

ASHBY BID BUSINESS PLAN 2021 – 2026

PLEASE NOTE: The Business Plan will be fully designed and will need supported images & testimonials

FOREWORD

Ashby De La Zouch lies at the heart of the National Forest. A historic market town with a population of approximately 13,000, it sits in a pleasant corner of North West Leicestershire offering a range of urban and rural amenities.

The town provides a unique offer in many ways, with it being at the centre of one of the boldest environmental projects over the last 25 years and its desire to be a 'Forest Town' and its heritage, perhaps best represented by the Castle. It combines a town centre that comprises of a permanent market, a range of high street and independent businesses offering shopping, food and drink. Alongside this you also have a museum, small theatre and library as well as an active business, local and public sector community which ensures that there are a range of exciting events from the traditional Ashby Statutes to the glamorous Ashby FABulous event.

Winning awards for its marketing and being nominated for the GB High Street Award showed a growing sense of confidence in the town and increased investment. Subsequent to that there was the onset of the COVID pandemic which has presented huge challenges and has seen further shift in both the retail offer and consumer behaviour.

As we head out of the lockdown, we believe Ashby can emerge stronger. We have so much to offer. But the town's businesses need a plan to boost the place, for the benefit of all those who live, work and visit our place.

Strength comes from working together and partnership. This BID is a form of cooperative that will benefit us all. The BID will re-invest in the priorities that matter, appreciating the loyalty and pride of local people whilst attracting new visitors and investment. The business plan has been crafted to capture the essence of Ashby and address issues that businesses have told us need attention. We need to drive footfall into our shops, restaurants, bars and attractions – both in the centre and further.

We know the challenges and also about the opportunities it can bring and we want to make Ashby a success story. Please support our journey by reading this business plan and then by voting for our own BID, to establish prosperity for Ashby's future.

The Ashby BID Task Group

The BID will allow us all to keep Ashby the lively market town it should be! We are stronger together!

Helen Cormack, Owner, Goose

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INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY

Ashby faces many of the typical challenges that similar locations endure; local and regional competition for market share and visitors, access and infrastructure issues, modernising and attracting investment, engagement with local residential and business communities and of course organisational and funding stability.

This year we have seen the unprecedented challenges caused by a global pandemic. Having actively responded to the immediate issues, it is against this backdrop that there is a desire to continue to recover and evolve and lay down strong foundations to help that which is why we would like to see a BID happen.

Business groups such as Ashby Traders have had a great deal of success with committed individuals from businesses and partners such as the District and Town Councils but both its organisational ability and finances will always be limited because of the voluntary nature. A BID is a means by which to professionalise the management of our town, make sure everybody contributes and benefits and develop and deliver projects properly.

You have told us what you want to achieve with a BID in Ashby:

- Help recover from the challenges wrought by the pandemic.
- Increase the footfall
- Promote our offer to encourage people to visit and spend
- Reinvigorate the events calendar so that it would be more beneficial to businesses.
- Develop initiatives to support easy and attractive access in and around the town.
- Ensure the reputation of the town as a welcoming and safe place for shoppers, visitors all those who do business there
- Reduce duplication, decrease business costs, and help support and promote towns businesses.

Ashby BID will help to develop our strengths and our being able to:

- Invest over £1m
- Raise our profile further
- Carry out exciting projects and events to drive loyalty, footfall and spend
- Make sure we are a welcoming, friendly and safe place
- Make it easier for people to move into and around the town
- Give businesses the support they need to flourish by driving down business costs whilst being a powerful voice.

This is your opportunity to see Ashby realise its potential through a Business Improvement District (BID) with over £1m investment over 5 years to shape the future. Over 300 BIDs have been set up in the UK already, all investing in their local priorities. Nearby this includes Melton, Loughborough, Hinckley & Leicester.

A vote for the Ashby bid makes perfect sense. For a cost, less than the daily coffee run, businesses will gain so much. Being BID will enable us to unlock funding, that would not otherwise be available. Funding that will enable promotions and events to really put Ashby de la Zouch on the map. Let's have a BID and be proud of our wonderful market town.

Alison Smith MBE, Owner, School of Sewing and Sew Wardrobe

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BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS EXPLAINED

WHAT ARE BIDs?

BIDs are an arrangement whereby businesses get together, decide what improvements they want to make in their town, how they will manage these and what it will cost them. This all goes into a business plan which is voted on by all those who would have to pay. The BID lasts for a maximum of five years and must be able to demonstrate how it benefits the businesses that have funded it. 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.

WHO PAYS FOR A BID?

Once 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 business plan. The cost to each business is worked out on a pro rata basis. 'This is called the 'BID LEVY'. An independent and formal vote then takes place on the agreed projects and services and if the majority vote is YES then ALL eligible businesses within the BID area HAVE to pay. The BID levy is normally paid by the occupiers of a property. In addition, BIDs can draw in other voluntary funding, grants and 'in kind' contributions to supplement 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 detailed 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 ADDITIONAL to those that public services have 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 Ashby BID.

- Cleansing & Maintenance
- Festivals & Events
- Leisure
- Car Parking
- Public Conveniences
- Landscaping & Planting

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- Tourism
- CCTV
- Police

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.

We are in full support of the Ashby BID as it will help with the economic regeneration of the town. It will help retain and create new jobs for the community, support tourism, enhance our event offering and further develop award schemes such as Green Flag & Purple Flag. A successful BID is an ideal vehicle to attract further investment to the town centre.

Stuart Benson, Town Centre Manager, Ashby de la Zouch Town Council

ASHBY BID IN NUMBERS.....

The following will be illustrated as a graphic:

Graphic 1 – BID Facts

300+ businesses
£12m total RV
15+ Sectors
Over £200,000+ pa Levy Raised
Over £1m invested during the five year life of the BID

Graphic 2 – Key Project Areas

Marketing, Promotion & Events – 51%
Welcoming & Safe – 13%
Getting Around – 17%
Business Support – 6%
Overheads – 13%

I am excited to be involved in the BID initiative as I know it will culminate in attracting investment, drive footfall, enable new ideas to thrive and build on our already vibrant day and night time economy both now and in the future. Most importantly this is a chance for us to have our own voice as a community and to have a say in how our funds our spent.

Kate Adcock Zamani, Zamanis

THE BID AREA



List of Streets

Bakery Court
 Bath Street
 Brook Street
 Brookside
 Burton Road
 Charter Point Way
 Coalfield Way
 Coxons Mews
 Dents Road
 Derby Road
 Elford Street
 Excelsior Road
 Ivanhoe Park Way
 Kilwardby Street
 Leicester Road
 Lountside
 Lower Church Street
 Market Street
 Mill Lane Mews
 Norman Court
 North Street
 Nottingham Road
 Resolution Road
 Rushtons Yard
 Smisby Road
 Smithy Road
 South Street
 Station Road
 The Callis
 The Green
 Wood Street

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LISTENING TO YOU

The BID Task Group have been talking with businesses to understand how the town can be developed in order to address business concerns, interests and priorities. This valuable information has been collected through a number of channels:

- October 2019 - BID Feasibility Study presentation to businesses.
- January 2020 – Survey & Factsheet to businesses
- March to November 2020 – UK hit by the Coronavirus Pandemic and subsequently the country goes into lockdown
- January 2021 – Recommence BID Work with Ashby Traders Group
- February 2021 – Draft Business Plan produced
- March- April 2021 - BID Business Engagement
- May 2021 – Final Business Plan
- June 2021 – Ballot Campaign
- July 2021 – BID Ballot

WHAT'S NEXT?

Businesses within the BID area will receive a ballot paper by post. The vote to establish a BID for Ashby is then formally open. From this date businesses can complete and return their ballot papers to Civica Election Services, the independent agents acting on behalf of North West Leicestershire District Council's Returning Officer. The following outlines the Ballot timetable

Ballot Notice - To be sent by 17 June 2021

Despatch of Ballot Papers – 01 July 2021

Close of Postal Ballot – 29 July 2021

Formal Declaration of Ballot Result – 30 July 2021

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ASHBY PROJECTS

Marketing Promotion & Events

Say 'YES' to a Ashby BID and we will:

- Continue to develop and expand our logo and brand encouraging use by businesses and stakeholders
- Develop seasonal/event led marketing and promotional campaigns that will include local and regional marketing to promote the Town and BID businesses. This will include conventional and online platforms.
- Development of a 'Reward Card' Scheme as a customer care tool and to encourage loyalty
- Develop comprehensive website and social media platforms to showcase the complete Ashby experience, promote offers and be an effective way of communicating with customers and engaging with businesses.
- Further support our existing events calendar through marketing & financial help where appropriate. Beyond this we will develop key new events. This will include:
 - Ashby Soapbox
 - Ashby Open Air Cinema
 - Pancake Day
 - Medieval Ashby

Ashby is already host to a number of events that run throughout the year. Becoming a BID town will introduce more funding to help grow existing events and introduce new ones, bringing greater footfall, increased spend and stronger community ties to our lovely little market town.

Emma Clark, BID Lead, Ashby Town Centre Traders

Welcoming & Safe

Say 'YES' to a Ashby BID and we will

- Make Radiolink FREE for businesses and improve take up and coverage
- Further develop the Purple Flag Initiative through events and marketing.
- Support the expansion of seasonal decorations and lighting
- Expand Floral Displays scheme

Insert Business Testimonial (The White Hart)

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Getting Around

Say 'YES' to a Ashby BID and we will

- Develop seasonal/event based free/discounted car parking initiatives.
- Investigate seasonal Park & Ride service.
- Investigate viability of 'Hopper Bus' scheme to encourage Industrial Estate/Business Park trade and for events

Business Support

Say 'YES' to a Ashby BID and we will

- Developed centralised procurement for services such as trade waste, recycling, insurance and the like to ensure reduced costs for businesses. Independent businesses in Salisbury, for instance, saved between £200-£1600 pa on centralise trade waste management initiative
- Be an influential lobbying and advocacy group, working on behalf of the businesses to ensure that your views are fully represented. This will include elements such influencing policy with Councils, representation on local and regional economic partnerships and industry bodies as well as national place management bodies such as The BID Foundation and The High Streets Taskforce which have been instrumental in developing post Covid support and will be leading on recovery support and funds
- Work to ensure that Post COVID, Ashby is in a position with a plan and a partnership to secure stimulus funding to help businesses and the town recover.
- Provide regular intelligence and information about the business environment by publishing updates so that you are kept aware of the information and opportunities that may impact your business.
- Develop the profile and quality of independent businesses in Ashby from dedicated promotional activities for existing businesses to providing financial incentives and location support to expand or locate to Ashby.

I really support the BID initiative as it will bring the town closer together, help to make Ashby even more attractive to visitors, and preserve Ashby's economy as a thriving small desirable market town.

Simon Pellecchia, Owner, Fitness Republic

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BID LEVY WHAT WILL YOU PAY?

BIDs are funded by the eligible businesses included in the BID area – defined on page XX

If businesses vote ‘yes’ for the Ashby BID, the levy will raise approximately £214,000 per annum for five years. With additional income, this equates to over £1m to deliver improvements that will directly benefit you. If the BID vote is successful, all eligible businesses will pay a levy of 2% of the rateable value of the business per annum. Small businesses, with a rateable value of less than £2,500, will be exempt from paying.

The table below gives an example of what the BID levy could be for your business.

Rateable Value	Maximum Annual Levy	Maximum Daily Equivalent Cost
£2,500	Minimum Levy Amount £100	£0.27p
£5,000	£100	£0.27p
£10,000	£200	£0.55p
£25,000	£500	£1.37
£50,000	£1000	£2.74
£100,000	£2000	£5.48
£200,000	£4,000	£10.96

Businesses pay an annual amount, collected once a year. This income is then used year-by-year over the 5 year lifetime of the BID to carry out the projects defined in this business plan. BIDs are funded by the businesses within the BID boundary.

ADDITIONAL INCOME

BIDs across the UK on average generate 15% in additional income through their lifetime. Ashby BID will endeavour to do this through sponsorship, grant funding and other income generating activities.

VOLUNTARY/INVESTOR MEMBERSHIP

A voluntary/investor contribution can be made by businesses that are exempt such as those that have a rateable value under £2,500 and those outside the BID area. This will entitle them to all the agreed 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.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE FORECAST

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Totals
Income						
BID Levy	£214,000	£214,000	£214,000	£214,000	£214,000	£1,070,000
Additonal Incomce	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£100,000
Total Income	£234,000	£234,000	£234,000	£234,000	£234,000	£1,170,000
Expenditure						
Marketing, Promotion & Events	£120,000	£120,000	£120,000	£120,000	£120,000	£600,000
Welcoming & Safe	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£150,000
Getting Around	£40,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000
Business Support	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£70,000
Sub Total	£204,000	£184,000	£184,000	£184,000	£184,000	£940,000
Overheads						
Staff	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£125,000
Office/ IT	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£5,000
Insurance	£500	£500	£500	£500	£500	£2,500
Levy Collection Cost	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£15,000
Professional Fees	£500	£500	£500	£500	£500	£2,500
Sub Total	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£150,000
Total Costs	£234,000	£214,000	£214,000	£214,000	£214,000	£1,090,000

- **A BID Company of this size and spend will require staffing to develop/deliver projects and ensure successful implementation. This may be on a permanent basis or contracted.**

**** Office cost will be minimal or gratis**

***** We will work to minimise the levy collection cost further**

“The successful events that have been put on in Ashby over the years have helped to increase footfall and trade for our town. The BID will provide further funding and structure to ensure these events continue, making Ashby more visible and will help bring both the community and businesses alike closer together”.

Matthew Rice, Partner, Timms Solicitor

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BID GOVERNANCE AND 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 12 directors made up of representatives of levy paying businesses or equivalent financial contributors. Additional non-levy paying members may be co-opted, as required.

The board will serve voluntarily (without payment) and will be composed to reflect the make-up of the BID area in business sectoral terms. The board of directors will be directly accountable to BID levy payers for:

- Effective delivery of the projects and services as set out in the BID business plan.
- Upholding and promoting the BID's vision and objectives.

Board elections will be held where any levy paying business or equivalent financial contributor will be eligible to stand as a BID board director. Nominated representatives from public sector will be invited to the board meetings.

All levy payers will have a stake in the BID company. They will control what the BID funds are spent on and can hold the BID company accountable throughout the duration of the five years.

The BID company will not be able to make a profit and any surplus must be spent on projects and services agreed by levy payers and the board of directors.

In Year 1, the BID Task Group who have been involved with the development of the BID will form the interim board to allow for continuity as much as is possible. Elections will then take place to establish the board from year 2 onwards.

Any levy payer or voluntary contributor can stand to be elected onto the board during this process. Board positions are laid out below (up to 12 in total): REMEMBER THE ASHBY BID IS DEVELOPED, MANAGED AND CONTROLLED BY YOU, THE BUSINESSES

- 4 Retail
- 2 Office
- 2 Food & Drink
- 1 Entertainment & Leisure
- 2 Public Sector
- 1 Voluntary contributor/ Investor member

I support initiatives that help our community recover, grow and thrive. The BID will give customers a reason to visit the town and trade with our businesses. It will give outsiders a reason to travel to our historic market own. Eat, Drink, Shop Ashby
Dean O Shea, Senior Team Leader, UW

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MEASURING RESULTS

Ashby BID and its board will keep levy payers up to date on all the projects that the BID will implement over the 5 year term in a variety of ways. It will demonstrate that it is delivering against its objectives. The board will set the key performance indicators (KPIs) and criteria upon which to measure the BID's performance. Examples of the criteria the BID will use include:

- Footfall figures
- Spend Levels
- Rental levels
- Car parking usage
- Public transport usage
- Crime Statistics
- New business activity
- Annual surveys
- Business feedback
- Consumer feedback
- Media coverage
- Website/social media interactions.

Performance measurement will be carried out at regular intervals and the results will be reported back to levy payers through the following channels:

1. Annual meetings
2. Group liaison forums and briefings
3. Direct communications (for example: e-bulletins, newsletters and face-to-face meetings)

BID LEVY AND BALLOT RULES

1. The BID Regulations of 2004, approved by the Government, sets out a regulatory framework within which BIDs have to operate, including the way in which the levy is charged and collected, and how the ballot is conducted.
2. The BID levy rate will be fixed for the full term of the BID (five years) and will not be subject to inflation or alterations.
3. The BID levy will be applied to all businesses within the defined area with a rateable value of or exceeding £2,500, provided they are listed on the Non-Domestic rates list as provided by North West Leicestershire District Council for the 'Chargeable Date', set annually.
4. There will be a minimum levy payment of £100 and a maximum levy payment of £23,000 per hereditament
5. The following will be exempt from paying the levy:
 - Organisations with a rateable value below £2,500.
 - Non-retail charities with no trading income, arm or facilities and are predominantly volunteer based. Non-profit making organisations with an entirely subscription and volunteer-based set up.
 - Businesses that fall in the following sectors – industrial, manufacturing, storage, and workshop.
6. New businesses will be charged from the point of occupation based upon the rateable value at the time they enter the rating list.
7. If a business ratepayer occupies the premises for less than one year, the levy paid will be on a daily basis.
8. BID Levy payment will revert to the property owner or the registered business ratepayer of vacant properties. Those undergoing refurbishment or being demolished will be liable to pay the BID levy.
9. The BID levy will not be affected by the small business rate relief scheme, exemptions, reliefs or discount periods in the non-domestic rate regulations prevailing at the time.
10. VAT will not be charged on the BID levy.
11. 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.
12. The billing body is authorised to collect the BID levy on behalf of the BID company.
13. Collection and enforcement regulations will be in line with those applied to nondomestic business rates, with the BID company board of directors responsible for any debt write-off.

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14. The BID funding will be kept in a separate BID revenue account by North West Leicestershire District Council and transferred to the BID company.

15. BID projects, costs and timescales may be altered by the BID board of directors, provided they remain in line with the overall BID objectives.

16. The BID board of directors will meet at least six times a year. Every levy paying business and equivalent financial contributor will be eligible to be a member of the BID company. Company members can vote at annual meetings.

17. The BID company will produce a set of annual accounts made available to all company members.

18. The BID will last for five years. At the end of the five years, a ballot must be held if businesses wish the BID to continue.

THE POSTAL BALLOT

All eligible businesses have the opportunity to vote.

The ballot will be conducted through an independent, confidential postal vote by Civica Election Services, on behalf of North West Leicestershire District Council, which is the responsible body as determined by the BID Regulations of 2004.

Each eligible business 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 North West Leicestershire District Council

A proxy vote is available, and details will be sent out by Civica Election Services. Ballot papers will be sent out to the appropriate person/ organisation from 01 July 2021 to be returned no later than 5pm on 29 July 2021.

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

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

The results of the ballot will be declared on the 30 July 2021.

Under the BID Regulations of 2004, if the BID is approved at ballot by businesses, all those eligible, regardless of how or if they voted, will be legally obliged to pay the annual levy amount.

WHY VOTE YES FOR A BID IN ASHBY?

The Ashby BID presents an opportunity for businesses to move the town forward, to stop talking about what could be achieved and to start delivering a plan which is backed with funding. The plan is focused on the projects which you, the businesses, have asked to be prioritised and which will deliver a return on your investment.

Post COVID-19, the town must respond to the economic impact by marketing Ashby and delivering a great experience for visitors. Implementing the Business Plan will assist this and with other investment make Ashby a great place to visit and do business.

Together we can embrace the opportunity for greater input, influence, control and self-determination, by providing a new energy and sustainable funding stream to make this happen.

By coming together as a business community, we can achieve so much more. A BID will bridge the gap between town centre businesses and those that are in the industrial estates. The BID will also help to fight any future unprecedented situations, like the pandemic, together as a collective group.
Sharon Keevins, MD, Kangaroo UK

YOUR BID TEAM

The Ashby BID has been guided to this point by a Task Group, of local business people, champions and Stakeholders who are passionate about the future success of the town:

Ashby BID Task Group

Insert Names & Business

Key Stakeholders

Ashby Town Council
North West Leicestershire District Council
Leicestershire County Council
Police

To find out more about the Ashby BID contact:

Mo Aswat, Project Director at mo@themosaicpartnership.co.uk

You can also visit the Ashby BID website XXXX



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