



WestChester
CommercialBID

Annual Report **2022-2023**

westchesterbid.co.uk

ABOUT THE WEST CHESTER COMMERCIAL BID



The West Chester Commercial BID funds and delivers added value projects and services within the local trading environment, through a Business Improvement District (BID). These projects are managed and controlled by the business community and the entire project is business led. More than 300 BIDs have been approved by companies across the UK since BIDs were introduced in 2004.

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 Year 1 of BID 2 (September 2022 – August 2023) are detailed in this annual report.

The BID's vision is:



To provide a safe and more secure trading environment, to develop and maintain a range of image enhancements across the trading environment, to work towards providing sustainable travel options for companies and their employees and to provide a co-ordinated and supported Business Community.



The West Chester Commercial BID was first approved in 2017 and came to fruition in September that year. In July 2022, businesses in the BID area voted to secure a second term Business Improvement District for the West Chester Commercial BID area for another 5 years, with a majority vote of **75%** by number and **76%** by rateable value. BID 2 started on 1st September 2022.

During the BID's lifetime, a range of improvement projects have been implemented, including upgrading the image of Sealand Industrial Estate and West Chester Employment Park through various enhancement schemes, reducing crime in the area through the incorporation of bank holiday security guard services and the installation of a state of the art CCTV and ANPR Security camera system, as well as providing a number of popular training courses for employees and offering support with any issues through the BID Delivery Team.

BID 2 will now ensure that Sealand Industrial Estate and Chester West Employment Park can continue to be an exceptional environment to work and trade in for both employees and businesses alike, and that the essential services and projects delivered by the BID can continue to aid all companies on the estate to develop and thrive.

£137,100
of investment generated
to support businesses
in the BID area throughout
2022-2023

THE WEST CHESTER COMMERCIAL BID BOARD

The West Chester Commercial BID has an Executive Board which is made up of voluntary members of the local business community. The current Executive Board is as follows:

Jordi Morell
Obsidian Group
(Chairperson)

Chris Leicester
Sanctuary Housing

Lexa Farthing
Cheshire West Library
Services

Mary Murphy
Proximo

Ann Rogers
Deva Designs Ltd

Elaine Thomas
Living Floors

Mark Diaper
Legat Owen

Gill Williams
Cheshire West and
Chester Council
(Council Link Officer)

The Executive Board met three times in **2022-2023** and was quorate at all meetings. Full copies of minutes from these meetings are available from:

www.westchesterbid.co.uk.



WHAT THE BID HAS DELIVERED BETWEEN

1st September 2022
– 31st August 2023

THEME ONE

A SAFER, MORE RESILIENT BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Year 1 of BID 2 saw the funding and installation of a brand new state of the art CCTV and ANPR Security Camera system across the BID area. Comprising of **54 CCTV cameras** and **3 specialist ANPR cameras installed across 14 locations**, the system now provides extensive coverage to both help prevent and tackle crime in the area thanks to specialist audio and AI monitoring capabilities.

As well as visual data, the impressive cameras also capture a wide range of information on a variety of metrics including fuel types of vehicles and their emissions. An additional benefit of the new system is that businesses can now access **ultra-fast broadband** using the same Wi-Fi and fibre networks that have been deployed to install the cameras.

Throughout 2022-2023, the West Chester Commercial BID continued to make investments in to the highly valued mobile security patrols conducted by **Alpha Omega** throughout Bank Holiday weekends, Easter Weekend and during the Christmas and New Year period to ensure the area remains as secure as possible, as well as during periods when it was deemed necessary to have additional security on site.

The BID also continued to fund the **24-7 Rapid Text Service**, which was available to all businesses that signed up to the service. The hotline allows businesses to report any suspicious activity so the information can get disseminated across Sealand Industrial Estate and Chester West Employment Park. Both Alpha Omega Security and Cheshire Police have representatives signed up to the service, as are the BID Team, to ensure rapid distribution of key security messages.

SelectaMark DNA Kits were distributed to any new businesses moving in to the West Chester Commercial BID area, with the kits aiming to protect the assets and belongings of businesses and ensuring the police can link criminals to the crime scene and secure a conviction. If any business would like a kit or more materials, please email hugh.shields@groundwork.org.uk.

The BID Team continued to maintain an excellent partnership with Cheshire Constabulary and the local PCSO throughout the year as well as working hard alongside the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison department at Cheshire West and Chester Council to ensure that any illegal traveller encampments were moved on as quickly as possible. A total of four illegal traveller incursions were dealt with in a swift manner, with to the minute updates communicated out to businesses.

54

CCTV cameras installed

352

Rapid texts sent out to businesses

792

Hours of BID funded security patrols

3

Specialist ANPR cameras installed

43

Security patrols funded

Pro-actively worked towards removing

4

illegal traveller encampments



THEME TWO

GREENER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE

During 2022 - 2023 the BID Team conducted 42 image audits across the entire West Chester Commercial BID area and have worked with Cheshire West and Chester Council to enhance the baselines that they are delivering in the area. Monthly meetings are held with Streetscene regarding grounds maintenance.

Regular audits of the condition of the roads are also implemented, with the relevant team at Highways informed of any improvements that need to be made, including potholes.

The West Chester Commercial BID has funded a number of image enhancement projects as part of a wide scale landscape masterplan, the aim of which is to make the estate a more attractive place for businesses and employees to work. Landscape maintenance is undertaken through the BID on the BID-funded feature outside Bromborough Paints while the two entrance signs are also maintained annually, with cleansing, structure and fixing inspections, litter removal and a check of tenant listings all taking place.



42

Site audits
conducted

19

Highways faults
reported

12

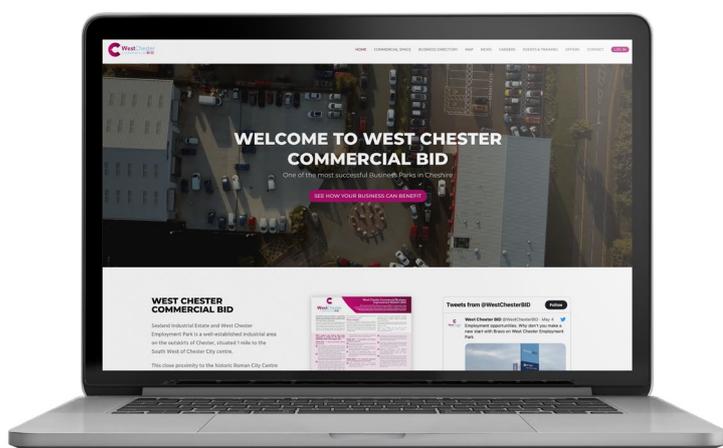
Grounds
maintenance visits
completed

THEME THREE

A CO-ORDINATED, SUPPORTED AND CONNECTED BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The West Chester Commercial BID continued to fund the Estate Management Service during 2022-2023, with Groundwork providing support and advice to all companies across Sealand Industrial Estate and Chester West Employment Park. The Estate Management Service is the central point of contact for all businesses in the West Chester Commercial BID area. If you have any issues or queries, please get in touch with:

Hugh.Shields@groundwork.org.uk.



2022-2023 saw the continued maintenance of the West Chester Commercial BID website (www.westchesterbid.co.uk) while the quarterly newsletter was produced throughout the year and emailed to all businesses, each issue containing important updates and information on all of the projects and services undertaken by the BID along with good news stories and successes from local businesses.

New businesses were issued with the BID welcome pack detailing all of the services and advantages that are available to them through the West Chester Commercial BID (also available on the website to any BID member).

The employee incentive scheme with Brio Leisure continued throughout 2022-2023, offering West Chester Commercial BID employees a **20% discount** on Business Leisure Packages at any Brio Leisure outlet in Cheshire.

The West Chester Commercial BID X (formerly Twitter) account continued to post updates throughout the year, while the BID e-bulletin also dropped in to inboxes to keep employees up to date with the latest news. The BID Team also continued to send out information surrounding various grants and how to apply to BID businesses.

The BID Team maintained relationships with a variety of partner organisations including Cheshire and Warrington LEP, The Growth Hub, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cheshire Constabulary and Alpha Omega Securities in order to get the best services for BID businesses.

5
Job vacancies promoted

Information on **9**
grant support schemes sent out to businesses

100+
Critical update emails sent out to businesses containing key information

16
Local Partnership meetings attended to represent business needs

2
Job fairs attended to promote businesses and vacancies

BID FUNDED TRAINING SCHEDULE



All companies based on Sealand Industrial Estate and Chester West Employment Park are entitled to attend one of the many BID funded training courses that run throughout the year. The courses are **FREE OF CHARGE** to any employee who wishes to attend, as they are all funded and delivered through the BID.

A full schedule of training courses took place between September 2022 and August 2023. Key courses included Emergency First Aid at Work, First Aid at Work, Mental Health First Aid at Work and Fire Marshal training, with courses validated by **Ofqual** and **The Institute of Fire Safety Management**.



Fork Lift Truck refresher training was also funded by the BID for those businesses that required it and was provided by on site Fork Lift Truck specialists **GHR Training Services** based in Mercury Court. The BID also provides a contribution towards any Full Fork Lift Truck Training businesses may require.

Specific courses that were delivered in 2022-2023 were as follows:

- C Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (4 courses)**
- C Level 3 Award in First Aid at Work (2 courses)**
- C Level 3 Award in Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace (2 courses)**
- C Fire Marshal Training (4 courses)**
- C Level 2 Award in Health & Safety in the Workplace (1 course)**
- C Fork Lift Truck Training provided by GHR Training Services.**

13

Course dates available

84

Employees received **FREE** training

8

Employees trained up to use Fork Lift Trucks

4

Businesses benefitted

801

Hours of accredited training

A combined saving of **£20,112** for businesses

6

Fork Lift Truck courses undertaken

SUMMARY OF FINANCES: 2022-2023

The total BID levy income for the year was **£137,100** with a bank interest of **£867**. The amount spent on BID arrangements and projects for 2022/2023 was **£137,768**. There is accrued expenditure of **£302** for the West Chester BID external accountancy fee.

A surplus of **£99,147** was brought forward from BID 1.

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY	2022/2023	
	CASH	
	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE
Theme One - A Safer, More Resilient Business Community	£58,000	£86,485
Theme Two - Greener and More Sustainable	£31,000	£10,760
Theme Three - A Connected and Supported Business Community	£15,136	£22,982
Administration	£13,550	£17,541
Total	£117,686	£137,768

INCOME	2022/2023	
	FORECAST	ACTUAL
Business Improvement District Levy	£98,767	£137,100
Interest received in the bank account	Nil	£867
Surplus from BID 1	£68,000	£99,147
Total	£166,767	£237,114

The detailed income and expenditure can be seen in Appendix 1.

PLANS

FOR 2023-2024 - YEAR 2 OF THE WEST CHESTER COMMERCIAL BID 2

Below is a summary of the projects and services which will be delivered during the second year of the West Chester Commercial Business Improvement District 2 from September 2023 - August 2024.

Theme One - A Safer, More Resilient Business Community

- Maintenance of the CCTV and ANPR system across the West Chester Commercial BID area
- West Chester Commercial BID Mobile Security Patrol unit over Bank Holidays, the Christmas and New Year Period and Easter Holidays, as well as any other periods where extra security is deemed beneficial.
- Regular liaison with Cheshire Police regarding crime and security issues
- Rapid Text Service for all businesses to disseminate important information to employees
- Provision of SelectaDNA Property Marking kits to all new businesses
- Rapid action protocol put in to place when illegal traveller incursions are reported on site

Theme Two - Greener and More Sustainable

- Weekly image audits across the West Chester Commercial BID area
- Working in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council to improve the road surfaces on the estate
- Continued grounds maintenance of the image enhancement projects in the BID area

Theme Three - A Connected and Supported Business Community

- West Chester Commercial BID Business Park Management Service
- Grant support and information disseminated to businesses
- A full schedule of training courses free of charge to West Chester Commercial BID employees
- Provision of BID funded Fork Lift Truck refresher training and a contribution towards full training
- Employee Incentive scheme with Brio Leisure
- West Chester Commercial BID welcome pack for all new BID businesses
- Maintenance of the West Chester Commercial BID dedicated website
- E-mail and regular e-bulletin updates
- West Chester Commercial BID quarterly news bulletin emailed out to all businesses
- Management of the West Chester BID X (formally Twitter) Account [@westchesterbid](#)
- Looking at the introduction of a West Chester Commercial BID Annual Quiz



For further information on the West Chester Commercial BID, please contact:

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BID Project Manager

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BID Co-ordinator and Training

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Email: stephanie.leese@groundwork.org.uk

Jane Hough

Deputy Director for BIDs & Business

Tel: 01606 723175

Email: jane.hough@groundwork.org.uk



www.westchesterbid.co.uk



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APPENDIX 1

WEST CHESTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	2022/23		2021/22	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
CWaC BID levy	137,100		102,269	
Bank interest	<u>867</u>		<u>14</u>	
		137,967		102,283
EXPENDITURE				
Mobile security patrols (Christmas, new year & bank holidays)	20,439		17,823	
Installation of ANPR camera system	53,385		2,500	
Maintenance of ANPR camera system	-		-	
Rapid text service	661		673	
DNA property marking kits	-		389	
Landscape & signage design & improvements	-		8,226	
Landscape & signage maintenance	510		855	
Public transport initiatives	-		-	
Business park joint waste management service	-		-	
Exploring solar business park initiatives	250		-	
Estate management service & project management	37,936		36,833	
Network events	362		-	
Training courses & seminars	13,292		9,017	
Website development & maintenance	1,072		1,007	
News bulletin	3,820		3,000	
BID development & pre set up costs	2,600		8,000	
Meeting costs & administration (postage, stationery, photocopying)	3,442		3,909	
		<u>(137,768)</u>		<u>(92,232)</u>
		199		10,051
PROVISIONS FOR EXPENDITURE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE PROJECTS				
Accountancy fee	<u>302</u>		<u>280</u>	
		<u>(302)</u>		<u>(280)</u>
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		<u>(103)</u>		<u>9,771</u>

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash at Bank		157,414		105,059
Due from Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside		-		-
Accrued income		-		-
		<u>157,414</u>		<u>105,059</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Due to Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside		58,068		5,632
Provision to complete projects		<u>302</u>		<u>280</u>
		<u>99,044</u>		<u>99,147</u>
FUNDS				
Surplus brought forward		99,147		89,376
Surplus/deficit for the year		<u>(103)</u>		<u>9,771</u>
		<u>99,044</u>		<u>99,147</u>

CLIENT APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

We approve the financial statements and confirm that we have made available all relevant records and information for their preparation.

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J Hough
Deputy Director for Business Improvement Districts and Business Services

.....

J Morell
Chair

Date:

ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

In accordance with our terms of engagement and in order to assist you to fulfil your duties, we have compiled the financial statements of the entity for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise an Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet from the accounting records and information and explanations you have given to us.

This report is made to the entity's Board as a body, in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work has been undertaken so that we might compile the financial statements that we have been engaged to compile, report to the entity's Board that we have done so, and state those matters that we have agreed to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the entity and the entity's Board, as a body, for our work or for this report.

We have carried out this engagement in accordance with technical guidance issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales and have complied with the ethical guidance laid down by the Institute relating to members undertaking the compilation of financial statements.

We have not been instructed to carry out an audit of the financial statements. For this reason, we have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the financial statements.

Murray Smith LLP
Chartered Accountants
Darland House
44 Winnington Hill
Northwich
Cheshire
CW8 1AU

Date: