

Newport Now BID: How your Levy will be spent in 2023-24

The Newport Now BID – local businesses improving our city centre.

As we enter the 9th year of your Business Improvement District, thank you for your continuing support as we work together to create better trading conditions for Newport city centre.

The BID was established in April 2015, following a ballot of eligible city centre businesses, to deliver a five-year business plan. In November 2019, we successfully balloted eligible businesses again for a second five-year term to 2025. The BID and its Board – all of whom either own or run city centre businesses, or are voluntary levy payers – continue to ensure the business plan you helped develop and voted in favour of, is delivered in its entirety between now and 2025.

Board members for 2022-23 are: Zep Bellavia (Chair, Bellavia & Associates), Alan Edwards (Vacara's), Tracy Stokes (Belle Femme), Steve Corten (Pub Watch), Ian Lamsdale (Newport City Radio), Nicky Vignoli (The Newporters community group), Catherine McNamara (Liverton Opticians), Robin Hall (Kymin), Dan Smith (M4 Property Consultants), Simon Pullen (Friars Walk), Gavin Horton (Horton's Coffee House) and Councillor Jane Mudd (Leader, Newport City Council). Management and PR services are provided by Kevin Ward Media Ltd with Street Ambassador and Night Ambassador services provided by Safestyle Security.

Remember the BID is a private, not-for-profit company funded by city centre businesses via a 1.25% levy based on rateable values (1% in managed shopping centres).

The 2022-23 period was the first since March 2020 when businesses, including BIDs, were able to operate without Covid-related restrictions.

This meant we were able to provide a full calendar of events in the city centre, hold our AGM and open meeting in person, and focus fully on our 2020-25 business plan.

We were also able to provide a number of new services thanks to successful grant applications, and to launch a new 'one-stop shop' website – www.newportnow.co.uk

Each year we are required to report on four headline items:

- a. Revenue from BID Levy due to be received in 2023-24 is £174,717, plus an additional £18,500 carried forward from 2022-23.
- b. Of this, it is forecast that £173,000 will be expended up to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, leaving a rolling reserve of £20,000.
- c. The BID Levy is spent across three key themes as set out in the Newport Now business plan for 2020-25. **Future Newport** (delivering 'digital high street' projects and business support such as the city centre app, collective purchasing of energy and telecoms, and the city centre gift card), **Safe & Secure Newport** (a visible & reassuring presence on the street with our

Street Ambassadors and working closely with the local police force, as well as free membership of the Newport Against Business Crime Partnership for all Levy payers and the purchase of additional radios for partners), **Welcome to Newport** (delivering a programme of city centre events and marketing). Spend on the three key themes accounts for 80% of Levy income with the remainder spent on core costs (management, office rental etc).

- d. The 2023-24 programme will see the BID deliver or fund a variety of services within our themes, all aimed at aiding the city centre's post-Covid recovery, including:
 - i. An events programme that includes Countdown to Christmas, Newport Rising Festival, Newport Food & Drink Festival, the King's Coronation, Record Store Day, The Big Sesh, the City of Newport Half Marathon, Pride in the Port, and the Big Splash.
 - ii. Working with partners to extend funding for the successful Night Ambassador service on Friday and Saturday nights in the city centre.
 - iii. Expanding the Loyal Free city centre app launched last year.
 - iv. Continuing the free graffiti removal service launched last year.
 - v. Shop Front Improvement Grant.
 - vi. Continuing to promote the Newport Now Gift Card and Savings Advisory Service.
 - vii. Ensuring the voice of Levy payers is heard on city centre issues at local and national level.
 - viii. Working with partners to reduce the number of empty retail units in the city centre.

We will have to work smarter with your money over the next and coming years as the revaluation of commercial properties in Wales that comes into force on April 1, 2023, will see our levy income reduced by 15% compared to 2022-23.

Our programme helps to create a city centre that is safer, more attractive, and well promoted. The BID is a private company financed by its members – local businesses improving our city centre.

If there are further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Newport Now BID team or visit our website www.newportnow.co.uk

**During 2022-23, the BID received additional income via a £52,908 grant from the Home Office's Safer Streets fund to establish a Night Ambassadors service, and £50,000 from Welsh Government's Transforming Towns initiative towards dressing empty shop units.*

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