



BedfordBID

Business Improvement District
Funded by Town Centre Businesses

www.lovebedford.co.uk

All Together NOW!



**The BedfordBID Company Limited Company by Guarantee
Income & Expenditure Account
Period from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019**

*Love Bedford is the promotional brand of the Bedford Business Improvement District (BID)
which promotes the interest of over 500 Bedford town centre businesses*

Bedford Business Improvement District (BED) was one of 12 towns which piloted the independent business-led model back in 2005; over 300 BEDs are now established around the country. BedfordBED has been operating successfully for almost fifteen years and in October 2019 will go to ballot for renewal for a further five years.

The BedfordBED vision is to create a vibrant environment and broaden the role of the town centre beyond shopping towards being a great place for people to spend time. The 2015-2020 Business Plan detailed three key priorities:-

-  *To market and promote Bedford town centre and make Bedford a destination through the presentation of high quality events*
-  *To enhance the visitor experience and develop the customer offer*
-  *To continue to forge strong partnerships, working with others to create a vibrant, economically strong and attractive town for residents and visitors alike and be sustainable.*

Having good internal controls and corporate governance procedures are important for a BED. This leaflet is to demonstrate that income received is spent in accordance with its plan and that there are authentic internal governance controls to ensure that this happens. Full Accounts and performance reports including BedfordBED networking and briefing breakfast presentations, AGM papers, previous Annual Review documents and five year business plan are all available for download at www.lovebedford.co.uk or call 01234 404500.

The Bedford Business Improvement District (BED) is a democratically elected organisation, with a voluntary (elected) Board of Directors who represent the town's businesses. BedfordBED is a member of British BEDs and ATCM and subscribes to the National Survey for best practices. The list of Directors approved at the last AGM are also included online at www.lovebedford.co.uk



2018/19 Headlines

Project expenditure remains consistent with over 70% spent on services and 10.8% on overheads. The levy collection cost per hereditament's National Guidelines suggest a maximum charge of £35 per hereditament. Bedford is £23 and Overheads industry criteria acceptable level is 20%.



Seasonal marketing - Celebrating 40 years of Bedford River Festival!

During the summer of 2018, the Bedford BID embarked upon a successful marketing campaign to cultivate contact details for ongoing direct mail. Working with local business Global Travel, a Free Prize Draw trip to New York harvested 4919 entries, extensive publicity and good will.

Additionally, other schemes to generate sales through Love Bedford vouchers yielded up-selling to over 44% of independent businesses and the Bedford BID Little Book of BID offers featured 30 different BID businesses bringing back new customers to the town e.g. "We had very good feedback, our margins are great so worked really well, with 80% being new customers" Mobasher Qayyum CREAMS

River Festival weekend foot flow in the town centre: Saturday + 57.9% WOW, Sunday +53.7% YOY

Reaching new audiences and broadcasting positive news

During 2018/19 Bedford BID also embarked upon a series of social media campaigns starting with Instagram summer company videos. Over a period of 10 weeks, the campaign generated 2,929 Followers, 47,977 views, 1,217 shares, 1,608 Likes and 164 Comments. This provided the foundation for the very successful Christmas campaign a few months later which was branded Love Bedford NOW! (News, Offers and What's-On) and included Night Time Economy businesses.

Love Bedford NOW!

A celebration broadcasting the positive and pushing traffic to Love Bedford website* giving access to the latest advanced social media promotion to everyone in the town centre - large or small!

Between 14th November to 19th December over c430 scripts throughout the campaign promoted BedfordBID businesses and locations.



Total Views 97,117, Likes 2,632, Shares 1,331 and Comments 1,020

***Users on Directory up 3% vs. last year**

Users on Love Bedford Offers up 34% vs. last year

Page views of vouchers microsite up 205% vs. last year

Page views of Santa's Grotto (Harpur Centre) up 87% on last year



Volunteer BID business presenters were Nicola Harris - Hattie & Co / George James Bridal, Libby Lionetti - La Piazza and Alfonzo Bravacco - Mamma Concetta.

"It went very well, people who had mentioned they'd seen the post, loved the video" Store Manager & SHE Champ - Amanda J Olliver & Team Leaders - Lily Rankine & Dilly Walsh The Body Shop Bedford

Feedback from both businesses and customers was very positive :

The Barley Mow was "delighted to take part"; La Piazza again said the videos definitely made more people come to La Piazza and lots were mentioning seeing him: and both Happyfones and Rollback World confirmed good awareness from visitors with lots of mentions.

"We saw fantastic results in areas that were promoted through BID and the social media promotion. For example The Beauty Advent Calendar we were the fastest clearance store on our region for this product, Christmas Food To Order has seen growth on last year - this is a great result."

Consumer comments regarding Love Bedford Now! :

Coming to Bedford in 3 weeks' time looking forward to it Fabulous idea. Love it. Well done Love Bedford Great page promoting our town of Bedford keeping it alive!! Looking forward to seeing more! Brilliant- very helpful Good promoting for independent businesses in the town It's great to see what's going on! Don't get into town enough! Fabulous idea let's get Bedford smiling Definitely a great way to showcase the best of Bedford Aww, Love Bedford! Shops, Restaurants, Parks and people Super scheme Popped into town today to do a bit of last minute shopping, it's the first time I've seen the old spiral in the centre unveiled, looks great and the Christmas decks are loving fabulous to. I'm going to be doing my Christmas shopping in Bedford this year!



Generating foot flow around the town for all BID businesses

The Summer Mini Maps Symbol Spot TRAIL involved town centre businesses pick up points, 12 dedicated BID zone disc rubbing sites and over 30 town centre businesses drawing locations including:-

Gallone's, Goldings, Rogan's Books, Harrison & Simmons, Rollback, Customer Services, Market Square, Rob's Barbers, Castle Mound, Higgins Museum, St Cuthberts Arcade, Priory Primary School, Cycle King, Bus station, Church Square fountain, Slide Records, Seventh Heaven, NatWest Bank, Silver Street Faces, Heritage Board Mill Street/High Street, St Cuthberts Church, Lingers, The Ship, Castle Mound, Archaeological site, Spaghetti John's, Memorial Statue, Bedford Swan Hotel, La Piazza Café, St Paul's Church, Albero Lounge, Vue, Riverside footbridge, St Mary's bridge, Castle Hill Garage, Bunyan Museum and Gallery, Golden Post-box (Etienne Stott), Harpur Suite Box Office, Library, Corn Exchange, Harpur Square, Harpur Centre, The Pantry, Lime Kiln, La Fontana and Companions Bakery.



Results: During the first 10 days over 400 booklets were collected. As a comparison, the last trail attracted 48 entries for the Easter Mini Trail & Prize Draw over a 10 day period compared to the previous year which was 47 entries over 3 week basis and 6 BID businesses.

Future proofing; BedfordBID sponsored the initial project; businesses have since been contacted and are participating in a trail for this Easter.

Working in partnerships to support BID businesses and meet new audiences

The relationship with Bedford College continues with BedfordBID attending the annual Fresher's Fayre and ongoing links to their 12,000 students. The BedfordBID also sponsors the successful Hair & Beauty Show which attracts over 500 family members and friends of the students whilst the Comic Convention in September at the Bedford Corn Exchange, brought comic fans flocking in from around the UK to see international celebrities at an event organised by Bedford business Close Encounters.



Pre-Christmas Lights switch-on event to extend dwell time

The successful BID pre-Christmas Lights Switch-On event on 22nd November included reindeer and Santa plus a host of costume characters, entertainment and helter-skelter fun ride. The duration of the event was extended to 7pm when foot fall vs. 2017 like for like, increased by 8.1% and overall, in total between 15.00 and 19.00 vs. the previous week the flow increased by 9,030.

A Welcome to Delight; Christmas – Lighting Up Bedford campaign

BID-funded Christmas light enhancements, Switch-On event, Christmas window competition and multi media advertising campaigns included Love Bedford NOW! Christmas lights enhancements at Clinton Card's tree and Church Square attracted very positive comments and BID Businesses were also involved through the 'sponsorship' of the tree base. Feedback included "This year Bedford looks wonderful in Christmas lights, beautiful Christmas trees and decorations look nice and fresh."



Christmas Window Competition

BID Businesses were actively encouraged to dress their windows to create a Welcome to Delight. 26 different shop window displays were voted on by the general public out of over 40 participating BID businesses. The winner was Sue Ryder on Harpur Street. Top 5 most popular: -

Sue Ryder

Michael R Peters

Kel's Belles Beauty

Bedford Guild House

Urbanite Hair

Winner selected by Random. Org



Keeping it Local!

The Love Bedford Voucher scheme is up to a record number of 296 participants and c90% redemption rate. Significant engagement with on-account and other B2B direct sales now includes local businesses Bourns, Fuji, Bedfordshire Police, Santander and NHS pending. Redemptions over £1m.

Love Bedford is the dominant brand for the Town Centre for BID businesses across all channels of communication.

The dedicated events section on the Love Bedford website is now one of the most popular. It has developed a reputation as the 'go to' site for the definitive guide to the town with unique users in excess of 100k.

Love Bedford is the marketing brand of The Bedford Business Improvement District (BID) www.lovebedford.co.uk the website for Bedford town centre.

www.lovebedford.co.uk

109,707 unique visitors between
April – March 2018/19



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Most viewed pages:

1. Events
2. Home
3. Town Centre Guide
4. Things to do in Bedford
5. NYC FPD
6. Vouchers microsite
7. Late Night Shopping
8. Christmas
9. Vouchers landing page
10. The Arcade

www.lovebedford.co.uk

24,536 online directory searches total,
see landing page for new business openings
198,029 direct mail e-shots delivered

Peak open rate 28.69% vs. industry standard of 19.36% (retail).
Click-through rates vary subject to campaign message.

Christmas lights 20.69%
Beacon Lighting 21.33%



lovebedford.co.uk 7306 Followers



[@lovebedford](https://twitter.com/lovebedford) 8663 Followers



[Instagram @lovebedford1](https://www.instagram.com/lovebedford1) 3098 Followers



The BID is now also working with the BedSafe Licensees group boosting its support to the ENTE with the provision of administrative assistance as well as the recent launch of the BeBAC night time scheme. Funding of the BIIAB Award in Responsible Alcohol Retailing along with the sponsorship of the Taxi Marshal scheme has also taken place during 2018/19 as well as inclusion in the Love Bedford business videos.



Enhancing the visitor experience

During November 2018, BedfordBID enhanced the Retail RadioLink and Exclusion Scheme to launch the BedfordBID Businesses Against Crime (BeBAC) app based initiative designed to improve reporting and evidencing for prosecutions and the prevention of persistent ASB. Compliant with Data Protection Act 1998/2018 GDPR legislation this significant partnership working is enabling greater ownership from businesses and intelligence gathering being used by Bedfordshire Police. Summary of activity involving our regular town centre offenders since November include:-

- CPW/CPN's (Community Protection Warning / Notice) Issued:8
- To be issued imminently: 7
- Prosecutions: 13 (retail theft) Further arrests (results pending)

Day Members: 311
Known Offenders: 259
Unknown Offenders: 66
Incidents Reported: 528
User Logins: 8373

ELNE Members: 57
Known Offenders: 42
Unknown Offenders: 19
Incidents Reported: 14
User Logins: 1649

Statement and security training with businesses is to follow and Direct-to-Police reporting is being investigated.

The BedfordBID Champions act as the 'eyes and ears' of the BedfordBID business community supporting the day-to-day operational needs of local businesses ensuring that cleanliness and safety issues are rapidly addressed to help maintain the town's appearance and appeal.

The BedfordBID WIPEOUT Scheme; (Zero tolerance on Graffiti) now has over 230 businesses on the scheme and over 500 reports made and actions taken since last April to Love Clean Streets. This includes collaborations with Riverside Bedford to resolve recent issues with day time, persistent rough sleepers.



Supporting BID Businesses - improvement workshops

BedfordBID's added value is also demonstrated by a number of B2B initiatives which includes a conduit for B2B cross marketing opportunities and relationship development through the BID breakfasts, the visiting and promotion of new business arrivals, featured business promotions on the Love Bedford website and Directory plus the dedicated B2B publication for the promotion of the non-retail sector.

Attendance at the BedfordBID breakfast has increased to an average of 70, culminating this year with important insights into the proposals for High Street from Chief Officers of Highways & Planning plus Economic Growth Development regarding the imminent Future High Streets Fund application.



BID means Business

The latest round of Business Mentoring included Customer Experience Review (Mystery Shop) followed by an action plan, tailored to support the business with a focus on delivering more revenue through better customer experiences, attracted the following participating businesses:

***Riobello ReUse Arcadia Sweets Bedford Swan Cash Converters
Bedford College Companions Real Bread St Peters Dental
Bedford Central Library Howorths Shoes Mill Street***

Additionally the Bedford Business club also proved effective with independent businesses as demonstrated by “Having taken part in last year’s Business club I have approached this year with a positive can do attitude. Staying focused on the elements that generate real worth within my business arena.”



“The networking opportunities within the course structure have proven invaluable and moved our business platform to another level. I whole heartedly encourage anyone who has the opportunity to sign up this year to grab it with both hands.”

Martin Keys, Gallone’s

Saving you money with Utilitrack. Many businesses have made substantial cost savings on utilities through local company Utilitrack’s FREE utility cost evaluation service, saving to date for BID businesses is in the region of £62,408K an average of £12,481 a year.

Engagement with businesses is further demonstrated through an increased participation in features and advertising in the Love Bedford quarterly glossy publications distributed to over 20k homes and industrial estates (B2B edition). These feature Hair & Beauty, Food & Drink, Christmas and Business Services (non retail sector).

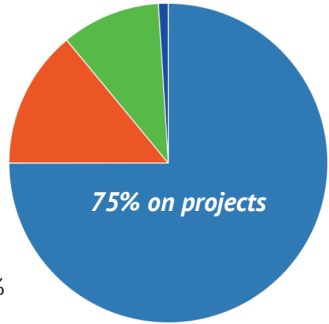
Sixty nine multi-branded business e-shots have taken place during the year to a growing database of over 4000 cultivated by competitions and website Hello! Bar. Opening rates c28% and average open rate 19.7% vs. industry standard average open rate @ 19.36%.

Engagement with businesses also extends into Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and recently launched closed FB page for confidential matters. There are over 19,000 ‘followers’.

How your money is spent

- 75% Projects *
- 14% Management
- 10% Overheads
- 1% Sustainability

* Improving the Visitor Experience 19%
 Love Bedford Marketing, Promotions and Events 40%
 Partnerships and Sustainability 5%
 Operating surplus (projects) c/f 11%



Partnerships

A collection of logos for various partners, arranged in a grid within a blue-bordered box. The logos include:

- Bedfordshire Police**: The official crest and name of the police force.
- Street Link**: A logo featuring a red location pin icon and the text 'Street Link'.
- Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership**: A logo with a cluster of colored dots and the text 'Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership' and 'working together to make communities safer'.
- love clean streets**: A logo with a green heart shape containing a tree and the text 'love clean streets'.
- insight6**: A logo with the text 'insight6' and 'CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE SPECIALISTS' below it.
- Bed:Safe**: A logo with the text 'Bed:Safe' and a yellow archway below it.
- Bedford Homeless Partnership**: A logo with the text 'Bedford Homeless Partnership' and a puzzle piece icon containing a house.
- NABCP**: A logo with the text 'NABCP' and 'NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS CLEANING PARTNERSHIPS' below it.
- BII**: A logo with an orange hexagon containing a leaf and the text 'BII' and 'BRITISH INSTITUTE OF INNKEEPING' below it.
- Bright Business Club**: A logo with the text 'Bright BUSINESS CLUB' and 'Knowledge + Accountability = Growth' below it.

Looking ahead

The 300th Business Improvement District has been opened in the UK; Bedford was among the first 12 pilots of the project in 2005. Since their creation, BIDs have gained Government backing and widespread national attention across the country creating a powerful voice for those investing in town centres.

“Business Improvement Districts are a powerful way for all the businesses in an area to invest for the future, to encourage new businesses and to market themselves. They allow businesses to have some control over their own futures in a turbulent world. We welcome the 300th BID into the national community.” CEO of British BIDs Chris Turner.

Under Government legislation BedfordBID is now approaching the end of its third five-year term and therefore, to continue beyond April 2020 and ensure investment in the town centre, needs to run a ballot in October 2019.

The benefits the BID has brought to Bedford year in, year out over the past fifteen years cannot be underestimated. Our approach to the marketing of the town, which has been consistently funded by the BID under our Love Bedford banner, has also changed to keep up with new technology. We work behind the scenes with police and other authorities and agencies to act as a champion on difficult issues for independent businesses, giving them the support of the national chains here in town.

Acting as the connection between businesses, stakeholders and key agencies, resolving issues, and providing guidance to those who may not know how to progress is another key benefit of the BedfordBID.

No other organisation can hope to create that multi-business voice and in today's challenging climate no other organisation can pull together the funding to sustain all the activity undertaken by the BID.

We began consultation on the future of your BID through BID Business Feedback through electronic mail last August and more recently direct telephone calls have been made to businesses. Now it is time to have your say and let us know what you think. We need to hear from you! We want to know what you think we've done well, what we could improve further and what new initiatives you'd like to see introduced.

To contact BedfordBID call 01234 404500

Email info@lovebedford.co.uk

The full list of BID services is included in the five year plan, a copy of which is available on the website together with the 2018/19 Year Planner and 2018 AGM brochure report.

www.lovebedford.co.uk