



Businesses lead the way...

Hello and welcome to your third newsletter from the BID Huntingdon Task Group as we work towards obtaining BID status for Huntingdon Town Centre.



Katy Sismore
Huntingdon Town
Partnership
Manager & BID
Project Manager

A BID (Business Improvement District) allows businesses in a defined area, in our case Huntingdon Town Centre, to take control of, and improve, their business environment. How is it done? By identifying and voting for additional services that they want delivered in the BID area and which they are prepared to pay for.

BID Huntingdon Task Group is made up of some of these businesses and organisations, representing many sectors. All are genuinely passionate about Huntingdon and are responsible for steering the activities of the BID project.

We are now at an exciting time and in this edition of BID News we detail what you have told us you want to see delivered in terms of BID projects for our area.

All the businesses that attended the business meetings and expressed a view were supportive of the BID.

Key Dates

Distribution of Business Plan (BID Proposal)

by Friday 11 June 2012

Ballot papers sent out

by Thursday 14 June 2012

The result

by Friday 13 July 2012

For more information on the BID Huntingdon proposal, visit our website and download BID Facts and BID News March 2012

Samantha Laycock

Workman Retail
Managing Agent for St Benedict's Court

"I was a Retail Manager in Bedford when businesses said YES to a BID in 2005. The impact on the town has been significantly positive. My role changed to Shopping Centre Manager in Bedford and I have seen firsthand the continued benefits of the Bedford BID following the second YES vote in 2010. Now, as Centre Manager of St Benedict's Court in Huntingdon, I am aware of the wide range of benefits a BID potentially could deliver; working towards improving our trading environment and bringing extra footfall to the town centre."



What you think!

In addition to the two surveys, which were carried out in Spring 2011 and February 2012, we have met many of you over the last couple of months to find out exactly what is important to you and how we can all work together to ensure businesses in Huntingdon Town Centre thrive. Finding out what

you believe will make a positive difference to your trading environment is paramount in delivering a successful BID project.

Really encouraging is the fact that the results not only mirror those from the surveys but the vast majority identified the same issues.

Businesses in Huntingdon Town Centre have a common goal 'to make their town the best it can be' and you have been very clear in identifying the key areas you want to focus on to achieve that goal. See overleaf for a summary of those key areas.

Business Rates - what do they actually pay for?

See answers over the page

Summary of KEY areas

We listened and you told us to focus on the following key areas and projects, which are **over and above** those that the public agencies have to deliver.

Clean, Safe & Welcoming (39%)

Huntingdon Town Centre needs to be a clean, safe and welcoming place for visitors and businesses. We will enhance the cleaning and maintenance programme in the Town Centre, whilst promoting the Town as a safe and welcoming place, building on much of the excellent work that already takes place and raising it to another level.

Marketing, Promotion and Events (36%)

Driving footfall; we will tell people where we are and what we have to offer. Without a comprehensive, targeted marketing strategy and events programme focused on promoting the mix of retail, commercial and leisure found in Huntingdon Town Centre, we stand to lose out. We need to maximise opportunities through social media and website marketing.

Business Support (14%)

More support for businesses will be provided along with opportunities for centralised procurement of services and creative networking activities, allowing local businesses to use local services. Business advice, including marketing and design services, will be made available for smaller businesses.

Access - including Parking (11%)

We will thoroughly investigate schemes and ways of making car parking costs more attractive to shoppers and visitors to Huntingdon Town Centre.

So what happens next?

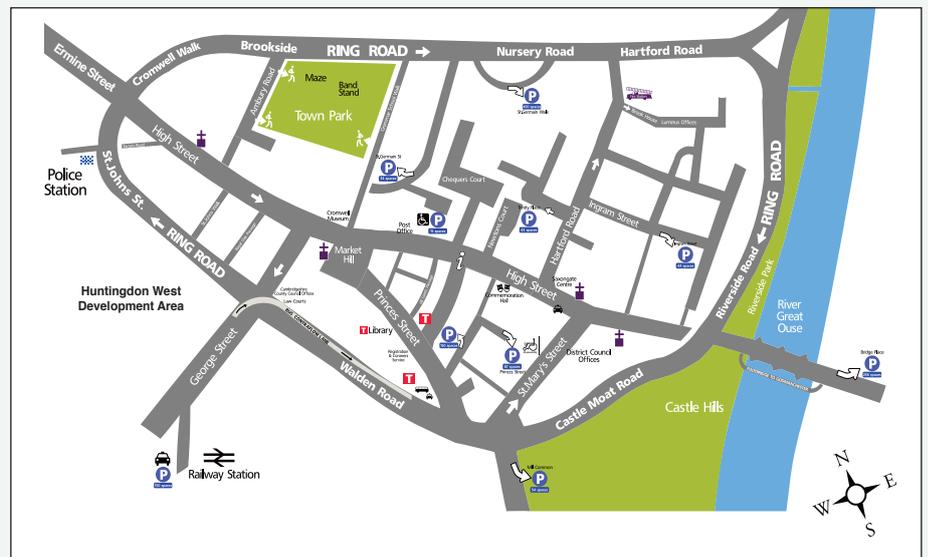
All the information that YOU have given us will be used to develop specific projects to address the key areas that YOU have told us are important. Details of these projects, along with their associated costs, will go into the BID Business Plan. You will vote whether to accept the BID or not.

In June, the Business Plan will be distributed to all eligible businesses in the BID area. An independent and confidential postal ballot will take place a short time after. Remember it's your voice, your choice. A 'yes' vote gives YOU the chance to make a real difference to the future of Huntingdon Town Centre.

BID Huntingdon will act as a powerful lobbying body to ensure that the views of all are represented at the highest levels in all relevant public and private agencies. BID Huntingdon will potentially have a huge influencing power as it will represent all business in Huntingdon Town Centre: that's the voice of over 340 businesses and organisations!

Huntingdon Town Centre – proposed BID area

A more detailed map will be available in the BID Huntingdon Business Plan.



Answer to Business Rates - what do they actually pay for?

Policing, Highways, Street Lighting, Cleansing (to a level) but NOT Trade Waste, Landscaping (limited)



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"Following the BID business meetings at the Old Bridge Hotel, I think the Huntingdon BID is a great mechanism to get everybody working together to improve Huntingdon Town Centre as a whole. A co-operative approach will always give better results than someone struggling on their own to achieve change. From that point of view BID Huntingdon is a great opportunity for all businesses to work together for the overall improvement of our town centre."

Keep up-to-date, visit www.bidhuntingdon.co.uk

For more information contact Katy Sismore, BID Huntingdon Project Manager



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