# FIVE YEARS
2021
# LANCASTER BID
2026
# FIVE GOALS

BID LANCASTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Business Plan Third Term

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LOVE
HIGH STREET.
LOVE
LANCASTER
MUSEUM

# Mission Statement

**Since 2013 Lancaster BID has been a driving force of economic, cultural and social development in Lancaster.**

Lancaster BID's mission is to facilitate economic growth and utilise resources efficiently. The city's revitalisation will be achieved through increased marketing and visibility to locals and visitors alike, continuing to build key partnerships, helping to keep the streets safe and clean, improving and renewing infrastructure and focussing on direct local business support. Through these outlets we will ensure Lancaster remains a city which attracts a wide audience to visit, live, work and do business.

# Message from BID Chair

The last year has presented challenges for the majority of businesses, **making high quality support from Lancaster BID more important than ever.** The BID team reacted fast to ever changing circumstances to ensure businesses had all the information they needed along with practical support to enable prompt safe reopening. Feedback from businesses has confirmed how valued this support was.

New initiatives, introduced as lockdown eased, have helped encourage visitors safely back into the city centre. Lancaster BID has become established in a pivotal role which is more vital then ever to continue delivering a strong recovery for Lancaster city centre. **VOTE YES TO BID in 2021** to ensure the strong voice for local businesses continues for another five years.

**Nick Wilkinson,**
Chair, Lancaster BID

# Table of Contents


04 WHAT IS BID?

05 OUR STORY SO FAR

06 MEET THE TEAM

08 FINANCES

09 LANCASTER BID EVENTS

10 BID SUPPORTED EVENTS

11 IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

12 BUSINESS SUPPORT

13 BID RENEWAL PROPOSALS

14 MAP OF NEW BID ZONE

15 THE NEW BID TERM

16 KEY GOALS

26 FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

29 VOTING FOR BID

# BID Management Board Statement

**During the second term Lancaster BID has become even more established as a key player in supporting businesses to thrive in Lancaster city centre.**

The team have excelled in delivering on the key BID objectives to market the city, deliver flagship events, make improvements to the city centre and drive footfall to support city centre businesses. Our flagship Dino Day, Festa Italia and Christmas Lights Switch On have grown to become key dates in the city centre calendar.

2020 has been uniquely challenging for businesses everywhere and Lancaster BID has responded fast to ever changing circumstances to support city centre businesses to survive. Throughout lockdown we continued to be available, communicating important updates more frequently through our newsletter and ensuring city centre businesses were supported to access essential grants. We provided counter screens and floor markers to support businesses to safely reopen and launched Loyal Free to provide FREE marketing to draw customers safely back into the city centre. We also recruited a BID Warden to provide a visible presence in the city centre and help reduce levels of antisocial behaviour and shoplifting. Strong partnerships with the Police and City Council have been enhanced to support this aim.

All this has only been possible because the city centre businesses voted YES TO BID in 2012 and 2015. As we come to the end of the current five year term, we are now asking you to **VOTE YES** again to ensure we can continue to build on this work and continue to help Lancaster city centre remain a great place to visit, live, work and do business.

**Nick Wilkinson,** Lune Properties, Lancaster BID Chair

**Phil Simpson,** C2 Investments, BID Director

**Mark Diggle,** Diggles & Marcos, BID Director

**Jennifer Larton,** Holdens Solicitors

**Sarah Turnbull,** Natwest Bank

**Professor Dame Sue Black,** Lancaster University

**Tim Hamilton-Cox,** Lancaster City Council

**Karen O'Neill,** Dukes Playhouse

**Bruno Buccelli,** Buccelli's

**Maria Chambers,** CancerCare

**Paul Smith,** St Nic's Arcades

**Steve Wilkinson,** Lancastrian Antiques

# What is a BID?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a **business-led** and **business-funded** body formed to improve a defined commercial area.

Within the defined area a levy is charged on all business rate payers in addition to the business rates bill other than any exceptions defined within the individual BID rules. This levy is used to develop projects which will benefit businesses in the local area.

There is no limit on what projects or services can be provided through a BID. The only requirement is that it should be something that is in addition to services provided by local authorities.

Improvements may include, but are not limited to, events programmes, extra safety/security, cleansing and environmental measures.

BIDs were introduced in the UK in 2005 and have become a great success as businesses see the benefit of taking greater control of delivering a business plan to drive footfall into their own commercial district. There are now over 300 BIDs across the UK.

Lancaster BID was established in April 2013 and is now asking you to **VOTE YES** to plans for a third BID term of five years commencing April 1st 2021.

# Our Story so Far

Lancaster BID started in April 2013 and is now coming to the end of the second term. During this time the BID has become a key player in driving positive change in Lancaster city centre.

We have delivered high quality events and festivals to draw people into the city centre, made physical improvements to make the city centre more attractive, worked in partnership to improve city centre security and acted as a voice for businesses across the city to make sure your voice is heard.

Circumstances have obviously been very challenging this year and Lancaster BID reacted quickly to the ever changing needs of local businesses. BID staff remained available throughout lockdown and continued to deliver vital information and support to businesses across the city centre. This included circulation of crucial updates and working hard to ensure local businesses quickly accessed the Government grant funding which was available to them. BID also distributed free Perspex screens and floor markers to numerous smaller businesses to help ensure they could safely reopen.

Alongside this the Lancaster BID team were busy planning ahead for longer term initiatives to ensure the city centre returned to being a hive of activity as soon as people could safely venture out again. A Love Local, Love Lancaster campaign was launched alongside partnering with LoyalFree to release their App in the city. The newly appointed Lancaster BID Warden also took to the streets to help improve safety and security in the city centre.

Surveys of businesses across the city centre were conducted both before and after lockdown to ensure key priorities were correctly identified. The survey highlighted marketing the city as a destination as the top priority from businesses. Other key priorities were making physical improvements to make the city more attractive, helping to tackle antisocial behaviour, and work with others to deliver a year round programme of events.

Feedback from local businesses has been key to developing our proposed delivery plan for the next five years. We now need you to **VOTE YES TO LANCASTER BID** to ensure this can happen and that Lancaster BID initiatives can continue to deliver benefits across the whole city centre.

From the outset the success of Lancaster BID has been entirely down to the support from you – the businesses who pay the BID levy throughout the city centre. Without your support none of the achievements of Lancaster BID would have been possible.

**VOTE YES TO LANCASTER BID** for another five years working together to benefit our historic city centre.

# Meet the Team

**Tony Johnson**

Lancaster BID Manager
bidmanager@lancasterbid.org

**Tom Fyson**

BID Development Manager
info@lancasterbid.org

**Victoria Muir**

Marketing & Events Coordinator
marketing@lancasterbid.org

# BID Management Board & Sub-Group Members

**Of course nothing Lancaster BID achieves would be possible without the support and involvement of so many of our city centre businesses who give up their time to get involved in the BID Management Board and thematic sub groups.**

The Management Board provides strategic direction for Lancaster BID and helps to monitor progress towards delivering our priorities and ensuring the greatest benefits to all businesses across the city centre. Engagement of a wide variety of businesses is critical to ensure the BID priorities are relevant across all sectors.

The businesses and organisations below showcase just some of the many who have been involved in Lancaster BID over the past five years.

We'd like to thank everyone for their involvement so far, and look forward to continue to work with you all for a further five years.

# Business Testimonials

"I think Lancaster BID term for 2021-26 is essential to ensure the city centre continues to progress as it has. I think I speak on behalf of most of the high street retailers when I say the work done specifically in 2020 has been brilliant at working toward a safe and secure Lancaster. This would have not worked or been possible without the BID team. The BID team allows retailers like myself a voice as well as providing the vital link bringing all the businesses together alongside the police, council and all other organisations needed to secure the sustainability of Lancaster as a safe, enjoyable, healthy high street.

The work done when we come together, led by the BID, is invaluable. It would be an awful shame for the term to be ended and watch the work unravel when we are getting so close to where we wish to be.

For my store personally we have never felt more supported by the city, our issues dealt with, opinions heard and acted upon. This would not have been possible without the BID team. In a time when its no secret high streets continue to slip away we, as retailers, need to support all the organisations working toward helping keep our high street safe and alive. Lancaster BID is the key to this for us."

**Lauren Banks,**
Store Manager,
Flagship City Centre Retailer

**"The BID has become an increasing benefit to not only our store, in Lancaster City Centre, but to the Lancaster environment as a whole. For us, the BID has formed and connected us with an independent networking and ideas group with like-minded businesses, improved security and connected us back with PCSO's by employing a BID Warden and are actively improving the look of the City Centre. I also think they are key to connecting the general public/ customers with the City Centre businesses which can be seen through the newly implemented Loyal Free Programme."**

**Hannah Gibson,** Silver Tree

# Finances

Lancaster BID is a not for profit company limited by guarantee, whose accounts are externally verified to ensure that every penny of your BID levy provides maximum benefit to the city centre. The BID team work hard to attract additional income to add even more value to your levy and deliver stronger benefits for all businesses in the city centre.

## Financial summary for second BID term

"**90% of all income** has been spent on delivering Lancaster BID's primary objectives. Just 10% has been spent on administration and overheads."

| | |
|---|---|
| Total BID Levy income | £1,073,227 |
| Additional Income Secured | £565,682 |
| Carry forward from Previous BID term | £23,991 |
| **Total investment secured for Lancaster City Centre** | **£1,662,900** |

| | |
|---|---|
| Project Delivery Expenditure | £1,489,862 |
| Administration & Overheads Costs | £165,002 |
| **Total Expenditure** | **£1,654,864** |

* figures include projected income and expenditure for 2020/21

## Additional Funding Highlights

"Additional income **added 52.7% to the value of the levy collection** during the 5 year term. This **exceeded** the predictions in our business plan by an impressive **£390,000**"

## In Kind and Leveraged Funding

Lancaster BID also generates significant additional value for the city centre through leveraged funding in partnership with other organisations and in kind support through donations of goods and services. Highlights include:

Supporting Lancaster City Council to secure **£1.15m for the High Street Heritage Action Zone**

**Over £40,000 FREE advertising** on buses, radio and print

# Lancaster BID Events

**Lancaster BID has delivered an extensive programme of high profile events across the city centre.**

The events are targeted at varying age ranges and are designed to drive footfall into the city centre.

Significant annual highlights include Dino Day, Festa Italia, Reindeer Day and Christmas Lights Switch On.

Other successes of the past five years include the Coke Truck, Easter events, Pirate Day and Student Shopping Night.

Pirate Day

Pirate Day was a swashbuckling success linking with The Dukes production of Treasure Island to draw the crowds into the city centre.

Dino-Day

Dino day celebrates Lancaster's links to Sir Richard Owen who grew up in the city and coined the word dinosaur. The event has rapidly become a real family favourite and grows bigger and better every year.

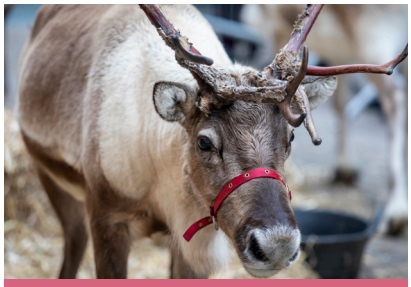
Lancaster Festa Italia

"Festa Italia boosted city centre footfall by **over 50%** in 2019"

**"My wife and I visited Lancaster yesterday for the Italian celebration day, not knowing what to expect, it was amazing, the town was buzzing and so busy, so much to see including the cars and motorbikes, and the food stalls were really good, we queued for a pizza but it was well worthwhile. Can I just say for a small city you put a lot of other local towns in the shade, hopefully a repeat performance next year, Thank you Lancaster."**

**Visitor,** Festa Italia 2019

Easter Events



Reindeer Day

Coke Truck

"Lancaster was the busiest stop on the Coca-Cola tour, with **over 8,000** attendees"

Ambassador Awards

**"Amanda and myself would wholeheartedly like to thank Lancaster BID for giving us this opportunity. You are amazing and are truly going to help make this city better than it's ever been."**

**Tiffany Moore,** Renes, Best Independent Retailer 2019

# BID Supported Events

In addition to delivering our own events, Lancaster BID provides funding and in kind support to a wide range of events organised by other organisations in the city centre.

Lancaster BID is a lead partner in delivering the annual Light Up Lancaster festival as well as providing funding towards Lancaster Music Festival which is reliably one of the city's busiest weekends of the year.

Support from Lancaster BID enables event organisers to attract additional income and increase the size of their events to maximise benefits to city centre businesses.

Light Up Lancaster

Image by Mandy Johnson

Lancaster Pride

Lancaster BID is a key partner in maintaining Lancaster's reputation as a City of Events – drawing crowds of people into the city centre throughout the year

Image by Lancaster Jazz Festival

Jazz Festival

Image by Cameron Baird

Lancaster Music Festival

Image by Nick Dagger Photography

Lancaster on Ice

Lancaster Expo

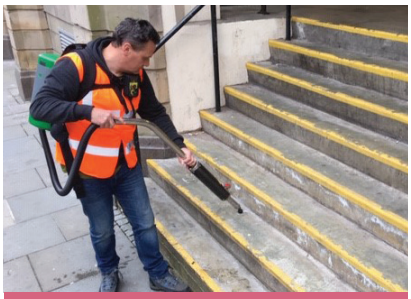
"The continuing support of Lancaster Music Festival by BID has enabled the festival to not just survive but also thrive, expand and start on the journey towards greater self-sufficiency. BID has played a vital role in **establishing a connectivity** between the arts and business and plays a key role in helping to improve Lancaster – for its **residents, businesses and visitors** alike. Indeed the expansion of family-friendly events in the city's historic squares and streets during the music festival would not have been possible without BID support. The success of Lancaster Music Festival is now unthinkable without the **wholehearted contribution from BID** and we look forward to partnering with Lancaster BID through 2021-26 on the many exciting projects we are currently planning".

**Stuart Marshall,** Lancaster Music Festival

# Improvement Initiatives

Lancaster BID has delivered a wide ranging programme of improvement initiatives to make the city centre a cleaner and more attractive place for everyone to enjoy. This has included enhanced street cleansing through proactive action in regular grot spots and removal of graffiti. Occasional deep cleaning has included removal of chewing gum from the city centre streets.

A range of initiatives have also been delivered to make the city centre a brighter and more attractive place. These include bespoke lighting in several ginnels, planting displays across the city and regular seasonal decorations including an extensive Christmas lights display, summer bunting and one off installations such as an Umbrella canopy to promote Festa Italia.



Chewing gum removal

Lancaster BID funded the removal of chewing gum from over 5,000 square metres of paving

Ginnels lighting

Bespoke lighting was installed in three city centre ginnels to encourage visitors to explore beyond the main pedestrian streets.

Bespoke Summer Bunting

Christmas lights / trees

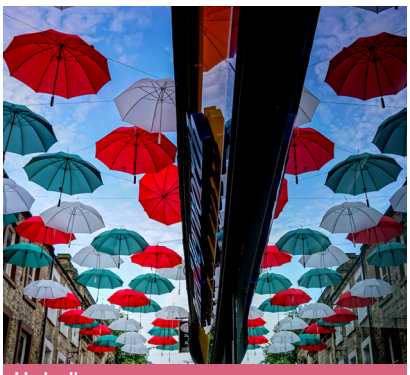
The Christmas trees in Market Square help bring festive cheer to the city centre

Hoarding panels

Hoarding panels have been used to turn vacant premises into visitor information points

Planters

Planters and bespoke bunting help brighten up the city centre and make it a more attractive and welcoming place to visit



Umbrella canopy

The Umbrella canopy promoting Festa Italia was the talk of the town and drew crowds to New Street

# Business Support

Lancaster BID couldn't exist without the support of city centre businesses. The key focus of all our activities is to give city centre businesses a boost and make sure all businesses are well supported and feel confident that their voice is being heard.

BID Breakfast

## Supporting you through COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented major challenges to businesses everywhere, with Lancaster city centre no exception. The Lancaster BID team have been proactive throughout to ensure rapid flow of information regarding grants and other support. A number of new initiatives were also instigated during this time to enable businesses to reopen safely and to help attract people safely back into the city centre. These included:

- 40 counter screens and over **1,000** social distancing floor markers provided FREE to city centre businesses
- Launch of new **BID Warden Service** to help reduce antisocial behaviour and shoplifting in the city centre
- Launch of Loyal Free App to provide **FREE** promotion of businesses throughout the city centre
- Launch of a '**Love Local, Love Lancaster**' Marketing Campaign

We work hard to share information with businesses in a timely manner and to seek feedback on what is working well and areas where we can usefully provide further support. We achieve this through regular newsletters by email to almost 600 contacts, Levy Payer Surveys to hear your views and business events such as the themed BID Breakfasts. We also showcased and rewarded success in the city through the Lancaster BID Ambassador Awards.

Ambassador Awards

**"I am personally really pleased to see how seriously you have taken the 'safe and secure' part of the agenda this year. I can certainly see improvements already in the City. Our store has also seen a reduction in the issues we reported and discussed last year. It has been comforting to see lots of agencies now coming together in Lancaster to tackle some of the hot topics that are important to the businesses. I think a BID in Lancaster is essential as we cannot always rely on other agencies with more and more workload and less resource. The BID is able to act as the "middle man" that can support bringing everyone together to tackle issues and come up with some great ideas to continuously improve Lancaster."**

**James Streets,**

District Loss Prevention Manager

Flagship City Centre Retailer

# Proposals for the 5 year renewal of Lancaster BID 2021-2026

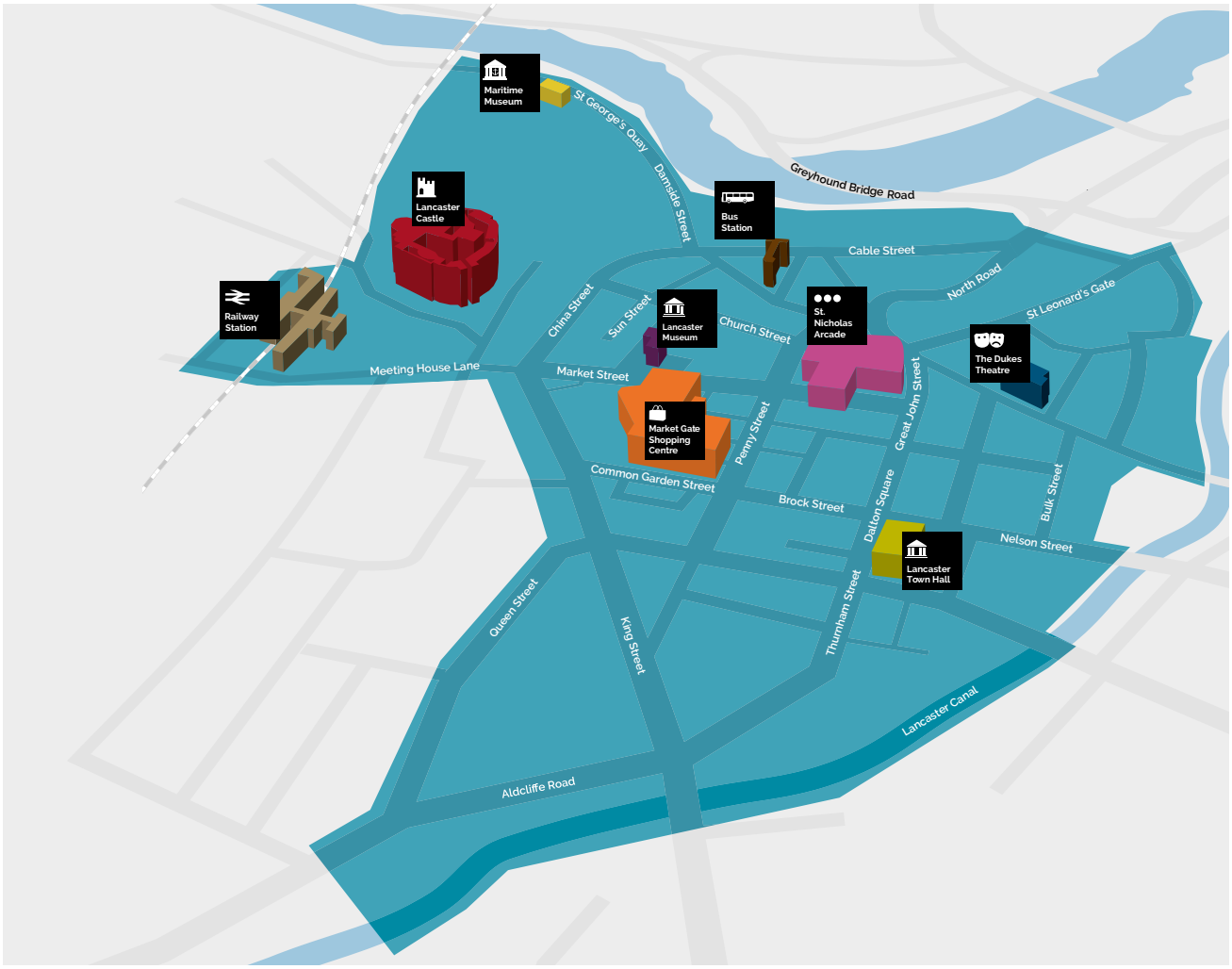
## Lancaster BID will focus on 5 key priorities over the next 5 years:

- **Marketing Lancaster as a destination**
- **Ensuring the city centre is a clean and attractive place**
- **Delivering a year round programme of flagship events**
- **Partnership working to create a safe and secure city centre**
- **Direct support to businesses through information and events**

- The Lancaster BID zone will be extended to encompass approximately **12** additional hereditaments.
- The levy charge will remain at **1.5%** of the rateable value and will be fixed for the entire 5 year term.
- Hereditaments with a rateable value below £10,000 will continue to be **exempt of paying the levy**, although voluntary associate membership is available to allow access to the full range of Lancaster BID benefits.
- The renewed Lancaster BID will run for a **5 year term** to maximise opportunities to develop longer term strategic projects to benefit Lancaster city centre.
- Lancaster BID will continue to be delivered by the not for profit BID Company (Lancaster BID Ltd) overseen by the Company Directors with support from the BID Management Board.
- Lancaster BID will continue to be responsive to levy payers and will **react to changing circumstances** where necessary to ensure services remain relevant and provide maximum benefits to all.

The renewed Lancaster BID zone is being extended to bring a slightly larger area inside the boundaries. The amended zone will incorporate city centre businesses and spaces which were previously on the edges, in particular around Lancaster Station and Cable Street / North Road. These changes bring around 12 new hereditaments into the BID zone to ensure they are all a part of a unified city centre and can access the full range of benefits offered by Lancaster BID. The extended Lancaster BID zone is forecast to generate an annual BID levy income in excess of £230,000 per annum for five years. This will be spent directly on promoting, improving and building footfall and events in Lancaster city centre.

# Map of New BID Zone




Illustrative purposes only – contact Lancaster BID to check if you are uncertain if your business is included

## Streets included in **existing BID Zone:**

Aalborg Place, Aalborg Square, Aldcliffe Road (part), Alfred Street, Anchor Lane, Ashton Walk, Bashful Alley, Brewery Arcade, Brewery Lane, Bridget Street, Brock Street, Bryer Street, Bulk Street, Cable Street, Castle Grove, Castle Hill, Castle Park, Chapel Street, Cheapside, China Street, Church Street, Common Garden Street, Corn Market, Dalton Square, Damside Street, Edward Street, Ffrances Passage, Fleet Square, Gage Street, George Street, Gillisons Lane, Great John Street, Henry Street, James Street, King Street, Lancaster Gate, Lodge Street, Lower Church Street, Lucy Street, Market Hall, Market Street, Market Gate, Marton Street, Mary Street, Meeting House Lane, Moor Lane, Moor Street, Nelson Street, New Road, New Street, North Road, Penny Street, Perpignan Way, Pitt Street, Priory Close, Quarry Road (part), Queen Street, Queen Square, Rendsburg Way, Robert Street, Rosemary Lane, Russell Street, St Georges Quay, St Leonardsgate, St Mary's Parade, St Mary's Gate, St Nicholas Arcades, Sir Simon's Arcade, Slip Inn Lane, Spring Garden Street, Stonewell, Sulyard Street, Sun Street, Thurnham Street, Victoria Street, Wood Street.

## **Amended boundaries** for extended BID Zone 2021-2026

**Bridge Lane, Cable Street, Church Street, Damside Street, Lancaster Railway Station, Market Street, Meeting House Lane, North Road, Parliament Street, Phoenix Street, St Leonardsgate, Sugar House Alley**

This list of streets includes all locations where changes have been made to the Lancaster BID boundaries which affect one or more hereditaments. Where streets span the boundary the definitive map should be checked to confirm exactly which hereditaments are within the BID zone. Contact the Lancaster BID office if you are unsure if your property is included.

# The New Lancaster BID Term 2021-2026

## WHAT will we deliver?

In our recent surveys of levy payers you told us which of our services you value the most and what initiatives should be prioritised moving forward over the next 5-year term. We have used this information to agree **Five Key Goals** which will guide our work.

### Marketing Lancaster as a destination

We will continue to utilise a mix of online and traditional marketing methods to market Lancaster city centre to local residents and visitors from further afield.

### Safe and secure city centre

We will continue to provide a BID Warden to ensure visible presence on the streets and work in partnership with others to improve safety and security throughout the city centre.

### Clean and attractive city centre

We will work in partnership to deliver strategic city centre improvements whilst also continuing to support seasonal street decorations and a targeted approach to keeping the city centre clean and tidy.

### High quality events programme

We will deliver flagship events across the city centre and provide support to partners to ensure Lancaster continues to be known for high quality events throughout the year.

### Direct support to businesses

We will ensure a regular flow of information to our levy paying businesses with networking events around key themes. We will also respond to changing circumstances to provide maximum direct support to businesses in the most effective manner.

"BID is the glue that pulls together many of the disparate features that make our City so wonderful, provides support and investment to help them grow and also the window that shows them to the visiting world. Without it, there is no suitable alternative and the City would be a far weaker place, and I hope it will continue to carry out its excellent work for years to come."

**Tim Tomlinson**
Licensee and Chair of Lancaster Pubwatch

# Key Goal:
# Marketing Lancaster as a destination

In our recent levy payer survey **72%** of you told us that Marketing Lancaster as a Destination should be our top priority.

**100%** of respondents ranked this goal within the Top 5 priorities for Lancaster BID.

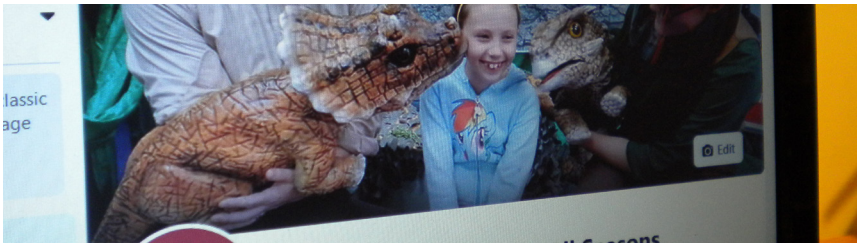
We will deliver a comprehensive marketing plan throughout the next BID term to promote the benefits and attractions of Lancaster city centre to local residents and visitors from further afield. We will utilise a combination of traditional and digital methodology to ensure the maximum reach.

## Key Elements of this plan will include:

Continuation of our partnership with **Loyal Free** – a multi award winning App which provides a digital platform to promote businesses and events whilst encouraging repeat visits to the city centre. Loyal Free provides multiple FREE promotional opportunities to BID levy payers. A Marketplace feature will also be launched soon to facilitate commission free online sales for city centre businesses.

Continuation of longstanding partnerships with local print media including Lancaster Guardian, Lancaster District Magazine and Local Choice. Working with these publications will ensure regular features and **FREE** promotional opportunities for businesses in Lancaster city centre.

Build relationships with **broadcast media** through regular features on local radio and gaining a reputation as a reliable voice for news articles relating to issues affecting businesses in Lancaster city centre.



**Managed Social Media** channels across several platforms to promote city centre businesses, special offers and events to a wide following.

Responding to opportunities for high profile **marketing and promotion of the city** to a wider audience across the district and beyond. Previous examples have included winning a bus advertising package worth £25,000 for the city and promoting Lancaster at the annual North Lancs Business Expo.

**"As a local business we have found the BID to be a real force in driving footfall to the city centre and encouraging a pride in Lancaster that has grown and grown over the years. They offer a voice to the concerns of the small business owner and a megaphone to the community who wish Lancaster to rise to be 'the place to visit, live and do business'.**

**They have identified areas which need to be addressed and have encouraged a community involvement in their response to these. Without the BID we would be unable to continue to move forward in improving our beautiful city."**

**Nicola McIlwrath,**
Guy Penn Insurance

# Key Goal:
# Safe and secure city centre

In February 2020 we held a BID Breakfast event attended by representatives of around **70** businesses on the theme of safety and security in Lancaster city centre. The event was supported by Lancaster City Council and Lancashire Constabulary and highlighted several themes which businesses agreed were the top priorities for action.

As a result of this event Lancaster BID worked with key partners to agree a **joint action plan** to take forward. As a result of this event a number of initiatives have already been introduced as a pilot during the final year of the current BID term. Following a successful ballot, these will be rolled out further to bring additional benefits to the city centre over the next five years.

## Key initiatives to improve safety and security in Lancaster city centre are:

Lancaster BID has already introduced a **BID Warden** working 30 hours per week as a visible presence in the city centre. This role has already proved highly effective to build stronger links between businesses, security staff and the Police. The BID Warden is a key role in a multi-agency approach to reduce issues such as antisocial behaviour, shoplifting, street drinking and homelessness in the city centre. This role will continue throughout the new BID term.

Lancaster BID has provided funding towards the provision of **community radios** for all PCSOs operational in the city centre. These are already proving highly effective to improve communication links between businesses, security staff and the Police. In the new BID term we will focus on further expansion of the community radio network to engage with a wider number of businesses and encourage them to join.

Work has already started to introduce a formal **ShopWatch** scheme to align with the highly effective PubWatch already operational across the city centre. The scheme, which will be formally launched in the new BID term will provide a GDPR compliant platform for sharing intelligence between businesses across the city centre. Details of prolific shoplifters and other offenders will be available to signed up members (FREE to BID levy payers) to facilitate a joined-up approach to reducing business crime.

**As part of the ongoing work of the Homelessness Advisory Group I have been appreciative of the leadership offered by Lancaster BID . The Street Aid scheme to reduce street begging and support people to come off the streets has been researched through BIDs across the country and supported by Tony Johnson's work with local BID members. The real energy for change has come through Lancaster BID and it is an excellent example of the partnership work the BID is doing with Police, council and voluntary sector to make the city feel safer.**

**Caroline Jackson:** Portfolio Holder for Housing, Lancaster City Council

Lancaster BID is a key player in the multi-agency **Homeless Advisory Group**. BID has led the development of a new pilot Street Aid initiative introducing contactless donation points in the city centre to encourage donations to a support fund. The scheme will provide a positive alternative to giving money directly to people on the streets and provide crucial funds to directly support individuals to find a permanent home.

**"BID have been a key partner with Lancashire Constabulary in delivering on 'Safe and Secure Lancaster'. As representatives of the business community they have ensured that the voice of business is heard when responding to the challenges of policing the city centre. They have ensured that the concerns of business have been heard at the highest level through the BID Breakfast with the Police & Crime Commissioner, Clive Grunshaw. As a result of this collaborative approach BID has driven the identified concerns of business into action from addressing prolific shoplifting through supporting civil court action and the development of Shopwatch, highlighting and supporting the response to anti-social behaviour through the BID Warden and assisting partner agencies to address the long term complex issues of rough sleeping and begging through the Street Aid project. Most recently BID has stepped up and fully supported the district's response to the Covid pandemic and the reopening of the city's economy. They have become an invaluable ambassador in bringing people and organisations together to identify the issues businesses face in the city and ensuring that action is taken to the benefit of all concerned."**

**Sergeant Lindsay Brown**
Partnerships Officer, Lancashire Constabulary

# Key Goal:
# Clean and attractive city centre

Maintaining and enhancing a clean and attractive city centre has always been a key priority for Lancaster BID. Our recent levy payer survey highlighted that this continues to be a key priority for the majority of businesses.

**Creating a positive first impression is essential** to encourage visitors to make repeat visits to Lancaster city centre.

## Over the next five years this will continue to be a priority with an ongoing commitment to the following initiatives:

**Provide resources** to enhance cleansing of the city centre including proactive targeting of frequent grot spots, fly tipping and graffiti. Specific campaigns, such as chewing gum removal, will continue to feature.

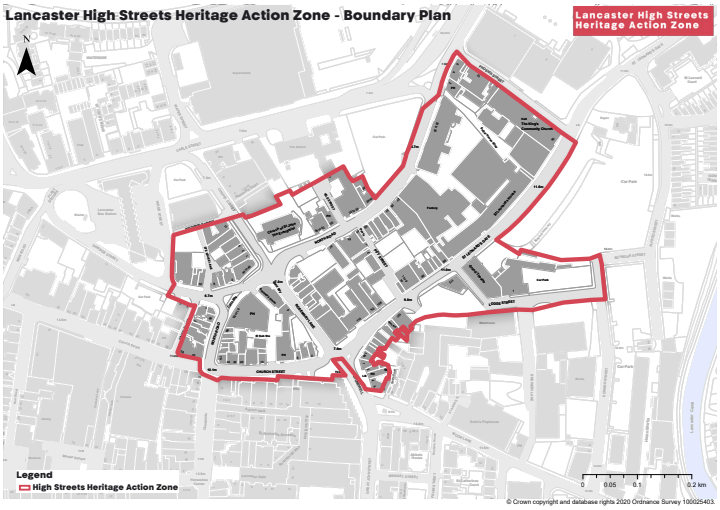
**Installation of seasonal decorations** including extensive Christmas lights, summer bunting and themed temporary installations to provide focus points throughout the year.

**Ensure the ongoing maintenance** of the city-wide planting scheme with opportunities to expand to further locations actively investigated.

**Continue to be responsive** to other opportunities to improve the aesthetics of the city centre, for example utilising high profile long term vacant units for promotional purposes.

**Lancaster BID will also continue to develop strong partnerships with other agencies to deliver strategic initiatives with wide long-term benefits for the city centre.**

**Representation from local business via Lancaster BID is often seen as being critical to securing significant funding for the city.**




**"In seeking the award of £1.15M from Historic England towards the Lancaster High Streets HAZ, demonstrating partnership working with Lancaster BID was integral to evidencing that there was strong local support and demand for investment in the historic centre and good relationships and understanding of local businesses."**

**Regeneration Team,**
Lancaster City Council

## **Case Study:** High Streets Heritage Action Zone

Lancaster has successfully secured **£1.15m** from Historic England to deliver a High Streets Heritage Action Zone as part of the Government's nationwide initiative designed to secure lasting improvements to our historic high streets. The area of benefit is around Cable Street and North Road as shown on the map.

Lancaster City Council, working with partner organisations, will work to repair and, where vacant, bring back into use historic buildings through a grants programme and invest in street improvements to re-connect this area with the core city centre. These will create **safer and more attractive places** to spend time in and will be supported by opportunities to learn more about the area and how to look after it.

The total budget for the project is **£2.875M**, with **£1.15M** from both Historic England and the city council, with the balance of funding coming from local partners over the four-year delivery programme. Partnership working, including the close involvement of Lancaster BID, has been critical to securing this significant strategic initiative for the city.

# Key Goal: High Quality Events Programme

Lancaster BID has supported an ever-growing events programme over the current BID term. This has included a range of **flagship events** directly managed by Lancaster BID as well as providing funding and marketing support for key events organised by others. The events reliably draw in large crowds to the city and are viewed as a key priority by most of our levy payers. 2020 has clearly been a challenging year for events with almost all public events having to be cancelled to ensure public safety. During this time we have found innovative new alternatives to drive footfall into the city centre until such a time as events can safely return.

We have launched the **LoyalFree App** which will continue to be used to market all events of any size across the city centre. The App also features trails which encourage self-guided exploration of Lancaster with incentives to visit new businesses. This includes interactive trails with significant prizes to drive footfall into the city centre.

The LoyalFree App will continue to be a key tool to draw people into the city throughout the new BID term and will become even more effective as the number of users grows.
As soon as it is safe to do so and Government guidance allows, the Lancaster BID team will be ready to bring all your favourite events back to the city centre to once again draw crowds to discover what Lancaster has to offer.

## Key Lancaster BID events currently scheduled to return in 2021 include:

**Dino Day** – a family event where animatronic dinosaurs take over the streets in the city centre.

**Festa Italia** – a celebration of all things Italian with the city streets lined with food & drink stalls, Italian Supercars and a packed stage for entertainment into the evening.

**Winter in the City** launched by the flagship Lancaster Christmas Lights Switch On – always one of the most popular events of the year to draw shoppers into the city centre and get everyone in the festive mood.

## Lancaster BID will also continue to work with partners to bring back many more local favourites including:

**Lancaster Music Festival** – a free festival across the city's bars and public spaces which is always guaranteed to draw in the crowds.

**Lancaster Pride** – a packed day to celebrate the diversity in Lancaster city centre.

**Light Up Lancaster** – a two-day festival of light culminating in the fantastic city fireworks from the rooftop of Lancaster Castle.

## Lancaster BID will work tirelessly to bring back these events and ensure that Lancaster retains the reputation of being a city of events.

**"Lancaster BID as an organisation are invaluable for promoting Lancaster City Centre and its businesses, both large and small. The local events that are either supported, or run by Lancaster BID drive footfall & loyalty to the City Centre from local residents and visitors from surrounding districts.**

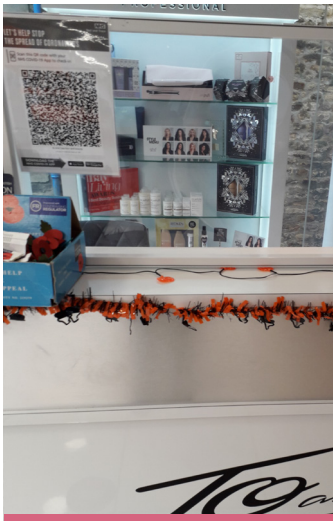
**As a result we have seen customers returning to us instore who have been made aware of us when visiting the City Centre for an organised event, such as the Christmas Lights switch on, Dino Day and the Music Festival. More than ever, promoting #shoplocal #supportlocalbusiness is crucial for reviving our City Centre & community..... long may Lancaster BID be allowed to continue their activities for marketing and promoting our beautiful City!"**

**Julie Shaw,** Simply Baby Lancaster

# Key Goal: Direct support to businesses

The majority of Lancaster BID initiatives are targeted at the public with the specific aim of driving increased footfall into Lancaster city centre to spend with local businesses.

Less visible to many, but equally important, is our work to directly support business owners. This Key Goal has become more critical than ever during the COVID-19 Pandemic when Lancaster BID has continued to provide essential prompt updates to businesses to support them to survive and safely reopen.



40 sneeze screens provided to city centre businesses

Over 1000 social distancing floor markers distributed across the city centre

Throughout the new BID term, Lancaster BID will continue to deliver direct targeted support to businesses responsive to need. **Specific initiatives which will continue throughout the next BID term will include:**

Our **BID Ambassador Awards** will return even bigger and better to reward the businesses which go above and beyond to help raise the profile of Lancaster city centre. The Awards offer high profile promotional opportunities to showcase the very best businesses to the wider public.

**"Thanks for the newsletter – always very clear and useful"**

**Jane Richardson,** Arteria

Our regular **newsletter** will continue to provide regular updates on BID initiatives and wider useful information relevant to local businesses. The frequency of the newsletter increased during lockdown and will continue to be circulated on at least a fortnightly basis to ensure businesses remain fully informed with the most up to date information.

We will resume our hugely popular **BID Business Breakfast** events which focus on specific themes most relevant to businesses, with expert speakers and the opportunity to put questions to the panel.

We will work with businesses to identify sector specific needs and deliver **FREE** training to build skills within the local business community. Previous training delivered includes Dementia Awareness, Window Dressing, Social Media and Video Marketing.

**FREE marketing opportunities** will continue to be available for city centre businesses including on the LoyalFree App, BID social media accounts and local media.

## All our support to businesses will be responsive to local priorities and businesses are always encouraged to contact us to suggest any topics which would be beneficial.

**"The acronym BID means Business Improvement District, in essence we; our city; our shops are 'open for business'. Without a plan, an approach and communication it is bound to fail.**

**Lancaster BID under Tony's leadership, is shouting from the hilltops, we are open for business and we want to hear from you how we can do this together.**

**Many of the businesses in Lancaster are disparate and seemingly unconnected aside from common goals. BID opens the businesses and operators up to talking, sharing, listening and working together to look at how to make improvements.**

**I have found these are not simply opportunities to talk but also to listen, consider doing things differently and be involved from a different perspective, such as working with the colleges to provide mentoring, sharing information with each other to ensure security and safety of staff and stock, marketing the City and independent traders as a subject of focus.**

**It will be great to see more of this as we enter a phase potentially more challenging that anyone could have imagined."**

**Peter Wood,**
Renes

# 2021 – 2026 Financial Projections

**The BID levy is fixed for the duration of the next five-year term to enable all businesses to be certain of their commitment when deciding how to vote. The fixed levy also ensures that Lancaster BID can confidently plan ahead to allocate the budget.**

The financial projections assume a levy collection rate of 95% which is in line with what has been achieved during the current BID term.

To ensure we deliver excellent value for money for levy payers we will have a strong focus on securing additional income streams to add to our overall budget to benefit Lancaster city centre. For forecasting purposes, we have assumed we will secure additional income equivalent to 20% of the annual BID levy. This is a conservative forecast which is likely to be exceeded through securing grants to deliver specific initiatives in the city centre.

We work hard to keep overhead costs low and expect additional income will exceed our annual overheads costs.

This means that an amount greater than the total BID levy collection is expected to be available for investment directly into project delivery for the benefit of Lancaster city centre businesses.

## Financial Projections for new BID term – 2021-2026

**Income**

| | Annual | Five Year Total |
|---|---|---|
| BID Levy Income | £230,000 | £1,150,000 |
| Additional Income Secured | £46,000 | £230,000 |
| **TOTAL Income** | **£276,000** | **£1,380,000** |

**Expenditure**

| | Annual | Five Year Total |
|---|---|---|
| Project Delivery Costs | £236,000 | £1,180,000 |
| Administration and Overheads | £40,000 | £200,000 |
| **TOTAL Income** | **£276,000** | **£1,380,000** |

Our Finances will continue to be managed by a contracted accountant with regular reporting for scrutiny to our Finance and Strategy sub group and BID Management Board. Accounts are externally verified and are available to all levy payers.

Lancaster BID always seeks to ensure excellent value for money for levy payers. In line with our ethos we will always seek suppliers from within the Lancaster district wherever possible. Where appropriate BID levy payers will be encouraged to quote to provide services.

## **WHO** will pay the BID Levy?

All properties within the boundaries of the Lancaster BID Zone with a rateable value of £10,000 or above on 1st April 2021 will be liable to pay the BID levy.
Check the map and list of streets on page 14 to confirm if you are within the boundary.

## **HOW MUCH** will I have to pay?

The BID Levy will remain at 1.5% of your rateable value at 1st April 2021. For a property with a rateable value of £10,000, this equates to just £150 per year – about the same cost as a weekly cup of coffee!
The levy is payable by whoever is responsible for paying the Non Domestic Rates for the property.

## **WHEN** will I have to pay?

The five year term will commence on 1st April 2021. BID levy bills will be issued by Lancaster City Council in April each year as a one-off annual payment. If responsibility for Non Domestic Rates changes during the year, a pro rata refund will be calculated and a new BID levy bill issued to the newly responsible party.

## Any More **QUESTIONS?**

To check if you are included within the Lancaster BID Zone, or to check your rateable value to calculate the amount you will have to pay contact the Lancaster BID team on **info@lancasterbid.org** or phone **01524 590650.**

We'll be happy to answer any questions you have about the BID Ballot and any of our key goals.

## GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Lancaster BID is established as an independent not for profit Limited Company. This ensures direct local control and oversight of all our decision making to deliver maximum benefits to city centre businesses. The company is overseen by a Board of Directors which is guided by decisions made by the Lancaster BID Management Board. The company is VAT registered and produces accounts which are externally verified by a qualified accountancy firm.

## BID LEVY RULES

- Lancaster BID levy is fixed at 1.5% of rateable value on 1st April 2021 for the full five year term.
- This will be the third term of Lancaster BID and will run from 1 April 2021 for 5 years until 31st of March 2026.
- There will be no VAT charged on the BID levy.
- The BID levy will be applied to all business ratepayers of occupied or unoccupied property with a rateable value of £10,000 and above within the Lancaster BID Zone at any time that the BID is in operation. No relief is to be given to any class of non-domestic ratepayer irrespective of whatever relief or exemption they may currently enjoy in respect of Non Domestic (or Business) Rates.
- The BID levy will be used to fund the delivery of initiatives as outlined in this Business Plan or other activities of benefit to Lancaster city centre which are responsive to emerging priorities and approved by the Management Board.
- Businesses locating to or leaving the BID area during the time that the BID is in operation will pay a proportion of the levy calculated on a pro rata basis.
- The existing recovery procedures for the standard Business Rates bill will be utilised for any non-payment of the BID levy.
- There are no costs relating to the development of the new BID term which will need to be repaid during the term.
- For the purposes of definition the term 'Renewal' in regard to the Lancaster BID means replacement of the existing BID at the end of its current term (March 2021) with a new arrangement covering an extended area illustrated by the 'BID Zone' map (page 14) and which will be subject to the rules and arrangements herein.
- Notice of the intention to hold a ballot has been given to the Secretary of State and Lancaster City Council.
- The BID arrangements may be altered without an Alteration Ballot in the following instances:
- Alterations do not alter the geographical area of the BID
- Alterations do not alter the BID levy payable
- Alterations do not conflict with the Local Government Act (2003) or The Business Improvement District Regulations (2004)
- The streets and hereditaments to be included in the BID area may alter due to changes in the local ratings list. Hereditaments may be additionally included if their rateable value — at any time during the BID period — exceeds £10,000 or they are newly added to the local list and the rateable value threshold criteria (as set out in the above response to point 1 (1) (d) of schedule 1 of the BID regulations) is exceeded.
- Hereditaments may also be excluded from the BID area and BID levy charge in those cases where properties are removed from the local list. Where this occurs such amendments will be adjusted from the effective date notified by the Valuation Office.

## BASELINE SERVICES

The BID's projects and services will be entirely additional to statutory services already delivered by Lancaster City Council or any other local authority. Your money will not be used to pay for any services that the council has a statutory duty to provide. This will be monitored through a baseline agreement with Lancaster City Council detailing the existing level of service provided by the City Council. BID funding may be used to work in partnership with the City Council or any other authority to add value and extend existing initiatives to provide added benefits to the city centre. In accordance with the statutory requirements for BID renewals the proposals set out in this Business Plan were put before Lancaster City Council cabinet and received approval.

# What will happen if I vote No?

If the majority of city centre businesses (by number or rateable value) vote No, Lancaster BID would cease operation and all benefits to city centre businesses will be lost.

Specific impacts on the city centre include:

**No single voice lobbying on behalf of city centre businesses on key issues such as parking**

LoyalFree App will no longer be available to Lancaster city centre businesses

**Significant reduction of Christmas Lights display in the city centre**

No protection for free Bank Holiday and Christmas parking

**No more BID organised events including Christmas Lights Switch On, Festa Italia and Dino Day**

No more BID funding for key city centre events including Lancaster Music Festival and Light Up Lancaster, which would put their future at risk

Businesses will struggle to have a voice on strategic issues affecting the city centre

**No more BID Warden patrolling the city centre to help address antisocial behaviour and shoplifting**

No active social media promotion offering free publicity for your business

**No more funding for city centre improvement initiatives**

No more marketing campaigns including Shop Local and Love Local, Love Lancaster

**Loss of all additional funding which Lancaster BID secures for the city centre**

End of additional targeted street cleansing in the city centre

## What if I Don't Vote?

Much like a general election, there is no minimum turnout for a BID. So, if you don't vote, the outcome will be decided for you by other businesses. Make sure you use your vote to ensure that your voice is heard.

# Vote YES to Lancaster BID

With your support we will ensure that Lancaster city centre businesses continue to have a strong voice and have a direct say in the future of your city centre.

All future plans for Lancaster BID can only be implemented if you **VOTE YES TO LANCASTER BID**. To be successful the ballot must be won by a majority by number and a majority by rateable value so every vote counts.

## With a positive outcome Lancaster BID will:

- Deliver against the Five Priority Goals detailed in this Business Plan to ensure strong benefits to businesses in Lancaster city centre.
- Provide a voice for local businesses to engage with the City Council and other key agencies on the matters which are most important to you.
- Be part of a national BID network of over 300 BIDs giving a strong national voice to lobby government on issues affecting the future of city centres.
- Communicate regularly with other BIDs across the Northwest to share best practice
- Invest over £1million directly back into the city centre
- Listen to our levy payers and actively encourage feedback and ideas along with opportunities to become more involved through attending events, training or joining one of our thematic working groups.
- Remain proactive and responsive to adapt to changing priorities and ensure we continue to remain relevant and provide the best possible support to all our levy payers.
- Ensure Lancaster continues to have a strong public profile and remains a popular place to visit, live, work and do business.
- All this is only possible of you V**OTE YES TO LANCASTER BID**. Look out for your ballot paper to make sure that your voice is heard.

# How to Vote

**The vote will be via a postal ballot which will take place between 14th January and 11th February 2021.** Results will be announced by 5.00pm on Friday 12th February 2021.

All defined business ratepayers with a rateable value of £10,000 or above in the BID area will be given the opportunity to vote during the formal ballot period.

Each ratepayer will be entitled to one vote per hereditament on which a BID levy would be paid. It will be possible to appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf and information on how to do so will be included with the ballot information sent to you. The ballot will be a confidential postal ballot managed by Civica Election Services.

Look out for the ballot papers coming through your door in January and make sure you place your vote to be certain that your voice is heard.

Any ballot queries or missing ballot papers should be brought to the attention of Lancaster BID as soon as possible on **info@lancasterbid.org** or **01524 590650**.

FIVE YEARS

2021

LANCASTER BID

2026

FIVE GOALS

BID

LANCASTER
BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT

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