

# Wilmslow BID Annual Report 22/23



WILMSLOW  
WAY BETTER

22  
23

# Introduction

The Business Improvement District (BID) is a partnership which delivers a dynamic collaboration between the diverse range of businesses of Wilmslow and an array of partner organisations. With a visionary approach, the BID is set out to position Wilmslow as a premier destination of choice for residents, visitors, employees and shoppers alike, transforming the town into both a thriving community hub and commercially viable location of choice for businesses.

The BID's journey began in August 2022, when an overwhelming 74% of organisations voted in favour of its formation, representing a

substantial 85% of the collective rateable value of those who voted.

Officially launching on 1st November 2022, the BID is projected to deliver circa £1 million of investment into the town centre through to 31st October 2027, propelling Wilmslow's evolution.

Businesses pay a small additional supplement through the business rates system (the BID levy). This collective investment serves to introduce and enhance a plethora of improvement projects and services, which are over and above the services provided by the Local Authority, laying strong

foundations for the present and developing future-proofed initiatives that are scalable.

## KEY STATISTICS:

**74%**

voted in favour of the BID

**85%**

of the collective rateable value represented by those who voted

**£1 million**

(circa) of investment

## How the BID Operates

At the helm of managing the project is the elected Executive Board, consisting of levy payers from within the BID area. The Board has a terms of reference and has contracted with Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside to effectively project manage the Business Improvement District. The Board meet at least six times per year to ensure transparency and efficiency whilst executing the strategy.

## The BID Levy

All non-domestic ratepayers in the geographical area with a rateable value equal to or above £15,000 are liable for a BID levy. This includes all organisations that occupy a rateable property (hereditament) and property (hereditament) owners/leaseholders (when units are vacant) in the BID geographical area. The BID levy is 1.5% of rateable value for all hereditaments.



## The Wilmslow BID Team

<b>Lisa Russett</b>	Wilmslow BID Manager	Lisa.russett@groundwork.org.uk
<b>Jane Hough</b>	Deputy Director for BIDs and Business Services	Jane.hough@groundwork.org.uk
<b>Greville Kelly</b>	Director for BIDs and Business Services	Greville.kelly@groundwork.org.uk
<b>Stephanie Leese</b>	Business Team Co-Ordinator	Stephanie.leese@groundwork.org.uk

## The Board

<b>Joanna Davies</b>	Chair - Black White Denim
<b>Jane Eastwood</b>	Boots
<b>Neil Matthews</b>	Mail Boxes ETC
<b>Susan Marshall</b>	Hoopers
<b>Tony Jones</b>	Emerson Group
<b>Charles Jarvis</b>	Cheshire East Council
<b>Jo Wise*</b>	Cheshire East Council
<b>Tony &amp; Luis Munding</b>	The Rex Cinema
<b>Danny Brown</b>	Howden Insurance
<b>Martin Lowe</b>	Suburban Green & The Wine Cellar
<b>Chris Hilliard</b>	The Electric Bike Shop
<b>Mark Goldsmith*</b>	Wilmslow Town Council
<b>Angela Donaldson</b>	The Information Commissioner's Office
<b>Samuel Burrows</b>	Wood Fire Smoke
<b>George Hajjyanis</b>	The Grove & The Wrap Studio
<b>Numan Shah</b>	Canova Medical

\*Advisory Capacity Only



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Joanna Davies



*"Chairing the board of Wilmslow's recently created Business Improvement District has been one of the most rewarding parts of my (varied) career to date. Working with a group of energetic, entrepreneurial, results-driven individuals and businesses has proved what can be achieved when you harness the talent on your doorstep. The fact that the members of the board turn up to frequent meetings with such positivity and purpose means we must be getting something right.*

*It's been an outstanding year! Together, we have collectively delivered a range of unforgettable events, from the festive Wilmslow Winter Wonderland, complete with an artificial ice rink and captivating street performers, to the prehistoric adventure of Jurassic Wilmslow, which saw hundreds of people scouring the town centre in search of hidden dinosaurs.*

*But the fun didn't stop there! We rallied families and sports enthusiasts alike during the Wilmslow Summer of Sport Fun Day in support of the Women's World Cup, before later partnering with Wilmslow Town Council to illuminate the centre with the Christmas Light Switch On and celebrate the King's Coronation. We drew crowds into town for truly memorable events, with overwhelmingly positive feedback across the board.*

*All of the above are a testament to our brilliant board, hard-working local businesses, our supportive community and our partners Groundwork who support everything we do with such commitment and drive. Despite everything that's been going on in the world, we have powered on knowing full well that nothing is beyond our capability as a collective. We truly believe that we live up to our promise: Wilmslow's Way Better."*

## MESSAGE FROM THE WILMSLOW BID MANAGER

### Lisa Russett



*"The BID's inaugural year has been both exciting and challenging, with a calendar that boasted a wide array of remarkable events and essential maintenance to enhance the town's kerb appeal. One of my highlights undoubtedly rests with Jurassic Wilmslow; I loved seeing everyone get so involved with dressing the dinosaurs up, naming them and sharing their creative endeavours on social media. This prehistoric event sparked a real buzz in the town, largely thanks to the enthusiastic participation of our local businesses.*

*Amidst the more glamorous events, tasks such as orchestrating the streets being jet-washed and bunting being placed along Grove Street were equally as important, contributing to the aesthetic enhancement of our beloved town.*

*Collaborating with various businesses and community groups, including Wilmslow Town Council, In Bloom, Round Table and the Clean Team, has been a rewarding journey. It's a testament to the dedication of our business community and its unwavering commitment to the collective success of Wilmslow.*

*Our aspirations are high, but with our unrivalled community spirit and genuine desire to elevate the town to new heights, I'm looking forward to seeing what more we can accomplish together, in both our second year and the remainder of the BID's five year term."*



# Projects Delivered in 2022/23

## Theme 1

# Creating a 'Way Better' Experience

Ever since its inception, the BID has been on a quest to identify areas where enhanced cleansing could take place, to go above and beyond what the local authority is duty bound to deliver.

Within the first year, approximately 300m<sup>2</sup> of public realm was cleansed, with jet-washing of both Grove Street and Alderley Road completed. The BID have identified a number of

additional areas for cleansing in year two.

The BID's commitment to enhancing Wilmslow's cleanliness extends beyond just street cleaning. In addition to this, we've also delivered:

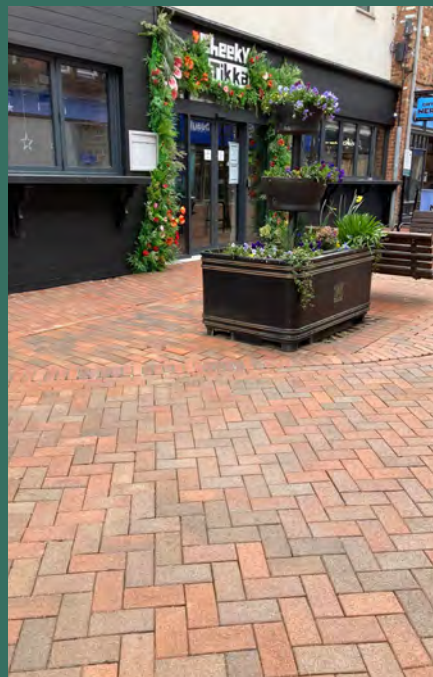
- ▶ Additional investment into the Wilmslow Clean Team to help tackle litter picking in 'grot spot' areas.

- ▶ Installation of bunting along Grove Street for the summer months.
- ▶ Support to the business community during the resurfacing of Kings Close.

We also collaborated with the In Bloom Team to identify where additional floral enhancements can be added, enhancing the town's natural beauty and charm.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



Aligned with the pledge to deliver a 'Way Better' Experience for Wilmslow, the BID has orchestrated and championed a series of memorable events through year one.



# Christmas Winter Wonderland 2022

During the festive season, the BID worked in partnership with Wilmslow Town Council to support the delivery of the annual Christmas Light Switch On. We organised for local resident and Coronation Street Star Samia Longchambon to help to switch on the lights, drawing in a crowd of over 11,000 people to kick off the 2022 festivities.

In December 2022, the BID unveiled its inaugural Wilmslow Winter Wonderland - a two day extravaganza featuring a pop-up synthetic ice rink in Bank Square (with support from Wilmslow Town Council), drawing in nearly 800 skaters and an estimated 2,000 spectators.



## KEY STATISTICS:

### Christmas Light Switch On

**11,000+**  
attendees

### Wilmslow Winter Wonderland

**800** skaters  
**2,000** spectators







# Dinosaur Trail

In February 2023, the BID funded a static trail of eight dinosaurs scattered across venues around the town. Visitors to the town centre were invited to locate the dinosaurs, with entrants who completed the search having the chance to win prizes from various local businesses.

The trail was complemented by lively dinosaur performances in Bank Square and Wilmslow Library to drive footfall, increase dwell time and encourage customer spend, whilst also giving visitors the opportunity to really discover all that Wilmslow has to offer.

The event attracted over 200 entries to the trail competition in the first six days, with 973 entries overall, along with around 20,000 social media engagements during the first week. Wilmslow Library also recorded approximately 1,100 people through the door throughout the interactive dinosaur day.



“Our dinosaur proved to be extremely popular. As it was half term week, we literally had a constant stream of primary children with their parents. Your plan worked, as everyone was out and about looking for dinosaurs.”

Debbie - Jordan Fishwick

## KEY STATISTICS:

**20,000**

social media engagements

**1,100**

footfall to Wilmslow Library

**973**

total competition entries



# King's Coronation

On 7th May 2023, the BID joined forces with Wilmslow Town Council to organise a King's Coronation event, infused with a traditional May Day style celebration with music, games, activities and community stalls leading up through Grove Street, driving additional footfall through the town.



## SOCIAL STATISTICS:

Reach:

**44,288**

Engagements:

**511**



# Summer Sports Day

August 2023 marked the BID's first large-scale solo event with the Summer Sports Day, to celebrate the Women's World Cup. We put on a full day of activities for varying abilities across Grove Street, Hawthorn Lane and Swan Street drawing in over 10,000 attendees - a 26% uplift on an average summer Sunday and garnering rave reviews.



## KEY STATISTICS:

**10,000+**  
attendees

**+26% uplift**  
on an average summer  
Sunday

“Wilmslow is a great town. We need more events like Sunday where people are brought together. I absolutely loved it. We want people walking into the town and leaving their cars at home, we want people eating and drinking as well as spending money. Well done to all involved, it was a brilliant job.”

Alex - Resident





Amidst these endeavours, the BID has nurtured partnerships with key stakeholders from Cheshire East Council, Wilmslow Town Council, Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Group and Wilmslow Civic Society to brainstorm opportunities for improving gateways, developing event space and tackling parking issues.

Moreover, we worked closely with Cheshire Police, Cheshire East

Council, Wilmslow Town Council and Wilmslow High School to tackle anti-social behaviour and theft. We're also working closely with key stakeholders on how to improve and grow the use of the business crime radio network.

In our pursuit of community engagement and empowerment, we've maintained an open line of communication with Wilmslow residents and the bustling business community. Over twenty

e-bulletins and newsletters were distributed, notifying locals of upcoming events and activities across the town centre to encourage their involvement. We have quickly grown our email marketing list to over 1,200 subscribers.



## Theme 2

# Delivering ‘Way Better’ Marketing & Town Centre Promotion

Our footprint has surged across the Wilmslow’s Way Better digital media platforms, raising the profile of the town centre to attract new visitors and shoppers. Following a procurement exercise, a new marketing agency was appointed in April 2023, amplifying the spotlight on town centre businesses, events and activities, whilst achieving an impressive combined reach on Facebook and Instagram of over 153,000 consumers and 1,114 new followers.

Businesses were able to contact the marketing team directly by emailing marketing@wilmslowswaybetter.co.uk, whilst the team also proactively met and engaged with businesses across the town on a weekly basis.

In our quest to extend our reach further, we also worked with Cheshire-based news outlets such as Wilmslow.co.uk, Knutsford Guardian, Cheshire Life and Cheshire Living. In order to visualise everything

Wilmslow has to offer, we produced the Way Better Living video to promote the town centre’s assets, heritage, modern-day relevance and convey the message that there is much more to Wilmslow than consumers may expect. In addition to this, we produced the Way Better Business video to create a modern, relevant narrative online, supporting the town centre’s office-based businesses to attract world-class talent and investment.

### KEY STATISTICS:

**153,000**

combined reach on Facebook and Instagram

**1,114**

new social followers

### WAY BETTER LIVING



[youtu.be/MHtY8CxpCCY](https://youtu.be/MHtY8CxpCCY)

### WAY BETTER BUSINESS



[youtu.be/zE0mBEDpsek](https://youtu.be/zE0mBEDpsek)



## Theme 3

# Providing 'Way Better' Business

The establishment of the BID board marks a pivotal milestone in providing businesses with a stronger voice, creating new opportunities and tackling barriers to growth in the town centre. In a strategic move to bolster our analytical foundations, the BID procured a comprehensive place informatics database, enabling us to analyse footfall, visitor

behaviour, catchment areas, demographics and benchmarking data. These datasets also allow us to compare our own performance against that of neighbouring towns to further improve our strategy.

As part of our continued commitment to the professional development of our BID members,

we invested in free training, with four courses held in total - two Level 3 Awards in Emergency First Aid in the Workplace, and two Fire Marshal training courses. These efforts have not only equipped 35 employees with essential life-saving skills across 190 accredited hours, but also resulted in a significant cost-savings of £6,390 for Wilmslow businesses.

In 2024, we have even more training planned, including:

- ▶ Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid in the Workplace
- ▶ Level 3 Award in Mental Health First Aid
- ▶ Pediatric First Aid
- ▶ Fire Marshal

“Me and Viktoria both loved the course! It was brilliant!”

Course Attendee

Furthermore, the BID also provides free online accredited courses in a range of topics, including Food Hygiene in Catering, Allergen Awareness, Leadership & Management, GDPR Training and Customer Service, with 180 topics in total.

For any businesses wanting to enquire about training, please email [stephanie.leese@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:stephanie.leese@groundwork.org.uk).

**4**

courses held

**35**

employees trained

**190**

accredited hours

**£6,390**

cost-saving for Wilmslow businesses



# What We Plan to Deliver in Year 2

As we commence our second year, our commitment to elevate the town centre and the Wilmslow's Way Better brand through leveraging our website, PR and social media channels remains unwavering.

Steering the course toward an even more vibrant and engaging local experience, we will continue to deliver festivals and events in the town centre, including a bigger and 'Way Better' Winter Wonderland, a Spring/Easter trail event, plus much more to be arranged. As always, we'll continue to partner with other local groups and stakeholders to enhance these activities and strengthen our efforts.

Investment in aesthetic enhancements, including charming hanging baskets, intricate floral arrangements and strategically placed wayfinders, is paramount to our vision for a rejuvenated town centre.

Building upon the positive feedback previously garnered from both businesses and visitors alike, we're thrilled to announce the forthcoming reinstatement of the bunting along Grove Street from April 2024.

Our commitment to ensuring the cleanliness of the town persists, as enhanced cleaning along Alderley Road and Water Lane will continue into the coming year.

We're delving into the current capabilities of the footfall counter software, whilst exploring new advanced technology options to evidence and record more accurate intelligence within Wilmslow's town centre.

Recognising the invaluable role of the current business networking groups, we're developing a 'Meet the Neighbour' group to allow for more opportunities to collaborate with one another and share best practices, contributing to the ongoing success of Wilmslow's thriving business community.

Finally, we're exploring ways in which we can maximise BID members' investment by looking at external funding and grants.





## Income and Expenditure 2022/23

The accounts below are for Year 1 of Wilmslow BID - 1st November 2022 to 31st October 2023.

Income	Forecast	Actual
BID Levy Contribution	£202,350.00	£275,511.00
Other	£5,500.00	£3,353.00
Bank Interest	-	£480.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£207,850.00</b>	<b>£279,344.00</b>

Expenditure	Budget	Actual
Theme One - Way Better Experience	£105,000.00	£66,027.00
Theme Two - Way Better Marketing	£35,000.00	£37,029.00
Theme Three - Way Better Business	£17,000.00	£11,292.00
Levy Collection Costs	£11,000.00	£20,845.00
Project Management & Administration	£27,550.00	£29,861.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£184,550.00</b>	<b>£144,209.00</b>

There is accrued expenditure of £302 for the Wilmslow BID external accountancy fee.

The income figures for the Wilmslow BID's FY 22/23 includes income in advance to cover expenditure during BID year 23/24. This is due to the billing cycles utilised by Cheshire East Council being different to the BID's financial year.



**For more information on the Wilmslow  
BID, please contact:**

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[wilmslowswaybetter.co.uk](http://wilmslowswaybetter.co.uk)

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