



GODALMING

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Five Year Business Plan 2024-2029





INTRODUCTION

Godalming is an attractive, historical town much loved by residents and business owners alike and held in great affection by its many visitors, often travelling from all over the world to reconnect with their heritage. But like many towns Godalming has had its ups and downs and having lived and worked here as a retailer for 45 years, I have experienced both. Now in this uncertain economic climate and with consumers' changing shopping habits it is even more important we work together to ensure the town's commercial future.

That is why working together as a community to become a Business Improvement District gives us the opportunity to take control and determine how we would like our High Street to develop over the next five years.



With the benefit of a sustainable funding stream to bring those plans and projects to life we can ensure the future of our town.

Godalming is known for its innovation and determination through the ages. Whether that is being the first town in the world to introduce public electric street lighting, developing a thriving wool trade or being home to the world-renowned Gertrude Jekyll and the truly heroic Jack Phillips, we strive to be the best we can.

Since 2004 when the government passed the Business Improvement legislation there have been over 320 successful town bids which will generate £100 million pounds in investment over the next five years. As custodians of Godalming High Street we need to come together and vote in favour of the proposed business plan so that we can re-invigorate the trading environment.

Viv Ellis,
Chair, Godalming BID

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THE GODALMING BID



Godalming is an ancient market and coaching town delightfully situated on the picturesque River Wey surrounded by beautiful countryside. The town is home to many diverse independent shops and businesses which serve the 22,000 Godalming residents as well as the surrounding villages.

With a strong sense of community and a number of associations there is always plenty to do whether sport, art, leisure or social activity. Each season many festivals and events are held in the town for family and friends to enjoy. With origins dating back to Saxon times Godalming offers historic and interesting architecture which gives the town its unique character.



BID STATS & FACTS

THE BID BOUNDARY ENCOMPASSES
280+ UNITS

ANNUAL BID INCOME OF
£170,000+

RATEABLE VALUE TOTAL OF
£8.65M

TOTAL BID INCOME OVER
5 YEARS
£850,000+

SECTOR BREAKDOWN %

- **Retail 51%**
- **Office 30%**
- **Food & Drink 8%**
- **Other 8%**
- **Entertainment & Leisure 3%**



THE BID AREA

This map shows the area that will contribute and benefit from the projects outlined in the business plan.



This is your opportunity to see Godalming build its potential through a Business Improvement District with over £850,000 of investment over 5 years. This document sets out what businesses have said they would like a BID to deliver.

WHAT IS A BID?

WHAT IS A BID?

A BID is an arrangement whereby businesses come together and decide which improvements they feel could be made in their village, town or city centre, how they will implement these improvements and what it will cost them. BIDs are financed and controlled by the businesses within the selected area. BIDs deliver additional projects and services over and above those already provided by public bodies.

WHY DO BUSINESSES SUPPORT BIDS?

A BID is a mechanism which allows businesses to raise a sum of money to manage and deliver projects that they have identified and believe will improve their trading environment, ultimately increasing trade for those businesses who are paying for the improvements.

HOW IS THE BID FUNDED?

Once the projects and services have been agreed by businesses, along with how they are going to be delivered and managed, they are costed and set out in a detailed business plan. The cost to each business is worked out on a pro rata basis. This is called the 'BID LEVY'. This investment is ring-fenced and can only be spent within the BID area on the projects detailed in the business plan. It is important to note that the levy has nothing to do with normal business rates which pass straight to the government. An independent and formal vote then takes place and if the majority vote is YES then ALL eligible businesses within the BID area are required to pay the BID levy.

HOW DOES AN AREA BECOME A BID?

Normally a 'BID Task Group' is set up which is responsible for putting together a business plan setting out the projects it aims to deliver on behalf of the businesses in the BID area. This is based on a consultation process with businesses.

The business plan will include the projects, cost, delivery guarantees, performance indicators and the management structure. A confidential postal vote is held with all the businesses that would pay the BID levy getting a vote. To become a BID a majority of those that vote must be in favour by number and rateable value. A successful BID then has a mandate for a maximum of 5 years after which the BID would need to seek a re-ballot.

HOW IS A BID MONITORED?

Like any good business plan, specific key performance indicators (KPIs) are set and performance is monitored against the KPIs by the BID board. The BID Company is answerable to the businesses that pay the BID levy, and will be required to monitor and inform its members on its progress towards the agreed KPIs.

DOES THIS MEAN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY WILL STOP DELIVERING SERVICES?

No. BID money can only be used to carry out projects/services which are ADDITIONAL to those that the public agencies are required to provide. Prior to the BID business plan being produced, the current services being delivered by all public agencies including the Local Authority and Police are set out in Baseline Statements. Baseline Statements for the following areas are available for the Godalming BID:

POLICE | CLEANSING | STREET LIGHTING | PARKING

The BID company can agree to provide additional resources to deliver a higher level of service over and above the benchmarked level if this is what businesses have identified they want.

Kirsty Stancombe, Black Bear Creative



Our creative marketing agency is run by passionate locals who want to see our High Street alive and local businesses thrive; elevating Godalming to be a real destination town. It is therefore important that we join together to vote YES in October so we can benefit from over £860,000 of investment and shape the future of our town.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Since February 2023 we have undertaken a consultation process in Godalming and activity has incorporated newsletters, a dedicated website, face to face meetings and workshops to give businesses the opportunity to share their ideas with the BID team. All your suggestions have been considered, costed and prioritised by the Task Group and are outlined in this document.

For a BID to be introduced, the vote must meet two conditions:

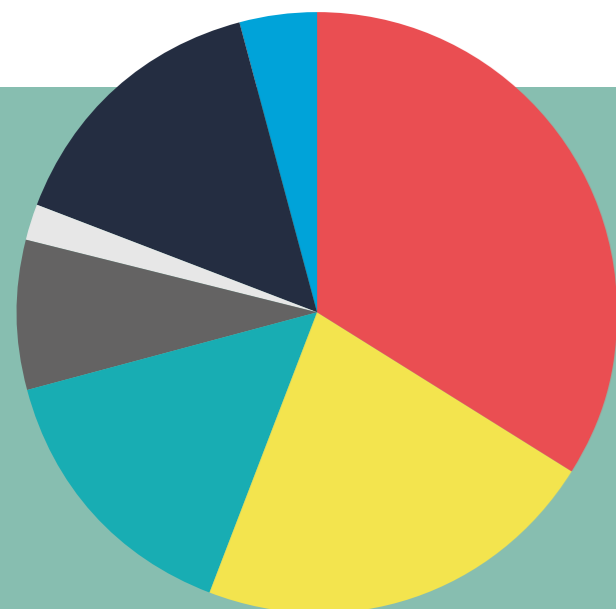
1. Over 50% of businesses that vote must vote in favour of the BID.
2. The businesses that vote yes must represent a greater total rateable value than those that vote no.

NEXT STEPS



If you vote **YES** for the Godalming BID you will be saying **YES** to investing circa **£850,000** in the town over the next 5 years.

There are currently over **320 BIDs** across the UK with local BIDs including Cranleigh, Guildford, Camberley, Dorking, Cobham, Epsom, Walton-on-Thames, Caterham and Oxted. Several other BIDs are currently being developed in Surrey.



EXPENDITURE PROFILE %

- **Destination Marketing 34%**
- **Digital High Street 22%**
- **Clean & Welcoming 15%**
- **Staff 15%**
- **Business Support 8%**
- **Delivery & Running Cost 2%**
- **Levy Collection Costs 4%**



Town Clerk, Godalming Town Council



“Godalming Town Council is extremely supportive of the BID. Although it receives no income from businesses, the Town Council recognises the importance of a successful business community to the Town. It is the reason why the Town Council agreed to help fund the BID process. The BID is a unique opportunity for the Town’s businesses to prioritise business needs and importantly have funding available to deliver on those priorities.”

PROJECTS

WE WILL DELIVER

Destination Marketing - £300,000 over 5 years

We all love Godalming and want the town to thrive as an attractive visitor destination. The BID will be investing £300,000 over the next 5 years in a comprehensive marketing communications programme with the objective of branding Godalming High St and driving more footfall and spend in the town.

As a priority you would like to see a dedicated Godalming website showcasing the town as a unique destination for independent shopping, hospitality, art, history and leisure. The website will also be an effective way of communicating your business and services to a wider customer base as well as enabling businesses to collaborate with each other on a dedicated members page. Planned and managed promotional campaigns, targeting both locals and visitors from further afield, will run across social media as well as traditional platforms using new and creative ways to engage people and create brand loyalty.

Godalming already hosts a busy calendar of events in the town but BID funding can selectively contribute to their further development as well as creating new events, such as seasonal town trails, that interact directly with BID businesses and boost spending.

Digital High Street - £275,000 over 5 years

With new technology emerging at an ever-faster pace; offering new ways to pay, park, promote and build customer relationships it is important to future proof the High Street with WiFi infrastructure that can support the roll out of new apps and services. Public WiFi will also compensate for the inconsistent mobile coverage in the town as well as being used for market research and as a promotional tool.

Next year Waverley BC will stop paying for the footfall counter in the High Street so BID funds will either maintain that service or replace with newer technology that can also track visitor origin and behaviour. Footfall data helps us to promote Godalming to potential new businesses looking to establish themselves in the town.

Increasing Footfall

Connecting to Customers

Clean and Attractive - £150,000 over 5 years

We are all sad to see the many empty shop fronts which give a very drab first impression of our much loved heritage town. We want to work with landlords and their agents to do as much as we can to clean up the frontages and dress them with vinyls to create a more welcoming and attractive streetscene. We are also exploring ways to repurpose at least one empty unit as a pop-up space to encourage new businesses into the town but that will depend on landlord cooperation.

With so many diverse and interesting independent shops to visit we need to make it easier for visitors to find their way around. Introducing better wayfinding signage and digital town maps will ensure that visitors can explore all that the town has to offer.

We want to ensure a clean and attractive public realm that will encourage longer dwell time. Additional street cleansing over and above the council provision and additional planting will make for a more pleasant visitor experience.

Business Support - £60,000 over 5 years

It is important for the BID to represent all businesses and manage relationships with town stakeholders and other local organisations so that we can work together to champion all our interests. Examples of this could be advocating for cheaper staff parking or working with the police to create a joint action against crime plan.

Collective procurement of services such as waste management, merchant services and insurance will save businesses money and the BID will also seek out further grants and funding opportunities to support development of the town. The BID will play a key role in creating a vibrant business community offering opportunities to share ideas and take advantage of skills training for personal and business development.

How will the projects be delivered?

A Godalming BID is your chance to participate in shaping Godalming's future and realising its full potential. It will be managed by the BID board of local businesses with a part time project manager reporting to the board and responsible for day-to-day delivery of the business plan.

Looking Smarter

Reducing Costs



THE BID LEVY

Every eligible BID business in the area shown in the boundary map will pay the BID levy which is calculated as 2% of the rateable value of its premises. The levy rate will not change throughout the duration of the BID term.

The levy will be collected by Waverley Borough Council on behalf of the BID Company and transferred to the BID Company's bank account.

This income is then ring-fenced and only used to fund the priorities included in this business plan.

Examples of what your will pay:

RATE VALUE OF PREMISES	ANNUAL LEVY PAYABLE
Below £5,000	Exempt
£5,000	£100
£10,000	£200
£20,000	£400
£40,000	£800
£60,000	£1,200
£100,000	£2,000
£250,000	£5,000

Over 60% of businesses will pay less than a £2.50 per day

The Godalming BID will raise approximately £173,000 per annum from the levy – raising £865,000 over 5 years. We will use that income to leverage additional funds from grants and other opportunities as they arise.

BID MEMBERSHIP

Any BID levy payer or equivalent financial contributor can become a member of the BID Company. This enables them to take part in the decision-making process, as well as stand for and vote during Board of Director elections.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary investment can be made by any businesses that are exempt such as those that have a rateable value of £5,000 or less and businesses located outside the BID area. This will entitle them to all the projects and services outlined in this business plan as well as full rights as members in the management and governance of the BID company. Details and eligibility will be set by the Board.

2024-2029

BUDGET FORECAST

The proposed budget is set out below:

BID INCOME	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	TOTAL
Levy	173,000.00	173,000.00	173,000.00	173,000.00	173,000.00	865,000.00
Assume 15% add income	26,000.00	26,000.00	26,000.00	26,000.00	26,000.00	130,000.00
Total Income	199,000.00	199,000.00	199,000.00	199,000.00	199,000.00	995,000.00

BID EXPENDITURE						
Destination Marketing	60,000.00	60,000.00	60,000.00	60,000.00	60,000.00	300,000.00
Digital High Street	55,000.00	55,000.00	55,000.00	55,000.00	55,000.00	275,000.00
Clean & Attractive	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	150,000.00
Business support	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	60,000.00
Delivery & running costs	3,100.00	3,100.00	3,100.00	3,100.00	3,100.00	15,500.00
Staff	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	150,000.00
Levy collection costs	8,900.00	8,900.00	8,900.00	8,900.00	8,900.00	44,500.00
	199,000.00	199,000.00	199,000.00	199,000.00	199,000.00	995,000.00

ADDITIONAL INCOME

BIDs across the UK on average generate 15% in additional income over a 5-year term. The Godalming BID will endeavour to do this through grant funding and other income generating opportunities. It is expected that this will generate over £26,000 in additional funding per annum to be invested back into the projects outlined in this plan.



BID GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

If the BID Ballot is successful, an independent, not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee, will govern the BID. The Board will have up to 15 Directors made up of representatives from levy paying businesses or voluntary contributors. Additional, non-levy paying members may be co-opted, as required.

Board Director positions are unpaid and voluntary and include a mix of all sectors of business that operate within the BID area as well as having the necessary skills and experience required to deliver the Godalming BID business plan.

Board elections will be held and any levy paying business or equivalent financial contributor will be eligible to stand as a BID Board Director. Nominated representatives from Waverley Borough Council will also be present at board meetings.

By becoming a member of the BID company you can have your say in controlling how the funds are spent and also holding the BID company accountable throughout the 5 year term. The BID company will not be able to make a profit and any surplus must be spent on the projects and services agreed by the levy payers and Board of Directors.

In the first year, the BID Task Group who have been involved with the development of the BID will form an interim Board to allow for continuity. Elections to the Board will then take place in the second year. One of the Directors will then be voted in as Chairperson by the Directors.

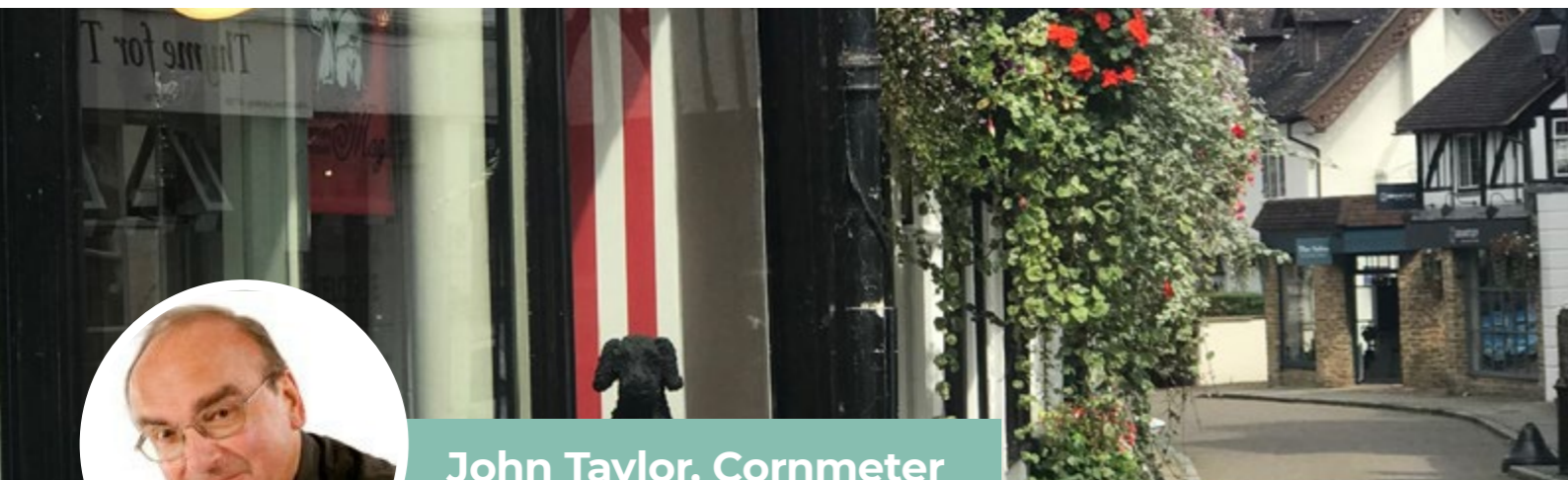
There will be regular updates via newsletters and e-bulletins. The annual reports and accounts will be produced at the end of each year and available to members.

MEASURING PERFORMANCE

The board will set key performance indicators (KPIs) and criteria upon which to measure the BID's performance, for example: annual surveys, visitor numbers, new business activity, media coverage, website and social media interaction. The BID will keep businesses updated on a regular basis through the website, newsletters, face to face meetings and annual meetings.

BID LEVY RULES & BALLOT

- The BID Regulations of 2004 (as amended), approved by the Government, set out the legal framework within which BIDs will have to operate, including the way in which the levy is charged and collected, and how the ballot is conducted.
- The BID levy rate will be fixed for the full term and will not be subject to variation by the annual rate of inflation. This will be set on the 1st of April each year using the most current Non-Domestic Ratings list. It will be updated for any changes in ratepayer appeals, additions, or removals.
- The BID Levy will be applied to all eligible business ratepayers within the defined area with a rateable value of £5,000 or above.
- The following exemptions to the BID Levy apply:
 - Those with a rateable value of less than £5,000
 - Non-retail charities with no paid staff, trading arm, income or facilities
 - Not-for-profit subscription and entirely volunteer-based organisations
 - Business that fall in the following sectors – industrial, manufacturing, storage and workshops.
- The minimum levy amount payable will be £100.
- The BID levy will be paid by any new ratepayer occupying any existing hereditaments (a business rated property) within the BID area.
- New hereditaments will be charged from the point of occupation based on the rateable value at the time it enters the rating list, even though they did not vote on the initial proposal.
- If a business ratepayer occupies premises for less than one year, the amount of BID levy payable will be calculated on a daily basis.
- Empty properties, those undergoing refurbishment or being demolished will be liable for the BID levy via the registered business ratepayer with no void period.
- The BID levy will not be affected by the small business rate relief scheme, exemptions, relief, or discounts prescribed in the Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) Regulations 1989 made under the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- The BID Company will operate a 'closed year system'. In case of revaluations/backdating of business rates for premises, the BID Levy payments will not be backdated and/or refunds provided
- VAT will not be charged on the BID levy.
- The billing body is authorised to collect the BID levy on behalf of the BID Company.
- The levy income will be kept in a separate ring-fenced account and transferred to the BID.
- Collection and enforcement arrangements will be like those for the collection and enforcement of non-domestic business rates with the BID Company responsible for any debt write off. The BID area and the levy rate cannot be altered without a further ballot.
- The BID projects, costs and timescales can be altered subject to Board approval providing the changes fall within the income and overall objectives of the BID.
- The levy rate or boundary area cannot be increased without a full alteration ballot. However, if the BID Company wishes to decrease the levy rate during the period, it will do so through a consultation, which will, as a minimum, require it to write to all existing BID levy payers. If more than 25% object in writing, then this course of action will not proceed.
- The BID Board will meet at least six times a year. Every levy paying business or equivalent financial contributor will be eligible to be a member of the BID Company and attend General Meetings.
- The BID Company will produce a set of annual accounts available to all company members.
- The BID will commence on 1st April 2024 and will last for five years. At the end of five years a ballot must be held if businesses wish the BID to continue.



John Taylor, Cornmeter



Patsy Bell, Calico

“I believe that the BID can deliver a brighter future for Godalming by attracting more visitors and customers to the town helping businesses to flourish and creating a more vibrant local economy.”

“This BID allows business to pool resources, to protect Godalming’s Town Centre today and as seed funding to grow for tomorrow.”

THE BID BALLOT

All eligible businesses have the opportunity to vote.

The ballot will be conducted through an independent, confidential postal vote conducted by the Returning Officer at Waverley Borough Council which is the responsible body as determined by the BID legislation.

Each eligible ratepayer will have one vote in respect of each hereditament within the BID area, provided they are listed on the National Non-Domestic Rates List for the defined area as provided by Waverley Borough Council. Organisations occupying more than one hereditament will have more than one vote.

A proxy vote is available and details will be sent out by the Returning Officer at Waverley Borough Council.

Ballot papers will be sent out to the appropriate organisation from **3rd October 2023** to be returned no later than **31st October 2023**.

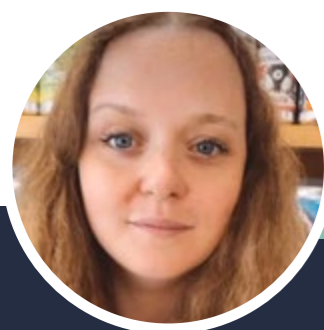
For the BID to go ahead, two conditions must be met:

- More than 50% of businesses that vote must vote in favour
- Of the businesses that vote, the 'yes' votes must represent more than 50% of the total rateable value of all votes cast.

The results of the ballot will be declared on **1st November 2023**.

Streets included in the BID area are listed below:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Bridge Mews | Moss Lane |
| Bridge Road | Pound Lane |
| Bridge Street | Queen Street |
| Church Street | Station Approach |
| Flambard Way | Station Road |
| Great George Street | The Burys |
| Haskells Yard | The Wharf |
| High Street | Wharf Street |
| Lower South Street | Wiggins Yard |
| Mint Strett | |



Emily Gore, Peppered Pear Pantry

“As a small independent retailer with a background in face-to-face businesses it is clear to me that Godalming has the foundations of a fantastic high street, with a little love, attention and support we can restore this quaint little town to its former glory.”

MEET THE TASK GROUP

Local business people and key stakeholders have been guiding the Godalming BID through the consultation phase. They are passionate about using this opportunity to reinvigorate the town for the enjoyment of all.



Patsy Bell
Calico



Viv Ellis
Godalming Museum



Laura Goddings
Yard Market



Emily Gore
The Peppered Pear Pantry



Catherine Knight
Waverley Borough Council



Sophie Pringle
Pringle & Pringle



Renato Rufus
SI Capital



Emma Sheen
The Godalming Art Shop



Kirsty Stancombe
Black Bear Creative



John Taylor
Cornmeter



Godalming Town Council
Stakeholder

GODALMING

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Five Year Business Plan 2024-2029



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