

The BedfordBID Company Limited Company By Guarantee Review Period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023



BedfordBID
Business Improvement District
Funded by Town Centre Businesses



www.lovebedford.co.uk





Bedford Business Improvement District (BID) was one of 12 towns which piloted the independent business-led model back in 2005. There are now some 330 BIDs established around the country. BedfordBID has been operating successfully for **eighteen** years. In October 2019, a fourth term **BID4 Renewal ballot was successful with 69% in favour by number and 88% by Rateable Value.**

The aim of the BedfordBID renewal 2020-2025 proposal is to: -

Provide a welcoming environment for visitors to experience therefore allowing businesses to prosper.

Create a vibrant destination, working with partners to develop changes to compete whilst promoting and celebrating what is unique about the town for both day and evening economy.

Support businesses with training and education designed to help them adapt to changes in customer behaviour.

Demonstrate how BedfordBID will enhance communication channels to engage and report back to businesses.

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It was lovely to meet you and see Bedford High Street playing its part at this year's River Festival. A magnificent display of vehicles and the only time we can sit in a deck chair on the town bridge listening to amazing brass bands. Just being able to walk in the middle of the roads was a novelty for our grandchildren. It was also a wonderful opportunity for town businesses to be part of the river celebrations.

By building on the successful work of the past years and addressing the priorities raised from the pre-proposal business consultations, the 2020-25 Business Plan details four key themes:

<https://bit.ly/3GkUz9Y>

BID levy money is ring-fenced for use only on BID projects. BIDs cannot subsidise local authority statutory obligations, however, BIDs can enhance services.

It is only through the successful collection of BID levies that BedfordBID can continue to fulfil the agreed business plan to enhance the trading environment. Money can only be spent when funds are received. Whilst this makes planning more challenging, it has been achievable due to prudent fiscal management and protection of reserves.



1.



**Clean,
Safe &
Welcoming.**

2.



**Love
Bedford.**

Celebrating what is unique about the whole town highlighting independent businesses, uses and purposes which foster greater social interaction, community spirit, local identity, and characteristics.

3.



**Supporting
Businesses.**

4.



**Measurement
& Reporting;
enhanced
communication.**

To foster greater social interaction.

REVIEW 2022/23 HEADLINES

As more uncertain COVID rules were apparent, we all continued to navigate the new regime. No longer required to self-isolate, there was still a duty of care required for customers and staff, juggling of sickness absence and working from home, temporary business closures plus inconsistent opening hours.

Soaring energy bills threatened the hospitality sector with predictions of businesses shutting permanently and the loss of hundreds of jobs added further to the challenges and hurdles brought on by the cost-of-living crisis and the 2022 recession.



A VOICE FOR BUSINESSES

BedfordBID continued to act as a voice for local businesses, representing members' interests and lobbying on their behalf whilst keeping them informed of developments, issues, and opportunities at a local and national level.



HM Government

Working with Government and representing the needs of BID businesses.

In August BedfordBID joined forces with industry colleagues and national partners including British BIDs, BID Foundation, ATCM, British Beer and Pub Association and the Night Time Industries Association to lobby at Westminster level to bring forward pro-active solutions that represent and support the economy.

More locally, planning applications specifically the Little Vegas change of use to Adult Gaming Centre/73 High Street Bedford was resolved to Refuse Permission.





BedfordBID also attended the inaugural **PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner) Annual Business Conference 2022** to raise issues from BID Businesses and hear from the PCC and the police about crime/business safety.

The **Town Centre and Castle Wards, Bedfordshire Police priorities setting forum** was again attended by BedfordBID representatives from which it was consequently agreed for the BID and Police to meet independently to agree a plan of action to address specifically retail crime, threatening behaviour and in some cases physical harm to store staff. It had been standard practice in the past for BID to meet separately with Bedfordshire Police.

Social cues have become particularly important.

When people saw others going out after COVID, consumer confidence was buoyed. BedfordBID supported events and promotions to attract and harness the appetite to use the town centre. Fresh content and improved social media technology using high quality images for newsletters enhanced engagement.

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During the two weeks, we had delicious food at both familiar and unfamiliar places, plus relaxing glasses of wine. We also took advantage of the offer at the fishmonger and bought bargain gifts. We have great independent shops in our town and are looking forward to the next FiverFest.

Source of Statistics: The national high street index is a benchmark created by Springboard Research Ltd to deliver a national performance index based on footfall in town and city centres. Springboard has benchmarked High Street footfall activity for over 20 years. Data for the High Street index has been gathered by Springboard from 5500+ footfall counters across 370+ UK towns and cities.

Source of vacancy rate report statistics: Data on vacancy rates is gathered from participating towns and cities via an online survey of Place Managers every quarter. The vacancy rate is defined as the percentage of the ground floor units in the town centre (BID zone / retail core) that are vacant, and a vacant unit is regarded as one which is not trading at the time of the survey (whether or not it is let).

Footfall average
+39%
year on year over
past 12 months

vs.
+29%
market towns index



Note: footfall camera out of action during September – November 2022



The busiest day in December was **Saturday 3rd December (Small Business Saturday)**

The peak hour of the month was **11am Saturday 10th December** when the **Love Bedford Express Land Train** was launched.

Vacancy rates in Bedford have fallen from 11.9% to **11.7%**



New business openings/relocations...

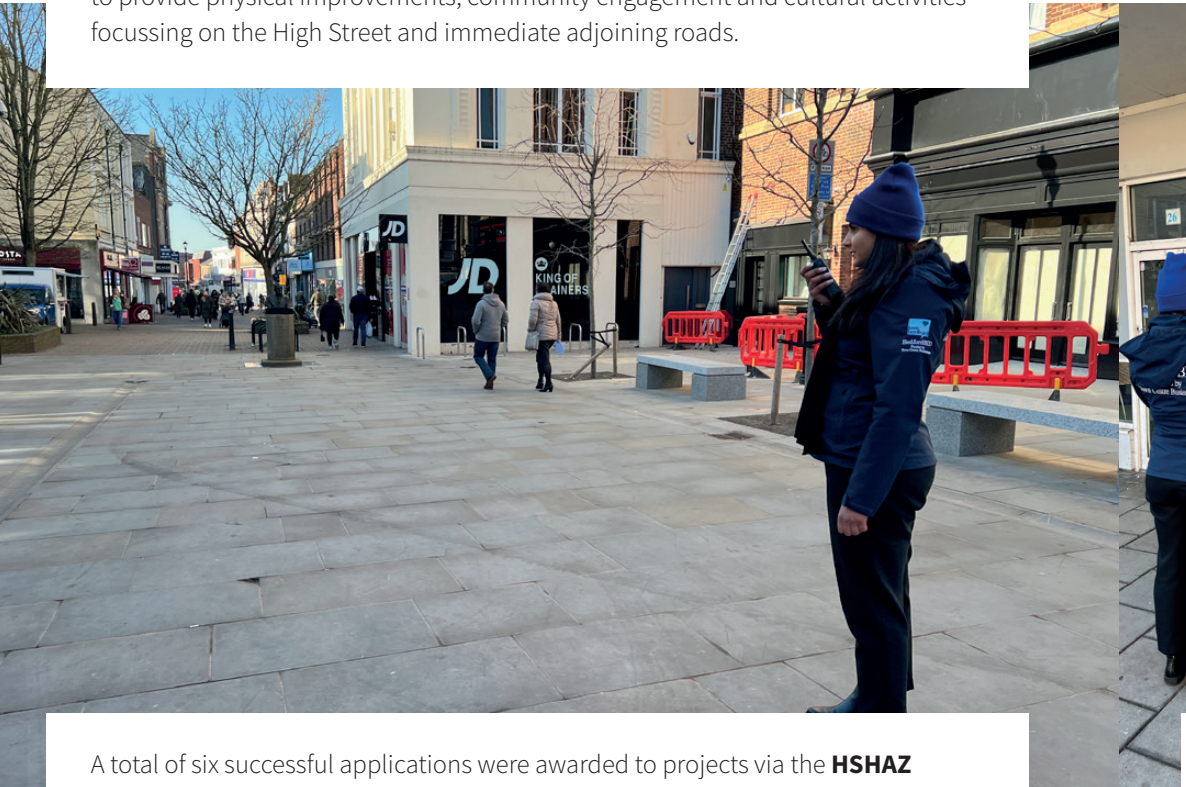
Bedford's independent rate has risen to **67%** vs. national average of 42%

874 new signups increased total number to **5,141** consumer subscribers who receive the Love Bedford e-newsletter every month.

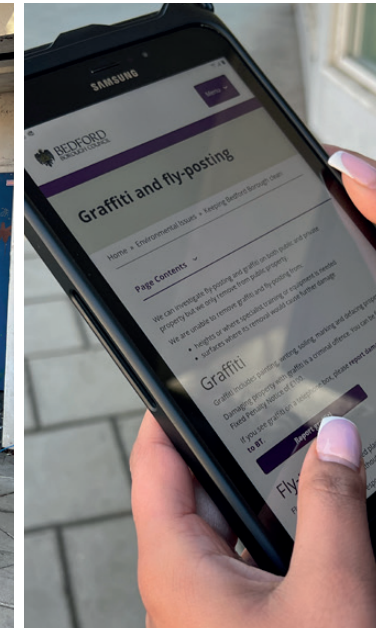


IMPROVING THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

BedfordBID continued to support the **High Street Heritage Action Zone** initiative to provide physical improvements, community engagement and cultural activities focussing on the High Street and immediate adjoining roads.



First Aid and customer service **Team Training** investment coincided with team recruitment and bedding-in. During early Autumn we welcomed a new Office Manager and implemented changes for a job share marketing resource together with the promotion of BedfordBID Champion Dan Field to Team Leader.



A total of six successful applications were awarded to projects via the **HSHAZ Community Engagement grant** scheme. Applications included *Stonewater Housing; LUMA Sounds; Aragon Lacemakers; Bedford Radio; Eagle Gallery; Islam Bedford and Outreach Music Group.*

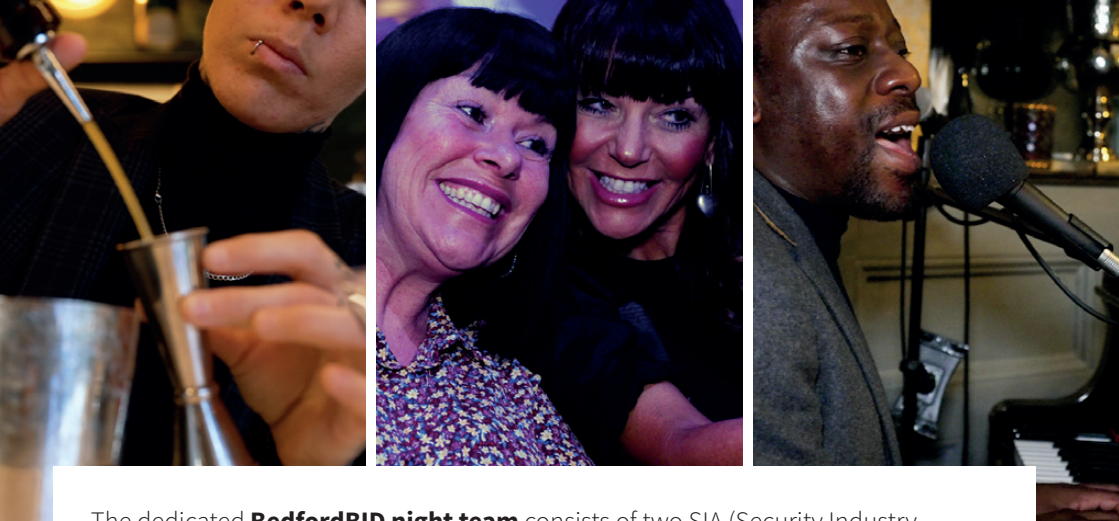
320 graffiti, StreetLink, street cleansing and highway engineers' reports were sent by the frontline team. The BID team also carry out regular weekly checks, updates and reprovisioning of the town centre defibrillators at the High Street, Star and Bedford Rowing Clubs and the bus station.

BedfordBID continued to arrange **enhancements to the Christmas lights** both at major gateways to the town as well as in the town centre including Mill Street.



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We've been using VeggieCrush since the start in the Castle Road area and are delighted it's now doing so well on the High Street.



The dedicated **BedfordBID night team** consists of two SIA (Security Industry Association) licensed operators who support the town centre on a Friday 7pm – 4am and Saturday 7pm – 4am. They are not tied to any venue, but their role encompasses reporting and signposting support available to beggars, addressing anti-social behaviour, supporting venues and door staff with any incidents that may arise, working alongside the Police to assist where needed and providing support and assistance to the public visiting the BID **NTE** (Night Time Economy) venues.

They also operate the **BedfordBID taxi marshalling** at the end of the night. The team report back each week and provide body-worn camera footage of any incidents that have taken place in case further evidence is needed for prosecution.

In May, the BedfordBID night team (contracted to local firm Belmont Security) was recognised with thanks by businesses at the BedSafe meeting. Businesses and CCTV were singing their praises for the help and assistance they provide for the **NTE** in town centre.

BedfordBID also acts as secretary for the **BedSafe** group (town centre licensees) organising membership, meeting invites, minutes and communications. BedfordBID covers the insurance costs and in the past have provided accredited training courses for venue staff to attend. Recently membership numbers have grown and now include venues from outside the town centre. In 2021 BedSafe won the National Pubwatch of the Year Award. (www.nationalpubwatch.org.uk/pubwatch-awards/)



A strong working relationship has also been built with the new Licensing Officer and BedfordBID continues to support and assist with all Police and Council initiatives. This year the BID was involved in the initial planning and delivery of **Operation Firefly** alongside the **Safer Streets campaign**. Both looking at making nightlife a safer experience, particularly for women. The BID continued to support both projects through the delivery of written materials, posters, merchandising and plays a key role utilising its contacts to keep businesses informed and up-to-date.

The BID helped publicise and promote all new initiatives such as the **Ask Angela** campaign and most recently the **Hollie Guard** app. We continue to work closely and have strong relationships with the Community Safety Partnership, Police and both Police and Council licensing teams.

BedSafe meetings have continued to operate with enormous success and are a key point of delivery for information. A new chair was appointed this year, Gareth Hitchings of The George and Dragon. The **banned scheme** continues to be a success with the Licencing Officer's active involvement which has continued to encourage and grow the scheme.

The BID manages **the town centre radio link system** which encompasses *Night Net* and provides the Police teams with night owl radios to use when on duty. We also supply, manage and assist with any repair/fault/requirement of radios for all licensed venues and CCTV within the town centre BID zone. The BID also support all **NTE** premises with general assistance with any issues they may be facing.





We operate a disc system (<https://discagainstcrime.com/>) operating title BeBAC (BedfordBID Businesses Against Crime) for businesses and use this to also manage the shared banning scheme.

A strong working relationship has been built with the new town centre Sergeant liaising on such Operations as Op Bless (focused on shoplifting and anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre in the run up to Christmas) in which several known offenders were arrested.

The BID continues to provide written statements and evidencing through BeBAC to assist in court with prosecutions.

The BID also assisted in a bid to receive further funding for the community team, gathering key statements from Town Centre Businesses and presenting a document that encapsulated the problems and feelings faced by all at this time. Conversations are still ongoing also to further use BeBAC with direct to Police reporting.



With the arrival of a new town centre Sergeant and several conversations with BedfordBID, the BID was instrumental in changing the structure of the Highgate meetings going forward. Officers from Bedford Community Policing Team meet and focus on issues such as anti-social behaviour, street drinking and begging. The idea is to focus on those meetings in the forefront of the issues faced. It is a method tried and tested in the past when impressive results were had.

DAYTIME



MEMBERS
213



USER LOGINS
5,618



INCIDENTS
PROCESSED
392



OFFENDERS
KNOWN
528



OFFENDERS
UNKNOWN
63



ACTIVE
EXCLUSIONS
11

NIGHT



MEMBERS
146



USER LOGINS
3,112



INCIDENTS
PROCESSED
213



OFFENDERS
KNOWN
72



OFFENDERS
UNKNOWN
21



ACTIVE
BANS
41

LOVE BEDFORD: MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

With visitors looking to combine leisure activities with shopping to create days out, the role of BedfordBID in marketing Bedford town centre as a vibrant destination with a wide range of retail, food and leisure offers is crucial to raising the profile of the town and helping drive footfall and sales.

Love Bedford is the successful customer-facing promotional brand created by BedfordBID to promote over 500 town centre businesses large and small, retail, services and experiences. Independent businesses can help provide the unique attraction for a town centre. Bedford has more independently owned businesses (67.2%) compared to the UK average (42.7%) *Source: Springboard vacancy rate – January 2023.*

Brand new! Video reels (reel based), posts and stories have shown a significant impact to customer engagement and with the inclusion of TikTok and greater use of Love Bedford YouTube, a younger demographic and loyal audiences are enjoying fresh content e.g., 585 views for Valentine's in February.



BedfordBID
Business Improvement District
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543
town centre
events listed
and posted since
April 2022



847
new signups,
total mailing
list **5,141**



Unique visitors to
www.lovebedford.co.uk since April 2022:

46,639

Christmas Hub unique visitors:
3,900



Business to consumer
e-newsletters
circa 15.5 themes/
campaigns a year



Business to business
e-newsletter x 40
themes/campaigns
@ circa 600 business
contacts



585
views for
Valentine's in
February



11,000
Facebook
followers,
61% Bedford
based.



16,000
Instagram
accounts reach.
Reels reaching
13.3k non-
followers



9,238
followers on
Twitter.



The BedfordBID team also write about businesses and events in the town centre for local publications BedsLife and Times & Citizen whose circulation falls within our immediate catchment and the new residential areas. Global Radio are used to widen the penetration into 20+ minute drive time.



The ARG (Additional Restrictions Grant) Hero videos and social media Shorts

filming concluded May 2022. Overall, **90 BID member venues featured** in the 5 hero video themes – Shopping, Night Life, Food, Family Experience and Beauty.

Social media short videos were produced for Howard Centre, Harpur Centre, The Arcade and Mill Yard. Themes covered ‘Eat’ at Riverside..., ‘Something Different for Every Night of the Week,’ ‘Good for Friends and Fun, Coffee and Cake,’ ‘Where to Spend LB Vouchers and Bottomless Brunch.’

The **Jubilee weekend website dedicated link** [Love Bedford · Jubilee](#) and content was also used for printed publications for All Things Jubilee in Bedford Town Centre! Bringing together Jubilee-themed events and information for visitors to Bedford Town Centre.

The BedfordBID **sponsorship of the Armed Forces Day event** in June and Armed Forces Day Parade video created by BedfordBID created 6.8K reach, 3.9K views and 1.4K engagements.



BedfordBID proudly supported the successful **Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service Support nomination for The John Bunyan Boat**. The Bedford Business Improvement District provided initial start-up funding to launch the scheme and on-going promotion. ‘Messing about on the River’ has proved immensely popular with visitors to Bedford. The John Bunyan Community Boat team also won the Pride in Bedfordshire Award in 2013 for ‘Raising the Profile of the Town’.



The **Hair & Beauty Show with Body Shop giveaways and Baker Brothers as a first time collaborator** was the highlight of the students’ training with backing from businesses and Love Bedford.

Hair and beauty are two services which cannot be accessed over the internet. Businesses at the event, represented by their young apprentices and by the trainees of the future, are at the heart of the town centre. *The show is organised by staff and students from Brooks Hair & Beauty Salon on the High Street, part of The Bedford College Group.*

Bedford Concerts 2022 staged two large concert weekends in Bedford with headline ‘local’ talent Tom Grennan and forever popular Simply Red with support act Lisa Stansfield; bringing excellent quality entertainment to Bedford.

BedfordBID’s newly created videos were screened at the events promoting 90 BID member venues, a discounted ticket price was offered to businesses as well as an onsite branding and selfie trail around selected stores in town centre to create further awareness.



90
BID members
promoted

Independent shops weekend, Italian Festival and **FiverFest** all crossed over on 2nd and 3rd July. Bedford BID highlighted unique independent shops such as The Store, The Italian Supermarket, BBTea and KOKO.

Town Centre big spruce up Tuesday 19th July – Just ahead of the massively popular River Festival, businesses engaged their teams to show some love for our town for the second time. Knowing how busy Bedford is at the River Festival, with thousands of folk visiting, it was the ideal time to make sure that the spaces outside their stores and businesses looked brilliant!

The former Sharps vacant unit displayed posters (which have subsequently remained) to promote the HSHAZ (High Street Heritage Action Zones) scheme and new community walking trail.

River Festival 2022 Bedford BID

The High Street was closed for the River Festival weekend to play host to **THE ONE HUNDRED** Motoring Display. Over 100 dazzling vehicles were displayed down the length of the High Street and around St Paul's Square.

The High Street exhibition was sponsored by Bedford BID to bring the River Festival into the heart of the town centre during this important weekend which welcomed thousands of visitors.



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Since Covid and recent store closures, shopping in the town had sadly seemed less inviting. However, this year we decided it was time to check out the bargains again and check out what was on offer [with FiverFest].

BEDFORD RIVER FESTIVAL 2022 FOOT FALL ANALYSIS: -

Week on week 2022

Bedford +29.9%	High Street Index (Market towns) -3.3%	UK -4.9%
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Year on Year

Bedford +43.5%	Eastern region +14.3%	High Street Index (Market Towns) +3.7%	UK +15.3%
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Peak of the week 15.00 Saturday 23rd July

Busiest period of the week Saturday and Sunday 9am to 21.00

Saturday week on week **+95%**

Sunday week on week **+118.8%**

Saturday year on year **+129.9%**

Sunday year on year **+219.0%**

High Street **+47.5%** vs. Midland Road **+16.3%** week on week,

High Street **+56.2%** vs. Midland Road **+32.9%** year on year.

2022 vs. 2019

Saturday **+90.7%**, Sunday **+102.8%**

% of week – Saturday **+32%**, Sunday **+20%**

Source of Statistics: The National High Street Index is a benchmark created by Springboard Research Ltd to deliver a national performance index based on footfall in town and city centres. Springboard has benchmarked High Street footfall activity for over 18 years. Data for the High Street index has been gathered by Springboard from 5000+ footfall counters across 300+ UK towns and cities.

The footfall analysis above speaks for itself in terms of visitors to the town. As quantitative results from businesses are either confidential or restrictive, **tactical measurable** promotions were organised to establish a ROI and provide qualitative data.

A **Free Prize Draw** was organised to cultivate contacts for the Love Bedford mailing list to help facilitate a cost-effective resource and reduce paid-for advertising. That weekend only (as this ran longer into the summer months) 505 **Free Prize Draw** entries were made.

To capitalise on the sponsorship of 'THE ONE HUNDRED' presented by The Festival of Motoring on High Street, BID also encouraged visitors to see and experience alternative food and drink options in town centre promoted on a large portable screen showing hero videos and social media shorts. The Love Bedford website business directory was screened and staffed by the BedfordBID team which raised awareness of BID member venues, day and night.

- **Visitor breakdown** – 87.4% NEW Visitors
- **Pages Visited** – town-centre-gift-vouchers most viewed page.
- Social media commentary, interactions and new Likes and Followers were up by 150%.
- TV coverage was also attracted and screened on the day.
- Vacant units were camouflaged using BedfordBID promotional banners of the town centre and contact details for the Love Bedford website.

BedfordBID also ran its successful **ChildSafe** scheme and secured cross marketing arrangements again with the John Bunyan Community Boat who were making short cruises on the lower river from the lock landing, avoiding all the small craft on the upper river (embankment). They were also part of the afternoon boat procession and the illuminated procession on the Saturday evening.

Businesses also reported ...

With reference to the addition of the car show to the festival I'd like to feedback that it was an enormous success. Many customers commented that it was such a fantastic thing to see and be a part of.

It [River Festival] certainly increased our normal festival weekend footfall & trade beyond recognition and has once again cemented Bedford in the minds of many "out of towners."

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For a sweet treat, whilst not being keen on doughnuts, after having one from SAY at the River Festival, we are now converts.



Offers from businesses were also consolidated and promoted to encourage repeat visits during the summer. 500 free £5 voucher giveaways were pre-dated to expire post-Christmas festivities.

With an over 40% voucher redemption rate, all businesses taking part demonstrated their upselling capabilities. Initial engagement with businesses was undertaken prior to the Festival to ensure they had the chance to 'sign-up' to the membership if they were not already involved.

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Boots | Bridges Espresso Bar | Zip Yard |
| TK Maxx | Frescoes Coffee House | Arlo Arts |
| Wilko | Harrison & Simmonds | Baker Brothers Diamonds |
| Gallone's Ice Cream | Shoe Zone | Brooks Hair & Beauty |
| Parlour | The Body Shop | Executive Snooker Club |
| The Works | Nicholas Anthony | George & Dragon |
| WH Smith | Hairdressers | H. Samuel |
| Close Encounters | All Ears | Howard Café |
| Coffee with Art | BBTea | McDonalds |
| Foxy Wings | Charisma | Pepe's Piri Piri |
| New Look | Cycle King Bedford | Pistachio Desserts |
| Rice Thai | DP Clarke Butchers | Poundland |
| Superdrug (both units) | Fusion O | Roosters Sandwich Bar |
| Arcadia Sweet Shop | Grape Tree | The Arc |
| Geek Retreat | Hippy Wytch Cottage | The Store |
| Miller & Carter | Iceland | Timpson Shoe Repairs |
| Steakhouse | La Piazza | |
| Subway | Waterstones | |

THREE WEEKENDS OF FESTIVE FUN FROM BEDFORDBID AND A DEDICATED CHRISTMAS HUB



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Today we went to the new No7 Coffee House on Wellington Street and can definitely recommend their coffee.

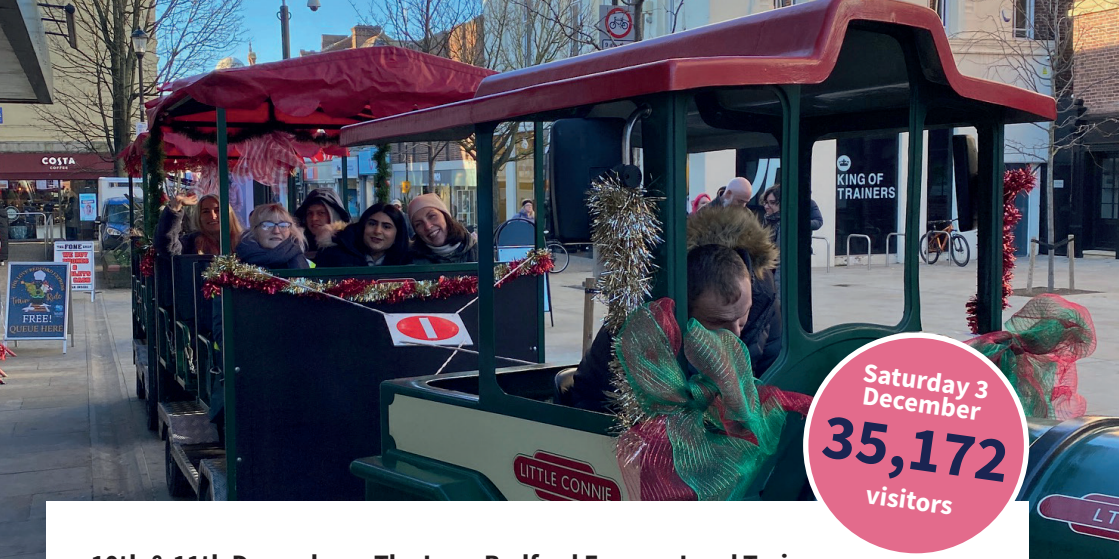
3rd of December – Small Business Saturday: Love Bedford, Shop Local!

Love Bedford Christmas Goodie Bags were handed out which included keep-it-safe purse bells, festive treats, a £5 Love Bedford gift voucher and incentives from businesses. Giant balloon signposting took place around town to help promote where to spend resulting in a 26% redemption level. Participating businesses included:

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| All Ears | Kempston Footwear | Warren James |
| Andreas Pizza | New Look | WH Smith |
| Arlo Arts | Boutique Planet | Wilko |
| Bellissima | Poundland | Slide Record Shop |
| Boots | Superdrug | Frescos Coffee Shop |
| Charisma | The Arc | Arcadia Sweet Shop |
| Close Encounters | The Body Shop | DP Clarke Butcher |
| Geek Retreat | The Fragrance Shop | |
| Grape Tree | The Works | |
| Hippy Wytch Cottage | TK Maxx | |



A giant photo-fabulous floral wreath was installed and adorned the Silver Faces. Live musical performances were enjoyed on Harpur Square and St Paul's Church annual **Christmas Tree Festival** coincided with the online public vote for **Love Bedford's Christmas Window Display Competition.**



10th & 11th December – The Love Bedford Express Land Train

The Love Bedford Express Land Train gave free rides through the town centre along with other free amusements and lovely live performances too. Added to the festive cheer were refreshments of the ‘Christmas kind’ helping visitors to discover some extra unique gifts and spend some quality time with friends and family.

The busiest day in December was Saturday 3 December with 35,172 visitors.

(Small Business Saturday).

The peak hour of the month was 11:00 on Saturday 10 December

(Launch of The Love Bedford Express Land Train).

“I wanted to say what an absolutely fantastic Saturday we had in Town on the 10th Dec...the people working at the land train were absolutely brilliant with my 3 grandchildren whilst they waited for the train. The free rides for them and the £1 hot chocolates made a magical day very affordable so much so we were able to treat them to Santa’s Grotto, so it was a truly magical day ..well organised, great street performers, Thanks again. You’re appreciated.”

17th and 18th December – Love Bedford, FREE festive fun! With a day of face painting, balloon artistry and fairground rides for youngsters it was a wonderful opportunity for making family memories and enjoying time together in Bedford Town Centre.

Elf on the Shelf provided some mischievous fun throughout December on the Love Bedford social media platforms which involved a plethora of BID business with a shelf and a sense of humour!



#RediscoverBedford Advent Calendar video was created by Bedford Borough Council with the integral support and assistance from the BedfordBID team to celebrate things to do and see in Bedford. ([youtube.com/watch?v=WqGzR1fxm](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqGzR1fxm))

“Great job, some fantastic independent shops, feel very proud and lucky to have them in Bedford.”

I have to say this video is perfect!! Shows that we really do have some little gems of shops and places to go. I only wish they weren’t so far out from the centre but that’s just me .

Love this video!

What an amazing advert. Shame you can’t get it onto local TV. Very professional and a great advert for the town. Well done to everyone involved.

Brilliant. X

Absolutely love this. Shared with friends and family

Outstanding advert, your video editors/directors definitely deserve a bonus for that. Very professional and shows off some of the absolute best of Bedford!

Great advertising and highlighting for folks to shop locally. Well done.

What a fab advert, showcasing the brilliant small businesses”

10th–19th March – British Science Week offered budding scientists and intrepid investigators the opportunity to have a brilliant time exploring STEM activities at Pop-up Science Labs at The Higgins Museum, The Panacea Museum and John Bunyan Museum.

Mother’s Day on Sunday 19th March was another chance to give Bedford Mums a treat and for businesses to highlight what they had in store.

COMING UP 2023/24: DATES FOR THE DIARY



Do not miss – FREE Social media training opportunities, meet n' greet business surgeries with a chance to network and receive updates about the town and Bedford BID



PLUS!, the introduction of the new Work From Bedford Club designed to encourage people to come out of their homes and into BID business venues.



Spring – Launch of the advanced and improved Love Bedford website which will include walking Google directions, on site navigation, mobile phone and tablet compatibility and beautiful imagery. Every businesses' social media platforms, TikTok and 14 step SEO capacity has been used for every business to optimise awareness and location.



From April Eat Feast is returning for every last Friday of the month until September with a caravan of artisan street food trucks at Riverside Square.



The Love Bedford Easter Egg Trail – this ever-popular free fun for the family returns with a delicious ice cream reward for completed entries.



On the 2nd Saturday of the month from April–October Harpur Square will host a monthly Craft Fair alongside the regular Charter market stalls offering a wide range of local products from fresh fruit and veg to preserves and local free-range eggs.



King Charles III Coronation is a time for celebration, family, and fun! Love Bedford will be hosting a best dressed King's Coronation Window Competition, look out for the competition details via our social media channels. Over the **May Bank Holiday weekend 6th – 8th May**, Harpur Square will be decked out in Union Jack bunting and there will be an afternoon Coronation Celebration to bring together the whole family for a time to remember.



From 2nd April and then every 2nd Sunday in the month until 12th November, Bedford will welcome the *Bedford Flea and Affordable Art Fair* to St Paul's Square. This delightful event is just the ticket for those wanting to potter and mooch and purchase home grown produce, affordable art, locally roasted coffee and listen to the church bells chime and local buskers serenade their visit between 10am-3pm.



Father's Day 18th June.



A bumper summer weekend of great reasons to visit Bedford

23rd and 24th June Kite and Motoring Festival

25th June Armed Forces Day with a procession of Veterans and even army tanks! down the High Street culminating in a FREE family event on Harpur Square.

Bedford Park Concerts take over Bedford Park with huge artists that put Bedford on the map!

June 23rd the Jackson Family arrive from the USA and are joined by powerhouses Sister Sledge.

June 24th the legend that is Sting performs on his World Tour!

June 25th Sheridan Smith is joined by West End stars for the West End Proms.



Friday 30th June George Ezra will be 'riding shotgun' into town to take crowds by storm.

Saturday 1st July Ministry of Sound Classical concert will have revellers dancing the night away to house music tracks lead by super star DJs Roger Sanchez and Judge Jules.



Independent Retail Weekend is **1st and 2nd July** when Love Bedford will signpost all the independent BID member venues; time to celebrate Bedford's pavement café culture, dessert parlours and bars around town.



July 2nd Italian Festival returns to Harpur Square



Bedfringe begins on **Thursday 20th until Sunday 30th July** and takes place at The Quarry Theatre.



During August, Love Bedford and Bedford Borough Council will host a summer themed event with an artisan market in Harpur Square, perfect for entertaining the children and bringing some holiday fun to Bedford.



The *John Bunyan Boat* cruise season begins in **April** and ends in October.



Guided walks around *Bedford with Bedford Association of Tour Guides* offer opportunities to learn about famous faces, the origin of buildings in the town centre, stories about WW2 and so much more. Walks run from 16th April-29th October.



Saturday 16th September Vegan Fair in Harpur Square.



Love Bedford Halloween Trail entertaining the kids over half term – we promise no tricks- just treats!



Autumn ends with *Remembrance Sunday* on **12th November** at the War Memorial on the Embankment and afterwards at Harpur Square. Whilst St Paul's Square hosts the last Bedford Flea and Affordable Art Fair of the year, the *Christmas Flea!*

December's Christmas Celebration begins early. The town centre main Christmas markets event takes place on **2nd and 3rd December**, which is also Small Business Saturday. There will be an enhanced Charter Market, artisan market stalls, festive food and drink and mini fairground rides.



PLUS! The *FREE Love Bedford Express Land Train* will return with bubbles and jolly Christmas music to entertain and uplift!

St Paul's Church will host their annual Christmas Tree Festival – with the theme of Kings and Queens **6th-10th December**.

Santa will return to Bedford in the Harpur Centre. Their monthly Kids' Club, hosting free events will be promoted and bring free fun for families.

HOW WE SPEND YOUR MONEY

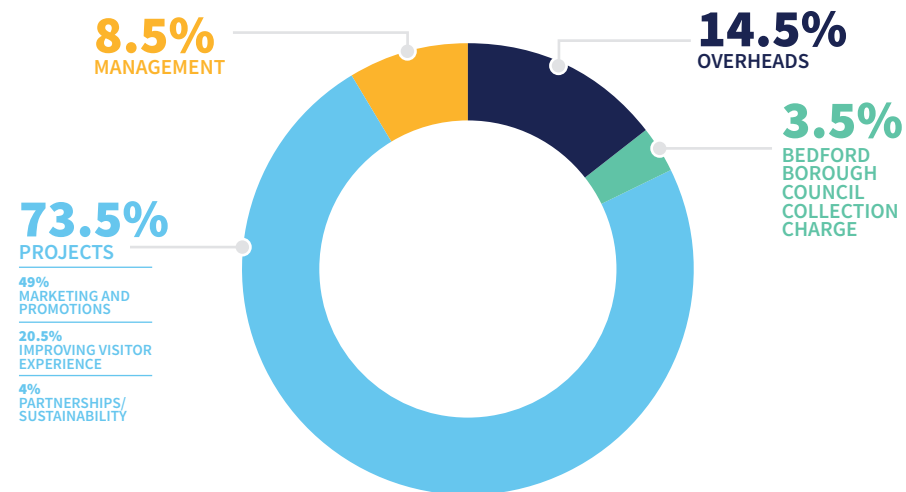
Having good internal controls and corporate governance procedures are important for a BID. This leaflet is to demonstrate that income received is spent in accordance to the plan and that there are authentic internal governance controls to ensure that this happens. Full Accounts and performance reports including the BedfordBID networking and briefing 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 (BID) is a democratically elected organisation with a voluntary (elected) Board of Directors who represent the town's businesses. BedfordBID is a member of British BIDs and ATCM and subscribes to the National Survey for best practices. The list of Directors approved at the last AGM are also included online www.lovebedford.co.uk/about/bedfordbid-board.php

Transparency and Accountability

BedfordBID is open and accountable to its levy payers. The use of social media, an up-to-date website, news releases, e-shot news to levy payers, regular meetings and the production of annual accounts are some of the ways we ensure that the work of the BID is open and available for scrutiny by its levy payers. Every new business is visited to obtain business contacts for further communications.

How your money is spent ...





BedfordBID
Business Improvement District
Funded by Town Centre Businesses

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Tel: 01234 404500

Email: info@lovebedford.co.uk

Design by www.dougdawson.co.uk