

Chester BID  
Business Plan  
2024-2029





# Contents

---

Your BID Team	03
BID Board	04
Chester BID	05
BID Initiatives - <b>Enhancing</b>	06
BID Initiatives - <b>Supporting</b>	08
BID Initiatives - <b>Promoting</b>	10
Term 2 2019-2024 timeline	14
Business Testimonials	16
What you told us - 2023 Consultation	17
Your priorities for the future - <b>Enhancing</b>	18
Your priorities for the future - <b>Supporting</b>	20
Your priorities for the future - <b>Promoting</b>	22
BID Rules & Levy	24
Finances	26
There is a lot to lose if you don't vote YES	27

# Chester BID Business Plan 2024-2029

## It is my privilege to present to you the Chester BID Business Plan 2024-2029.

This document highlights the BID's successes to date and outlines what you can expect from your Business Improvement District over the next five years.

Chester has changed significantly since the BID was launched in 2014 yet our aim to help the businesses of Chester to thrive has remained constant. Chester BID has invested more than £5 million over the past 10 years, attracting consumers, helping the city to run smoothly, and ensuring that the needs of our members are recognised. The broad range of projects and initiatives delivered by your BID have become integral to the Chester experience and are relied on by BID members and consumers alike.

Chester BID is now an established city stakeholder and is well positioned to influence the future of Chester. This status has enabled the BID to leverage more than £500,000 in additional income and grants over the last 5 years to supplement businesses' contributions. COVID demonstrated the BID's ability to respond at pace to the changing needs of businesses while our established partnerships allow us to identify and tackle problems before they escalate.

As we look towards the BID's third term, we have ambitious plans to build on our achievements and ensure both BID members and the city continue to prosper. The future of Chester is looking positive, with significant developments around Northgate Phase 2, and the City Gateway improving transport links and enabling more people to live in the city centre. With your support, Chester BID will invest more than £2.5 million across the next term to help your business navigate the challenges and opportunities of the coming years.

Thank you for supporting your Business Improvement District.

*Carl Critchlow*  
CEO



(Left to right) BID Team:  
Tom, Monica, Carl, Luka, Ian, Lloyd

## The BID Team

### Carl Critchlow | CEO

- Representing businesses
- Attracting investment
- Influencing local decisions and policies

### Luka Morrell | Business Engagement Manager

- Providing one-to-one business support
- Managing BID projects and initiatives
- Maintaining business communications

### Ian Macdonald | Digital Channel Manager

- Social media marketing and promotion
- Maintaining websites and online presence
- Digital training and support

### Monica Roman | City Host

- Business engagement and support
- Greeting visitors and consumers
- Reporting city centre issues

### Tom Hughes and Lloyd Woodworth | BID Maintenance Operatives

- Maintenance and repairs
- Daily cleaning service
- Pro-active city management



# Our Board

## BID Board:



<b>Neil Hardy</b>	Chair
<b>Emma McGlinchey (Co. Secretary)</b>	Aaron & Partners
<b>Rebecca Bradbury</b>	Large Retailer
<b>Gemma Davies</b>	Cheshire West and Chester Council
<b>Nigel Driver</b>	Grosvenor
<b>John Farrell (Chair Audit Committee)</b>	Ellis & Co
<b>Andy Farrall</b>	Andy Farrall Ltd
<b>Ian Gordon</b>	iKO Projects
<b>Kate McEvoy</b>	Jigsaw
<b>Helen O'Sullivan</b>	University of Chester
<b>Stephanie Peters</b>	Pastry Pédaleur
<b>Will Powell</b>	Powells Jewellers
<b>Tim Stratford</b>	Chester Cathedral
<b>John Welsh</b>	Hickory's/BarLounge
<b>Paul Wildes</b>	Wildes Group

## A message from the Chair

As Chair of the Chester BID Board, I have the honour of leading a group of industry professionals who give their time and expertise to help make Chester and its businesses as good as they can be. The role of the BID Board is to help the BID team achieve its objectives, ensure sound corporate governance, and oversee the BID's finances.

The role of the BID has evolved since its inception. Initially set up to promote the city and give businesses a collective voice, the BID's role has expanded to include inward investment, city centre management and strategic leadership. We now have a daily cleaning service for BID members, initiatives like the Chester Gift Card drive thousands of pounds into BID member tills, and the BID team's availability means businesses always have somebody they can call on for help and support.

The BID continues to develop new ways to support members and drive standards and our ambition continues to grow. The BID's role in delivering Chester's One City Plan means Chester BID and its members are directly involved in shaping Chester's future.

On behalf of the BID Board, I want to thank BID members for their support and look forward to continuing to work with you in the coming years and beyond.

*Neil Hardy*

Chair





# Chester BID

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

Chester BID is one of more than **340 BIDs operating in the UK** and covers the core of the city centre as shown on the map below. **BIDs are required to deliver additionality: funding projects and initiatives to a level over and above what is already in place.**

**Chester BID was established in 2014 and renewed in 2019** following a ballot of city centre businesses, a majority of whom voted in favour. **BIDs run in five-year terms** and as per BID legislation they are required to ballot members at the end of each term and ask if they would like the BID to continue.

To qualify as a BID member your premises must be located within the BID area and hold a rateable value of more than £18,000. BID members are required to pay an annual levy based on their premises' rateable value which funds the projects and initiatives detailed in this business plan.





# Enhancing

**Chester BID's enhancing initiatives are focused on creating a city that is clean, safe, and welcoming for people who shop, visit and work in Chester.**

## BID Maintenance Operatives

In our half-term review, you told us that the cleanliness of the city centre was a priority for you and your customers. In response, we expanded our regular cleaning activity by appointing two full-time BID Maintenance Operatives. Tom and Lloyd use the latest specialist equipment to carry out daily cleaning and maintenance work for businesses, over and above the level provided by the council. As well as cleaning shop fronts and areas of private land, they've undertaken property repairs, repainted damaged paintwork and removed graffiti on behalf of hundreds of BID members.



## City Improvements

To ensure Chester continues to look its best for businesses and their customers, Chester BID has carried out a wide range of public realm improvements. We have covered dozens of empty units with attractive designs and key messages to promote lettings and deter anti-social behaviour. In 2022 we installed four, 24-hour accessible defibrillators at key locations in the city to ensure access to life-saving equipment at any time of day or night. During the summer of 2023, we carried out our largest improvement programme to date, installing 17 new benches on Eastgate Street and The Cross, renovating 16 cycle racks, and painting 150 bollards.

## City Hosts

Our City Host service was introduced in 2016. Since then, Monica and her colleagues have been a constant presence on the streets of Chester, providing a personal welcome to thousands of shoppers and tourists while logging dozens of environmental and anti-social behaviour incidents. Visitors have been assisted by our City Hosts more than 113,000 times, helping them to navigate the city and directing them to businesses and key visitor attractions.



## Wayfinding

Helping people to navigate Chester is essential in ensuring a positive visitor experience. Our interactive maps can be found on empty units and at key locations around the city, signposting attractions, businesses, and places of interest. Last year we also replaced six out-of-date information maps located in car parks and city access points and we have recently approved funding for new business signage on The Rows. Along with the council, Chester BID funded a detailed study into city centre wayfinding and is supporting calls for more digital signage to communicate with visitors in real time.



## Night-Time Economy

The importance of Chester's night-time economy has seen Chester BID deliver a range of sector-specific support. Since 2017, Chester has held Purple Flag Accreditation, the internationally recognised standard that measures the safety and management of a city's night-time economy. Working with partners including the council, police, and university, we help to maintain Purple Flag standards and fund the annual renewal process. We are active partners to Pubwatch, regularly attending meetings, and in addition we also fund a broad range of hospitality-specific training including customer experience, first aid, and fire safety.



## Voice of Business

Since 2020, we have invited Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire Police to undertake quarterly walkabouts in the city. These walkabouts enable us to directly highlight problems relating to cleanliness, crime, and anti-social behaviour to officers responsible for dealing with them. In addition, we have facilitated dozens of introductions and one-to-one visits between business owners, managers, the police, and the council.

## Flowers

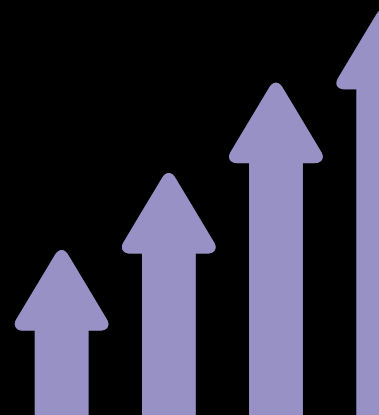
Our award-winning floral displays have continued to 'grow' since their introduction in 2016 and now signify the start of summer in Chester! Every year, we line The Rows and streets with more than 130,000 flowers and bee-friendly blooms. In 2023, we expanded our service to enable more businesses than ever to participate through our BID-subsidised hanging baskets and planters. Businesses like Popcorn, Chez Jules and Cinderbox Coffee have all taken advantage and play their part in enhancing our beautiful city.



## Cleaning

To ensure visitors experience a clean city centre, Chester BID undertakes frequent cleansing in addition to the service provided by the council.

We regularly commission specialist contractors to undertake deep cleans of pavements, alfresco seating areas and historic areas such as The Rows that require expert cleaning equipment and techniques.





# Supporting

The BID's 'supporting' initiatives are here to provide businesses with the help they need to run as effectively as possible. We represent the interests of businesses on multiple groups and boards as well as providing one-to-one support and guidance.

## Training

Since 2023 we have offered BID members free training, fully funded by the BID. We aim to help businesses make cost savings, upskill their staff, and ensure the safety of their customers. In 2023 more than 150 BID members across all our business sectors were trained on one of our many courses which range from first aid to deaf awareness through to customer experience and food safety.



## Information Sharing

Keeping you informed about the latest opportunities and city news is an important role for the BID. In 2021 we launched the Chester BID WhatsApp group which allows us to communicate with businesses in real time, sharing city centre news, BID initiatives and key messages from partners such as the council and police. Our weekly BID updates and monthly e-newsletters share information such as footfall data and opportunities for your business.

## Representing

We represent the interests of BID members at multiple meetings, groups and boards that oversee the smooth running of the city centre. Chester BID is represented on all of the council's One City Plan delivery groups covering everything from digital infrastructure to transport and we also contribute to Christmas planning, fire safety and anti-social behaviour meetings. Chester BID also represents members at Pubwatch, Chester Against Business Crime, and Destination Chester.



## Business Grants

Our pledge to offer grant support to businesses goes back to 2020 when Chester BID distributed almost £50,000 of COVID recovery funds in the form of alfresco grants to support the hospitality industry recover from the pandemic. Since then, our Business Growth Grants have re-distributed funds raised through the BID's commercial activities to help BID members deliver a range of projects that both help their business grow and benefit the wider city. More than £15,000 worth of grants have been awarded in the past two years, helping businesses fund things like signage, equipment, and marketing support.



## Let's Get Digital

Dozens of BID members have taken advantage of our 'Let's Get Digital' training sessions where Ian Macdonald, our Digital Channel Manager, provides free, one-to-one advice on how to maximise reach through the use of the internet and social media.



## Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Chester BID works closely with Cheshire Police and the council to minimise the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) on your business. To ensure that your views are represented accurately when we are engaging with senior police and the Police and Crime Commissioner, we conduct a bi-annual Crime and ASB survey along with dozens of one-to-one business visits supported by the police. In addition, we have funded police drug dog operations in the city and funded the installation of new CCTV on The Rows.

We regularly communicate intelligence and details of police operations and our street team report hundreds of incidents each year. To make reporting easier for businesses, we have helped develop the local reporting guide and produced easy-to-follow videos to help businesses through the reporting process.

## Sponsorship

There are dozens of organisations delivering events and campaigns that support both Chester and its businesses. Supporting those that align with BID objectives helps us reach new audiences while supporting key sectors. We are strong supporters of Chester Pride which brings tens of thousands of visitors to the city each year. Past support for the Chester Hospitality Association Awards recognised an important sector for Chester, while sponsorship of ATFest, the active travel festival, promoted Chester's green credentials.



## Free Parking

Businesses frequently highlight parking as a challenge for their customers, particularly at weekends and at key times such as Christmas. To address this, we have collaborated with Chester Racecourse which has one of the largest car parks in the city and now provides free parking all day on the last Sunday of the month. In addition, Chester BID funds free parking every Saturday and Sunday in the build-up to Christmas. These 10 days provide 4,000 free parking spaces at a crucial time of the year, 97% of which were occupied in 2023.

## COVID Support

Supporting businesses through the COVID pandemic was among the BID's biggest challenges. Remaining open and active throughout, the BID utilised its local networks and connections with the public sector to ensure businesses had access to the necessary information and financial support to navigate the multiple lockdowns and restrictions. The BID lobbied government for additional financial support for businesses and our 'Chester Together' campaign maintained links between businesses and their customers when they were advised to stay indoors. When restrictions were finally lifted, the BID supported the reopening of the city, undertaking additional city centre cleaning, installing new signage and marketing, and distributing almost £50,000 in grants to hospitality operators.





# Promoting

Chester BID's promoting initiatives are aimed at driving footfall, increasing dwell time, and encouraging consumer spend. We use a range of communication channels to engage with visitors and businesses to keep them up-to-date with everything Chester has to offer.

## Chester Gift Card

In 2021 we launched the Chester Gift Card as a way of locking funds into the high street and driving consumer spend within our businesses. To date, we have sold more than £125,000 worth of gift cards which can only be spent with one of the 120 participating BID businesses that have signed up to accept the card. Businesses include a diverse mix of national brands and local independents across a range of sectors including hospitality, retail, and service.



## Christmas

Every year, Chester BID offers a wide range of projects and initiatives to ensure shoppers choose Chester at Christmas. Promotional activity has included TV adverts on Sky and Channel 4, radio and media campaigns, and digital gift guides promoting businesses and their products. Events focused on driving footfall include our Santa's Grotto, which has sold out every year, and the 12 Days of Christmas parade which attracts thousands of visitors and marks the official launch of Christmas in Chester. Our promotional activity is complemented by installing Christmas lights on those streets not covered by the council including, St Werburgh, St John, and Pepper St. Each year we provide 4,000 free parking spaces at Chester Racecourse every weekend in December.

## Seasonal Experiences

Throughout the year, Chester BID funds and supports numerous events and experiences that drive footfall and increase consumer dwell time. We recently expanded our bookable events to include Halloween, creating an interactive experience that runs throughout October half-term. Summer activity has included the Watergate Street Festival and our dinosaur weekends have seen a 12 ft T-Rex and the UK's largest Stegosaurus roam the city and provide days of family fun.





## Public Relations

PR is a key element of the BID's marketing strategy and helps us reach a broad audience across TV, radio, and printed press. Over the last term, Chester BID has secured almost 600 items of PR coverage in dozens of regional and national publications. In addition, the BID team has undertaken multiple interviews on the BBC and ITV, platforms that now regularly approach the BID for comment on business in Chester. Chester BID successfully kept Chester on the news agenda during COVID with BBC Breakfast twice broadcasting live from the city as it emerged from lockdown, and ITV News came to film a group of our hospitality operators, footage that reached millions of viewers.

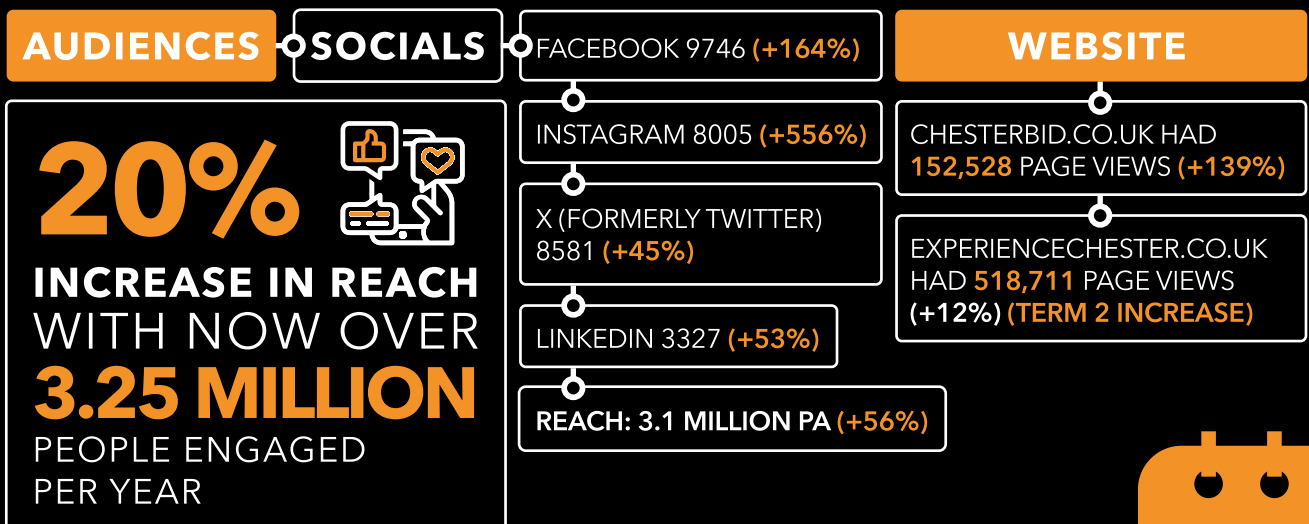
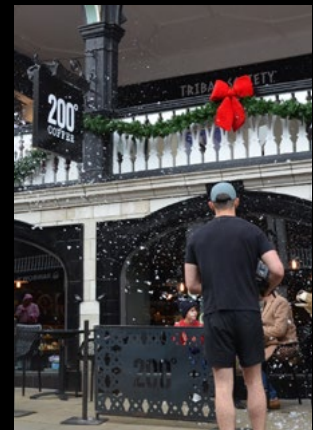


## Digital Channel Manager

In the BID's half-term review you told us you valued our social media support and wanted a greater focus on promotion via our digital channels. In response, we recruited a dedicated Digital Channel Manager to integrate our web, social and email channels into a single digital strategy. Through engaging campaigns, production of high-quality content and providing businesses with one-to-one support, the BID's digital reach has grown significantly, helping to drive footfall, increase dwell time, and encourage consumer spend with our businesses.

## Digital Campaigns

In our mission to captivate and engage, we set the bar high by creating eye-catching content, high-quality videos and informative posts, ensuring we amplify Chester city centre's reach and enhance the visibility of our businesses. Our digital campaigns align with key consumer dates and holidays throughout the year to maximise engagement. Examples include our #MoreTheMerrier Christmas campaign which utilised high-quality film production to reach more than 1.2 million people supported by a Digital Gift Guide, promoting individual businesses, and the Chester Gift Card, which secured a further 204,000 impressions online. Our campaigns drive engagement at key times including Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, and school holidays, while also highlighting relevant information about our businesses such as those that are dog friendly or wheelchair accessible.



# Customer Service Awards

Chester BID's annual Customer Service Awards have become a staple of the city's events calendar.

Now in their eighth year, the awards highlight those businesses and teams that set Chester apart from the competition and deliver the unrivalled customer service that the city is renowned for. Shortlisting for each category is decided by the public and last year's awards secured a record-breaking 32,364 votes, encouraging interaction between businesses and their customers. Independent mystery shoppers then visit each business before the winners from each sector are celebrated at our annual awards night.



**101,914**  
PUBLIC VOTES

THROUGHOUT THE LAST 5-YEAR TERM  
OF OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARDS

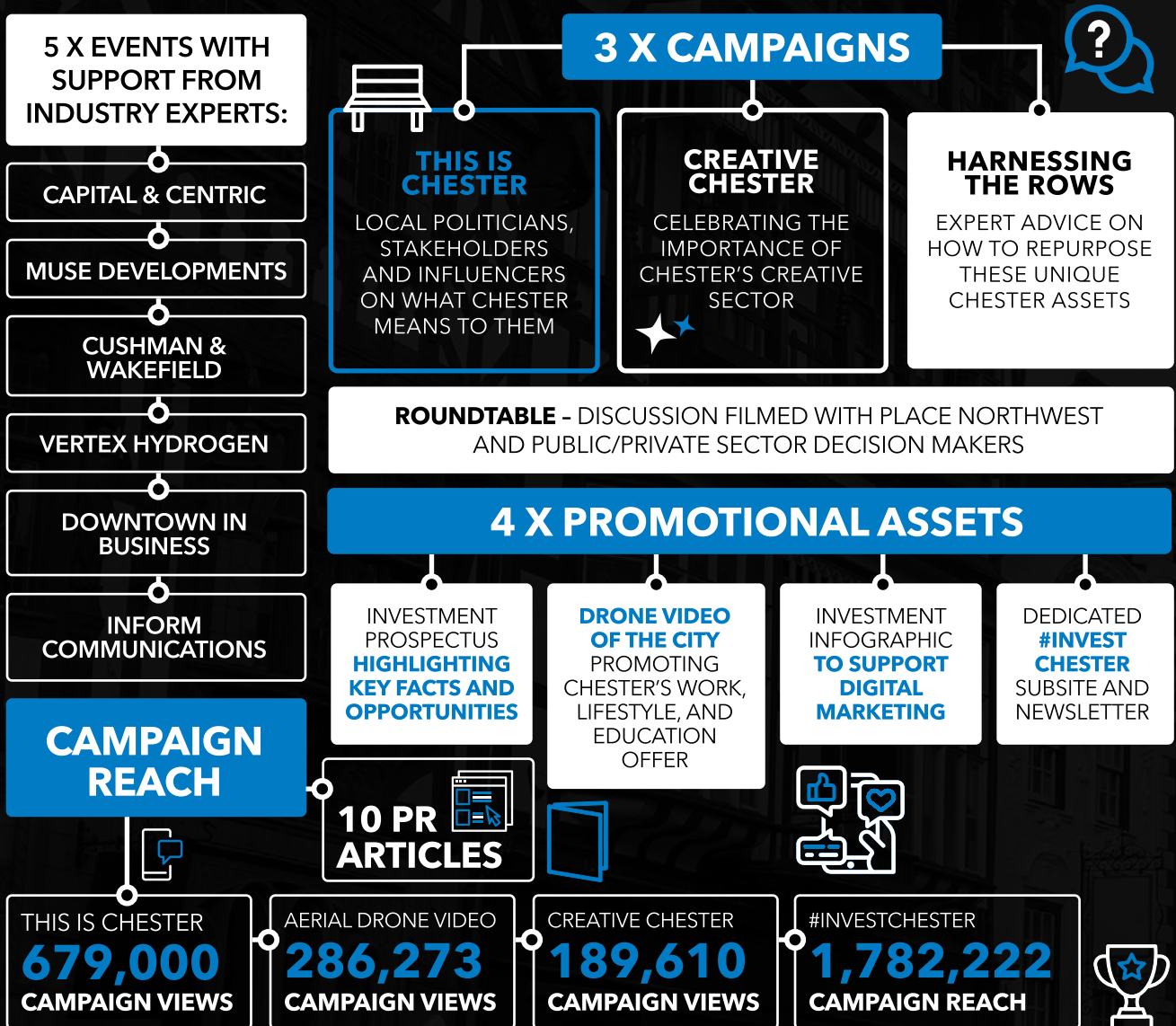




# #INVESTCHESTER

Launched in 2022, our #INVESTCHESTER campaign is aimed at driving inward investment by raising the profile of Chester as a place to do business. Alongside partners Grosvenor and Cheshire West and Chester Council the campaign forms a key part of **Chester's One City Plan** and aims to:

- Attract new businesses by promoting Chester as a city open to development and investment.
- Engage the regional property industry ensuring they are briefed and onside.
- Capitalise on the momentum created by the opening of Northgate Phase 1.
- Create a suite of marketing assets that can be shared across a range of channels.
- Develop a sector focused database and communication strategy.



# Term 2: 2019-2024 Timeline



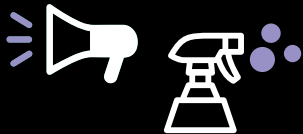
## 2019

- **June:** Visited Parliament to advocate for more support for our high streets
- **September:** Businesses voted YES to Chester BID's second term
- **November:** Social media followers surpass 13,000
- **December:** Brought our popular City Host service in-house



## 2020

- **March:** Emergency COVID plan implemented - radio campaign, one-to-one support, Virtual High Street
- **June:** 120 business frontages and 37,000m2 of the city deep cleaned ahead of reopening
- **October:** BID writes to government for additional financial support due to the impact of tier restrictions
- **November:** COVID campaign secures 60 pieces of PR including The Express, iNews, BBC and ITV
- **December:** BID launches Chester's first-ever Christmas TV advert, broadcast on SKY



## 2021

- **January:** Chester Gift Card launched to aid pandemic recovery
- **February:** BID member WhatsApp group started, enabling real-time communications
- **June:** Supported the roll-out of 55 new co-sign radios to report crime and anti social behaviour
- **August:** Independent business guide launched to support new businesses
- **October:** 10 new CCTV cameras installed on The Rows, jointly funded by the BID







## 2022



- **February:** 150 businesses complete mid-term review placing focus on 'clean, green and safe' and digital
- **July:** Mini Murals Art Trail launches
- **August:** Ian Macdonald appointed Digital Channel Manager to lead on new digital strategy
- **September:** Four 24-hour accessible defibrillators installed around the city
- **October:** #InvestChester campaign launched promoting Chester to investors and developers
- **November:** Northgate Development, including New Chester Market, opens
- **December:** Annual footfall increases by 18.5% on 2021



## 2023

- **January:** First BID crime survey completed and shared with the police
- **April:** Let's End Homelessness scheme starts with donation terminals in Chester Market and Grosvenor Shopping Centre
- **May:** Free BID-funded staff training scheme launched
- **July:** BID Maintenance Operative service launched providing daily cleaning and repairs
- **August:** 'Summer Spruce Up' sees 17 new benches installed and 150 bollards painted
- **November:** Two million visits to the New Chester Market
- **December:** #MoreTheMerrier Christmas campaign reaches 1.2million, annual footfall increases by 1.9% on 2022



## 2024



- **January:** Chester Gift Card sales hit £125,000
- **February:** Social media followers reach 30,000
- **March:** Launched the Rows Business Guide
- **April:** Additional income for Term 2 surpasses £520,000



# Don't just take our word for it...

## SUPPORTING

'The support I get from Chester BID is outstanding. They are an excellent organisation and have helped me more than I could imagine. Aside from all of the valuable initiatives they undertake, they are also accessible to talk to and give me practical advice and signposting to different things I need. BID is doing an outstanding job for our city' - **Tony, Northgates**

'I think the BID are an amazing resource for all businesses in Chester, especially the independents. They have an amazing presence in our city and are always at the end of the phone (even for those silly questions!) I wouldn't want to be without their current team. Every one of them is amazing!' - **Dawn, Chester Boutique**

'Our new light system for live music events wouldn't have been possible without the support of the Chester BID Business Growth Grant. The support and information we receive from them is invaluable to my small, independent business' - **Jackie, JAX**



## ENHANCING

'Using the BID Flower service has really enhanced the alfresco area of our business. BID helped us make savings by funding 50% of these displays. Having direct access to BID made the process and organisation seamless and a pleasure' - **Steve, Popcorn**

'Doing good things is one of our key pillars at Seasalt. We're very proud to use our volunteering time to assist Chester BID with opportunities to improve the visual environment and the team love spending time on projects which provide such a worthwhile benefit for everyone visiting the city' - **Alison, Seasalt**

'I always feel incredibly supported by the BID. The biggest thing that has improved our business is the deep clean that the BID provides. We are a very prestigious brand so keeping our store front clean is important to us' - **Andrew, Penhaligons**



## PROMOTING

'We were delighted to be involved in the Chester BID promotional video for the Christmas 2023 campaign. It was extremely well-organised and professionally-done on the day. The video was a great way to showcase Chester at Christmas and we were delighted to be involved' - **Eileen, The Coach House**

'Here at Hotel Chocolat, we find the support we receive from Chester BID invaluable. We always receive feedback from customers who have seen our products/campaigns on BID's Instagram and Facebook, which is fantastic for us in helping us achieve our store budgets. Nothing is ever too much trouble, and we hope we have their support for a long time' - **Liz, Hotel Chocolat**

'It is always a pleasure to work alongside and with Chester BID. They provide a great personal service, deliver on promises, and have certainly made sure the relationship between themselves and the stakeholder thrives. We love getting involved in the city initiatives when we get the opportunity. Thank you, Chester BID'

- **Steve, Travelbag**





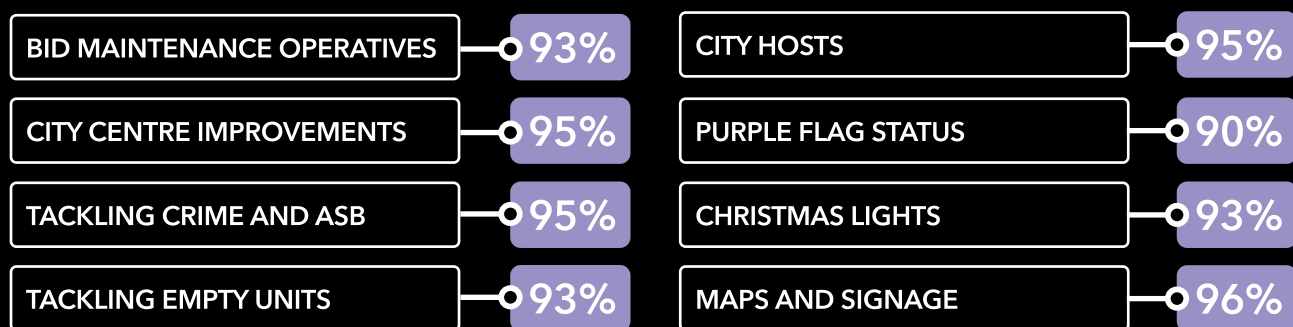
# What you told us: 2023 BID consultation

Throughout 2023 and 2024 we consulted with BID members to help us understand how BID initiatives benefit your business, the city, and your customers.

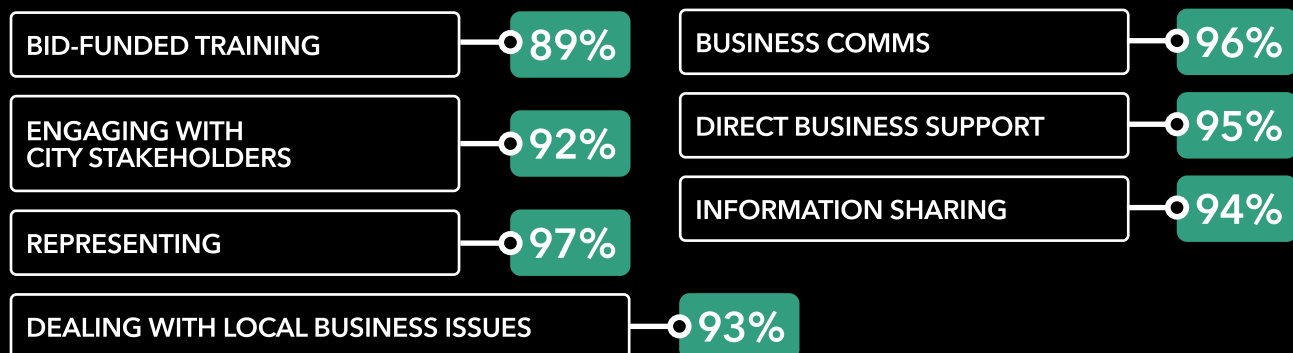
The BID hosted 10 drop-in sessions and engaged BID members at our events and training courses to ensure you had the opportunity to have your say. Our renewal ballot questionnaire was completed by 137 businesses. The percentage of respondents who saw either a direct or indirect benefit to each BID initiative:



## Enhancing



## Supporting

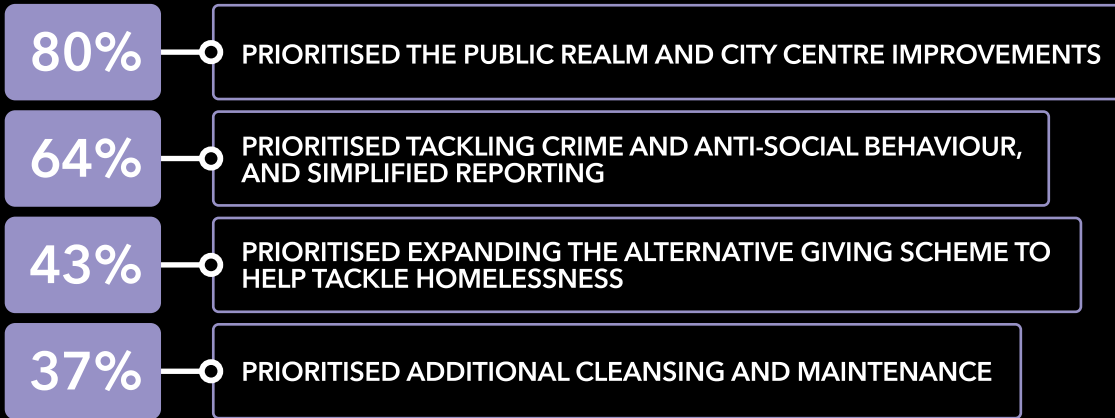


## Promoting





# Your priorities for the future: enhancing



## Public Realm

Over the coming term we will develop new ways to ensure Chester's public realm remains clean, green, and always looking its very best. We will continue to invest in our BID Maintenance Operative service to ensure staff have the latest training and equipment in order to provide maximum benefit to businesses.

We will look at new ways to showcase empty units and align opportunities with our **#INVESTCHESTER** campaign to entice new investors and tenants. We will also explore ways to build on our successful summer floral displays with new planting schemes throughout the year.

## Maps and Signage

Creating a city that is easy to navigate and explore is crucial to a positive visitor experience.

We will work with the council and partners to improve maps and directional signage while removing unnecessary street clutter and out-of-date infrastructure.

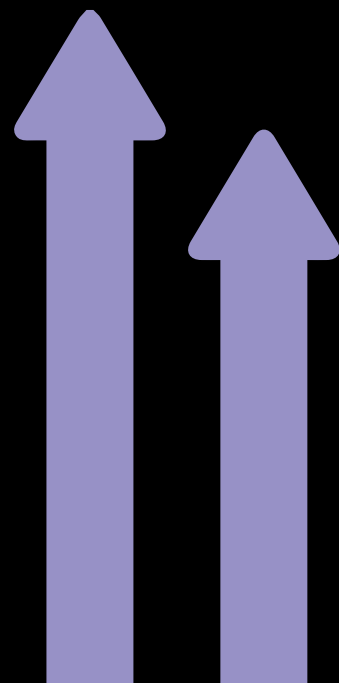
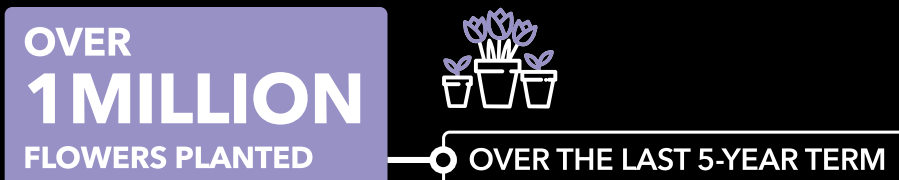
We will encourage the adoption of digital signage as a way of communicating in real time and create opportunities for businesses to promote their products and services.

## Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

The challenges faced by businesses associated with crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) are constantly evolving.

We will use the data and intelligence gathered through our business crime survey to help ensure the police have a full understanding of the impact crime and ASB has on BID members and their customers.

We will work with partners to explore new ways to make the reporting process for businesses easier while supporting links between the police and business community.





STORYHOUSE







# Your priorities for the future: supporting

64%

PRIORITISED CONNECTING BUSINESS SECTORS AND INFORMATION SHARING

44%

PRIORITISED HELPING BUSINESSES STAY AHEAD OF LEGISLATION CHANGES

42%

PRIORITISED AN ENHANCED TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR STAFF

35%

PRIORITISED HELPING BUSINESSES BE MORE ACCESSIBLE

## Sector Forums

Our sector forums bring connected businesses together, both digitally and in person, to share information and discuss issues relevant to their sector.

Over the next term we will use our extensive business network to expand these forums and through them give businesses the opportunity to engage with the city partners and decision makers who manage Chester.

## BID Data HUB

You told us that having access to data is key to helping you to make informed business decisions. In our next term, we will provide more city data to help you understand how Chester is performing.

Supporting the existing city footfall data, we will provide information on sales trends and visitor demographics. We'll also be using our wide network of businesses to collect information and share it between BID members.

## Enhanced Training Programme

We're committed to helping your business make savings on the training and development of your teams. We will therefore expand our funded training programme to upskill colleagues and add value to your business.

We are keen to hear about what training support would benefit your business or sector so please do get in touch.

## Connectivity

Digital connectivity is fundamental to future proofing the city centre for the benefit of businesses, visitors, residents, and students.

We will work with partners to ensure access to 5G and high-speed internet is prioritised to ensure Chester is prepared for the technology of the future.



OVER  
**£19,000**

IN TRAINING COSTS SAVED FOR  
BID BUSINESSES SINCE 2022











# Your priorities for the future: promoting

82%

PRIORITISED ENGAGING WITH INVESTORS AND DEVELOPERS

56%

PRIORITISED EXPANDING OUR DIGITAL PRESENCE

41%

PRIORITISED MORE CITY ANIMATIONS AND CONSUMER EVENTS

35%

PRIORITISED EVENTS THAT ENGAGE BUSINESS/CORPORATE AUDIENCES

## #INVESTCHESTER

We need to engage with investors and developers in order to attract new businesses, fill empty units, and provide more homes and offices. We will work with partners to build on the success of #INVESTCHESTER in promoting Chester as a city open for businesses.

A new investment prospectus will direct investors to the information they need and wraparound support from both public and private sectors will make investing in Chester as easy as possible.

## Accommodation BID

Working with Chester Hospitality Association, Destination Chester and Marketing Cheshire, we will support the creation of an Accommodation Business Improvement District (A-BID) to drive Chester's visitor economy.

If successful, the new A-BID will be funded by accommodation providers through a visitor charge on overnight stays and be delivered through a newly created subsidiary of Chester BID. Chester A-BID will support a range of initiatives that promote Chester to new audiences and encourage overnight stays.

## Digital Marketing

The BID's marketing strategy will apply a multichannel approach to promoting both the city and its businesses, blending traditional PR with our web and social media to ensure maximum impact.

Over the coming term we will continue to invest in our digital channels to maximise our online reach and embrace the latest social media trends, creating even more of the quality content that the BID is known for.



£125,000

IN SALES OF THE CHESTER GIFT CARD SINCE NOVEMBER 2021







# The BID Rules

---

## The Ballot

1. On behalf of Cheshire West and Chester Council, UK Engage will send those responsible for properties or hereditaments to be subject to the BID a ballot paper prior to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024.
2. Each property or hereditament subject to the BID will be entitled to one vote in respect of the BID Proposal in a 28-day postal ballot which will commence on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024, and close at 5pm on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Ballot papers received after 5pm on that date will not be counted. The result of the ballot is due to be announced on the following day.
3. In order for the proposal to be successful at ballot the result will need to meet, as a minimum, two independent criteria which are: (a) of those ballots returned by the close, those voting in favour of the new term proposal must exceed those voting against it, and (b) of those ballot papers returned by the close, the total rateable value of those properties or hereditaments which vote in favour, must exceed the total of those voting against.
4. If successful at ballot, the BID will commence delivery of services on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 and will continue for a period of 5 years to August 2029.
5. The BID area covers: Abbey Green, Bell Tower Walk, Bridge Street, Bridge Street Row, Coachworks Arcade, Eastgate Row, Eastgate Street, Exchange Square, Foregate Street, Forum Shopping Centre, Frodsham Court, Frodsham Square, Frodsham Street, Godstall Lane, Grosvenor Shopping Centre, Hunter Street, Love Street, Music Hall Passage, Newgate Row, Newgate Street, Northgate Row, Northgate Street, Paddock Row, Pepper Row, Pepper Street, Princess Street, Rufus Court, Souters Lane, St John Street, St Michael's Row, St Michael's Square, St Werburgh Street, The Forum, The Groves (junction with Souters Lane), Watergate Row and Watergate Street (The Cross to Nicholas St).
6. The voter list has been developed through consultation with businesses and based on the Non-Domestic Rates list provided by Cheshire West and Chester Council on 9/4/24.

---

## Accountability and Transparency

1. The BID Body and BID Proposer will remain as CH1 Chester BID Company Limited (Company Number 08898786) a not-for-profit organisation, limited by guarantee.
2. The Directors of the BID (the 'Board') shall continue to be representative of levy-paying businesses, although other city stakeholders may be included. The Board will have responsibility for governance matters such as financial arrangements, contractual obligations, partnerships, human resources, standards, performance, and compliance.
3. From time to time, the Board shall appoint a Chair.
4. The Board may form such sub-groups that from time to time become necessary. This will include an Audit and Remuneration committee.
5. Provided that the BID is meeting its overall objectives, the Board shall have the ability to vary service delivery and expenditure allocation according to the changing demands of levy payers. However, any change to the BID boundary or to the levy rate proposals may require an Alteration Ballot.
6. The BID will meet with the council as the Billing Authority, quarterly to monitor service delivery, levy collection, and financial management issues.
7. The BID will file annual accounts with Companies House. An annual report on activities, including finances, will be published, together with the information required to be included with levy demands.
8. The BID will make information available to levy payers through newsletters, infographics, an annual review, and an annual meeting.
9. An Operating Agreement, which includes the Council's Baseline service commitments, has been agreed with Cheshire West and Chester Council. A copy can be found at [www.chesterbid.co.uk](http://www.chesterbid.co.uk).
10. Notification of the intention to hold a ballot was sent to the Secretary of State on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

## BID Levy

**The BID levy is based on a percentage of a premises' rateable value as determined by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA).**

In the 2023 business rates re-valuation more than 75% of BID premises saw a reduction in their valuation. **It is proposed that from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 the BID levy will be set at 1.5% of a premises' rateable value.**

You can check your premises' rateable value on the VOA website [www.gov.uk/find-business-rates](http://www.gov.uk/find-business-rates)

1. The levy rate to be paid by each property or hereditament is to be calculated as 1.5% of its rateable value as at each 'chargeable day' (1<sup>st</sup> September each year). The charge will apply to all properties and hereditaments.
2. The 2023 ratings list will be used throughout as national ratings revaluations within the term will be disregarded for levy calculation purposes.
3. The levy will be charged on a daily basis, with refunds and new charges reflecting changes in occupancy.
4. If a new hereditament enters the ratings list for the first time or has its rateable value adjusted (other than by a national revaluation) such that it is then above the threshold, it will be charged from the date of entry or adjustment. Hereditaments subject to alteration through a change of use or a physical change (including inter alia; new construction, merger, subdivision, extension, and refurbishment) will have the revised rateable value applied from the date of change.
5. Only properties or hereditaments with a rateable value of £18,000 or more will be eligible for payment of the levy.
6. The number of properties or hereditaments liable for the levy is approximately 420.
7. The owners of all untenanted properties or hereditaments will be liable for payment of the levy.
8. Occupiers within shopping centres that are subject to a service charge will pay 75% of the levy that would otherwise apply.
9. Cheshire West and Chester Council will be responsible for collection of the levy. The collection charge will be £7,400 this equates to £17.61 per hereditament and 1.5% of anticipated billed levy.
10. No charitable or non-for-profit organisations will be exempt from paying the Levy.
11. The Levy will be charged in advance and no VAT will be charged on the Levy.
12. Billing, collection and enforcement of the levy is carried out by Cheshire West and Chester Council.



# Finances

1. A cautious approach has been adopted to budgeting for the BID term.
2. A levy collection rate of 95% has been assumed.
3. The average annual levy available to be spent by the BID for the term is £448,799.
4. Annual surpluses act as a contingency provision on expenditure. The budget provides for a total contingency of £144,000 which equates to 5.7% of overall expenditure.
5. The additional income provision within the budget for the renewed BID takes account of committed amounts only and equates to approximately 12.9% of the estimated levy to be collected.
6. Operating costs of the BID are estimated as 11% of total expenditure.
7. There are no costs relating to the development of the new BID that will need to be repaid during the term.

Income	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
BID Levy (95% collection rate)	448,799	448,799	448,799	448,799	448,799	2,243,995
Voluntary & Commercial (estimated)	31,000	34,100	37,510	41,261	45,387	189,258
Grants	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>499,799</b>	<b>502,899</b>	<b>506,309</b>	<b>510,060</b>	<b>514,186</b>	<b>2,533,253</b>
Expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Enhancing	147,802	147,209	146,561	145,853	136,679	724,104
Supporting	105,574	105,150	104,687	104,182	97,630	517,223
Promoting	168,917	168,238	167,499	166,689	156,205	827,548
Operating Costs	46,106	50,717	55,788	61,368	67,504	281,483
Collection Costs	7,400	7,585	7,774	7,968	8,168	38,895
Contingency	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	48,000	144,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>499,799</b>	<b>502,899</b>	<b>506,309</b>	<b>510,060</b>	<b>514,186</b>	<b>2,533,253</b>

**Definition:** The term 'Renewal' means replacement of the existing BID at the end of its current term (August 2024) with new BID Arrangements, subject to the rules and arrangements described herein.



**£520,000**

**IN ADDITIONAL INCOME GENERATED OVER THE LAST TERM AND REINVESTED BACK INTO BID INITIATIVES**



# There is a lot to lose if you don't vote YES

**If Chester BID does not return for a third term, Chester City Centre will lose out on more than £2.5 million of investment. Without this investment everything currently delivered by Chester BID would end.**

- NO BID team to provide direction and one-to-one support
- NO City Hosts
- NO BID Maintenance Operatives to help with cleaning and maintenance
- NO WhatsApp or e-newsletter sharing relevant news and information
- NO collective voice on city centre issues
- NO BID website providing city data and information
- NO additional crime or anti-social behaviour initiatives
- NO additional street cleaning or city improvements
- NO BID floral displays or improving empty units
- NO free business training
- NO business-focused PR or marketing of the city centre
- NO additional Christmas lights, free parking or support for the Christmas parade
- NO seasonal events and trails
- NO Chester gift card
- NO #InvestChester campaign.

**YOU MUST VOTE YES IF YOU WANT YOUR BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT TO CONTINUE FOR ANOTHER FIVE-YEAR TERM.**



**113,000**  
VISITORS AND  
TOURISTS

ASSISTED  
AND ENGAGED  
WITH BY OUR  
CITY HOSTS

## Key dates

**31<sup>ST</sup> MAY:**

BALLOT PAPERS SHOULD  
HAVE BEEN DELIVERED  
TO YOUR BUSINESS'  
PRIMARY CONTACT

**24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE:**

LAST ADVISED  
POSTAL DATE

**26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE:**

FINAL DATE FOR THE  
BID TO COLLECT  
YOUR COMPLETED  
BALLOT PAPER

**27<sup>TH</sup> JUNE:**

BALLOT ENDS 5PM

**28<sup>TH</sup> JUNE:**

RESULT DECLARED

The Chester BID team are always on hand to meet with you.

Are you on WhatsApp? Signed up for business emails? To arrange a meeting or for an informal chat please contact us on 01244 403680 or email [hello@chesterbid.co.uk](mailto:hello@chesterbid.co.uk)

As we celebrate 10 years of Chester BID, we'd like to thank every one of you who has engaged, supported, and represented us, helping us continue to build on our achievements and ensure both BID members and the city prosper together. Here's to another decade of growth, collaboration, and success.



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



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

Contact us on: **01244 403680** or email: [hello@chesterbid.co.uk](mailto:hello@chesterbid.co.uk)

Chester BID | 9 Lower Bridge Street | Chester | CH1 1RS

[f](#) [@](#) [in](#) @ChesterBID #ExperienceChester #INVESTCHESTER