

# Newsletter

## October 2016



### In this issue

- About the BID
- Current programmes
- Upcoming programmes

#### BID Chairman, Adam Sinclair A warm welcome to our autumn 2016 Newsletter

Over the summer, our Board and our new Executive Director, Andrew Lawson, have been working hard to roll-out the first stages of our Business Plan for which the City's businesses voted overwhelmingly. In doing so, we have had to focus on delivery whilst ensuring that each project is properly researched and formulated with the right assurances. We have been impressed by the collaborative and detailed manner of Andrew's approach. As always, our clear objective is the right and attractive environment for businesses, professions and investors and to deliver additional value for York City Centre. I am delighted to report early successes with our Street Rangers initiative - where the police have praised our involvement - and the exciting prospect of a gold-plated and responsive street cleaning service for York City Centre. Next year we are going to look at enhancing street furniture, securing procurement deals that will result in cost savings for BID businesses, creating ways to improve signage and way-finding in the city and reviewing the quality and cost of car parking in York City Centre.



We are committed to fulfilling the initiatives in our Business Plan, which has been based on extensive consultation. Your feedback and input are important to us and informs the work we do, so please do not hesitate to get in touch.

#### BID Executive Director, Andrew Lawson

Firstly I would like to say thank you to the many businesses that I have managed to meet and who have made me feel welcome in the city. I understand that the BID will be judged by its programme delivery over the next five years, which is why I have been using these first few months to better understand some of the issues the city faces and talk to businesses and partners as how best to address them. This newsletter will detail some of the initial projects I have concentrated on, but I am conscious that in these early days it is still important to keep communicating on what a BID is and what it can bring to a city.

It is also important to stress the York BID is not a local authority initiative or government quango. It is a private company with the levy money ring-fenced for use only in the BID area (unlike business rates which are re-distributed by government). The Local authority collects the BID levy only because it has the capacity to do so. *So what is a BID?*

- BIDs were first established in Canada and the US in the 1960s and now exist across the globe.
- The first BID in England started in January 2005 and in 2016 there are over 200 in the UK.
- The average size of a BID is 300-400 hereditaments, with some of the smallest having fewer than 50 hereditaments and the largest at over 1,000.
- Annual income is typically £200,000-£600,000 but can be as little as £50,000 per annum and over £2 million.

#### *So what are the benefits of BIDs?*

- They aim to improve the trading environment for businesses and consumers alike.
- Businesses decide and direct what they want for the area have a voice in issues effecting the area.
- Assistance with business cost reduction.
- Facilitated networking opportunities with neighbouring businesses.
- Assistance in dealing with the Council, Police and other public bodies.

The York BID is a large one with 1,100 hereditaments. The reason for this was to be as inclusive as possible, as one of the attractions of York is its diverse range of small businesses. Whilst the BID prospectus covers a range of areas, two things stood out from the initial consultation; that businesses wanted to see York cleaner and feeling safer. These are two large programmes that the Board and I have prioritised for this year, which is why you will now see the Street Ranger programme visible and soon the BID street cleansing teams.

A key message I would like to convey is that the Board and I will continue to welcome ideas or specific proposals from businesses and we have devised a small grants form to encourage this. Different businesses and sectors will have their priorities and I would ask for understanding that we cannot bring improvements everywhere overnight. Learning from established BIDs is that they take time to gain trust, credibility and demonstrate results. I am confident over the next few years that the BID will make a difference, making York a better environment for trade and business cooperation.



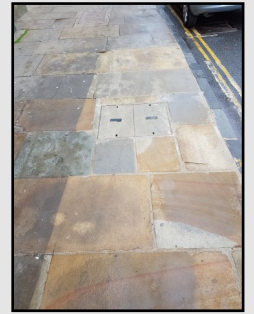
## Launched Programmes

The York BID piloted two new programmes over the summer: York BID Greeters and York BID Rangers. York Greeters were available in the City Centre offering a helping hand for visitors, shoppers and business visitors alike. They were positioned in visitor hotspots throughout the city providing information such as directions, attraction details and places to shop and eat. They had a specific remit to ensure visitors were aware of all the City Centre offering, particularly periphery streets. During the Greeters' 75-day run, they handed out over 8,600 mini guides and answered over 2,250 queries of which 39% focused on York attractions, 22% on directions, 19% on retail, 12% on food and drink, and 8% on transport. Just as they concluded their run, the BID Rangers were introduced. The Rangers are working with city partners, taking a friendly approach to deter anti-social behaviour or disorderly conduct and act as a reassuring presence to curtail potential crime. They are also serving as a welcoming presence, available to give information and assistance to residents

and visitors to the city. As the eyes and ears on the street, they log locations requiring improvements, such as littering or drunkenness and communicate with relevant bodies to address any detected issues. We've partnered with York-based Eboracum Security who have filled the Ranger role with staff who have experience working in similar capacities in the City Centre. The Rangers have already helped resolve issues affecting BID businesses such as local fly tipping, anti-social behaviour and drug abuse within a business premises. The Rangers are positioned throughout the BID area 9am-5pm during the week, with additional resource working 12pm-midnight on Fridays and Saturdays to respond to businesses' increased concerns about activity during this period. If you would like to contact the Rangers, please call **07809 900794** or email **rangers@theyorkbid.com**. Both programmes support the BID's initiatives to boost safety and security in York City Centre and is part of the BID's overall commitment to enhancing the city's inviting atmosphere for all who visit, work, study and live in York. *(Picture above: York BID Executive Director, Andrew Lowson, with York BID Rangers)*

## Upcoming Programmes

**Street Cleaning** During the consultation leading up to the formation of the York BID, businesses said they wanted to see a cleaner city. We also know from tourist feedback that cleanliness has not met with expectations. Within the next month the BID will introduce a street cleansing programme which will bring additional cleaning services above the baseline provided by the City Council. The additionality funded by the BID will include deep cleansing of public areas, gum removal, graffiti on private property, fly posting and a rapid response team available for business customers to call. We have been working closely with the Council to ensure we do not duplicate their services and understand how they can help raise standards across the city. We have also been undertaking tests to ensure the equipment proposed brings noticeable results *(see picture above)*. Further communication will follow, including how to contact the cleansing teams.



**Indie York** As part of the BID's commitment to support independent businesses, the York BID is funding the Indie York initiative. Led by Cllr Johnny Hayes, Indie York aims to market the vibrant independent trade and retail available in York. The initiative will be piloted with a group of independent businesses through a new website and visitor map that will focus on promoting their offerings. Once the pilot is complete, remaining independent businesses will be invited to join the initiative. If you are interested in further information, please contact [info@theyorkbid.com](mailto:info@theyorkbid.com).

**Business Cost Reduction** York BID is moving forward with ways for our BID businesses to save money on utility costs. We are working with suppliers to understand the best options that will increase savings and add to your business profitability through opportunities to participate in collaborative procurement packages. We are starting with gas and electricity, but in future will look at trade waste and recycling. We are also seeking packages that are green and efficient, positioning York to be certified as a 'Green City'. If you are interested in learning more, please contact [info@theyorkbid.com](mailto:info@theyorkbid.com).

## Updates

We want to hear from you! We are currently reviewing our contact database. If you have updated contact details or news to share with us, please contact **info@theyorkbid.com** or call **01904 554448** and connect with us at **The York BID** on **Facebook (like us!)** and **Twitter (follow us!)**.