



# **Warrington BID Annual Report**

## **2018-2019**



**WARRINGTON** | **BID**



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# Message from the chair

## WE ARE ONE!

...and that’s a great theme for Warrington BID as we celebrate our first 12 months of working together in partnership in this annual report. With funding from businesses across the town centre, we have hit the ground running and in our first year delivered lots of great projects and improvements including festivals, events and solutions to make the town look better and feel safer.

However, none of these activities would have been possible without the collaboration and the ‘can do’ attitude of a range of partners, large and small, coming together and collectively taking pride in making Warrington a great place to do business.

Transformation is all around us and there’s a buzz of change in the air. This is an exciting time for the Business Improvement District to play a key role in Warrington. I’m delighted to be chairing such a great team of proud, passionate and talented partners from organisations across my home town.

**Dawn McElroy**  
**Chair of Warrington BID**





# Warrington Business Improvement District

A Business Improvement District (BID) was identified by Warrington & Co and Warrington Borough Council as an ideal mechanism to develop a dynamic business environment in Warrington Town Centre.

The area was defined in 2018 and represents the town as it was then. The boundary of the map remains the same for the full term of the BID.

In August 2018 Warrington Town Centre businesses voted in favour of a proposal to establish the BID. This provided the mechanism for a £1.8 million investment in the area over a 5 year term, addressing issues important to businesses.

Consultations with businesses in 2018 identified 4 key themes which would be addressed by the Warrington BID business plan:

- 1. Marketing a Vibrant Town Centre
- 2. Safer Town Centre
- 3. Accessible Warrington
- 4. Doing Business in Warrington

## Warrington BID Members

All businesses and organisations within the defined area of the BID with a rateable value of £15,000 or more are required to pay the BID levy each year based on occupancy and the rateable value on 1st August each year. The BID levy is currently 1.5% of the rateable value.

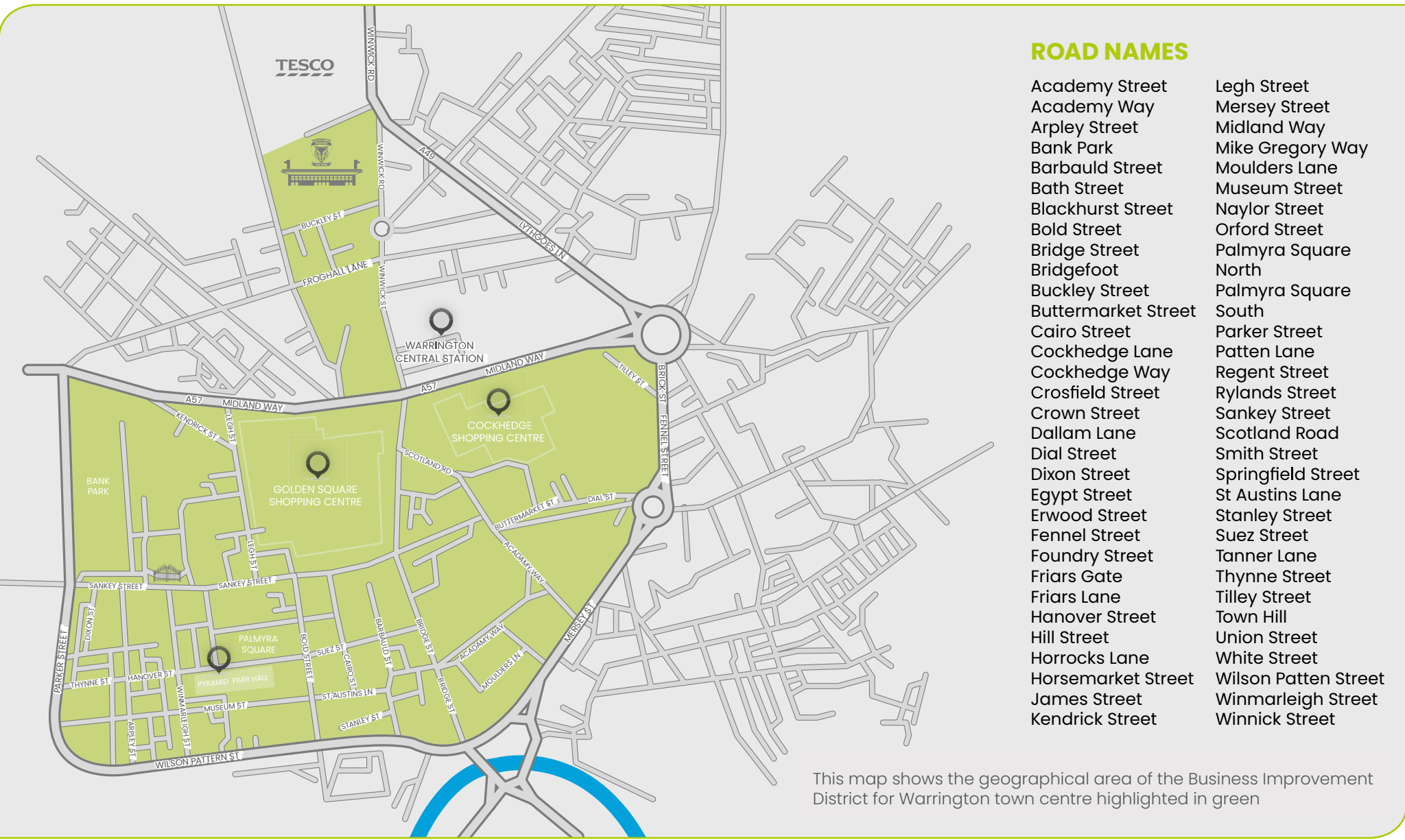
### Voluntary BID Members

Businesses that are too small to pay the levy can opt to join the BID and become members on a voluntary basis. The annual charge is the same (1.5%) of the rateable value and expires on 31st July each year.

### Benefits

- Free training courses
- Free PR and publicity
- Access to marketing materials for BID campaigns
- Opportunity to take part in BID business planning, feedback ideas and discussions

## The BID Area





# BID Management

Warrington BID operates as a project managed by Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside (CLM) as the accountable body looking after the delivery of the project, governance, finance, HR, insurance etc. Decisions are made by an Executive BID Board made up of representatives from businesses and organisations across the town.

## Executive BID Board

Chair: Dawn McElroy, Primark  
Ian Cox, Golden Square  
Emma Hutchinson, Culture Warrington  
Debbie Wheatcroft, The Vet  
Mark Walton, Skipton  
Stephen Nickson, DATS  
Ian Fitzsimons, The Auction Rooms, Acoustic Café  
Neil Drum, Cheshire Police  
Mark Weall, Warrington Wolves  
Paul Blaney, Warrington Market  
Cllr Tom Jennings, Warrington Borough Council  
Lynne Bennett, The Gateway  
Stephen Fitzsimons, Warrington & Co

The BID Project is managed by Greville Kelly and Jane Hough from Groundwork CLM. The Business Plan is delivered by an operational BID Manager, Harriet Roberts. Businesses are supported by a Communications and Marketing Officer, Isabelle Smith.

# Theme One: Marketing a Vibrant Town Centre

## Festivals and Events

### Achievements

With an established calendar of annual events there is always something happening to draw a crowd in Warrington. From our famous Walking Day and regular street markets to the Contemporary Arts Festival and Christmas Lights Switch On.

We worked in partnership with partners at Culture Warrington to support 'Take Me Back to Dear Old Blighty', a Heritage Lottery Fund project to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War with community activities across the town centre.

Warrington BID was the headline sponsor of Warrington Music Festival in Golden Square in May 2019. During a weekend of Christmas Maker stalls in December, the BID curated a cavalcade of street performers and fairground organs to bring a festive atmosphere and animation to the markets and delivered a 12 Ways of Christmas campaign trail.

### Priorities for Year 2

Festival and event organisers can apply for a grant towards activities that meet the objectives of the Business Improvement District. These are about changing perceptions, driving footfall, raising our profile, developing our place narrative, bringing about cross sector collaboration and cohesion and civic pride. We are excited about the opportunities presented by the new leisure offer and events plaza at Time Square and the new Warrington Market. We are keen to work with partners to support new initiatives to bring animation and activities into the town centre that enhance the visitor experience.





# Destination Marketing Brand

## Achievements

Since April 2019, we have been working with branding experts Cuning Plan to bring an exciting new destination marketing strategy to Warrington. This will include a website that will bring everything that is happening on one website linking to social media and PR. Extensive research and consultation has included focus groups, one-to-one interviews, workshops and an online survey. The brand will launch in November to coincide with the beginning of an 8 week Christmas marketing season.

### Priorities for Year 2

We will launch the brand with a multi-platform campaign which will include some image enhancements such as signage, banners and shop wraps as well as digital ads and print media.

Our aim is to have four seasonal campaigns a year linked to the traditional retail festivals and school holidays: Christmas, Spring/ Easter, Summer, Autumn/Halloween.

We will work with the big players such as Golden Square, Warrington Market, Time Square, The Cockhedge, Culture Warrington and Warrington Wolves to come together under the new brand to have one loud, proud voice for the town.



# Image Enhancements

## Achievements

The BID invested in additional Christmas lighting decorations in two key areas of the town centre, Bridge Street and Palmyra Square.

### Priorities for Year 2

Wayfinding is a key priority for the town centre to create a coherent visitor journey from the public transport hubs and car parks to the key shopping and leisure areas. This includes street signs and maps.

We will launch a multi-sector ‘Clean Sweep’ strategy with Warrington Borough Council which will commit to tidy, clean pavements which will be regularly power washed. We will encourage businesses to take a collective civic pride in maintaining a high standard in their own areas of responsibility through a reward and awards scheme.

We will invest in planting projects and work with volunteers through community organisations to develop and maintain urban green spaces.





## Public Relations and Social Media

We have recruited the retained support of professional communications agency Cuning Plan to build our social media profile and create high impact PR stories.

They have developed a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn to promote everything that is happening in Warrington.

### PR:

- 15 pieces of coverage
- 100% positive sentiment
- 100% of stories include a photograph
- Reach to date of 2,514,261

### Social (Apr 9th – Sept 30th):

#### Twitter:

- 214 tweets
- Followers increased from 389 to 413
- Organic Impressions 100.2k
- Total Engagements 2,041
- Link Clicks 160

### Instagram:

- 133 posts
- Followers increased from 360 to 713
- Impressions 215,104
- Engagements 3,642

### Facebook:

- 189 posts
- Page Likes increased from 499 to 3,896
- Impressions 802,222
- Engagements 31,287
- Message Link Clicks 6,047





## Theme Two: A Safer Town Centre

### Achievements

Warrington BID is a key player in a multi-sector partnership which is committed to widening the evening and night time hospitality and leisure offer, raising standards in making the town safe and promoting that message. We have invested in consultancy expertise to review and make recommendations for the best way for businesses to collaborate in partnership to reduce crime.

In the last 12 months we have supported Warrington Street Pastors to transform a disused taxi-shop to create 'Help on the Corner' working with Groundwork CLM, The Prince's Trust, Cheshire Police and Warrington Borough Council.

We worked with Warrington Pubwatch and Warrington Police to provide two mobile metal detector arches. We have also provided every licensed premises with a hand held metal detector wand.

We have unlocked funding of £57k from the dissolved Warrington Business Crime Reduction Partnership to be reinvested in this work theme through the activities of the BID.

### Priorities for Year 2

Warrington BID will lead a group of stakeholders to deliver Purple Flag, a national accreditation scheme which measures the performance of towns and cities offering an entertaining, diverse, safe and enjoyable night out.

We are working with Warrington Police and Warrington Pubwatch to look at DISC – a mobile app which allows businesses and the police to report and share information about offenders using a national legal and safe data sharing platform.

We have also committed to invest in enhanced CCTV and also reduce the cost of hand held radios for businesses in the town centre.

We will continue to work closely with our Pubwatch partners and Warrington Police to look at solutions to raise standards such as portable ID scanners.

## Theme Three: Accessible Warrington

### Achievements

We commissioned Warrington Disability Partnership to review the access issues across the town. A number of recommendations have now been adopted by Warrington Borough Council's Strategic Equality Group including ensuring that sufficient seating is available in Time Square, designated areas for drop off without the driver receiving a parking caution, signage, induction loops, access ramps, autism friendly hours, awareness training and improved kerbs and pavements.

### Priorities for Year 2

Warrington BID's Accessible Warrington Strategy will launch on Purple Tuesday, 12 November 2019, and include a hidden disability awareness scheme to be adopted across the town centre, free access audits and training opportunities. Share information about offenders using a national legal and safe data sharing platform.

We have also committed to invest in enhanced CCTV and also reduce the cost of hand held radios for businesses in the town centre.





# Theme Four: Doing Business in Warrington

## Achievements

We provided seed funding for Warrington Buyers Club to launch a business app and loyalty scheme which enables businesses to work together to deliver value for money offers and incentives to the residents of Warrington.

We provided a calendar of free training opportunities which included social media, manual handling, first aid and merchandising/window dressing.

With the support of Solutions 24-7 we have a comprehensive, regular feed of weekly e-bulletins and quarterly newsletters providing additional internal communications and updates to our members.



## Priorities for Year 2

We will carry out a survey of our members to find out how businesses are responding to the challenges of the town centre, bench mark their satisfaction levels and measure our performance on an annual basis during the 5 year lifetime of the BID.

We will continue to collect and share information via weekly e-bulletins and quarterly newsletters, getting out and about, collecting and sharing stories from businesses.

We will investigate procurement opportunities to save business costs.

# Business Improvement District Finances

BID Income	Budget – Year 1 August 2018 – July 2019	Actual – Year 1 August 2018 – July 2019
BID Levy Income	£300,000	£274,285
Grants/Fund Match (Financial)	£60,000	£57,543
Bank Interest	N/A	£13
Total Income 2018 – 2019	£360,000	£331,841
BID Expenditure	Budget – Year 1 August 2018 – July 2019	Actual – Year 1 August 2018 – July 2019
Theme One – Destination Warrington	£180,000	£132,476
Theme Two – A Safer Town Centre	£58,340	£32,571
Theme Three – A Connected and Accessible War- rington	£22,500	£5,628
Theme Four – Doing Business in Warrington	£33,500	£22,685
Management and Administration	£54,900	£51,369
Accruals	N/A	£51,210
Total – Expenditure 2018 – 2019	£349,240	£295,939
Actual Surplus +/-	£10,760	£35,902

**Note:** In addition to the financial income received by the Business Improvement District in 2018/2019 there has been additional in-kind investments made of £46,500, which have supported the Warrington Music Festival, Warrington Buyers Club, Take me back to dear old Blighty and the Safe Space Street Pastors project.

This additional investment has been secured through Heritage Lottery Fund, Golden Square, Cheshire Police and Warrington Buyers Club. The surplus generated in Year One of the BID will be utilised to deliver a number of added value projects and services in Warrington in Year 2.





# WARRINGTON BID

*Our future vision for the Town Centre*

For more information

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Web: [www.warringtonbid.co.uk](http://www.warringtonbid.co.uk)

