

# East Midlands BIDs Academy Newsletter

UKBIDs National BIDs Advisory Service from ATCM

Issue 2 – September 2007

Welcome to the second Newsletter for the East Midlands BIDs Academy – working with towns and cities across the region supporting regeneration at a local level.

## A “YES” for Sleaford - a step forward for the East Midlands BIDs Academy



**Sleaford Celebrate!**

*Photo courtesy of Mick Fox Foxtography*

Pictured left to right – Barbara Jones (Sleaford Chamber), Debbie Scott (BID Development Manager), Ian Fytche (Chief Executive of North Kesteven District Council) Cliff Robinson (Head of Member Services North Kesteven District Council)

The successful vote for Sleaford will mean that an extra £3million will be invested in Sleaford over the next 5 years. Creating a better business environment for all Sleaford's businesses, this money will be used to provide a higher level of security, strong business representation and marketing campaigns to bring more people into the town and raise the profile of Sleaford. The first levy payments will be collected in November 2007 and for most businesses in Sleaford will mean a contribution of less than £2 per week.

Sleaford BID has secured a resounding yes for their BID proposals from local businesses. Announced on the 9th July 2007, 69% of businesses voted in favour of the BID.

Sleaford was one of the locations chosen to participate in the one year Academy programme which helps locations through their BID development process. Now 6 months into the programme Sleaford have become the first location participating in the Academy to go to vote. On Monday 9th July it was announced that businesses had voted in favour of the BID. Sleaford is now the 2nd Business Improvement District in the East Midlands, the first was Lincoln Business Improvement Group which secured business support for their proposal in April 2005.

# SLEAFORD

**B I D**

**Daventry Derby Hinckley Nottingham Sleaford Uppingham**

## Additional programme for the Academy is announced

There is a great deal of interest in BID development in the region. A number of locations applied to be part of the Academy but many needed support for partnerships at an earlier stage in this process. In response to this, the Academy is delighted to announce the development of an additional six month programme. The programme will support up to a further nine locations in the region.

Jacque Reilly, Partnership Development Director for the ATCM, who has pioneered the Academy concept said “This exciting new programme will provide nine towns with the opportunity to develop robust and effective partnership structures, re evaluate their current vision and objectives as well as gaining a clear understanding of the stages of BID development and the skills needed. We will also provide a toolkit of BIDs information for the development of a BID proposal. “

[www.ukbids.org](http://www.ukbids.org)

  
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## Derby's Cathedral Quarter Vote Moves Closer



Derby's Cathedral Quarter

Derby's Cathedral Quarter Business Improvement District (BID) vote has been brought forward in response to requests from businesses based in the Quarter.

The BID was launched in March 2007 to help generate new investment to unlock the true potential of the Cathedral Quarter, which is home to many of the city's independent retailers and businesses.

Over the last few months, Derby's BID team has been undertaking extensive consultation and research designed to find out what issues are facing the Quarter and how the BID can tackle these. The exercise has included a questionnaire aimed at businesses, together with a series of surveys of Derby's shoppers, employees and people who never visit the city.

To date, the BID team have received completed questionnaires from about one third of all businesses based in the quarter.

Of these, 96% of the businesses have expressed a positive intention towards the vote, seven have said that they don't yet know how they'll vote and only one business has expressed an intention to vote against the BID.

The BID team are now using the results from these questionnaires and surveys to produce the BID strategy and draft business plan, which will be presented to the businesses later this summer.

The decision to move the vote forward to November instead of April 2008 as originally planned comes directly from the businesses themselves, who felt that they wanted to capitalise on the positive momentum the BID has gained. This in turn will allow them to enjoy the business benefits that the BID will provide at the earliest possible time.

Speaking about the decision to bring the BID vote forward, BID project leader Ian Ferguson, commented:

"We are delighted with both the enthusiasm and positive response from the businesses towards the BID – many business owners and managers have said that they would be happy to vote tomorrow, but due to the rigorous BID procedure, November was the earliest date we could have the vote."

**"businesses have said moving the BID forward will allow them to better tackle the challenges they are facing in a strategic and positive manner"**

Ian Ferguson – BID Project Leader

### Did you know?

BIDs across the country are developing a wide range of projects and services on behalf of their local businesses to improve the trading environment, BIDs are also adding value to public services already provided.

The Swansea BID has recently offered shoppers free park and ride tickets to assist in increasing the cities footfall as well as trying to ease congestion around the city. They distributed 20,000 leaflets highlighting the park and ride sites around Swansea city centre among BID traders containing a free park and ride voucher for their customers.

As part of the target to reduce Violent Crime in the town Kingston First BID employs a night time manager who works overnight three nights each week as well as a day in the office. The BID has also purchased three minicab kiosks and obtained planning permission to locate these adjacent to the night clubs and local businesses. The BID has negotiated concessions with licensed minicab operators who fund qualified staff for queue management every night. The marshalled minicab booking offices handle over 1000 journeys per week and over Christmas 2006 the marshalled black cab rank was the second busiest in London. Kingston BID is the lead partner within the Local Area Agreement for the reduction of violent crime in the town centre and these activities form part of a stretch target funded by Government Office London. If the BID is successful in meeting these targets the Government will provide a further £300 for town centre projects.

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## Derby's Cathedral Quarter Vote Moves Closer continued...

"We had originally built in 'rest periods' into the timescale because we anticipated that people would want to focus on their businesses at key, busy times of year, such as Christmas. However the businesses have said that moving the BID forward will allow them to better tackle the challenges they are facing in a strategic and positive manner.

As a result, the positive benefits of moving the BID forward far outweighed the pre-Christmas timing," added Ian.

The Cathedral Quarter has received £50,000 from Derby City Council, £20,000 from emda and £14,250 from Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP), who also supported the feasibility phase of project, to launch the BID.

## Developing a BID – a perspective from Daventry



Some twelve months ago the whole concept of Business Improvement Districts was new to us here in Daventry and seemed something that was probably more relevant to large cities and commercial centres than to a small town like Daventry.

Or at least that is what we initially thought until we looked into the idea more closely.

The environment in which a business operates can have a dramatic affect on the success of the business, we all pay Business Rates and expect to see something for that however the rates are paid to central government with little being returned to the local area and then it is not ring fenced for local economic initiatives, that's the main difference between Business Rates and a Business Improvement District, anything paid into the BID stays within the BID area and is only spent on initiatives approved by the levy payers.

I think that it was this realisation that spurred us on. Daventry Town Centre Partnership applied to participate in the East Midlands BIDs Academy, and were selected to be part of the first cohort of six towns, the Academy is provided by the UKBIDs Advisory service, part of the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM).

## East Midlands Revenues Managers are preparing to support BIDs

As more and more BIDs are developing across the UK there is an increased need for key partners, including Local Authorities to be aware of the impact a BID will have on their role and work. For the revenues department within a local authority an understanding of the BIDs concept and regulations is essential. In England and Wales the Local Authority are tasked with collecting the levy.

Revenues managers across the local authorities in the East Midlands have been discussing the ways in which they are working with BID development partnerships at the East Midlands Revenues and Benefits Practitioners Group. The group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss revenues issues including the impact that any BID in the region has on them.

At a recent meeting held at North Kesteven District Council in Lincolnshire, Mike Carr Revenues Manager at North Kesteven, and Vice Chairman of the group, gave a presentation on the Sleaford BID, talking them through the process and providing his top tips on how to support the process and ensure all runs smoothly. Top of his list was the importance of early involvement of Revenues Officers in the process.

The meetings provide a useful mechanism for revenues managers and officers to share information and best practice on a variety of issues concerning revenues and benefits and BIDs is a topic which has now been added to their list.

Talking about the Sleaford BID, Mike Carr says:

"I do believe that the Sleaford BID in particular, and BIDs in general, shows that businesses are prepared to make a positive and direct contribution to the places where we all live and work, by voting to pay a small levy. Working with the Sleaford pre BID group we have been through a learning curve together, and built up a mutual respect for each others roles in the process."

He added: "The East Midlands Revenues & Benefits Practitioners Group, has been in existence for quite a number of years now, and is very successful as a vehicle for discussing topical issues and using the experience of the officers in the group to pass on practical advice. Meetings are usually hosted at Council Offices, there is no annual subscription and membership is open to any revenues and benefits officer in the East Midlands. It is normal practice to invite speakers to the meetings often from various Government Departments, who do use the forum to discuss and 'sound out' professional officers on various matters".

For further information contact the East Midlands Revenues & Benefits Practitioners Group Chair – Steve Goodrich at [sgoodrich@rushcliffe.gov.uk](mailto:sgoodrich@rushcliffe.gov.uk) or Vice Chair, Mike Carr on [mike\\_carr@n-kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:mike_carr@n-kesteven.gov.uk)

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## Developing a BID – a perspective from Daventry continued...

ATCM has been a great support to the partnership, not just in terms of information on the process and advice on running a BID company but also as a means of meeting up with other towns large and small going through the process and sharing experiences.

This information and advice has been great, but there is a lot to do to achieve a BID and that has meant getting out into the town and finding out what matters to our town centre businesses.

When we shop we buy what we want not what someone tells us we will pay for, so the partnership started by finding out what businesses want, and establishing the level of support for each area of activity.

To do this, face to face interviews were held with each business with follow up events to discuss outcomes of the survey work.

This enabled priorities to be identified and the development of an action plan is now underway.

The action plan will address the following issues identified by business

- First Impressions (access to the town centre)
- Experience (clean and tidy town centre)
- Welcome (safe and friendly town centre)
- Reasons to visit (better promoted town centre with more events)

While the partnership is leading the process, the BID belongs to the businesses in the identified area and it is their decision whether it goes ahead. To assist the businesses in deciding if they want to support the BID we will be providing a number of options from which the businesses can choose the types of actions they would want to support, that will be followed by an initial business plan set against three levels of levy.

Only once that has been established will we be in a position to finalise the business plan and go for the ballot. September is an important month as we will have to inform the secretary of state that we intend to hold a ballot, and that sets the clock ticking for at that point it is important that we keep to the critical time line if we are to hold the ballot in February.

Fingers crossed that we achieve BID status.

**Sally Halson, Economic Development Officer, Daventry District Council**



Daventry town centre

## Contact

More information on BIDs can be found on [www.atcm.org](http://www.atcm.org) or email [info@ukbids.org](mailto:info@ukbids.org)



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