



# BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

SECOND TERM BUSINESS PLAN

**2021 – 2026**

PROVIDING A STRONG COLLECTIVE VOICE FOR OUR  
MEMBERS IN THE **STRABANE BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

# STRABANE BID VISION 2026

To work in partnership to support, promote and advise our member businesses to sustain, transform and grow a vibrant Strabane Town Centre, creating positive opportunities for businesses and the community

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## CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Firstly I would like to say thank you for supporting Strabane BID over the past five years. It has been quite a journey and only made possible through the support and co-operation of YOU, our local businesses.

When we embarked on this journey in 2016 we never could have predicted a global pandemic or that we would be going to a renewal ballot in such uncertain circumstances. The whole intention of a Business Improvement District, of a business community coming together to be stronger as a collective as opposed to individually, is even more important and relevant now as we move forward into recovery and seek to prepare ourselves for the future. We know there are changes afoot, we understand that to survive and navigate those changes we need to rebuild and rethink how we operate.

I feel that Strabane BID will be instrumental in assisting businesses in recovery, focusing on our town centre and providing a strong collective voice for the business community. We have changed and adapted over the past 5 years, using your feedback as a driver for change, and that has enabled us to focus on the issues that affect our town centre, provide crucial business support, market and promote our wonderful unique town and represent businesses from local government level right the way up to Ministerial level.

I am delighted to present this proposal to set out how we intend to work for, represent and support all of our local businesses over the next 5 year period. Throughout the business plan you will see our successes over the last 5 year period but we want to better that and create a brand so strong that everyone will know about Strabane and the wonderful things we have to offer. It's an exciting time, especially with the £70m investment coming as part of the City Deal whereby our town centre stands to be transformed for the better and I would sincerely urge you to lend us your YES vote to make sure BID can represent and reflect your voice and views in the rolling out of this much needed radical change to our town. If BID ceases to operate it is unlikely that the business community will have that voice or impact into the project therefore it is vital that you take the time to consider our proposals and support us in voting YES.

Strabane sits on the cusp of being transformed and the potential effects on our business community could be great! So we ask that you come and lend us your vote before 23rd September 2021.



**Kieran Kennedy**  
Chair of Strabane BID



**Emma McGill**  
Strabane Town Centre  
Development Manager

## A MESSAGE FROM STRABANE TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

As most of you will know I took up post in November 2020, in the middle of a health crisis and at a time when our business community have faced the toughest of times. It has meant that I haven't been able to get out to visit a lot of you due to closures and public safety but it has given me time to review and reflect on what has happened over the past 5 years of Strabane BID.

There have been challenges, there's no doubt about that, but I also feel there have been many successes. The InStrabane gift card has been instrumental in supporting local businesses and bolstering the Strabane economy, it has been purchased from as far away as Australia and spent right here in Strabane! An active and widespread presence has been built up on social media leading to marketing and promotion of our town centre businesses and increasing footfall to premises, not to mention the fantastic additions that BID have made to the festive programme. These additions delighted and engaged people with pre-lit, walk through gift boxes and provided music throughout the town centre, again increasing the footfall and sense of spirit on Strabane's high street. Our 'Strabane BID Highlights' section provides more detail but it's been eye opening for me to see what the first 5 years have brought.

One of the reasons I am in post is a result of feedback from you, indicating that you wanted a dedicated resource for the town centre. BID listened and recruited me and I look forward very much to calling in to see you all now that our streets are reopening. I have been able to meet and engage with a few of you so far and that has been informative and eye opening, there is much to do and a lot to build on. A lot has been learned from BID 1 and the second stage of our journey starts here. I hope that by listening to our members and our members engaging with us that we can work forward to really put Strabane on the map and become a leading example of partnership working.

We must now accept that change will be part of our daily life going forward, Covid19 has changed how town centres operate all over the world making it hard to future proof this business plan but what we have tried to do is encapsulate the ability to react, redirect and become more flexible in our work. With challenges comes opportunity and a chance to develop, grow and evolve through our service to our businesses. Strabane BID will continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders and organisations to improve our town centre, make it cleaner, safer and more welcoming, a place that locals, visitors and tourists can relax, shop, eat and explore. The Strabane Regeneration scheme funded through the City Deal brings a wealth of opportunities and it's important that we ensure the voice of our business community is strong through BID representation to inform and drive that project.

I would like to thank each one of you for your support and contribution over the last five years and I hope that support will continue and grow as we embark on the next five years. I'm keen to get to work on the aspects that are important to you and reflected in this plan so I hope you will vote YES and give me the chance to do that.



## WHAT IS A BID?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a business-led and business funded body formed to improve a defined commercial area. The benefits of BIDs are wide-ranging and include:

- **Businesses decide and direct what they want in their area**
- **Businesses are represented and have a voice in issues affecting their trading area**
- **BID levy money is ring-fenced for use only in the BID area**
- **Increased footfall and spend**
- **Enhanced marketing and promotion**
- **Looking at infrastructure, pollution and movement**
- **Guidance in place shaping vision activities**
- **Facilitated networking opportunities with neighbouring businesses**
- **Assistance in dealing with the Council, Police and other public bodies**

BIDs were first established in Canada and the US in the 1960s and now exist across the globe, including in South Africa, Germany, Japan, New Zealand and Australia.

There are 330 BIDs across the UK with 8 of these operating in Northern Ireland.

# WHO WE ARE

First established in 2016 by a majority vote of the businesses within the BID area, Strabane BID is a means of regenerating Strabane town, increasing footfall and improving the trading environment.

Set up as an independent, not for profit company, the BID board contains representation from businesses and stakeholders in the BID area.

Each business within the area contributes by paying an annual Levy, based upon the rateable value of your business premises. By collectively investing in the area it gives more control to businesses and stakeholders to have their own input on what they want to see, and how they can deliver it.

We are dedicated to making Strabane a better place to live, work, visit and invest.

“We give the InStrabane gift card to our clients as a token to say thank you and wish them luck in the future. At the same time; using the cards enables us to support local businesses and retailers which keeps the money in our own town.”

**Ronan McAnenny**  
Ronan McAnenny Ltd



## THE FOLLOWING STREETS ARE INCLUDED IN THE BID IN STRABANE AREA, EITHER WHOLE OR IN PART

- Abercorn Square
- Barrack Street
- Bowling Green
- Bradley Way
- Branch Road
- Bridge Street
- Butcher Street
- Canal Street
- Castle Place
- Castle Street
- Church Street
- Derry Road
- Dock Street
- Eden Terrace
- John Wesley Street
- Lifford Road
- Main Street
- Market Centre
- Market Street
- Newtown Place
- Park Road
- Patrick Street
- Railway Street



**John Houston**  
Houston Homewares

“The presence of BID over the last few years has been an asset to the town centre. Working towards a consistent marketing strategy, promoting the town as a whole, and being a driving force behind the “Shop Local” message which was particularly effective during the Christmas 2020 season. Initiatives such as the In-Strabane gift card, shop window competitions and the 12 days of Christmas campaign have all positively impacted my business.”



# STRABANE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST 5 YEARS

## HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE



## THEME 1: PROMOTION, MARKETING AND EVENTS

**Purpose:** to increase local loyalty and footfall.

Strabane BID delivered on a number of various goals under this theme including creating regular events for both the day time and night time economy, examples include:

- **Christmas Fayre:** 2016, 2017 and 2018
- **Strajamba:** 2017, 2018, 2019
- **St Patrick's Day:** 2017, 2018, 2019
- Street animation in town centre throughout the year
- Collaboration with Council to deliver Inside Out programme.

There was also a strong focus on incentivising and rewarding people for shopping locally and supporting our town centre businesses. BID were able to deliver this through the hugely successful InStrabane Gift Card which was introduced in 2018. Below are some examples of the success of the gift card which has been vital to our local economy and business community.

- 70 businesses currently signed up to accept gift card
- Over £80,000 redirected back into Strabane economy through gift card sales
- Gift card is becoming increasingly popular with sales rising year on year:

Year	Gift Card Sales	Increase from previous year
2018	£9,293	N/A
2019	£21,285	+ £11,992
2020	£50,400	+ £29,115

- Increase in corporate sales accounting for £18,000 in 2020

Strabane BID has also pro-actively promoted and marketed Strabane both on a local and national scale. The continued rise in popularity of our social media pages are evidence of successful engagement with the public to promote and market the unique offering that Strabane has to give. BID has also become instrumental in running the hugely successful InStrabane Christmas marketing campaign through a focused approach which has seen our gift card sales rise substantially year on year. Examples of how Strabane BID have successfully marketed the town centre include:

- InStrabane website developed and launched
- InStrabane social media channels developed on Facebook and Instagram
- Significant social media engagement & reach with over 7,000 followers
- Christmas marketing campaign including billboards, press advertisements, radio advertisements and banners
- Christmas and Halloween window displays
- 12 Days of Christmas campaign showcasing 12 local businesses
- Monster Hero Safari trail
- Business spotlight features promoting individual businesses.



# STRABANE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST 5 YEARS

## THEME 2: WELCOME, ACCESS AND EXPERIENCE

**Purpose:** to improve accessibility to the town

Another aspect that Strabane BID have focused on is how people see the town and experience what Strabane has to offer, improving it where it is within our remit. Strabane BID have delivered the following aspects over their initial term:

- Street Dressing
- Commission of 70 no. planters / floral displays
- Christmas tree installed at the Tinnies
- 3 no. pre lit gift boxes installed in town centre
- Christmas music being played in town in the run up to Christmas
- Free off street car parking the weekend before Christmas 2020
- Christmas and Halloween window displays
- Monster Hero Safari trail
- Flann O'Brien literary tour due to launch June 2021
- Welcome and directional signage scheme in development

The above projects have all been well received by the business and local community, providing a welcoming atmosphere and invigorating the town centre. Most recently the additions to the festive programme have gained particular attention. The new gift boxes in town, Christmas tree at the Tinnies and music within the town centre all received hugely positive feedback and BID hope to expand on this in the future if a new second term is secured.



**3 PRE LIT CHRISTMAS GIFT BOXES INSTALLED**



**CHRISTMAS SHOP WINDOW DISPLAYS**



**FREE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING PARKING**



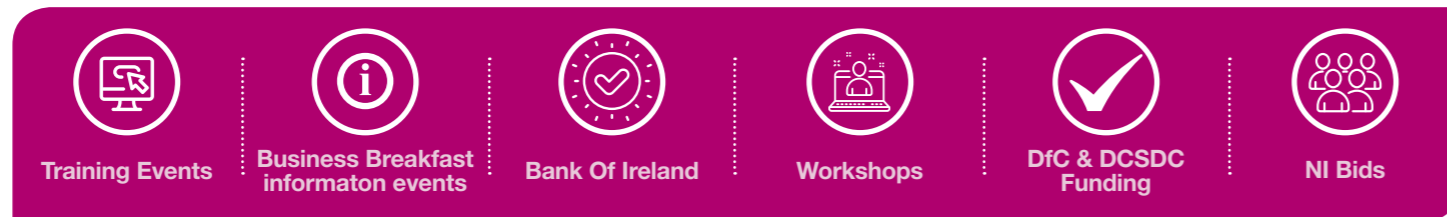
**MONSTER HERO SAFARI TRAIL**





# STRABANE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST 5 YEARS

## HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE



## THEME 3: REDUCING COSTS AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

**Purpose:** to support our town centre businesses and promote growth & prosperity.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of Strabane BID's work is the support that we provide to businesses operating within the town centre. Whilst all the above projects and initiatives support our businesses we also provide direct support enabling our businesses to access advice and guidance when they need it most. Some of the ways we have delivered under this theme are:

- Training events on Age / Dementia awareness
- Business breakfast and information events delivered
- Appointment of Bank of Ireland as preferred Merchant Service Provider enabling businesses to save money
- Collaboration with Council's Business Development Team to provide workshops on: GDPR, Social Media, Delivering the Perfect Pitch, Get Your Business Online, Business Reboot
- Collaborating with Invest NI to provide access to workshops and guidance

On a more strategic scale Strabane BID has also provided a collective voice for our businesses and attracted additional funding to the town, again examples of deliverables are:

- Collaboration with other NI BIDs to lobby central government
- DfC funding
- DCSDC funding
- Irish Central Border Area Network Ltd funding

These aspects are important going forward for our town to be recognised and listened to.



# MID TERM REVIEW 2019

## HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE



In order to remain relevant and provide the best service Strabane BID held a Mid Term Review in 2019 to establish additional needs of the business community and how BID could improve delivery.

The following examples represent some of the changes implemented by Strabane BID in response to the review:

- Revised action plan developed to become more relative to business needs.
- Increased communication and development of informative Newsletters distributed to levy payers.
- Recruitment of a Town Centre Manager to focus on BID projects, town centre issues and provide a central point of contact for all businesses.
- Focus on online marketing and social media engagement.
- 4 additional BID Board members recruited providing additional diverse skill sets and expertise.
- Establishment of working groups to focus on development of various aspects of BID i.e. Arts, Culture and Events and Marketing and Promotions.

One of the biggest changes BID have made in response to the Mid Term review is the appointment of a Town Centre Manager.

Emma McGill took up post in November 2020 and now acts as a central point of contact for the business community. Since coming into post Emma has been able to drive forward BID projects and fully focus on delivering for businesses. Since her appointment BID have seen improvements in gift card sales, business engagement and business consultation throughout the town centre.

Exciting times lie ahead with the planned and confirmed £70m investment into the Strabane Regeneration Project. With a Town Centre Manager now in place Strabane BID will be driving that project forward and in a position as a key stakeholder to ensure the collective business community in Strabane have a voice and an input into this project which has the potential to change the business environment significantly for the better.

Recently the biggest issue facing our businesses has been the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Strabane BID realised the need to be responsive and reactive to support our business's needs. Examples of assistance provided include:

- Access to funding
- Information and guidance on changing restrictions
- Providing template graphics and signage displaying COVID information for use in businesses.
- Informing of and signposting to other areas of support available.
- Being responsive to questions and queries from the business community.

As we now begin to emerge from restrictions it will be crucial that Strabane BID remain an active, accessible and relevant organisation to support our businesses in recovering, stabilising and setting the environment for growth.

We hope to be in a position to keep on delivering successes for Strabane businesses for another five years.

# OUR STRATEGY

In advance of going to ballot for a second term Strabane BID reviewed our mission, vision and values. We recognise the importance of remaining relevant and our responsibility to focus on developing and delivering services to benefit businesses within a fast paced and ever changing environment.

There are also big changes and opportunities coming to Strabane Town Centre, most notably the significant 70 million pound investment into the Strabane Regeneration Project through the City Deal and, considering BID will have a major part in representing the views of our business community we felt it was imperative to review and renew our strategies to take this into consideration.

Moving forward to secure a new five year mandate we want to ensure that you, our members, know what we're all about and how we are strategically looking forward to improve, regenerate and grow Strabane for the betterment of the business community, residents and visitors.

“Thank you to the BID team on the efficient resolution of our expired gift cards during lockdown. This enabled us to sort out a problem very quickly without ever impacting our customers which is brilliant. BID provide an important service to town centre businesses and this is just an example of one of them.”

**Keith Gordon**  
Valerie Manning Jewellery



SECOND TERM BUSINESS PLAN 2021 – 2026



STRABANE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

# STRABANE BID

## OUR MISSION

To be a strong collective voice for our members in the Strabane Business community

## OUR VISION

To work in partnership to support, promote and advise our member businesses to sustain, transform and grow a vibrant Strabane Town Centre, creating positive opportunities for businesses and the community

## OUR VALUES

### RESPECT

For each other and our members

### INTEGRITY

Impartial, objective and fair

### PASSION

For our community and Strabane Town Centre

### TEAMWORK

Supporting each other in serving our members

### COMMITMENT

To our Shared Vision

### PARTNERSHIP

Caring for our members and their businesses

# CONSULTATION

As well as re-evaluating our strategy Strabane BID consulted with member businesses to shape this business plan. A business survey was developed to enable businesses to give feedback on their priorities, what they wanted to see continue and what they thought should be changed or developed. The survey was promoted and communicated to levy payers who were encouraged to complete to shape what a second term for BID would look like, there was also a significant social media and press campaign advertising the survey. The process has been valuable in reviewing what has worked previously, what needs to change and what the next five years should look like according to YOU.



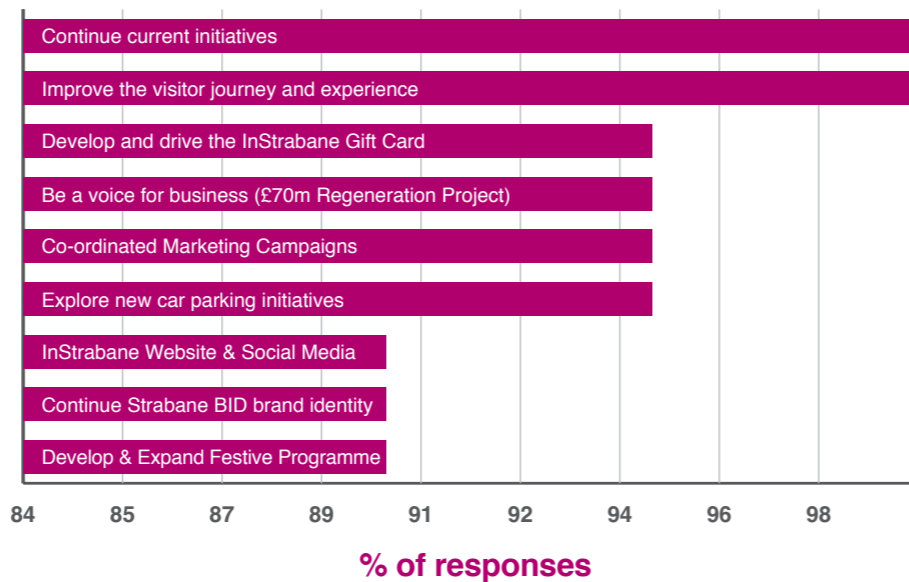
## WHAT YOU TOLD US

90% of respondents have been in business for more than 10 years, indicating that Strabane has a dedicated business sector who are happy to trade here.



**You were clear on your priorities for Term 2:**

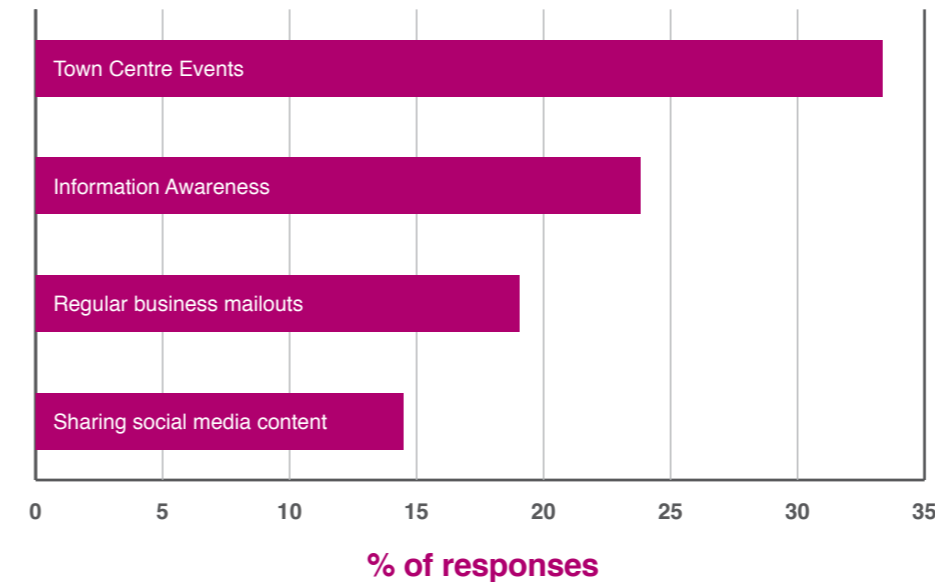
## PRIORITIES RANKED IMPORTANT OR VERY IMPORTANT



- 76% of respondents said they'd engaged with Strabane BID of which 88% said their experience had been positive or very positive.
- 80% of respondents thought that BID provided good value for money
- Strabane BID's performance in the Town Centre was rated as excellent by 14%, good by 57% and average by 24%

**These were the elements you felt were less important:**

## INITIATIVES RANKED NOT IMPORTANT OR LESS IMPORTANT



**88%**  
said their experience was positive or very positive

**80%**  
thought the BID provided good value for money

**71%**  
thought the BID performance was good or excellent





# CHALLENGES

You told us some of the challenges that we face together, these include:

- Encouraging footfall into the town centre
- Availability of shop front improvement grants
- Parking provision
- Better broadband
- Reducing costs
- Attracting shoppers from other places

Examples of your feedback to help shape our new BID include:

“Projects to reduce cost of waste disposal. Push for better broadband. More programs to attract Donegal shoppers”

“As there are a great deal of out of town visitors / consumers already coming to ASDA, McDonalds, the retail parks etc I would like to see a strategy to encourage this footfall into the town centre. I am happy to hear that BID are exploring parking initiatives for the town centre as this is consistently a topic I hear customers complain about”

“Difficult town centre for traffic to navigate around. I'd like to see this improved, unfortunately the large shopping outlets on the edge of town are a bigger attraction than the town centre.”



# LOOKING AHEAD TO TERM TWO 2021-2026

## TERM 2

We asked you to shape our proposals for the next five years. We listened and have incorporated your views and feedback in the development of our proposed activities and initiatives. The overwhelming feedback is that you want us to be a voice for business. As a direct response we have incorporated this into our mission and will ensure it is at the core of everything we do.

*Strabane BID's Term 2 will focus on 5 key themes:*

**1. PROMOTE**

**2. STRENGTHEN**

**3. SUPPORT**

**4. IMPROVE**

**5. ATTRACT**

# 1. PROMOTE

**Aim – To market and promote our member businesses and the Strabane area to drive footfall into the Town Centre and raise the profile of Strabane.**

Over the last five years Strabane BID has focused on marketing Strabane and it's unique offering and your feedback tells us that you think we did a good job and you want to see more of it. As we now look to recover from the effects of the pandemic it's crucial that we continue to market Strabane as a destination of choice. From our well known big branded chain stores to our small independents, our vibrant hospitality sector to our professional service sector we have a lot to celebrate and promote. So we will:

## **PROMOTE STRABANE BID**

We will continue to promote Strabane BID and raise the profile of what we do and how we can benefit your business. Our research showed a good awareness of our InStrabane brand but we feel we could do better with the BID brand. We will seek to rebrand to something that's more captivating and energising to the public and ensure that all our member businesses can use it too. This will give a more fit for purpose, destination branding that can be used to promote and showcase Strabane not just locally but also on a national level.

## **PROMOTE STRABANE**

We will continue to develop and strengthen our already solid Strabane marketing campaigns. We will look to expand our festive programme, complimenting and adding to our existing scheme to encourage footfall at the most popular shopping time of the year.

We will also continue to deliver seasonal marketing campaigns, building on the success of our past campaigns such as Halloween. Our businesses have really engaged with our campaigns over recent months and we want to grow and expand this to further increase footfall and activity in the town centre.

## **PROMOTE LOVE LOCAL, SHOP LOCAL**

We have seen huge success with our Love Local, Shop Local initiative last year with the community coming out in force to support our member businesses through purchasing the InStrabane gift card. At a time where Shop Local messaging was all over the nation Strabane managed to reap the benefits of a continued and ongoing campaign that's been building steadily over the last five years, this proved vital as we massively exceeded our target gift card sales and were able to ensure our local businesses benefitted. We will continue to promote this concept and encourage people to continue to buy local products and services.

## **PROMOTE OUR BUSINESSES**

We will continue to promote and showcase our local business offering via marketing and promotion through various mediums such as local paper, social media and online platforms as well as share content from your business across our multimedia channels. You are the building blocks to our town centre and you deserve to be showcased and celebrated. We recognise that we could do more for our service sector and we are committed to working with them to promote their offering and develop an online directory for customers to search, promoting services locally and beyond. In Term 2 Strabane BID will increase the amount of PR we deliver for our members.

## **PROMOTING INITIATIVES**

We will continue to promote and market our local initiatives and events. Your feedback told us that big events don't have the desired impact you would like on your business so we will look at developing our events and initiatives to encourage more engagement throughout the streets of Strabane and not primarily focused on one area. Whilst large events are still important to bring new audiences in to Strabane we will work with businesses to identify ways in which we can encourage them to walk the town centre and avail of our retail and hospitality offering.

## **PROMOTING SOCIAL MEDIA AND OUR WEBSITE**

Strabane BID has worked hard to build up our social media profile and it's been a success. We now have over 7,000 followers and they engage with us regularly. Social media has never been so important and trends suggest that people prefer the experience of 'bricks and mortar' shopping as opposed to online but they will check social media and websites before hitting the high street to see what's on offer. We need to be responsive to trends like these and will work to maximise our impact across both our social media and website platforms.



**Stephanie Rice**  
Good Vibes Wellness

“As a new business setting up we found Strabane BID a great help in launching and promoting our business. We participated in the business spotlight which resulted in a marketing piece focused on our business. This really helped to raise awareness of our products and services and encourage footfall through the door and web sales during COVID.

I feel that BID has been key to promoting Strabane and what we have to offer, giving us businesses a collective voice and improving the town centre. We need to work together, especially after this difficult year, so we will be fully supporting Strabane BID by voting YES.”

## 2. STRENGTHEN

**Aim – To maximise investment opportunities and external funding to strengthen and add value to Strabane’s offering.**

The Strabane Regeneration Project will be a key initiative in redeveloping, transforming and re-energising our town centre, it’s absolutely vital that we maximise the many opportunities that this brings. Strabane BID is a key stakeholder in driving this project forward and we need to ensure a YES vote so we can be instrumental in representing YOU and YOUR voice in its development.

### STRABANE REGENERATION PROJECT

#### What is the Strabane Regeneration Project?

The Strabane Town Centre Regeneration Project will revitalise Strabane Town Centre by creating new infrastructure, centred around the historic Canal Basin, which integrates a health hub, further and higher education campus, leisure centre, incubation units and high quality public realm that includes a revitalised outdoor performance space. The co-location of key public services on a significant town centre site affords the opportunity for innovative partnership working as well as creating a unique model of best practice in collaboration which will deliver better outcomes for the citizens of the area.

The project aims to create a destination space within Strabane Town Centre by regenerating the historic Canal Basin, a scheduled monument, providing a new economic hub linking key services collaboratively on a single site with increased connectivity to public

transport services through the construction of a pedestrian bridge opening up access to the bus station.

#### How will it impact the Town Centre?

In addition to the integration of health, education and leisure, the Strabane Town Centre Regeneration Project will transform the heart of the town centre, an area which is at present significantly underutilised, underperforming as an economic centre and has suffered from the development of edge-of-town development. The transformation of the site, centred around the historic Canal Basin, through the development of the buildings required to provide these integrated services, together with high quality public realm, greenway connections and enhanced civic space will bring life into the town centre and encourage private sector investment, unlocking development potential across the rest of the town, thereby creating additional job opportunities.

The project aims to regenerate Strabane Canal Basin, reconnecting Strabane and the Riverside area of Derry~Londonderry economically by using the original site of economic flow into Strabane, the Canal Basin, to stimulate footfall, investment and revitalise the town centre. The project will re-align the current emphasis of economic activity in Strabane, moving beyond the edge-of-town shopping, refocusing interest and activity back to the original economic heart in the town centre. The project will also offer a unique opportunity to strengthen cross border links by creating a line of investment and connectivity between the proposed cross border Riverine Park, through the current edge-of-town retail park, to Railway Street, the Canal Basin and ultimately the traditional commercial core of Strabane town centre.

### STRENGTHENING STRABANE TOWN CENTRE

We will continue to work alongside other key stakeholders in the development of this project and drive it forward. This is important to ensure that our members have a strong collective voice and input into the development and delivery of the project itself. BID will be the vehicle for representing you and your voice at the table of stakeholders, we will communicate your views and opinions on your behalf and help to shape the project to have maximum benefit for your business.

During construction of the project there will be many various services required that our local businesses should be primed to take advantage of. Strabane BID will ensure that local businesses are informed and ready to bid for such contracts.

### STRENGTHENING INVESTMENT & OPPORTUNITIES

We will continue to identify a range of investment opportunities that Strabane can access and bid for these on behalf of our members and the wider Strabane area. We have already accessed external funding from various government departments and funding bodies i.e. Department for Communities and ICBAN and we will continue to monitor availability of these sources including new avenues such as Shared Prosperity Fund.



## 3. SUPPORT

**Aim - To support and engage all BID members whilst further developing visibility of BID as a core town centre organisation dedicated to improving the trading environment.**

Through your feedback you told us that we're doing a good job of supporting you but we want to improve on this and do it even better. You told us that you want BID to be a visible entity and support for your business. Strabane BID will commit to this through provision of the following:

### LOBBYING

We will lobby on your behalf to ensure your voice is heard and views accounted for. This is more important than ever as we seek to rebuild after the pandemic and we need to be coming together as a collective to influence change both at a local and strategic level. BID will continue to lobby central government on issues affecting the trading environment and to provide a voice for the Strabane business community. We will continue to work together with other BIDs and stakeholders to keep up to date with what is happening at a strategic level ensuring we are active and ready to respond. At Strabane BID we will aim to empower our businesses, big and small, to channel their energy and voice through us to influence change and progression.

### GIFT CARD

The InStrabane gift card has been hugely successful and has had a significant positive impact on our businesses locking in over £80,000 into our local economy since its inception in 2018. It

continues to grow and we want to develop it further by investigating more corporate opportunities, more ways to use and buy the card and also encourage more businesses to participate and benefit from gift card scheme.

### BUSINESS SUPPORT

We will support your business through provision of training, workshops, access to information, business advice and start up support. We will respond to your training needs and signpost you to other areas of support and grant funding. We will continue to provide COVID recovery support and guidance including COVID signage and access to grant funding.

We will investigate shared services such as waste collections, guttering cleaning and other aspects that you address with us to help provide good value for money and reduce individual business costs.

We will look at developing an online business portal to service your needs and also develop an online business directory for your customers, listing the business offering we have in Strabane and detailing specifically our extensive service sector offering.

### PARKING

You told us that parking is a problem in the town that needs to be addressed. Strabane BID have previously successfully negotiated free parking at busy periods and will continue to strive for a parking strategy that promotes and encourages footfall into the town centre. In addition we will explore new and sustainable opportunities such as Parking Perx etc.

### TOWN CENTRE OFFICE

Strabane BID will set up an office in the town centre, providing a central point of contact and access to the Town Centre Manager. This will increase visibility of BID in the street and enable businesses to drop in with any issues or queries they may have.

### TOWN CENTRE MONITORING

We will monitor business satisfaction through surveys and feedback, footfall and vacancy rates in the town centre and collect data where applicable to help identify areas that need addressing. This information is vital to provide information to our members and monitor the performance of our town centre.

### COMMUNICATION

We will continue to inform you of; opportunities for your business, up to date advice and guidance, upcoming events and good news stories through use of email, social media and business mailouts. Keeping you in the know of all the latest news.



**Majella McDermott**  
Caffé Milano

“Strabane BID has been incredibly helpful for our business; particularly given the difficult economic climate we have all seen in the last year.

It has been great having the ongoing support of a town centre manager. Strabane Bid has been instrumental in driving people to Strabane through marketing, promotion and creating events to help make Strabane the destination of choice.”



## 4. IMPROVE

**Aim - To improve the visual impact of Strabane Town Centre to improve its attractiveness as a destination and drive footfall to member businesses.**

Strabane BID will work to make our town a more attractive and vibrant destination for visitors and businesses. The town centre in its current state needs to be reimagined and regenerated to become more visually appealing. The benefits of this are wide ranging as they will improve people's opinions of Strabane, attract new visitors and drive footfall to our member's businesses. Strabane BID aim to deliver this by:

### DELIVERY OF STREET LIFE PROJECTS

We will ensure that proposed public realm projects will proceed and be delivered. We will also identify new public realm improvements and lobby local and central government to implement these or access external funding where available to implement.

### DELIVERY OF REVITALISATION SCHEMES

We will work alongside key stakeholders to deliver shop front revitalisation schemes to improve the aesthetics of our businesses and streets.

### DECREASE THE NUMBER OF VACANT PROPERTIES

Strabane BID will endeavor to create a dynamic and attractive town centre by delivering targeted projects and initiatives to improve the streetscape and trading environment. This will lead to a place where businesses want to be therefore reducing vacant properties and developing a bustling town centre which is attractive to both businesses and visitors.



## 5. ATTRACT

**Aim - To attract new audiences to Strabane through provision of targeted and innovative initiatives in partnership with our members.**

We want to explore ways of attracting new people to Strabane thus increasing footfall and the trading environment. We will aim to do this by:

### THEMED EVENTS AND PROMOTIONS

We have run events in the past and we've taken on board your feedback of running initiatives throughout the town centre. Taking on this feedback we will run themed events i.e. busking, street animation and family orientated trails encouraging people to travel throughout the town centre and not stay in one place. This should improve the dynamics and movements of the town centre, benefitting businesses through increased visibility and footfall.

### PROMOTE A DIVERSE MIX OF OFFERS

We will continue to promote Strabane and our member businesses but in addition we will explore new concepts to build and expand our customer base through innovative schemes such as LoyalBe.

### PROMOTE THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Strabane BID will encourage and promote the development of an evening and night time economy in the town in a safe and clean manner, i.e. pavement cafes and restaurants along with music and ambience. This will develop and promote Strabane not just as somewhere to visit during the day but also somewhere to visit in the evenings to relax, unwind and socialise.



# HOW A BID OPERATES

As a business led entity BIDs are funded by businesses that operate within the defined BID boundary. Each business pays a levy and the funds collected are used to deliver additional benefits and services over and above those at local government level. Improvements are made to the town centre, business support is provided and projects developed and delivered with the purpose of benefitting businesses, residents and visitors and improving the local trading environment.

To become a BID a ballot must be held and the majority of businesses within the boundary must vote in favour, if successful the BID has a mandate over a 5 year period to deliver on the approved business plan. Strabane BID are nearing completion of their first 5 year mandate and are now seeking a second 5 year mandate.

## THE LEVY

When a BID is successful in a ballot the collection of a levy from all eligible businesses is mandatory. The levy amount is based on a percentage of the rateable value (NAV) of the property. Strabane BID's percentage will remain the same as Term 1 and is set at 1.5%. This is a fair and equitable way of funding additional projects over and above the remit of the local authority.



# THE BUDGET

## BID Income

Income	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5 Year Total
BID Levy	95,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	475,000
Derry City & Strabane District Council	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	150,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>625,000</b>

## BID Expenditure

Expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5 Year Total
Theme 1 - Promote	30,500	30,500	30,500	30,500	30,500	152,500
Theme 2 - Strengthen	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	20,000
Theme 3 - Support	18,520	18,520	18,520	18,520	18,520	92,600
Theme 4 - Improve	18,650	18,650	18,650	18,650	18,650	93,250
Theme 5 - Attract	18,650	18,650	18,650	18,650	18,650	93,250
Operating Expenses	29,680	29,680	29,680	29,680	29,680	148,400
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>600,000</b>
Contingency	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	25,000

# THE BID BOARD

Strabane BID's Board of Directors has a strong representation across the business sectors and bring an experienced and dynamic skill set to the table. Combined with a passion and dedication for improving the town centre and driving economic growth in Strabane the directors are responsible for ensuring the BID deliver on the business proposal.



**Kieran Kennedy**  
*(Chair) O'Neills*



**Michael Kelly**  
*(Vice-Chair) MK's Bar B&B*



**Kevin O'Connor**  
*(Company Secretary)  
DCSDC Head of Business*



**Deborah Deans**  
*(Treasurer)  
21 Training*



**Kieran Murphy**  
*Murphy's on the Green*



**Seamus Nealis**  
*CRAFT Training*



**Peter McDermott**  
*Pat Kirk Limited*



**Gareth McCay**  
*McCay Solicitors*



**Gillian Moss**  
*North West Regional College*



**John McGuinness**  
*Garden Depot*



**Dale Coyle**  
*Building Management Services*

# THE BALLOT

## IN ORDER TO SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVE A SECOND TERM FOR BID WE NEED YOU TO VOTE YES!

The ballot will be carried out by the independent body, Civica Group. Here's all the important information you need to be able to cast your vote:

- A ballot paper should be delivered to you from Thursday 12th AUGUST 2021 along with a copy of this business plan. You will receive one copy for every property you are eligible to vote for.
- Please vote YES and return your ballot paper, by post. Votes cast and received after 5pm Thursday 23rd SEPTEMBER 2021 cannot be counted so please make sure your vote is received on time.
- The ballot result will be announced on Friday 24th September 2021
- A YES vote will ensure investment in the BID area for a further 5 years, benefitting businesses, the local residents and attracting visitors to the area.
- A NO vote will see BID close and none of the actions from this business plan will take place.



## WHAT A NO VOTE MEANS

If the result is a NO vote Strabane Town Centre will lose £600,000 investment. In real terms this means:

- ✗ **NO - Marketing and promotional campaigns for Strabane town centre**
- ✗ **NO - InStrabane Gift Card**
- ✗ **NO - Collective voice to represent businesses or lobby on strategic issues**
- ✗ **NO - Town Centre Manager**
- ✗ **NO - Events programme**
- ✗ **NO - Festive programme**
- ✗ **NO - Business support programme**
- ✗ **NO - Training**
- ✗ **NO - To so many other benefits**

If BID don't get voted in for a second term then none of the actions in this business plan will be delivered, the investment into the business environment will be lost, Strabane will not have a dedicated marketing and promotional resource which has been so successful, the InStrabane gift card will no longer operate and the town will lose the newly recruited Town Centre Manager. The actions of the business plan will not be delivered by any statutory body, Strabane BID will cease to exist on 31st October 2021 leaving Strabane with no other organisation dedicated solely to the needs of the business community.

We need YOU, the businesses, to come out and support our plans. To work with us to achieve a better and brighter Strabane, to engage with us and feel the full benefit of what BID can do for YOUR business, YOUR town, YOUR livelihood.

Strabane BID was set up as an organisation to drive positive change in Strabane Town Centre and, with your support we have been able to make huge changes as laid out in our highlights section on page 7-10.

We really cannot do this without YOUR YES vote and we cannot be clear enough that if you vote NO Strabane BID will cease, the investment lost and there will not be an opportunity to get that back again.

“

Derry City and Strabane District Council has been a partner organisation to Strabane BID since its inception in 2016 and I have seen it grow and develop into what it is today, a key development tool in the Town Centre working for the benefit of businesses and lobbying and representing on their behalf. They have added value, supporting businesses and delivering initiatives that have added a new vitality and vibrancy to the town. Clearly the InStrabane gift card has played a substantial role in injecting a further £80,000 into the local economy and engaging a Shop Local focus, the success of this is to be widely celebrated and indeed built on over the course of the next term.

The emerging plans for the second term show that Strabane BID have concentrated and focused on aspects that have the ability to sustain and grow the Town Centre over the next five years. I'm confident that the proposals will add further value and stimulate growth to the region. Also, the Strabane Regeneration Project will be a key project in the town, bringing with it a wealth of opportunities for businesses and Strabane BID will be a key stakeholder in bringing this to fruition and providing a voice and input for the business community.

Given this past year the work of Strabane BID will be more important than ever to support the growth and prosperity of Strabane over the next five years. We look forward to a continuing and strengthening our partnership with them and would encourage you to give them your YES vote to enable their vital work to continue

”



**John Kelpie**  
Chief Executive, Derry City and  
Strabane District Council

## WHAT A YES VOTE MEANS

A YES vote will mean continued investment into the business environment to the tune of at least £600,000 over the next 5 years. It means security for YOUR business knowing that you will be able to benefit from marketing, promotion, initiatives, support and training for the next 5 years. A YES vote means:

- ✓ **YES to investment exclusively into Strabane town centre.**
- ✓ **YES to the ability to attract further investment from statutory bodies and funders.**
- ✓ **YES to having a strong collective voice working for you and your business**
- ✓ **YES to a dedicated marketing and promotions resource**
- ✓ **YES to your business having access to a Town Centre Manager dedicated to your business needs**
- ✓ **YES to campaigns to raise the profile of your business above and beyond the local area**
- ✓ **YES to the continuation of the hugely successful InStrabane gift card which has supported and benefitted businesses through the toughest of times**
- ✓ **YES to support and guidance for your business and to help it grow and evolve**
- ✓ **YES to having your say in and driving forward the Strabane Regeneration Project**
- ✓ **YES to a dedicated festive programme**
- ✓ **YES to festive lighting, decoration and music to help bring Strabane alive during the most important of shopping seasons**
- ✓ **YES to a making Strabane cleaner, safer and increasing its vibrancy**
- ✓ **YES to training and workshops**
- ✓ **YES to events to increase the footfall in the town centre**
- ✓ **YES to a better trading environment**

**THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT  
WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU GIVING US YOUR YES VOTE.**





## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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**12th**  
AUG

**Ballot Papers Issued**

**23rd**  
SEP

**Final day to cast your vote**

**24th**  
SEP

**Result Declaration**