

**Belfast  
ONE**

Business  
Improvement  
District

# Business Plan 26—31

**VOTE  
YES!** 

BALLOT OPENS  
22 JANUARY





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# Welcome from the Chair, Leona Barr



**Leona Barr (Chair)**  
Centre Manager,  
CastleCourt

## **Belfast One continues to play a vital role in supporting and championing the needs of our city centre businesses.**

Over the last five years, we have navigated a period of significant change and growth, ensuring that the Belfast One district remains a vibrant, welcoming and successful place to work, live, visit and invest.

We have seen remarkable transformation across the city centre. The expanding student population, the growing university presence and the opening of Grand Central Station have all contributed to a renewed sense of energy and movement. Our district has benefited from substantial private investment across hospitality, retail, student accommodation and office developments. This investment continues to shape how our city looks, feels and operates.

Following the challenges of the COVID period and the subsequent recovery programme, Belfast One has remained a key organisation in reinforcing the needs of Belfast city centre. While we recognise the ongoing requirement for further investment and regeneration in some areas, we are actively working with local partners and agencies to influence and lobby for meaningful improvements across the district.

Over the last year, we have continued to Promote, Enhance, Support and Shape the city. Our City Centre Beat Team and Clean Team have improved safety, cleanliness and the day-to-day experience for residents, visitors and workers. We have strengthened our sense of place through major events and activations that draw people into the city and encourage them to spend time in our businesses and venues.

Halloween saw the successful Monster Campaign and Restaurant Week delivered with record levels of business participation. The free Santa's Post Office activation has given families a reason to return to the city centre, spend time here and enjoy what the district has to offer. The "Belfast" sign on Royal Avenue has become one of the most photographed installations in the city. These initiatives help promote the city, enhance its atmosphere and support trading at key periods throughout the year. Through ongoing lobbying and partnership working, we continue to shape long-term regeneration and growth for the district.

As we look ahead, we are inviting organisations to renew the Belfast One Business Improvement District for a third term.



## **Your Vote Matters More Than Ever**

By voting YES, you secure continued investment, stronger representation and a thriving, competitive city centre. Your support ensures Belfast One can keep delivering projects, services and improvements that directly benefit your business.

A YES vote is a vote for progress, partnership and a stronger future for our district. Please make your voice count. Vote YES for Belfast One.



# Chief Executive's Summary

**As we look ahead to Term 3 (2026–2031), this Business Plan sets out the priorities and actions that will guide Belfast One over the next five years, shaped directly by the voices of Belfast city centre businesses.**



**Martina Connolly**  
Chief Executive  
Belfast One BID

The period ahead will be both exciting and challenging, with clear opportunities to strengthen the performance, attractiveness and long-term success of the city centre.

Through extensive engagement, including focus groups, workshops and surveys, businesses have been clear about what matters most. There is a strong desire for a city centre that attracts footfall and investment, feels safe, clean and welcoming, supports businesses to trade with confidence and has a credible, effective voice shaping its future. This plan reflects those priorities through clear themes, practical actions and measurable outcomes.

Belfast is entering an important phase for the city centre. Major projects such as the **Eastern Transport Plan**, **Belfast Stories**, the **regeneration of Royal Avenue** and the **North-South Glider** present significant opportunities to improve connectivity, accessibility and the public realm. Delivered well, these interventions will enhance the city centre's long-term appeal, and it will be essential that business needs are considered throughout. At its heart, this five-year plan sets out **a shared ambition for a vibrant, resilient and successful Belfast city centre**.

Over the next five years, Belfast One will focus on **four interconnected priorities**. We will **promote** the city centre with confidence and creativity, delivering distinctive events, campaigns and communications that celebrate what makes Belfast unique. By strengthening the Belfast One brand and working closely with partners, we will drive footfall, improve perceptions and enhance appeal.

We will **enhance** the experience for all by focusing on everyday issues such as cleanliness, safety and the quality of the public realm. Building on the success of our Clean Team and City Centre Beat Policing Team, we will deliver visible improvements, champion higher standards and support placemaking initiatives. We will also develop and support the new Business Crime Reduction Partnership to strengthen collaboration and improve safety.

We will **support** local businesses by being responsive and connected, acting as a trusted first point of contact and providing practical support, data and opportunities for collaboration. Through stronger networks and a modernised business support programme, we will help levy payers trade with confidence. We will also continue to lead the Belfast City Centre Gift Card initiative, which supports over 260 businesses and has returned more than £900,000 to the local economy since 2019.

Finally, we will **shape** a better city centre by using our collective voice to influence major decisions, infrastructure projects and long-term investment. Representing around 700 businesses, Belfast One will ensure business needs are clearly understood as major transport and regeneration schemes progress.

This Business Plan sets out a clear direction, strong delivery focus and a commitment to transparency and accountability. Above all, it reflects the belief that a successful city centre is built through partnership and that when businesses are supported and represented, Belfast thrives.

# Who We Are

## What is a Business Improvement District (BID)?

A BID is a defined district where organisations collectively invest in projects, services, and events that will benefit the area. The BID is governed and managed by elected business representatives. Over 340 BIDs have been established in towns and cities across the UK and Ireland—demonstrating their effectiveness and impact. In Northern Ireland, 8 are already operating, with two more towns currently planning to introduce the BID model.



## Who manages the Belfast One BID?

Belfast One BID is an independent, not-for-profit company that works on behalf of its levy payers to support, develop, and promote Belfast city centre. The BID focuses on delivering programmes that enhance safety, cleanliness, business support, and the overall vibrancy of the area.



## Our Mission

Our mission at Belfast One BID is to go above and beyond statutory services—supporting businesses, improving the city centre environment, and delivering initiatives that enhance the experience for everyone who works, lives, or visits the area. We aim to strengthen Belfast city centre through targeted investment, innovative projects, and strong stakeholder partnerships.

## Your Opportunity

Belfast One BID will go to ballot for a third five-year term. From 22 January 2026 to 5 March 2026, businesses can vote to secure £5 million of additional investment over the next five years. Ballot papers will be posted directly to each company, with one vote per eligible business.





**The Belfast One Business Improvement District (BID) was established in 2016 as an independent not-for-profit company for Belfast City Centre.**

Belfast One is the core of the city centre which includes a diverse range of retail, hospitality and services all concentrated within approximately One Square Mile in Belfast city centre. This is a dynamic, innovative and vibrant part of our city, with so much on offer across so little an area.



promote



enhance



support



# The BID Area

Cathedral  
Quarter

Linen  
Quarter

A map of the Belfast One Business Improvement District, showing a grid of streets. The district is highlighted in green. An orange polygon is overlaid on the map, containing the text 'Belfast ONE Business Improvement District'.

# Belfast ONE

Business Improvement District

## Belfast One Area Streets

Adelaide Street	Fisherwick Place
Alfred Street	Fountain Lane
Ann Street	Fountain Street
Arthur Lane	Gloucester Street
Arthur Place	Great Victoria Street
Arthur Square	Gresham Street
Arthur Street	High Street
Bank Square	Howard Street
Bank Street	Joy Street
Bedford Street	Joy's Entry
Berry Street	King Street
Bridge Street	Linenhall Street
Callender Street	Lombard Street
Castle Arcade	Lower Garfield Street
CastleCourt	Marquis Street
Castle Lane	Music Hall Lane
Castle Place	North Street
Castle Street	Pattersons Place
Chapel Lane	Pottinger's Entry
Chichester Street	Queen Street
Church Lane	Queen's Arcade
Coles Alley	Rosemary Street
College Avenue	Royal Avenue
College Court	Seymour Street
College Square East	Upper Arthur Street
College Street	Upper Church Lane
College Street Mews	Upper Queen Street
Cornmarket	Victoria Square
Crown Entry	Victoria Street
Donegall Arcade	Wellington Place
Donegall Place	Wellington Street
Donegall Square East	William Street South
Donegall Square North	Wilson's Court
Donegall Square South	Winecellar Entry
Donegall Square West	

# Consultation and Research

Over the course of 2025, Belfast One BID has undertaken an extensive consultation programme with levy payers to shape the development of the new Business Plan.



They provide a  
great conduit to the  
**support**  
we need.

We wouldn't know  
who to contact otherwise.







## Surveys

This process included an online survey carried out twice during the year, once in April 2025 and again in October 2025 to capture business perspectives at different stages and ensure robust feedback.

## 1-2-1 Meetings

In addition to survey responses, Belfast One BID has held over 200 one-to-one meetings with a diverse range of businesses across different sectors. These conversations have provided in-depth insights into operational challenges, priorities, and opportunities.

## Workshops

A series of workshops and focus group sessions have been delivered throughout 2025. Between the Engagement Manager and the Chief Executive, numerous individual consultations have also taken place, ensuring levy payers have had multiple opportunities to inform and shape the emerging proposals.

## Focus Groups

Focus Groups were carried out independently with a cross section of sectors from businesses. The results show broad satisfaction across sectors and a clear consensus that the BID is delivering meaningful value.

## Strong Overall Performance

Levy payers overwhelmingly believe the BID has performed well.

## What Businesses Told Us: Belfast One Has Delivered Real Value

Over the past five years, Belfast One BID has played a central role in supporting businesses, improving the city centre environment, helping to drive footfall and in increasing business confidence. Independent research with levy payers through a survey and dedicated business focus groups shows a clear and consistent message:

**Belfast One has made a positive and meaningful impact**

**85%**

RATED BELFAST ONE'S OVERALL PERFORMANCE AS **EXCELLENT** OR **GOOD**

**4.3**

Out of 5

**PROMOTING**

**4.0**

Out of 5

**ENHANCING**

**4.2**

Out of 5

**SUPPORTING**

BELFAST ONE SCORED STRONGLY ON ACHIEVING ALL THREE OF OUR CORE AIMS

**84.6%**

SAID BELFAST ONE'S SERVICES HAVE **DIRECTLY** BENEFITTED THEIR BUSINESS

# Consultation and Research

## High-Impact Services Levy Payers Value

Businesses particularly highlighted the strength of Belfast One's frontline support and activities with a clear majority of levy payers highly valuing the work of the Belfast One Clean Team and the City Centre Beat Policing Team, as well as events like Restaurant Week. More than 80% of levy payers thought the Halloween Takeover was delivered well, whilst 85% of respondents thought that our marketing and promotional work had been most beneficial.

During focus groups, participants consistently praised the BID team's visibility, responsiveness and practical help. Many described Belfast One as the organisation they call first when an issue arises. We are a trusted, connected partner able to mobilise support quickly.

**“They're our first phone call when something goes wrong — they get things sorted!”**

**“The city centre is as good as it has been in years!”**



**“The city centre would be worse without the BID. You see the difference when the Clean Team has been in an area.”**

## A Trusted Partner for Local Businesses

Levy payers also emphasised the BID's role as a connector, linking businesses to the Council, Police and support agencies:

**“They know everyone. They're the ones who get things moving.”**

Businesses appreciate the team's hands-on support and regular presence across the city centre. Even those with limited direct engagement acknowledged the value of the BID's work for the wider trading environment.



## Visible Improvements to the City Centre

Many businesses feel the city centre has improved despite challenging national and local conditions. They credit Belfast One for:

- cleaner streets
- quicker responsiveness to issues
- helpful promotional activities and events
- supporting safety, especially during the day
- maintaining vibrancy and confidence during difficult trading periods

“There’s definite progress. Two steps forward, sometimes one back, but the direction is right.”

## A Strong Foundation for the Next Five Years

The feedback is clear:

***Belfast One BID is valued, trusted and delivering results.***

Businesses want the BID to continue its core work in cleanliness, safety, footfall generation and practical support, while strengthening communication and sharpening focus.

This strong base of satisfaction and trust provides a clear mandate for Belfast One’s next five-year term and forms the foundation for an ambitious, business-led plan for 2026–2031.



# Belfast One BID: Delivering for Our City (2016 to 2026)

Belfast One BID launched in 2016 with a shared ambition to make the city centre more vibrant, welcoming and competitive. Over the past decade we have worked hand in hand with local businesses and city partners to champion investment, attract visitors, improve safety and cleanliness and support business growth.





## Term 2 (2021 to 2026)

During our second five-year term (2021 to 2026), our work has taken place against a backdrop of significant challenges. From the recovery of the Primark Bank Buildings fire to the COVID 19 pandemic, we played a vital coordinating role. We supported business resilience, promoted reopening and restored confidence in the city centre.

Today, Belfast One BID is recognised as a trusted, proactive partner delivering impact at scale. Some of our highlights over the past five years include:

## Supporting Businesses and Boosting Economic Recovery

- Belfast City Centre Gift Card - Over £900,000 in sales returned to the city centre economy.
- Gift the City campaign driving spend directly back into local businesses.
- Workshops and Skills Support - 80 workshops delivered with 1,500 attendees providing training and business development support.
- Promotional and recovery campaigns including "We Welcome You Back to Belfast."
- Footfall Data from 6 Cameras show continuous year on year improvement.
- 60 Monthly Footfall reports sent out.

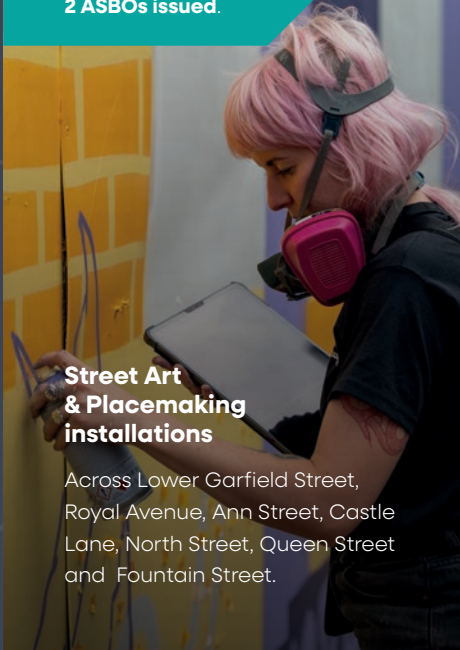


## Enhancing the City: Clean, Safe and Welcoming

### Additional Policing



**20,000 extra hours** on the street resulting in **5,990 interventions** and **1,300 business liaison visits** and over **500 arrests** or assisted arrests.  
**2 ASBOs issued.**



### Street Art & Placemaking installations

Across Lower Garfield Street, Royal Avenue, Ann Street, Castle Lane, North Street, Queen Street and Fountain Street.



### Successful lobbying

Secured the removal of the Castle Place barrier which had been in place since 2023.



### Pest Control

Delivered across **7 city centre** locations.



### Nighttime Economy Leadership

Recruitment of the Belfast Night Czar in partnership with DCQ and LQ BIDs.



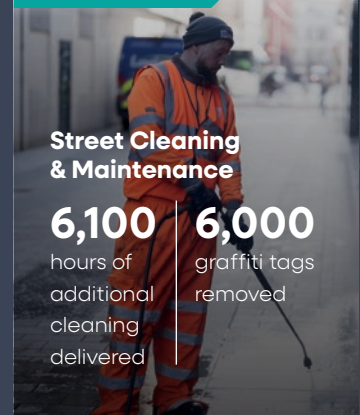
### Reporting & Advocacy

**Over 2,000** incidents logged to statutory bodies which has driven accountability and improvements.



### Greening the City

Belfast Bees installations delivered in Spring and Summer 2024 and 2025.



### Street Cleaning & Maintenance

**6,100** hours of additional cleaning delivered  
**6,000** graffiti tags removed

## THE NIGHT CZAR

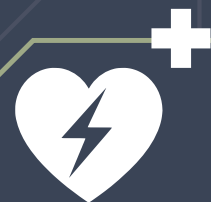
delivered:

- Late night transport pilot delivered in 2025 and 2026.
- **203 engagements** with businesses and partners since October 2024.
- Championing the return of Culture Night.



Run Club active for 24 weeks.

**Over 750 miles completed** with representation from 15 businesses.



**Defibrillator funded** by Belfast One and **installed** in Church Lane.

Other safety initiatives include;

- Purple Flag reaccreditation in 2020, 2023 and 2025.
- Night Time Economy research carried out with Ipsos and Nordicity.
- Bi annual on street safety surveys delivered by Card Group.
- Business Crime Reduction Partnership launched in December 2025.



## Promoting Belfast and Growing the City's Profile

### Events and Footfall Activation

More than  
**50**  
events  
delivered

including Seasonal Fashion Shows, Summer Cinema, Belfast Busing fest, Halloween Monsters, Pumpkin Patch, Restaurant Week and Santa's Post Office.

**NEW**  
initiatives

including Wellbeing Week, the Belfast Summit, Inflatable Halloween Monsters and the Belfast Sign.

Supported  
city events

**HIT  
THE  
NORTH**  
STREET ART FESTIVAL

including Tradfest, Hit the North, Culture Events, Belfast Summit, Belfast & Our Place.

Additional  
funding secured

**£250k**

**Created** trail maps  
to encourage  
exploration and  
spend.



### Representing Business Interests

- Active leadership across multi-agency task groups including COVID recovery and infrastructure.
- Business impact statements supporting ASBOs and designated safety zones.
- Contribution to consultations including:
- Pavement cafés, Culture Night, Fleadh, Eastern Transport Plan, Anti-social behaviour consultations with the Department of Justice and Department for Communities, Repeal of the Vagrancy Act, PSNI Local Policing Plan and Consultation on street preaching and amplification.

## Marketing & Social Reach Growth Highlights

PLATFORM	Audience Growth	Starting Base	Current Reach	Growth Achieved
Instagram	+11.6K	3.9K	15.5K	Nearly 4x growth (+297%)
Facebook	+9.2K	18.8K	28K	Strong uplift (+49%)
LinkedIn	+2.7K	294	3K	Over 10x growth (+920%)
TikTok	+5.9K	7	5.9K	Explosive launch growth (+84K%)

# Looking Ahead to Term 3 (2026–2031)

This plan has been shaped by you — our Belfast city centre businesses. Through focus groups, workshops and surveys, we have gathered your insights and gauged your priorities. Your feedback has helped us to develop themes and projects that directly reflect your needs: increasing footfall, ensuring a safe and clean city, shaping the future of the city centre, promoting and assisting local businesses, and raising the profile of Belfast One and the work we deliver. Our Business Plan for the next five years sets out our shared ambition for a vibrant and successful Belfast One.





# Promoting Belfast City Centre

## Our Five-Year Focus

**We will make Belfast city centre a place people want to visit, explore, invest in and talk about through distinctive events, promoting what makes the city stand out and a stronger Belfast One brand that businesses recognise and value, strengthening our city centre's appeal and driving the footfall businesses and investors depend on.**

## How We Will Promote the City Centre

**We will celebrate what makes Belfast unmistakably Belfast.** We will refresh our event and campaign programme, building on successes like the Halloween Takeover, Santa's Post Office, Restaurant Week and our seasonal footfall drivers, to create experiences that feel rooted in Belfast's culture, creativity and character, helping to deliver consistent and meaningful increases in footfall for the benefit of city centre businesses

**We will promote the city for visitors and investors.** We will work with Invest NI, Visit Belfast and Belfast City Council to communicate the city centre's strengths in supporting business growth, investment attraction and sectoral confidence.

**We will communicate with clarity, confidence and consistency.** We will publish a monthly business brief, and communicate the work we do to you via infographics, short video updates and "You Asked / We Did" summaries, ensuring businesses always understand the purpose of the BID and the results of their levy.

**We will strengthen our impact through a clearer, stronger Belfast One brand.** Our work will be visibly "Powered by Belfast One", with clearer attribution on everything we deliver, greater on-street presence, and simple, consistent updates that show levy payers what we have achieved each month on their behalf.

## Measures of Success

- Growth in footfall linked to BID-led events and campaigns
- Higher understanding among levy payers of the BID's purpose and impact
- Stronger investor and visitor perception of the city centre
- Increased recognition of the Belfast One brand





# Enhancing The Visitor Experience

## Our Five Year Focus

**We will help to deliver visible, high-impact improvements to cleanliness, safety and the appearance of the city centre, focusing on the things businesses see and feel every day that are essential to a successful and attractive Belfast.**

### How We Will Enhance the Visitor Experience

**We will improve cleanliness through a focused, street-by-street approach.** Building on the strong impact of the Belfast One Clean Team, we will prioritise streets that most negatively impact perceptions of the city and deliver enhanced cleansing, graffiti removal and environmental improvements with visible before/after results.

**We will strengthen safety through deeper partnership and presence.** We will continue managing and promoting the City Centre Beat Policing Team, strengthen engagement with evening economy partners including ongoing support for the city's Night Czar and deliver clearer communication on safety issues, responses and improvements.

**We will champion higher city centre standards.** We will work closely with Council, Police and partners to push for improved responsibility lines, more consistent cleansing standards and a stronger culture of maintenance and pride in the heart of the city.

**We will enhance the public realm and city centre experience.** Through lighting, planting, wayfinding and creative interventions, we will help create a more welcoming, attractive and easier to trade in environment for businesses and visitors.

**We will support placemaking across the city centre.** We will deliver and champion creative placemaking initiatives that strengthen identity, improve the look and feel of streets and support positive experiences for workers, residents and visitors, building on existing assets such as the Belfast Sign, the Linen Hall Wall and Street Art across the BID area.

### Measures of Success

- Year-on-year improvement in levy payer satisfaction with cleanliness and safety
- Delivery of a targeted programme of enhanced cleaning, graffiti removal and environmental improvements across priority areas
- Increased visibility of City Centre Beat Policing Team and safety initiatives
- Tangible improvements in the appearance and usability of the public realm

**“We’re extremely appreciative of all the support from Belfast One towards the ongoing improvement of Belfast as a destination, for those living in, working in & visiting the BID.”**

**John Lunn**  
Lunn's Jewellers

# Supporting Local Businesses

## Our Five Year Focus

**We will be the first point of contact for businesses, providing practical support, timely and insightful data, more collaboration and faster responses, helping levy payers trade confidently and feel part of a stronger city centre community.**

### How We Will Support Local Businesses

**We will act as a rapid, responsive connector for businesses.** We will provide quick-response channels for reporting issues, coordinating with Council, PSNI and partners to solve problems and minimise disruption. Through the Business Crime Reduction Partnership, we will support businesses by sharing intelligence, promoting preventative measures and strengthening collective responses to crime and antisocial behaviour, helping businesses trade with greater confidence.

**We will strengthen the Belfast city centre business community and collaboration.** We will create structured sector roundtables, peer networks and shared campaigns that bring businesses together and amplify their impact.

**We will empower businesses with timely and insightful data.** We will publish footfall dashboards, monthly data briefs and an annual “City Centre Progress” report to support planning, benchmarking and performance insight.

**We will continue to support and grow the Belfast City Gift Card as a practical way to drive spend directly into city centre businesses.** Working with partner BIDs and stakeholders, we will expand participation, promote the card to consumers and employers, and strengthen its role as a tangible way to keep money circulating within Belfast’s economy.

### We will modernise our business support offer.

We will deliver a programme of workshops, seminars and networking opportunities, working in partnership with key organisations to provide digital, sustainability, technology and wider business skills, ensuring businesses are equipped to meet current and future challenges.

### Measures of Success

- Increased business satisfaction with BID responsiveness
- Strong attendance and engagement at sector roundtables
- Greater use and value placed on BID-generated data and insights
- Clear evidence that businesses feel more supported and connected



# Shaping A Better City Centre

## Our Five Year Focus:

**We will help shape a better Belfast city centre by influencing major decisions, guiding investment in infrastructure and ensuring the needs of businesses are understood, represented and acted upon. Representing around 700 businesses, we have a legitimate and influential voice and will secure a seat at the table on major city centre schemes. We will develop a clear mandate to guide our influencing work and ensure the needs of businesses are reflected in decisions on key projects.**

## How We Will Shape a Better City Centre

**We will seek to influence the major infrastructure projects that will impact Belfast city centre.** From Streets Ahead 5 and the regeneration of Royal Avenue and Castle Street to Glider Phase 2 and the Eastern Transport Plan, we will ensure these schemes are designed and delivered with Belfast One businesses in mind, minimising disruption and maximising long-term benefit.

**We will promote placemaking as a core city centre goal.** We will advocate for placemaking-led improvements in lighting, public realm, movement and accessibility, ensuring plans enhance the character and usability of the city centre.

We will continue championing improvements that only statutory bodies can deliver. We will make the case for consistent cleanliness standards, better lighting, safer streets, improved public transport access and enhanced public realm.

**We will amplify the voice of the business community.** Building on successful interventions, such as securing improvements to the public

realm in Castle Place and enhanced Christmas lighting on Royal Avenue, we will continue to step in where business needs are not being met, offering constructive, solutions-focused influence.

**We will harness our convening power to drive coordinated action.** Through regular multi-agency meetings, collaborative planning and shared problem-solving, we will bring the right partners together to resolve issues that no single organisation can fix alone.

## Measures of Success

- Positive business influence on major city centre schemes
- Delivery of improvements to public realm, safety and cleanliness standards
- Documented outcomes where Belfast One's influence has shaped decisions and had a measurable impact on city centre schemes
- Increased perception that the BID is an effective voice for businesses





# The BID Levy & BID Rules



## What is the BID Levy?

Belfast One BID is funded by a levy based on occupiers or owners of non-domestic property in the district, including public, private and 3rd sectors. Levy collection is sub-contracted under the Business Improvement District (NI) Act 2013 and all eligible levy payers have a statutory duty to pay, irrespective of how they voted. One of the advantages of this system is it prevents the “free rider” effect of a voluntary arrangement and means all eligible organisations contribute towards a shared fund that provides collective benefit. It also ensures the BID has reliable core funding and can represent the area independent of government.

Although the levy is based on the property rating system, it is not a tax, or a charitable donation. Each BID is time-restricted to a ballot of up to five years and within this time, spend for the district under the

legislation money is spent for the benefit of the district and all who live in, work in or interact with the area.

## How is the levy calculated?

Levies are calculated at **1.7%** of a (non-domestic) property's Net Annual Value (NAV), which means smaller organisations pay less and larger organisations pay proportionally more. If you occupy multiple property units, each has its own NAV and is charged.

Levy is invoiced for each relevant property or hereditament. New occupiers are charged daily, and daily % of NAV is applied until the end of the BID term. For all other commercial property, charges apply from the assessment date.

Where a property is newly built, the levy will apply once property NAV is confirmed by Land and Property Service. For a vacant property, property NAV is used as part of valuation process, which becomes the assessed NAV for that calendar year period, then the next annual invoice following the revaluation.

VAT will not be charged on the BID Levy.

## Who is liable for the levy?

Every organisation – irrespective of sector and within the defined Belfast One boundary – who occupies a relevant property predominantly with a non-domestic NAV, as defined by Land and Property Services, is eligible for the levy. When a property is vacant the occupier is defined as the Ratepayer. The owners of untenanted relevant properties or hereditaments will be liable for payment of the levy.

However, there are several important exceptions and discounts highlighted below.

## Exemptions

1. Every company that occupies commercial property with a NAV less than £20,000 does not pay the levy.
2. Properties whose primary purpose is to facilitate acts of worship as part of the core faith completion.
3. Properties that are exclusively used for public benefit, for example: an art collection, are not required to pay the charge. Items cared for and ultimately held for the good of the nation by an organisation exclusively for public benefit.
4. Shopping centres will be subject to a discounted levy rate of 1.275%, representing a 25% reduction from the standard levy rate of 1.7%.
5. Charitable organisations with a Net Annual Value (NAV) exceeding £40,000 will be liable for the BID levy at the discounted rate of 41%, where the premises are used for trading purposes, including the sale of goods or services.
6. Eligibility for the discounted rate will be subject to submission of appropriate evidence and approval by the Belfast One Board.
7. Charitable organisations with a NAV of £40,000 or below will remain exempt from the BID levy.





### When is the levy paid?

Organisations will be issued an annual invoice at the start of each financial year, covering the period from 1 April to 31 March the following year.

### What happens if i exit or enter the BID area during the year?

Any new eligible rateable relevant property or hereditament created during the lifetime of the BID and situated in the BID area will be obliged to pay the levy on the next chargeable day.

Any property removed from the ratings list during a chargeable period (1st April to 31st March each year) will be removed from the date the local authority is notified of the update by the Land and Property Services (not the effective date of the change). No refund will be made for that chargeable period.

The non-domestic ratings list will be updated for any changes in ratepayer, appeals, additions or removals and liability will be adjusted accordingly. There will be no refunds given for retrospective years as a result of successful rateable value appeals but changes in values will be reflected by a corresponding change to the levy for the year in which notification is received and for subsequent years.

### What is a voluntary levy payer?

An eligible organisation (those who fall under the levy rate threshold or those outside the BID boundary) who chooses to join the BID for a payment of £330 per year. This voluntary levy payment is set for private sector businesses that wish to join. Conditions create an organisation eligible to be voluntary levy payers for the BID term outlined and gain the benefits within

this period but are not eligible to vote in the BID ballot.

### The Ballot

1. Belfast City Council will send those responsible for eligible hereditaments to be subject to the BID, a ballot paper prior to 22nd January 2025.
2. Each relevant property or hereditament subject to the BID will be entitled to one vote in a forty-two day postal ballot which will commence on 22nd January 2026 and close at 5pm on 5th March 2026. Ballot papers received after 5pm on the 5th March 2026 will not be counted.
3. In order for the proposal to be successful at ballot the result will need to meet, as a minimum, three independent criteria which are: (a) of those ballots returned by the close, those voting in favour of the proposal must exceed those voting against it, (b) of those ballot papers returned by the close, the total rateable value of those relevant properties or hereditaments which vote in favour, must exceed the total of those voting against and (c) the turnout of ballot papers returned must be no less than 25% of the eligible rate payers entitled to vote in the ballot and total no less than 25% of the eligible rateable value.
4. The result of the ballot will be announced as soon as practically possible after the close of the ballot.
5. If successful at ballot, the new BID will commence delivery of services on 1st April 2026 and will continue for a period of 5 years to end 31st March 2031.

### Accountability & Transparency

Belfast One BID recognises the importance of accountability and transparency within its governance arrangements. The Proposer of the new BID and the BID Body is Belfast One BID, a not-for-profit organisation, limited by guarantee (NI 637120).

The Directors of the BID (the 'Board') shall be representative of levy-paying businesses. The Board will meet at least once a quarter, with responsibility for governance matters such as financial arrangements, contractual obligations, human resources, standards, performance and compliance. The Board of the BID may nominate and appoint Directors.

The Board shall appoint a Chair. Levy paying businesses are eligible to apply to the Board to become a Director. The Board shall have the ability to vary service delivery and expenditure allocation according to the changing demands of levy payers. However, any change to the BID boundary or to the levy rate proposed would require an alteration ballot.

The BID will file annual accounts at Companies House. The accounts will be available to all levy payers. The BID will monitor performance against annual objectives and will report to levy payers at least once a year. Regular updates through email bulletins, social media and business visits will keep businesses informed.

A survey with businesses will be conducted annually. An annual report and business meeting will provide information to businesses on the activities of the BID, including finances. Notification of the intention to hold a ballot was sent to the Department of Communities on 1st September 2025.



# Income & Expenditure

**In Term Three around 700 organisations will be eligible for the levy. Those who fall below the £20k minimum NAV are now exempt. This will raise a collected fund of £1.1m in year 1.**

In addition to the levy, the BID intends to enhance its core revenue via public grants, sponsorship and co-funded partnership projects. This funding will pass through Belfast One accounts and does not include wider investment the BID hopes to source into the district.

Anticipated income and expenditure for the five-year term is highlighted below.

**TABLE 1: BELFAST ONE BID INCOME (FULL £ FIGURES)**  
(Based on annual total income of £1,120,065 per year)

BID INCOME (£)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Total over BID Term
Invoicing total	£1,073,753	£1,073,753	£1,073,753	£1,073,753	£1,073,753	£5,368,765
95% Collection total	£1,020,065	£1,020,065	£1,020,065	£1,020,065	£1,020,065	£5,100,325
Additional Income	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£500,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£1,120,065</b>	<b>£1,120,065</b>	<b>£1,120,065</b>	<b>£1,120,065</b>	<b>£1,120,065</b>	<b>£5,600,325</b>

Total Over 5 Years: Invoicing £5.6m, Collection rate 95%

**TABLE 2: EXPENDITURE BY THEME (FULL £ FIGURES)**  
(Based on annual total income of £1,120,065 per year)

THEME	% Spend	Annual Spend	Total over BID Term (5 Years)
Promote	35%	£392,023	£1,960,115
Enhance	35%	£392,023	£1,960,115
Support	15%	£168,010	£840,050
Shape	5%	£56,003	£280,015
Central	10%	£112,006	£560,030
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£1,120,065</b>	<b>£5,600,325</b>

Total Investment over Five Years: £5.6m

# About the Board

**A BID board director must be an employee, director or owner of a levy paying organisation located within the geographic footprint of Belfast One BID. The board aims to reflect a representative membership of Belfast One organisations.**

Key sectors within the area include Retail, Hospitality, Professional services, Finance, Technology, Property, PR & design, Public and Third sector sector. Levy payers who wish to join the Board should speak to the Chief Executive Officer/Chairperson in the first instance.

The Board has three office holders: Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer – who are appointed for a renewable one-year term – and the Company Secretary position, which is also held by the Chief Executive Officer. The office holders form a policy and remuneration committee, which meets as required to approve items such as manager salaries and budgets – but are administered and monitored within budgets set and approved in advance by the full Board.

The Chief Executive Officer is the only Executive Director of the organisation and is supported by the team and Voluntary Board Directors who attend in a voluntary capacity.

The Board is supported by up to two public sector advisors. The Chair can also request representatives from the following sections – those within the geographic footprint and a community representative from adjacent neighborhoods. Individuals may input the Board as observers, but similar to the public sector representatives, are not entitled to join as a Director or holder and cannot vote on company business.

## BOARD MEMBERS

Name	Business / Organisation	Role
Leona Barr	CastleCourt	Chair
Martina Connolly	Belfast One BID	Chief Executive
Nigel Skillen	Diamond & Skillen Chartered Accountants	Treasurer
Andrew Irvine	Belfast City Centre Chaplaincy	Board Member
Conor McLoughlin	Marks & Spencer	Board Member
-	PwC	Board Member
Mark McAdam	CCD Solicitors	Board Member
Michelle Greeves	Victoria Square	Board Member
Norman Maynes	Translink	Board Member
Paul Connan	McDonald's	Board Member
Simon Little	Danske Bank UK	Board Member
Wilson Walker	Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company	Board Member
Zoe Watson	The Clover Group	Board Member
Lisa Toland	Belfast City Council	Advisor

# The Ballot: Your Vote Is Essential

## The BID Ballot: 22 January – 5 March 2026

Under government legislation, all Business Improvement Districts operate on a five-year term. At the end of each term, a ballot must be held in order for the BID to continue its work.

An independent ballot will take place to determine whether **Belfast One BID** will be granted a further five-year term. The ballot will be conducted by Civica Election Services on behalf of Belfast City Council, running for 42

days, running from **22 January 2026** and closing at **5pm on 5 March 2026**.

Each hereditament (rateable property) within the BID boundary is entitled to one vote in the ballot which will be conducted by post. All votes will be cast anonymously. Ballot papers received after the deadline will not be counted. The outcome of the ballot is expected to be announced on **6 March 2026**.







# How to Vote

For the ballot to be successful, the following two conditions must be met:

1. A majority of those who vote must vote in favour of the BID proposal.
2. The total rateable value (RV) of those properties voting in favour must exceed the total RV of those voting against.

If successful, the new term of the BID will commence on **1st April 2026** and will run through to **31st March 2031**, delivering continued improvements and services to support **Belfast City Centre**.



1. You should receive one ballot paper per eligible property by post, in advance of **22 January 2026**.
2. Please check to ensure each ballot paper is accompanied by a pre-paid return envelope.
3. Mark your vote clearly by placing an **X** next to your voting intention.
4. Write your name in **BLOCK CAPITALS**, state your position within the business and sign the form.
5. Each ballot paper must be returned in its **own separate return envelope**.
6. Post your completed ballot paper as early as possible to ensure it is received before the deadline.
7. If your ballot paper is lost or not received, please contact the **Belfast One BID** team at [info@belfastone.co.uk](mailto:info@belfastone.co.uk) or 07501 469010 immediately to arrange a replacement.



# Your Vote Is Essential

Between 22 January and 5 March 2026, businesses in Belfast City Centre will make an important decision about the future of our area.

Since 2016, Belfast One has delivered a wide range of initiatives that make it a cleaner, safer, vibrant and improved city centre environment. These services have become part of our everyday “business as usual” but they will only continue with your support.

Your YES vote is the only way these services can happen. We genuinely cannot do it without you.

✓ **YES - I support the continuation of Belfast One**

Our Key Services Will Only Happen With Your **YES** Vote

**VOTE YES!** 

**BALLOT OPENS 22 JANUARY 2026**

## WITH YOUR SUPPORT, BELFAST ONE WILL CONTINUE TO DELIVER

Dedicated PSNI City Beat Officers

Dedicated Belfast One Clean Team

Dedicated marketing & PR Support

Belfast City Centre Gift Card

Business Crime Reduction Partnership

Access to footfall figures and data

Pest control for your area

Involvement in promotional campaigns

Involvement in events to generate footfall

Member communications

Social media presence

PR opportunities

Free training workshops in City Centre location

Data analysis

Access to networking events

Dedicated Business Engagement Manager

Access to a rapid, responsive, connected team

Timely & insightful data

Influence and lobbying for the area

Initiatives addressing antisocial behaviour & crime

City briefing sessions

Weekly/monthly newsletters

Purple Flag status & Night Czar

Placemaking projects for the area

Sponsorship opportunities

**“Belfast One is always helpful, proactive and working hard to make our area clean, safe and vibrant. Their work has led to a great improvement in our area with events, creating more footfall, and a clean team enhancing our streets. They are not only important but have proven a necessity to the city and its continual growth. Belfast One’s training has been a fantastic boost for our team. Specifically, the customer service and sign language workshops offered a brilliant opportunity to gain new skills. The instructors were engaging and knowledgeable. We’ve seen a real positive impact. Highly recommend Belfast One services to anyone.”**

**Ben Ringland**  
Amelia Hall

**“The Belfast One Halloween Takeover was a huge success, and McDonald’s was delighted to be part of it. The footfall, animation, and sense of inclusivity created in the city throughout the week—especially with the pumpkin patch and family-friendly activities—brought a vibrancy that Belfast has been lacking in previous years. We’re hopeful that Belfast One will continue these fantastic initiatives moving forward.”**

**Paul Connan**  
McDonald’s

**“I have had a great experience with the team at Belfast One Bid and would really recommend becoming part of their community. Anyone I have worked with has been friendly and professional not to mention really knowledgeable about the city area itself. They do a great job promoting the Belfast city centre and encouraging people back into the area along with supporting local businesses. With some great initiatives I wouldn’t have known about if it wasn’t for the team reaching out and sharing.”**

**Leigh Walker**  
Glandore



**Business Improvement District**

1st floor Sinclair House,  
95 – 101 Royal Avenue,  
Belfast BT1 1FE

**028 9091 2740 • [belfastone.co.uk](http://belfastone.co.uk)**

**Belfast  
ONE**

Business  
Improvement  
District