

Watford BID Marketing & Communications

Strategy Year 2

Background

Watford town centre is a popular, vibrant shopping centre: a centre for finance, services, leisure, cultural and entertainment activities. It is also the home of many people, a central point for passenger transport movements and an historical centre with examples of high quality townscape and building design. The town centre is the focal point of Watford, one of its main attractions to visitors and a significant contributor to the quality of life. The town centre is also a major employer and main stay of the local economy. The BID area contains 496 hereditaments.

Watford is the largest town in Hertfordshire and the only non-metropolitan borough completely contained within the M25. The town benefits from excellent transport links, with the London Underground and Overground, West Coast Mainline, M1 and M25 all linking the borough with the rest of Hertfordshire, Greater London and the Midlands, as well as providing easy access to Heathrow, Luton and Stansted airports. It is a commercial and retail hub at the centre of a sub-region serving approximately 500,000 people within a 20-minute travel time, and 5,000,000 within 45-minute travel time.

Watford Town Centre

Watford is a linear town centre, said to be one of the longest High Streets in the UK, comprises of approximately 149,239 sqm of retail floor space. It has excellent links to local centres of commerce such as the Clarendon Road, the main business street that leads from the town centre linking it to Watford Junction Station. The station has in the region of 6.5 million visitors per year.

Watford's town centre has attracted visitors to its broad retail offer and vibrant night time economy for decades. Recent initiatives include public realm enhancements, the creation of New Watford Market, and a comprehensive events programme has enabled the High Street to fare comparatively well during a challenging period for town centres across the UK. The forthcoming £180m into Watford extension, due for completion in 2018/19, also demonstrates the town centres continued attractiveness to the market as one of the premier retailing destinations nationally.

In addition to its extensive retail offer the town centre has a service sector, diverse range of leisure providers as well as being a hub for arts & culture with two major venues in the Colosseum and the Palace Theatre.

The town centre also boasts a free public wi-fi network offering residents and visitors to Watford seamless, 'always on' connectivity at no cost with no time or bandwidth limitations.

"High streets are the heart of towns and communities. They have been for centuries. People are passionate about high streets. Fundamentally I believe that our high streets are uniquely placed to deliver something new. I believe that our high streets can be lively, dynamic, exciting and social places that give a sense of belonging and trust to a community"

Mary Portas

Population

The Census 2011 shows that Watford has a comparatively young population when compared with the Eastern and national averages. This reflects the borough's attractiveness for young professionals both already living and employed in the town itself as well as those working in London. Watford is attractive to first time house buyers working in London who are unable to afford London property prices.

Age range	Watford	East of England	England
0-4 years	7.50%	6.20%	6.30%
5-14 years	11.90%	11.50%	11.40%
15-25 years	12.20%	12.20%	13.10%
25-44 years	33.80%	26.50%	27.50%
45-59 years	17.90%	19.80%	19.40%
60 years +	16.80%	23.90%	22.30%

Demographics

Watford's population continues to grow.

Year	2015	2017	2020	2024
Est. population	96,400	100,000	104,400	109,609

2014-2024 in Watford

- 17th highest population increase in England at 14.8%

It is projected that Watford 2020 will see a much higher % of under 20's than the national average, continuing the trend of Watford's young population. This puts pressure on services such as schools and family housing but provides great opportunities too in terms of vibrancy of town and digital agenda.

- In 2015 there were over 150 languages in Watford schools. English 63%, Urdu 6%, Polish 3%, Tamil 3%, Pahari 2%, Gujarati 3%, Portuguese 1%, Romanian 1%.
- Births by birth country of Mother in 2015 showed 52% of births in Watford were to mothers born outside of the UK. This was up from 2014, 2013, 2012. 3rd highest outside London.

Watford has a very diverse population, this as a great strength and something the town can be proud of, it is a very real reflection of modern, vibrant, multi-cultural Britain. The town centre is just a stone's throw from several churches, a Mosque and a Sikh gurdwara, all sitting just outside of the BID area.

Major Projects

Over the next 10 to 15 years in the region of £1 billion pounds worth of investment occurring in Watford, with both public and private funding. This will provide new employment and housing spaces for the residents of Watford, with significantly improved services, transport infrastructure and leisure facilities. This investment will ensure the borough remains a highly attractive proposition for residents and business alike. Major infrastructure regeneration is key to unlocking local growth and there is strong support for Watford's growth plans at both a regional and national level.

Significant scale regeneration is happening within the town centre, Riverwell Watford (formally known as Watford Health Campus), Watford Business Park and the recently approved Ascot Road scheme, with further development planned for Watford Junction.

The Metropolitan Line Extension to Watford is listed in the UK Government's 2014 National Infrastructure Plan and Watford is key to delivery within Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) M1/M25 Growth Area, leveraging maximum investment from its economically significant rail and strategic road networks. Plans to extend the Metropolitan line have been delayed following a change of London Mayor and after Transport for London revealed an additional £50m of funding was needed for the project.

With over £1 billion being invested in seven major development projects over the next 20 years it will complement the town's role as a vibrant, thriving and diverse economic centre. The £180 million Intu Watford extension is due to open in 2018/19; expanding the existing intu shopping centre creating a 1.4 million sq. ft. retail and leisure destination.

The new intu Watford extension will have Debenhams as the anchor store and include larger retail units, ten restaurants, a Hollywood Bowl plus a Cineworld nine screen IMAX cinema. Once completed, CACI has estimated Watford will be promoted to the top 20 of its national retail destination ranking, alongside Edinburgh and Bristol. As a direct result, the town will also be reclassified as a premium London satellite.

Local competition

Watford has a wealth of local competition which is broad in its offering. Ranging from historic St Albans with its healthy tourist trade and quaint market town appeal, through to larger purpose-built centres like Brent Cross and Westfield London. Watford isn't the only destination with major investment planned and we must ensure Watford is well placed to fulfil its aspirations as Hertfordshire's premier town centre.

St Albans

St Albans stands out as a unique English Cathedral City. The city's colourful history can be seen in the Roman remains and the medieval architecture. It boasts attractive green parks and countryside, and an interesting and ancient history. The retail offer is typified by small independent shops mixed with large well know retailers, it also has a wide range of eating and drinking establishments. It's just 20 minutes from London St Pancras, a short hop off the M1 and M25 motorways, and within easy reach of London Luton and Heathrow airports.

Brent Cross

Brent Cross Shopping Centre opened in 1976 and although dated attracts a wide large audience from Hertfordshire and beyond. It is an easy option for Watford users as it's a short commute from Watford and offers 8,000 free car-parking spaces. Although it is smaller than more recent shopping centres such as the Metro Centre, Bluewater, Lakeside and Westfield

London, it has one of the largest incomes per unit area of retail space in the UK, with two major department stores as anchors.

The Brent Cross Cricklewood Development Partners recently secured planning permission for a £4bn masterplan to create a new town centre including 7,500 homes, 27,000 jobs, three re-built schools, new parks and community facilities, an additional train station on the Midland Mainline, and major road and public transport improvements. This is due to begin next year (2018).

This new town centre will have at its heart a transformed Brent Cross Shopping Centre, complete with cinema, dining and evening entertainment options and a network of covered streets & spaces.

Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes started the modern concept of the European shopping experience when the centre:mk opened in 1979. It has 240 stores and restaurants, desirable brands and high street names. Throughout the surrounding areas you can also discover boutique village shops and award-winning restaurants. The leisure hub and transport hubs are not directly linked to centre MK.

“With major shopping centres situated to the north (The Centre MK), south (Westfield, London; Brent Cross), east (Lakeside; London Colney; Westfield, Stratford) and west (Eden, High Wycombe) and numerous local shopping centre destinations in Aylesbury, Hemel Hempstead, St Albans, Harrow and Uxbridge, Competition is not only restricted to bricks and mortar retailers; competition stretches across the internet and through ecommerce retailers. The trend for online shopping is growing”

Source: Intu Watford

Footfall

Footfall cameras have been installed at 13 locations across the town centre, these count independently of the intu centre. The cameras were phased in from August 2015. Comparative annual data is now available and is monitored on a weekly and monthly basis. Footfall figures are available to town centre businesses via the Watford BID members hub and quarterly reports are prepared for the Watford Borough Council’s Leadership team.

Last year Watford’s town centre footfall reflected national trends throughout 2016 with a modest bounce of the high street, alongside a slowing of growth out of town and a downward slide in shopping centre activity. Springboard national analysis identifies an evolution in shoppers` requirements from bricks and mortar retail destinations, moving away from purely transactional based trips to trips that focus on offering a more rounded leisure experience. This coincides with online transactions which have increased compared to last year.

Football has a huge impact on town centre footfall, especially now Watford FC play in the premier league. Every home match day was the busiest day of that week, the number of visitors starts to increase 2 hours before kick-off, reaching its peak an hour before the game. The number drops down during the match. At the end of the game the number increases again, as the peak of the afternoon.

The Intu redevelopment started in March 2016, this has also had a major impact on town footfall with numbers dropping further than we would expect when compared with any towns undergoing major development. This drop was particularly steep in September / October 2016 but spring 2017 has shown footfall numbers stabilise, even showing a modest increase mid year. Works has been done by Watford Council, Watford BID and Intu, setting up a working party to focus on movement through the town, with planned public realm work

hopefully rectifying any issues caused by the redevelopment / hoardings and construction works.

Intu Watford has its own footfall counters within the centre and actively monitors its footfall compared with the rest of the town centre. These reports are shared with intu retailers and are not widely available.

Example Footfall : May 2016 vs May 2017

	Year to Date % Change		Year on Year % Change		Month on Month % Change	
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
Watford	▼ -4.2 %		▼ -5.4 %		▼ -3.3 %	▲ 3.0 %
Greater London	▲ 0.1 %	▼ -2.3 %	▼ -2.6 %	▲ 0.8 %	▼ -2.4 %	▲ 2.8 %
UK	▲ 0.5 %	▼ -2.0 %	▼ -2.1 %	▲ 1.5 %	▼ -1.0 %	▲ 3.1 %

Watford BID Ltd

In 2015, the Town Centre Partnership (TCP) proposed the creation of a Business Improvement District for the town. The TCP Board comprised of representatives from all sectors across the town centre including retail, night time economy, education, hospitality etc. In October 2015 businesses in the town voted for the creation of a Business Improvement District for the town. Of those businesses who returned a ballot paper (43.3%), 77% voted in favour for the creation of a BID.

Now fully established (since April 2016) Watford Business Improvement District (BID) Ltd has grown to be an imaginative and dynamic organisation run for the benefit of businesses in the town by the businesses in the town.

After many years of little official ownership ‘Watford For You’ (WFY), the consumer facing brand of the town, was transferred to Watford BID in April 2016 to act as ‘guardians’ of the brand. The Watford BID Marketing & Communications Manager took full control of all channels/activity, making WFY the official consumer brand of the BID with aspirations of becoming the towns overarching marketing brand, working with all major stakeholders and partners.

The Watford Business Against Crime scheme transferred to Watford BID in April 2017, after previously sitting under the Watford & West Herts Chamber of Commerce. The scheme is focused on information sharing, which links retailers directly with each other, the CCTV centre and nominated PCSOs and police officers who work in the town centre, via a radio link system. The BID appointed John Hattingh as the new Watford Business Against Crime co-ordinator in late spring 2017.

Watford BID’s vision was shaped by extensive business consultation.

“Watford town centre to be the region’s premier centre for retail, leisure and business, a place where everyone enjoys spending time, well maintained with a variety of offerings a

place where businesses are thriving.”

The Watford 2016-2021 BID Business Plan identifies three key priorities for the town:

We want Watford town centre to be:

- The region’s premier centre for retail, leisure and business
- A place where everyone enjoys spending time
- Well maintained with a variety of offerings
- A place where businesses are thriving

We will do this by focusing on the following themes:

- Promotion, Marketing & Events
- Enhance the look and feel of the town
- Working Together to ensure the future of the town

What does success look like?

- Watford BID / WFY to be the overarching brands in the town, supporting and complementing key projects and stakeholder work streams
- Improving perceptions of the town from stakeholders and consumers
- Buy in from levy payers, instilling a sense of pride in being a BID town
- Support and recognition from key town stakeholders
- Consumer confidence at a high, demonstrated by increased footfall, dwell time, spend and visits
- Successful BID ballot renewal in 2021

How will we do this?

- Raising awareness of the town’s wider offer
- Promote and support businesses
- Making the visitor journey even better with excellent access to town information
- Clear regular communication with our businesses / levy payers
- Work in partnership with stakeholders to use all communication channels effectively and to maximise return on investment, ensuring value for money.

Watford BID marketing channels

Year 1 of Watford BID has seen marketing and communications channels strengthen and develop, offering the best possible support to businesses around the town. We communicate to visitors via the Watford For You brand using the website, social media channels, print/digital advertising, radio broadcast as well as taking ad hoc opportunities as they arise.

Watford For You Digital consumer channels	Watford BID Digital corporate channels
www.watfordforyou.org www.twitter.com/WatfordForYou www.facebook.com/watford4you www.instagram.com/watford_for_you www.instagram.com/watchwatfordgrow	www.watfordbid.co.uk www.watfordbid.co.uk/hub www.twitter.com/watfordBID www.twitter.com/watfordBusiness www.facebook.com/WatfordBID www.linkedin.com/company/watford-bid www.youtube.com/channel/UCI-OWz0Y0jevYI4mehsPFQ

Social media channels continue to strengthen in year two of Watford BID, with 14k followers across all channels reaching on average 100,000+ people per month. Alongside the websites they remain a key communication channel to highlight offers and promotion from our town centre businesses as well as local news and events. We use the 'Watford For You' brand to engage with consumers while business news and updates are communicated through Watford BID branded channels. Alongside digital channels we also use the following marketing tools:

Watford For You Consumer activity	Watford BID Corporate activity
Watford visitors guide Watford B2C handouts with map Watford weekender brochures Press articles / advertorials Event sponsorship Instameets (photography meet ups) Outdoor advertising (Big screen / WFC screens)	Seasonal newsletters Monthly / Ad hoc email updates Hardcopy leaflets / posters 121 meetings / workshops 'Door to door' deliveries Levy payer forum B2B event Networking events

Building on the successes of Watford BID year one

With an overall vision and detailed business plan (as published in 2015 pre-ballot) Watford BID followed through on its aims and objectives in year one focusing on its 3 key themes as mentioned previously.

Watford BID: Year one activity at a glance

Watford in Bloom

In our first year of operation Watford BID put in place 116 additional floral displays around the town centre. The theme in 2017 was red, white and blue to commemorate the Queen's birthday and Olympics. These consisted of:

- 54 double cubes each containing 250 plants
- 19 three tiered planters
- 27 baskets over railings
- 16 hanging baskets

Christmas Lights

Watford BID increased the number of Christmas lights and displays in the town by 100%

- Additional were also put in place on Market Street and outside the Peace Hospice
- We hosted the first town centre Christmas Lights switch-on featuring a snow king and queen on The Parade – the event launched a co-ordinated Winter in Watford campaign

Winter in Watford

This campaign saw Watford BID co-ordinate a seasonal marketing campaign in partnership with the Colosseum, Watford Palace Theatre and Watford Borough Council – we took the campaign on the road with bus backs promoting Watford.

Service Excellence Awards

At the end of February, the town's businesses celebrated customer service excellence in Watford. 340 business representatives attended our awards ceremony at the Watford Colosseum. There were 15 award categories plus an outstanding employee award won by Matt Caylor from Jury's inn.

Watford Weekender

In October 48 businesses participated in our first Watford Weekender offering discounts, promotions, activities and events across the town. Prizes to the value of £5,000 were also donated by local businesses.

Supporting and sponsoring events

Watford BID sponsored the Imagine Festival and Diwali – these are important events which are well supported by residents and visitors to the town. We also played an active part in supporting and promoting other Big Events happening in the town.

Promoting Watford to our customers

We have over 14k followers across 2 websites & 9 social media channels reaching over 100,000 people per month. We post most days, covering days, evening and weekends, aiming to keep Watford up to date with the latest news, offers, events and promotions.

We produced 15,000 Visitor Guides to Watford which were circulated at the Masters Golf Tournament at The Grove and via information points across the region.

We have promoted Watford For You via a refreshed website and through a variety of social media channels plus we have used advertising and radio opportunities.

We have partnered with the Watford Observer in numerous campaigns which helped us promote Watford to a broader audience.

We negotiated the all-star package worth £6,000 free of charge at the Big Screen on the Beach, securing 352, 30 second adverts across this summer event.

We negotiated free pitch side and digital screen advertising at Vicarage Road stadium (home of Watford football club) reaching both home and away fans.

We secured a regular column in the Watford Observer highlighting the work of the BID every 6 weeks both online and in print.

There are now over 3400 uses of the #WatfordForYou hashtag on Instagram and we have tweeted over 15,000 times to date.

We have secured over 100 pieces of editorial press coverage in our first year ranging from print newspapers and glossy magazines to online website and blogger coverage.

Communicating with businesses

The Watford BID website and BID members hub went live early in the BID's first year this features regular updates about football across the town plus other items of interest and news. Hits to the hub have been encouraging with an average monthly hit rate of 347 unique users.

At the end of each month a news update is circulated to all those businesses on our email database. We have email addresses for 259 business, 74% of the total number of businesses in the town centre.

We have produced 4 (12 page) newsletters over the course of the year – these have been hand delivered to every business in the town and emailed to both businesses, local contacts and residents on our database.

In February, we hosted a B2B event and invited our partners and other stakeholders working with us from across the town. We combined the day with a selection of practical workshops ranging from introductions to the WFY brand to social media marketing, licensing, online security & fraud prevention.

Watford SWOT

Looking at a SWOT analysis allows us to focus on actions which will capitalise on strengths and opportunities whilst negating the impact of weaknesses, protect against threats and shape the delivery plan. The local environment continues to change with the town redevelopment and extension underway, plus new additions to the high street, and many edge of town centre developments and projects taking shape. The town is changing at a rapid pace. It is vital that we retain existing town centre users through this process, bringing them along on the journey. This will ensure we do not lose footfall, and trade to our

neighbouring town centres at this crucial time. We will need to stabilise the business base in the town to try and reduce movement.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access and good public transport links • Diverse town centre offer • Major town projects more than £1.5bn in investments • Premiership football team • User friendly town – predominantly pedestrianised – lack of conflict with vehicles in a large part of the town • Watford BID in place for a 5-year term • Large indoor shopping centre, Intu Watford, with its £180 million extension project – significant investment is being made in both the town and wider environs. • WFY brand established in the town • Proximity of West Herts College to town centre • Strong & large business community on edge of town centre. • Significant number of car parking spaces across the town (5,000). • Commitment of Council and partners to Big Events programme and town centre activities • Installation of free town Wi-Fi • Purple Flag awarded for the 3 years. • Attractive to multi national chains • Strong local community links, buy in from key local stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low number of independent retailers, restaurants and bars • Perception of high parking charges. • Perception of traffic congestion and parking problems in peak times i.e. weekends. (ring road / WFC home match days) • Pressure on household expenditure • Disproportionate rise in house prices – the housing mix in Watford is dominated by one bed flats with limited land available to develop a wider housing mix • Strong commuter town with many residents commuting out of the area for work and leisure time • Perception of lack of diverse leisure or entertainment offer (Evening economy vs far stronger day / night time) - perceived to be dominated by young people • Inconsistent hours between the high street and Intu centre. • A perceived 'disconnect' between the Intu centre and the high street • Length of the High street, many are unwilling to travel from end to end • Proximity to London and other urban centres can be an issue as many residents don't stay local at weekends
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intu Watford extension (due 2018) which will create an early evening economy, linking day and night time visits • Major projects and level of investment in Watford (public & private sector) • Click and Collect is a growing market (we have the opportunity to attract people into town with collection of online purchase, converting them into town centre users) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing economic trends – uncertain predictions for 2017/18 causing consumers to cut back on leisure time spend • Brent Cross an attractive alternative due to free parking • A perception of congestion in town centre especially when in development stages • Consumers see Watford as Intu only, rather than a wider high street / leisure

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain high awareness within catchment area, Watford is a dynamic and prosperous town centre – evidence by significant levels of investment • Maximising opportunities with social and digital media to provide two-way dialogue with visitors and residents • Growing the ‘Watford’ brand, ensuring this is used by key partners and major stakeholders across the town, creating one overarching marketing brand. • A chance to change the perceived lack of diverse leisure or entertainment offer as Watford has a strong cultural and arts offer • Brent cross have an extensive works planned so a chance to convert their customers to Watford • Premiership football gives us huge footfall and access to away fans 	<p>offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intu Extension works impact access and block flow to traders beyond the hoarding (short term) - • During intu extension development phase – significant loss of businesses will impact on customer baseline and ability of town to maintain existing foot flow and loyal customer base • Internal refurbishments at intu Watford ahead of the launch of the intu extension may further hamper use of the centre and town and perceptions of access • Additional visitors from London and other areas coming to Watford at night impacting on safety / Police etc • NTE is in decline nationally, this will impact on Watford as one of the nightlife hubs of Hertfordshire • Low unemployment limits ability to recruit and fill vacancies • Growing number of people undertaking retail purchases from home and using home delivery
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Aspirations for year two

- The night time economy (NTE) is key for Watford and an area we wish to target in year 2, alongside how we tackle vacant units. (Please see specific NTE strategy for detailed information)
- The Watch Watford Grow campaign will be key in 2017/18 as the Intu Watford development reaches its final year. It will be crucial to bring local businesses, residents and visitors along on the journey as we reach completion
- We will continue to grow and engage our audience using the Watford for You brand (consumer) and Watford BID (Business / corporate), and develop our brand awareness to strengthen our audience / engagement figures
- We will undertake a review of Watford For You – and consider the best way to market Watford in the future to both residents and visitors

It is of vital importance that we take levy payers / the business community along with us on the journey, keeping them updated of BID developments, projects and results.

Year 3 strategy will focus on marketing our town regionally / nationally (including tourism / group visits) something we haven’t done during the disruption of the redevelopment / building stages.

Year Two: Delivery Plan

The Delivery Plan covers in detail what we hope to achieve in year, and how we will measure success. This Delivery Plan is work in progress, changing and evolving with the economic climate and local trading conditions but it does provide the foundations for the programme of works we will deliver in year 2.

Promoting Watford to consumers

Objective	Action	Measurement
<p>Enhance and improve the way we market and promote Watford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve the brand and brand awareness of Watford increase the level of marketing and communication activities undertaken to promote Watford use technology creatively and explore new ways of enhancing the visitor experience and access to information about the town, services and businesses 	<p>Create compelling campaigns to engage target audiences with the Watford offer</p> <p>Fully utilise marketing opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press coverage Editorial coverage Advertising coverage Digital channels (web/social) Outdoor advertising Print (Visitor guides/maps etc, B2C handouts) Radio Bloggers / Community groups Stakeholder channels <p>Undertake a comprehensive review of how Watford is marketed and branded in the future, working with partners and key stakeholders</p>	<p>Grow website hits and social media followers by 10% year on year</p> <p>Gather feedback from both consumers, businesses, partners and stakeholders via research undertaken following campaigns</p> <p>Improved perception of Watford and it's offer (This will require qualitative analysis which will be researched, costed and undertaken at year end 2017/18)</p>
<p>Engage town centre workers with the offer available to them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and enhance the town's offering to employees / workers in the town 	<p>Create a marketing campaign targeting employees / workers to encourage sign up to the employee app</p> <p>Communicate and promote the app to businesses through our digital channels, monthly updates, e-shots and</p>	<p>Number of employees sign up for the App</p> <p>App usage (see analytics)</p> <p>Businesses feel the benefits of providing offers, shown by additional sales, appointments and footfall</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the new Watford BID employee app, build a good base of employees Encourage businesses to sign up and ensure offers are available 	<p>newsletters</p> <p>Support businesses with ideas and best practice to create offers.</p> <p>Highlight case studies of successful business offer showing benefits / results of hosting offers on the app</p>	
<p>To attract town centre users from neighbouring towns and cities within a 30-minute drive, bus or rail catchment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight excellent transport links to and from Watford 	<p>Focus on residents and target visitors from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Albans MK Harrow Brent Cross Bushey Oxhey Northwood Harrow <p>Utilise bus back advertising as well as at key rail & bus hubs</p>	<p>Analyse data from marketing campaigns, social media and events to pinpoint where our town centre users travel from</p>
<p>To provide people with the information they need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight Watford's hidden treasures Promote Watford as a retail, leisure and cultural destination Work with businesses to showcase the variety of the local offer 	<p>Undertake research to establish how people find out about Watford and its offer – ensure information is accessible to all</p> <p>Ensure our digital channels contain up to date information on travel / transport and how to access the town</p> <p>Produce visitor guides, maps, B2C handouts to help wayfinding in the town</p> <p>Support businesses with promotion and marketing through our digital channels, marketing campaigns and press coverage</p>	<p>Feedback from businesses</p> <p>Increased footfall and dwell time in the town centre</p>
<p>Promote the positive impact of our floral displays, street art project and Christmas lights installations</p>	<p>Consumer photography competition</p> <p>Increase press coverage of key projects</p> <p>Use our website and social</p>	<p>Ensure that Watford BID are recognised for the work they do in enhancing the look and feel of the town centre</p>

	media to build excitement in the lead up to major projects, continuing focus as we move through each season	
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Business to business communications

Objective	Action	Measurement
<p>Effective communication with businesses and stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host meetings, social exchanges and networking events to ensure we stay in touch with our businesses, and provide businesses and partners with the opportunity to meet each other 	<p>We will maintain our regular BID email bulletins and monthly updates</p> <p>Ensure the Watford BID website and Members Hub are maintained with up to date relevant information</p> <p>Hold an annual information session / network event to keep levy payers informed about what we are doing in the BID area</p> <p>Create a minimum of 4 BID newsletters per year and distribute these in both hard copy and electronically</p> <p>We will work with businesses on selected marketing and promotional activities where we can mutually add value</p>	<p>Feedback from businesses in person via 121 meetings, forums and networking events</p> <p>Annual survey to capture feedback and best practice</p> <p>Gather ad hoc feedback from business during our day to day interactions</p>
<p>Actively manage the level of vacant units in the town centre</p>	<p>Continue to work with agents managing void units to promote Watford as a key destination to locate</p> <p>Identify problem units</p> <p>Continue to create a bi-monthly vacancy list to showcase retail and business units available in Watford</p>	<p>Monitor the level of void units</p>
<p>Engage our businesses with the shop link scheme and business against crime co-ordinator</p>	<p>Fully utilise b2b marketing opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular email updates to businesses Inclusion in our BID newsletter 	<p>Ensure we have a functioning scheme and a fully establish our BAC co-ordinator following taking it on in Spring 2017</p> <p>Grow the number of</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 121 support to businesses that wish to enter 	businesses on the scheme
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Events

Objective	Action	Measurement
<p>To provide high quality experiences in the town centre that will attract residents and visitors, increase their dwell time and spending, and encourage return visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor and support key events in the town managed and developed by other partners and organisations. These can include the Imagine Festival, Big Beach & screen, Diwali and the 'Big Skate' ice rink. 	<p>Continue with activities such as the floral displays and Christmas lights which improve the look and feel of the town</p> <p>Explore opportunities for new eye catching projects such as street art and clean art.</p> <p>Promote our events and partner town centre events through a broad range of marketing channels to ensure we reach our targeted audiences (specific to each event)</p> <p>Where appropriate sponsor and support partner town centre events</p>	<p>Retailers and residents have pride in our town (This will require qualitative analysis which will be researched, costed and undertaken at year end 2017/18)</p> <p>Increase in footfall improves from the current level</p> <p>Increase in ticket sales</p> <p>Improved public perception of town</p> <p>Public enjoyment of events</p> <p>Development of specialist events such as Restaurant Week</p>
<p>Promote the Service Excellence Awards (SEA) to both our BID business community and consumer audience</p>	<p>Fully utilise b2b marketing opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated SEA website Regular email updates to businesses Inclusion in our BID newsletter Door to door leaflet drop 121 support to businesses that wish to enter <p>Promote and engage consumers with both the premise of the SEA awards, voting and results</p>	<p>To bring together businesses from all sectors of the town centre for a night of celebration that they would enjoy and with which they would feel proud to be associated, while ensuring value for money throughout.</p> <p>To generate positive publicity about Watford town centre and its businesses & build a relationship with the local paper</p> <p>To build stronger relationships with BID businesses.</p> <p>To further establish the</p>

		<p>brand 'Service Excellence Awards' and have it associated with Watford BID.</p> <p>To demonstrate to external stakeholders that Watford BID is a professionally-run organisation that is serious about making a difference in Watford town centre.</p>
Deliver new and compelling events in the town	<p>We will deliver a variety of new events and promotions, and will look to link into national initiatives such as British Food Fortnight with Food & Drink / Restaurant Week, plus ideas as mentioned above such as 3D street art</p> <p>We will support and enhance town centre wide Christmas activities, promoting the Watford Christmas experience through the 'Winter in Watford' campaign working with our partners</p>	<p>Increased footfall and dwell time in the town</p> <p>No of businesses participating and consumer take up of offers</p> <p>Analyse social media engagement and feedback from visitors / residents</p>
Explore opportunities for 'pop up' live music performances across the town centre	<p>Work with venues / local radio stations to source local bands / artists to perform. Marketing this to the appropriate audience</p>	<p>Customer and business feedback</p>

Night time economy

Objective	Action	Measurement
<p>To promote and enhance the town's night time economy offering to visitors / young people, ensuring Watford is a key destination for nightlife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showcase nightlife offer Highlight arts and culture offer Communicate 	<p>Work with partners to promote the town as a safe and welcoming destination</p> <p>Promote the town as a Purple Flag destination – the only one in Hertfordshire</p> <p>Work with bars, clubs, restaurants and theatres to promote offer (upcoming shows, special appearances, events, offers and seasonal menus)</p> <p>We will develop an 'Alive after 5' campaign (see objective below)</p>	<p>Visitor numbers to the town increase across the evening / night time</p> <p>Ticket sales in key venues</p> <p>Feedback / anecdotal evidence from Pub Watch members and NTE businesses</p>

Watford's excellent transport / travel links		
To promote and enhance the town's arts & culture offering	<p>Target key demographics to engage with theatre, comedy and dining offers etc</p> <p>Utilise transport networks to promote Watford (bus backs, station advertising etc)</p>	<p>Visitor numbers to the town increase across the evening / night, measured using footfall counters</p> <p>Ticket sales in key venues</p>
To promote and enhance the town's early evening offering stimulating after work trade	<p>Research current 'Alive after 5' campaigns run in other town centres / BIDs and look to develop a similar campaign in Watford</p> <p>Highlight the offer available to workers in the town centre and Clarendon Road</p> <p>Create a specific marketing campaign / visual identity for Watford's 'Alive after 5' offer</p>	<p>Visitor numbers to the town increase across the early evening measured using footfall counters</p> <p>Data from the employee app to capture spend / uptake from workers</p>

Watch Watford Grow

Objective	Action	Measurement
Communicate the 'Watch Watford Grow' message during the Intu development build	<p>Consumer photography competition</p> <p>Website developed and up and running (showing timeline of developments / news etc)</p> <p>Continue to post regular social media updates showing progress of the works</p>	<p>Residents and visitors feel fully informed and engaged with the development</p> <p>Creating a sense of excitement and anticipation for the new extension opening with businesses and consumers – measured via research into public understanding of Watford and offer</p> <p>Number of website hits/ visits / engagement</p> <p>Use campaign specific hashtags to measure social media engagement</p>

Key messages

Audience	Message
Residents	<p>A great place to live, visit, do business and raise a family</p> <p>Stay, shop, do business, play and stay fit locally, supporting your town centre</p> <p>Watford town centre is the social heart of Watford</p> <p>WFY a one-stop shop for those wishing to find out what's on in Watford</p>
Young people	<p>A vibrant & safe place to study / party (promoting NTE).</p> <p>Purple Flag town – only one in Hertfordshire.</p>
Employees / Town centre workers	<p>Make the most of Watford– spend time in town and visit during lunchtime and early evening – socialise in Watford during the early evening</p>
General visitors	<p>Hertfordshire's premier centre for retail, leisure and more</p>
WFC away fans	<p>A safe and friendly place to spend the day</p>
Warner Bros studio visitors	<p>A magical place to spend the day before / after your tour of the Warner Bros studio tour</p>
BID Businesses	<p>Watford BID here to support local town centre businesses and promote</p> <p>Watford as a great place to do business and invest in</p>
New business (investors)	<p>Work with economic strategy team at WBC on messaging in line with inward investment / business retention team (ref Big Business Connect workstreams)</p>