

your business, your voice, your BID

Hello

Welcome to the first edition of the Staines-upon-Thames BID News.

This fact sheet will answer some frequently asked questions about Business Improvement Districts and our plans to work with businesses towards developing one for Staines town centre.

What could a BID mean for Staines-upon-Thames?

For Staines a BID could mean up to £1.4 million over 5 years would be raised and spent to invest in and enhance the town. How that money is spent is up to you and your fellow businesses.

Staines has a thriving town centre that needs to remain competitive. A BID enables the private sector to work together, to agree the projects and improvements that will be delivered in their area to ensure that Staines attracts visitors, increases footfall and encourages investment.

A few examples of projects and services that BIDs deliver are:

- **Attracting footfall** – a truly magical Christmas throughout the town, year round events and festivals, family attractions to animate all areas of the town and create buzz and atmosphere
- **Marketing and promoting** – through campaigns to promote the town as a destination, to develop its identity and increase spend, promote brands and independent businesses
- **Clean, bright and welcoming** – entering Britain in Bloom, free WIFI for shoppers / visitors, new street furniture, wayfinding signage and digital advertising
- **Reducing business crime** – additional police, PCSO's and Storennet radio system for businesses
- **Business support** – to help businesses save money on bills and reduce costs through joint procurement
- **Voice for local businesses** – superfast broadband, affordable parking / travel for employees, professional business seminars, business training, networking and awards. BIDs also give all businesses a strong, collective voice to be able to engage with the rest of the town and raise the issues that are important to you such as parking, the market etc.

Get involved and have your say. The BID survey enables all businesses to voice the issues they want addressed, put forward ideas and identify priority projects. These will form part of the 5 year BID business plan that all businesses will vote on later this year. Pending a majority vote Staines will become a Business Improvement District and all projects will get underway. Please complete the survey online at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/stainesbid>

What are BIDs?

A BID is an arrangement whereby businesses get together, decide what improvements they want to make in their town or city centre, how they will manage these and what it will cost them.

BIDs have a maximum term of 5 years, which gives a good length of time for businesses to feel the benefit of the services and projects delivered by the BID.

BIDs can only deliver services and projects that are additional to those provided by the public agencies including the local authority and police to ensure that businesses receive added value.

The BID development phase is being supported by Spelthorne Borough Council but, going forward, the BID would be entirely managed by the businesses.

Have BIDs been supported elsewhere in the UK?

Since the legislation was introduced in the UK in 2004 over 225 BIDs have been formed in locations including Kingston, Guildford, Camberley, Croydon, Bromley, High Wycombe, Bath and Reading. There are 50 BIDs in London alone. 95% of BIDs are re-elected by businesses after their first 5-year term demonstrating their value to businesses.

In partnership with Spelthorne Borough Council

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How could Staines-upon-Thames become a BID?

As BIDs are business led, a new BID Steering Group made up of local businesses will be formed to develop and drive the BID project forward. Please get in touch if you would like to be a part of this group. The Steering Group, in line with the widespread business consultation, will make key decisions including projects that go into the business plan and the budget allocated to the projects.

Following consultation with businesses in the BID area, a business plan will be produced setting out the priorities identified and the exact costs. All eligible businesses within the BID area will be asked to vote to deliver the projects and services contained within the business plan.

For a BID to go ahead businesses cast their vote at official ballot. A ballot must be won on two counts: A majority by number and a majority by rateable value. This ensures that the interests of large and small businesses are protected.

Making sure it's right for Staines-upon-Thames

Throughout the term of a BID it is essential to measure the effectiveness of the services and projects being delivered to demonstrate to businesses the improvements it is making to their area. The BID will verify this in a variety of ways including the UK Retail Rankings, installing footfall counters throughout the town, undertaking shopper surveys, business surveys and looking at the crime figures and number of vacant units. All data will be benchmarked regularly during the BID term.

What next

Please take a few minutes to complete a BID survey. This is your town and your BID so you decide the initiatives that go into the Staines-upon-Thames BID business plan.

In the next BID News we will:

- Give you feedback on the BID survey data and the initiatives businesses want the BID to focus on
- Introduce your new BID Steering Group of local businesses
- Provide you with a BID development timeline

For more information and to discuss the BID, please contact Michelle Baker, Staines BID Development Manager tel 07527 016338 email Michelle@staines-upon-thames.bid

How is a BID funded?

A BID is funded through a BID levy, this is calculated as a small percentage of a business's rateable value. The majority of BIDs charge between 1 - 1.5% of rateable value per annum to fund the improvements businesses want. For a small independent business this is circa £50 a year / £4 per week. Once a ballot is successful the BID levy is mandatory for all eligible businesses. BID levy is ring-fenced for use only in the BID area and only for the projects businesses choose. The BID would be managed by an elected Board of local businesses.

Examples of BIDs at work

"In the last 10 years we have seen higher footfall, longer user stay and higher spend; this is in no small part down to Kingston BID". Chris Paterson, director – real estate, Aviva Investors, joint owners of the Bentall Shopping Centre

Nottingham BID events attracted over 500,000 extra visitors

Shrewsbury BID trailed 'Free Sunday Parking' and footfall rose by 35% on the previous year's figures

A Manchester BID event – the MCR Student Takeover saw footfall increase by 61%

Winchester BID saw a 25% increase in footfall due to their BID

Reading BID installed 400,000 lights throughout the town making it one of the finest Christmas displays outside of London