

LINEN QUARTER
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

BUSINESS

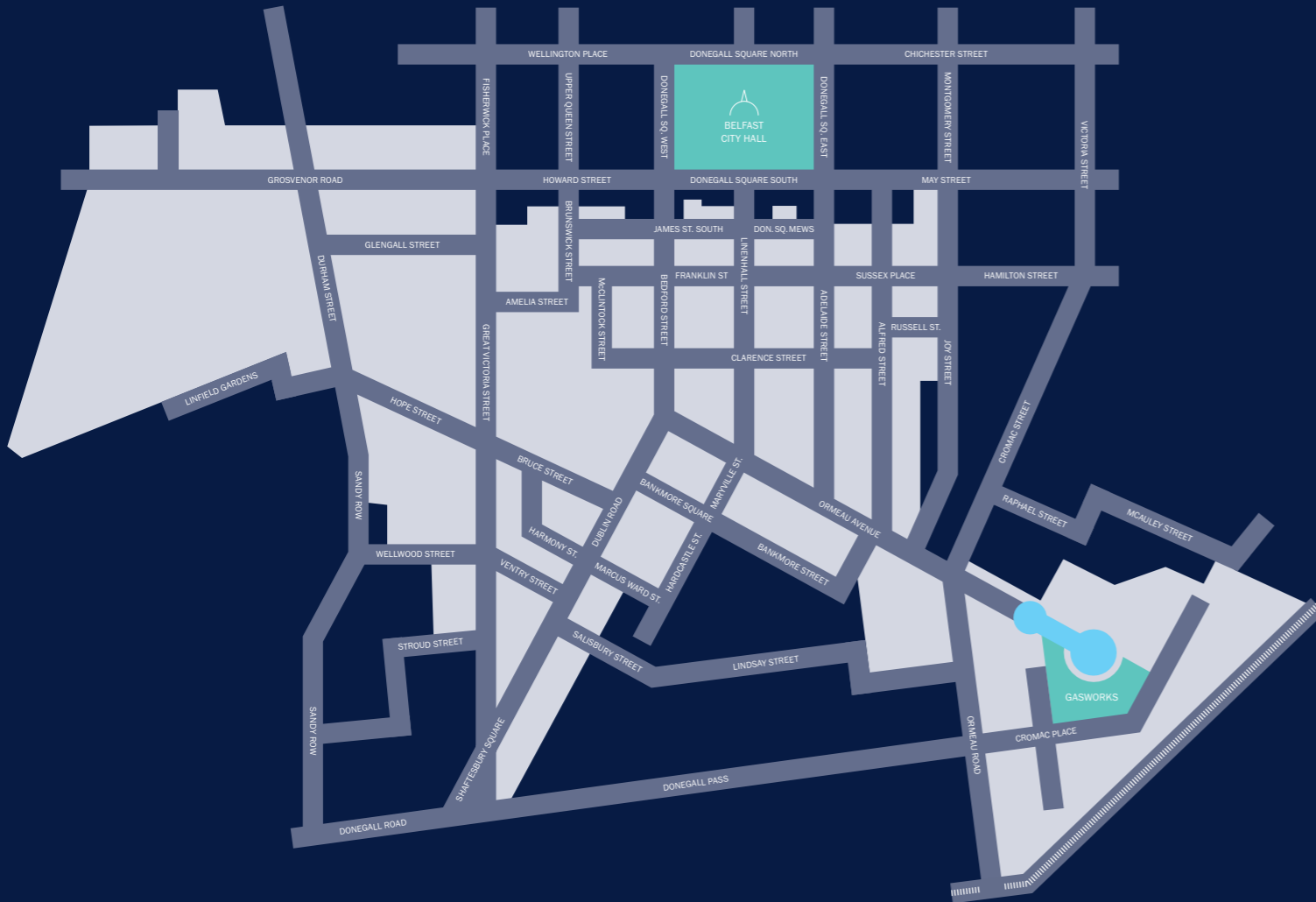
PLAN 2023 2028

linenquarter.org
@linenquarter



THE BID AREA

The footprint of the Linen Quarter BID covers 50 hectares of Belfast City Centre. This is illustrated in the map below, along with a list of streets that are either wholly or partially within the district.



ADELAIDE STREET
ALBERT STREET
ALFRED STREET
AMELIA STREET
APSLEY STREET
ATHOL STREET
BAIN'S PLACE
BANKMORE SQUARE
BANKMORE STREET
BEDFORD STREET
BLACKSTAFF SQUARE
BRUCE STREET
BRUNSWICK STREET
CHARLOTTE STREET
CLARENCE STREET
CLARENCE STREET WEST

CROMAC AVENUE
CROMAC QUAY
CROMAC PLACE
DONEGALL SQUARE MEWS
DOWNSHIRE PLACE
DUBLIN ROAD
DURHAM STREET
FISHERWICK PLACE
FRANKLIN STREET
FRANKLIN STREET PLACE
FULTON STREET
GASWORKS PATH
GLENGALL STREET
GREAT VICTORIA STREET
GROSVENOR ROAD
HARDCASTLE STREET

HARMONY STREET
HARTINGTON COURT
HOLMES STREET
HOPE STREET
JAMES STREET SOUTH
JOY STREET
KEYLAND'S PLACE
LINCOLN PLACE
LINENHALL STREET
LINENHALL STREET WEST
LINFIELD ROAD
LITTLE MAY STREET
LITTLE VICTORIA STREET
MARCUS WARD STREET
MARYVILLE STREET
MCCLINTOCK STREET

MURRAY STREET
ORMEAU AVENUE
RATHBONE STREET
RUSSELL STREET
PAKENHAM STREET
SALISBURY STREET
SHAFTESBURY SQUARE
ST ANDREW SQUARE EAST
ST ANDREW SQUARE NORTH
ST ANDREW SQUARE WEST
SUSSEX PLACE
VENTRY LANE
VENTRY STREET

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WELCOME TO LINEN QUARTER



Blair Mayne
Chair
Linen Quarter BID

Over the last five years LQ BID has pioneered the transformation of the Linen Quarter, which has become a distinct district with its own identity and unique offer. The area has been animated with festivals and events, it has its own community police officer and clean team, and we have taken the first steps to become a sustainable district. Its sense of place has been re-inforced with a £500k public realm programme, delivered in partnership with the public sector.

The Linen Quarter has another period of exciting transformation ahead: public investment in the Grand Central Station, Weavers Cross, BBC, Gasworks Bridge,

and North-South Glider, along with refreshed streets and open spaces. Private investment will land in student accommodation, residential, offices, public realm, and even a museum.

But regeneration will not land effectively if the District lacks local co-ordination. To keep adding value, and provide a unified voice, the Board of LQ BID are inviting local organisations to renew the business improvement district for a second term. Your vote is valuable. Please vote yes to continue our collective journey and help make the Linen Quarter the best place in Belfast to work, live, visit, and do business.



Chris McCracken
Managing Director
Linen Quarter BID

The Chair and I, along with the wider Board, are delighted to launch a new business plan for LQ BID. This ambitious document highlights 50 projects to be delivered into an extended area over the next 5 years. We believe this will provide an excellent return on investment for all our BID levy payers, delivering specific organisational advantages as well as benefits to the wider district.

We are particularly excited to develop our healthy & sustainable initiatives, with opportunities for organisations to sign up to green energy, sustainable waste management, climate change training, and subsidised cycling accreditation for employers. We are offering free health checks, first aid & CPR training, subsidised purchases for AEDs, and a new initiative to monitor air quality.

If you are a hospitality business you will be interested in restaurant week, the city centre gift card, food & drink promotions, and our new destination marketing strategy. Everyone will benefit from the work we do to bring

festivals and events into the district, while every levy paying organisation will receive a one-off welcome pack, plus ongoing invites to bespoke social occasions and networking opportunities. We are also pleased to launch two new grant funds exclusively for levy payers – a £100k crime prevention fund, and a £100k safer district fund.

And of course, building a Safe & Clean district remains at the heart of our mission. We will retain our dedicated LQ PSNI officer, while our Clean Team hours will increase from three to five days per week, plus additional deep cleans. On top of all this we will be funding over £1 million in planting, street art, and public realm.

We hope this provides an exciting vision for the future of the Linen Quarter. However, none of it will happen without a positive vote from local organisations. Ballot papers will arrive by post by 13 December, with the voting period open until 24 January. During this period, we invite you to vote yes for business benefits and a better district. Vote yes for Linen Quarter BID.

THE BALLOT FOR LQ BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT TAKES PLACE FROM 13 DECEMBER 2022 TO 24 JANUARY 2023

THIS IS **YOUR** OPPORTUNITY TO KEEP BUILDING A BETTER BELFAST.

This business plan provides an opportunity for every organisation in the Linen Quarter & Gasworks to make a difference. Ballot papers will arrive at your company offices by 13 December 2022 and votes must be cast by post. The process will be managed independently by Civica Electoral Services.



A yes vote will sustain the BID's unique area management function. This integrated approach focuses on every issue of local relevance, from street litter to capital investment, and ensures the district is properly represented with stakeholders and statutory partners.

The innovative pooled funding model of the BID will support 50 projects that benefit everyone who lives in, works in or visits the district, providing a return on investment for every pound spent.

A clean, safe, vibrant and sustainable district supports employee recruitment and retention. Many organisations also find their levy quickly pays for itself, simply by utilising the services, events, or training opportunities on offer.

We encourage all organisations in the District to cast their ballots and vote yes for Linen Quarter BID. Let's work together and keep building a better Belfast.



CONSULTATION WITH LEVY PAYERS

To help shape this business plan the Linen Quarter BID have spent the last six months actively engaging with our members:



TELEPHONE SURVEY

This was conducted by an independent company in April 2022 with the following results:

- 98% indicated LQ BID had been effective in improving the Linen Quarter with 62% stating the BID had been **very effective**.
- BID staff were rated as approachable and responsive (89%), effective at getting tasks done (83%) and knowledgeable (82%).
- 86% agreed the events program added vibrancy to the district
- 83% agreed that LQ BID had been successful in delivering regeneration. 72% agreed that new planting and parklets have improved the district a lot.
- Businesses wanted to see continued investment in cleanliness/ maintenance, action on anti-social behaviour and more policing/ improved lighting. BID services such as the dedicated Clean Team and enhanced police team were rated as good.
- Sustainability and well-being were key future priorities for all businesses. The need for sustainable transport was rated as the top concern with a score of 93%.



AGM

LQ BID hosted its AGM in June 2022, which included a panel discussion on the BID and audience Q&A.



CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

A 12-page consultation document was launched at the AGM and subsequently distributed to every organisation across the district, with an invitation to provide feedback.



CAFÉ CONVERSATIONS

Two additional consultation events, plus an on-line seminar, were held between September and November 2022.



SURVEYS

Several bespoke surveys were also distributed in 2022, on issues that include cycling, hybrid working, and community safety.

ABOUT US

WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)?

A BID is a defined district where organisations collectively invest in projects, services and events that will benefit the area. The BID is governed by statute and can only be formed following a successful vote amongst eligible organisations. Over the last two decades 330 BIDs have been established in towns and cities across the UK and Ireland – a visible demonstration of their effectiveness and impact.

WHO MANAGES THE LINEN QUARTER?

Linen Quarter (LQ) BID is an independent not-for-profit private company that was specifically set up for this district to administer the levy and deliver benefits. Our name reflects the heritage, culture and history associated with this area of Belfast, which is rich in hospitality, business services, transport links and Victorian architecture.

OUR MISSION

Our commitment is to go above and beyond, supporting our levy payers and renewing the Linen Quarter for the benefit of everyone who lives in, works in, or visits the area. We do this by acting as a collective voice for the district, providing enhanced services, leveraging support, and attracting investment.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY

LQ BID will go to a ballot for a second five-year term from 13 December 2022 to 24 January 2023. This is your opportunity to vote for £3.7m of additional spend over the next five years, enhancing the competitive advantage enjoyed by your organisation and supporting the continued renewal of the district. Ballot papers will be posted directly to your company. We invite you to vote YES for the BID, and yes for a clean, safe, vibrant and sustainable district.



“More than ever we need to invest in our city centre to ensure it is a safe, clean and welcoming environment. The co-ordination of improvements created and implemented by Linen Quarter BID, which has a track record of delivering successful projects, will benefit all of us who work in the area, as well as everyone who uses it for business and leisure activities.”



IAN WILSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GRAND OPERA HOUSE

LQ BID INVESTS TO DELIVER DISTRICT-WIDE BENEFITS ACROSS FOUR DIFFERENT THEMES:

SAFE & CLEAN - £941,000 INVESTMENT



LQ BID will conduct a weekly 'safe and clean' street audit, and fund an enhanced PSNI service, with a full-time police constable to liaise with organisations and resolve problems. Under term two our Clean Team, who powerwash streets and remove litter & graffiti from private land, will be increasing from three to five days per week. Other projects include additional CCTV, crime prevention training, district planting and pest control.

REGENERATION & INVESTMENT - £1,129,000 INVESTMENT



LQ BID propose an immediate public realm investment in 2023, alongside statutory partners. This includes new street dressing and planting across the district, a wildflower meadow at Bankmore Square, and working alongside Council to kickstart the regeneration of Dublin Road and Great Victoria Street. Future projects include working with DfC to renew Blackstaff Sq, new social space at the Gasworks, and advocacy for active and sustainable transport. The BID also acts as a voice for the area to help land future investment.

PROMOTED & VIBRANT - £753,000 INVESTMENT



In term two we will continue our mission to rebrand Linen Quarter as a must visit destination, with press features, professionally-run social media, and food & drink promotion. The BID will fund a vibrant events programme throughout the year, including an extension of existing festivals and bespoke events for members. We will work with the other Belfast BIDs to co-host restaurant week and support the city centre gift card.

HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE - £376,000 INVESTMENT



Our long-term aim is to transform the Linen Quarter into Northern Ireland's most sustainable urban area with projects including air pollution monitoring, green energy, recycling, and climate awareness training. We will help land investment into active & sustainable travel and provide subsidised cycling accreditation for employers. We also run an annual health week, with health checks, seminars, fitness sessions and events; whilst first aid training for staff will continue throughout the year.

WHAT WE DELIVERED

LINEN QUARTER BID STARTED ITS FIRST FIVE-YEAR TERM IN FEB 2018, WITH AN AMBITIOUS ACTION PLAN COVERING 32 SEPARATE PROJECTS. IN 2020 THIS PLAN WAS ENHANCED WITH A £500K PUBLIC REALM PROGRAMME AND A SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT INITIATIVE. A FULL UPDATE ON OUR DELIVERABLES CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE, BUT HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR FIRST TERM INCLUDE:

YEAR ONE (2018)

- Our new Clean Team provided additional litter picking and power washing.
- Five Summer Street Ambassadors were on the ground from June to September.
- Linenopolis, a pop-up heritage experience and store, helped promote the area.

YEAR TWO (2019)

- LQ Street Beat was launched – an additional PSNI officer dedicated to the District.
- We published the LQ Regeneration Vision to help shape future investment.
- Installed “Flax Fields” at Bedford Sq, including bright planters and additional seating (relocated to Blackstaff Sq in 2022).
- The BID extends key festivals to the Linen Quarter including Four Corners, Imagine, Belfast Blues, Culture Night, and Design Week.



YEAR THREE (2020)

- Secured “Purple Flag” for the city centre - a national accreditation for a well-managed night-time economy.
- Celebrated Chinese New Year with our members. Our dynamic 2020 events plan, launched the same night, was unfortunately cancelled due to the pandemic.
- During lockdown, the BID continued to monitor and improve the area, including graffiti removal and vacant building checks. We distributed Covid advice and promoted local support services.
- In June 2020 we started to develop a £500k public realm renewal scheme for the area, in partnership with the City Council, DfC and DfI.

YEAR FOUR (2021)

- Work completed for parklets at Linenhall Street and Bedford Street.
- We replanted The Thomas Thompson Fountain, Linenhall Street West, and Flax Field, and introduced summer planter along Great Victoria Street.
- In November we launched the RE[act] Festival, for a sustainable Belfast, to coincide with COP26. Twenty-six events were delivered over the two-week period.
- Health Week returned with free Health Checks, Physio, and CPR Training.

YEAR FIVE (2022)

- Work completed on Flaxx, a 43m outdoor deck on Brunswick Street. The installation includes 200 seats, games area, container bar and raised stage and is part of the re-imagining of the Linen Quarter as a low traffic people friendly district.
- Blackstaff Square enhanced with tree wrap lighting, planting, and petanque court.
- Our third parklet is installed outside Coco, Urban Retreat and Snax.
- ‘Shaping Ideas’ a new mural by Sophie Mess, is installed on Linenhall Street. The mural represents the history of innovation associated with the district.
- Our term two business plan is launched, with 50 projects to be delivered in five years.



DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2028

SAFE & CLEAN

—
**TERM 2
 PROJECTS
 2023-28**

A SAFE AND CLEAN DISTRICT IS THE FOUNDATION FOR A HIGH-QUALITY BUSINESS AREA. YOUR INVESTMENT INTO THE BID WILL FUND 12 SAFE AND CLEAN INITIATIVES, HELPING TO IMPROVE THE COLLECTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR STAFF, CLIENTS, SUPPLIERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS. PROJECTS INCLUDE:

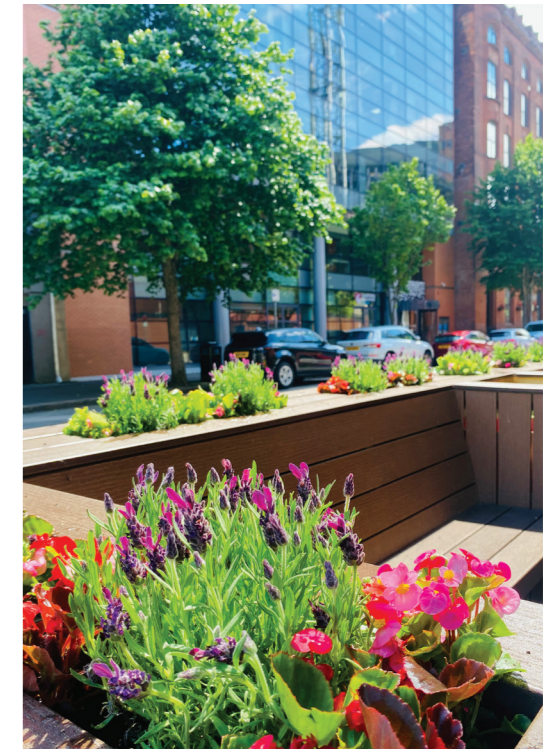
- 1 A weekly 'safe and clean' street audit by LQ BID staff. This will maximise the effectiveness of existing services by identifying issues across the district and requesting an appropriate response from statutory providers to resolve problems.

SAFER DISTRICT PROJECTS

- 2 A dedicated LQ police officer to provide additional patrol hours. This experienced PSNI officer will have in-depth knowledge of the area and provide longer-term problem solving. Contact details will be shared with levy payers to facilitate direct access.
- 3 Support for charity partners working to alleviate street-based problems in relation to alcohol, substance abuse, and mental health. The initiative will help create a safer night-time economy and will signpost people in need to longer term help.
- 4 A package of crime prevention measures to include educational/marketing initiatives, business training & distribution of safety products for staff.
- 5 A £100k crime prevention fund to enhance security measures for individual businesses and deliver street-based interventions such as improved lighting and CCTV. This project will be delivered in partnership with PSNI design out crime advisors.
- 6 Manage a safer city centre initiative between all three Belfast BIDs, the PSNI and other agencies. The initiative will feedback business concerns and identify problem solving measures.

CLEANER DISTRICT PROJECTS

- 7 A daily (Mon-Friday) Clean Team, focusing on value added services such as power washing, graffiti removal & litter picking on private property. The team will also provide a scheduled service for levy payers, on request.
- 8 Make arrangements with DFI to introduce dedicated maintenance for Bankmore Square, which is currently badly neglected and suffers from blight and anti-social behaviour. This supports a complimentary meanwhile project to renew the space.
- 9 Enhanced week-long deep cleans of the District at Spring, Summer, and Christmas, concentrated at high footfall locations and venues.
- 10 Additional planting across the District, including maintenance of year-round planting at parklets & other designated planters, the Thomas Thompson Fountain, and key public spaces including Blackstaff, Bankmore, and Shaftesbury Squares.
- 11 Installation of colourful flower displays across the District from June to September, including tower flower boxes and hanging baskets along key streets and public locations.
- 12 Pest control services at key locations, including Blackstaff and Bankmore Squares. Additional short term pest control along streets or public spaces can also be requested by levy payers.



“ Police and Linen Quarter BID have developed a close and productive partnership over the last five years. We have worked together to identify problems, and critically, have developed and delivered bespoke solutions to address these issues. We look forward to continuing this collaborative approach for many years to come. Effective partnerships such as this are an essential component of policing. We commend the local business community for their support of this collective endeavour to build a safer Belfast for those living, working and visiting the city.



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CH SUPT DARRIN JONES, BELFAST DISTRICT COMMANDER, PSNI

REGENERATION & INVESTMENT

CONCEPT DESIGNS & TRANSPORT STUDIES

REGENERATION PROJECTS ARE DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS. THIS FIRST SECTION PROVIDES A VISION FOR THE AREA, INCLUDING CONCEPT DESIGNS TO FACILITATE PUBLIC REALM SCHEMES AND TRANSPORT STUDIES TO SUPPORT INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE.



The second section, on pages 16-17, highlight delivery projects that will be project managed by LQ BID. Delivery projects have been divided into short (2023) and medium-term initiatives (2024-2028). Most regeneration projects are delivered in partnership with statutory agencies, and often incorporate successful grant funding applications submitted by the BID.

LINEN QUARTER VISION 2023-2027

CONCEPT DESIGNS

- 13 Renew the vision for the Linen Quarter with a professionally produced overview for the area. This document will collate all the proposed public and private projects across the District and will help integrate investment in a coherent way.
- 14 Commission a consultancy report to explore how we can enhance the Gasworks experience for workers and visitors, including improved social space, accessibility and design features.

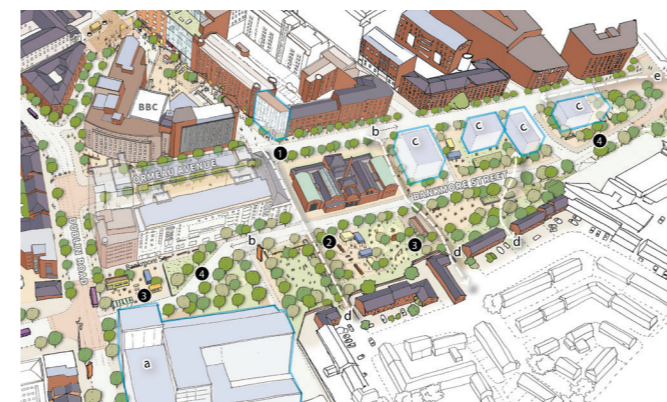


TERM 2 PROJECTS 2023-28

- 15 Work with statutory partners to explore further pedestrianisation, public realm, and green space where appropriate. This could include specific studies for Linenhall Street, the creation of a pocket park around the Thomas Thompson Fountain, and the remodelling of Shaftesbury Square.
- 16 Maintain up-to-date webpages of recent and proposed capital projects and working with developers to help land new investment into the Linen Quarter.

TRANSPORT STUDIES

- 17 Produce an integrated document to visualise transport investment across the District, including the opening of the Grand Central Station, Glider, Gasworks Bridge, cycling infrastructure, Streets Ahead V, and possible reconfiguration of local roads.
- 18 Work alongside statutory partners to introduce a new parking strategy for the area, which will incorporate improved access for trade suppliers, taxis, disabled parking, cyclists and coaches.
- 19 Work with statutory partners to improve the crossing point for cyclists and pedestrians between Ormeau Avenue and the Gasworks.
- 20 Contribute to emerging concepts for a cycling greenway from the proposed Gasworks Bridge to the Grand Central Station, along with wider connections to West and East Belfast.



WELCOME FUT OF LINEN

MAP SHOWING PROPOSED PUBLIC & PRIVATE INVESTMENT OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS

1 GRAND CENTRAL STATION
This new £264M integrated public transport interchange will comprise a station concourse, bus stands, railway platforms, cycle parking, and retail spaces. The development also includes a new public square on Durham Street.



Credit: Translink (March 2019)

2 WEAVERS CROSS
This £400m mixed use regeneration scheme will take shape between Great Victoria Street and the new Grand Central station. It will comprise of several new blocks that include commercial, retail, hotel and residential uses with new streets and upgraded public realm along Glengall Street.



Credit: weaverscross.co.uk

3 NORTH-SOUTH GLIDER
The new Glider route will involve road alignment works along Great Victoria Street, Bruce Street and Ormeau Road, with a new dedicated bus route linking Bruce Street with Ormeau Road along the Bankmore Street corridor. A reduced Bankmore Square will be upgraded to a high-quality public realm as part of the proposals.



Credit: Translink

4 BEDFORD HOUSE PUBLIC REALM
This scheme involves the upgrading of the pavement zone directly in front of Bedford House on Bedford Street in order to create an enhanced entrance zone to the building. Plans include a number of high quality stone benches that incorporate references to the history of the site, raised planters as well as an information totem to mark the entrance to the Linen Quarter from the retail core.



Credit: OGU Architects

6 FORMER SOCIAL SECURITY BUILDING ON SHAFESBURY SQUARE
This project proposes to apply a brand new vinyl around the building featuring a striking piece of visual art that highlights Shaftesbury Square as the entrance to the Linen Quarter.



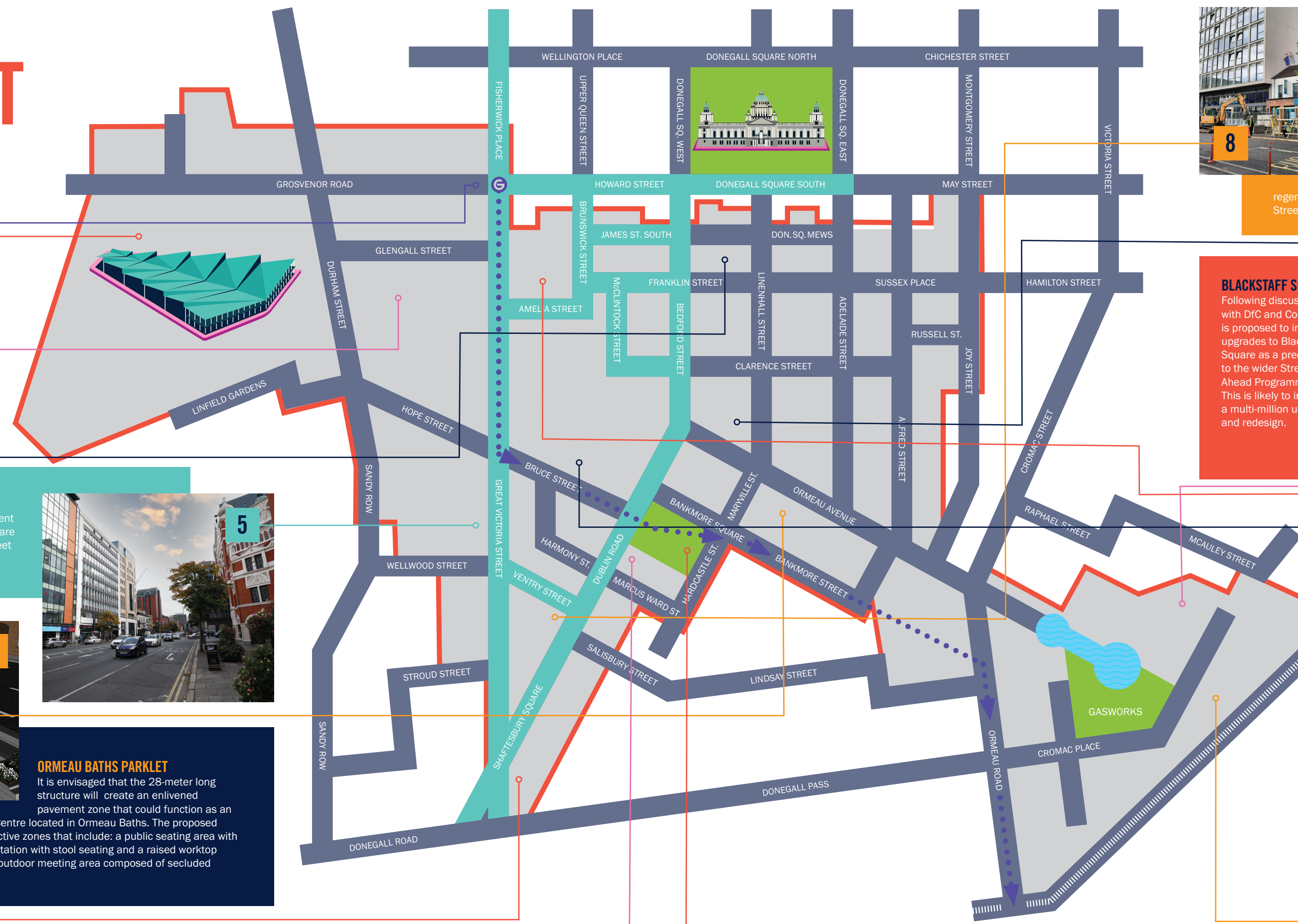
5 STREETS AHEAD V
This scheme involves public realm improvement between Howard Street and Shaftesbury Square including road alignment works, planting, street furniture and associated works.



7 ORMEAU BATHS PARKLET
It is envisaged that the 28-meter long structure will create an enlivened pavement zone that could function as an outdoor extension of the Innovation Centre located in Ormeau Baths. The proposed structure will incorporate three distinctive zones that include: a public seating area with space for outdoor hospitality; a workstation with stool seating and a raised worktop overlooking Ormeau Avenue; and an outdoor meeting area composed of secluded seating arrangement.



Credit: Decking NI



8 DUBLIN ROAD / GREAT VICTORIA STREET
New residential investment is being attracted into the Linen Quarter, and we will work with the City Council to regenerate those parts of Dublin Road and Great Victoria Street that have fallen into dereliction.



11 BLACKSTAFF SQUARE
Following discussions with DfC and Council it is proposed to initiate upgrades to Blackstaff Square as a precursor to the wider Streets Ahead Programme. This is likely to involve a multi-million upgrade and redesign.



13 STUDENT ACCOMMODATION
LQ BID welcome the influx of new students, which will enhance the vibrancy of the city centre and support retail and hospitality. Following completion of a 15 storey purpose built student accommodation building containing 265 units on Bruce Street, more student accommodation is planned for the former MovieHouse site on Dublin Road.



Credit: Todd Architects (Dec 2019)

9 BBC REDEVELOPMENT
This £48M redevelopment of BBC Broadcasting House includes internal reconfiguration and refurbishment of office spaces, update of technological infrastructure and a new entrance and landscaped plaza opening onto Linenhall Street.



Credit: BBC

12 GASWORKS PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT
Following a consultation report in 2023 LQ BID will work with the City Council to explore enhancements such as improved pedestrian entrances, animation for the central green space and up lighting of architectural features.

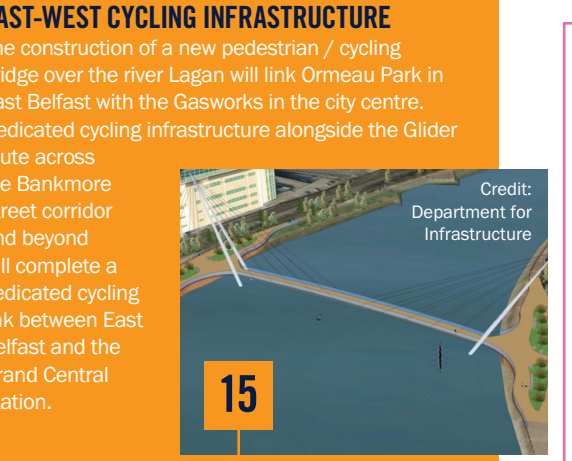


14 BANKMORE SQUARE
This scheme is intended as a temporary meanwhile use in anticipation of a permanent upgrade as part of the Glider works. It will involve the relaying of the grass pitches and the incorporation of a wildflower garden. We will also discourage antisocial behaviour by removing parts of the boundary wall and hedges on the Dublin Road to increase natural sightlines.



Credit: Paul Hogarth Company

15 EAST-WEST CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE
The construction of a new pedestrian / cycling bridge over the river Lagan will link Ormeau Park in East Belfast with the Gasworks in the city centre. Dedicated cycling infrastructure alongside the Glider route across the Bankmore Street corridor and beyond will complete a dedicated cycling link between East Belfast and the Grand Central Station.

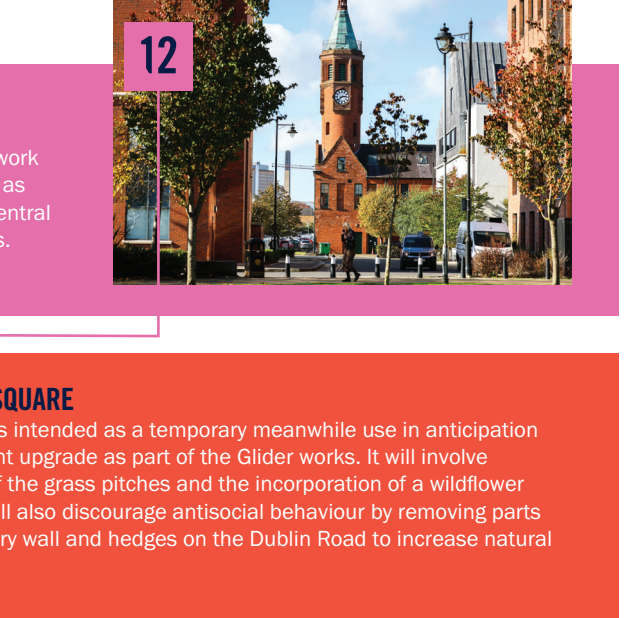


Credit: Department for Infrastructure

10 STREETScape ENHANCEMENT
Further roll-out of our streetscape enhancement programme will build upon previous interventions to deliver more vibrant planting, vinyls, murals and street art to the District.



16 KAINOS HQ
This £30M investment would see the erection of a 80,000 sq ft Grade A office building on the former Dublin Rd MovieHouse site. The new premises will function as Kainos' international Headquarters.



Credit: Ulsterbusiness.com

TO THE URE QUARTER

REGENERATION & INVESTMENT

DELIVERY PROJECTS

21 Provide a consistent and unified voice to represent the area and support additional resource, both from existing services and emerging grant funding opportunities.

CAPITAL PROJECTS FOR 2023

22 Additional parklets and cycle bays, subject to support from immediate organisations and granting of permissions.

23 A meanwhile renewal of Bankmore Square, to bring it back into public use. This will be a temporary project, in partnership with DFI and the City Council, prior to the construction of the Glider route.

24 Deep clean and tactical regeneration projects along the Dublin Road and Great Victoria Street. This six-figure spend, in partnership with the public sector, will support the regeneration of streets that have fallen into long term decline.

DELIVERY PROJECTS (2023-2027)

25 Stone benches and planting outside Bedford House, subject to permissions.

26 Working alongside the Department for Communities to help deliver the renewal of Blackstaff Square.

27 Future projects flowing from the Linen Quarter concept and transport studies, including a specific focus on projects for the Gasworks.

28 Future partnership projects flowing from proposed public sector investment, such as Weaver's Cross, the Bolder Vision, or Streets Ahead V.



“ Along with the Departments for Infrastructure and Communities, we're committed to delivering 'A Bolder Vision for Belfast' - the blueprint for major investment decisions, focusing on making Belfast a more accessible, attractive, liveable, vibrant and globally competitive city. It will also challenge us collectively to address the climate emergency and to ensure the city continues to grow with people at the heart of decision making. Genuine partnership will be crucial to A Bolder Vision's success – and we view LQ BID as an essential partner in helping to shape ideas, communicating with stakeholders, and helping to deliver projects on the ground.



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COUNCILLOR RYAN MURPHY, CHAIR, BELFAST CITY COUNCIL'S CITY GROWTH & REGENERATION COMMITTEE

— TERM 2 PROJECTS 2023-28

AREA REPRESENTATION



Linen Quarter BID will represent the area on a series of strategic groups, including City Centre Future Leadership, SW Quarter, Sustainability & Resilience Board, and Safer City Centre Group. LQ BID will also provide direct input into a series of key projects due to be landed in the Linen Quarter, including:

- The Bolder Vision for Belfast – strategic vision for the city centre jointly owned by the City Council, Dept for Infrastructure and Dept for Communities. It highlights the transition of the Linen Quarter to a low traffic neighbourhood and positions the area as a key component of the Civic Spine running between Royal Avenue and Botanic
- Grand Central Station – a £264m replacement of GVS train station, due to open in 2025
- Weavers Cross – a £400m mixed use scheme likely to start in 2025
- Cycle Network – proposed Belfast network with priority routes through LQ
- Glider – a £120m North-South route by 2027 with significant investment in LQ
- Belfast Streets Ahead V – a £30m public realm scheme covering Bedford St, Dublin Road, Great Victoria Street and Shaftesbury Square. Likely to land in 2027
- Proposed mixed use development at Hope St
- Gasworks to Ormeau Park foot/cycle bridge, earmarked as a £10m City Deal project.

PROMOTED & VIBRANT

OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS THE BID HAS REBRANDED THE LINEN QUARTER, TRANSFORMING IT FROM AN UNKNOWN AND POORLY DEFINED AREA TO A DISTINCT PART OF THE CITY CENTRE. TERM TWO WILL FURTHER INVIGORATE THE STORY OF THE LINEN QUARTER, INCLUDING INTEGRATION WITH THE GASWORKS, DUBLIN ROAD AND SOUTHERN GREAT VICTORIA STREET, TO ESTABLISH THE DISTRICT AS ONE OF BELFAST'S MOST EXCITING DESTINATIONS.



We will also provide effective communications for our members, promoting local services and highlighting relevant opportunities.

Projects include:

- 29 A weekly digital newsletter that will highlight activities throughout the District, including LQ BID events and levy payer news. This will be supported with active social media, and an up-to-date website.
- 30 A professionally-run destination marketing campaign to promote the district, including sense of place, events & experiences, and levy payer stories. The ongoing campaign will use a range of channels, from Instagram to PR & print media, and will enhance awareness of member services as well as branding the district itself.
- 31 A specific food and drink promotion package, including marketing material that collectively sells the district, food tours, PR initiatives, and bespoke events.
- 32 A Welcome Pack for every levy payer, including a guide to the area, gift card, and promotional material.

TERM 2 PROJECTS 2023-28



“Linen Quarter BID have pioneered the revitalisation of the District with colourful public realm, street art and planting. The have supported hospitality through challenging times and initiatives like restaurant week, events & festivals, and the ongoing destination marketing campaign, have driven footfall to the district. That’s why we will be voting a resounding YES for Term Two.”

PAUL LANGSFORD,
DIRECTOR, PUG UGLYS

- 33 Curating a vibrant calendar of activities through BID run events, including restaurant weeks, health week, Re[act] Festival, games night, AGM, business breakfasts, and regular member’s social and networking opportunities.
- 34 Curating a vibrant calendar of activities by extending existing festivals into the Quarter. Examples include Four Corners, Imagine, Blues, Trad Fest & Culture Night. The BID will also fund promotional experiences for members at existing LQ venues.
- 35 Ongoing roll out of visual branding for the Linen Quarter using the bespoke colours and brand identity designed for the district. This includes vinyl wraps, banners, street installations and public art.
- 36 Establish a £100k “Vibrant District Fund”. This will co-fund ideas from levy payers who want to do something to improve the vibrancy of their workplace or the District.
- 37 Story telling initiative through the installation of QR codes across the district. The codes will be linked to web pages providing information on history, architecture, people, and place.

CITY CENTRE PROMOTION

- 38 Deliver two city centre restaurant weeks each year (in Q1 and Q3) in partnership with Belfast One and Destination Cathedral Quarter.
- 39 Work across all three BIDs to promote Belfast City Centre through the gift card, purple flag accreditation (for the Night-Time Economy), and other joint marketing initiatives.

HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE

—
TERM 2
PROJECTS
2023-28

THE LINEN QUARTER ASPIRES TO BE A HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT, DRAWING ON INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE FROM THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION AND UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

HEALTHY DISTRICT

- 40** An annual health week, with a range of activities for LQ based employees, including personal health checks, physio, first aid & CPR training, mental health, cycling initiatives, fitness classes, and healthy eating.
- 41** Co-funding AED's that levy payers wish to purchase for their organisation. The BID will help levy payers register their devices with the national database and provide annual training and ongoing awareness.
- 42** Management of air quality monitoring across the Linen Quarter, combined with an area-based health assessment. Datasets will be used to make the business case for additional health related investments. The project is delivered in partnership with Belfast City Council and the British Heart Foundation.
- 43** Provision of cycling support for employers and employees, including subsidised workplace accreditation and free cycle training and maintenance for staff. LQ BID will fund 75% of the cost of the employer's accreditation, which is a national scheme led by Cycling UK.

SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT

- 44** Curating the biennial RE[act] Festival for a Sustainable Belfast. The Festival incorporates keynote speakers, local organisations, and individual activities, and provides a forum to debate critical issues. RE[act] is delivered in partnership with the BCC Resilience Commission.

- 45** Free building audits – administered by Climate NI – who will review the energy use, waste and carbon of buildings as well as the sustainability of products and services.
- 46** Provision of sustainable waste management. LQ BID has selected RiverRidge as the preferred supplier for the District due to its superior commitment to sustainable practices – including free consultancy and reduced landfill – along with the competitive rates offered as a bulk provider.
- 47** Green Energy, in partnership with Power NI. LQ organisations can sign up for accredited green energy at no extra cost, along with free support to reduce energy use and improve efficiency.
- 48** Climate awareness training, and other packages to support sustainability, will be offered to levy payers at no or significantly reduced cost.
- 49** Work with statutory partners to bring forward plans for active and sustainable travel, and fund sustainability concept studies to support initiatives such as the roll out of superblocs or green buildings within the District.
- 50** Encouraging the adoption of best practice initiatives for organisations across the District. This includes support for ESG reporting and helping to create a more sustainable and inclusive economy through the roll out of the JAM card and company accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation.



GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

—
TERM 2
PROJECTS
2023-28

LINEN QUARTER BID EMPLOY A PROFESSIONAL STAFF TEAM TO MANAGE DELIVERY OF THE BUSINESS PLAN, AND ALSO COMMISSION A RANGE OF SUPPLIERS TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION. THE STAFF AND CONTRACT TEAM ARE LED BY THE BID MANAGING DIRECTOR, WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE TO THE BID BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

The BID Board governs LQ BID on behalf of all levy paying organisations. The Board meets six times a year and is responsible for setting strategy, monitoring progress against the business plan, and approving spend. The Board can alter or amend business plan projects during the term, but are not empowered to change the BID levy, geographical boundary, or other matters that are governed by the statutory BID Regulations.

Each year LQ BID convenes an annual general meeting, which presents a report to levy payers and facilitates discussion. The BID is also accountable to its levy payers through:

- A weekly newsletter highlighting activities
- Regular discussion fora, presentations and events
- An approachable staff team who will respond to queries and help resolve issues
- An up-to-date website, including a section highlighting progress against business plan targets.

Once per term the BID will commission an independent consultant to survey levy payers and ensure perceptions about the BID - both positive and negative - are surfaced and actively managed.



ABOUT THE BOARD

A BID BOARD DIRECTOR MUST BE AN EMPLOYEE, DIRECTOR OR OWNER OF A LEVY PAYING ORGANISATION LOCATED WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC FOOTPRINT OF THE LINEN QUARTER. THE BOARD AIMS TO REFLECT A REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERSHIP OF LINEN QUARTER ORGANISATIONS.

Key sectors within the area include professional services, hotels & hospitality, technology, property, PR & design, retail, public sector and 3rd sector. Levy payers who wish to join the Board should speak to the MD/Company Secretary in the first instance.

The Board has four office holders: Chair, Deputy Chair, and Treasurer – who are appointed for a renewable two-year term – and the Company Secretary position, which is always held by the MD. The four office holders form a policy and remuneration committee, which meets as a sub-group under the Board. Two office holders are required to approve invoices, although overall project budgets must be authorised in advance by the full Board.

The MD is the sole executive director of the organisation and rest of the Board consists of non-executive Directors who attend in a voluntary capacity.

The Board is supported by up to two professional advisors from the public sector. The Chair can also invite one representative from the following sectors - exempt organisations within the boundary, a community representative (from adjacent neighbourhoods), and a strategic partner from outside the District. These individuals may input to the Board as advisors but similar to the public sector representatives are not entitled to join as a Director or office holder and cannot vote on company business.

LIST OF BOARD MEMBERS

Chair

■ Blair Mayne, *BBC*

Managing Director

■ Christopher McCracken, *Linen Quarter BID*

Vice Chair

■ Sarah Cull, *Danske*

Treasurer

■ Colin Mounstephen, *Deloitte*

Directors

■ Karen Blair, *Cleaver Fulton Rankin*

■ Eamon Butler, *CBRE*

■ David Campton, *Belfast Central Mission*

■ Julia Corkey, *ICC*

■ Phil Donaldson, *Limelight*

■ Louise Doyle, *Translink*

■ Paul Johnson, *Arup*

■ Fearghal McKinney, *British Heart Foundation*

■ Jonathan Topping, *Clayton Hotel*

Advisors

■ Cathy Reynolds, *Belfast City Council*

■ Liz Loughran, *DFI*

THE BID LEVY & BID RULES

WHAT IS THE BID LEVY?

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

Although the levy is based on the property rating system, it is not a tax but rather a collective fund which is ring-fenced for the district. Under the legislation money is spent for the benefit of the district and all who live in, work in or interact with the area.

HOW IS THE LEVY CALCULATED?

Levies are calculated as 1.5% of a (non-domestic) property’s net asset value (NAV), which means smaller organisations pay less and larger organisations pay more. For example, if a business occupies a property with a NAV of £20,000, their levy will be £300 per year.

The levies are invoiced for each property hereditament, so a business covering multiple properties will pay multiple levies. There is no cap on payments but 60% of properties attract a levy between £300 to £1,000 per year. VAT will not be charged on the BID levy.

During the term the BID rate of 1.5% will remain fixed. However, property NAVs can be adjusted as part of regular rates revaluations by Land and Property Services, which will alter the levy paid on the next annual invoice following the revaluation.

WHO IS LIABLE FOR THE LEVY?

Every organisation – irrespective of sector and within the defined Linen Quarter boundary - who occupies property hereditaments with a non-domestic NAV, as defined by Land and Property Services, is eligible for the levy. When a property is vacant the occupier is defined as the property owner.

However, there are several important exemptions and discounts highlighted below:

Exemptions

- 1 In term two the BID is raising the de minimis limit of the NAV to £20,000. In other words, every company who occupies commercial property with a NAV less than £20,000 does not have to pay the levy.
- 2 Properties whose primary purpose is to facilitate acts of worship will continue to receive an exemption.
- 3 Properties that are exclusively staffed by volunteers, for example an art collective, are not required to pay the levy. This exemption does not apply where the organisation also employs professional staff.
- 4 Properties removed from the LPS ratings list – for example due to construction work – are exempt from the levy. However the owners of vacant properties that are still eligible for rates are still required to pay the levy.
- 5 Organisations that are exempted from the levy cannot vote for the BID and are not directly eligible for any services offered by the BID.

Discounts

- 6 Charities that are registered with the charity commission will receive a 50% discount to the levy. This ensures the charitable organisation and staff will still benefit from the services offered by the BID and will continue to make a collective contribution to the area at a rate that reflects their special status.

- 7 Charities that are in the process of registration with the charity commission will receive the discount on submission of appropriate evidence and following approval by the LQ Board.

WHEN IS THE LEVY PAID?

- 8 Organisations will be issued an annual invoice at the start of each year, covering the period from 1 February to 31 January the following year.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I EXIT OR ENTER THE BID AREA DURING THE YEAR?

When an organisation exits or enters the BID area they will only be liable for a levy payment that reflects the duration of their occupancy. Organisations who have paid the annual levy and subsequently leave the district are eligible for a refund. Organisations who leave the district without paying the levy are still liable for a payment up to the point of their exit. Organisations who enter the district part way through the year are liable for part of the annual levy calculated from when they took up the lease or ownership of commercial property.

WHAT IS A VOLUNTARY LEVY PAYER?

An exempted organisation can choose to join LQ BID for a payment of £300 per year. This enables the organisation to participate in the full range of services offered by the BID. Examples could include a small restaurant that wants to join restaurant week or an organisation that wants to benefit from the BID’s healthy and sustainable services. Organisations outside the footprint of the Linen Quarter BID are not eligible for the voluntary scheme.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE

In Term Two around 350 organisations will be eligible for the levy, with 150 of the smallest organisations from term one, who fall below the £20k minimum NAV, now exempt. This will raise a collective fund of £629k in year 1. This sum is projected to rise in year 2 due to Reval 2023 and the opening of new/refurbished properties.

In addition to the levy, the BID intends to enhance its core revenues by 20% via public grants, co-funded partnership projects, and commercial ventures. This is funding that will pass through LQ BID accounts and does not include the wider investment the BID helps to secure for the District.

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

BID Income	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Total Over BID term
Invoicing total	631k	662k	662k	662k	695k	3.3m
95% Collection	599k	629k	629k	629k	661k	3.1m
Additional Income	120k	126k	126k	126k	132k	630k
Total	719k	755k	755k	755k	793k	3.7m

Expenditure by Theme	%	Spend £
Safe & Clean	25%	941k
Regeneration & Investment	30%	1,129k
Promoted & Vibrant	20%	753k
Healthy & Sustainable	10%	376k
Administration & Governance	15%	565k

Total Investment over Five Years: **£3,764,000**

THE BALLOT PROCESS & FAQ

THE BALLOT FOR LINEN QUARTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT WILL TAKE PLACE BETWEEN 13 DECEMBER 2022 AND 24 JANUARY 2023. RESULT WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON 25 JANUARY 2023.

The ballot will determine if Linen Quarter Business Improvement District continues its work to support levy payers and enhance the District for a further five years. A successful vote will be determined by three criteria:

- ✓ **AT LEAST 25% OF ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS CAST THEIR VOTE**
- ✓ **A MAJORITY OF VOTERS BY NUMBER VOTE YES FOR LQ BID**
- ✓ **A MAJORITY OF VOTERS BY NAV VOTE YES FOR LQ BID**

The ballot will be managed independently by Civica Electoral Services, whose offices are based in London.

Voting slips will be sent directly to your company office. If you do not receive your ballot, please let LQ BID know by e-mailing Charlotte@linenquarter.org

Any member of the organisation can cast the vote on behalf of the organisation. If you wish to appoint a third party proxy to vote for your organisation (for example a property agent), then you must complete an application and send to Civica for verification.

Please return your ballot by post as soon as possible. We would encourage organisations to post their ballot before Christmas and certainly post **no later than Tuesday 17 January** to ensure delivery.

Q: WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE?

A: Organisations within the BID boundary (see map on page 2), occupying commercial property with a NAV of £20,000 or more, will be eligible to vote (apart from exemptions listed on p24).

One vote is allocated to each eligible property hereditament – a total of 345 across the District.

Q: SHOULDN'T MY BUSINESS RATES COVER THIS?

A: Business rates are a property tax collected by Land and Property Services and then distributed to Councils and the NI Executive. Belfast City Council spends the allocated funding on services and local organisations have no control over these decisions. In contrast the BID levy is ring fenced to the Linen Quarter and is used to fund enhanced services not covered by the rates.

All spend is approved by a Board made up of local organisations who are direct stakeholders in the area.

Q: HOW WILL THE BID IMPROVE MY BUSINESS?

A: Supporting Linen Quarter BID will bring an additional £3.7million investment into the area and fund a wide range of direct business benefits. This includes direct access to a Clean Team and dedicated LQ police officer, free training & events, and a programme of subsidised or discounted initiatives to support a safe, healthy and sustainable business.

LQ BID also makes a significant investment procuring supplies from LQ based organisations.

Q: WHAT HAPPENS IF IT'S A 'NO' VOTE?

A: If the BID is not renewed then local organisations will lose the following:

- £3.7million worth of investment in the Linen Quarter over the five-year term.
- The 50 projects listed in this business plan will not happen.
- Organisations will have no access to an enhanced Clean Team and dedicated LQ police officer.
- Funding for training, events and business support programmes will be lost.
- £1m of additional public realm will not take place and progress towards a more sustainable district will stall.
- There will be no co-ordinated voice for the area to identify and resolve problems, to make business cases for additional funding, or to add value to the huge number of public and private investments landing over the next 5 years.



“ We have been delighted with the services provided by Linen Quarter BID. Our staff now have two outdoor parklets to enjoy in close proximity, we have signed up to the sustainable waste management service, and we have also benefitted from training opportunities, including first aid and climate awareness. LQ BID provides an excellent return on investment and enhances the life of the district, and that is why Cleaver Fulton Rankin will be voting yes for term two.

KAREN BLAIR, CHAIR OF CLEAVER FULTON RANKIN



A BALLOT FOR LINEN QUARTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT WILL TAKE PLACE BETWEEN **13 DECEMBER 2022** AND **24 JANUARY 2023**.

A YES VOTE WILL:

Provide a cohesive voice for the Linen Quarter & Gasworks that will represent the area and help support **£1 billion** of future capital investment.

Manage **£3.7m** of direct spend in the next 5 years, with **50 projects** to be delivered by LQ BID.

Deliver bespoke services for members incl. green energy contracts, waste management, cycling accreditation and business training.

Fund a vibrant series of events and promotional activities, including member only networking events.

Invest **£1.1m** in new public realm projects which will increasingly brand and animate the district.

Accelerate the roll out of a healthy and sustainable district.

Maintain a dedicated PSNI officer and enhanced Clean Team.

Support wider City Centre initiatives such as the Gift Card and Restaurant Week.

To find out more or to ask a question, please e-mail Chris@linenquarter.org



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