



KNUTSFORD

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

OUR 5 YEAR PLAN FOR A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

2026-2031



WWW.KNUTSFORDBID.CO.UK

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF KNUTSFORD BID STEERING GROUP



I am proud to present our first draft of a new shared vision for a Business Improvement District in Knutsford - a vision rooted in Knutsford's rich heritage, distinctive charm, and strong sense of community.

Knutsford: a vibrant market town, mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, with a good quality combination of national and independent retail and hospitality businesses. It has a welcoming atmosphere, and a unique connection to one of the region's most iconic attractions - Tatton Park (which is also part of this BID area).

A BID would be a first for Knutsford—something completely new and never tried here before. It's a chance for us, the business community, to take the lead and make our own decisions about what our town really needs—not wait around for government direction. With £1million of private sector funding, we have the opportunity to drive bold, practical change that benefits Knutsford right now and builds a stronger future on our own terms.

The BID will focus on making Knutsford a more attractive, accessible and, importantly an, economically resilient destination. Investing in environmental enhancements and improved public spaces. A BID could support the development of the towns calendar of events to drive footfall and encourage even stronger local civic pride. The BID will also focus on marketing and PR to raise the profile of the town and promote all that Knutsford has to offer.

Tatton Park attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year—but too many come and go without ever stepping into Knutsford. A key part of our BID ambition is to change that. By strengthening the link between Tatton and our town—through better signage, easier transport, and joined-up visitor experiences—we'll make sure those visitors don't just pass by. We want them walking our high street, eating in our restaurants, booking beauty treatments, discovering our shops—and even choosing to work or live here. This is a chance to turn passing footfall into lasting local value.

We are committed to ensuring that businesses have a strong, unified voice and the support they need to thrive. The BID will bring businesses and organisations together, drive investment, and act as a catalyst for positive change. Your feedback on this plan is critical and will help shape the final proposal for a BID which we expect to release in September / October 2025.

Yours,

Helen Rogers

Chair of the BID Steering Group and founder of Matix Accounts,
a Knutsford centre-based business of 14 years



MEET THE KNUTSFORD BID STEERING GROUP

The Knutsford BID Steering Group has been drawn from companies and organisations across Knutsford. Organisations small and large, independently owned or operating as part of larger groups have all contributed to the development of this draft plan for a BID.

Helen Rogers

Matix Accounts

Chair of the BID Steering Group

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The Blind Pig

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Tatton Estates

Caterine Hooper

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Knutsford Town Council
Representing the Bexton and
Town Centre ward

Julia Chard

Knutsford Olde Sweet Shoppe

Melanie Barnes-Batty

Knutsford Asset Management

Richard Heap

TT Games

Roberta Dyer

Roberta Beauty Redefined

Sean Spooner

The Lost and Found

Sue Henry

The Tea Room

Sandra Curties

Town Centre Manager,
Knutsford Town Council

Richard Milkins

Visitor Economy, Tourism &
Hospitality Manager
Cheshire East Council

HOW THE BID WORKS

- ▶ All premises with a rateable value greater than or equal to £2.5k will receive a vote.
- ▶ If a majority vote in favour of the BID (by number and rateable value) the BID is approved for a 5 year period.

VOTE

BID BOARD

- ▶ Businesses within the Knutsford BID area form a representative Board to govern the BID.
- ▶ The BID Board includes representation from organisations across the Knutsford BID area.

- ▶ The BID Board guides and directs the BID team who are responsible for the delivery of the BID 5 year business plan.
- ▶ New projects and services agreed by the business-led BID Board are commissioned in line with the BID proposal.
- ▶ The impact and success of the BID is reported to businesses.

INVEST, BENEFIT AND REPORT

WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)?

WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)?

- ▶ A BID is an opportunity for businesses and organisations to take a lead in the management and improvement of Knutsford for a five year defined period.

ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT LED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR

- ▶ The BID in Knutsford could generate over £1m of business led investment over a five-year period and will cost the average premises the equivalent of £1.27 / day, and for 60% of premises less than £1 day.
- ▶ The investment will be delivered through a new private sector led Knutsford Business Improvement District Board. The Board will be made up of local businesses and organisations who contribute towards the BID and answerable to the wider business community who fund the BID.

WHERE DOES THE INVESTMENT COME FROM?

- ▶ The investment will principally come from a small additional levy paid by each premises (hereditament) within the BID area with a rateable value above £2,500. The proposed model will cost the average premises the equivalent of £1.27 / day.
- ▶ Together this will raise an investment of circa £1m, over 5 years, which we expect will lever in additional funding from a range of sources.

WHO DECIDES IF THE BID IS TO BE INTRODUCED?

- ▶ All eligible premises will be able to take part in a 28-day postal ballot vote to approve or reject the BID proposal. This is expected to take place in November 2025.
- ▶ If a majority vote in favour of the proposal from the number of votes cast, and this represents a majority in level of rateable value from votes cast, the BID will come into operation from 1st April 2026, when all premises with a rateable value above £2,500 would pay the small annual levy (equivalent to 2% of their rateable value) to fund investments planned by the BID.

HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT TO BUSINESS RATES?

- ▶ The BID levy is separate from business rates, which are a local tax collected by Cheshire East Council and pooled with council tax and government funding to support general services, with no direct link between what businesses pay and the services delivered. Any retained funds from business rates are principally invested in core council services including adult social care, children's services, domestic waste disposal, highways and economic development.
- ▶ The funds from the BID once collected will be held locally, under the control of local businesses and will only be invested in projects and services that are additional to base line services (highways, street scene, environmental enhancement etc) provided by the public sector.
- ▶ The BID funds will be invested under the direct control of the business community who pay the annual BID levies.

WHERE DO BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS ALREADY OPERATE?

- ▶ Businesses and organisations across 350 towns and cities have embraced BIDs since 2005, with notable examples that support town centres or city centres in Wilmslow, Altrincham, Northwich, Chester and Manchester.
- ▶ More than 300 BIDs have been approved by business communities in towns and cities across the UK since 2004 when they were first introduced.



KNUTSFORD CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



In 2024, Knutsford Town Council commissioned a Business Improvement District (BID) feasibility study to explore the potential benefits of establishing a BID in the town. As part of this process, a consultation was carried out with the local business community through an online survey, one to one stakeholder meetings and business workshops. The results from the consultation have helped to shape this draft business plan. A summary of the key headlines are listed below:

WHAT YOU TOLD US

Maximise the opportunity that being so close to Tatton Park provides – particularly with large events.

Improve the cleanliness, lighting, security and highlight the uniqueness of the town's ancient ginnels and alleys.

Lobby for improved frequency and quality of service of train routes and station arrival experience.

Marketing support for the town's businesses via dedicated social media platforms.

Introduce visitor monitoring/footfall measurement system and town event evaluation.

Work with the public agencies, Cheshire East Council and Knutsford Town Council on improving the quality of the visitor experience.

Knutsford's history/architecture/literary significance should be showcased more.

Provide better quality and more events that are targeted at more than just families.

THE TOP TEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR KNUTSFORD

1. Giving Businesses a Stronger Voice

The BID will provide a platform for Knutsford's business community to influence local decision-making, access funding opportunities, and shape the town's future direction.

2. Boosting Footfall through Events & Experiences

The BID will work with partners and stakeholders to build on existing events and introduce new high-quality events - markets, festivals, late-night shopping, and cultural activities to attract visitors and encourage local spending.

3. Enhancing the Link with Tatton Park

Enhance physical and promotional links between Knutsford town centre and Tatton Park to encourage two-way visitor flow, ensuring both locations benefit from increased footfall and engagement.

4. Marketing and Promotion

Working with key stakeholders to promote a strong, unified identity for Knutsford as a must-visit destination - targeting both residents and regional/national day-trippers through coordinated campaigns.

5. Improving the Public Realm

Invest in cleaner streets, greener spaces, better signage, and improved lighting to make the town centre more attractive, accessible, and welcoming.

6. Supporting Local Businesses

The BID will provide free training, link businesses to support and provide networking opportunities, and collective services (e.g. waste management, joint procurement) to reduce costs and improve competitiveness.

7. Encouraging a Day-to-Night Economy

Support the growth of Knutsford's evening economy by promoting dining, culture, and leisure options to encourage longer dwell times and more diverse opportunities.

8. Improving Accessibility & Parking

Work with partners to address parking concerns, enhance signage, lobby for public transport improvements, promote public and active transport options, and make it easier for people to work, visit and stay longer.

9. Enhancing Safety & Security

Introduce initiatives such as business crime reduction partnerships, or improved CCTV to create a safer and more secure town environment.

10. Influencing Local Investment through Devolution

As devolution brings greater powers and funding to the region, the Knutsford BID can act as a key voice in shaping how investment and resources are directed locally. By aligning BID priorities with the wider Cheshire and Warrington devolution agenda, the BID can champion the needs of Knutsford's business community - ensuring the town benefits from infrastructure improvements, skills funding, transport upgrades, and place-based regeneration initiatives.

WHAT CAN A BID DO FOR ME?

| INDEPENDENT RETAILERS | NATIONAL RETAILERS | LEISURE, HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM | PROFESSIONAL AND OFFICE SECTOR |
|---|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ We're committed to increasing footfall in Knutsford — seven days a week, 365 days a year. Through strategic destination marketing and a dynamic calendar of events, we'll attract more visitors and keep Knutsford buzzing all year round ▶ Our bespoke promotional campaigns will shine a spotlight on Knutsford's vibrant business scene. High-quality videos and professional photography will be shared across leading digital channels — connecting you with thousands of new customers ▶ Seasonal events and fresh activities will elevate Knutsford's profile and draw crowds. There'll be exciting opportunities for your business to get involved and be featured front and centre in these campaigns ▶ Collaborate with fellow businesses on group purchasing and cost-saving initiatives. Take advantage of practical support including training workshops, expert advice, and dedicated networking events — all organised by the BID ▶ Access exclusive footfall data and insights into town centre performance. Play an active role in shaping BID priorities and have your say in the future of Knutsford | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increased footfall, dwell time and more consumers and visitors to Knutsford ▶ Access to a professionally managed business crime reduction partnership ▶ Raising the profile of Knutsford through a joined up and more targeted local and regional year-round marketing and promotional campaign ▶ Being part of a local network of major retailers who can share and gain in-depth insight into trading factors/conditions ▶ The ability to collaborate with fellow traders over seasonal campaigns ▶ The BID will support a better shopping environment in Knutsford with additional public realm improvements and improved safety initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increased footfall and spend with visitors and consumers staying longer ▶ Promotional campaigns that shine a spotlight on the range and quality of food and beverage operators ▶ Improve the daytime to night-time economy experience ▶ The creation of new events and festivals that directly involve and promote a range of leisure and cultural opportunities in Knutsford and Tatton Park ▶ A BID gives the leisure/hospitality sector a collective voice in discussions with the council, police, and other stakeholders, influencing policies and planning decisions ▶ Opportunities to join together with neighbouring businesses to access group purchasing initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ An enhanced and more vibrant town centre for your clients and employees ▶ The BID will lobby for better transport linkages and additional public transport services to support attracting talent and staff retention ▶ The ability to promote your business services to a wider audience and to 400+ fellow Knutsford businesses through regular media communications ▶ Promotion of a strong, positive narrative about Knutsford to help your business attract prospective employees to a high-quality work location ▶ Additional initiatives aimed specifically at the professional and office-based businesses within Knutsford, such as improved network opportunities, links with professional development providers and better routes into the local labour market ▶ Greater exposure and interaction with regional bodies such as Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington, The Growth Hub and Cheshire East Council |

**VOTE
YES** 

THEME ONE – DESTINATION KNUTSFORD



Making Knutsford the place people want to visit, explore and enjoy.

The BID will focus on promoting Knutsford as a must-visit destination, attracting more consumers, visitors, tourists and encouraging them to stay longer and spend more. By improving the visitor experience, delivering exciting events, and working with partners like Tatton Park, we'll raise the profile of Knutsford and boost footfall into the area. This theme is all about making Knutsford even more welcoming, vibrant and memorable—for both visitors and locals alike.

► **Support the evolution of the Knutsford Brand Identity**

Lead and work with partners to develop a unified visual identity and messaging strategy to promote Knutsford across all media platforms

► **Seasonal Marketing Campaigns**

Seasonal cross promotional activities in Knutsford and Tatton Park e.g. autumn walks, Easter trails and festive Christmas promotions

► **Promotional Partnerships with local visitor attractions**

Joint campaigns, shared visitor materials, cross-promoted events, and package deals working with local visitor destination including Tatton Park and the National Trust

► **High-Quality Photography and Video Production**

Commissioning professional content showcasing Knutsford's streetscapes, markets, heritage, and links to Tatton Park for use in PR and social media

► **Seasonal "Buy Local" Campaigns**

Promote spring gifting, summer dining, Christmas shopping, showcasing Knutsford's diverse range of businesses

► **Marketing Spotlights**

Weekly features on local businesses and attractions across social media, website, and printed newsletters

► **Knutsford in National Tourism Publications & Travel Guides**

Work with agencies to feature Knutsford in broader national / regional media campaigns e.g. Private sector PR, Marketing Cheshire, and Visit England

► **Enhance and develop the annual Knutsford events calendar**

Work with partners to develop a year-round, diverse programme of high-quality events that celebrate Knutsford's food, culture, history, and retail offering, attracting new visitors, encouraging local participation, and driving footfall to the town and Tatton Park



THEME TWO – EXPERIENCE KNUTSFORD



Creating a cleaner, safer and more enjoyable town centre for everyone.

The BID will work to improve the cleanliness, safety, and accessibility of Knutsford, helping to create a welcoming environment for shoppers, visitors, workers, and residents. Whether it's cleaner streets, better signage, improved spaces, or more vibrant displays, we want people to enjoy their time in Knutsford and keep coming back.

► **Heritage-Inspired Street Art or Interpretation Boards**

Commission art or storyboards sharing Knutsford's history to enrich the visitor experience

► **Wayfinding & Signage Improvements**

Refresh existing signage, introduce accessible signage including directions to car parks, toilets, Tatton Park, and heritage points of interest

► **Enhanced Deep Cleaning Programme**

Targeted deep cleaning of key locations in addition to the standard cleansing services delivered by the council. E.g. Jet-washing of pavements, street furniture, signage, and alleyways

► **Work with Transport Providers to Improve Service Provision and Information**

Work with partners to lobby for better public transport provision in Knutsford and ensure up-to-date train and bus schedules are available online, on BID signage, and in printed visitor guides

► **Connecting Tatton Park and Knutsford Town Centre**

The BID will commission a feasibility study to identify opportunities for enhancing connectivity between Tatton Park and Knutsford Town Centre and vice versa. Our goal is to develop new ways to ensure visitors can fully enjoy both the historic beauty of the Tatton Estate and the unique offerings of the town centre.

► **Introduce a Knutsford Town Link Radio Scheme**

To improve safety, reduce crime, and enhance communication between Knutsford's businesses, Cheshire Police, and local authorities through the implementation of a digital Town Link Radio Scheme

The benefits of a town link radio scheme are:

- Allows instant communication about incidents such as shoplifting and antisocial behaviour
- The radio will be linked to the town CCTV systems and monitored centrally by Cheshire East Council
- The radio link helps with rapid response to issues and improves the feeling of safety for staff and the public



THEME THREE – CONNECTED KNUTSFORD



A thriving Knutsford depends on strong, supported businesses.

The BID will provide practical support—from cost-saving initiatives and skills development to shared promotion and networking. It will also act as a voice for business, helping shape local decisions and connecting Knutsford to wider opportunities through the devolution agenda.

A Private Sector Led BID Board

- ▶ Creating “One Voice” for the private sector in Knutsford
- ▶ Driving forward improvements and lobbying for change
- ▶ Governance of the BID Investment
- ▶ Representative of the business area in the BID

The Knutsford BID Team

- ▶ One-stop shop for businesses to refer issues and opportunities
- ▶ Creating new opportunities to tackle barriers to growth
- ▶ Responsible for delivering the five-year BID Business Plan

Start-Up Support & Knutsford ‘Welcome Pack’

- ▶ Development of a ‘Welcome to Knutsford’ business information pack containing local contacts and information on BID services to new businesses launching in Knutsford
- ▶ Supporting local enterprise/entrepreneur development programmes

Free or Subsidised Training Workshops/Courses

- ▶ Training and workshops covering key topics such as digital marketing, customer service training, merchandising, social media, financial planning, food hygiene, staff recruitment, first aid at work or fire safety

Joint Procurement Services

- ▶ BID-negotiated deals to cut costs for local businesses on commercial waste, utilities, energy, insurance, and card processing to reduce business overheads



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BUDGETS

Governance and Management of the Business Improvement District funds will be governed and directed by a private sector led Board of local businesses leaders and premises occupiers from across the Business Improvement District area.

The added value investment that will be generated from the BID over five years will be circa £1m, with the potential to leverage additional investment from other sources including the public sector, grant awarding bodies and commercial opportunities.

An exemption is planned for any premises / hereditaments with a rateable value lower than £2.5k.

Administration costs for delivery of the BID will be no more than 20% of the overall budget, to ensure that the significant majority of investment is targeted towards delivery of tangible added value services and projects.

Any eligible business will be able to put a representative forward for appointment onto the private sector led Board, which will be elected through an annual meeting of members of the Business Improvement District.

Circa £1m added value investment over the five years

BID levy for the average premises **£1.27 / day** based upon **2%** of a premises rateable value

Premises with a rateable value lower than **£2.5k** are exempt

BASELINES

A benefit of a BID being approved for businesses is the statutory baseline agreements we will receive from Knutsford Town Council, Cheshire East Council and Cheshire Police. These are required to ensure that funds from the BID do not fund council or other statutory services.

All funds raised by the BID will only be used to support added value investments into Knutsford that without the BID would otherwise not be realised.



PROPOSED BID AREA



**VOTE
YES** 



KNUTSFORD

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

MORE INFORMATION AND YOUR THOUGHTS ON THIS PLAN FOR A KNUTSFORD BID

You can feedback online at **www.knutsfordbid.co.uk** and click on the draft business plan consultation link or contact BID Project Team:
Jane Hough on 07966 375162 or John Graham on 07826 907742



Full details are available on the Knutsford BID website: **www.knutsfordbid.co.uk**. Scan the QR code to learn more and share your views.



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