

enjoy wolverhampton

Annual Report 2015/16



ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

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WHAT IS A BID?

A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) IS A BUSINESS LED AND CONTROLLED PARTNERSHIP WITHIN A DEFINED AREA SUCH AS WOLVERHAMPTON CITY CENTRE.

The BID delivers services and projects which have been agreed and formally voted for by city centre businesses, in addition to services provided by public agencies. A BID lasts for five years with the aim of bringing about positive changes to the area, improving trading conditions and enhancing the city-centre environment.

Wolverhampton BID

Wolverhampton businesses voted in support of establishing the BID during a month long voting period in October and November 2014. Wolverhampton BID Company Ltd launched on April 1st 2015.
It is a non-profit organisation set up to promote and enhance Wolverhampton to make it more attractive to visitors, shoppers and investors.

Representing more than 670 businesses in the city centre, the BID works with stakeholders and partners to identify, agree and deliver programmes which increase the appeal of the city centre and subsequently improve trading conditions. Businesses and properties within the BID boundary which have a rateable value of £10,000 or over, as defined by National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR), are legally required to pay the levy. The levy is collected by Wolverhampton City Council on behalf of Wolverhampton BID Company Ltd in June each year.

WOLVERHAMPTON BID'S KEY AIMS:

Direct and deliver £3million of investment in the city centre from 2015 to 2020.

Improve people's perceptions of the city by delivering a safe, clean and welcoming city centre, day and night.

Address the issues of accessibility and parking to remove the barriers to people choosing to shop and visit the city.

Increase footfall and raise the city's profile through enhanced and targeted marketing, and co-ordinated promotions and events.

Secure Wolverhampton's future as a thriving and vibrant city, putting it back on the map as a destination of choice.

Make sure Wolverhampton city centre is doing all it can to enhance its offer and secure its future.



BID Director

Welcome to Wolverhampton BID's first annual report which sets out what the organisation has achieved in its first year and how it has delivered on its four key objectives. I am delighted to share the highlights of what has been an extremely busy year for the BID team. Looking back at the projects and activities we have delivered in our first year has shown me exactly how much we have achieved and inspired me to continue building on this next year.

We have planned a series of high quality promotions, events and initiatives which aim to enliven our city streets, attract footfall and put the city back on the map as a destination for families and visitors. We have worked hard to promote our city in a positive light to ensure it has the glowing reputation it deserves. Our city is going through unprecedented change, attracting investment with the redevelopment of the Mander Centre, completion of the Interchange development and opening of the Youth Zone with more to come.

Whilst the city will see the benefit of this regeneration in the coming years, the BID hopes to ensure we support businesses in this changing and growing city and maximise a return in your investment in Wolverhampton BID.

We want your business to really benefit from all the BID brings to the city centre. As a paying BID business member, we encourage you to take full advantage of these services whether it be saving money on your operating costs or benefitting from increased footfall as a result of the events we deliver. We are stronger together and ensuring your voice is heard, your business is supported and the city is strengthened from the activities of the BID will support you to do business and promote a vibrant city centre.

Cherry Shine



Statement from the BID Chairman

As we start year two of the Wolverhampton BID, I think we can look back on our first year with some pride. The BID now employs its full complement of staff with six ambassadors, a CEO and a project manager. Not forgetting a self-financing lady in shining armour who amongst her many roles co-ordinates the valuable radio link which is able to send resources to an incident quickly, thus preventing any escalation.

We have hosted events for day time visitors to Wolverhampton, as well as focusing on the night time economy. The late-night Safe Haven has helped create an improved environment for the city's evening visitors and helped reduce crime in the city to a 'surprisingly' low level, in the words of the police.

We have big plans for the future which will become apparent as the year progresses, I urge BID payers to engage with our utilities broker Meercat Associates who provide free 'intelligent buying and smart saving advice for businesses' which is free for BID businesses. Meercat has already saved participating businesses significant sums of money. Their aim is to save every business £4 for every £1 they pay to the BID. Give them a challenge!

You have a strong team of voluntary directors, all of whom have Wolverhampton in their blood. If you would like to learn more do contact the office, this is a team game with Wolverhampton as the only winner.

John W. Heum

DELIVERING OUR OBJECTIVES

- A CLEAN, SAFE AND WELCOMING CITY CENTRE
- MARKETING, PROMOTION AND EVENTS
- BUSINESS SUPPORT
- ACCESSIBILITY AND PARKING



The city centre is starting to look clean and smart and bright. Wolverhampton is starting to become a destination to visit rather than a place to avoid. We are on the way up!

Colin Quinton, Dip SCM
Wulfrun Centre centre manager

A CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING CITY

CITY AMBASSADORS

For the first time, Wolverhampton city centre has a dedicated team of six city ambassadors who pride themselves in ensuring all BID businesses know what is happening in the city, whether it is a BID event, alerting the council to a trip hazard or an update on city regeneration. Connected via the retail radio, the ambassadors are a light touch security role that connects city retailers, the police, CCTV operators and key stakeholders in the city centre. They are the eyes and ears for the city centre: responding to anti-social behaviour, reporting graffiti and fly tipping and removing flyposting. Keeping businesses up to date the ambassadors regularly visit all BID businesses to circulate our quarterly newsletter, provide updates on events and encourage businesses to get involved in promotions.

They also provide a warm, friendly and welcoming face for all visitors to the city. They help people way find and know details of up and coming city events, providing a walking, talking tourist information service.

3,400

Business visits to our BID businesses during the first year.

Safe

Keeping our city safe via Facewatch and meeting daily with the police.



A DEEP CLEAN

During our first year, the BID was keen to start getting the basics in the city right with an enhanced clean of the core city centre streets. During October and November 2015, a large scale jet wash, hot wash and chewing gum removal in Dudley Street, Queen Street, Queen Square, Woolpack Street, King Street, and sections of Lichfield and Victoria Street was undertaken; this added an extra sparkle to our streets, removing years of ground in chewing gum before the city's peak Christmas trading period. Early in 2016, further sections of Queen Square, Woolpack Street, Cleveland Street and Lichfield Street (outside the Grand Theatre and Britannia Hotel) were completed.

The BID team employed specialist Midlands-based cleaning company Ramora who have the right equipment to remove the chewing gum and dirt. The deep cleaning takes place overnight to avoid unnecessary disruption to our city centre businesses and we are looking at rolling this deep clean out across the city centre making the city cleaner, brighter and more welcoming to all its visitors.



Cleansing the City...



Removing dirt & gum



A job well done!

The deep clean really brightened up Dudley Street, removing years of ground-in gum and dirt and made a real difference to our main shopping street. With the BID team rolling out this street clean across the city, this will really make our city more welcoming.

Anesh Patel - Santander Business Manager

581

people used the service during 2015/16

110

well connected business use City Radio Link

LATE-NIGHT SAFE HAVEN

A safe and welcoming city is key to the success of our evening economy, which is why the BID was keen to significantly extend the provision of the Late-Night Safe Haven. The service at the Epic Youth Café on Lichfield Street provides a comfortable and friendly place where people can wait for a taxi or seek assistance and is supported by the Red Cross. The BID support for this project has enabled the service to be provided throughout the year on payday weekends – twice a month in Wolverhampton - and for special events in the city including football matches and BID events.

Enhanced promotion of the Safe Haven in all of our evening venues is a key aim for 2016/17 to promote a great night out in Wolverhampton.

CITY RADIO LINK

The BID team now manages the City Centre Radio Link and has rolled out an upgraded digital radio link system to ensure better coverage and communications with an easy to use handset, compared to the former analogue service. Since the BID launched its upgraded system in July 2015, the number of members of the scheme has increased by over 20 users to 110 well connected city centre businesses. The city ambassadors use this link to ensure they know what is happening in the city and the use of the Radio Link will be bolstered when public surveillance via CCTV is provided by the BID in May 2016 to support a safe city.

A WELL DRESSED CITY

Working with landlords and agents, we will continue to identify longer-term vacant units which would benefit from window dressings to ensure our city is attractive to visitors and potential investors. To date, we have installed a window dressing on one prominent unit on our main shopping street and are working hard to ensure other units are presented in the best light.

The BID team is aware of the impact of commercial waste bins on how our city looks. We have developed a vinyl wrap design and are working with commercial waste contractor Amey to wrap a series of the most prominent bins as a short term solution. Longer term solutions include working with businesses to reduce the number of bins, repositioning bins internally where possible and developing a bin housing to remove them from sight for a more attractive city centre.

WOLVERHAMPTON POLICE SAID:

“I have been impressed by the way the BID has brought business together and enabled they them to work as a partnership for the good of the city. This partnership has really demonstrated what can be achieved when you work together. There has been a real focus on making the city a place where people want to go and enjoy themselves. The events they have supported have generated a real community spirit, where all feel welcome. They have managed to do all of this, whilst not forgetting about helping to make people safer. Well done!”

Superintendent, Keith Fraser



MARKETING PROMOTIONS AND EVENTS

PROMOTING THE CITY

Ensuring there are varied and engaging events happening is essential to attracting visitors to our city centre. It is key to the BID that all visitors to our city enjoy a vibrant experience. As a BID team we want to inject more fun back into the city and to date have done this by hosting four events: a Macmillan City Café, Seaside in the City, Christmas Grotto and the Easter Parade and Workshops.

The Macmillan Café proved a great success with fantastic support from Marks & Spencer, Greggs and Madame Clarks providing the cakes, Prince Albert providing the pop up café, Santander providing the man power and doubling the amount raised and Wolfie, the Wolverhampton Wanderers team mascot providing smiles throughout the day.

Seaside in the City transformed Queen Square in to a true British seaside resort and attracted over 1,000 people to enjoy the free family fun with traditional seaside fun, a surfboard simulator, sand, games, Punch and Judy, storytelling, ice cream and candy floss. Fun was had by all and this is an event we hope will grow year on year. City business got involved by dressing their windows in the seaside theme and providing over 30 offers and vouchers to maximise the impact and repeat custom from the event.



CHRISTMAS IN THE CITY

Our Queen Square Grotto attracted more than 1,080 visitors, who enjoyed a traditional wooden grotto at a family-friendly price. This year we plan to make this event bigger and better. Over 20 businesses got involved by providing in excess of 60 offers and promotions as part of our Big Book of Christmas, which was distributed to over 7,800 people. BID co-ordinated a Christmas Market for the light switch on event to encourage people to stay and dwell in the city during the day and after the switch on itself.

BID supported a brighter Christmas by providing additional lighting for the Christmas tree located in Queen Square and made sure people knew what our city had to offer through advertising, including a West Midlands wide billboard poster, coverage in the Express and Star, a Wolverhampton Magazine campaign and social media with a daily average reach of 2,368 throughout December. Utilising the LED advertising display by Junction 9 of the M6, we put Wolverhampton back on the map and in people’s minds as a Christmas shopping and entertainment destination.



SANTA’S BIG NIGHT OUT

Designed to capture an awareness of the great evening venues we have in our city centre, we produced a campaign to raise the profile of the great evening economy we have and produced Santa’s passport for a great night out in the city. With a number of night time venues working together this campaign is one to build on in 2016/17.

EASTER FUN

The city came to life with two Saturdays of Easter activities including children's craft sessions which were fully booked and an Easter Parade with the Mad Hatter, Giant Daffodils and the Easter Bunnies.

To encourage footfall across the city, 11 bespoke Easter Eggs were positioned in a range of venues for our City Egg Hunt with city ambassadors and Easter characters handing out goody bags to all the participating families. We will repeat and improve this event in 2016/17.

POSITIVE PROMOTIONS

With the city receiving more than its fair share of negative publicity, the BID is conscious that its positive news and actions to enhance the city need shouting about.
Through quarterly supplements in the Express and Star we have showcased the city, events and key BID projects to positively promote the centre. In our first year we have produced over 12 positive news stories, have featured on BBC news and Big Centre TV for Seaside in the City, BBC Radio WM promoting the positives of the city and in regular editorial in Wolverhampton Magazine and Staffordshire Living.

WOLVERHAMPTON ONLINE

The Enjoy Wolverhampton website provides a directory of shops and services, events, places to stay and venues to visit, it now features a news section where we regularly provide updates on new business openings and events. The website also features a BID section where all BID businesses can find information about the range of services we provide. We have our Enjoy Wolverhampton Facebook page and are committed to boosting our posts and raising the profile of BID events and all city attractions.



Ensuring our Business to Business trade is maximised through our City Centre Whatsapp group. Call the BID team to join.

Make sure your business is on the Enjoy website. Call the BID team with any news or updates.





ACCESSIBILITY AND PARKING

INITIATIVES & PARTNERSHIPS

In partnership with NCP, we have delivered a parking offer which is now available to BID business members. With recent changes to parking prices this now represents an amazing saving of up to £2 per day which is attracting a growing number of businesses signing up.

Creating an accessible city centre is a key objective of the BID. Working with parking providers and key stakeholders we aim to encourage people to shop, visit and stay in the city, whether it be through offering parking incentives to attract people to city events, helping people find the parking through enhanced signage, or having a friendly welcome from one of the city ambassadors. The BID team has worked with NCP to offer a reduced shoppers tariff with prices being reduced to £1 an hour at the Wulfrun Centre Car Park.

We want our City to be more accessible via every mode of travel so we have been working a variety of partnerships, including Centro with whom we have negotiated travel deals to our family events to reduce the price of travel. There is a lot of work to be done and this is a key focus for the BID team

Call the BID team if you would like to take advantage of our BID Business Parking Tariff at the Wulfrun Centre.





SUPPORTING CITY CENTRE BUSINESSES

BUSINESS SAVINGS SCHEME

Since its launch in April 2015, the BID has been able to offer savings on businesses operating costs. The service is free to BID businesses and is coordinated by Meercat Associates. Savings are available on utilities, telecoms, equipment testing, pest control, waste and recycling; at present the most effective savings are being made on the utilities and telecomscosts. The savings brochure has been delivered to all BID members and is distributed via city ambassadors to interested businesses. Savings of £39,779 (representing a 100% return of the BID's investment) have been identified for 30 business in total.



A CITY VOICE

Ensuring businesses are represented and a strong business voice is felt in key decisions about the centre and issues it faces is a key function of the BID. With a successful application to the Healthy High Streets Programme, the BID team has gained significant support from key businesses including Marks & Spencer, Boots, Santander, Greggs, EE and Exterion Media, all of whom are committed to supporting a vibrant high street.

The BID are key partners in the Queen Street Townscape Heritage Partnership which is directing £800,000 lottery funding to enhance the historic fabric of a key gateway to our city and ensuring businesses benefit from the investment. The BID provides a business voice at the Connected Spaces group and Economic Growth Board and is a key consultee on the council's' Car Parking Strategy, Connected Spaces Strategy and Environment Management issues.

KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE

With so many changes in our city centre, we endeavour to keep you as a BID business up to date with city news and BID activities via a quarterly newsletter – plans to move this online will assist with communications and sharing news throughout 2016/17.

Helping to save money some examples

Blooms
£9,913
On Merchant Fees

Thornley St Surgery
£3,460
On Electricity

CRC Manhattans
£943
On Utilities

FHC Charity
£3,000
On Utilities

One Way Music
£2,891
On Merchant Fees

Freedom Fostering
£2,813
On Telecoms

The service now offers savings on merchants fees which will be launched in 2016/17 to all BID members.

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE



Wolverhampton BID brings hope that our city will be great again... The money raised is a small part of the picture - it is the determination and collective effort of the many people involved in this initiative that drives its success.

Chris Bourne, NoVello

BID BUDGET

Looking to the year ahead we will continue to ensure that the BID levy is spent effectively and efficiently to deliver maximum benefit to the city. We will seek opportunities to supplement the BID levy by investigating sponsorships, grant funding, partnerships and advertising opportunities.

TOTAL INCOME FOR 2015/16:

£571,400.00

ADDITIONAL INCOME:

£75,883.30

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION FOR FACEWATCH FROM WEST MIDLANDS POLICE.

£1,500.00

BID BOARD

The Wolverhampton BID Board is representative of significant stakeholders and a diverse range of organisations from within the BID area. The board meets monthly to discuss BID activities, understand city challenges and put in place initiatives and action plans to deliver positive change in the city.

CHAIRMAN

John Henn *TA Henn*

Laurie Dalrymple
Wolverhampton Wanderers FC
Lal Chand *WILKO*
Iain Watkins *The Grand Theatre*
Debbie Eggerton *House of Fraser*

Robert Gough *Mander Centre*
Colin Quinton *Wulfrun Centre*
Darren Murphy *Marks and Spencer*
Councillor John Reynolds
Wolverhampton City Council

Chris Bourne *NoVello*
Supt Keith Fraser *West Midlands Police*
Simone Chatwin *Boots*
Richard Hunt *Stonegate Brewery*

Jason Davies *Primark*
Bilvir Chander -*Kumar Equinox*
Susan Winmill *NCP*
Richard Hardman *Centro*

THE YEAR AHEAD



The Wolverhampton BID team have made a great start for the brighter future of our City!! Greater things are yet to come, greater things are still to be done !!

Lal Chand, Wilko

2016 - 2017

Looking ahead to the year 2 – 2016/17 budget, the levy generated based on the NNDR list as correct on the April 1st 2016 is estimated at £557,950 (representing a £12,000 reduction as a result of significant redevelopment of the city centre).

The total amount of expenditure is forecast to be £632,950 with the balance being met from other income sources.

We will identify opportunities to maximise the use of the levy, seek opportunities to supplement the budget and will split the income across our four key objectives and operating costs as shown below:

CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING	MARKETING, PROMOTIONS & EVENTS	ACCESSIBILITY AND PARKING	BUSINESS SUPPORT
£210,438	£177,147	£78,732	£19,683

LEVY COLLECTION COSTS	CONTINGENCY FUNDS	STAFFING AND OVERHEADS	TOTAL FORECASTED EXPENDITURE
£11,200	£10,360	£125,390	£632,950

EXCITING TIMES AHEAD

CCTV Operator for the City Centre

By committing £25,000 to provide a CCTV operator for 2016/17 and looking to support future years funding, the BID wants the city to be known as a safe place to visit, work, shop and enjoy, by ensuring the city is monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Working with the established Business Crime Partnership and Radio Link users the CCTV operator and city ambassadors will be able to work jointly to ensure the city centre remains and is known as a safe place.

Alternative Giving – Small Change for a Big Change

The Wolverhampton BID Company is launching an Alternative Giving Campaign to support the homeless to get the right support and to reduce begging in the city centre under the strapline 'Small Change for a Big Change'. The reasons why people beg on the street can be complicated and only addressed with the right agency support. Giving money to beggars may make life on the street easier for them in the short term, but, in the worst case, could feed a dependency. Donation boxes will be produced by the BID and located in businesses across the city centre. By giving to the scheme, rather than directly to beggars, the public can ensure their money is used as their good-will intended. Collected donations will be distributed by Wolverhampton BID Co Ltd to our chosen three charities of which 100% will go to help the homeless and vulnerable individuals in Wolverhampton.

THE ALTERNATIVE GiViNG CAMPAIGN



FUN FEST

With a fantastic line up of 1980s artists and children's entertainer Mr Bloom we have planned a fun filled day for everyone to enjoy Wolverhampton. The Fun Fest is the largest-scale event BID has hosted to date and we hope to attract more than 4,000 people.

SEASIDE IN THE CITY

Attracting over 1,000 people to the city centre despite the unseasonal weather conditions, this event will be built upon in Year 2; we hope to spread the location of the event to ensure footfall attracted to the city centre is felt by all businesses.

BIGGER, BRIGHTER AND BETTER CHRISTMAS

Building on the Christmas grotto, Big Book of Christmas and the additional lights installed on the Queen Square Christmas tree we want Christmas 2016 to be bigger, brighter and more inviting. We are currently looking at plans to extend the Christmas Grotto into a bigger event and to look at more imaginative ways of lighting our city centre streets during the festive period. We need to look at making sure shoppers and visitors to the city know we are open for business by coordinating our shop opening hours and showcasing our festive offerings in a digital and online format.

LATE NIGHT SAFE HAVEN

Ensuring that the Late Night Safe Haven is publicised effectively and in a co-ordinated way across the evening venues in the centre we will raise the profile of this much-needed facility.



BUSINESS SUPPORT

We aim to offer a comprehensive package of support in addition to our savings scheme by developing a series of training opportunities and information packs on issues commonly faced by businesses including city centre recruitment and auto enrolment on the pension scheme. We will also develop a BID members' information and welcome pack that will provide BID businesses new and old, with key information about trading in the city and benefits of the BID.

DRESSING VACANT UNITS

Ensuring that our city looks at its best at all times, we will roll out our vacant unit dressing across the city to ensure that the empty units look inviting for potential investors and our city is more attractive to visitors to our city.

FACEWATCH

With the pilot of Facewatch underway with 20 businesses receiving updates and key intelligence, the BID team will be looking at how this scheme can be rolled out across the city.

AN ACCESSIBLE CITY

With a more accessible city from better signage and wayfinding, through to reduced parking charges and key incentives we will continue to work with partners to ensure that our city becomes more accessible and inviting.

For more information on any of the projects or services set out in this report please call the BID Team on 01902 710903.



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