
Warwick BID Consultation Report

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BACKGROUND

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a precisely defined geographical area within which the businesses have voted to invest collectively in local improvements to enhance their trading environment. Within Warwickshire, Leamington Spa and Rugby already have BID's in place, and businesses within Stratford have recently given the go ahead for a BID in their town.

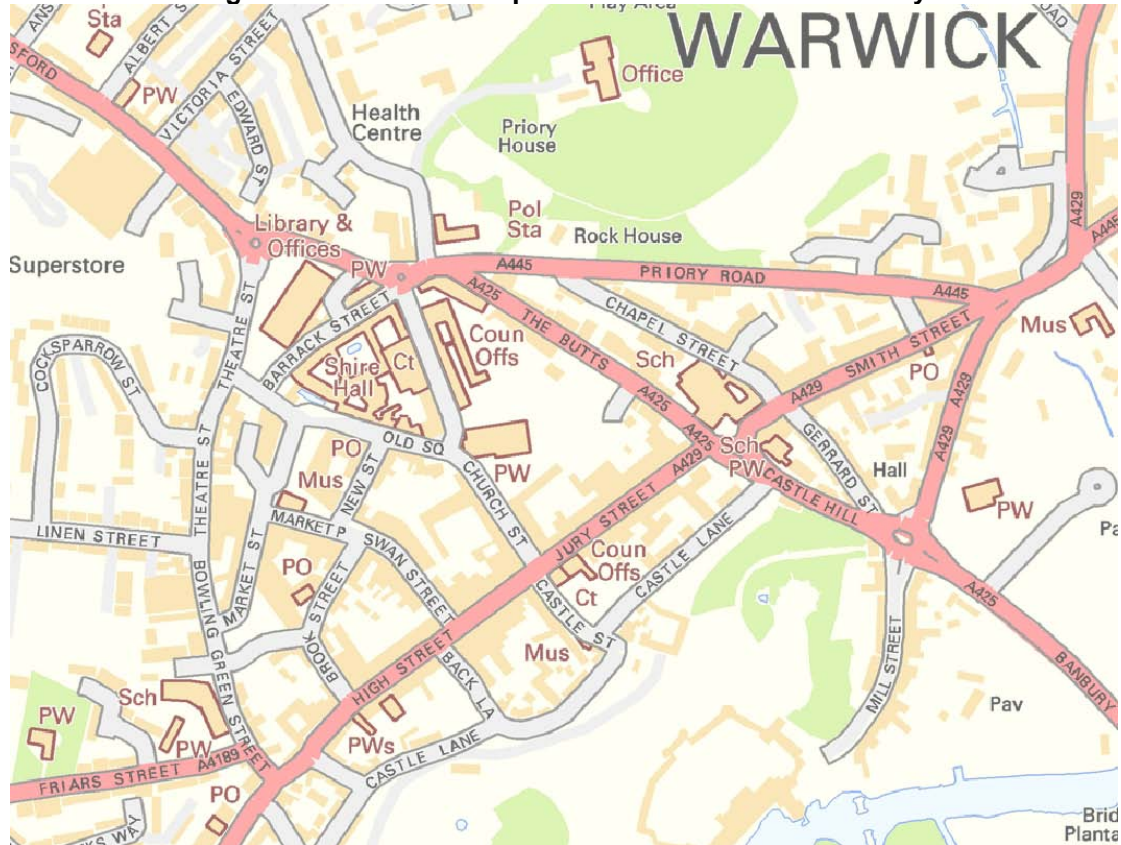
In order to find out the business priorities for those based in Warwick Town Centre, a short questionnaire was made available to all businesses covered by the BID study area. The questionnaire asked businesses for their views on 'Town events and initiatives', 'Marketing and promotion', 'Safety and security', 'Accessibility' and the 'Environment'.

In total, 101 businesses completed the questionnaire within the deadline; their views and opinions are summarised in this report.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents within Warwick Town Centre.

Figure 1: Location of respondents to Warwick BID survey



Street	Number	Street	Number
Market Place	26	Coten End	4
Smith Street	23	Old Square	3
High Street	8	New Street	2
Swan Street	8	Castle Lane	1
Brook Street	6	St. John's House	1
Market Street	6	Hampton Road	1
West Street	6	Saltisford	1
Jury Street	5		

RESULTS – EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

Firstly, respondents were asked about events and initiatives that currently take place in Warwick town centre, and what events they would like to see in the future.

Current events in the town have produced a mixed response from businesses. In terms of current events reflecting the flavour of the town, only one in ten (10%) believe that this is ‘excellent’, whilst a further one in three (34%) believe that this is ‘good’.

Respondents appear slightly happier that current events are successful for the town. Just over one-half of respondents, 54%, believe that this is ‘good’ or ‘excellent’, whilst just 15% believe it is ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’.

However, there is a mixed view about whether current event are successful for the business community in Warwick; two in five respondents (39%) state that this is only ‘average’.

Figure 2: Satisfaction with town events and initiatives

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
Do current events in Warwick reflect the flavour of the town	10%	34%	40%	10%	6%
Do you think current events are successful for the town	11%	44%	30%	9%	6%
Do you think current events are successful for the business community	6%	22%	39%	22%	11%

Respondents were asked what types of events they would like to see more of, all comments received can be found in Appendix A of this report. A number of suggestions were made, including initiatives based around food and drink, crafts, historical events. Many respondents commented that they would like to see events that cover the whole of the town centre, rather than one particular area.

When asked what events and initiatives respondents would like to see less of, 26 respondents (one-quarter of all respondents) stated that they would like to see the Mop removed from the town centre. There was also a small amount of opposition for the annual cycle races. A full list of these comments can be found in Appendix B of this report.

Most respondents stated that they would be willing to support initiatives to help the business community in Warwick, approximately three-quarters (76%) said ‘Yes’, whilst only 12% said ‘No’. The remaining 12% stated that it would depend on the initiative.

Respondents were asked what kind of initiatives they think would be successful in Warwick. Many respondents took the opportunity to mention that free parking would assist their business draw in more customers. There was also support for a better marketing campaign, both to potential visitors and businesses. A full list of comments made can be found in Appendix C of this report.

RESULTS –MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Respondents were firstly asked how important marketing is to their business, on a scale from 'very important' to 'not important'. Figure 3 shows that less than half of respondents, 43%, said that it was 'very important' with a further 37% stating it was 'important' to them. One in five respondents 21% stated that marketing was 'not important' to them.

Figure 3: Importance of marketing to businesses



Most businesses, 73%, currently market their business at a 'local' level. Regional and National marketing are used by 36% and 38% of businesses respectively. International marketing is far less popular, with just 7% of respondents promoting their business at this level.

Respondents do not appear satisfied with current town centre marketing for their business; just 9% of businesses rate the opportunities as either 'good' or 'excellent'. In fact more than one in three respondents (36%) rate them as 'very poor', with a further one in four (26%) rating them as 'poor'.

Many respondents, 46%, spend over £1,000 per year on marketing their business, with a further 32% spending at least £200 per year. Only one in five businesses (22%) spend less than £200.

Local publications, direct marketing and the Internet were the most popular ways that businesses promote themselves, Figure 4 shows the full results to this question.

Figure 4: Methods of advertising currently used by businesses

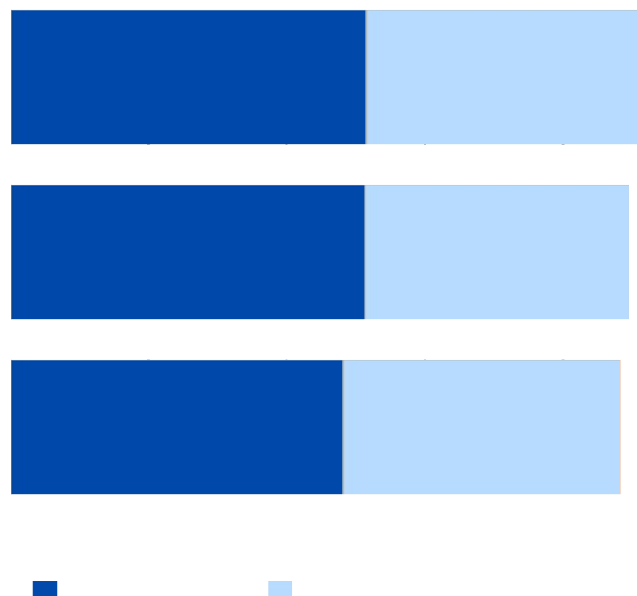
Method	Percentage
Local publications	61%
Direct marketing	48%
Internet	44%
Local radio	21%
National newspapers	17%
Local TV	7%
National TV	4%

RESULTS – SAFETY AND SECURITY

Most respondents consider Warwick to be a safe town centre for visitors, employees and residents; approximately nine out of ten respondents believe safety is ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ in the town centre.

Crime preventative measures and initiatives around Warwick town centre received similar levels of satisfaction; Figure 5 shows how current provisions were measured. Approximately one-half of respondents rated each initiative as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’, although there were a handful of respondents who rated each as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’.

Figure 5: Evaluation of current crime prevention initiatives



Respondents were asked for further comments around safety and security, a full set of comments can be found in Appendix D of this report. Many of the comments reinforced the general feeling that Warwick is a safe town, however a few comments referred to a lack of police presence in the town, and a lack of CCTV cameras.

RESULTS – ACCESSIBILITY

Respondents were asked a number of questions about the quality of buses, parking and signage in and around Warwick town centre.

Figure 6 shows that few respondents regard the provision of long stay car parking as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’, with over one-half of respondents viewing it as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’. At least two out of five respondents also regard short stay car parking, signage for parking and signage for pedestrians as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’.

The only area that respondents appear to be satisfied with are bus routes into the town, only 13% of respondents consider them to be ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’, with more than one-half, 54%, considering them as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’.

Figure 6: Satisfaction with accessibility issues

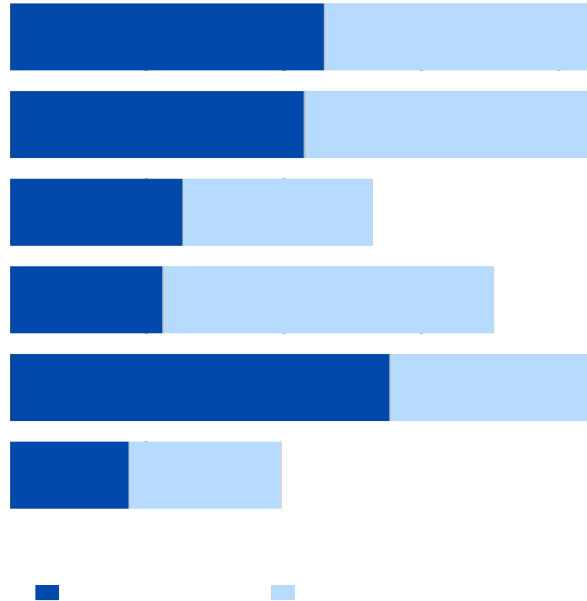
	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
Bus routes into town	14%	40%	33%	11%	2%
Short stay car parking	9%	19%	27%	33%	12%
Long stay car parking	7%	7%	24%	35%	27%
Signage into town for parking	9%	29%	29%	25%	8%
Signage in town for pedestrians	8%	24%	29%	23%	16%

All further comments around the issues of accessibility can be found in Appendix E of this report, they reflect the findings in Figure 6 above. Many respondents highlighted that signage to Smith Street needs improving, and that parking in Warwick is generally poor.

RESULTS – ENVIRONMENT

Respondents were asked how effective a number of current environment-related schemes are in the town centre. Generally, current planting schemes, street lighting and street cleanliness were considered to have higher levels of satisfaction. Christmas lights and business recycling collection were rated lowest by respondents, with approximately one-half of respondents rating them as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’.

Figure 7: Evaluation of current environment-related schemes



The number of respondents to the question about business recycling collection was lower than each of the others, nearly one-quarter did not respond. This, along with some of the comments received, indicates that not all businesses receive this service, or are aware that this service exists.

RESULTS – FURTHER SUGGESTIONS

Respondents were encouraged to state where they think the money generated from the BID should be spent. Many respondents took the time to add in suggestions, all comments can be found in Appendix G of this report.

Most comments related to one of the topics mentioned in the questionnaire. Attracting visitors to the town appeared to be an important issue for many, and particularly organising new events to attract people into the town. Car parking was also raised, and respondents appear keen to resolve the issues previously mentioned. A handful of respondents were also keen to integrate the town centre with Warwick Castle better. Many businesses also emphasised that it is important the whole town benefits from the BID project, and not just one or two areas.

APPENDIX A – TYPES OF EVENTS RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE OF

- *2 day events*
- *charity events, Victorian, local kids etc.*
- *concerts*
- *concerts at castle, not just classical*
- *craft market, high quality, different events. Large scale family events (not too expensive)*
- *crafty, arts*
- *daytime/arts/theatre*
- *events - music, poetry, theatre*
- *events appropriate to town/business community*
- *events in market square*
- *events that reflect Warwick's history*
- *family based activities, mass market appeal*
- *family daytime events*
- *family run/castle grounds 10km*
- *family/historical days. Use a lovely town, not just the square*
- *farmers markets, fayres etc*
- *festivals, draw more people here*
- *folk festival*
- *folk festival, Victorian festival,*
- *food festivals/markets/wine tasting event*
- *historical*
- *integrating local shops*
- *late night shopping, Victorian evening*
- *live music*
- *live music in Square, Thai Festival, Folk festival etc*
- *markets*
- *markets on a Friday and Saturday*
- *markets, Victorian, medieval events*
- *modern & historical events*
- *more events for locals*
- *music*
- *music events*
- *music related festivals, cultural, historical,*
- *music, food festivals*
- *none*
- *Public entertainment*
- *similar to craft market*
- *smith st markets*
- *street art, cultural*
- *street entertainers*
- *street festivals & markets*
- *summer event to match Victorian festival*
- *Sunday events*
- *supporting local businesses, stalls for each business etc at food festival.*
- *Themed events - something to draw in out of towners*

- *themed events ie Warwick words*
- *To accentuate current life within Warwick*
- *use of square and surrounding areas*
- *weekday markets, farmers/French markets etc*
- *Xmas events*

APPENDIX B – TYPES OF EVENTS RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE LESS OF

- *anything too cultural*
- *cycle race, the mop*
- *cycle races, mop*
- *events that don't use the whole of the town*
- *fairground rides*
- *less road closures during the day, and more notice of closures*
- *mop*
- *mop*
- *mop*
- *mop & cycling event*
- *mop & runaway mop*
- *mop fair*
- *mop fair*
- *mop fair, do nothing for business*
- *mop fairs*
- *MOP!!*
- *MOP!!*
- *n/a*
- *none*
- *none*
- *summer events*
- *The MOP*
- *the mop*
- *the mop*
- *the mop*
- *the mop*
- *the mop*
- *The Mop*
- *the mop*
- *the mop*
- *the mop*
- *the mop & cycle races*
- *Victoriana*
- *Warwick mop*

APPENDIX C – INITIATIVES THAT RESPONDENTS FEEL WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN WARWICK

- 15 minutes free parking in the market square
- A longer stay car park in the centre of town. 2 hours is not long enough
- AD campaigns to support local, independent businesses
- anything to promote that Warwick is full of independent shops
- Better mix of shops, better parking
- better quality events
- Clean up the old post office. Replace planters with trees in market place. Get more residences in town centre. Sell off Northgate street as individual houses.
- close Smith St at weekend to traffic and allow businesses to put tables outside
- commercial link ups with castle, marketing Warwick correctly, Town cameras, webcam
- concerts/drama etc. Using the market square as a venue. Possibly a summer event - summer version of the Victorian festival. Themed events, with appropriate costume, music etc
- current events in Warwick are based towards market square area, and tend to avoid businesses outside
- events that make Warwick worth a visit for the day or weekend
- extra events, and marketing of. Increase parking support and details of where customers can park.
- family based, activity orientated, fun for kids, educational but fun, free, weekend events, greater frequency, 1/2 day minimum dwell time
- Food & Drink festival. Major pop events appropriate to ABC1 demographics. Any event which spreads visitors through the town, instead of focusing on one venue, folk festival is a great example. Events focused over weekend or week rather than month.
- food festival, including Indian food stall
- free parking
- free parking
- free parking for at least 15 minutes. 2 hours is not long enough for visitors
- free parking, or provide an attractive walkway from ample car parking by the racecourse up into the town
- historical based events, bring town & castle together, mock battles, birds of prey demonstration
- Initiatives that bring thousands of visitors from the castle into the town. Historical themes. Pushing Warwick as a great place to shop and eat, and because of its small shops.
- Initiatives that make Warwick renowned for; Great days out, A food experience, A collectors heaven, A lovers retreat 'weekends'
- investment schemes to encourage new and existing business. Accessibility from surrounding areas
- It is vital that businesses get together to decide on improvements and what's needed for each business to develop and grow. It would help if we had a post office in Coten End.
- local business promotions supporting each other. Stalls where restaurants can cook. Stalls for businesses to showcase products and produce
- make the most of what we have, lost lots of markets/international markets.
- marketing package, an initiative to tie shops in Warwick together

- *more events on Smith St, whole street closure*
- *more for visitors to do in Warwick*
- *more outdoor artists, shops for youngsters*
- *more shops in Warwick are needed, i.e. clothes shops. The parking is a nightmare for short stay and long stay*
- *none*
- *nothing that will close the roads during the day.*
- *ones that get the youth more involved*
- *open to debate*
- *promotion of town centre, shops and shopping. Filling empty units, better Xmas lights*
- *promotions to help the whole town. Encourage Sunday opening & plan events for Sundays in Spring & Summer*
- *regular events in Market Place. Street entertainers*
- *revamp of market square in traditional style, in keeping with Warwick Image, unlike ghastly safety rails outside registry office*
- *Showcase young businesses, exploit the talents of individuals, Successful business club for networking/events. Businesses need to know what's on their doorstep.*
- *some entertainment in town particularly in summer on a regular basis as long as it is marketed well*
- *Some of the events need to tie in more for the business community. I feel that Warwick stages a number of very good events already, but they need to be better promoted/marketed. Warwick festival could have more punch. Broader scope.*
- *support current events, but nor sure we would want to see roads closed etc preventing entry to the town, and no parking which affects trade considerably*
- *to bring more guests into town centre i.e. craft markets, gifts etc*
- *Useful to have more events this end of town(Smith St) The success of the summer craft market shows it can be done.*
- *where all of the town would be working together, and no divide between Smith St and the rest of the town*

APPENDIX D – FURTHER COMMENTS ABOUT SAFETY AND SECURITY

- *A policeman needed as well as/rather than a CSO*
- *all businesses should be able to join the radiolink for free*
- *crime not a problem*
- *evidence of this is average, concerned about drunkenness amongst adolescents, particularly around St. Nich's park*
- *for the police/council to sort*
- *I have been attacked, had stuff stolen, and business set alight, police did nothing, luckily these events are rare.*
- *lack of real police on the beat is an issue*
- *more CCTV cameras would deter crime*
- *no idea*
- *no real presence from police offers walking the street*
- *only camera always faces up swan street, does it even work?*
- *policing is poor, just lucky there are nice people*
- *possibly more cameras to track undesirables in town.*
- *think some of the problem areas are not helped by some of the bigger stores not enforcing their own policies regarding shoplifting*
- *Think Warwick is really quite safe*
- *town police cover every day*
- *Warwick is a very safe town compared to others*
- *Warwick is pretty safe*

APPENDIX E – FURTHER COMMENTS ABOUT ACCESSIBILITY

- *always having to give out directions for tourists*
- *Barrack St should be public car park, county council should use park & ride or racecourse*
- *barrack street should become a public car park, wouldn't want any more money on signage*
- *bus travel very expensive. Need orientation signs from Train Station, market square, to direct and show other areas of the town.*
- *buses stopped using Smith St many years ago*
- *car park signage over fussy, and car parks don't seem to point visitors to local attractions until they have parked.*
- *don't drive, bus route into town takes 1 hour from Leamington unless you walk to Parish church. Train station is a disgrace, and smells.*
- *don't like illuminated signs, could be better use of electricity*
- *free parking*
- *Lack of parking is a real bug bear, for the amount of visitors and new inhabitants, there is a real deficit. Signs directing shoppers to Smith St from the town are pretty non existent*
- *long stay parking is too far away from town centre.*
- *multi storey could be more welcoming, esp. to female visitors*
- *need longer parking in Smith St*
- *need signage for Smith St*
- *not easy to park at any time*
- *not enough LS car parking*
- *not enough parking in town centre*
- *nowhere for coaches or mass tourist visitation, need park & ride infrastructure, complete revaluation of requirements & provisions.*
- *on street parking does not allow enough time for visitors to do shopping*
- *Only long stay car park is a horrible car park, especially for push chairs or the elderly. Also not good first impression for visitors.*
- *park & ride - also concessionary rates for workers*
- *park & ride, signage from castle to town centre*
- *parking expensive*
- *parking for businesses is very poor*
- *parking is a real issue for businesses within the town centre, for clients and employees - struggle with short stay parking.*
- *Parking is notoriously difficult to navigate for strangers to town.*X17 bus route - @ present only Cov-Ken-Leam-Warwick and back. Why not introduce a circular route?*
- *parking is the biggest issue*
- *parking too mixed up, and too expensive, cheaper long stay car parking.*
- *progress to resolve issues is lamentably pathetic*
- *rail access is good for Smith St*
- *remove parking fees to attract people to stay longer in town.*
- *season tickets have gone up by 30% year on year for 4 years. This is absolutely outrageous.*
- *should be free parking like council employees*
- *signage needs to be consistent in appearance. Not sufficient signage to racecourse*

- *signage to Smith St needs improving*
- *signage, car parks esp. long stay ones.*
- *Smith St needs more signage*
- *smith street could be better*
- *stop digging up car parks to build on*
- *The council wants the rates money, but then discourages cars that bring customers*
- *there should be free car parking in Westgate after 6pm*
- *Town Centre parking has been severely reduced*

APPENDIX F – FURTHER COMMENTS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

- *against the BID*
- *all BID money should be spent to benefit the area covered, and all businesses within that area, not just selected industries such as tourism.*
- *Bin service needs to be improved. Street furniture in Beauty spots required.*
- *Coten End does not benefit from the above*
- *cycling and parking your bike should be easier*
- *don't spend money on events that involve road closures*
- *down to the council to manage the current budget so the towns business community don't have to fund any changes. That's what business tax is for*
- *generally very good. Love the new bus station!*
- *more planting schemes*
- *more tree planting in the square*
- *no rubbish collection, street cleaning in Jury St an issue, they don't clean properly.*
- *refuse is collected by a private company*
- *same Christmas lights for years*
- *street lighting in Smith St is rubbish, as are the Christmas lights. Very little street furniture in Smith St. Pay for our own recycling*
- *the problem is we don't stand out as a town, everything is average.*
- *very difficult to get info on recycling*
- *what business recycling? I do it all myself*
- *Xmas lights are very poor, not like Kenilworth/Stratford*
- *Xmas lights not my biggest priority, need more street furniture. Non existent recycling collection*

APPENDIX G – FURTHER COMMENTS ABOUT WHERE RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE BID MONEY SPENT

- 15 m free parking in market place
- An extension to the visitor information patrol scheme
- attracting national retailers to the town - i.e. next
- Better all year round use of the square area. TIC moved to museum. Co-ordinate events to promote town all year round. TCM involvement with all businesses
- Business rate payers should get one parking season ticket per business. A Warwick event needs to play to the USP - castle, history, for centuries. This was England's second city.
- car parking & times of car parking
- Christmas lights
- Christmas lights & illuminating businesses, buildings
- Christmas lights for Smith Street, Marketing of Smith Street, Enhancement of Street furniture etc
- collective marketing schemes, aesthetics, pedestrian signage, new & different events. Marketing to illustrate that Smith St is part of Warwick town Centre
- concerned about controversy in Coventry
- Creating a cohesive plan to pull the town centre layout together - We need to establish our USP - history wont cut it!
- don't spend money on events that involve road closures
- Encourage multiple new businesses to set up. Sponsorship of small craft based businesses
- Encouraging visitors to Warwick, more events. Increasing diversity of businesses in town. Improving parking for locals and visitors
- events, marketing, Christmas lights
- free car parking after 6pm, at Westgate car park, and free local magazine
- General marketing of town and amenities. Combined events with castle/town.
- if the BID goes ahead, each area of Warwick should be treated differently. Give the decisions to be made to each area, and not Warwick as a whole.
- improve pedestrian crossing on the high street. Improve the view of empty shops, make them look less empty/derelict. Attract more locals in the week by doing 'happy hour' parking? A 'Where to eat' guide for the town centre. Use market square more.
- Improve road surfaces/pavements and further work like Swan St & the square?
- Improve the town, increase the footfall. Filling empty units, increasing car parking for shoppers would benefit
- Improving parking, more traditional events needed around the town. Big tourist town so more information points/centre required as the tourists are helpful in boosting the economy.
- It is important for small businesses to meet and take part to ascertain what is needed.
- joining the BID will be a decision for the trustees, and the anticipated cost of members contributions and the direction that the BID will probably take.
- large open market place rather desolate, would benefit from some planters.

- *make Warwick a fun and interesting place to explore rather than a short stay to visit the castle, and the one or two recognised shopping areas, for example, guided tours to encourage people to explore the town and spend more time here.*
- *Market Place - development of activities/events. Marketing - in the town - more visual impact!*
- *Marketing of Warwick focused first on local, then regional, then national. Lots of greenery, hanging baskets, sprucing up tired areas such as Old Square, or garden behind TIC, open gardens scheme. Cleanliness, make Warwick a really memorable place to visit*
- *more daytime with run on into the evening economy with emphasis on tourism/overnight stay.*
- *More events involving Smith Street, pedestrianised street fairs, themed sector events*
- *more live music in the square, park & ride, cycle parking, benches in the square, feature in the square, get rid of the mop!*
- *more tree planting in the square*
- *not in favour*
- *not supportive*
- *parking*
- *plenty, need meeting to discuss further*
- *promote all of Warwick, not just the town centre*
- *promotion of Smith St to tourists, better parking for shoppers. Cycle path down Smith St and Jury St.*
- *promotion of Warwick to invite more people to visit. Make Warwick more appealing, because at the moment not much happens here.*
- *proper trees in Square and suitable lighting in town centre.*
- *remove the mop to St. Nicholas Park or racecourse*
- *replace new Xmas lights, but with low energy bulbs. Continuity with Xmas lights across all areas of town. Additional lighting and signage for Smith Street. Market the whole town, focus on keeping customers local, and promoting the uniqueness of independent shops in Warwick. New planting schemes, cherry trees etc.*
- *Review of the town infra-structure. Market square needs to become a focus.*
- *separate pot of money for Smith Street, or separate projects. A higher standard of Christmas lights would be wonderful, instead of the 2 1/2 bulbs we currently have. Greater awareness of Smith St by highlighting the area via boards or signs in the main town centre. Wrought Iron arches at the top of Smith St. Increase footflow, and make Warwick a better shopping environment.*
- *summer events too*
- *The centre of town is High St / Jury St junction but nothing ever happens here. We would like to be included in this town.*
- *The lack of adequate car parking near the town centre has a big negative effect on trade in the town, more parking is needed if the town is to be prosperous*
- *touch screen information point in town for tourists to find info. Advertise local business campaign in local press. XMAS LIGHTS!!! More business support, more business and community events.*
- *try to highlight the better buildings, encourage colour in our dreary town*
- *Unless the scheme benefited Smith Street (lower end) & Coten End we would not support.*

- *Warwick is a very nice town but missing the sparkle of entertainment. Not much to do at night. In daytime missing more shops other than independents. Need company to attract more visitors to Warwick Town*
- *well advertised family events for school holidays, advertising aimed at promoting independent retailers, combined with retailer promotional activity*
- *Working with castle to promote the town centre*