

**Bringing  
customers  
to your door**



**BedfordBID**

Business Improvement District  
Funded by Town Centre Businesses

[www.lovebedford.co.uk](http://www.lovebedford.co.uk)



**The BedfordBID Company Limited Company by Guarantee  
Income & Expenditure Account  
Period from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018**

**Bedford Business Improvement District (BID) was one of 12 towns which piloted the independent business-led model back in 2005; over 290 BIDs are now established around the country. Bedford is in the third year of its third term.**

The BedfordBID 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 details 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. All through a sustainable BID.

Having good internal controls and corporate governance procedures are important for a BID. This leaflet is intended to demonstrate that income received is spent well and that there are good internal governance controls to ensure that this happens. Full Accounts and performance reports including the BedfordBID networking and briefing breakfast presentations, AGM papers and five year business plan are all available for download at [www.lovebedford.co.uk](http://www.lovebedford.co.uk) or call 01234 404500.

Project expenditure has not declined with over 70% spent on services and 10% on overheads.

BedfordBID contributes to the British BIDs National survey which measures

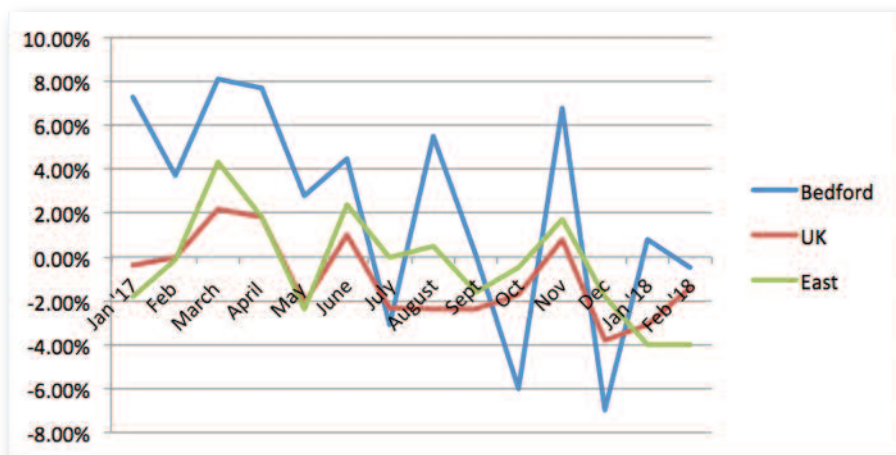
good practice by collecting quantitative and qualitative data through one to one research of BIDs. The data is analysed and verified for publication at the BritishBIDs annual conference and thereafter on their website. The levy collection cost per hereditaments: National Guidelines suggest a maximum charge of £35 per hereditament. Bedford is £25 and Overheads industry criteria acceptable level is 20%; BedfordBID 10%.

The bottom-line success of BedfordBID is demonstrated in its increase in foot flow which during 2017/18 continued to buck the trend both nationally and regionally, despite reduced visitor numbers in October and December, caused in part by poor weather conditions and less support for late night opening.

Supporting and promoting a plethora of events, Love Bedford branded promotions and town centre FREE parking messages were key elements of the marketing for the town. The multifaceted marketing campaigns also included door to door, printed publications, PR, regional press and radio, online & social media platforms all of which have contributed to the promotion of the town centre and its businesses, helping to attract new investment.



## Footfall figures



Source of Statistics: The national high street index is a collaboration between Springboard Research Ltd and the Association of Town Centre Management to deliver a national performance index based on footfall in town and city centres. Data for the High Street index has been gathered by Springboard from around 100 million pedestrian flows per month in around 140 UK towns and cities



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 £109k. Third party collaborations and ever-popular events last year contributed to the spikes in visitor numbers including Love Bedford Day, Comic Convention, Chilli Fest, High Street Showcase and pre-Christmas lights event.

Bedford also welcomed the opening of the new **Riverside Bedford** complex which, during the launch weekend, attracted +7% growth in foot flow into the town vs. -1.8% national comparison like for like.

The Love Bedford town centre gift voucher scheme includes over 70% of independently-run businesses and has now exceeded the £1m target generating cash directly back into various BID zone businesses. The online voucher sales tripled against the previous Christmas and a new micro site was introduced.

BedfordBID's representation in the Bedfordshire Business Awards included Large Business, Customer Service, Small Business and Young Business person of the Year categories. Engagement with

businesses is further demonstrated through an increased participation in features and advertising in the Love Bedford publications distributed to over 20k homes and industrial estates (B2B edition). Thirty multi-branded business e-shots have taken place during the year to a growing database of over 4000 cultivated by competitions and the website Hello! bar. Opening rates circa 31% and click-through rates @ 3.5% which is above average. Engagement with businesses also extends into Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and a recently launched closed FB page for confidential matters. There are over 15k 'followers'.

Businesses committed to the Mystery Shop campaign last Christmas which supported 25 businesses with 1-2-1 advice from industry experts Shopper Anonymous and the recently launched Bedford town centre business club mentoring and education initiative is also providing added value.

Utilitrack continue to partner Bedford-BID offering a 'One Stop Shop' to help levy-paying businesses check their current energy and telecoms/broadband tariffs against the market's best buys. To date the total savings Utilitrack have managed to secure savings for BID members is £60,685.



BedfordBID's added value is also demonstrated by a number of B2B initiatives, this 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 the High Street from Chief Officers of Highways & Planning plus Economic Growth development around Bedford as part of the Master visioning process.

Bedford was declared as the preferred location and "most enjoyed" by visitors despite the recent opening of neighbouring Rushden Lakes development.

The Intercept Study research also concluded that the main reason for visiting is shopping and the Castle Quay was the most liked and most preferred area. This study is also being used to help shape the future sustainability of the town in which businesses can prosper and offer employees an environment with good choices of facilities, shops and restaurants.

Regular editorials in local media has also increased including front page coverage with FREE introductory text and branded front cover of rural publications distributed to over 60k households including new housing developments. Column inches conversion is c£12k.

## Businesses make it to a Wembley final

Five businesses from Bedfordshire were shortlisted to compete for the Wembley 2016 award.

Local business leaders have been celebrating the success of five Bedfordshire businesses that have made it to the final of the Wembley 2016 award.

The winners are: Bedfordshire Business Awards 2016: Best Business, Best Business Leader, Best Business Support Organisation, Best Business Development, Best Business Innovation.



During the second half of 2017/18, Bedford BID restructured how to offer services to town centre businesses with a new skills set for the frontline team which included online completion of paperwork at business visits to ensure that every business has a presence on the Love Bedford website. Providing up to date information about the latest opportunities of commercial value to them is also a priority. The Bedford College Intranet is now providing further opportunities with a direct link to staff and over 12k local students.

Reports for environment issues and removal of graffiti continue with essential services such as the recruitment to Retail RadioLink and Exclusion scheme which has over 240 members. Enforcing PSPO restrictions such as cycling in pedestrianised areas is now being imposed by local authority Enforcement Officers. Bedford BID continue to deliver the WipeOut graffiti monitoring and reporting for action programme as well as being the critical link to emergency services and the town's CCTV.

Coupled with the investment in two dedicated BID PCSOs, measures are also in hand to address specific issues relating to persistent rough sleepers, begging, street drinking and general ASB in the town centre. From Bedfordshire Police a PC with experience of the 'alternative powers' is working with the BID PCSOs to address the more persistent offenders. BID is also working in partnership with the dedicated multi-agency officer who is addressing homelessness in the town. In endeavouring to improve the visibility of officers in the town, the

BID helped facilitate a new town centre police hub which opened in December. The last meeting with the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner resulted in a decision that BID contact the Minister for Policing direct to try and address the issue of the imbalance of funds available to Bedford to cover its policing needs.

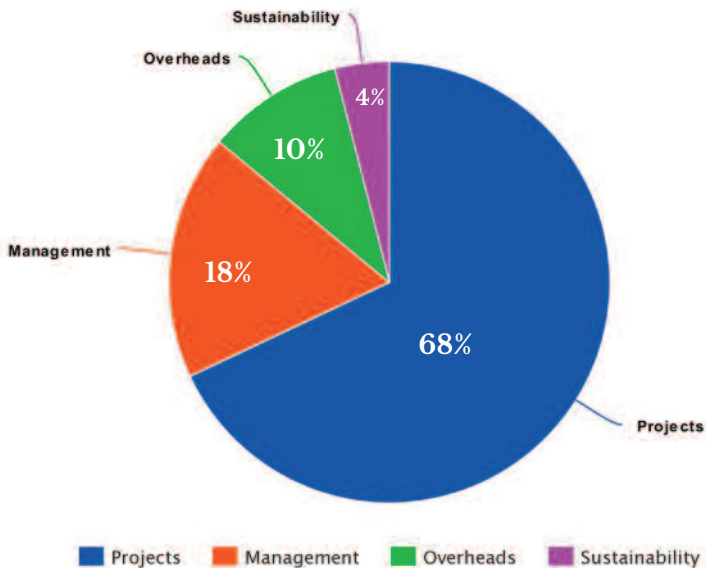
The BID is now also working with the BedSafe Licensees group boosting its support to the evening and nighttime economy with the provision of administrative assistance, a trial of Database Intranet for Safer Communities, funding of the BIIAB Award in Responsible Alcohol Retailing along with the sponsorship of the Taxi Marshal scheme. The evening and late night economy section is currently the third most popular search on our website and is at the top of any Google search such as 'What's on tonight in Bedford?'

A new measurement of community support will be featured in further reports which this year has included sponsorship of the Community Cohesion business awards and the numerous raffle prizes in the form of Love Bedford gift vouchers to a variety of charitable groups.



## How we spend your money

INCOME		Budget Yr3	Mar-17
BID Levy		£504,000.00	£422,941.00
Other Income		32100	£10,921.71
Cash Surplus 2016-17			£39,830.53
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£536,100.00</b>	<b>£473,693.24</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Improving the Visitor Experience		£134,500.00	£94,100.00
Love Bedford (M&P)		£223,500.00	£168,801.00
Partnerships		£10,560.00	£9,629.70
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£368,560.00</b>	<b>£272,530.70</b>
Management Charge (2 x f/t staff & NI)		£70,000.00	£72,280.89
Overheads		£43,000.00	£40,791.32
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£113,000.00</b>	<b>£113,072.21</b>
Sustainability		£5,000.00	£14,000.00
		<b>£5,000.00</b>	<b>£14,000.00</b>
Bad Debt Provision		£25,000.00	£23,700.00
Contingency		£24,540.00	£281.97
Voucher net cost			
Operating Surplus		£53,000.00	£50,108.36



## Get involved

BedfordBID regularly deals with a number of enquiries from businesses as well as your issues; we listen and act upon your concerns.

To contact BedfordBID call 01234 404500, email at [info@lovebedford.co.uk](mailto:info@lovebedford.co.uk); Twitter and FB Love Bedford. BedfordBID board meeting open sessions dates are displayed on our web site [www.lovebedford.co.uk](http://www.lovebedford.co.uk). Look out for invitations to the AGM plus B2B Breakfast updates and networking meetings or contact us for a further copy of the year planner printed calendar. To join the BedfordBID closed Facebook page to receive updates on police activity in the town centre and news relevant to BID businesses. <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=BedfordBID>.



The full list of BID services is included in the five year plan , a copy of which is available on the website link <http://lovebedford.co.uk/perch/resources/bid-business-plan-low-res-web-site.pdf> together with the 2017/18 Year Planner <http://lovebedford.co.uk/top/downloads.php> and 2017 AGM brochure report.