

Welcome to BE03
The Bedford BID Newsletter
The Shape of Things to Come!



Bedford means business

YES to Bedford BID will see a minimum of £3m being spent directly on the Town Centre

You said Yes! Congratulations, Bedford is the first town in the country to turn a pilot into a reality with the Business Improvement District. (BID)

77% of those who voted said Yes, in real terms only a few voted against. We want everybody to feel part of this important & new way of managing and promoting our Town Centre. We hope those who didn't find the time to vote and those who still have concerns will be persuaded by the tide of positive opinion and the work in the coming months which is making Bedford a centre of attraction.

Others towns from across the world (notably Japan), television, radio and press pundits have all put Bedford in the spotlight of success - now it is time for us to get moving.

£450,000pa raised from the BID Levy will be spent directly on improvements. The Bedford BID team has secured another £150,000pa from property owners because you voted YES. We are also applying for funds from organisations such as the Regional Development Agency. The aim is to match every £1 you give us with £1 from elsewhere.



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BE03

What you'll get for your money

The first benefits of being a Business Improvement District will be seen on the streets by the end of Summer - just a soon as the levy is collected in from everyone.

1. **Be Safe, Be Smiling** - will see Town Centre Rangers on parade, five of them eventually who will be there to meet, greet and guide shoppers to Bedford. These will be backed up by a minimum of two dedicated Police Community Support Officers. Retail Radiolink will be expanded and available to all shops within the BID Area for free. The Bed:Safe NiteNet Radio and BAND scheme will be rolled out to all nighttime businesses. The implementation of the National Business Information System (NBIS) will mean that we will become highly proactive in dealing with crime and disorder in the Town Centre, leading to the Safer Shopping Award.
2. **Easy Come, Easy Go** - the words on everyone's lips are car parking. The Bedford BID Board will be looking at free or discounted parking and extended evening parking with shopper escorts.
3. **'Surprise Yourself' Marketing Campaign** - sustained and high impact, this will be a surprise when competitors see Bedford promoting its shopping to customers not just in Bedfordshire but beyond.
4. **Small is Beautiful** - again your Bedford BID Board will be looking at helping independent retailers financially to add to the quality, range and interest of shops in the town.

If you want more details of the work programme including costs, please visit our website www.bedfordtowncentre.co.uk and click on Bedford BID. Alternatively call us free on 0800 013 0339.

So when is it all going to happen?

Bedford BID, the independent, private company managing the BID came into being on 1 April 2005 after the YES vote. Legal and financial arrangements were made during April to prepare for:

Collection of the BID Levy

Bills will be sent out the week commencing 16 May 2005 and a minimum of 3 months is required to allow payment. Those businesses with a rateable value of less than £7,000 are exempt from the BID levy and will not receive a bill. However everybody will be kept informed through, for example, this newsletter.

Contractual Arrangements

The contracts for provision of e.g. Town Centre Rangers, free/discounted car parking, the marketing campaign are currently being negotiated. The majority of the BID Levy is expected to be collected by August 2005 and this will enable us to go ahead with the launch of the programme.

Launch of Bedford BID

The Bedford BID programmes will be on the streets and visible to you from September 2005. Highlights are personnel on the street to help shoppers and visitors, as well as Bedford BID looking to commission TV adverts for Bedford Town Centre for the first time this Christmas.



Who's managing all this and how can I have my say?

The Bedford BID Board of Directors will be elected by YOU, the BID Levy Payers from April 2006. In order that you can input ideas and issues, vote on company business and stand for election for the Board in 2006 you will need to fill in a simple registration form which is enclosed.

The Bedford BID Board of Directors had to be nominated this year to enable the process to swiftly move into action - those nominated were from people who had actively supported the BID process. The details of the Board can be found on the back page. Remember your turn could come next.



Bedford Wins Major Award

In February Bedford Town Centre Company was the overall winner in the Eastern Region of the Association of Town Centre Management Awards presented at its first Regional Showcase Conference in Newmarket. Beating off competition from the likes of Cambridge & Norwich, it also won a category award for 'Managing the Evening Economy' and will now go on to national finals in January 2006.



Your Bedford BID Board Directors for 2005

The Bedford BID Board comprises of up to 10 directors from business whom you will elect from 2006, 2 directors from the Bedford Town Centre Company & 2 directors from the Public Sector.

Current directors are:



Mo Aswat
Mo Aswat, Executive Director of Bedford Town Centre Company (BTCC) and the 'face' of the Bedford BID on TV, radio and in the papers. He will be responsible for its implementation.



Glenn Farrar
Glenn Farrar, Chair of the BTCC, runs the Bedford Swan Hotel and a major behind-the-scenes influence in the success of the Bedford BID.



Michael R. Peters
Bedford's leading independent retail personality who decided to speak up and back the Bedford BID in a big way.



Neil Primett
Neil Primett of Planet Clothing, owner of expanding high fashion outlets, whose customers are all the best dressed young shoppers in town and who sees the need for more & sustained marketing of the Town Centre.



Mark Needham
Mark Needham, Harpur Shopping Centre. Enthusiastic supporter of the Bedford BID with practical experience of managing a shopping centre environment. His skills will be invaluable to our success particularly in developing contractual arrangements.



Nick Smith
Nick Smith, Bradford & Bingley. As well as providing sound financial advice to the Bedford BID, he has been involved in raising the profile of the Town Centre through, for example, the organisation of Bedford's first Film Festival.



Rae Levens
Rae Levens, Managing Director of Park Woodfine Solicitors, a visionary who is tenacious & resourceful and who has helped make many Bedford ideas a reality, for example, The Place theatre. Will provide legal expertise to Bedford BID.



Ian Pryce
Ian Pryce, Bedford College - just across the town bridge and home to hundreds of daily visitors to the centre. Overseen expansion and development of the college to provide a first class educational environment for the community.



Mary Callan
Mary Callan, Debenhams - simply the biggest department store in town.



Frank Branton
Frank Branton - Mayor for Bedford and, as far as the Bedford BID is concerned, the Mayor for Business. His influence, experience and drive is invaluable at Town Hall.



Tim Malynn
Tim Malynn, Strategic Director, Bedfordshire County Council. Committed to putting Bedfordshire on the map, he is one of the leading figures in attracting the NIRAH development amongst other things.

The team will be supported by independent accountants to ensure financial robustness, professional marketing & communications advice & Bedfordshire Police.

If you would like to speak to any of the directors please phone Bedford BID FREE in the first instance on 0800 013 0339 or email us at info@bedfordtowncentre.co.uk

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