



# Northwich BID Annual Report

2024-25





## ABOUT NORTHWICH BID

Northwich Business Improvement District (BID) is a proven partnership between businesses and a range of partners organisations operating across a defined area of the town.

The BID's vision for Northwich is to be a destination of choice where business and community thrive together, celebrated for its distinctive character, vibrant cultural life, and successful town centre that attracts people of all ages to visit, stay longer and spend locally.

Since 2014, the BID activity has attracted tens of thousands of additional visitors, consumers and investors to Northwich, while reaching millions more with positive messaging through social media.

Funded through a small levy on business rates, BID investment delivers projects and services over and above those provided by the local authority, with BID3 continuing this work and committing around £1.5 million of direct investment into the local economy through to August 2029.

## HOW THE BID OPERATES

The Northwich BID is overseen by an elected Executive Board, representing local businesses. The Board works on a voluntary basis under agreed terms of reference and has contracted Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire & Merseyside to manage the day-to-day delivery of BID projects. The Board meets six times a year and reports on progress annually at the AGM.

## THE BID LEVY

All non-domestic ratepayers in the BID's geographic area with a rateable value above £6,000 are liable for a BID levy. This includes all organisations that occupy a rateable property (hereditament) and property owners/leaseholders (where properties are vacant) in the designated area. The BID levy started at 1.95% of rateable value for all hereditaments and increased by 0.05% of a hereditament's rateable value each 12 months from April 2025.



**The Northwich BID was approved in August 2024, with 83% of organisations voting in favour for its third term, representing 71% of the rateable value of those who voted.**



# YOUR BID TEAM

<b>Lynn Riley</b>	Northwich BID Manager	<a href="mailto:Lynn.Riley@groundwork.co.uk">Lynn.Riley@groundwork.co.uk</a>
<b>Jon Houghton</b>	Assistant Project Manager	<a href="mailto:Jon.Houghton@groundwork.org.uk">Jon.Houghton@groundwork.org.uk</a>
<b>Laura Diffey</b>	BID Programme Manager	<a href="mailto:Laura.Diffey@groundwork.org.uk">Laura.Diffey@groundwork.org.uk</a>
<b>Jane Hough</b>	Deputy Director for BIDs & Business Services	<a href="mailto:Jane.Hough@groundwork.org.uk">Jane.Hough@groundwork.org.uk</a>
<b>Adam Gerrard</b>	Operations Manager	<a href="mailto:Adam.Gerrard@groundwork.org.uk">Adam.Gerrard@groundwork.org.uk</a>
<b>Stephanie Leese</b>	Business Team Co-ordinator	<a href="mailto:Stephanie.Leese@groundwork.org.uk">Stephanie.Leese@groundwork.org.uk</a>

# YOUR BID TEAM

<b>Ellis Wardle – Chair</b>	Salthouse & The Bull Ring
<b>Abda Obeid-Findley – Deputy Chair</b>	Abda's
<b>Graham Allen</b>	Sainsbury's
<b>Russell Figgis</b>	Barons Quay
<b>Paul Heatley*</b>	Cheshire Police
<b>Louise Hough</b>	CRS Consultants
<b>Julie Kirkham</b>	Brio Leisure
<b>Gerard Rooney</b>	Mosshaselhurst
<b>Paul Rowland</b>	Superdrug
<b>Chris Shaw*</b>	Northwich Town Council
<b>Kim Smith</b>	Radio Northwich
<b>Lindsey Smith*</b>	Cheshire West & Chester Council
<b>Cllr Sam Naylor*</b>	Cheshire West & Chester Council

\*Advisory members of the board and have no voting rights.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE BID CHAIR, ELLIS WARDLE

---

As Chair of the BID Board and a local business owner, I was delighted by the strong support for a third term of Northwich BID. Running a town centre business gives me a clear view of the opportunities and challenges we all face, and I am proud of what we have achieved together in this first year of BID3.

Our focus remains on delivering the programmes and initiatives you voted for, ensuring they bring real impact and value for every levy-paying business. From headline events like the Pina Colada Festival and Christmas Extravaganza, to practical support with marketing, training, safety initiatives, and town centre improvements, our work is all about creating a thriving, resilient environment for businesses of all sizes.

What makes Northwich truly special is the collaboration behind it all. The success of Visit Northwich is built on strong partnerships between local businesses, the BID team, and our community stakeholders – together, we showcase our town, attract visitors, and amplify pride in Northwich.

Looking ahead, with significant public sector investment planned for the town, the BID will continue to be a strong voice for our area and the business

community, ensuring your priorities are heard and represented. With an exciting calendar of events, targeted marketing, and a wide range of business support, we remain committed to helping you connect, grow, and share best practice.

I encourage all businesses to get involved, make the most of what the BID offers, and join us in continuing to make Northwich a vibrant place to live, work, shop, and visit.



**Ellis Wardle,**  
**Chair of the BID**



# A MESSAGE FROM THE NORTHWICH BID MANAGER, LYNN RILEY



Joining the BID team in April 2025 gave me the opportunity to look with fresh eyes at everything the BID has delivered over the years, and it was truly an eye-opener. Everyone involved can be immensely proud of the energy, enthusiasm and breadth of events and activities that have been brought to life for the benefit of our town.

Year 1 of the third BID term has been about building on these strong foundations. For me personally, it has meant hitting the ground running and getting to know our businesses and partners by listening closely to what makes Northwich a destination with a difference for residents, visitors, and the business community alike. Despite challenging times nationally for town centres, Northwich continues to punch above its weight, standing out as a vibrant, attractive and welcoming place.

Over the past year, the BID's ambitious programme of events, activities and enhancements has helped present Northwich at its very best, increasing footfall and supporting local businesses. From large-scale events such as Northwich's unique Pina Colada Festival and NOW Northwich, to lower-cost but highly impactful initiatives including seasonal trails and free

family activities throughout the summer, our focus has remained on creating experiences that encourage people to visit, stay longer and return more often.

It has also been a pleasure to discover the commitment from the partners we work with every day. The combined efforts of the BID and the Town Council help create a strong sense of pride in our town centre, seen in everything from floral displays and colourful bunting to the Christmas decorations and tree-lighting extravaganza. The new team at Barons Quay started at the same time and are great allies in staging events that bring in the crowds. The Rotary is a well known for its great events that generate funding for local causes and Northwich Toppers add their unique colour and character with their hand made decorations across the town.

This year also marked a step change in how we tell the story of Northwich and what makes it special. With the introduction of a new marketing team for the Visit Northwich brand, our digital reach and media impact have grown significantly, reaching new audiences and strengthening local engagement.

Supporting our businesses sits at the heart of everything we do. Through access to free training, clearer communication about issues and opportunities, stronger partnerships, and a more representative BID Board, we continue to focus on ensuring levy payers see real value from their investment.

Finally, I would like to thank all our businesses for your warm welcome and continued support, enthusiasm and pride in Northwich that we share with our partners and stakeholders. This truly is a special town, and I look forward to building on this success in Year 2 of Northwich BID3.

**Lynn Riley,**  
Northwich BID Manager



# CREATING A DESTINATION WITH A DIFFERENCE

The trading environment continues to be challenging for many town centre businesses, with cost-of-living pressures and the growth of online retail influencing consumer behaviour. In response, the BID appointed a new marketing team to strengthen digital marketing and raise awareness of Northwich's diverse offer, encouraging people to visit and spend locally.

Between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025, Visit Northwich delivered a step change in visibility, engagement and pride in the town. Through a strategic and highly active approach to digital content, event promotion, business engagement and place marketing, the brand reached wider audiences than ever before and significantly enhanced Northwich's local and regional profile.

## ONLINE AND IN PRINT

A strong focus on the people behind local businesses has proved highly effective. Over the past 12 months, more than 130 businesses were featured across BID social media channels, with many more promoted through blogs and monthly newsletters, increasing engagement, visibility and bringing a more human face to Northwich's retail, professional services and hospitality offer

### STATS FOR 2024/25

FACEBOOK STATS	INSTAGRAM STATS
6.5M views	451,300 views
3,400 new followers (210% increase from previous year)	1.6M reach
66,700 interactions	1300 new followers
82,900 visits to the page	13,100 profile visits
	8,500 interactions

Businesses to Watch compares Visit Northwich to similar pages in other towns. Social metrics now rate Visit Northwich in 3rd position on Facebook behind Visit Manchester and Visit Cheshire and 1st position for Instagram. Visit Northwich is performing well against considerably larger brands.

The Visit Northwich website continues to perform well and has been further developed to improve the user experience when booking activities and participating with online initiatives. A new business listings section has been introduced, initially focusing on food and drink establishments, with plans to expand to all businesses within the BID area. Businesses can manage and update their own information, ensuring accurate and relevant content for visitors.

The monthly business-to-consumer e-newsletter remains a key marketing tool, with subscriber numbers continuing to grow over 5000. Performance consistently exceeds industry benchmarks, achieving strong open and click-through rates and providing an effective channel for promoting events, businesses, and positive news from across the town.

## PRINT

In May the What's On Guide was delivered to a targeted 10,000 households in adjacent areas, with a focus on reaching new audiences living on Northwich's newer housing estates. This approach helped extend awareness of the town's offer beyond the town centre and attract new visitors.



To support local hospitality during the NOW Festival, the BID also produced a dedicated Food & Drink Guide featuring all hospitality businesses within the BID area. Showcasing over 50 venues, the pocket guides were distributed to the festival audience, through local businesses and into targeted residential areas, helping to drive footfall, increase dwell time and maximise the event's economic impact.

The BID led the marketing for key town centre events in 2024/2025, including the Festival of Arts, Summer Activities, Christmas Extravaganza and Pina Colada Festival, alongside a range of smaller activities. Additional support was provided to partner-led events such as the Artisan Markets, Verdin Park Music Festival, River Festival, and Firefest.

Coverage in the print media continues to grow. Highlights include a special feature in Cheshire Life in July 2025 showing why Northwich is a destination with a difference

# ENHANCING THE EXPERIENCE FOR CONSUMERS & VISITORS

## BLOOMING MARVELLOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

The BID continues to enhance Northwich town centre creating a vibrant, welcoming town centre that residents, visitors and businesses can be proud of.

### FLORAL DISPLAYS & PLANTING

Winter 2024 saw bedding plants refreshed across the town, followed by a 40% increase in BID-funded summer planting in 2025 to reflect the expanded BID3 area.

This included:

- Subways, including the raised tree area
- Memorial Court frontage
- Brick planters in the town centre
- 12 black tub planters
- 62 half-round lamppost planters
- 78 hanging baskets
- 12 barrier baskets (Dane Street)
- 5-tier planter (Northwich Library)

Watering is supported by Northwich Town Council with a 50% summer discount, keeping displays vibrant all season. While the BID took a planned sabbatical from the North West in Bloom Awards in 2025, previous entries have brought community pride and multiple Gold awards, including Best Large Town and Best Art in the Community. Plans are already underway for an even more spectacular programme in 2025/2026.



### SEASONAL ENHANCEMENTS

Colourful bunting brightens the town during spring and summer. The BID continues to fund Christmas trees at key gateways and extended festive lighting ensure Northwich shines bright through the winter months.

### CLEANLINESS & SAFETY

The BID has funded targeted cleansing by Northwich Town Council, timed to major events and addressing fly-tipping, service yard tidiness, and untidy land in public areas. A deep clean of the Town Centre and Station Road gateway was also completed. Maintaining these shared spaces ensures the town is presented at its best to visitors, residents, and potential investors.

### PEST & FLOOD MANAGEMENT

Working with Cheshire West & Chester Council, the BID has supported initiatives to manage vermin and reduce flood risk in key areas, contributing to a safe, attractive, and welcoming town centre.

## STRONGER AND SAFER TOGETHER



Over the past 12 months, the BID's strong partnership commitment to community safety has helped Northwich be and feel a safer and more welcoming town for businesses and visitors. Close collaboration with the Northwich Police Team, Northwich Town Council, and Cheshire West & Chester Council has addressed shoplifting, theft, and anti-social behaviour, ensuring confidence for traders and shoppers alike.

The BID works closely with businesses to encourage reporting of incidents and the reality on the ground, helping to make the case for targeted statutory resources. This approach has seen the welcome deployment of Community Safety Team members to Northwich, with a particular focus of supporting the reduction of town centre criminality and rough sleeping.

### KEY BID INITIATIVES INCLUDE:

- Funding counterfeit note scanners to help combat fraud
- Hosting a meeting between the Police & Crime Commissioner and local businesses to explore new safety measures including securing Safer Streets funding for increased patrols over the summer months
- Supporting Safer Business Action Week in November 2025, with targeted business visits
- Contributing to a growing number of banning orders against repeat offenders

The BID team has also strengthened relationships with Licensing & Enforcement and CCTV to help tackle anti-social behaviour and environmental crimes.

Our partnership with Northwich Against Business Crime (NABC) continues to grow, with the BID attending monthly meetings to feed into future service development and ensure businesses have access to effective crime prevention support.

# LET US ENTERTAIN YOU!

## EVENTS PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

### CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA

The annual Christmas Extravaganza made headlines as one of the few events to go ahead despite Storm Bert, highlighting the strength of the partnership between Northwich Town Council, Barons Quay, and Northwich Rotary Club. With a last-minute move under cover, visitors still enjoyed the ice rink, free games, and craft activities, while local businesses embraced the festive spirit through the popular 'Dress to Impress' window display contest. The lights were switched on, and Northwich shone bright for the season.

### NOW NORTHWICH

Returning in 2025, the arts-based, community-focused Now Northwich event kicked off the summer season. Delivered in partnership with Cheshire Dance, it showcased Northwich as a creative destination, increased footfall, and supported local businesses. The BID secured Arts Council funding to support delivery for both the 2024 and 2025 events.

### POKÉMON HUNT

The Northwich Toppers, a unique community group of dedicated volunteer knitters, bring creativity and joy to the town through their craft. Their most popular initiative, the Knitted Pokémon Hunt, has captured the imagination of residents and visitors alike, with colourful handmade characters hidden around Northwich for families and fans to find. This charming and inventive project not only encourages people to explore the town but also highlights the power of local creativity and community spirit in making Northwich a vibrant and welcoming place.

### RIVER FESTIVAL

Delivered by Northwich Rotary Club, the River Festival attracted large crowds to the town centre. The BID supported the event with marketing, team entries, financial management, and duck ticket sales. The Visit Northwich team emerged victorious, as visitors celebrated the town's rivers while raising funds for local causes.

### NORTHWICH FESTIVAL OF ARTS

The month-long Festival of Arts returned in 2025 in partnership with Visual Arts Cheshire. The BID-funded workshops, led by locally commissioned artists, were free to attend, while the Summer Art Trail ran through more than 50 businesses, showcasing Northwich as a hub of arts and culture. Family-friendly workshops were hosted by town centre businesses, bringing creativity to the streets and engaging audiences of all ages.

### SUMMER FUN ACTIVITIES

Every Saturday during the summer break, the BID funded a variety of family-focused activities, including climbing walls, participatory art, remote-controlled car races, cartoon caricaturists, and musical competitions. These events brought vibrancy, energy, and increased footfall to the town centre, creating a lively and engaging summer programme for all.



### PINA COLADA FESTIVAL NORTHWICH'S SIGNATURE EVENT

Year 1 of BID3 set new records with the biggest ever Pina Colada Festival, Northwich's unique, family-friendly event that celebrates everything our town has to offer. The festival was held on 16th August 2025 and has become a true signature event – the only one of its kind in the world – and it just keeps growing bigger and better each year.

PCF 2025 transformed the streets into a full-scale town party, with music, dancing, and family fun for all ages. The parade was louder and more spectacular than ever, from 12 drummers in 2024 to over 100 in 2025 – making sure that Northwich truly had its salsa on!! With the invaluable support of Northwich Town Council, Barons Quay, and Northwich Rotary Club, the festival was delivered seamlessly across the town, including a popular beach attraction by the library on Witton Street and two stages at either end of the town centre.

Hospitality businesses reported record-breaking sales and footfall and our thanks to all local BID members who brought their own unique offerings to the event, showcasing Northwich at its very best. The BID deliberately timed activities to finish at 6pm, encouraging visitors to continue the celebration in town's restaurants, bars, and cafes.

Thanks to this incredible collaboration between the BID, stakeholders, and local businesses, the Pina Colada Festival has cemented itself as a firm favourite for visitors and traders alike. Our marketing campaign for this event featuring many fun elements and special appearance reached a media audience of 18million across the UK with 1.48m views on Facebook, 200k on Instagram and 668 new followers. Planning is already underway for 2026, with ambitions to make the festival bigger, bolder, and even more impactful.

# A VIBRANT & SUPPORTED BUSINESS COMMUNITY

As part of our commitment to supporting local businesses, the BID provides access to a range of training opportunities designed to upskill staff and strengthen your business.

BID levy payers can access a range of free and discounted accredited national training courses throughout the year, and details of our upcoming sessions can be found below.

## THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, THE BID PROVIDED FREE, ACCREDITED TRAINING TO ITS MEMBERS, COVERING ESSENTIAL WORKPLACE SKILLS:

- Level 2 Award in Health & Safety in the Workplace
- Level 3 Award in First Aid at Work
- Level 3 in Mental Health First Aid at Work
- Level 3 Paediatric First Aid
- Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid in the Workplace
- Fire Marshall Training
- Level 2 Award in Principles of Manual Handling
- Level 2 Award in Working at Height
- Food Safety & Hygiene Level 2 for Catering & Retail
- How to improve your food hygiene rating
- GDPR training
- Leadership & Management training

The training delivered an equivalent saving to BID businesses of £15,620.00 in costs saved with 70 employees trained across 555 accredited hours. Further access is available to a wide variety of free online accredited courses.

Strong collaboration with the local authority enabled the BID to support businesses in engaging with council services, providing a clear line of advice and guidance on operational matters. The BID also acts as a voice for Northwich businesses, raising local and national issues that impact sustainability, supporting grant applications, and offering guidance to help the business community thrive.

Investment in advanced footfall analysis tools has enabled the BID to monitor town centre performance, understand visitor patterns, benchmark against comparator towns, and inform future events and initiatives.

In addition, the BID trialled task-and-finish groups focused on key areas including events, marketing and promotion, business support, and town centre safety. While participation outside the working day remains a challenge, new initiatives around business networking and B2B opportunities are under development to further strengthen connections within the business community.



# WHAT WE PLAN TO DELIVER IN YEAR 2 OF BID3

Looking ahead, we will continue to raise the profile of the town through the Visit Northwich brand, delivering targeted marketing activity and campaigns across digital platforms and social media to attract visitors and encourage local spend.

As set out in the BID3 Business Plan, the introduction of a Customer Service Award will be delivered in Year 2, recognising excellence and celebrating the people who help make Northwich such a welcoming place.

Our programme of events and flagship festivals will continue, building on the insight and experience gained in recent years. We will focus on those events that have proved most effective in supporting local businesses and enhancing the town's reputation, including the much-loved Pina Colada Festival. Partnership working remains central to our approach, and we will continue to work closely with Northwich Town Council, Rotary, Barons Quay and a wide range of community groups.

A key investment this year will be the renewal of Christmas lighting across the BID area. Working in partnership with Northwich Town Council, we will deliver enhanced, energy-efficient lighting, including new tree and roadside displays, ensuring the town is presented at its best while reducing long-term costs and risk.

Plans are also underway for a refreshed summer planting scheme to ensure the town centre's floral displays are vibrant and impactful. In partnership with the Town Council, we will explore the creation of a new town centre corridor

designed to engage families and businesses, impress visitors and support Northwich's In Bloom ambitions.

Our enhanced cleansing programme will continue, with a focus on key gateways and public thoroughfares, helping to maintain a clean, welcoming and well-presented town centre.

We will work with partner agencies to expand training opportunities for businesses, complementing our existing accredited provision with additional support in areas such as digital marketing, cyber safety and business management.

Town centre safety remains a shared priority. Our work with the Northwich Against Business Crime partnership will continue to focus on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, ensuring that Northwich remains a safe and welcoming place to work, visit and do business.

We'll look for opportunities to attract inward investment and external funding that benefit the BID priorities.

Finally, as significant public sector investment comes forward, we will ensure that the voice of business is heard. We will create new opportunities for engagement and networking, strengthening B2B connections within the BID membership and providing more ways for businesses to share feedback, collaborate and exchange best practice.

Together, we will continue to build on Northwich's strengths and deliver a town centre that thrives for businesses, residents and visitors alike.



## MARKETING & PR SUPPORT FOR BID BUSINESSES

**As a BID member, your business can benefit from a full suite of marketing and PR services designed to raise your profile, engage audiences, and secure valuable media coverage.**

Over the past year, our dedicated Marketing and PR team has been central to promoting the **Visit Northwich** brand, highlighting local businesses, and sharing the latest town news. This work has resulted in hundreds of features across leading local media to include; Cheshire Life, the Northwich Guardian, Cheshire Live, Mid Cheshire Independent, Marketing Cheshire, So Cheshire, Manchester News and North West Business Insider, reaching thousands of readers each week.

Our digital channels continue to thrive, with Facebook and Instagram now generating **6 million interactions** over 12 months. This reach gives businesses the opportunity to connect with a highly engaged audience across Cheshire and beyond. Whether it's

promoting a special offer, launching a new menu, advertising vacancies, celebrating achievements or announcing an event, our team ensures your updates reach the widest audience possible.

Newsletters to both consumers and businesses continue to grow, providing tailored updates on town news, events, and offers. The **Visit Northwich blog** and **What's On page** also offer excellent visibility with the latter appearing on page 1 of Google for "What's on in Northwich." Businesses can upload their own events or send details to the team to share.

From seasonal events like Valentine's Day and Easter to headline attractions such as the Pina Colada Festival, the BID ensures your business and the town are showcased at their best. With Visit Northwich marketing and PR support, your business has the tools and platforms to increase engagement, visibility, and reach.

Contact us: [marketing@visitnorthwich.co.uk](mailto:marketing@visitnorthwich.co.uk)

DM us on social media: @visitnorthwich

# INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2024/2025

INCOME	FORECAST	ACTUAL
BID Levy Contribution	£247,155	£311,268
Arts Council	-	£84,266
Other Income	£35,000	£13,550
Bank Interest	-	£1,398
Prior Year Surplus	-	£10,806
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£282,155</b>	<b>£421,288</b>

EXPENDITURE	FORECAST	ACTUAL
Theme One - Investment into Marketing and Promotion	£60,000	£72,060
Theme Two - Events, crime prevention and environmental improvement	£147,500	£254,166
Theme Three - Business support	£34,000	£25,806
Project management and administration	£30,700	£48,125
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£272,200</b>	<b>£400,157</b>

<b>SURPLUS +/-</b>	<b>£9,955</b>	<b>£20,792</b>
--------------------	---------------	----------------

There is accrued expenditure of £339 for the Northwich BID external accountancy fee.





## NORTHWICH BID WORKS WITH KEY PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS



## FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NORTHWICH BID AND HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED, PLEASE CONTACT:

### LYNN RILEY

Northwich BID Project Manager  
lynn.riley@groundwork.org.uk  
07592 774163

### MARKETING SUPPORT

marketing@visitnorthwich.co.uk  
or message via socials @VisitNorthwich

### TRAINING ENQUIRIES

Stephanie.leese@groundwork.org.uk  
www.visitnorthwich.co.uk  
www.northwichbid.co.uk