



# *HITCHIN BID BUSINESS PLAN*

*2019-2024*

[www.hitchinherts.com](http://www.hitchinherts.com)  
Twitter: @ourhitchin & @ourtomhardy  
Facebook: /ourhitchin  
Instagram: @ourhitchin



Hitchin**BID**





*HITCHIN  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
BUSINESS PLAN*

*2019-2024*

## Your chance to benefit from a £1.6 million investment in key projects for Hitchin Town Centre.

For the last ten years Hitchin has enjoyed the benefits of a Business Improvement District (BID) through which almost two and a half million pounds of additional investment has been spent in our town. This has paid for substantial improvements that have made a tangible positive difference to the cleanliness, vibrancy and safety of the town.

However, nothing is forever, and the BID is a fixed-term arrangement, working its way through its fifth and final year of its second term right now. If we do nothing, the BID will stop on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and everything, and I mean everything, will grind to a halt and then disappear. No Rangers, no cardboard and waste recycling collections, a reduced security presence, no night rangers, no Independents' Day or similar events, no Christmas lights, no floral displays, the list is substantial.

Of course it doesn't have to be like this. You can, if you want to, renew the BID's term for a further five years, continue the great activities we have all come so used to, and do more on top too!

We already know two-thirds of you want to see the Hitchin BID renewed for a further five years. The following pages detail why and how. Hopefully the few businesses that are undecided or unsure will be reassured by the facts and figures in this document to be sufficiently convinced to add their company names to the substantial list of BID supporters we have already.

In November this year the Council will be issuing ballot papers seeking your formal approval for the renewal of the Hitchin BID through a 28 day postal vote. I know the BID's past record and potential future plans make an immediate "Yes" the only sensible option and I'm sure you agree with me.

I hope we can rely on your support.



Tom Hardy,  
Manager of the Hitchin BID Company





## WHAT IS A BID?

Business Improvement Districts are business-led partnerships which are created through a ballot process to deliver additional services to local businesses. They are a powerful tool for directly involving local businesses in local activities and allow the business community to work together to improve the local trading environment.



*THIS IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR HITCHIN TOWN CENTRE  
BE SURE TO VOTE YES AND RENEW IT*

We already know two-thirds of you want to see the Hitchin BID renewed for a further five years. The following pages detail why and how. Hopefully the few businesses that are undecided or unsure will be reassured by the facts and figures in this document to be sufficiently convinced to add their company names to the substantial list of BID supporters we have already.

*£1.6 million*

Businesses will be responsible for deciding how £1,600,000 raised through a levy and other funding mechanisms, would be invested over five years to improve the town.

*600 businesses*

Together more than 600 businesses in the BID area will decide whether the BID is renewed by voting in a ballot.

# *WHY SHOULD HITCHIN BID CONTINUE?*

The Hitchin BID has delivered services which are seen as priorities by local businesses, customers and staff that use Hitchin town centre.

Below is a brief list of the key elements that businesses have enjoyed the benefits of since the first Hitchin BID term began in 2009.



Ranger team



Cardboard & paper recycling service



Enhanced CCTV provision



Shop & pub watch radio links



Deep cleaning & gum removal



Seasonal floral baskets and displays



Town-wide Christmas lights display



Regular, speciality & major events



Town-wide marketing campaigns



Seasonal bunting



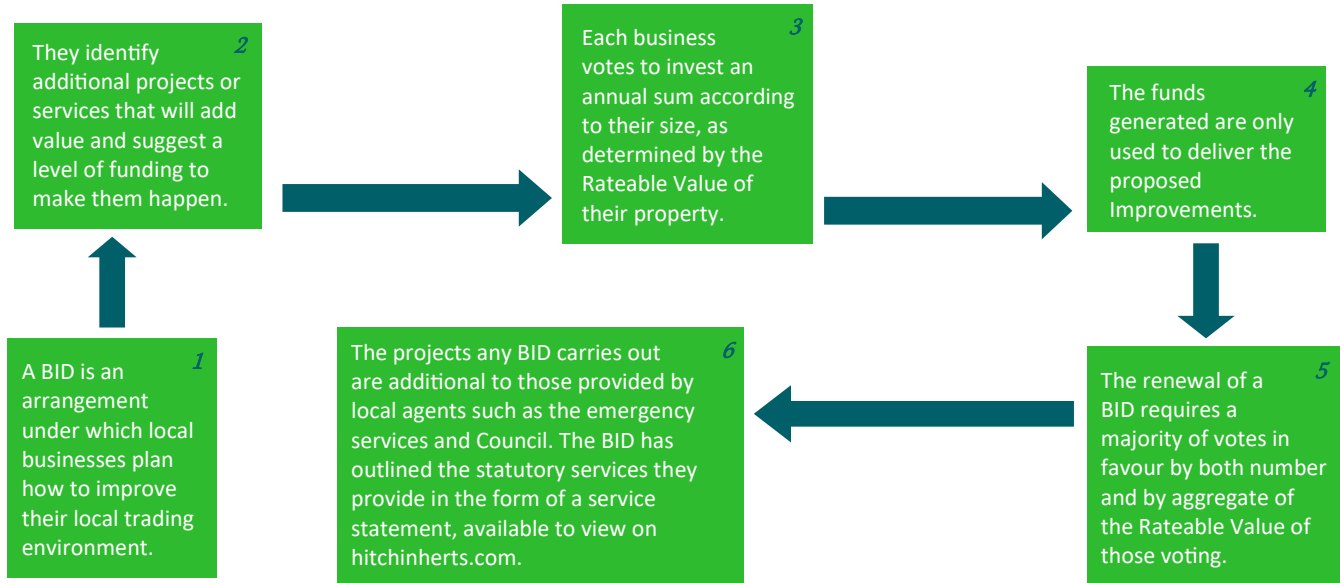
Regular graffiti removal



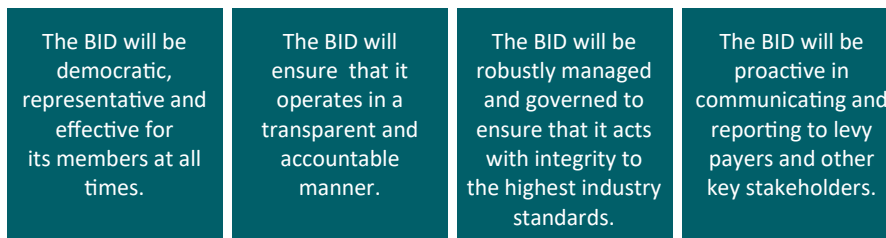
Town centre website & social media

## HOW THE BID COMPANY WORKS

Over 300 BIDs have been voted in by businesses across the UK and this number continues to grow, with all BIDs delivering quality projects and services to the areas they support.



## HOW WOULD THE BID CONTINUE?



The BID has worked with businesses within the area over the past ten years to help manage the town centre in a more creative and efficient way, applying their internal skills and resources to the external environment around them. Those extra services deemed necessary over the past ten years through scrutinising previous provision then setting new, higher standards for them, need to be sustained.

## HOW MUCH WILL IT COST YOUR BUSINESS?

BIDs are designed to be fair. Larger businesses invest more than smaller ones and all business sectors benefit from the improvements rather than just retailers.

### *COST TO YOUR BUSINESS*

*SMALL BUSINESS*  
Rateable Value of £12,000

2 cups of coffee



Weekly Cost: £4.27

*MEDIUM BUSINESS*  
Rateable Value of £60,000

10 cups of coffee



Weekly Cost: £21.35

*LARGE BUSINESS*  
Rateable Value of £120,000

20 cups of coffee



Weekly Cost: £42.69

*% of RV*



*1.85%*

*Levy*

All businesses within the defined BID area would pay a contribution to the costs of the BID at the rate of 1.85% of their stated Rateable Value as declared on North Hertfordshire District Council's non-domestic ratings list as of the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 and this figure would be used to calculate the levy value for the first year of the BID's renewed term of five years.

Each business is to pay  
an additional **Percentage**  
of the **Rateable Value**  
The cost of the levy.

All businesses should consider the proposed cost of the levy as an investment - an investment of a relatively small sum which is pooled with the contributions of all the others in the BID to provide a considerable sum that is spent entirely in the town centre.



## *SOME OF THE BENEFITS FOR YOUR BUSINESS*

The Hitchin BID is specifically created to bring a range of benefits to all businesses, regardless of their location within the Town Centre or the sector they trade in.



### **INDEPENDENT RETAILERS**

Distinctive, promotional campaigns to highlight the range and quality of speciality independent businesses.

The opportunity to raise business profile via a number of new events.

Discounted costs on commercial waste and food waste removal through a negotiated procurement deal with a local waste provider.

Free cardboard and shredded paper recycling services.

Discounted advertising in various publications and programmes as well as promotional space in designated areas in the town centre.



### **NATIONAL RETAILERS**

Being part of a local network of major retailers who would share and gain in-depth insight into trading factors and conditions.

Directly and indirectly benefiting from footfall increases caused by events and promotional activities in the town.

The availability to collaborate operationally over seasonal trading campaigns including the Christmas festive period.

Promotion and marketing of Hitchin town centre to a wider geographical area, targeting regional audiences, building footfall and subsequently improving the profitability of businesses.



### **PROFESSIONAL AND OFFICE SECTOR**

Additional activities aimed specifically at the professional and office businesses within the town centre, free or discounted training courses, free cardboard recycling, discounted commercial waste collections and improved connections with business networking organisations.

The ability to promote products and services to over 600 town centre businesses through monthly newsletters, events publications and networking opportunities.

A cleaner, safer and more vibrant town centre for clients and employees.



### **LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY**

Promotional campaigns through the town tourism strategy to highlight the range and quality hotels, food and drink businesses - both collectively and individually.

The continued expansion of events and projects to directly involve and promote the range of leisure and cultural opportunities in the town centre.

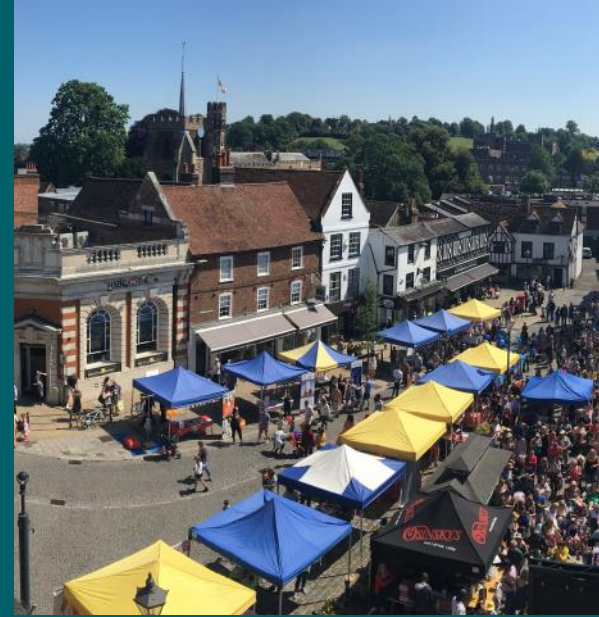
Work on projects to sustain and improve the town's night-time economy experience and energise the crucial linking period between 5pm and 7pm through schemes such as 'Alive After 5'.

# OUR VISION

We want everybody to share an ambitious vision for Hitchin Town Centre.

This new business plan has been designed to tackle changes in consumer behaviour and create an immersive experience for new and existing visitors to the town.

Whether people live or work in Hitchin or are simply visiting, our goal is that they are motivated to stay for longer, spend more money and return more frequently.





VOTE  
**YES!**  
Hitchin**BID**





## HOW WE GOT TO THIS POINT

Preparation and plans for the Hitchin BID renewal have been in the making for over a year and a significant number of town centre businesses have been involved every step of the way.



### Consultation



A comprehensive survey distributed to over 600 businesses, which elicited 116 responses.



A series of business workshops.



The creation of a renewal group which has met frequently to discuss the ballot process.



Extensive consultation with North Herts Council and other public bodies.

### Planning



The production and distribution of regular renewal newsletters.



Formal notification to Council and the Secretary of State.



Consultation on several elements of the business plan.



A comprehensive programme of one to one business visits.





## Awareness



Extensive activity on the BID social media.



Local press and local radio coverage.



Regular updates on the Hitchin BID website.



Business drop-in events.



The creation of a network of businesses who are actively championing the renewal process.



Frequent communications to businesses about the BID and the renewal.



Contact with Head Offices and Regional Managers of national businesses.



An open business plan launch event.

## *THE BID RENEWAL STEERING GROUP*

A group of like-minded business owners and managers were invited to join a steering group for the renewal of the BID. They were chosen from various business sectors across the town centre.

Name	Organisation	Sector
Tracie Morgan	Talents Hairdressers	Service
Emma Tarbox	Tate Recruitment	Professional/Office
Mark Shields	Life Practice UK	Professional/Office
Andrew Pearce	Bradshaw Johnson	Professional/Office
Ian Dawes	Bowen Solicitors	Professional/Office
Simon Kirbyshire	Waitrose	National Retail
Michael Norgan	Osinsky's	Leisure/Evening
Tom Smith	Hermitage Road	Leisure/Evening
Sophie Rose	Kite at the Red Hart	Leisure/Evening
Sam Mason	British Schools Museum	Leisure/Evening
Damian Caldwell	Los Reyes	Leisure/Evening
Fabio Vincenti	Fabios Gelato	Independent Retail
Mark Henry	Halsey's	Independent Retail
Hannah Brown	Jolly Brown	Independent Retail
Sarah Clare	What Sarah did...	Independent Retail
Richard Barry	Arkley Fine Art	Independent Retail
Jak Utley	Gatefold Music Lounge	Independent Retail
Louise Whipp	The Little Deli	Independent Retail

Businesses have been at the heart of developing this BID renewal at all stages of the process.

This began when businesses in Hitchin were asked for their views in 2018, via a survey which was available as an online form or through a face to face business visit. The survey was structured to seek the views of businesses as to which improvements projects they considered would boost their performance and to confirm their support for the renewal of the Business Improvement District.

A strong and representative sample of 116 responses (representing a response rate of 20% based on the total number of hereditaments) was received and provided strong support (86% in favour) of the BID's renewal. A development board met on a monthly basis to oversee both the production of the business plan and also to ensure the proposals have been drawn up in close consultation with as many Hitchin businesses and organisations as possible.

# *THE PROPOSED BID COMPOSITION*

Led by businesses for business, it is owned and operated by you, for you.

One of the reasons for Hitchin BID's success is its continuing productive and positive relationships with local businesses and public bodies. Over the next 5 years we will continue to work in close liaison with the following sectors:

- Multi-national retailers**
- Independent retail businesses**
- Pub and club operators**
- Hoteliere and restaurants**
- Cafés, bistros and takeaways**
- Financial and legal services**
- Community representatives**
- Local Landlords**
- North Herts Council**
- Herts Highways**

The BID directors would continue to be responsible for the strategic management of the BID and for all decisions relating to the BID. Working closely with public, commercial and community businesses and organisations, we will ensure the business plan is properly represented and governed.

The BID Company would continue to formally report results of the annual audit at its AGM with elections held then too for the directors and Chairman.

This process is to ensure the BID upholds transparency and openness at the highest level.



## BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

You the businesses have been at the heart of developing the Hitchin BID business plan at all stages of the process.

In 2018, businesses in Hitchin were asked for their views via an open survey which was available as an online form or through a face to face visit. The survey was structured to seek the views of businesses regarding which improvements projects they considered would boost their performance and to test their willingness for the Business Improvement District to be renewed.

116 surveys were received back representing a varied business sector and geographical sample. 86% of the responses were in favour of the BID renewal with the remaining 14% having face to face visits to ensure all for and against businesses were fully aware of the opportunities available to them.



*“We all know that the British High Street is facing a tough time. We need to work even harder to keep Hitchin businesses working together to sustain the energy, cleanliness and safety we see today. I strongly endorse the work of the BID and would urge all businesses to vote yes and continue its great work.”*

**Bim Afolami MP**  
Member of Parliament  
Hitchin and Harpenden



*“I consider the work of Hitchin BID to be a vital component of making our town the welcoming and diverse place for which it is renowned. I urge local businesses to support the BID renewal ballot in the autumn. A successful Hitchin BID is good for business and good for local residents. Please give it your full support.”*

**Cllr Ian Albert**  
Hitchin Area Committee Chairman  
North Herts District Council



*“The BID renewal has the potential to be a game-changer in taking Hitchin’s regeneration to the next level. It can be a genuine catalyst for bringing businesses and organisations together with a single voice and common goal making our town a place to be proud of.”*

**Ben Hedley & Tom Weller**  
Owners. Kite at The Red Hart  
The Groundworks  
Bucklersbury & Churchyard



*“The BID is an effective way of bringing businesses together to raise the profile of the towns working toward improving its image and subsequently encouraging new visitors in to shop, eat and drink, creating an experience that everyone can enjoy.”*

**Sophie Boyd**  
Manager. O2 Store  
Market Place



*“The BID is the perfect opportunity for Hitchin businesses to speak using one voice to help make our town an even more vibrant place. We’re very pleased to be supporting it and working with others in the town to strengthen Hitchin as a whole.”*

**Hannah Brown**  
Owner. Jolly Brown  
Bucklersbury



*“The Town Centre plays a huge role economically and socially to the success of a town, renewing the BID in Hitchin will ensure the town is a more welcoming place to do business through the additional value it will bring to existing services.”*

**Matt Cuhls (CEO)**  
CEO. ReAssure  
Tilehouse Street



*“A successful Business Improvement District renewal will pave the way for the future that Hitchin residents and local independently owned businesses deserve.*

*Promoting the town to a wider geographical area and sustaining the number of projects and initiatives the Business Improvement District currently deliver is so important for our towns future.”*

**Kim MacLarty**

Owner, Halsey's Deli & Eatery  
Market Place



# THE PROPOSED PROJECTS

## THE PROJECTS

The key aim of our business plan is to outline what businesses have suggested needs doing and the investment they are willing to make in each element of it to ensure its success.

A principal feature of the renewal survey and subsequent consultations have been to ask businesses to prioritise the projects that they felt BID money should be spent on and this information has been used to develop the following project proposals and to put a working budget to.

## THE PRIORITIES ARE:

### VIBRANT

We intend to ensure that the town centre is a vibrant area and a place people can enjoy all year round. We intend to help build on the success of existing events and to introduce a programme of additional activities to further energise Hitchin and to draw many more people to visit from the local area and further afield.

### CLEAN & SAFE

The BID plan is to ensure that the town centre is an attractive, safe and welcoming place for those who live, work and visit. Importantly, we want to present the best possible appearance to potential investors. The Hitchin BID therefore pledges to carry out activities that are completely above and beyond those already being provided by existing organisations.

### PROMOTED

The BID plan is to invest in much more promotion and marketing of the town centre and to ensure that this is targeted at key catchments. We also propose to work with others to ensure that we jointly and consistently promote Hitchin much more effectively to a local, regional and national audience.

### SAVE & SUPPORT

The BID plan is to ensure that it remains the voice of its businesses on key issues and representing views and opinions to ensure the town is properly represented and supported. We will look to offer businesses a greater choice of cost saving initiatives to ease the pressure of ever growing use of internet shopping.









*VIBRANT*



VOTE  
**YES!**

Hitchin **BID**





## VIBRANT

We intend to ensure that the town centre is a vibrant area and a place people can enjoy all year round. We intend to help build on the success of existing events and to introduce a programme of additional activities to further energise Hitchin and to draw many more people to visit from the local area and further afield.

## VIBRANT



### SEASONAL FLORAL PLANTERS AND BASKET DISPLAYS AS WELL AS COLOURED BUNTING

- 1 Fund a large floral display for the town centre with regular enhancements.
- 2 Work with local group and the council to encourage additional seasonal planting in existing areas.
- 3 Erect coloured bunting in designated areas in the town centre for the summer season.
- 4 Liaise with businesses on public realm decoration and how we can make improvements.



### LARGE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS DISPLAY IN DESIGNATED AREAS OF THE TOWN CENTRE

- 1 Fund an extensive Christmas lights display for the town centre.
- 2 Tender for Christmas lights contract to include erecting, take down, storage and insurance.
- 3 Arrange and decorate the large town centre Christmas tree.
- 4 Review display on an annual basis to ensure regular repair, alterations and enhancements.

BUDGET AVAILABLE *£535,000*



## MAJOR TOWN CENTRE EVENTS, INDEPENDENT SHOPPING DAYS AND PROMOTIONS

- 1 Run a series of major town centre events such as Food Fest and Christmas lights switch-on.
- 2 Support and organise a number of independent shopping events and promotions.
- 3 Encourage footfall circulation around the town including secondary trading areas.
- 4 Design and print event guides, programme, maps and posters for various events and promotions.



*"There's a tremendous amount of optimism and confidence in Hitchin at the moment, but we need a hands-on, collective effort from all sectors to realise the full potential of our beautiful town centre. A renewed Business Improvement District will unquestionably be a force for good in the town.*

*Keeping it clean and safe while showcasing and promoting our countless great attractions. I urge all Hitchin businesses to back the BID and guarantee a bright future for our town centre."*

**Fairy Shahiri**

Owner. Hitchin Dry Cleaners  
Bancroft



*PROMOTED*





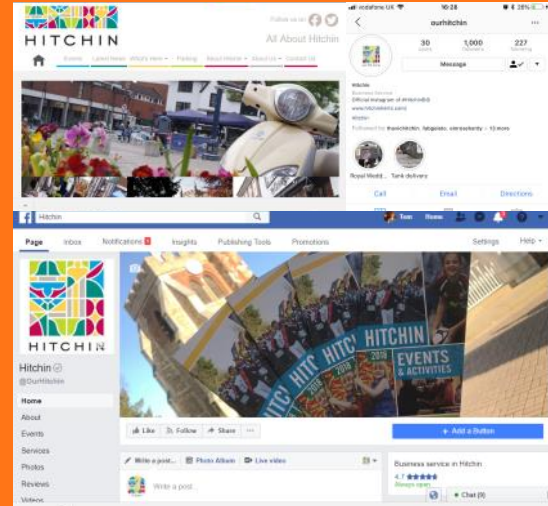


## PROMOTED

The BID plan is to invest in much more promotion and marketing of the town centre and to ensure that this is targeted at key catchments. We also propose to work with others to ensure that we jointly and consistently promote Hitchin much more effectively to a local, regional and national audience.



# PROMOTED



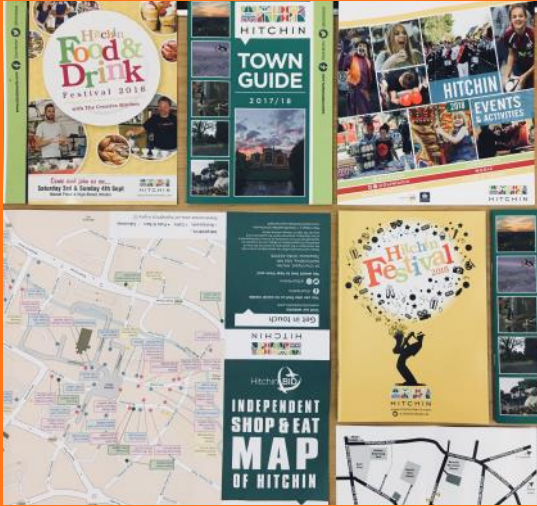
## PROMOTING THE TOWN AS A TOURIST DESTINATION

- 1 Using expert advice from external companies, develop a robust tourism strategy for the town.
- 2 Produce a quality tourism guide for the town and distribute to a wide geographical area.
- 3 Investigate new ways of promoting the town using national and international media.
- 4 Gain great exposure for Hitchin through national and regional publications.

## IMPROVING THE TOWN CENTRE WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

- 1 Undertake extensive improvements to the town centre website.
- 2 Using external companies, make improvements to the town centre social media.
- 3 Make updates and improvements to the business directory section on the town centre website.
- 4 Promote the town's businesses and their USPs using both the website and social media.

BUDGET AVAILABLE *£192,500*



## MARKETING, PROMOTIONS AND COLLECTIVE BRANDING FOR THE TOWN

- 1 Co-ordinated and targeted marketing of the town centre as a place to work, play and stay.
- 2 Create collective branding and style guide for town centre publications and marketing material.
- 3 Develop campaigns to promote and encourage town centre shopping.
- 4 Encourage people attending town centre events to stay in Hitchin and explore.



*"We believe that a strong, vibrant and enticing town centre is good for the town as a whole. Over the past ten years the Business Improvement District has tangibly sustained and improved the town centre as a great place to live, work and do business.*

*Without the BID, so much of what we have come so used to having in the town would disappear. I am voting yes in November to ensure we keep all the hugely important projects and initiatives that make the town the vibrant place it is today."*

**Fabio Vincenti**  
Owner, Fabios Gelato  
Hermitage Road

*CLEAN & SAFE*



Hitchin **BID**



## **CLEAN & SAFE**

The BID plan is to ensure that the town centre is an attractive, safe and welcoming place for those who live, work and visit. Importantly, we want to present the best possible appearance to potential investors. The Hitchin BID therefore pledges to carry out activities that are completely above and beyond those already being provided by existing organisations.



## CLEAN & SAFE



### CONTINUE FUNDING TOWN CENTRE RANGERS, EXTENDED CCTV AND TOWN RADIO LINKS

- 1 Continue funding the town centre Rangers, on hand to assist businesses and observe and report crime.
- 2 Provide extended CCTV cameras in key crime 'hot spots' in the town centre.
- 3 Continue to supply and manage the pub and shop radio links offering discounted radio hire.
- 4 Continue to fund night time rangers in the town centre.



### OFFER FREE CARDBOARD AND PAPER RECYCLING, AND DISCOUNT COMMERCIAL WASTE

- 1 Offer BID businesses a discounted rate contract on commercial waste and food waste removal.
- 2 Continue to offer town centre businesses free cardboard and paper recycling.
- 3 Fund cardboard rangers and electric van to undertake free cardboard and paper recycling.
- 4 Investigate new ways of recycling and look at additional recyclable waste collection.

BUDGET AVAILABLE *£382,000*



### CHEWING GUM REMOVAL, DEEP CLEANING, GRAFFITI AND FLYPOSTING REMOVAL

- 1 Instruct an external company to undertake chewing gum removal around 'hot spots' in the town.
- 2 Remove obscene and unsightly graffiti using specialist equipment and use anti graffiti techniques.
- 3 Report and remove flyposting in the BID area and advise businesses on the regulations around events promotions.
- 4 Use an external company to deep clean the high footfall area of the town centre.



*"Hitchin has seen some really exciting and positive changes in the past ten years. The BID's hard work, can do attitude and forward thinking is what the town needs for the future. Waitrose is a proud supporter of the Hitchin BID and all the great projects and initiatives it continues to undertake for the good of our town.*

*As a national retailer, we directly and indirectly benefit from so much that the BID organises and enables. I would encourage all local businesses to support the BID renewal and vote yes for another five years."*

**Simon Kirbyshire**  
Manager. Waitrose  
Bedford Road



*SAVE & SUPPORT*



Hitchin **BID**







## SAVE & SUPPORT

The BID plan is to ensure that it remains the voice of its businesses on key issues and representative of their views and opinions to ensure the town is properly supported. We will look to offer businesses a greater choice of cost-saving initiatives to ease the pressure of ever-growing use of internet shopping.



## SAVE & SUPPORT



### EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT CARDS, JOB VACANCY SITE AND DISCOUNTED/FREE TRAINING

- 1 Investigate the implementation of a new employee discount card for the town centre.
- 2 Using the Hitchinherts.com website to promote town centre job vacancies.
- 3 Offer a series of free/discounted health and safety training courses.
- 4 Organise a programme of free/discounted marketing, media and business development courses.



### A COLLECTIVE BUSINESS VOICE ON ECONOMIC REGENERATION PROJECTS IN THE TOWN CENTRE

- 1 Forcing the pace on the Churchgate refurbishment and development to include improvements to Hitchin Market.
- 2 Make more of the riverside waterfront and riverside walkway.
- 3 Work with the Council's economic development officer to access project grant funding.
- 4 Lobby for public realm improvements in the town Centre.

BUDGET AVAILABLE **£109,000**



### IMPROVEMENTS AND CHANGES TO TRAFFIC FLOW, CAR PARKS AND ENCOURAGE NEW START-UPS

- 1 Investigate how car park usage can be improved through new technology.
- 2 Real time electronic car parking signage feasibility study and possible implementation.
- 3 Seeking a reduction in through traffic in and around Market Place.
- 4 Encouraging new business start-ups in available empty units.



*"As an office based business in the town centre, it is important that the town is a clean, safe and a welcoming place for our employees and clients. There are some significant regeneration type projects which will benefit the town and having a collective business voice through the Business Improvement District scheme on how and when these projects are delivered is key to ensuring we have a say and our thoughts and opinions are heard. I consider that the town as a whole has benefited a lot from the BID scheme over the past few years and it is important that the BID work should continue. Our firm will be voting yes to the renewal of the Hitchin BID!"*

**Ian Dawes**  
Partner. Bowen Solicitors  
Bucklersbury

## *THE PROPOSED BID AREA*

All BIDs operate within a carefully constructed boundary, although this does not mean that they act in an exclusive way. In actual fact it's quite the opposite.

Business feedback gained from detailed discussions with lots of companies positioned close to the perimeter of our proposed BID has indicated that the BID should cover the area inside the blue dotted line from 2019-2024.

### **ROADS INCLUDED IN THE BID AREA**

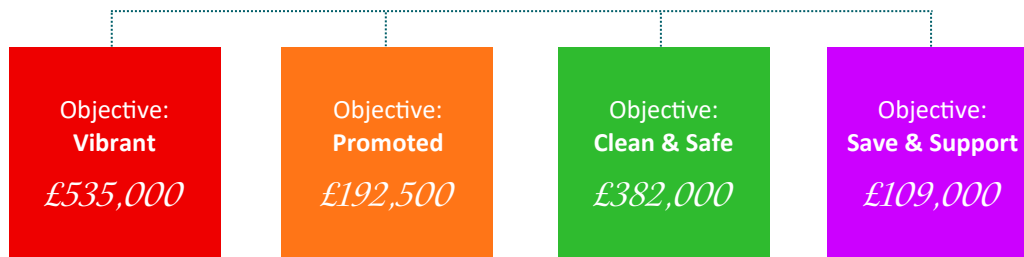
Arcade	Churchyard
Arcade Walk	Churchyard Walk
Bancroft	Hermitage Road
Bedford Road (part)	High Street
Brand Street	Ickleford Road (part)
Bridge Street	Market Place
Bucklersbury	Old Park Road (part)
Churchgate	Park Street (part)
Paynes Park	Sun Street
The Lairage	Tilehouse Street
Portmill Lane	West Alley
Queen Street (part)	Whinbush Road (part)





# BUDGET

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
<b>Income (£)</b>						
BID Levy	280,000	290,000	295,000	305,000	310,000	1,480,000
Sales & sponsorship	20,000	22,000	24,000	26,000	28,000	120,000
<b>Total income</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>312,000</b>	<b>319,000</b>	<b>331,000</b>	<b>338,000</b>	<b>1,600,000</b>
<b>Expenditure (£)</b>						
Promoted	35,000	36,500	38,000	40,000	43,000	192,500
Vibrant	98,000	100,000	106,000	112,000	119,000	535,000
Save & Support	18,000	20,000	22,000	23,000	26,000	109,000
Clean & Safe	73,000	75,000	76,000	78,000	80,000	382,000
<b>Total activity costs</b>	<b>216,000</b>	<b>223,500</b>	<b>234,000</b>	<b>245,000</b>	<b>260,000</b>	<b>1,178,500</b>
BID team	45,000	45,000	46,500	47,000	48,000	231,500
Premises/ admin/ over-heads	24,700	26,200	26,700	27,700	28,700	134,000
<b>Total overhead cost</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>61,500</b>	<b>63,500</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>67,000</b>	<b>317,000</b>
Contingency	2,000	4,000	7,000	10,000	13,000	36,000
<b>Grand total expenditure</b>	<b>276,000</b>	<b>285,000</b>	<b>297,500</b>	<b>310,000</b>	<b>327,000</b>	<b>1,600,000</b>



**Additionally:** We consider that, following the experience from the last ten years, the Hitchin BID should generate a substantial amount of additional revenue through grants, sponsorship, voluntary business contributions and stallholder bookings.

Note 1: Assumes collection rate of 98%.

Note 2: Including voluntary contributions from Landlords, associate members of the BID, in kind funding & additional income generated.

Note 3: Some projects are inclusive of staff overheads.

Note 4: BID levy will increase by only the rate of inflation at the discretion of the Directors.

Note 5: Contingency retained for capital spend and 2024 renewal campaign.

## MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

This is how you would be able to tell the BID is working for you.

Businesses here already benefit substantially from the additional services that the BID delivers. Here's a list of what you could expect over the next five years too:

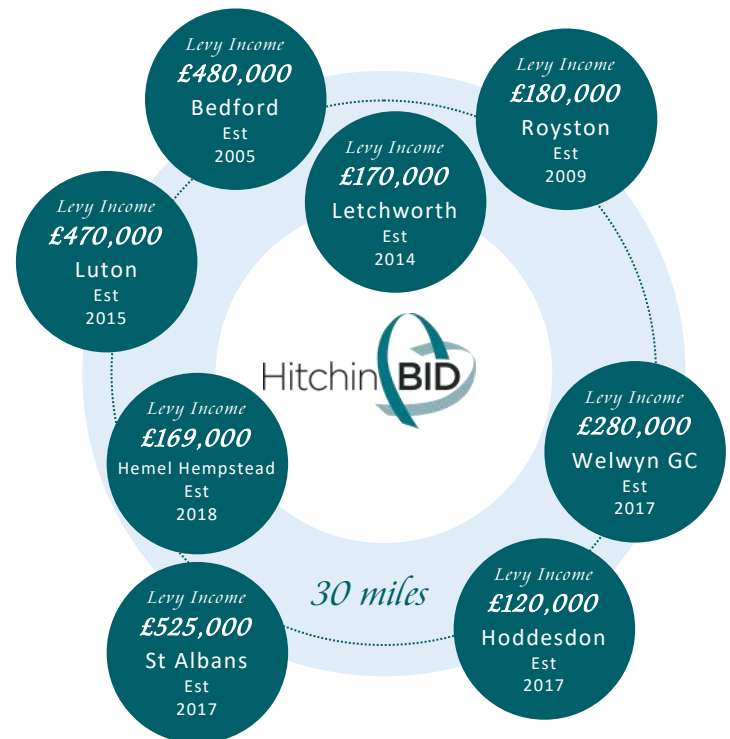
- A cleaner and safer town centre for those who use it.
- Targeting of a larger and more affluent catchment area meaning more visitors and a higher average spend.
- Those currently visiting wanting to do so more often, staying longer and spending more.
- Staff recruitment made easier and existing staff encouraged to remain in employment here.
- A constantly improving 'look and feel' to the town centre environment.
- A more accessible town centre for all forms of transportation, even the car borne visitor who are presently strongly attracted to peripheral supermarkets and out of town 'sheds'.
- A more effective voice for businesses over the management and future development of their trading environment.
- An opportunity to use the BID income to 'pump prime' additional income from external agencies, growing the overall 'pot' and improving return on investment for businesses.

## COMPARABLE BIDS

A BID levy is not a tax, it is an investment and all levy income would remain locally to fund our exciting plans for Hitchin.

When calculating the levy for Hitchin, we took both the results of the business survey and subsequent consultations with businesses into account.

We also examined the levy rates set by a number of established competitor BIDs for comparison. Unless we generate a level of similar proportion, we will fall behind the invests being made by neighbouring towns







# *PROPOSAL INFORMATION*

Forming a BID is an important legal process.

The BID will be governed under legislation via its Memoranda and Articles of Association, with the following principal elements being proposed. A more detailed proposal information document is available for any potential BID levy payer to view on the BID website.

- 1 This is a BID renewal to cover the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2024 inclusive.
- 2 The BID will deliver services additional to any public or private sector organisation.
- 3 All National Non-Domestic Ratepayers within the proposed boundary will be liable to pay the BID Levy.
- 4 The BID levy is proposed at 1.85% of applicable Rateable Value.
- 5 The BID levy will apply from 1st January each year.
- 6 VAT will not be charged on the BID levy.

More detailed information on the BID proposals is available at [hitchinherts.com](https://www.hitchinherts.com).

# DETAILED PROPOSAL INFORMATION

**Additional income** – this proposal commits to seek a substantial amount of extra income in addition to the BID levy over the life of the BID from other sources.

**Aims and objectives** – this plan explains how the BID would deliver improved trading for Hitchin.

**Ballot** – the timescale for the entire ballot process is clearly defined and both the BID and the Council will quickly and clearly communicate the ballot result.

**BID boundary** – the proposed BID area has been drawn to represent universal business interests and is formed around the natural town centre limits.

**Budget** – a detailed budget has been produced, which includes all income and expenditure, as well as the provision of a prudent contingency fund.

**Caps** – no levy caps are proposed to the BID levy payable.

**Communications** – a number of detailed communications with potential BID members have been carried out and are highlighted within this proposal.

**Company** – it is proposed that the Hitchin BID would operate on a non-profit basis as a Company Limited by Guarantee.

**Database** – the voter database has been refined to include the correct voter contact details, including those that are Head Office voting addresses, where appropriate.

**Empty properties** – the liability for the BID levy on any eligible vacant premises will revert to the Landlord.

**Exemptions** – There are no exemptions for businesses in the BID area.

**Governance** – the structure and operation of the BID Company has been designed so as to follow the highest possible standards of representation, governance and transparency.

**Inflation** – the proposed BID levy will be subject to annual increases by the rate of inflation at the discretion of the Directors.

**Levy** – the proposed levy has been selected as the minimum possible to deliver the required.

improvements and is considered to represent excellent value for money to levy payers.

**Levy collection costs** – the Council have kindly agreed to collect the levy free of charge.

**Mid-term review** – the Hitchin BID would undertake to commission and publish an independent review during the third year of the proposed five-year term.

**Monitoring** – the BID will employ regular and robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms, which will include an annual survey of a representative sample of levy payers, an Annual General Meeting and an Annual Report.

**Notices** – all notices, including those issued to the Secretary of State, the Local Authority and all proposed levy payers have been issued in line with the prescribed regulations from all applicable Legislation.

**Operating Agreement** – the BID has liaised extensively with NHDC as the Local Billing Authority and a detailed draft Operating Agreement which can be seen at [hitchinherts.com](http://hitchinherts.com).

**Operating costs** – the proposed budget includes a detailed breakdown of all anticipated BID operating costs, as far as can be determined at this time.

**Premises** – all relevant and eligible public and private sector premises within the BID area have been included in our database and this will be maintained to ensure accuracy during the lifetime of the BID.

**Proposals** – this document summarises the proposition to deliver additional services in Hitchin.

**Research and Consultation** – the BID development process has been carried out in a very open, inclusive and transparent manner and a number of consultative techniques have been employed over a twelve-month period.

**Revaluation** – the prevailing Rateable Value list, as updated on the 1st January each year of the BID term, will be used for the calculation of the annual BID levy for the duration of this proposal.

**Services** – the proposed BID projects have been generated through local research, are able to be measured and have been fully costed.

**Term** – the duration of the proposed BID, to include start and end dates, has been included in this document.

**Transparency** – every effort will be made to ensure the transparency of the operation of the BID, including the production and distribution of detailed progress, monitoring and financial reports.

**Variation** – there is no intention to significantly vary the projects within this plan and consequently we do not expect to seek a Variation Ballot for any reason, although, this could possibly occur during the term of the BID if it becomes necessary due to required material changes to the plan following the midterm review.

**Voting** – the ballot timetable is outlined on page 42.



Hitchin**BID**

*TO SECURE FIVE YEARS OF  
ADDITIONAL INCOME INTO  
HITCHIN TOWN CENTRE.*

|  
7<sup>TH</sup> NOV 2018  
BALLOT PAPERS ISSUED

|  
5<sup>TH</sup> DEC 2018  
DAY OF BALLOT

|  
6<sup>TH</sup> DEC 2018  
BALLOT RESULT DECLARED

THE BID WILL PROCEED IF  
TWO TESTS ARE MET

- 1 A majority vote in favour
- 2 Voters in favour must represent a majority of the Rateable Value







## CONTACT US

For any further information on any aspect of this proposal, please contact:

**Chris Gregory**  
Hitchin BID Project Manager  
Heartflood Ltd  
07854 027080  
chris@heartflood.co.uk

**Tom Hardy**  
Hitchin BID Manager  
www.hitchinherts.com  
Twitter: @ourhitchin & @ourtomhardy  
Facebook: /ourhitchin  
Instagram: @ourhitchin  
01462 453335



**Tom Hardy**

Hitchin BID Manager

[www.hitchinherts.com](http://www.hitchinherts.com)

Twitter: @ourhitchin & @ourtomhardy

Facebook: /ourhitchin

Instagram: @ourhitchin

01462 453335

**Some of the photography in this publication has been supplied by Paul Waby, Martin Isherwood, Mathew Bartlett and Jake Milligan**

**Designed by**

Tom Hardy, Hitchin BID Manager