

BedfordBID

the bottom line for business

Newsletter for Bedford Business Improvement District - Issue Eight



BID supporting the night time economy

Bedford Business Improvement District (BID) is supporting professionalism in pubs, clubs and bars to make the town a more welcoming place for visitors, day and night.



BedfordBID
finance the
Taxi Marshals

A competition to find the best run bars in Bedford Borough was staged for a second time with the support of the BID. 'Raising the Bar' in standards is the aim of the campaign.

BedfordBID sponsored the project along with

Charles Wells Pub Company, National Best Bar None, Bedfordshire on Sunday newspaper and Bedford Borough Council.

The Best Bar None project sees venues assessed under a variety of headings and then accredited. From those that were accredited the very best were selected by judges and awards were made at a gala dinner held in February 2014.

BedfordBID volunteer Board Member Paul Dawson of The Rose pub said: "Businesses that fund the BID include those that make an important contribution to the night time economy of the town – and that includes pubs and clubs.

BedfordBID supports Best Bar None as a celebration of the safe and successful businesses which provide a service for customers night and day.

"BedfordBID contributed £3,000 to Best Bar None, which together with the sponsorship of the High Street taxi marshals of £15,000 is a significant contribution to the safety of visitors."

The Retail RadioLink and Exclusion Zone activity is run by BedfordBID. Better deals on equipment bought by businesses have been secured on radios and batteries. Dedicated night time economy radio campaigns have been financed by the BID.

Best Bar None Awards for Top Venues



Elements Nightclub in Mill Street was the Judges' Overall Winner with the Barley Mow, St Lyles Street second. Highly commended was the university Pub in the Hub. The Public Choice voted for by Bedfordshire on Sunday readers was The Barley Mow. An Outstanding Contribution Award was made to the Bedford Street Angels who are out and about Friday and Saturday nights. The full story was published in Beds on Sunday with pictures and videos.



Subsidised training for bar staff in the BIIAB Level 1 Award in responsible Alcohol Retailing (ARAR) was sponsored with £1,000 from the BID. Those venues taking part in the first round of the training were: The Bear, Elements, Chameleon, The Embassy, Krystal, Number 13/Corn Exchange and Vibes.

Why businesses say YES to BedfordBID

BedfordBID represents businesses in Bedford Town Centre, approximately 575 are levy payers, but all benefit from the activities of our Love Bedford brand. By supporting BedfordBID you are supporting your own trading environment and helping to attract new customers and investment into Bedford. Contact your team on (01234) 404500 or ask a Bluecap.

Visit our new website for more info on our Parking Guide, Love Bedford Vouchers, Reward Card and App

Voucher sales on target for £1 Million
Twitter / Facebook accounts followed by 1,000s

www.lovebedford.co.uk

BID BedfordBID
means
business

Start spreading the good news:

Business Rates reductions



BedfordBID businesses have welcomed good news re BUSINESS RATES (BR) from Central Government.

Christina Rowe Director of BedfordBID said: "There is some good news among these Government announcements and we are now sharing the information with town centre businesses and directing them towards the council for further details."

The Government will cap the Retail Price increase in Business Rates to 2% for one year from April 1st 2014.

Note: The BID levy remains at 2% of rateable value which was agreed with local businesses as part of the BID mandate in 2005 and again in 2010.

The Government will introduce a BR discount of £1,000 for retail and food and drink premises with a rateable value of below £50,000 for 2 years up to the 'state aid' limits from April 1st.

The Government will introduce a 50% BR Relief for 18 months up to the 'state aid' limits for businesses that move into retail premises that have been empty for a year or more. Businesses which move into empty premises between April 1st 2014 and March 2016 will be eligible for relief. The Government will extend the doubling of Small BR Relief for a further year from April 1st 2014.

The Government will relax the Small BR Relief rules to allow businesses in receipt of this but taking on an additional property to retain Small BR Relief on the first property for one year, with effect from April 1st 2014.

Note: Ask Bedford Borough Council for information. Contact the Local Taxation Officer on (01234) 267422.

Daring Dozen open for 2014

Over Christmas and the New Year twelve independent businesses opened in new premises in the BID zone. They bring to 60 the total of start-ups and "moving up" businesses unveiled in Bedford in the last 12 months. BedfordBID Director Christina Rowe said: "This is proof positive that Bedford is open for business and entrepreneurs are coming to our town to set up shop."

Among the newest names is The Flute wine bar in Ram Yard, Harko, Chinese restaurant in Lime Street and Thali & Tandoor, Indian restaurant in Castle Lane. Expanding businesses included Limes who moved between Christmas

and New Year to bigger premises at the bottom of the Victorian arcade.

"Another good sign is that fewer businesses have closed in the last twelve months in the BID zone. The churn, particularly of independents, is often common in town centres – one opens, one closes. But only 36 businesses have vacated premises – and as we can see that is sometimes to move up.

"These are not pop-up shops or here today, gone tomorrow Christmas shops, they are committed entrepreneurs who want to be in business in Bedford."



Coffee with Art has opened on the High Street after a major investment by the owners and support from the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). The Grade II listed property has been revived and is now open as an interesting coffee shop complete with interior design which includes works of art and photography. There is also a takeaway service available for those who cannot stay. BedfordBID contributed to the THI fund, representing 'business investment' to support public money.

LOVE

the new look website
www.lovebedford.co.uk

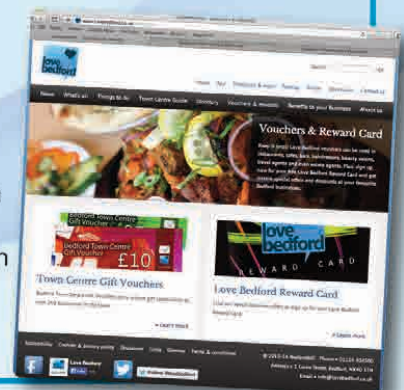
BedfordBID is sharing the love of our town with new look website. www.lovebedford.co.uk is promoting the town to tourists and visitors from near and far and has been launched this month.

Director Christina Rowe said: "This website is a central platform for our town's offer and for businesses within that town. It is linked directly to our Love Bedford App which contains offers from BID zone businesses and is also aligned with our social media on Facebook and Twitter."

"It is compatible with smart phones and tablets and will enable anyone, anywhere to get a good look at Bedford. It will also support our customer research and targeted marketing so enabling us to offer yet more help to individual businesses as well as the town as a whole."

"As months go by www.lovebedford.co.uk will become a central signposting site for anyone who wants to know what's on, the arts, history, and what sort of town they will be coming to if they choose to live here."

"Investment by home owners and businesses in critical to the success of the town centre and we want to make sure that anyone from London or Cambridge thinking of moving here sees there is a lot to Love about Bedford."



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Guide App