



Business  
Improvement  
Districts



bring the  
shoppers  
back to  
**brighton**  
through **BIDs**

### Why should you want to know about BIDs?

- BIDs give shopkeepers the power to improve their trading environment in ways that will draw more visitors and increase business.
- BIDs offer a fair and affordable way to raise substantial funding for major projects removing the opportunity to freeload.
- BIDs can deliver additional services that the Council does not and is not obliged to provide.

### What is a BID?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a specified geographical area where the business community agree specific improvements that they are prepared to pay for. A vote is then cast and the majority decision rules.

### How does it work?

The local business community forms a BID working group that decides what the BID will include in terms of benefits and geographical boundaries. A business plan is then drawn up detailing the improvements and presenting a budget.

### What could it deliver?

The improvements could include projects like:

- Promotion and events e.g. Christmas lights, activity days etc.
- Graffiti removal
- Security patrols
- Adding to radio security network
- Hanging baskets
- Additional CCTV cameras
- Additional signage
- Local marketing & market research
- Localised business support services
- Legal and insurance services

### How is a BID started?

Businesses are surveyed to find out what they would like to improve or change. The cost of the improvements will be determined and how much each business will have to pay. Every rate paying business will then be asked to vote on the proposals.

### Whether a BID goes ahead depends on two things:

A majority of those voting have to vote 'yes'  
The 'yes' votes have to represent at least 50% of the Rateable Value (RV) of those businesses.



# BIDs

## **How will the money be raised?**

Once the vote has been passed the local authority will collect a supplementary levy on the business rate (UBR) and this amount will be given to the BID. The levy proposed must be clearly specified in the business plan.

The levy will be a percentage of the RV. No limit has been set for this percentage but most BIDs ask for a levy of 1% or 2%. The levy may also be capped at the upper and/or lower levels.

Other non-ratepaying beneficiaries (eg property owners, transport operators) can be encouraged to make voluntary contributions.

## **Will the local authority contribute?**

The Council may make a contribution to show its commitment. It will incur expenses in running the referendum (only the Council can do this to make sure it is fair and above board) and staff time.

However, BIDs will be business led with expenditure decided by business owners not the local authority.

## **How long will a BID last?**

There is no recommended length of time but it cannot exceed five years.

When a BID comes to an end it can be extended or renewed but this must be approved by a new vote.

## **Who will manage the BID?**

A partnership board together with a BID manager will ensure projects are coordinated and delivered on time.

Where you can get more information about BIDs?

You could visit the following web sites:

**[www.brightonbusiness.co.uk](http://www.brightonbusiness.co.uk) // [www.ukbids.org](http://www.ukbids.org)  
[www.londonbids.info](http://www.londonbids.info)**

## **The Business Forum:**

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**[www.brightonbusiness.co.uk](http://www.brightonbusiness.co.uk)**