christmas Extravaganza stand out as big days in the calendar, but the input from the BID into all of the events in the town has made a massive difference in driving footfall into town and as a hospitality business that has been a massive boost to us”

CHRIS MUNDIE
The Salty Dog

THEME 1

DESTINATION WITH A DIFFERENCE

We want to further develop the customer journey experience, ensuring that Northwich remains relevant and attractive to a broad range of consumers and visitors.

Through BID 3 we will develop and deliver our events and marketing strategy for Northwich, striving to increase our reach and engagement over social media channels to in excess of 3.5 million consumers. We will promote Northwich's enviable events calendar throughout the year alongside the town's cultural assets, heritage and numerous green spaces, all whilst shining a spotlight on our town's businesses – the beating heart of Northwich.

Since 2014 the BID has been instrumental in raising the profile of Northwich through the 'Visit Northwich' brand. We have achieved this through:

- Managing and maintaining the dedicated website www.visitnorthwich.co.uk
- Managing and developing the Visit Northwich social platforms on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram
- Creating and delivering a dedicated year-round programme of event marketing and promotional campaigns to raise the profile of Northwich



BID 3 will grow and develop the 'Visit Northwich' brand through:

- Maintaining and growing the Visit Northwich consumer website to raise the profile of Northwich across the North West and beyond
- Delivering further investment in social media to grow the online reach of businesses in Northwich across key social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, and X)
- Creating the Northwich annual "What's on Guide" in print and digitally, distributing to over 10,000 people and key outlets in addition to hosting on the Visit Northwich website

BID3 MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT





“ THE NORTHWICH BID HAS BEEN FUNDAMENTAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN. ”

Not only have they delivered and supported great events, which continue to increase footfall to the town and the businesses within, they have a sustained and growing relationship with all local businesses and will always go the extra mile to help them. I'm proud to work with the BID, and will continue for a third term.

PAUL ROWLAND
Store Manager, Superdrug

- Continue to shine a spotlight on all our wonderful traders in Northwich and feature across all the digital platforms
- Investment into professional videography and photography production for use in promoting the town and its resident organisations
- Development of consumer online and hardcopy bulletins to promote relevant information including town events, special promotions, business promotion and good news stories
- Targeted marketing campaigns to reach different and new audiences of consumers across Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside

Over the last 10 years the Northwich BID, Northwich Town Council, Barons Quay and other key partners have worked in partnership to develop an enviable events programme in Northwich. To sustain the investment in these key events the BID is proposing to either fund or part fund the following events and festivals in Northwich.

Events and Festivals – BID3 could deliver or financially support the following annual portfolio of high-quality events and festivals which may include:

- Pina Colada Festival
- Christmas Extravaganza
- Now Northwich
- Music Events
- New events that celebrate the history and heritage of Northwich
- Northwich Arts Festival
- Northwich River Festival
- Seasonal Street Performance and Animation at:
 - Easter
 - Halloween



THEME 2

DELIVERING AN ENHANCED EXPERIENCE FOR CONSUMERS AND VISITORS

Our research and consultation with businesses has identified a range of opportunities to create an enhanced experience for consumers and visitors. We believe a successor BID can achieve this through:

1. Tackling crime, shoplifting and anti-social behaviour in Northwich Town
2. Delivering environmental enhancements to sustain the level of investment already delivered to improve the aesthetics of Northwich town

Tackling crime, shoplifting and anti-social behaviour

Through BID 3 we will develop our relationship with Northwich Against Business Crime. The BID will seek to make investments into the scheme which could provide the following support to BID members.

- ▶ Free Training in various topics including:
 - ▶ How to prevent shoplifting
 - ▶ Managing conflict
 - ▶ National Crime Behaviour
 - ▶ Avoiding Cyber Crime
 - ▶ Shop Security Testing

- ▶ Disc system
- ▶ Discounted Radio Network scheme
- ▶ Free to attend town briefings

We will work with our businesses, Cheshire Police and other relevant agencies to manage anti-social behaviour in the town. We will review the current youth-based activities provision and seek to make investments in potential projects by engaging our young people. Projects could include:

- ▶ Landscape/environmental/planting
- ▶ Street/Wall Art
- ▶ Performance/Dance



THE BID HAS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN HELPING TOWN CENTRE BUSINESSES THROUGH THE UPS AND DOWNS THEY HAVE FACED OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS

The marketing and promotion of Northwich is crucial to encourage visitors into the town and the effectiveness of the events and activities the team put on themselves as well as the support they give to others really helps to drive footfall. We fully support BID 3 and all that it aims to deliver.

JESS SAVAS
Store Manager, Clarks

Aesthetics, Wayfinding and Environmental

Enhancements - we will make investments into sustaining and improving the aesthetics across the town through town dressing, new planting schemes, hanging/railing baskets and public art installations.

- ▶ We will continue to invest in the landscaping, town bunting, sustainable planting schemes, hanging/railing baskets across the town, public art installations, in addition to looking at investments in town dressing around the key gateways to the town.
 - ▶ We will retain our annual application to the RHS In Bloom Awards and develop our portfolio of projects with stakeholders and community groups across Northwich, ensuring our town looks its very best.
- ▶ We will work in partnership with key stakeholders to develop improved ways of navigating visitors around the town. Projects could include:
 - ▶ The introduction of town maps
 - ▶ Improved directional and interpretational signage
 - ▶ Digital wayfinding software
 - ▶ We will continue to fund the Christmas Trees at Town Bridge and Weaver Square on an annual basis

VOTE YES! FOR BID3



THEME 3

A VIBRANT AND SUPPORTED BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The BID will continue to bring together and support the town's business community ensuring all businesses have the opportunity for their voices to be heard.

BID 3 WILL:

- **Deliver a private sector led partnership** – The BID will ensure the private sector led BID Board continues its work to bring together the views and interests of BID Levy payers.
- **Provide a BID operational delivery team** - Providing a first point of contact for your business, providing support to resolve issues and explore opportunities. The team will also be responsible for the delivery of the 5-year BID business plan.
- **Distribute regular news and information of relevance to Northwich town businesses** - The BID will provide regular updates and information on news, events, business support opportunities in the town.
- **Deliver new insights and data about Northwich consumers** – The BID will consider options for investment into footfall and consumer data to better understand our consumers shopping habits, where they come from and what demographics they represent.
- **Provide free and low-cost business training** – Deliver investments into free or low-cost training courses for your employees. These could include First Aid at Work, Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace, Health and Safety in the Workplace, Manual Handling, COSHH Training, Fire Marshal Training, Allergen Awareness Training, Food Hygiene and Catering, Visual Merchandise, Customer Service, Digital Marketing, Social Media, Risk Assessment and Leadership Skills.



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BUDGET OPTIONS

The added value investment that will be generated from the BID over the five years will be circa **£1m+**, with the potential to leverage additional investment from other sources including the public sector, grant awarding bodies and commercial opportunities.

An exemption is planned for any premises / hereditaments with a rateable value lower than **£6,000**. We are also considering a **maximum cap of £15k**. Management costs for delivery of the BID will be no more than 20% of the overall budget, to ensure that the significant majority of investment is targeted towards delivery of tangible added value services and projects.

Governance and Management of the Business Improvement District funds will be governed and directed by a Board of representative businesses and premises occupiers from across the Business Improvement District area.

Any eligible business will be able to put a representative forward for appointment onto the Board, which will be elected through an annual meeting of members of the Business Improvement District.

£1m+ added value
investment over the
five years

BID levy proposed
at 1.95% of RV with a
maximum cap of £15k

Premises with a rateable
value lower than £6,000
are exempt

BASELINES AND ADDED VALUE

A benefit of a BID being approved for businesses is the statutory baseline agreements we will receive from Cheshire West and Chester Council and other statutory bodies.

These are required to ensure that funds from the BID do not fund council or other statutory services.

All funds raised by the BID will support added value investments into Northwich town that without the BID would otherwise not be realised.



THE PROPOSED NORTHWICH BID3 AREA



Since 2014 the Northwich BID has delivered huge successes for Northwich businesses and the local community, increasing visitor numbers, creating a strong business led partnership, improving the image and environmental quality of the town and supporting projects that create a safer and more secure town.

To build on these 10 years of success we are proposing that the next BID for Northwich (BID3 - starting September 2024) will embrace and support a far wider community of Northwich businesses, all of whom we believe will benefit from our proposed £1million+ business led investment into Northwich between 2024 and 2029.

THE BENEFIT FOR ALL BUSINESSES WILL INCLUDE:

1. Increased and more impactful destination marketing, PR, events and festivals
2. Greater investment into projects that tackle anti-social behavior, crime and shop lifting
3. Additional funding into image enhancements and the look and feel of Northwich as a destination
4. Investment into creating a stronger, more inclusive business led partnership
5. Ensuring that Northwich continues to evolve and attract greater numbers of consumers and visitors

More information and your thoughts on this plan for a BID 3

We want your feedback on this plan for BID 3. You can feedback online at www.northwichbid.co.uk and click on the draft business plan consultation link.

Finally, to receive regular updates about the project, subscribe to the Northwich BID Team e-bulletin by emailing: nikki.halliday@groundwork.org.uk



Full details are available on the Northwich BID website. Scan the QR code to learn more and share your views.