

Bedford Developments 2007

A number of exciting developments are in the pipeline which will change the face of Bedford and the Town Centre. The following images and information gives BedfordBID members an update as to what we can expect. Let us know what you think?



- Bedford Town Centre West
- Department Store
 - New Food Store
 - 40 New Retail Units
 - Cinema – 16 Screen
 - Hotel – 130 Rooms
 - 330 New Residential Units
 - New Car Park – 1100 Spaces
 - New Bus Station



- Castle Quay
- Outdoor Archaeological Park
 - Lime Kiln Vault
 - 3 New Restaurants
 - 8 Specialist Retail Units
 - 103 New Residential Units



- Riverside Square
- New Grand Public Square
 - New Pedestrian Bridge
 - 160 New Residential Units
 - 5 New Restaurants/Cafes



Retail Radiolink

Shop thieves are becoming aware that Bedford is not an easy touch and to make a living they better go elsewhere - and they are. But we need to remain vigilant, Town Centre Police Sgt Pete Byrne told those who joined a Retail Radiolink meeting at BHS recently.

The 15 faces featured on the “not wanted in our town” leaflets have between them 650 convictions - the only way to stop shop theft is to keep them, and those like them, out of the shops. The only way you will know if they are heading towards your door is by keeping tuned into the radiolink.

A bigger Retail Radiolink event is planned next time - don't miss it - the activities will include:

- DVD sessions on recognising credit card fraud
- Refresher guidelines on using the radiolink equipment
- CCTV and you can help make it work more effectively

Remember Retail Radiolink is an important benefit of the BedfordBID membership - without it the shoplifters will be back, threats to staff will be increased and your costs will rise.

FOR DATE AND TIME OF NEXT RETAIL RADIOLINK CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR DETAILS



Graffiti OUT!

BedfordBID is working on plans to log and limit graffiti in the town.

Evidence will be made available to help the police prosecute the culprits.

It is a worldwide problem - we are doing our best to rub it out.



Bedford
Town Centre
Company



What's inside?

Front Page

Busy as a ... Bluecap
It's a win, win BID

Inside Pages

Heart stopping promotion for Bedford
Get the BIGGER picture
Double vision
Singing Bedford's praises
Spot the Spook
Lime Street in the limelight

Back Page

Retail Radiolink
Graffiti OUT!

BE06



Busy as a ... Bluecap

The team of Bluecaps undertake over 7,000 tasks each and every month.

The team of Bluecaps undertake over 7,000 tasks each and every month.

These range from dealing with visitor and shopper inquiries, keeping BID members informed of offers and opportunities, giving out leaflets as well as those high profile activities like appearing on TV and Radio telling people to “come around to our town”.

As Ambassadors for Bedford, the Bluecaps present a welcoming face to newcomers and regulars alike and now they have a kiosk outside Marks and Spencer to provide a focal point for visitors.



It's a win, win BID

Bedford continues to buck the trend and do better than national averages when it comes to visitor numbers and sales figures.

Whilst other Town Centres suffer losses due to out of town and internet retail - Bedford is being boosted by the activity of the BID.

Footfall is up - whereas in other towns it is simply falling. Independents and the Harpur Centre reported improved sales over Christmas and New Year, commercial vacancies are also down.

There will be more business to come when the riverside, Castle Lane and bus station improvements are completed creating exciting new retail, restaurant and relaxation opportunities. The expert opinion is that local residents spend only one quarter of their disposable income in the town. The aim is bring in more appealing outlets and increase the shopping spend in Bedford.

Inevitably there will be some temporary side effects whilst construction is going ahead. BedfordBID will be working on your behalf to make sure the impact on existing businesses is minimised.

Crime has been cut dramatically in the Town Centre thanks to the BID supporting the local police. By taking advantage of a special “Buy one GET THREE FREE” offer from Central Government the town centre has four Police Community Support Officers. Their profile in supporting the regular Town Centre police and working alongside the Bluecaps has driven trouble out of town. Businesses meeting at The Park Inn heard from police Chief Supt. Andy Frost that retail-related crime was down 25% last year and 40% the year before that.

A BID donation of £10,000 towards the taxi marshalling service run by BED:SAFE was a useful factor in keeping the streets safe for the night time economy.



Heart stopping promotion for Bedford

Thousands logged on to look at the BID website during the St Valentine's promotion.

Offering fantastic prizes and the chance to select "our song" for a romantic moment, the competition was won by Jodie Elliott who gets a great weekend in Prague.

- 2nd Prize – Claire Mowe (Champagne meal for two in Frescoes Lime Street)
- 3rd Prize – Louis Cahalane (£75 meal voucher)

Singing Bedford's praises

Children of nearly 20 schools in Bedford jumped at the chance to be Christmas CD stars.

They all took turns in recording songs at a studio which were then put together in a special compilation CD and sold for charity.

The story attracted TV and radio coverage - as well as hundreds of parents to who flocked to the town centre to see groups of their children singing "live" during late night Christmas shopping.

Sales raised more than £3,000 which was donated to the North Beds Toy Library, a local charity, which supports families with children with learning difficulties by loaning special toys.



Get the BIGGER picture

BedfordBID's success in cutting crime has been recognised overseas - stories have been carried on www.bedford.org

This is an international website aimed at Bedford folk who now live overseas - obviously they come home for visits - the question is: When they do, are they tourists?

Then there was a cracking story in the national Independent newspaper, which was picked up local radio and newspapers, declaring Bedford as a great place to live, work and play.

And the Guardian heralded Bedford as the up and coming place to live: "consider a new beginning in Bedford" started the illustrated article in February.

The property investor's Bible, Estates Gazette, ran two pages on why people should buy business properties in the town pointing to the Mayor's masterplan as reasons to invest in Bedford.

If you want to keep up with how things are going in Bedford remember to log on regularly to the BedfordBID website www.comearoundtobedford.co.uk - it could give you some great news to pass on to customers.

Spot the Spook

Louise Horsley of Bedford collected a fantastic box of goodies after winning the Spot the Spook competition run by BedfordBID.

Designed to encourage retail and restaurant visits in the lead up to Halloween, the competition was just one in a long series of seasonal activities organised by BedfordBID on behalf of businesses in Bedford.

Louise, aged 11, was presented with her prizes and £50 gift voucher by the BID's Chris Barker and Bluecap Lorraine.



Double vision

Two councils are members of BedfordBID. Bedfordshire County Council which governs all of Bedfordshire, except Luton, dealing with affairs like infrastructure, education and social services. And Bedford Borough Council, which deals with planning, bin collections and many of the matters relating to the Town Centre such as the markets.

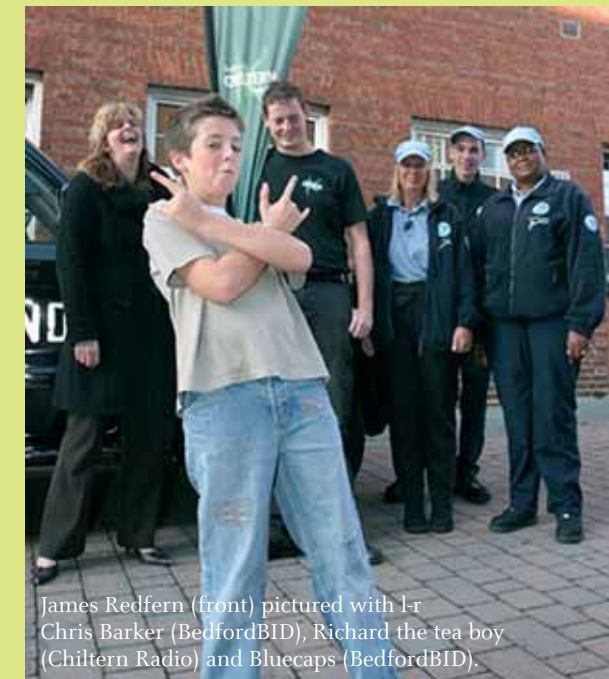
Both fall within the BID zone and pay a large levy on properties they own.

Both are bidding for unitary status - which will mean only one tier of local government for businesses in Bedford.

The decision will be made by Central Government which may decide to maintain the status quo or hand over power to County Hall or Town Hall.

BedfordBID has been asked by both parties to support their cause and to ensure a fair decision was made both councils were asked to put their case to the board.

BedfordBID believes that a single authority will be more efficient in principle and will work towards that goal.



James Redfern (front) pictured with l-r Chris Barker (BedfordBID), Richard the tea boy (Chiltern Radio) and Bluecaps (BedfordBID).

Lime Street in the limelight

James Redfern, aged 11, won a talent contest in the search for a star with that special wow factor.

James, a pupil at Bedford Modern School, impressed the audience and judges with his style and confidence in beat boxing and dancing. He was presented with a prize of £100 of vouchers for "Game" in Bedford by "Richard the tea boy" from Chiltern Radio's Black Thunder.

The contest was the finale to the Limelight activity that gave the town a thrilling summer of street theatre in Lime Street with a line up that included dancing, music, poetry, birds of prey, comedy, magic and theatre. Up to 24 acts with 137 artists delighted shoppers and visitors to Bedford over 19 weeks.

The performing arts season in Lime Street brought much needed trade to the area. In total more than 20,000 visitors passed through Lime Street to see the shows - in some cases audiences of 400 witnessed the acts in action