



YMLAEN
LLANELLI
PROSPER TOGETHER



RENEWAL BALLOT PROPOSAL

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT 2021-2026

INTRODUCTION



What a difference five years can make! In 2015, Ymlaen Llanelli was created by Llanelli businesses for Llanelli businesses.

Back then we couldn't have imagined how far we would come, and even last year we couldn't have foreseen where we would be now.

We have worked hard for our town centre, and our track record speaks for itself: our ever-growing and hugely popular events have become the envy of other towns and cities; we have strived to support our members through the current crisis; we have become a strong lobbying voice for the Llanelli business community, fighting in your corner as a force to be reckoned with, and our continued work with the local Police has been key to tackling anti-social behaviour in town.

Llanelli town centre is changing for the better, so much so that we were even shortlisted for a Great British High Street Award, but there's much more that we can and need to achieve.

From now until 2026, we plan to continue to expand our existing initiatives and introduce many more, developing our town centre to its full potential while helping businesses recover and adapt to the short- and long-term impacts of Covid-19. Our role will be crucial going forward.

Please vote **YES** to allow us to deliver even more results over the next five years and keep the momentum going.



Vote YES

Ymlaen Llanelli
BID Board

10 PLEDGES AND WHAT WE'VE DONE

In 2015, we had big ambitions for the town centre. We set out a list of pledges that we wanted to achieve and we think you will agree that we have delivered against them all.



1 Set out a long-term strategy to improve our town centre's appearance

2 Create a more accessible town centre with on and off-street parking

3 Design and deliver a marketing strategy that attracts more people into town

4 Promote a directory advertising our retail and professional services

5 Incentivise people to shop locally with a town centre loyalty scheme

6 Tackle anti-social behaviour and increase town centre safety

7 Reduce business costs with collective purchasing

8 Sustain existing businesses through training, networks and access to grants

9 Encourage and support new businesses to open successfully

10 Form a strong voice that lobbies and represents Llanelli's businesses



VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTORS

Thirteen businesses in the town centre pay the BID levy voluntarily so they can access our initiatives and services. **This is what some of them said:**

“ Ymlaen Llanelli has been instrumental in bringing the town’s business folk together; it’s given us a platform and a voice to be pro-active in contributing to develop and improve our town centre – we now work together with a joint goal. If I hadn’t contributed voluntarily I wouldn’t have had a voice or even met my business colleagues. It is heavily involved in encouraging and making our town more accessible and attractive for locals and visitors by developing infrastructure projects - this has led to an increase in visitors and locals coming into the town to use our services and buy our products. It has been the catalyst and subsequent driving force in the organisation of the many community events that are now being held annually in the town, which bring in thousands of visitors and locals - these annual events bring in large amounts of revenue and every business that wants to be involved benefits. Ymlaen has raised our town’s profile making it a better, safer and more profitable environment for all. ”

Julie Warner
- *The New Drovers*



“ What can I say? Amazing! Ymlaen Llanelli have made such a difference bringing people into town on the event days, people who had stopped coming. We are very grateful in Pandora’s Box for all that you do. Please keep it coming!! ”

Suzanne Thorpe - Pandora’s Box

“ We were very excited to see a team representing Llanelli in such a positive way. From the very first event Ymlaen Llanelli had organised we had seen an improvement to our turnover. Suddenly we had noticed different people who we hadn’t seen before walking around the town centre including many more families. We really hope it continues now more than ever to promote the businesses in the town and the lovely people that trade in them. We can’t thank Ymlaen Llanelli enough for helping our business grow in Llanelli town centre. ”

Oliver and Celia Bird
- *The Welsh Diner*



“ It was a no-brainer for me to contribute to the BID as a volunteer. The COVID recovery pack that Ymlaen Llanelli provided for businesses was a real help with re-opening and the advertising initiative has given me access to something I wouldn’t have been able to afford on my own. ”

Andrew Jones - D&A Heel Bar

“ We decided to become voluntary contributors to Ymlaen Llanelli as the events bring the town to life and increase footfall. The help received to deal with the COVID restrictions was very welcome as was the advertising and support provided for small businesses. The bags and mugs were great for customers too! ”

Craftastic



“ We decided this year that we wanted to be more involved and became a voluntary contributor to the BID. The benefits are amazing! The Covid recovery package was a great help as well as the free advertising billboard and the outdoor seating equipment. We are more than grateful! The events organised by Ymlaen are always a great success and we always see a significant increase in custom on those particular days. The community spirit they also bring is lovely to see. ”

Thank you Ymlaen!

Avó Café



COUNCIL BACKING

“ As Leader of Carmarthenshire County Council I am happy to state our wholehearted support for the BID here in Llanelli. The support the BID has provided in so many ways has been fully acknowledged by the businesses who have benefited. ”

Our intention is to continue that support for the BID especially our collaboration with the events that have proved to be such an outstanding success. I look forward to the ballot and a vote of support to continue the ongoing work of the BID.

Cllr Emlyn Dole - Leader, Carmarthenshire County Council

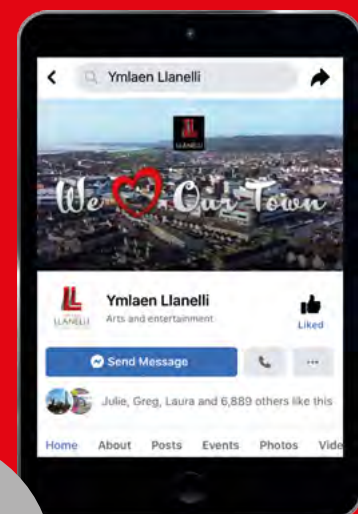
OUR RECORD ON BOOSTING MARKETING

Events programme – Our highly-anticipated annual calendar of events now brings thousands of people into the town centre. Our events showcase the wonderful vibrant community of Llanelli and have been crucial in our work to put Llanelli on the map. Our partnership work with Llanelli Rural Council also means we have access to volunteers on the day through the Street Buddies scheme. Everyone has their favourite, but the Food and Drink Festival is the jewel in our crown. We were delighted to be able to donate the proceeds from the 2019 Festival to the Llanelli Food Bank and the Carmarthenshire Toy Appeal.

Social media – You'd struggle to find anyone in South Wales who hasn't seen one of our viral videos, which rack up tens of thousands of views and get our town centre's name out there. Across all of Ymlaen Llanelli's social media platforms, we now have over 8000 followers who see our posts.

Cross-platform advertising – We have invested in advertising across local radio stations, including The Wave, Radio Carmarthenshire and the former Swansea Sound. For the Christmas 2020 period, we bought localised TV advertising with Sky Media to promote our town centre to shoppers. If you saw it we bet it brought a tear to your eye!

Branded products – We have developed products including the Love Llanelli reusable travel mugs and bags which have been hugely popular with the public and businesses, and have kept loyal customers coming back to town.



GROWING THE EVENTS CALENDAR



We had a whole calendar of events planned for 2020, but unfortunately these couldn't take place due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Gŵyl Fwyd a Diod
Llanelli
Food and Drink Festival



2016

- Wild West Wednesday
- Reindeer Parade

2017

- Pirate Friday
- Pancake Race
- Megasaurus Monday
- Gâr Gŵyl Music Festival
- Superhero Day
- Knights & Princesses Day
- Llanelli Reindeer Parade

2018

- Circus Skills Spectacular
- Pancake Race
- Batman Returns
- Animal Magic
- Llanelli 80s Festival
- Gâr Gŵyl Music Festival
- Pirates and Princesses
- Llanelli Food & Drink Festival
- Harry's Halloween
- Llanelli Reindeer Parade

2019-2020

- Batman Returns Again
- Pancake Race
- Dinosaur Day
- Grease Open-Air Cinema
- The Great Llanelli Get Together
- 80s Festival & Armed Forces Day
- Gâr Gŵyl Music Festival
- Cartoon Capers
- Llanelli Vintage Festival
- Llanelli Food & Drink Festival
- Harry's Halloween Returns!
- Llanelli Reindeer Parade
- Superhero Day 2020
- Nutcracker Trail 2020

OUR RECORD ON IMPROVING ACCESS

- **£1 parking Saturdays** - Always one of the hottest issues in town, we have provided £1 parking on Saturdays in the multi-storey car park during the Christmas period. The initiative has been popular with shoppers and businesses alike.
- **Free parking days** - We have worked with the county council to better plan and advertise these days. We have invested heavily in advertising including purchasing bright yellow parking meter covers.
- **Free parking schemes** - We were involved in the development of the free parking scheme on Mondays and Tuesdays between 10am and 4pm in council car parks, and installed signage to advertise the free parking at Coleshill car park on weekends.
- **Slower Shopping Tuesdays** - Ymlaen Llanelli worked with the St Elli Shopping Centre, Llanelli Town Council, Llanelli Market, and other community groups to provide and promote a quieter shopping experience in the town centre for those customers who prefer a slower pace of life.
- **Cowell Street pedestrianisation** - Ymlaen Llanelli helped inform and support the discussion around the partial pedestrianisation of Cowell Street to allow hospitality businesses to increase their outdoor seating capacities.



OUR RECORD ON ENHANCING EXPERIENCE

- **Window vinyls** - We collaborated with PeopleSpeakUp and local schools to create eye-catching window vinyls to turn empty units into positives.
- **Hanging baskets** - We have invested in winter baskets to brighten up our town.
- **Yarn bombing** - We worked with the Crafty Seniors to brighten up the town centre and create a treasure hunt around businesses. It certainly was a talking point!
- **Digital signage** - We were instrumental in helping Emerge Advertising install the town's first digital signage unit, allowing businesses to access cheaper advertising as well as providing a business directory and wayfinder for visitors.
- **Love Llanelli** - Ymlaen Llanelli and Llanelli Town Council jointly set up this online business directory for the town centre, which also enabled businesses to post offers and changes to their opening hours.
- **Easter trail** - We worked with Llanelli library on an annual Easter Egg Hunt around businesses in town. Children love it, and with prizes on offer from local businesses, it's become a favourite activity for the Easter holidays.



OUR RECORD ON DEVELOPING STRATEGY



- **Community Police Team –**
We campaigned heavily for the establishment of a dedicated town centre officer and teams of Police Community Support Officers to help tackle some of the issues faced by businesses. Aled and his team of PCSOs are now a regular feature of daily life in the town centre.

- **Tackling anti-social behaviour –**
We have been continually logging and pushing for solutions to tackle anti-social behaviour in our town centre; we pushed for the re-instatement of CCTV and were successful in persuading the Police to install three extra, unplanned cameras to cover trouble spots.

We have been heavily involved in the eradication of discarded needles on town centre streets. Our Chair represents business interests on the Contest Counter Terrorism Board, Anti Social Behaviour Board, the Serious Violence and Organised Crime Board, and the Advancing Communities Together Board. She has also done a lot of work on the begging issues in town.



“ Having initially been sceptical about the BID, my opinion has changed completely. Ymlaen Llanelli has been of immense value over the last few years in encouraging thousands of people into Llanelli town centre - at a time when, nationwide, retail is experiencing its toughest ever period. Of course, like every other area, social distancing has created huge logistical problems for the local BID team but past events have created a real buzz in the town, and we'll need the back up of events Ymlaen Llanelli can provide to give us a fighting chance. Long may it continue. **Steve Geach – Solid Gold** ”



- **Town Centre Task Force –**
For the last five years we have represented businesses in this forum which brings together all town centre stakeholders.
- **Reform of business rates –**
Ymlaen Llanelli has worked with other BIDs in Wales to form a strong voice in lobbying for business rates reform, including the extension of the threshold for small business rates relief.
- **Attracting new businesses –**
We sit on the Regeneration Board that strives to attract new businesses into the town.

- **Training opportunities –**
We were able to offer businesses free training in the use of marketing and social media through a series of workshops open to all members.
- **Accessing grant funding –**
We have successfully accessed grant funding from various sources for initiatives, including our amazing Llanelli Food and Drink Festival, and to help us provide additional outside furniture for hospitality businesses. We've also been able to access funding and on-the-ground help from Llanelli Town Council for some of our biggest events.



COVID-19 RECOVERY

When Covid-19 arrived we had to rethink our strategy, and we're proud to have been able to deliver the following initiatives to help businesses through the crisis.



- **Collective purchasing -**
We bought and distributed PPE for businesses to aid them with reopening. Our Reopening Package included perspex screens, hand sanitizer, masks and social distancing stickers, and was made available free of charge to levy payers.
- **Transforming Towns Fund -**
We, along with Llanelli Town Council and Carmarthenshire County Council, were able to access this Welsh Government Fund to supply outdoor furniture to hospitality businesses to help them adapt to new Covid-19 guidelines.
- **Llanelli Town Centre Exposure Fund -**
We collaborated with Emerge Advertising to offer businesses free advertising on Emerge's digital billboard at Halfway lights, the biggest advertising space in Llanelli. The scheme initially ran for a few weeks, before a second round of slots was acquired for six months from October 2020 to March 2021.
- **Community support -**
We were so happy to be able to support our hospitality businesses as well as the emergency services and local care homes during the crisis by ordering food parcels to be delivered from us.
- **Information -**
The Ymlaen Llanelli e-newsletter was adapted and sent out on a regular basis, featuring breakdowns of information on the grants and funding available to businesses amidst the crisis.

#ymlaenllanelli



“ I was unaware of Ymlaen Llanelli when I moved into Vaughan Street but I feel that my business has definitely benefited from the things Ymlaen has organised in the town. It's been so lovely to see the town full of people enjoying. I have chatted to many who think it is a wonderful thing and does bring new people into the town to shop. Even through this very difficult year Ymlaen Llanelli has supported businesses by providing items to help trade safely. I for one will definitely support the BID, long may it continue. ”

Angie Bowen - *Angie's Baby Cwtch*

“ I don't mind admitting that I was not a supporter of the BID at the outset. However, in the last five years I have slowly been converted. My businesses might not benefit from all of the events but they have been brilliant for the town. The Covid recovery packs we have received have been excellent and saved us the job of finding and buying our own. It was also great to have the pancake race trophy for two years running! I'm voting yes this time around as the town needs Ymlaen Llanelli to continue the good work. ”

Peter Beale - *The Welsh Shop & Beale's Linens*

“ I was very cynical about the BID but it has proved to be a great success and has achieved many good things. Ymlaen Llanelli has put on events that other towns could only dream of. On a personal note it has allowed me the privilege to promote local musicians through the Gâr Gŵyl Festival. Lets keep the BID going! Ymlaen Llanelli you and the team are great for this town. ”

Alun Rees - *Cadno Music*

“ Gomer Williams and Co are proud to support the BID as we know that the money goes towards events within the local community, bringing everyone together. We love getting involved with the activities and events and it helps us to get our firm name out there. The BID is a great addition to Llanelli and we are proud to be supporting this. ”

Gomer Williams

MOVING FORWARD

There is still so much more we can do, so let's build on what we've already done and keep the momentum going. Before Covid-19 hit, we were on a roll of positivity, and it's time to get that back. Llanelli needs us to keep challenging any negative perceptions of our town and to bring even more people into the town centre.



BOOSTING MARKETING

In the next five years we will:

- Continue to build on our highly successful and coveted calendar of events. We'll follow our trajectory and keep the town moving forward with bigger and better days out; our 2019 Vintage Festival increased the footfall in town by 200% compared to the same Saturday in 2018. Our second 80's Festival brought in 25% more footfall than our highly successful first festival in 2018 and our amazing Food and Drink Festival brought in 70% more footfall in its second year.
- Add to the Christmas experience in Llanelli by bringing attractions such as an ice rink into the town centre and establishing a weekly Llanelli Christmas market in December.
- Develop a new beer festival for town. This would be an event specifically aimed at our pubs, bars and nighttime economy.
- Work towards increasing Llanelli's profile as a centre for heritage and culture.
- Continue our aggressive marketing campaign for the town centre across all media. We know it works!



ENHANCING EXPERIENCE

We want people to enjoy spending time in the town centre, so we will:

- Investigate the possibility of installing a digital big screen in Spring Gardens. This will allow us to develop the area for more of our popular outdoor cinema nights, plus create a Fanzone for sporting occasions. It would also be a prime advertising spot for future initiatives. Other areas have them, why shouldn't we be as ambitious?
- Collaborate with local designers to design and install more window vinyls for empty units to brighten up the town centre.
- Make the town centre more attractive through additional cleaning and introducing more greenery.
- Work to bring businesses who may be on the outskirts of the town into the centre.
- Continue to work with the Police to tackle the anti-social behaviour issues and create a more welcoming environment for shoppers.
- Strive to make the town centre an attractive place to live and work, and ensure that those people who are choosing to live in town have all amenities that they need.





IMPROVING ACCESS

Parking continues to be a critical issue, therefore we will:

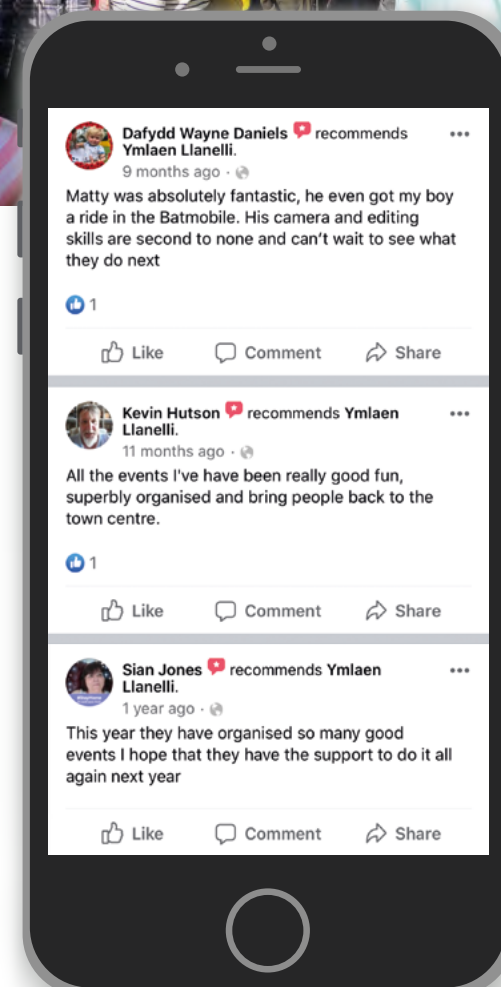
- Extend the Saturday £1 parking scheme to be year-round as planned before the Covid-19 pandemic, while continuing to advertise this and other parking schemes widely.
- Work with local residential homes and sheltered accommodations to organise days out to the town centre for their residents, giving them a whole-day experience of shopping and dining out.
- Continue to work with the council on initiatives that enable more people to access the town centre, making a better experience for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Work with the local authority and other stakeholders to link up the sea front and the proposed new Delta Lakes development with the town centre to bring new visitors in.



DEVELOPING STRATEGY

We have done so much to establish Ymlaen Llanelli as a force to be reckoned with in the last five years. We will continue to fight on behalf of town centre businesses by:

- Being a strong voice for businesses and working with the local authority, Police and other agencies.
- Accessing further grant support that may be available to supplement the levy income and use it to enhance the town centre in whichever way possible.
- Continuing to work with other BID's in Wales to lobby the Welsh Government on issues affecting town centres.
- Improving the reputation of Llanelli town centre to make it somewhere people want to invest and open new businesses.
- Integrating more initiatives into our strategy that aim to help businesses adapt to the new-look high street following the pandemic.



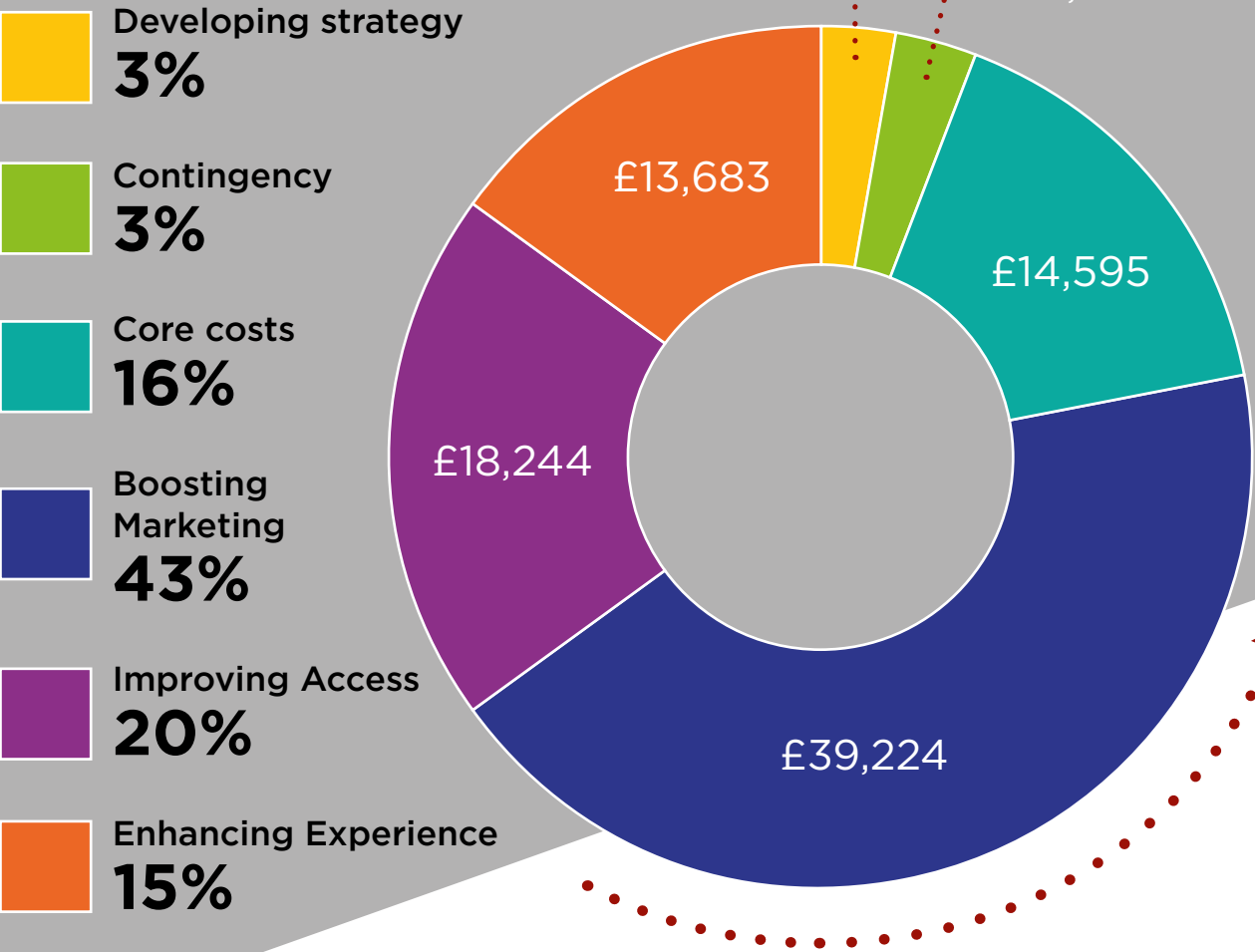
“ Ymlaen Llanelli was up and running when we opened our business in the town centre. We weren't sure what it was when we got the bill but now we realise how fortunate we are to have it in Llanelli. We've been able to bring our mobile trailer along to the amazing events which has opened up a whole new avenue of income for us. We will definitely be voting yes this time around, we can't imagine Llanelli without the BID. Losing the calendar of events would be a disaster for town. **”**

Marzano's Caffé Bar

FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN

This is how Ymlaen Llanelli will continue to invest in the town centre.

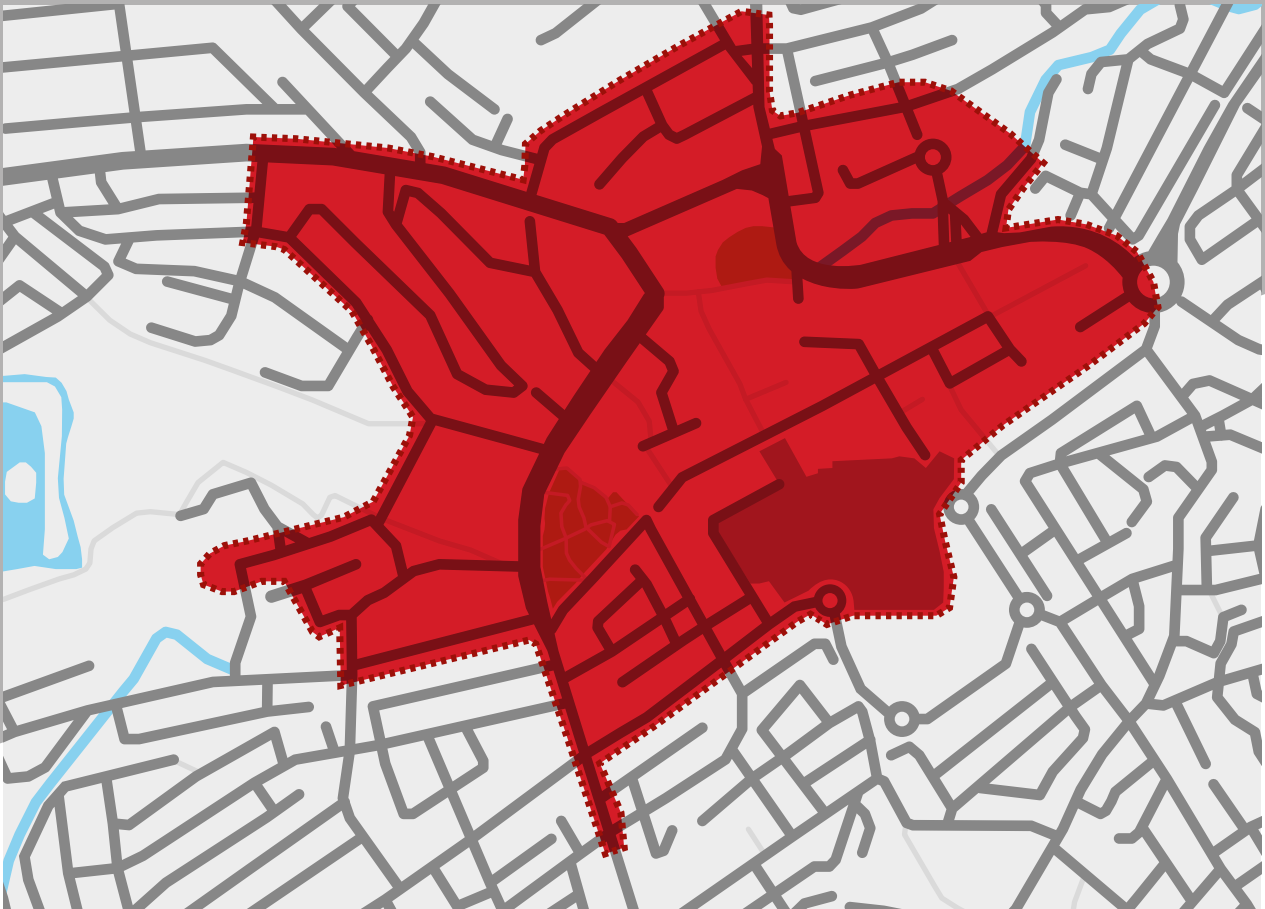
ANNUAL EXPENDITURE



“ We have seen and felt the whole benefit to our local business, it has definitely helped to build our sales and increase traffic. We could not imagine now not being involved in the scheme. We are especially busy during the 80s Festival with over 500 guests throughout the day joining us for food and drinks and buying tickets for our evening event which has increased in footfall every year. It’s also particularly great to see visitors from further afield staying with us for the celebrations at the hotel. We can happily recommend everyone to take full advantage in joining us and making the most of the opportunities that would not be available normally to business. We were overjoyed to be involved in the free advertising which was a massive boost in gaining new guests for the hotel. ”

Christine and David Evans - The Thomas Arms

THE BID AREA



- The BID area includes the following streets, either in whole or in part:
- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|
| • Bridge Street | • Mill Lane | • Swanfield Place |
| • Church Street | • Mincing Lane | • The Market |
| • Coldstream Street | • Murray Street | • Thomas Street |
| • Coleshill Terrace | • Old Castle Road | • Town Hall Square |
| • Cowell Street | • Park Crescent | • Vaughan Street |
| • Crown Parade | • Park Street | • Vauxhall |
| • East Gate Leisure Quarter | • Prospect Place | • Waunlanyrafon |
| • Frederick Street | • St Elli Centre | • West End |
| • Goring Road | • Station Road | • West End Yard |
| • Hall Street | (to junction with Inkerman Street & Waterloo St) | |
| • Island Place | • Stepney Precinct | |
| • John Street | • Stepney Street | |
| • Llys yr Hen Felin | | |
| • Market Precinct | | |
| • Market Street | | |

The BID area will remain the same as the BID’s first term, covering key areas in the town centre.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



What is a BID?

A Business Improvement District is formed following a ballot in which businesses vote on a BID proposal or business plan for the area. If a ballot is successful, it is then managed and operated by a BID Company – a non-profit business run by and for its members – and is funded through the BID levy, which is a small percentage of a business’ rateable value. Ymlaen Llanelli was created in 2015 following a first successful ballot of eligible businesses.

How is Ymlaen Llanelli funded – and where is it spent?

We understand that 2020 has been a tough year for businesses so we have decided to keep the levy rate at 1.25% even though it will mean a slight drop in income for Ymlaen Llanelli.

Businesses with a rateable value below the threshold are exempt from paying the levy, although they can contribute voluntarily as some have already done in Llanelli.

£5,000 threshold - Levy at 1.25%

Total rateable value	£7,297,550
Total yearly income	£91,219
Total five year income	£456,095
No. businesses in area	306

Ymlaen Llanelli is funded by a 1.25% levy on the rateable value of hereditaments (business units) within the defined BID boundary that have a rateable value of £5,000 or more, as of the notice of ballot date (21st January 2021).

Ratepayers that receive mandatory relief from business rates and are office-based have their BID levy discounted at the same rate. This discount does not apply to business units that receive mandatory relief which are retail.

This levy raises a collective pot of £456,000 that is invested in the town centre over the BID’s five-year term.

The BID’s services are above and beyond what the Local Authority and Town Council currently provide for the town centre. To ensure that the services the BID provides are additional to what’s already delivered, the BID has a baseline agreement with the local authorities which details the services they currently deliver.

BID funds are only for projects in addition to those delivered by the local councils and can only be spent to improve the area in which they are raised – Ymlaen Llanelli only spends here in Llanelli town centre.

How is the BID levy collected?

The BID levy is collected on an annual basis. Ymlaen Llanelli commission the local authority to collect the levy on our behalf as a separate bill. The levy is amended on an annual basis in line with inflation.

Ymlaen Llanelli is a limited company. The BID levy is mandatory for all eligible hereditaments within the BID area. This includes those owned by the local authorities and other public bodies.

How is the BID governed?

Ymlaen Llanelli was established in 2015 after a successful BID ballot. It is an independent, not-for profit company. It is a transparent body open to scrutiny from its levy payers and the community in which it operates, with regularly updated information about income and expenditure available to all members of the BID.

Ymlaen Llanelli is led by the private sector – a board of directors who represent a cross-section of businesses in Llanelli town centre, and theme groups also drawn from local businesses, who meet to oversee specific projects in the programme’s four main strands. A part-time BID manager and a part-time marketing assistant deliver the programme, overseen by the board.

How long does the BID last?

The BID runs for a term of five years, ensuring guaranteed investment in Llanelli town centre until 2026 if the renewal ballot is successful.



How does the BID ballot work?

The BID can only be re-established after a successful ballot vote of eligible businesses in Llanelli.

In February 2021, all eligible businesses within the BID boundary will receive a ballot paper in the post. Ballot papers must be returned within a month.

To be re-established, the ballot must pass on two counts: a simple majority of those voting must be in favour and their votes must represent more than 50% of the total rateable value of the properties that vote.

The BID was established in December 2015 following a successful ballot that adhered to the same rules.

KEY DATES



Notification
of ballot:
**21st Jan
2021**

Ballot
opens:
**4th Feb
2021**

Ballot
closes: **5pm
4th March
2021**

Result
announced:
**5th March
2021**

**YMLAEN
LLANELLI**



“ I support Ymlaen Llanelli as they do so much for the town. The events that they organise bring in a lot of people, and the support they have us given us during the last year has been outstanding. ”

Emma James - Andrew Price

“ Ymlaen Llanelli has been extremely helpful in testing times for business, the extra support has been beneficial to us as a local long standing business in Llanelli and the surrounding area, the floor stickers and hand sanitizers in the early lockdown saved us extra pressure to arrange and the advertising boost has been a positive aspect to drive business to us and subsequently other town centre businesses. ”

Gayle Hunt - Mallard Estates

“ I voted against the BID last time and saw it as a cost to business, but having seen the results of what Mandy and the team have and are doing, I have been converted. Even though my business does not benefit from most of the activities, the town itself has been lifted and I believe that without what the BID have done, then nothing would have been done. We have tough times ahead and we need all the help we can get. I'm voting for the BID. ”

Paul Brookfield - The Met Bar

“ St Elli Shopping Centre have enjoyed collaborating with Ymlaen Llanelli on big town events including Superhero Day, Llanelli's Great Get Together, Llanelli 80's Festival, The Reindeer Parade and much more! In 2019 we even picked up a 'Purple Apple Award' for our partnership work on the Food and Drink Festival. During this weekend event, we saw retailer sales rise by 33.1% YOY and footfall up 21.7% YOY. Events, promotions or town initiatives, St Elli will look forward to working with Ymlaen for many years to come! ”

Aimee Lewis - St Elli Shopping Centre





For more info on the BID, our proposals, or the renewal ballot, you can get in touch with us via the following:

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Move forward - together!

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