

# YOUR BID QUESTIONS ANSWERED



## WHAT IS A BID?

**A Business Improvement District (BID) is a defined geographical area within which the businesses vote to invest collectively in local improvements to enhance their trading environment.**

The mechanism for developing and operating a BID are governed by the BID Regulations 2004 which are part of the Local Government Act 2003.

The BID Business Plan identifies key objectives to be addressed, with the BID team and businesses delivering projects against action plans to fulfil these objectives. BIDs are business led with the Board and Committees consisting of volunteers from BID Businesses.

A key aspect of a BID is to ensure that anything delivered by the BID to the area is additional to any services provided by public bodies. As part of the development of the BID Proposal and Business Plan, baseline statements are drawn up with the Council and the Police, identifying the services they agree to provide during the life of the BID. Establishing close working relationships with the council, police authority and other recognised agencies also means that the needs of the local business community can be better understood and acted upon.

There are over 340 established BIDs in the UK operating on a five-year term. Towards the end of each term, a BID can be renewed by proposing a new Business Plan which businesses vote on to confirm whether they would like the BID to continue.

## HOW IS THE WGC BID FUNDED?

The delivery of the BID business plan is funded by businesses and organisations in business rated properties in the BID area and aims to be both fair and transparent. As a result of the majority of businesses voting in favour of the Business Plan in November 2021, all businesses and organisations in business rated properties in the area with a rateable value of £5,000 and above have been subject to the BID levy. This method of funding overcomes any problem of a few businesses paying for improvements that benefit the many.

Over the last nine years Welwyn Garden City BID has generated funding through the levy collection and additional funding and in-kind support which has been used to undertake the projects and activities identified by you, the businesses, as part of the BID Business Plan.

## WHO MANAGES THE BID?

Welwyn Garden City BID Ltd (the Company for Welwyn Garden City BID), is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. It has its own board made up of a cross-section of businesses and organisations from the BID area who volunteer their time free of charge. The Board is responsible for ensuring that BID projects and activities are

undertaken in accordance with the BID Business Plan and that activities contribute towards the achievement of the overall vision.

Welwyn Garden City BID have a dedicated BID Project Team that applies a combination of skills in the delivery of the projects identified by the businesses each year in accordance with the BID Proposal and Business Plan.

## WHAT ARE THE BID'S VISION AND OBJECTIVES?

In short, this is for you, the Welwyn Garden City businesses, to decide. The vision for 2022–27 was “establish Welwyn Garden City as a town centre which is innovative, vibrant and sustainable, which builds on the unique Garden City principles and characteristics to make it a wonderful place to visit, work, live and invest”.

As part of the renewal process, we now need to establish the vision and objectives for the next five years. This will be done in the form of interviews, business workshops, and surveys. The findings from these will be used to form the basis of the BID Business Plan for the next five years and on which businesses will be voting in October 2026. This is your opportunity to have a say in helping to identify the key issues and opportunities which businesses want to tackle or take advantage of over the course of 2027–2032.



**WONDERFUL**  
**WELWYN GARDEN CITY**  
**RENEWAL 2027-2032**

## HOW CAN I BE SURE MY LEVY IS SPENT APPROPRIATELY?

Subject to a successful renewal ballot, the BID will deliver the changes, improvements and projects over the next five years (2027-2032) which form the Business Plan. The responsibility for ensuring that the BID adheres to the Business Plan as well as remaining financially accountable is that of Welwyn Garden City BID Board.

It is also important to remember that the BID does not exist to replace the services provided by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and other public bodies. Money generated through the BID is used for the improvements voted for by the businesses in the BID area and to deliver services which would not have happened without the BID.

## HOW WILL THIS BENEFIT MY BUSINESS?

The benefits of a BID are numerous but include the following:

- Delivery of practical projects, events and activities across a range of objectives identified and driven by Welwyn Garden City businesses
- Being part of a mechanism to bring businesses together and act as a collective voice
- Having involvement and a focus on encouraging growth, development and investment in the area
- Benefitting from increasingly effective working relationships between the BID, Welwyn Garden City businesses and partners, including Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

- Leveraging-in of funding and in-kind support in addition to the BID levy and which contributes to projects and activities in the BID area
- A focus on the delivery of measurable improvements to benefit all businesses.

## HOW DOES A BID RENEWAL BALLOT WORK?

Under the BID regulations the renewal ballot is administered by the Electoral and Democratic Services within the Chief Executive's Department at Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. In order for the proposals set out in the BID Business Plan to go ahead, more than 50% of business ratepayers who vote have to vote 'YES'. In addition, those in favour also have to represent more than 50% of the combined rateable values of those who vote.

If these two criteria are met, the BID is activated for the next five years and all businesses and organisations in business rated properties in the area will be required to pay the BID levy in accordance with the levy criteria.

## WHO DECIDES AND WHEN?

The new BID Business Plan will be voted on in October 2026 by levy-paying businesses and organisations in business rated properties in the area in Welwyn Garden City.

The renewal ballot is your opportunity to create and vote 'YES' for a new business plan consisting of projects and activities which will maintain and continue to develop Welwyn Garden City BID as a great

destination and a great place to do business. If you would like Welwyn Garden City BID to continue, it is vitally important that you vote 'YES' so that your view is registered in the ballot.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DO NOT VOTE YES?

If you do not vote yes and the thresholds are not met, then the Welwyn Garden City BID will cease operations as of 31st March 2027. All its associated projects and activities such as the full calendar of BID events and festivals, Christmas lights and trails, free recycling, social media promotion, etc and the BID's collective voice for the Welwyn Garden City businesses will stop. However, if the BID vote is successful, you will be part of that BID for the next five years regardless of whether you voted or not.

## HOW CAN I CONTACT THE BID TEAM FOR HELP OR MORE INFORMATION?

The BID team is available via phone or email for support, enquiries and feedback. Please contact us at the following:

📍 **Welwyn Garden City BID**  
**Office 7, Floor 3,**  
**The Gate House**  
**Welwyn Garden City**  
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