



West Chester

Commercial **BID**

Annual Report
2023-2024

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 2 of BID 2 (September 2023 – August 2024) 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 and West Chester Employment Park through various enhancement schemes and signage, 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.

The BID's aim is to ensure that Sealand Industrial Estate and Chester West Employment Park are both exceptional environments to work and trade in for both employees and businesses alike.

£96,524
of investment generated
to support businesses
in the BID area throughout
2023-2024

141
businesses
supported through
the BID

THE WEST CHESTER COMMERCIAL BID EXECUTIVE BOARD

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

The Executive Board as of 31st August 2023 was as follows:

Jordi Morell
Obsidian Group
(Chairperson)

Chris Leicester
Sanctuary Housing

Jenny Williams
Deva Designs Ltd

Lexa Farthing
Cheshire West
Library Services

Gill Williams
Cheshire West
and Chester Council
(Advisory member)

Mark Diaper
Legat Owen

Elaine Thomas
Living Floors

Matthew Flack
Plan Ahead

Mary Murphy
Proximo

The Executive Board met four times in **2023-2024** 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 2023 –
31st August 2024

THEME ONE

A SAFER, MORE RESILIENT BUSINESS COMMUNITY

- Funded and managed the CCTV & ANPR camera system
- Funded and installed deterrent CCTV signage across the BID area
- Funded the Rapid Text Service – a 24/7 hotline to disseminate important security information across the estate
- Funded mobile security patrols by Alpha Omega over key periods including Bank Holiday Weekends, the Easter Weekend, and over the Christmas and New Year period. Security patrols were also deployed if any illegal encampments were reported on the estate and on set monthly weekends
- SelectaDNA forensic property marking kits distributed to all new companies on the estate. If any businesses would like to receive a kit, please get in touch with Estate Manager Hugh Shields (hugh.shields@groundwork.org.uk)
- Maintaining an excellent working relationship with the local PCSO and Cheshire Police
- Monthly security meetings with Alpha Omega & CCTV providers Onetek Solutions which is fed back to the police
- Regular meetings with Cheshire Police

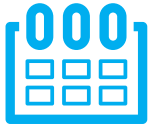


THEME ONE

A SAFER, MORE RESILIENT BUSINESS COMMUNITY

1,468

Hours of BID funded security patrols during 2023-24



5,040

Hours of security footage captured each month



2,880

Security patrols funded



Pro-actively worked towards removing

2

illegal traveller encampments with Cheshire Police



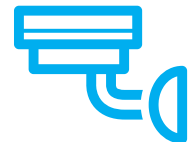
223

Rapid texts delivered over 4 occasions



57

CCTV & ANPR cameras across Sealand Industrial Estate and Chester West Employment Park



40

Deterrent CCTV signs installed across the BID area



31

Crimes reported



THEME TWO

GREENER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE

- Weekly image audits across Sealand Industrial Estate & Chester West Employment Park looking at the conditions of the roads, footpaths, lighting, drains, and landscaping. Any issues are reported.
- Maintenance of all existing BID funded signage on the estate
- Funding of a landscape maintenance scheme with local company All Seasons Ltd
- Working with Cheshire West and Chester Council to enhance the baselines that are being delivered
- Monthly meetings with StreetScene regarding grounds maintenance and identifying areas for improvement
- Potholes and other issues reported to Highways

42

Estate audits conducted



9

Grounds maintenance visits completed



18

Hours of grounds maintenance funded



86%

Of highways issues successfully resolved



On average,

3,965k

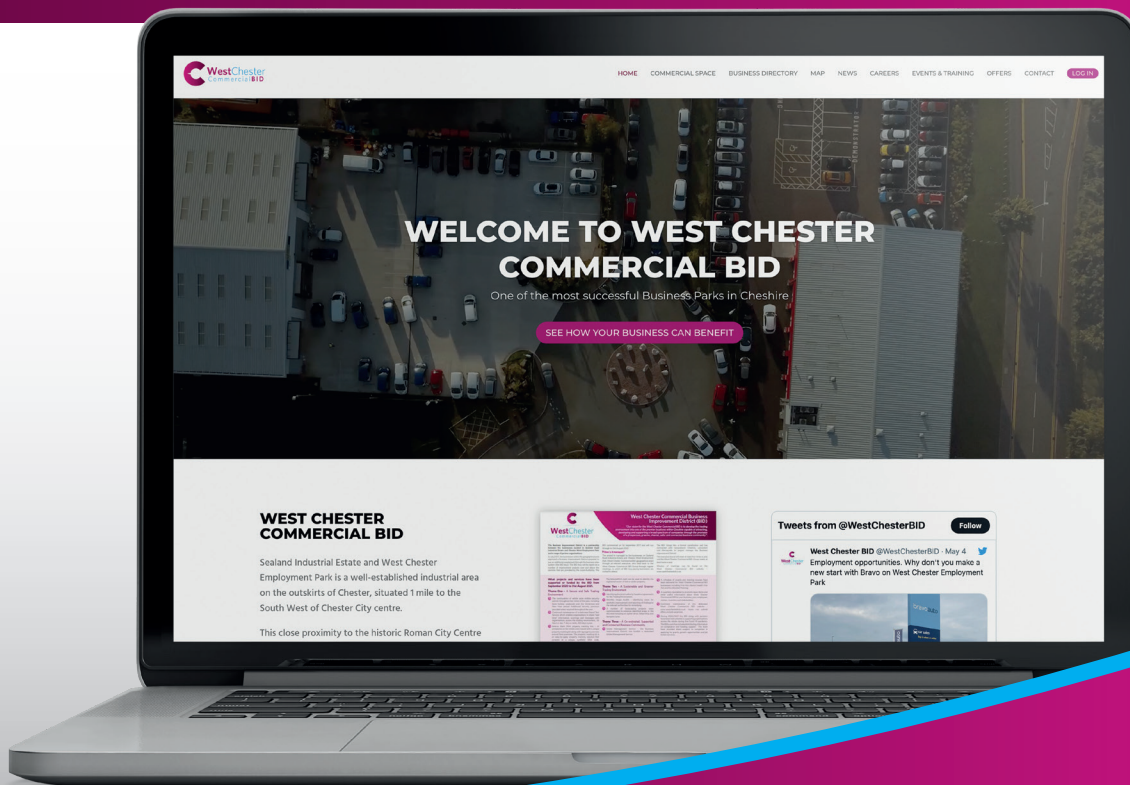
vehicle movements across the BID area per year



THEME THREE

A CO-ORDINATED, SUPPORTED AND CONNECTED BUSINESS COMMUNITY

- West Chester Commercial BID Management Team (providing support for your business)
- West Chester Commercial BID Communications – emails, e-bulletins, and quarterly news bulletins
- Regular updates on available business grants and funding opportunities to support your business growth
- Working with local colleges to deliver free, industry-focused training and workshops designed to upskill your workforce
- West Chester Commercial BID information pack for businesses containing information on the benefits, projects and services the BID provides
- Maintaining a comprehensive West Chester Commercial BID website (www.westchesterbid.co.uk) showcasing local job opportunities, industry updates, events, and key business resources
- Employee Incentive Scheme – Brio Leisure discount on the Work Fit Membership
- Local job fairs attended to promote vacancies for businesses – vacancies also promoted on the website (www.westchesterbid.co.uk)
- Local Partnership Meetings attended
- Maintaining relationships with partner organisations (The Growth Hub, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cheshire Constabulary, Alpha Omega Securities)
- Managed the West Chester Commercial BID social media accounts



THEME THREE

A CO-ORDINATED, SUPPORTED AND CONNECTED BUSINESS COMMUNITY

141

Businesses supported



4,000

Employees supported



4

Local Partnership Meetings attended to represent business needs



98

Critical update emails sent out to businesses containing key information



Over
200

visits to local businesses



4

Job fairs attended to promote businesses and vacancies



6

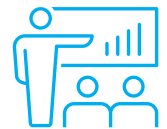
Job vacancies promoted



Information on

13

grant support schemes sent out to businesses



10

Exporting companies supported



2.7k

Visitors to the West Chester Commercial BID Website



3

New businesses joined the West Chester Commercial BID area



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 2023 and August 2024 with qualifications accredited by **Ofqual** and **The Institute of Fire Safety Management**. The BID also introduced a range of accredited Health & Safety based qualifications that proved to be extremely popular, with courses such as Health & Safety in the Workplace, COSHH, and Risk Assessment all taking place throughout the spring.



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

Online courses are also available for employees to gain accredited qualifications as funded by the BID in a variety of topics.

For more information on any BID-funded training, please email stephanie.jeese@groundwork.org.uk.

Specific courses that were delivered in 2023-2024 were as follows:

- **Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid in the Workplace** (4 courses)
- **Level 3 Award in Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace** (1 course)
- **Fire Marshal Training** (4 courses)
- **Level 2 Award in Health & Safety in the Workplace** (1 course)
- **Level 2 Award in Principles of Risk Assessment** (1 course)
- **Level 2 Award in Principles of COSHH** (1 course)
- **Fork Lift Truck Training provided by GHR Training Services**

12
Course dates available

85
Employees received **FREE** training

627
Hours of accredited training

A combined saving of **£20,500** for businesses

SUMMARY OF FINANCES: 2023-2024

The total income for the year was **£96,524**. The amount spent on BID arrangements and projects for 2023/2024 was **£98,155**. There is accrued expenditure of **£320** for the West Chester BID external auditor fee. A surplus of **£99,044** was brought forward from previous BID years.

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY	2023/2024	
	CASH	
	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE*
Theme One - A Safer, More Resilient Business Community	£41,696	£38,965
Theme Two - Greener and More Sustainable	£2,254	£1,609
Theme Three - A Connected and Supported Business Community	£54,870	£54,871
Administration	£3,221	£2,710
Total For Year	£102,041	£98,155

INCOME	2023/2024	
	FORECAST	ACTUAL
Business Improvement District Levy	£95,000	£95,000
Interest received in the bank account	£1,524	£1,524
Total	£96,524	£96,524

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

*Figures have been rounded up or down to the nearest figure

PLANS FOR 2024-2025

- YEAR 3 OF THE WEST CHESTER COMMERCIAL BID 2

Below is a summary of the projects and services which will be delivered during the third year of the West Chester Commercial Business Improvement District 2 from September 2024 - August 2025.

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
- Working with Cheshire Police to conduct security assessments for businesses in the BID area
- Holding Security Bike Marking sessions for employees who cycle to work

Theme Two - Greener and More Sustainable

- Weekly image audits across the West Chester Commercial BID area
- 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
- Collaborating with local colleges to deliver free, industry-focused training and workshops designed to upskill your workforce
- Online seminars, qualifications, and workshops free of charge to BID businesses
- Provision of BID funded ForkLift Truck refresher training and a contribution towards full training
- Employee incentive scheme with Brio Leisure
- West Chester Commercial BID Information Pack for BID businesses
- Maintenance of the West Chester Commercial BID dedicated website
- Updating the West Chester Commercial BID online map and Business Directory
- E-mail and regular e-bulletin updates
- West Chester Commercial BID quarterly news bulletin emailed out to all businesses
- Attending job fairs to promote vacancies
- Business networking opportunities to encourage inter-estate trading
- Continued development of the West Chester BID's social media presence
- Production and distribution of the West Chester Commercial BID Annual Business Survey

APPENDIX 1 – WEST CHESTER BID FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	2023/24		2022/23	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
CWaC BID levy	95,000		137,100	
Bank interest	<u>1,524</u>		<u>867</u>	
		96,524		137,967
EXPENDITURE				
T1 A Safer More Resilient Business Community				
DNA property marking kits	-		-	
Installation of CCTV System	1,845		-	
Maintenance of CCTV System	17,747		-	
Mobile security patrols (Christmas, new year & bank holidays)	18,748		20,439	
Installation of ANPR camera system	-		53,385	
Maintenance of ANPR camera system	-		-	
Rapid text service	625		661	
T2 Greener and More Sustainable				
Business park joint waste management service	-		-	
Exploring solar business park initiatives	-		250	
Landscape & signage design & improvements	1,159		-	
Landscape & signage maintenance	450		510	
Public transport initiatives	-		-	
T3 Coordinated and Supported Business Community				
Estate management service & project management	39,074		37,936	
Network events	976		362	
News bulletin	4,870		3,820	
Training courses & seminars	8,845		13,292	
Website development & maintenance	1,106		1,072	
Administration				
BID development & pre set up costs	-		2,600	
Meeting costs & administration (postage, stationery, photocopying)	2,581		3,442	
Mobile phone charges	<u>129</u>		<u>-</u>	
		<u>(98,156)</u>		<u>(137,769)</u>
		(1,632)		199
PROVISIONS FOR EXPENDITURE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE PROJECTS				
Accountancy fee	<u>320</u>		<u>302</u>	
		<u>(320)</u>		<u>(302)</u>
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		<u>(1,952)</u>		<u>(103)</u>

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	2024		2023	
	£	£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash at Bank	103,576		157,414	
Due from Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside	-		-	
Accrued income	-		-	
	<u>103,576</u>		<u>157,414</u>	
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Due to Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside	6,164		58,068	
Provision to complete projects	320		302	
	<u>97,092</u>		<u>99,044</u>	
FUNDS				
Surplus brought forward	99,044		99,147	
Surplus/deficit for the year	(1,952)		(103)	
	<u>97,092</u>		<u>99,044</u>	

CLIENT APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

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

.....
J Hough
 Deputy Director for Business Improvement Districts
 and Business Services

.....
J Morell
 Chair

Date:

ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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 2024 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:



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

Adam Gerrard

Operations Manager

Tel: 01606 723 175

Email: adam.gerrard@groundwork.org.uk

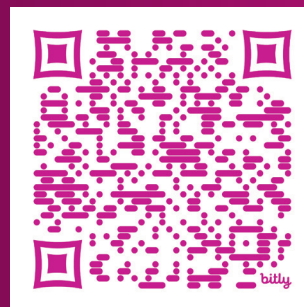
Jane Hough

Deputy Director for BIDs & Business

Tel: 01606 723175

Email: jane.hough@groundwork.org.uk

For more information on the West Chester Commercial BID, please scan the QR Code.



 www.westchesterbid.co.uk

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