



STRAT > FORWARD
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Let's keep up the good work

A BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE RENEWAL OF
STRATFORWARD BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT 2014-2019



VOTE
YES

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Timescales

The Stratforward ballot will take place during September.
Ballot papers will be dispatched on Wednesday 28th August.
All votes will need to be received by 5pm on Friday 27th September.

The ballot is run by an entirely independent organisation, Electoral Reform Services, and the ballot is *entirely* confidential.





Stratford
up on everything

SHEEP ST

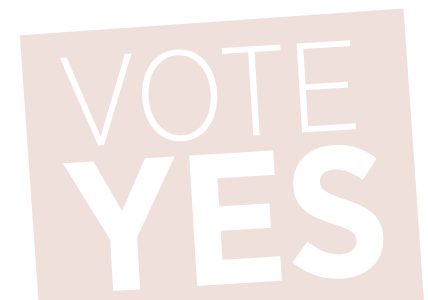
Introduction

Bard Watch with its day and night time radios and the evening marshals system. The Town Hosts in their distinctive yellow jackets. Summertime footfall-boosting favourites including the Arts, River and Food festivals. Not to mention the newest event to set the tills ringing – the Festival of Motoring. Wedding shows. Fashion Shows. The vibrant, year-round, street entertainment programme. A comprehensive, high-quality and targeted and ongoing marketing campaign. The packed programme of quality Christmas events designed to drive trade during this crucial period.

We've just given you the briefest overview of a few of the things Stratforward does for Stratford businesses. Say yes to the BID to secure the future of all these initiatives – and many more like them – for the coming five years.

Say no, however, and all of these many improvements and key town centre activities will simply cease in 2014. This means Stratford will quickly fall behind other comparable local centres with established BIDs such as Leamington, Solihull, Worcester and Rugby.

Let's keep up the good work



Foreword and Introduction

from Maria Warters, Chair of Stratforward Business Improvement District
and General Manager of Debenhams, Stratford.

Stratford, for all its undeniable charm, is in the grip of the same recessionary pressures as other towns the length and breadth of the UK. With ever-spiralling costs and squeezed margins, we understand that asking you to vote in favour of paying a levy to retain Stratforward is a tough call.

It is worth remembering, however, that whilst times are difficult – we don't underestimate the pressures businesses find themselves under – Stratford continues to perform strongly in comparison to other UK town centres. This is no happy accident.

Whilst the town's global renown plays a key part in its success, as indeed does the variety of high-quality local businesses, it is also undeniable that Stratforward has contributed to this strong performance.

Over the past five years it has been directed by you to deliver a huge range of initiatives to measurably improve trading conditions. If given the mandate to do so, we at Stratforward are determined to build on this strong track record and work to support your business for the next five years.



Indeed, my own business considers its levy payment not to be a contribution or cost, but an investment. An investment in a plan that delivers a tangible return precisely because it is directed by businesses and administered by businesses and works to sustain pedestrian footfall.

What's more, we can offer you good news regarding the levy. Mindful of the economic climate, Stratforward is proposing that the BID levy – or the investment you are asked to make – is to be reduced from 1.6 per cent of rateable value to just 1.45 per cent.

Of course, there are many things which impact on trade that Stratforward cannot change although over the past five years we have repeatedly proven that the ability, will and determination of a great number of people can be harnessed in a positive response to the challenges we face.

Please read on and take a look at what we've done, and what we plan to do for you and your business over the coming five years. Once you've done this, I'd urge you to commit your support, both as an individual and as a business, and ensure Stratforward keeps up the good work.

Association of Town & City Management

Business Improvement Districts have grown inexorably in recent years and now account for a significant proportion of the membership of the Association of Town & City Management. BIDs are leaders in delivering positive change, forging partnerships, representing the interests of the a range of businesses and meeting challenges in a robust and proven manner.



The BID structure ensures that the private sector is at the forefront of the organisation and allows a plan developed by businesses to be managed by businesses. The importance of BIDs has been recognised through the Portas Review, which recommended greater responsibility for BIDs.

I commend the Stratforward BID to businesses in Stratford-upon-Avon and would warn that, if the investment which Stratforward entails is not continued, the future of town centre vitality could be a lot more doubtful.

With ongoing constraints on spending, BIDs are a hugely effective way of delivering things that would, otherwise, simply not happen.

Martin Blackwell

Chief Executive

Association of Town & City Management



What exactly is a BID?

A quick reminder...

A Business Improvement District (BID) is an arrangement under which businesses within a defined trading area collaborate to select, invest in and then deliver key projects to enhance trading conditions.

The BID levy – how much your business pays into the fund – is determined by the rateable value of your business premises and so businesses pay proportionately, based on their size.

BIDs are about business working together to deliver positive change at a local level. BIDs and the projects they provide will not fund and cannot replace services statutorily provided by public agencies such as the police and councils.

There are over 120 BIDs operating successfully within the UK.

Many have been in operation for more than 10 years – proof indeed of their ability to deliver tangible local improvements.

Many local towns competing with Stratford for customers have their own successful BIDs including Leamington Spa, Worcester, Rugby and Solihull.

That's why in Stratford, we are asking business to vote yes to enable us to join the ever-growing list of UK locations where businesses have voted for their BID to continue beyond their original term.

Why should you vote for the BID to continue?

Stratforward has delivered what you asked for – and more!

For a full break-down of that we've done, turn to page 13.

Continued economic uncertainty, and ever increasing competition for fewer customers, means it is more important than ever that Stratford continues to host major events, delivers effective marketing campaigns and provides a safe, welcoming environment.

Without Stratforward, many of the initiatives your business has come to rely on would be lost.



Our strong track record

Stratforward BID Limited was formed as a company limited by guarantee in 2009 with the key objective to, *“Bring more people into Stratford-upon-Avon town centre, make them stay longer, spend more and leave happy”* and key activities, chosen by you, were used to develop a robust, five-year business plan. Now, just four years later Stratforward has successfully delivered each and every key activity outlined in that plan - as well as many more besides.

Take a look at the next few pages where we show in detail what we have delivered.

John and Helen Hogg,
Town Walks

“ We are amazed at just how much the BID does for the town and we wonder just who would do all these vital things for Stratford if Stratforward BID is not given a second term. ”

Up on Style mailers

reached **112,000 ABC1** households, a total opportunity to see of **269,000***



Facebook Flyers

generated > 3 million page impressions for the 2013 Arts Festival, and 1.4 million for the 2013 Up on Style activity



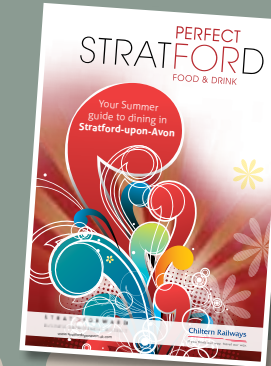
The Show your Love

this Christmas magazine reached **70,000 ABC1** homes, an opportunity to see of **168,000***



Brand Ambassadors

a campaign focused on independent retailers to re-engage local shoppers in the town. Each mailer was sent to **56,149 ABC1** homes within 25 minutes of Stratford, delivering a total opportunity to see in excess of **673,000*** for the five-mailer campaign



"Perfect For..."

Food & Drink leaflets, distributed along the length of Chiltern Railways

A proactive and sustained PR campaign

to promote Stratford has delivered more than **100** positive articles in last year alone plus considerable radio and TV coverage



Recent ads

recent full-page lifestyle magazine advertisements showcasing the town's product offer and events



WE SAID...

“ Marketing, Promotion, PR and Website ”

Stratforward will develop a comprehensive marketing strategy, specifically designed to bring visitors to Stratford.

WE DID...

1. Created high quality and distinct branding campaigns including 'Perfect For' and 'Stratford upon Everything'. ✓
2. Carried out major regional and national leafleting campaigns. ✓
3. Forged marketing partnerships with Chiltern Railways and The Times. ✓
4. Delivered marketing and promotional campaigns for all major events and activities. ✓
5. Created campaigns around all sectors of the town including Food & Drink, Retail, Attractions and Independent businesses. ✓

6. Surveyed a significant sample of our target catchment in order to refine our initial plans and promote the town most effectively. ✓
7. Created and maintained 5 websites for Stratforward. ✓
8. Organised social media presence and campaigns. ✓
9. Delivered promotional newspaper and radio campaigns. ✓
10. Set up a series of regular features in key quality publications, such as Warwickshire Living and Live 24-7. ✓



VOTE
YES



40,000

revellers visited The River Festival in 2012



Food Festivals

Free live food theatres, town centre taste trails, continental markets and live entertainment in the heart of Stratford

Big Screen

A 32m² screen showing the Olympic Ceremony live attracts more than 1,000 residents into Bancroft Gardens



Fashion Show

delivered a 200% increase in Facebook virality and a 93% increase in total reach, April 2013



STRATFORD
WEDDING
SHOW

Wedding Shows



Lewis & Lewis Photography



Arts Festival 2013

boosts town footfall by nearly 42% over 10-day event



Festival of Motoring

Town's first Festival of Motoring delivers a 200% rise in footfall and 40,000 visitors



Stratford
— Town Centre —
Food Festival

WE SAID...

Events, Festivals and Street Entertainment

“Stratforward will implement a consistent programme of events, festivals and street entertainment, focusing on encouraging a greater number of both regional and national visitors to the town centre.”



WE DID...

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Developed the Stratford River Festival into a major annual event attracting approximately 40,000 people. | ✓ | 7. Gained a National Visitor Experience Award from the Association of Town Centre Management. | ✓ |
| 2. Created a very successful annual Arts Festival, which featured over 100 shows in over 40 venues covering all sectors of the arts and culture. | ✓ | 8. Supported a number of events and activities in the town, such as the Music Festival, Heritage Open Days, Spring Sounds, and Literary Festival. | ✓ |
| 3. Forged key partnerships to deliver and develop the Stratford Food Festival, which attracts over 20,000 visitors. | ✓ | 9. Took the lead operational role in the Big Screen Olympic Celebrations, which was awarded the Tourism Initiative of the Year at the 2013 Pride of Stratford Awards. | ✓ |
| 4. Overseen a vibrant annual Christmas programme of key events and activities. | ✓ | 10. Organised new outdoor and indoor Fashion Show events. | ✓ |
| 5. Played a key role in the annual Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations. | ✓ | 11. Developed the Stratford Town Centre Wedding Shows. | ✓ |
| 6. Implemented a major street entertainment programme, which has been held up as a model of best practice. | ✓ | 12. Created the Stratford Festival of Motoring. | ✓ |
| | | 13. Strategically placed and rotated events to spread footfall across the town centre, including the creation of pedestrian trails as part of major events. | ✓ |



WE SAID...

Town Hosts

“Stratforward will introduce Town Hosts to act as reliable, mobile information guides and also act as a communication link between the shops and the public services. In addition, successful town host schemes reduce stock loss and cases of antisocial behaviour.”



WE DID...

1. Recruited and trained a team of professional Town Hosts. ✓
2. Developed the role of the Hosts to assist with a multitude of other key issues on behalf of our BID levy payers. ✓
3. Forged links between the Town Hosts, businesses and appropriate other organisations including public bodies such as the police and local authorities. ✓
4. Took on the Bardwatch and Stratford Retail Radio Links systems and reorganised them under an improved Bardwatch Day and Night operation, administered by the Town Hosts. ✓

5. Took on the delivery and administration of the Town Ambassador Scheme which provides free town orientation training for BID businesses. ✓
6. Developed specific expanded areas of responsibility for individual Town Hosts. ✓
7. Gained recognition as an accredited organisation within the internationally recognised World Host Customer Service Programme. ✓

Tammy Montgomery, The Golden Bee

“Schemes like Bardwatch and the Street Marshals have really opened up our night time trading opportunities as our customers feel safer in town after dark. Well done to Sam, her team of Town Hosts and the Street Marshals for making it happen.”

VOTE
YES



WE SAID...

Business Support

“ By working closely with existing agencies and organisations, Stratforward will deliver a comprehensive list of business support benefits. ”

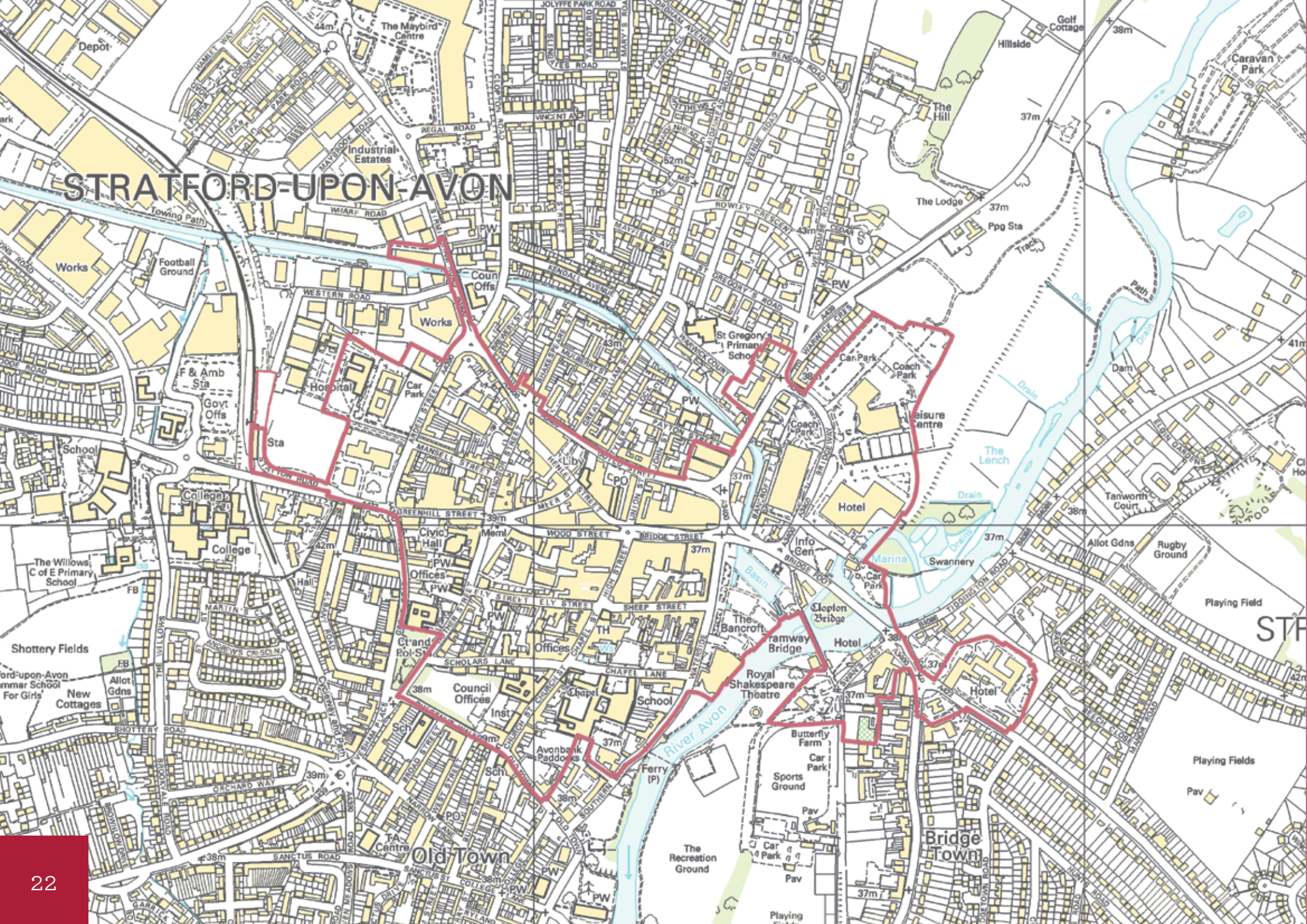
WE DID...

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1. Organised a system of Street Marshals to support the evening economy. | ✓ | 6. Lobbied on improvements, such as those to the car parking tariffs by representing BID levy payers on key external groups. | ✓ |
| 2. Negotiated and offered a series of preferential discounted costs for BID businesses. | ✓ | 7. Organised a series of structured business visits and acted upon the feedback. | ✓ |
| 3. Forged a key partnership with NCP to offer significantly discounted car parking charges to BID businesses. | ✓ | 8. Introduced economic measures such as footfall monitoring, business trade comparisons and monitoring of vacant shop levels. | ✓ |
| 4. Organised a series of meetings, seminars and other information events for BID levy payers. | ✓ | 9. Played an instrumental role in the development of Shakespeare's England as the recognised Destination Management Organisation for Stratford and the surrounding region. | ✓ |
| 5. Developed a monthly town centre newsletter to keep businesses updated on key local issues. | ✓ | 10. Organised accredited staff training courses for BID businesses. | ✓ |



VOTE
YES

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON



Proposed BID area

Following feedback from businesses, Stratforward has undertaken a review of the current boundary and is proposing significant refinements to that boundary for the second-term BID:

Key changes:

1. It follows a much more logical format in removing peripheral areas which are predominantly residential or do not contain significant number of eligible businesses.
2. It includes the recently developed Premier Inn on Birmingham Road.
3. It includes the Alveston Manor Hotel.
4. It includes the Railway Station.
5. It removes anomalies, such as The West End Pub in Old Town and the Shell Service Station on Evesham Road, neither of which are considered to fall within a logical definition of the town centre area

All eligible businesses (those with a rateable value of over £9,500) within the red line will therefore be asked to vote on the proposed Stratforward BID.

Proposed BID levy – now even better value

Mindful of the ongoing challenges posed to local businesses by the economic climate Stratforward has reduced the proposed BID levy to 1.45 per cent for the next BID term.

This represents a saving, in real terms, of around **9 per cent** compared to the current levy – yet at the same time is sufficient to meet the requirements of the proposed second term business plan.

Comparison BID	Levy	Comparison BID	Levy
Boston	1%	Nottingham Retail BID	1.25%
Croydon	1%	Stratford	1.45%
Hull	1%	Bournemouth	1.5%
Lincoln	1%	Melton Mowbray	1.5%
Newbury	1%	Leamington Spa	1.5%
Norwich	1%	Torquay	1.5%
Preston	1%	Worcester	1.5%
Solihull	1%	Derby	1.75%
Skipton	1%	Bedford	2%
Truro	1%	Hitchin	2%
Ilford	1.2%	Daventry	2.5%
Ipswich	1.2%		

Flair Gougoulia, El Greco

“ Pound for pound, compared with my other operating costs, the services delivered by Stratforward are excellent value for money. ”

What the bid levy would cost you...



Size of Business	Rateable Value	Annual Levy	Equivalent		
			Daily	Weekly	Monthly
Micro Shop/Office	£12,000	£174	47p	£3.34	£14.50
Small Shop/Office	£25,000	£363	99p	£6.98	£30.25
Average Store/Office	£55,000	£798	£2.18	£15.34	£66.50

“ Rachel Swain, Home of the Sofa

What I spend on my annual BID levy wouldn't even buy me one half page advert in a magazine but my very affordable levy payment mushrooms into a huge fund with real pay back for my business.

”

Current BID Board*

The Stratforward BID is currently overseen by the following board of directors and great care has been taken to ensure that the board is private-sector led and representative of the businesses and organisations involved.

Name & Organisation	Sector
Lisa Chambers Lisa Chambers Jewellery	Independent Retailer
Clive Swain Home of the Sofa	Independent Retailer
Jo Sainsbury Bright Ideas	Independent Retailer
Claire Wright Gemini	Independent Retailer
Maria Warters Debenhams	National Retailer
Levie Joson-Carter Edinburgh Woollen Mill	National Retailer
Mark Bullock Murphy Salisbury	Office
Miguel Abellan Van Kan Holiday Inn	Leisure
Neil Basnett Holiday Inspirations	Leisure

Name & Organisation	Sector
Patrick Websdell Wildwood Kitchen	Leisure
Annie Brown The Stratford Hotel	Leisure
Ross Sanders The Lazy Cow	Leisure
Sara Aspley Royal Shakespeare Company	Tourism
Vacant Vacant	Tourism
Chris Gregory Stratforward	BID Company
Neville Beamer Stratford-on-Avon District Council	Local Authority
Kate Rolfe Warwickshire County Council	Local Authority
Ian Fradgley Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council	Local Authority

*Details correct at time of going to print (June 2013)

Accountable at all times

This board is accountable for the delivery of the BID, to include:

1) Agreeing the contents of the business plan 2) Successful and business-focused delivery of the BID projects.

It is also responsible for planning the future beyond the BID lifetime.

The current board regularly invites guests to advise or speak on specific items and always welcomes the attendance of any BID levy payer at their meetings, provided that they are notified in advance.

The current board has evolved and been maintained as a balanced representation of the BID levy payers in the town and although board members are not necessarily required to step down, membership changes take place through natural movements. There is, however, the ability to nominate an entirely different board of directors if such board changes are requested by the BID levy payers.

Making sure your voice is heard – additional governance

Each area included within the Stratforward BID boundary will continue to have the opportunity to select a street representative to speak on behalf of their area at Stratforward board meetings.

This street representative's role will be, as now, to liaise with all surrounding businesses and ensure business concerns are brought to the attention of, and addressed by the Stratforward board. This ensures your voice is always heard.

Andrea Cureton, White Stuff

“It's good to know that a good proportion of the BID board is made up of other retailers like me. They understand the pressures we all face, especially in this climate, and it's good to know we have a voice!”



Our proposed projects and costs

A first look at what **Stratforward** could bring to your business over the coming five years

How did we develop the projects?

The whole point of a BID is that it is directed by businesses, for businesses. That's why when we started planning for a second term BID, the first thing we did was to listen to *you*.

We've carried out extensive local consultation to establish key local priorities – and whether businesses continue to support the principle of a Business Improvement District (BID) for the town.

We've:

- Carried out a comprehensive **business survey**
- Carried out individual **business visits**
- Actively **networked** at events
- Kept you informed with updates in our **newsletters** and on the Stratforward **website**.

Listening to you – the business survey

Stratforward developed a survey to obtain feedback on its activities. 475 surveys were distributed and 120 responses were received, which represents a highly-credible response rate of approximately 25 per cent.

1. **71 per cent** of businesses agreed that another BID proposal should be developed to cover the period 2014-19
2. The predominant views indicated that:
 - The BID levy rate should be **reduced** a little
 - Slight changes should be made to the **boundary** of the BID area
 - The focus should continue on **events and marketing**
 - Customer service and safety should continue to be carried out by the **Town Hosts**
 - The most important additional project identified was **pavement cleansing**

This feedback – *your views* – is the bedrock of the following plan for 2014-2019.

Marketing, Promotion, PR and Website

“Stratforward pledges to continue to roll out its marketing strategy to attract visitors, with added emphasis on engaging with local audiences.”

VOTE
YES

AND WE WILL...

1. Create high quality and distinct branding campaigns.

2. Carry out major leafleting campaigns within our core 25 minute catchment.

3. Produce high quality marketing and promotional campaigns for all major events and activities and distribute these to a wider area.

4. Oversee ongoing campaigns around all sectors of the town including Food & Drink, Retail, Attractions and Independent businesses.

5. Maintain high-quality websites.

6. Deliver pronounced and expanded social media presence and campaigns.

7. Oversee promotional newspaper and radio campaigns.

8. Commission regular features in key quality magazines.

9. Maintain and expand our library of professional standard promotional photos of Stratford for use across a variety of media.

10. Play a key role in a new visitor guide for the region. **new**

Annual Budget

£90,000

“My business is reliant on local customers – not tourists. That’s why it’s vital the BID continues so it carries on promoting the town’s shops, bars and restaurants to local people. It’s their cash that will keep our tills ringing long after the day trippers have gone home”

Adam Lucock,
Barry the Butcher



Events, Festivals and Street Entertainment

“ Stratforward pledges to continue to implement a consistent programme of events, festivals and street entertainment, focusing on encouraging a greater number of both regional and national visitors to the town centre. ”

VOTE
YES

AND WE WILL...



1. Further develop the Stratford Festival of Motoring, River Festival, Arts Festival and Food Festival into even bigger annual events attracting at least 100,000 people.

2. Continue to carry out the Stratford Fashion Show and Wedding Shows.

3. Forge stronger partnerships to develop at least three additional specialist events.

new

4. Oversee and improve a vibrant annual Christmas programme of key events and activities.

5. Continue to play a key role in the annual Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations.

6. Continue to oversee and publish a major street entertainment programme, which features acts every week of the year.

7. Support a number of other events, activities and festivals in the town.

8. Play a major role in the major Shakespeare anniversary celebrations planned for 2014 & 2016.

new

9. Influence key improvements to the annual Mop Fair based on business feedback.

new

10. Continue to create pedestrian trails as part of major events.

Annual Budget
£102,000

VOTE
YES

Town Hosts

“Stratforward pledges to ensure Town Hosts continue to act as reliable, mobile information guides and also act as a communication link between the shops and the public services. In addition, the Town Host scheme will continue to reduce stock loss and cases of antisocial behaviour.”

VOTE
YES

AND WE WILL...



1. Continue the Town Hosts service across the 7-day week, retaining an emphasis on their core duties.
2. Further develop the role of the Hosts based on business feedback and the changing needs of the town.
3. Continue to forge links between the Town Hosts, businesses and appropriate other organisations.
4. Continue to administer the Ambassador Scheme which provides free town orientation training for BID businesses.

5. Continue to liaise very closely between the police and local authorities over problems or issues in the town.

6. Continue to carry out extensive business visits across the town.

7. Expand the Town Host scheme in partnership with local residents.

new

Annual Budget

£80,000

Rachel Ngoube, Gorgeous Obsession

“The Town Hosts are professional, friendly and proactive. Not only are they great ambassadors for our town but I’ve also come to rely on them as a link to all the important information I need about security, safety and countless other business initiatives.”

VOTE
YES

Business Support

“ By working closely with existing agencies and organisations, Stratforward pledges to deliver a comprehensive list of business support benefits. ”

VOTE
YES

AND WE WILL...



1. Continue the system of Street Marshals to support the evening economy.

2. Continue to contribute towards the costs of driving tourism and to play a key role in Shakespeare's England.

3. Continue to negotiate and offer a series of preferential discounted costs for BID businesses.

4. Continue our partnership with NCP to offer significantly discounted car parking charges to BID businesses.

5. Continue to produce a monthly town centre newsletter to keep businesses updated on key local issues.

6. Continue to lobby on improvements for the town, together with local businesses and community groups.

7. Continue our support for the annual Pride of Stratford Awards and Stratford Business Show.

8. Continue to commission and publish footfall, trading and vacant unit measures to benchmark the performance of the town.

9. Continue to administer and develop the Bardwatch system of radios in the town to benefit both the daytime and evening economies.

10. Gain the prestigious Purple Flag status for the town, which recognises an exemplary evening economy. **new**

11. Drive forward wider town centre improvements by leading a new Town Team. **new**

Annual Budget
£33,000

VOTE
YES

Street Improvements

“Stratforward pledges to enact key improvements to the town centre streetscape.”

VOTE
YES

AND WE WILL...

1. Commission a programme of street cleansing in addition to that carried out by the District Council. **new**
2. Oversee a programme of street furniture painting. **new**
3. Carry out regular inspections of the BID area and report any defects to the appropriate body for repair.
4. Encourage business uptake in summer hanging baskets scheme in partnership with Stratford in Bloom.

Annual Budget

£13,500

VOTE
YES



Contingency

“Stratforward pledges to ensure that the company has sufficient resources to react to changing conditions over the BID lifespan.”

VOTE
YES

AND WE WILL...

1. Reserve to be managed throughout the financial year to react to changing conditions and demands, possibly to include a contribution to the Christmas lights, should this be required.

Annual Budget

£10,000

Company Costs

“ Stratforward pledges to continue to ensure that the company has the resources and systems to carry out the Business Plan to very high standards and ensure that the company operates professionally, transparently and robustly. ”

VOTE
YES

AND WE WILL...

1. Staff the company with qualified, professional and passionate employees.
2. Retain bases in the centre of town to be most reactive to business needs.
3. Employ professional legal and financial support to ensure very high standards of operation and independent, transparent auditing of company operations.
4. Drive down our overall operating costs by at least 5%. **new**

Annual Budget

£12,500* (Total annual budget £112,500)

*Total cost to BID levy payers is £12,500. The remainder of the total company costs are made up from sponsorship, grants and other income of at least £100,000 per year.

VOTE
YES



“ With times so hard, it would be really easy to find reasons not to contribute to the BID, but that would be a very short-sighted business decision considering such a small investment and a small team delivers such big returns. ”

Claire Wright,
Gemini



Proposed Budget 2014-19

Stratforward BID proposed budget 2014-19	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total budget
Income						
Levy income	£341,000	£344,410	£347,854	£351,333	£354,846	£1,739,443
Sponsorship, grants & other income	£100,000	£101,000	£102,010	£103,030	£104,060	£510,100
Total income	£441,000	£445,410	£449,864	£454,363	£458,906	£2,249,543
Expenditure						
Marketing, Promotion, PR and Websites						
Marketing & communications	£90,000	£90,900	£91,809	£92,727	£93,654	£459,090
Events, Festivals and Street Entertainment						
Motoring, Arts, River, Food and Christmas festivals	£95,000	£95,950	£96,910	£97,879	£98,857	£484,596
Other events costs	£7,000	£7,070	£7,141	£7,212	£7,284	£35,707
Town Hosts						
Town Hosts	£80,000	£80,800	£81,608	£82,424	£83,248	£408,080
Business Support						
Bardwatch and Evening Marshals	£20,000	£20,200	£20,402	£20,606	£20,812	£102,020
Wider tourism support	£5,000	£5,050	£5,101	£5,152	£5,203	£25,506
Footfall and trading information	£8,000	£8,080	£8,161	£8,242	£8,325	£40,808
Street Improvements						
Street improvements	£13,500	£13,635	£13,771	£13,909	£14,048	£68,863
Company Costs						
Core staffing costs, director, admin and finance	£75,000	£75,750	£76,508	£77,273	£78,045	£382,576
Office & company overheads	£37,500	£37,875	£38,254	£38,636	£39,023	£191,288
Other Costs						
Contingency	£10,000	£10,100	£10,201	£10,303	£10,406	£51,010
Total expenditure	£441,000	£445,410	£449,866	£454,363	£458,905	£2,249,544

Frequently asked questions about BIDs

1. How are the BID projects agreed?

The projects are agreed via a consultation process with the businesses within the proposed BID area, with the priority issues being those which are addressed and costed through a proposal document, which is then circulated to all businesses in order for them to consider their vote.

We have carried out a number of surveys and other research in Stratford and the proposed projects are detailed on pages 30-35 of this document.

2. What if enough people vote for the BID proposal?

If a majority of businesses (both in terms of total number and overall rateable value) vote positively, the BID contributions would become a compulsory levy on all local business ratepayers and would be collected in line with business rates.

All BID income is held in an account solely for the BID.

3. Who is liable to pay a BID levy?

Any person, registered company, charity or non-profit making organisation who is a business occupier or leaseholder within the BID area would pay the levy assuming that a yes vote is achieved.

Property landlords only become liable where the property is empty and a lease does not exist.

4. What would it cost me?

The BID levy would be applied as a percentage of individual business rateable value and so smaller businesses would pay less than larger businesses.

To carry out our key projects, the BID levy has been proposed at 1.45% of property rateable value in Stratford.

The average eligible business rateable value in the BID area is approximately £55,000, for which the annual contribution would be £798 per year – that's less than £15.34 per week and less than £2.20 per day.

5. Which rateable value would be used calculate any BID contribution?

The 2010 listings, which came into force on 1st April 2010. These figures, as well as the opportunity for you to check your rateable value, are available via www.voa.gov.uk

6. Are there any exemptions from the BID levy?

Yes, not all properties subject to business rates pay for the BID levy. Those not liable to pay in Stratford include those with a rateable value of £9,500 or less and also those non-retail charities in receipt of Stratford District Council's discretionary relief whose premises are unoccupied or part occupied.

7. Isn't this just a way for the council and other public bodies to save money?

No, BIDs cannot replace existing public services already provided by bodies such as the council, police and others. In this way, the BID only improves current standards and does not subsidise or replace them.

8. Who would run the BID?

BIDs are operated as not-for-profit organisations which are made up of key business and other representatives within the BID area. In Stratford, it is planned that the BID would continue to be run by the independent Stratforward Company.

9. Why isn't somebody else paying for the improvements?

As outlined, a BID involves things which are not already being done and BID income cannot be used to pay for services already being provided. In this sense, the BID would add value by delivering additional activities in Stratford which cannot currently be funded by others.



Frequently asked questions about BIDs continued...

10. What period would the BID cover?

The BID would cover a five year period between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2019.

11. What's in it for me?

The proven business benefits of a BID are that they increase customers visiting a centre, increase business profits, give businesses a greater voice and create a fair system of contribution towards key improvements.

12. What if the majority vote no?

Very simply, many improvements and key activities in Stratford will simply cease from 2014 and Stratford will quickly fall behind other comparable local centres, especially those with established BIDs, such as Leamington, Solihull, Rugby and Worcester.

13. Why is this business plan different to the former one?

Following detailed feedback from Stratford businesses, we have retained key elements of the first BID and also made key changes which have been suggested by businesses such as yours.

14. Are we able to change BID staffing?

Yes – the current BID staff are all contracted to 31st March 2014 although there is no obligation to retain any of the current staff if staffing changes are requested by the BID levy payers.

15. How is the current BID board elected and how often are board members required to step down?

The current board has evolved and been maintained as a balanced representation of the BID levy payers in the town and although board members are not necessarily required to step down, membership changes take place through natural movements.

There is, however, the ability to nominate an entirely different board of directors if such board changes are requested by the BID levy payers.

16 How is the board accountable to BID levy-payers?

The board is made up of levy payers themselves. It operates a very open and accountable system, whereby any BID levy payer is able to attend board meetings to raise any issues or concerns. It is proposed that this system continues.

17. If I do not vote, is my vote counted?

No – if you do not vote, your vote is not counted at all. Abstention from voting therefore does not affect the outcome of the ballot in any material way.

18. What benefits do BIDs bring?

Experience across the country has shown that BIDs have resulted in the following key benefits:

Businesses

- | | |
|--|---|
| Increased customer footfall | ✓ |
| Reduces individual business costs through joint projects | ✓ |
| Provides a united business voice on key issues | ✓ |
| Fair fee structure in that all contribute but smaller businesses contribute proportionally less than larger ones | ✓ |

The Community

- | | |
|---|---|
| Results in a more buoyant local economy | ✓ |
| Generally consists of physical improvements to the area involved | ✓ |
| Often results in businesses being more involved in community projects | ✓ |
| Builds local pride in the city/town or village centre involved | ✓ |

Frequently asked questions about BIDs continued...

19. How does Stratforward benefit specific sectors?

Independent retailers

- In many ways, this sector has most to gain from the BID.
- A large part of Stratford's appeal lies in its specialist independent businesses and we want to continue to promote this clear benefit. For most small businesses the annual BID levy will cost less than the price of a single full-page magazine advert.
- Independent businesses can continue to expect high quality marketing of specialist retailers, strong communication with the Town Hosts, a strong voice as part of Stratforward and access to subsidised offers on a variety of products and services.

Tourism businesses

- Stratford is a small town with a big reputation. However, in recent years, tourism numbers (those visiting and those staying in Stratford-upon-Avon) have undergone dramatic changes as a result of changes in the global economy.
- Stratforward has reacted to this by developing core activities aimed at targeting our immediate catchment to reinstate local loyalty in the town throughout the year, thereby making it less susceptible to seasonal tourism fluctuations.
- Importantly, we have also recognised that the wider need to promote the town to a regional, national and international tourism audience is best addressed in a properly co-ordinated and joint fashion and so Stratforward invests in Shakespeare's England together with other key bodies across South Warwickshire and beyond.
- Tourism businesses can therefore be reassured that the Stratforward BID will continue to attract visitors from close to home and further afield through the above channels, as well as through major events. Don't forget that the Town Hosts are on hand to welcome visitors and to guide them towards your business once they get here!

Multiple retailers

- The BID programme would propose to spend a significant annual sum on marketing and events to restore local loyalty to Stratford.
- Through the Destination Management Organisation, we also have big plans to promote Stratford regionally, nationally and internationally.
- All plans are designed to drive footfall and sales. Without continued investment, the outlook for Stratford would be even more challenging in these tough times, but through the work of the BID, the multiple retailers can sustain and boost their customer sales.

Leisure and catering business

- Eating and drinking is an essential part of Stratford's strong visitor offer. The leisure economy is vitally important to the town. We have made great strides in developing and promoting our evening economy through our Bardwatch and Street Marshals systems, and also plan to gain the coveted Purple Flag status for Stratford.
- We are also strongly committed to promoting our food, drink and leisure offers through our Brand Ambassadors campaigns and our marketing proposals intend to continue to promote the range and depth that our town can offer.
- Furthermore, we are committed as part of our development plans for the annual Food Festival to continue to showcase and promote Stratford food and drink businesses.

Professional sector

- Stratford is home to a vibrant professional services sector and Stratford BID aims to continue supporting this sector: we will continue to bring office-based businesses initiatives to reduce overheads and drive down costs.
- We will also help you grow your client base through support for regional networking and continue to play a key role in supporting the Stratford Business Forum with a range of projects such as the Stratford Business Show, which BID businesses can attend at a 50 per cent discount.
- We will also continue our work with bodies such as Stratford Vision, who have a strong focus on the professional sector.

More about the voting process

Under BID legislation, all qualifying businesses will be asked to vote on whether they want a BID in Stratford to go ahead. To date, there are over 120 approved BID schemes operating across the UK, generating in excess of £180 million in new funding.

In advance of the ballot in September 2013, the person with the authority to vote in your organisation will receive a ballot paper and statement. All votes will need to be received by **5pm on Friday 27th September** by Electoral Reform Services, the organisation who will independently conduct the ballot.

Each business within the boundary with a rateable value of £9,500 or more will be eligible to vote. This means that some organisations occupying more than one premises will have more than one vote.

For the BID to go ahead, two conditions must be met:

- 1) More than 50% of businesses who vote must vote in favour.
- 2) Of the businesses that vote, the 'yes' votes must represent more than 50% of the total rateable value of all votes cast.

Under the legislation, if the BID is approved, all businesses, regardless of how they voted, will be under an obligation to pay the 1.45% levy each year for five years until 2019.

Collection of the BID levy carries the same enforcement weight as collection of the non-domestic rates.

The results of the ballot will be publicly announced in early October 2013.

A 'YES' vote for Stratford would mean that the projects outlined in this Business Plan will begin to be implemented from 1st April 2014 with funds to deliver a comprehensive programme of benefits for five years from that date.

Summary of information provided under Schedule 1 of the BID regulations 2004

1. This is a BID renewal proposal and outlines a statement of the services proposed to be carried out by Stratforward Business Improvement District Limited, a company limited by guarantee.
2. All services described are in addition to any services provided by any public authority.
3. The geographical area proposed is shown on page 22 of this document. It includes the area within the red line bounded approximately by Arden Street, Guild Street, Bridgeway, The Recreation Ground, Church Street, Chestnut Walk, Rother Street and Arden Street. Please do however note that the above list is not exhaustive and that the exact area proposed should be reviewed on page 22.
4. The proposed term of this renewal proposal covers the period 1st April 2014 - 31st March 2019 inclusive and any significant changes to the activities proposed within this plan during this period may be subject to a BID alteration ballot.
5. All National Non-Domestic Ratepayers within the boundary/area are proposed to be liable to the BID levy, with the exception of (i) Any business with a rateable value below £9,500 (ii) Any non-retail charities responsible for unoccupied and part-occupied liable premises, which are in receipt of Stratford District Council's discretionary relief. All of those outlined within (i) and (ii) will be exempt from the BID levy.
6. The BID levy is proposed at 1.45% of business rateable value, using the most current ratings list to calculate the amount payable.
7. Each business ratepayer will have a vote provided they are listed on the National Non-Domestic Ratings (NNDR) List for the boundary defined on the map in this document, on the day that the notice of ballot is given by Stratford District Council.
8. Each person entitled to vote will have one vote in respect of each liable premises within the Stratforward BID boundary. A proxy vote is available and details will be sent out with ballot papers.
9. Only whole liable premises within the proposed boundary will be included and it is proposed that there will be no inclusion of part-liable premises.
10. Every levy paying business will be a member of Stratforward and have membership eligibilities.
11. The management arrangements for the proposed BID, which would include the financial arrangements, would mirror those adopted for the 2009-14 BID in that a board of directors would be appointed, which would consist of a representative sample of the businesses within the BID, including the Town Council, District Council and County Council. The board would meet regularly and receive both management reports and financial reports at each meeting, which would be subject to independent, accredited, external audit, leading to the production and submission of an annual report, annual accounts and the submission of the statutory financial and corporation tax returns.

Summary of information provided under Schedule 1 of the BID regulations 2004 continued

12. Under the BID regulations 2004, Stratford District Council will be responsible for collection of the levy on behalf of Stratforward. The levy income will be kept in a separate ring fenced account and transferred to Stratforward on an agreed basis. Collection and enforcement arrangements will be similar to those for the collection and enforcement of non-domestic business rates with the Stratforward BID responsible for any debt write off.
13. The BID levy will apply from 1st April each year.
14. The Stratforward BID will endeavour to secure additional voluntary contributions and other income to supplement the levy over the five year lifetime of the BID.
15. Exemptions, relief or discounts prescribed in the Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) Regulations 1989 made under the Local Government Finance Act 1988, will not apply.
16. Those responsible for unoccupied and part-occupied liable premises, will be liable for the full BID levy.
17. The BID levy will not be affected by the small business rate relief scheme and businesses who already pay service charges to landlords will not receive any discount.
18. Where a property is vacant, undergoing refurbishment or being demolished, the ratepayer will be entitled to vote and also obliged to pay the levy with no void period.
19. The BID levy will have to be paid by any new ratepayer occupying any existing liable premises within the BID area up until the end of the five year term on 31st March 2019, even though they may not have voted on the initial proposal. Likewise, any new rateable property created during the lifetime of the BID will be obliged to pay the levy.
20. It is proposed that the result of the renewal ballot will be published in early October 2013 and that any new arrangements would generally begin on 1st April 2014.
21. If a business ratepayer occupies premises for less than one year, the amount of BID levy payable will be calculated on a daily basis.
22. None of the costs in developing this BID renewal proposal are proposed to be recovered through the BID levy proposed between 2014-2019.

VOTE YES

Vote **YES** and let's keep up the good work

Vote no and be prepared to lose all of the many key activities shown in this document and see Stratford fall behind other comparable local centres with established BIDs such as Leamington, Solihull, Worcester and Rugby.

Timescales

The Stratforward ballot will take place during September. Ballot papers will be dispatched on Wednesday 28th August. All votes will need to be received by 5pm on Friday 27th September.

The ballot is run by an entirely independent organisation, Electoral Reform Services, and the ballot is *entirely* confidential.

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BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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