



Your town, your voice

Hello and, hot on the heels of our 'BID Facts' publication, welcome to your first BID newsletter. All this information is designed to keep you up to date, and encourage your involvement, with the progress being made as Huntingdon Town Centre aims for BID status - that is to become an official Business Improvement District (BID).



Katy Sismore
Huntingdon Town
Partnership
Manager & BID
Project Manager

We have delivered the 'BID Facts' to more than **348** businesses and organisations within the proposed BID area. *BID Facts* explains in detail what a Business Improvement District is; this document is available on the website.

In summary, a BID allows businesses in a defined area to take control of, and improve, their trading environment by identifying and voting for additional services that they would like delivered in the BID area.

A BID in Huntingdon could make a real difference to you and your business.



The Next Stage - Business Meetings

The next stage is to explore the findings of the surveys, carried out in Spring 2011 and February 2012, in greater detail and to talk with you more about the improvements you would like to see in Huntingdon. This April we will be holding a series of business meetings to encourage further discussion and ultimately to select potential projects to include in the final Business Plan.

Please make every effort to attend one of these meetings, which are a forum for you to ask questions about the BID and how it affects your business, to decide upon the projects you want and to have your say.

Remember it's your town, your voice.

Meetings will take place in the Kingfisher Room, The Old Bridge Hotel, 1 High Street, PE29 3TQ. On the right is a list of the dates and times to suit all sectors, which will be specifically held for retail, commercial/office, food/drink/leisure plus two 'open' meetings. When booking your place please ensure that you select the correct meeting. A high turnout is expected and there will be a maximum number of attendees for each meeting, so book early. Either complete and return the invitation provided, or email katy@bidhuntingdon.co.uk.

Postal Survey

In Spring 2011 and February 2012 we carried out detailed consultations and contacted businesses within the proposed Business Improvement District, offering you the chance to have your say on key issues affecting Huntingdon Town Centre.

Encouragingly the response rate for the surveys was over 15%, higher than an average BID survey response rate, suggesting that our businesses and organisations are keen to have their say.

The surveys brought to light several significant areas that can be improved

Find out more

You are invited to a Business Meeting

Each session will last approximately one hour and refreshments will be served. Use the attached invitation to book your place as spaces are limited. Please note it is only necessary for you to attend one of the meetings.

If you are unable to attend one relevant to your business sector, you are welcome at any of the others.

Venue:

Kingfisher Room, The Old Bridge Hotel
Huntingdon PE29 3TQ

Monday 16 April 2012

10am	Retail (National)
1pm	Office & Commercial
3pm	Open to all sectors

Wednesday 18 April 2012

1pm	Open to all sectors
4pm	Food/Drink/Leisure
6pm	Retail (Independent)

by projects decided upon by the business community. The areas identified are safety and security; reducing business costs; marketing, promotions and events; car parking initiatives and additional cleansing. You can read the key findings overleaf.

This is what you have told us so far!

Summary of the Surveys in 2011 and 2012

There have been two detailed BID surveys: in Spring 2011 for the Feasibility Study and February 2012, which focused on the project areas highlighted in 2011.

General

The two surveys have generated a **20%** (Spring 2011) and **15%** (February 2012) response, which is considered good for this type of survey, where the average response rate is between **5%** and **10%**.

Improving Safety and Security

This area is considered a very important focus.

Over **80%** agree or strongly agree with the provision of Town Rangers.

73% would like more PCSOs and **55%** want more Police.

An expansion of the Huntingdonshire Business Against Crime (HBAC) scheme, more CCTV and night time security are all considered important.

Reducing Business Costs

There is a keen interest in central procurement of trade waste management (over **70%**) and centrally procured recycling (**65%**).

Marketing, Promotions and Events

More than **75%** regard all aspects of suggested marketing and promotion as important to their business or organisation.

From the survey in Spring 2011 we know:

- Over **50%** of businesses spend more than £1000 a year on marketing, and over **80%** of marketing spend is controlled locally.
- The focus for spend is direct marketing (**73%**), press (**68%**), internet (**55%**) and radio (**23%**).
- Just **16%** thought Huntingdon Town Centre is marketed well.

Over **95%** wanted more events in this latest survey.

47% would like more events and **41%** thought it was about right.

Suggestions for events included music, dance, specialist markets, food events and community events (Spring 2011).

Car Parking Initiatives

Free and discounted car parking, and free evening car parking, attracted support from over **65%** of respondents.

Maintenance and Extra Cleansing

Almost **90%** consider maintenance issues a priority e.g. overflowing bins and holes in the road.

There was a high level of importance attached to cleansing including the removal of graffiti and chewing gum (over **75%**).

Meet your BID Team

Experience, knowledge and passion are all essential elements for our BID team and we are fortunate to have these aplenty within our Task Group. All want to see Huntingdon Town Centre grow and prosper and each individual comes from a mix of businesses and organisations in the BID area. The Task Group is responsible for steering the activities of the BID project to the voting stage as well as working closely with our appointed consultant, Mo Aswat, from The Mosaic Partnership.



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7 8 9 10 11 12

1 Boots
Andy Brown
2 Cambridge Interiors
Jon Kerby

3 Luminus
Julian Prentis

4 Campbell Rees Partnership
Graham Campbell

5 Huntingdon Town Council
Cllr John Skerry

6 Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr Jason Ablewhite

7 Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Sir Peter Brown

8 Huntingdonshire District Council
Economic Development

Sue Bedlow

9 The Mosaic Partnership
Mo Aswat

10 Huntingdon Town Partnership
John Sadler

11 Huntingdon Town Partnership/ BID Project Manager
Katy Sismore

12 Huntingdon Town Partnership Administrator
Sue Bradshaw

Further Task Group members include:
Huntingdonshire Business Against Crime Manager

Sainsbury's Kevin Sheen

Shopmobility Debbie Drew



Andy Brown, Manager, Boots

"As someone who has always lived in and around Huntingdon, I am passionate about the BID. I believe it's a key part of the rejuvenation of Huntingdon Town Centre. I'm looking forward to being part of the BID team and working with the businesses within the BID area."

Jon Kerby, Owner & Manager, Cambridge Interiors

"We are all having to work harder to succeed; a commitment to BID Huntingdon from each of us will encourage shoppers to the town and help to reduce our costs of running a business - something none of us can ignore."



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

For more information contact Katy Sismore, BID Huntingdon Project Manager