

The story so far

experience**g**uildford™



100

places to eat
& drink

240

retailers

3

shopping
centres

3

theatres &
a cinema





Experience Guildford have supported JD Sports with shop lifting and other incidents that happened in-store.

The BCRP has been a great benefit to JD Sports for sharing information and helping support the prevention of crime. This would effect our stock loss substantially if we did not have this.

Experience Guildford have also supported our business by posting in-store vacancies and by promoting our on-going events and offers.

Experience Guildford is a great asset and support for Guildford town centre.



Sarah Mitchell – Manager JD Sports



Since we opened our doors in Guildford High Street in June 2021, Experience Guildford have been a fantastic support to us. Through their training courses we now have three qualified first aiders, two mental health first aiders and staff booked in on Deaf Awareness courses in the future. The Rangers are a friendly, reassuring and helpful presence on the High Street and we have encountered footfall in our store based off social media posts shared on E.G Instagram and Facebook pages.



Amy Napper – Manager Montezuma's Chocolates



A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

I am very proud of the achievements of the Experience Guildford BID both prior to and during the pandemic. The BID has gone from strength to strength in the last decade and I firmly believe it is a tremendous asset to our businesses, giving us a firm advantage in this changing environment.

Quite rightly, the process requires that we review and reflect on what we have done so far, to better understand what we do well and what we can do better. Asking for your views enables us to understand your priorities for the next BID term, so we can develop a plan that takes your needs into account during these times of rapid change and uncertainty.

Please contribute to this important process by looking at the work we have done and telling us what you think works best for your business along with any new ideas and initiatives that you think should be included in the BID plan for the next 5 years.

I would like to thank my fellow Directors, particularly my predecessor as Chair, Kevin Lorimer and the BID team for all their hard work, and finish by asking all businesses to support the process once again and vote YES.

Claire Suggitt
Chair, Experience Guildford BID



Delivering Extra

The creation of Experience Guildford Business Improvement District (BID) in 2013 marked a fundamental change in how our town centre was managed. As BID members you were instrumental in that change, and instrumental in ensuring that collectively we made our town be the best that it could be. Together we have made a difference, and your strong support of our renewed BID ballot in 2017 further cemented this.



**THE BID
LEVY RAISES
£565,000
PER YEAR**

**BACKED BY
£50,000
ADDITIONAL
FUNDS**

We have, since then, delivered numerous projects to continue this positive legacy for our town, whilst also, in the face of the unprecedented challenges that the last couple of years have brought, adapted and responded to an ever-changing world. This document sets out that work and asks you to let us know what you would like to see happen in the future. As we move towards a new term and a new ballot, the success of your town is again in your hands, as we collectively identify and act upon those initiatives needed to maintain Guildford's prosperity and position.

£2.5 million

**of levy payments invested in making your
town centre a better environment**

Our 2018-2023 Business Plan set out the key themes highlighted by you, under which all our work has been carried out.

1
PROMOTING
awareness of
the town

2
ENHANCING
the safety &
cleanliness of
the town

3
IMPROVING
town parking
& access

4
PROVIDING
business support
for BID members

Working in collaboration with a range of town centre partners and stakeholders, the BID's Board of Directors (made up of local business representatives who work on a voluntary basis) have diligently delivered on this business plan, with projects, initiatives and services introduced to meet each of these already. They have also been proactive in securing new avenues of funding for our town, adding substantial additional value to the investment also received by BID members. They have been at the forefront of responding to the challenges posed by COVID-19, and have ensured that we, as a town, were ready for business as soon as restrictions were lifted.



Next steps

BIDs are required to go to ballot every five years in order to continue and Experience Guildford's current term will come to an end on 31 January 2023, at which time all our activities will cease if we do not renew. Therefore, we now need to review the work we have achieved and collectively agree a business plan for the next 5 years. The new plan will then be subject to a vote in October 2022.

The pandemic has accelerated the changes that were already happening on our high streets. Alongside the continued rise of online shopping, our choices, habits and lifestyle have dramatically changed as well. This requires our high street to continue to adapt and evolve, to be relevant to today's consumer and for the future. The BID will be a key driver in ensuring this happens.

As we emerge from these immediate challenges and into recovery, Guildford Town Centre must be fit for purpose and future proofed to enable it to compete and succeed. Above all, it must deliver what our businesses and our consumers want, when they want it, in an inspiring and exciting way. By working together through a renewed BID, we can do this. To make this happen, please show your support and vote YES once the ballot commences later this year.



5
year
business
plan

now
have your
say

YES
to the
BID

Feedback

Feedback by 30 April with your views.

What is a Business Improvement District (BID)?

A Business Improvement District or BID is an arrangement whereby businesses collaborate to decide what services and improvements (in addition to those already provided by the public agencies) they wish to make in their location, how they are going to manage and deliver those improvements and what they are prepared to pay to make them happen. This information forms a business plan that will be voted upon by all prospective levy payers. If the majority vote YES by both number and rateable value, a BID exists for a maximum of 5 years and must spend the funding raised within the BID area and in accordance with the agreed business plan.

An Investment in Your Business

This document aims to both review the work of Experience Guildford BID and also offer the opportunity to all in the BID area to secure another term. A chance to invest £3m plus over the next 5 years to continue to build on our success to date.

The Funding Your Money, Your Say

As central and local government funds steadily decrease, a great many town centres are deciding to adopt or continue this private sector management model called BIDs, to better fulfil the wishes and wants of their business community. Experience Guildford BID is an example of this and is funded by businesses in the area that pay a set levy based upon their rateable value. This investment is ring-fenced and can only be spent within the BID area on the ideas and themes agreed and voted upon 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.

The BID Company

Experience Guildford BID is managed by a private company limited by guarantee and is non profit. The Board of 17 Directors are drawn from businesses across the BID area and relevant public agencies, with each individual working voluntarily. Any BID levy payer is eligible to become a member of the company and can then be put forward to serve as a Director of the BID.



VOTE
YES

The Vote

If you are eligible to pay the levy, you are eligible to vote, so you decide if the BID continues. Of those that vote, it requires a majority of businesses vote in favour of the BID by number and by total rateable value. If the vote is successful, the levy will be mandatory on all businesses in the BID area apart from those that may be exempt.

Vote October 2022.



As Chair of Guildford Pubwatch, representing a large number of Hospitality venues in Guildford, I work in close partnership with Experience Guildford and sit on the Board as Vice-Chair.

Experience Guildford has provided service and support to Hospitality from the beginning :-

- Taxi Marshalls
- Business Crime Reducation Partnership
- Best Bar None Awards and Purple Flag
- Training (1st Aid, Mental Health, DOT)

During the past 2 years of Covid19, which has been particularly difficult for hospitality, they have gone the extra mile, providing :-

- Ongoing Ranger security support for closed venues
- Re-opening support, signage and communication
- The CEO provided overwhelming support for grant applications and information
- Administering "Welcome Back" programs

The engagement and support during the pandemic and moving forward out of it has been highly valued by all.



Jane Lyons – Guildford Pubwatch



Celebrating Our Achievements

When we started out on our second 5 year term, we could not have anticipated that half way in, we would be directing so much of our resource and attention to ensuring that the businesses we represent would survive the pandemic.

Despite this, we are proud to have still achieved so much.

The work that we deliver on your behalf is over and above the statutory services that are provided by the local authority. Our focus is to deliver extra value to you, above and beyond what you already receive.

As the BID has matured, we have continued to build on our early successes, focusing on the priorities that you identified as most important. We have invested over £2.5m of levy payments into making your town centre a better environment for you to conduct business and for your customers to enjoy. This success story will continue with new and revised projects for 2023 to 2028 if businesses vote 'YES'.

Here is a selection of projects and services we have delivered:

- 1. Marketing, Promotion and Events**
- 2. Safe, Clean and Welcoming**
- 3. Access and Car Parking**
- 4. Business Support**



HAVE YOUR SAY

This success story will continue with new
and revised projects for 2023 – 2028
if businesses vote 'YES'.

1. Marketing, Promotion and Events

- A programme of events to drive footfall to our town, including Street Festivals, Markets, Seasonal Events and Trails. We also launched a new event in 2019 - **Healthy Guildford Day**.
- Extending **Guildford in Bloom** across the town, by providing an additional 40 planters and baskets in addition to those supplied by the Council.
- **Guildford Walkfest** which drew over 600 attendees.
- **The Events Guide** which was published bi-monthly until the pandemic.

2019
Healthy
Guildford
Day



EVENTS
GUIDE PUBLISHED
BI-MONTHLY

1,250
urban beach
visitors

- Our popular **Guildford-on-Sea** event grew between 2018 and 2019 which attracted over **1,250** attendees each year and we were delighted to be able to add new **'Sundown Sessions'** to support the evening economy. These included a charity volleyball tournament for local businesses.
- Annual sponsored events including; **Guildford Fringe Festival, Guildford Shakespeare Company Productions and Guildford Book Festival**, which attracts over 12,000 visitors to our town each year.

12,000
visitors through
annual sponsored
events in the
Town

- Expansion of the **Christmas lights** offer and attracting over 8,000 visitors to the 2018 and 2019 switch-on events.
- In 2021 we also supported **Tungate Quarter Twinkle**, provided walkabout characters, music, entertainment and random act of kindness elves in the festive shopping period.
- Our annual **Little Book of Offers** has averaged 130+ incentives each year. 40,000 books were printed and nearly **7,000** vouchers were redeemed, representing an annual increase of 28%.
- In 2020 we switched to the **Mi Rewards** scheme to move away from discounting and to offer rewards instead.
- Our social media channels gained a combined reach of over **220,000** by December 2021 and have been instrumental in promoting your business.
- Our official **Guildford App** has now been downloaded over 6,000 times.
- We have continued to support our small businesses through the **'Proudly Independent'** campaign and promotions.
- Prior to the pandemic we delivered our successful annual **Customer Service Awards**, which are destined to return in 2022.
- The **Night Time Economy** has been supported through the **Best Bar None Awards** and the **Purple Flag Scheme**.
- Additionally, we have supported ad hoc events including the **Innovate Guildford** and **Innovation Awards**.

7,000
vouchers redeemed
through Little
Book of Offers
each year



HAVE YOUR SAY
This success story will continue with new
and revised projects for 2023 – 2028
if businesses vote 'YES'.

Safe, Clean and Welcoming

5
Town
Rangers

- In a typical year our 5, hard-working **Town Rangers** make approximately 450 business visits each. They actively support BID businesses and the public. They are your designated eyes and ears on the street, and a friendly and approachable presence in the town who are always happy to help.

25
first aid
incidents
dealt with in
a year

- In the last 12 months our Town Rangers have attended **25 first aid incidents**, reported **118 rubbish issues**, **80 environmental hazards**, **30 incidents of graffiti removal**, **10 pavement defects** to the Council, and **3 Thames Water issues**.

- Our **Town Rangers** continue to work in partnership with local agencies, the **homeless outreach team**, **neighbourhood police** and **fire service teams**.



118
rubbish
issues dealt
with in a year

- We liaise with **Guildford Borough Council** to ensure that the streets and street furniture are cleaned quickly and to the expected standard.
- **Guildford Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP)** has gone from strength-to-strength, providing a secure platform through the DISC system to share information on people shoplifting and about criminal and antisocial behaviour. The BCRP now has 236 members logging in regularly to help reduce business crime.



PARTNERS
with local
agencies

236
Guildford Business
Crime Reduction
Partnership (BCRP)
members

- **The Real Change Guildford** initiative has reduced begging and homelessness on our streets, whilst helping many take new steps to a brighter future.
- We have continued to work with partners and businesses to retain the town's **Purple Flag** status.
- To support the town's evening economy, we have provided **Taxi Marshalls** on Friday and Saturday nights along with additional security for the late bus on Wednesday and Friday evenings to ensure the safety of our students.



HAVE YOUR SAY

This success story will continue with new and revised projects for 2023 – 2028 if businesses vote 'YES'.

Access and Car Parking

- We continue to lobby for **car parking** and **access improvements**.
- **Signage** has been used to promote Secret Guildford and the businesses that operate off the High Street and North Street. Improved signage for side streets and 'COVID' signage provided for people returning to the town centre after lockdown.
- We have delayed the parking charge increase for the town centre and are lobbying to achieve a **staff travel scheme**.
- **Free parking after 4pm at Christmas** (up to 2019).



TO THE CASTLE

Whisky Shop
Whisky Specialist

ststuff
anning Shop & Clinic

Margaret Dabbs London
oot Clinic & Nail Spa

Pews Bar & Courtyard
ood, Drink, Sport & Entertainment

Red Planet Pizza
izza Takeaway

d of Fitness
roup Personal Training

The Greek
reek Fast Food

ourtyard

experienceguildford
Business Improvement D

Partisan Cheesemonger
Artisan Food

Tom Fox Tailors
Bespoke Tailoring

The Keep
Public House

The Mad Hatter
Designer & Bespoke Hats

Lottie Loves
Bespoke Beauty Lounge

Salvatore's
Barbers

Bisou Bisou
Lingerie, Swimwear & Nightwear

Côte Brasserie
Authentic French Cuisine

Castle Street Clinic
Natural Health Clinic

Giggling Squid
Thai Restaurant & Tapas

Theion
Modern Greek Cuisine

Pizza GoGo
Pizza Takeaway

La Casita
Mediterranean
Restaurant & Tapas

Lower Lodge Candles
Candles & Home Accessories

Fired Earth
Tiles, Paint & Bathrooms

FREE
PARKING AFTER
4PM AT
CHRISTMAS

STAFF
travel scheme
lobbying



Business Support

- Provided extensive **PR and Marketing** support to our businesses including, but not limited to, the introduction of a **website directory**, an App directory and promotion of offers. Our **'How to'** guides have also supported you to write news stories to help promote your businesses.
- **COVID support** work including information on PPE's, Social Distancing, Grants and **Financial Support** and **Re-opening Campaigns**.
- **Welcome Packs** produced by the BID have been distributed by Estate Agents to give to their clients and by the Town Rangers to new Managers and employees in the town.
- We have continued to communicate with you via a number of methods throughout this term including **weekly e-shots, monthly newsletter** and **events listings**.
- Experience Guildford team pro-actively promote the opportunity to place job vacancies on our website which attracts over **11,000 visitors**.
- We lobby effectively at a local and national level to ensure that your **business voice** is heard. Additionally, we have provided businesses and external partners with **industry leading statistics** and analysis of weekly and monthly footfall on the Highstreet and other local shopping areas.
- The Experience Guildford website **www.experienceguildford.com** was redeveloped in 2020.
- We have offered a broad programme of free training to all BID members, covering **First Aid, Defibrillator** and **Mental Health**, as well as **DOT Deaf Awareness, Dementia Awareness** and Social Media.
- Over the last 5 years we have trained over **2,000** members of staff.
- We are also working with and listening to local businesses to help them grow, by providing training courses that support them around issues like managing change and customer service skills.



What Happens if it is a 'NO' Vote

We very much hope that you will vote YES. If there is a NO vote, the Experience Guildford BID will cease operating on 31 January 2023 and all of the associated projects and services will end.

These include:

- We will lose our valuable **Town Rangers** from the town centre.
- The loss of **£3 million** of BID levy investment to support businesses across the town centre.
- The website www.experienceguildford.com will close.
- Content creation for our successful **Experience Guildford** social media platforms, namely Facebook, Instagram and Twitter will stop.
- Popular footfall-driving events such as **Easter Egg Hunt** and **White Rabbit Trail** will end, as will our **bi-monthly events guide**.
- Guildford's Christmas campaign, including the Christmas lights, the switch-on event **Little Book of Offers** and the **Christmas markets** will simply stop.
- Our sponsorship of events like **Guildford Fringe**, **Guildford Shakespeare Company Productions**, **Guildford in Bloom** and **Walkfest** will cease.
- Our numerous campaigns to support independent retailers will end.
- Promotions, such as **Retail Thursdays** and the **Privilege Card Scheme** will not be available.
- We will be unable to support the **Night Time Economy** via awards and partnership working, including the hugely important **Purple Flag** accreditation and the **Best Bar None** awards.
- The enhanced level of service in regard to **street cleansing**, which is a result of the rangers being your ears and eyes on the street, will end. The BID will not be there to liaise with the Council to ensure that the streets are clean and the environment graffiti free.
- We will no longer be able to deliver **The Business Crime Reduction Partnership** or provide **Taxi Marshalls**.
- Lobbying for **parking** and **access improvements** will cease. Businesses will no longer have an organisation to represent them in these important discussions.
- The **Business Support** that we provide as a matter of course and which has been critical during the pandemic will cease. This includes all the communications that we have with you, the market intelligence we share, plus the training that we offer.
- **Neighbouring towns** with BIDs and associated investment will gain ground on Guildford.

REMEMBER!

**THERE IS NO PLAN B
AND NO OTHER
ORGANISATION WILL
REPLACE THESE
PROJECTS AND
SERVICES**



“ Thank you very much for all your help over the years. I admire the way you guys always support us. Your ability to turn any problem to a solution is admirable and inspiring. Experience Guildford is an amazing team.

Mr Shah – Director Connect2Mobile

We would like to thank Amanda and Experience Guildford Team, for all their support and guidance with our successful application for the Covid business development grant.

Hans Vind – Owner Dance2

Kallies Deli opened during lockdown, and Experience Guildford really supported us and promoted us by putting up posts on social media.”

Kate & Kellie – Owners Kallies Deli

Tell Us What You Want for the Next 5 Years

We have laid out what we have achieved during our second term and what will be lost if a third term is not achieved. We now want to understand from you what your priorities are for the next five years. This will inform the Business Plan on which you will be asked to vote in Autumn 2022.

There will be a number of ways you can share your ideas in the coming months, but initially we would appreciate you completing our online survey by **30 April 2022**.

You can do this by visiting our website **www.experienceguildford.com**

QUESTIONS?

Please contact
Amanda Masters, Chief Executive
of Experience Guildford BID at
amanda@experienceguildford.com
or call
07885 995 711





Experience Guildford have assisted us when we needed their help the most:

Biddles were all set to close in May 2020. Our parent investor went bust and our team were being made redundant. We were unsure of where to start with our plan to try to rescue the shop, so we contacted Experience Guildford to see if they could offer any assistance.

Amanda and her team suggested Crowdfunding and within days lined up calls with the local Crowdfunder representative and our successful Crowdfunder was launched soon after. Experience Guildford helped promote the appeal, with their followers 'liking, retweeting and following'. Without Experience Guildford's assistance we would not have been able to spread the word. In July 2020 we re-opened and by September 2020 we had re-employed all the former staff, thanks in part to the Crowdfunding campaign.

Experience Guildford have always been keen to champion independents, giving us the opportunity to have our marketing material given out at local events. We take part in: Mi Rewards, Indie Days, Christmas Little Book Of Offers, Privilege Cards, Christmas Window Events

If we want to get involved with Experience Guildford's events the invitation is always there, with no pressure from them should we choose not to.

Biddles of Guildford have no reason other than to support Amanda, her team and the board.



David Goddard – Manager Biddles of Guildford



The support the Town Rangers provide during the pandemic and beyond in all forms was truly above and beyond what you would expect, they have a true passion to protect the town and the stores therein from undesirable behaviour and the actions/schemes/communication they have set up with us and the solid connect they have developed with Surrey Police really makes it feel like we are all making a real difference and impact to said undesirable individuals that put all people and stores at risk.



Carl Davies – Manager Poundland



