

# HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2018



'Imagine Luton' event - June 2018

**2018** marked the fourth year for the Luton Business Improvement District (BID) and we are very proud of the successful BID-funded projects which have led to many positive changes in our town centre.

Over the year we continued to build awareness and promote businesses across the sectors, as well as working hard to improve the perception of Luton. We have also been working in partnership with other agencies to improve safety, environmental factors and bring exciting new and improved events to the town centre.

## LUTON BID'S VISION

BIDs allow businesses in a defined area and business sector(s) to vote on which additional services they want to invest in, to improve their trading environment.

**Luton BID's vision, through a business-led programme of investment, is:**

'To develop an energetic and entrepreneurial business community that is ambitious, innovative and always resourceful which connects, inspires and strengthens the business sector and creates cohesion, a vibrant town centre, a great visitor experience and a sense of pride in our town.'

Improved street planters



Luton BID Mystery Shoppers

The BID's key objectives are around **PROMOTION**, **ENVIRONMENT**, **EXPERIENCE** and **BUSINESS COLLABORATION**.



'Luton Live' event - April 2018



# 2018 HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## Environment

### Clean Ups & Tidy Mornings

Ensuring that Luton town centre is attractive and appealing for visitors and workers continues to be one of the most important issues for our town centre businesses, which is why one of the BID's main aims for 2018 was to provide additional cleaning services.

#### Daily Cleaning

Our BID-funded glutton vacuuming machine has collected 57,840 litres of cigarette butts, chewing gum and other items of hard-to-reach litter over 1,300 hours - contributing to a cleaner Luton town centre in 2018.

The machine, which has a lengthy vacuuming nozzle to clear hard-to-reach pavement cracks and kerbsides of litter, was purchased by the BID in 2017 and loaned to Luton Borough Council to operate. The BID is continuing to fund the maintenance costs.



#### Tidy Mornings

We have had fantastic support for our award-winning Tidy Mornings, with volunteers from a number of Luton town centre businesses giving up their time to help clean hot spot areas. 63 people took part in our three events in 2017 collecting 53 bin bags of rubbish from the streets of Luton town centre.

#### Bins

Bins we purchased for the town centre were continually used throughout 2018. The bins are positioned across the BID area and include bait trays to help control and reduce vermin numbers.



### Hot Spot Cleaning and Gum Boards

The BID funded three hot spot cleans in 2018 to tackle serious cleanliness issues on Flowers Way, Chapel Street and Upper George Street.

The BID Ambassadors and project manager continue to work with Luton Borough Council's cleansing team to highlight key areas requiring work. They also report issues to the neighbourhood enforcement team where necessary.

In 2017, Luton BID introduced gum boards in the town centre, with six being placed in key areas around the town. Five of these are still in operation and are maintained by the BID team.





To ensure that the town centre and all its different areas present an accessible and appealing environment which attracts business investment, encourages visitors to stay longer and fosters a pride in the town.

## Environment



### Floral Displays

Luton BID has funded floral decorations across the town centre for the last four years and we once again had fantastic feedback from visitors and businesses in 2018 on our hanging baskets, flower displays and window boxes. The BID also funded the planning and maintenance of these flowers, as part of the remit to ensure that the town centre and all its different areas are attractive and appealing to residents, workers and visitors. This is undoubtedly one of our most popular projects and the flowers will be back again in 2019.



### Supporting Arts Project

The BID completed its funding of the '**As You Change, So Do I**' programme, which brought contemporary arts to the town centre.

A key focal point of the project was '**The Beacon**' – the huge light display on the side of The Hat Factory which greets visitors from the train and bus station to the town centre. There was also been a programme of other events, performances, projections, screenings and talks which took place across 2018.

Luton Culture and the BID supported the programme with a £10,000 a year contribution for three years. The BID's support has helped lever in £350,000 for the town.



### Town Centre Lighting

Our attractive pea lighting in the trees in St George's Square helped to brighten up the area in the evening throughout 2018 and will continue to shine this year. We also added extra Christmas lights on Chapel Street, Bute Street and Park Street and funded a 30ft Christmas tree in St George's Square.

## Experience

To provide a safe, attractive, and appealing experience for visitors and workers in Luton town centre to enjoy.

### LUTON LIVE Entertainment

We ran four Luton Live events in St. George's Square in 2018, entertaining shoppers and visitors with an array of acts and performances from magicians, big bands, circus workshops, pop music and jazz. We also supported a special event focused on entertainment from around the era of WW1 to commemorate 100 years of the end of the conflict.

As well as organising our own entertainment, the BID has also supported many other town centre events – including **Summer in the Sun**, **Rise, Roundabout**, **Jack and The Beanstalk Christmas panto**, and the **St. Patrick's Day** and **St. George's Day** celebrations.

### Evening Economy

Luton BID teamed up with key town centre partners during the application process for Purple Flag status - a sought after accreditation for towns and cities that provide a vibrant mix of dining, entertainment and culture, while promoting the safety and well-being of visitors and residents.

**Luton Council, Bedfordshire Police, Luton Safe, The Fire Brigade, The Mall and The Galaxy Centre** were among the stakeholders involved in the application in early 2018.



### Public Space Protection Order

Luton BID worked with Luton Council on the town centre PSPO which has given officers additional ways to enforce against anti-social behaviour such as street drinking, begging and spitting.

Luton BID have also funded the erection of signs across the town centre to make members of the public aware of the additional enforcement.



### Our Ambassadors

Our two uniformed BID Ambassadors continue to play an important role in the community, regularly calling into all town centre businesses to keep them up to date on BID events and initiatives. They also walk Luton town centre streets welcoming and assisting visitors and report issues such as street cleanliness and safety to the relevant organisations and their work with the police and other agencies helps to reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB), street begging and crime.

In 2018 we said goodbye to Joanne after three years of service and welcomed Verity onto the Ambassador team – Verity had previously worked with NOAH as an outreach worker helping the homeless.

#### During 2018 our Ambassadors:

- Made **2479** business visits
- Carried out **2323** visitor interactions
- Reported **453** ASB and Environmental Issues



### Safer Neighbourhoods

Crime prevention advice was given to 60 town centre businesses during Luton BID's latest Safer Neighbourhood Days. Luton BID teamed up with Bedfordshire Police as part of the initiative which focuses on improving security.

Ambassadors were joined by police officers as they visited town centre shops and businesses to promote safety and security, discuss business crime intelligence sharing, demonstrate the digital radio scheme and offer crime prevention advice.

### Business Radio Scheme

Luton BID continues to support the digital business crime radio scheme, which is managed by Luton Business Against Crime (LBAC), by offering town centre businesses a significant subsidy towards the hire cost of the digital radios. The scheme is an effective way to reduce crime through collaboration and direct contact with Bedfordshire Police and the CCTV team. Luton BID has also purchased radios for Luton Street Pastors and the SOS Bus to enable them to assist the public on Friday and Saturday evenings.



## Experience



### Diwali in Luton

**Luton BID supported the first-ever town centre Diwali in Luton festival.**

The event took place in George's Square in October 2018 it included a day of entertainment and fun in celebration of the Hindu festival of light – the grand finale was an exciting parade on Market Hill. By working with the organisers of Diwali in Luton to support this event, the BID helped lever in over £20,000, with people from all cultures joining in the celebrations.

### Imagine Luton

Luton BID backed the popular Imagine Luton festival for the second year in 2018, through financial sponsorship and promotional support, and helped organisers build on their 2017 successes to host another fantastic event of spectacular outside performances and circus acts. Imagine Luton took place on the last weekend in June and attracted thousands of extra visitors to the town centre.



### International Street Market

**We turned St George's Square into a lively outdoor marketplace in March when we organised a four-day International Street Market.**

There were 15 stalls offering food, drink and hand-crafted products, such as fine Baltic Amber jewellery, dream-catchers, Spanish tapas, churros and organic custom clothing and accessories. The event saw good numbers especially on Friday and Saturday afternoon with the feedback from the public very positive.

## Christmas 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

**We were delighted with feedback from businesses, families and shoppers about our BID-funded FREE Christmas events that spanned the December weekends.**

The BID supported Luton Council's Christmas Market at the beginning of December, arranged for **Peter Rabbit™** and **Paddington™** to entertain families in the lead-up and during the Christmas light's switch-on and also hosted carol singing with The Big Hat Factory Choir and Luton Choral Society on St George's Square.

Our **Santa in Luton** event added to the festive feel as Santa and his helpers performed throughout the town centre.

Our 30ft Christmas tree in St. George's Square, additional lighting in Bute Street, Chapel Street and Park Street improved the look and feel of our town centre, and our **Christmas What's On Guide**, which was distributed to 40,000 people, promoted a host of other town centre events over November and December.

All BID-funded Christmas events were aimed at bringing more people into the town centre over the festive period.



## Promotion

Identify, develop and promote the strengths, characteristics and the business offer of Luton town centre to positively change perceptions of the town, locally regionally and nationally.

### EVENING ECONOMY

We updated our highly popular evening economy guide which now includes over 70 town centre businesses providing a night time offer or service after 6pm. 5,000 copies were printed and distributed at events and places of interest such as The Mall, The Library, Travel Centre and town centre hotels. We were also heavily involved in the Purple Flag application process alongside other key town centre organisations, and were thrilled when Luton was awarded the sought-after accreditation last year. Our Purple Flag selfie board campaign in October celebrated Purple Flag month and was another success in terms of promoting our strong evening economy - with lots of businesses having their pictures taken.



## MYSTERY SHOPPING AWARDS 2018

55 businesses took part in our first Luton BID Mystery Shopping Awards which were designed to recognise and celebrate customer service excellence in the town centre. Businesses were praised for their 'outstanding customer service' during the ceremony and the overall results in Luton town centre were above the national average. Congratulations to **AW Group, Debenhams, The Mall, Lenwell, Levels Trust Uniform Exchange, Make My Vape** and **Metro Bank** who were awarded the highest Service Excellence Awards for their 100% scores, and to all the other businesses who were awarded silver and gold.

### Social Media Activity

Please connect with us to share your news and events or to join other town centre businesses who participate in our social media campaigns -

#IndieRetail,  
#ShopLocal and  
#SmallBizSatUK  
were just a few  
from last year  
and 54  
businesses got  
involved.  
Search, follow  
and like  
@LutonBID.



## LUTON BID WEBSITE REFRESH

Our website received an upgrade and refresh in 2018 with an improved look and feel, more images and even better navigation. It is now easier to find information about town centre events, updated details of our projects and archived e-bulletins, press releases and newsletters. Visit [lutonbid.org](http://lutonbid.org) and let us know your feedback.

### Media Coverage

Generating positive media coverage for Luton BID and town centre businesses is crucial in changing perceptions and improving the reputation of Luton town centre.

We take a proactive approach and we wrote more than 20 press releases about Luton BID initiatives and events in 2018. With some fantastic local coverage of the **Purple Flag, Mystery Shopping Awards, Christmas programme, Imagine Luton** and **Diwali** in Luton.

### Newsletters & eBulletins

The BID produces weekly e-bulletins and quarterly printed newsletters to keep businesses in the BID area up to date with events, activities.



### Working Groups

Our BID Business Group Meetings give businesses the chance to have their say on existing and future BID projects and initiatives throughout the year. We ran 22 meetings in 2018 which covered the professional services and evening economy sectors as well as different town centre areas including Wellington Street, Cultural Quarter, George Street, Chapel Street, The Mall and many more.



## Businesses Working Together

To build on the strengths of the businesses in Luton town centre, to support and promote growth, development, investment and a sense of businesses community.

### CAR PARKING SCHEME

Luton BID have partnered with The Mall Luton and Luton Town Football Club to create two reduced rate car parking schemes for people working for town centre businesses, helping to make working in Luton cheaper for individuals and to reduce overheads for businesses.



The Power Court scheme went live in January 2018 with The Mall scheme having been in operation since March 2017.

**Over 60 people now benefit from the offers.**

### New Businesses

**28** businesses have moved into Luton town centre over the last year – we would like to extend a warm welcome to them all.

### Footfall

Luton BID funds footfall cameras which are positioned in Park Street, Manchester Street, Bute Street and George Street in the town centre to measure visitor numbers.



The end of the year results show that the town has seen a 8% decrease when compared to 2017, above the Springboard national average and the regional averages of 2.5% and 4.1% reductions respectively.

### Consultation

Luton BID has built a strong reputation among key town centre organisations and is regularly consulted on projects which are likely to impact the town centre including the Power Court and Newlands Park developments proposed by Luton Town Football Club, Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), Alternative Giving Scheme and Red Routes. We work closely with BID businesses to ensure that their views are included.

Artist's Impression of the new stadium



## Luton BID Renewal

Business Improvement Districts (BID's) are prescribed by the BID (England) regulations 2004 which stipulate that the lifetime of a BID cannot exceed five years per BID term. The Luton BID is now in the last year of its first term and is due to end on 31st December 2019.

Over the next few weeks and months the Luton BID team will be talking and listening to you to find out what your challenges are and what you would like the BID to do in the next five years so that it can prepare a new Proposal and Business Plan. This is a great opportunity for all businesses to help shape the future of the town centre and have your say in the projects to be delivered.

It is essential that businesses who are eligible to vote and wish to see the BID continue to support you, vote in the ballot in October.

Further information regarding the renewal process and how to get involved will be sent out in due course. This will include the opportunity to attend a series of workshops and seminars, undertake a detailed survey and have one to one meetings to discuss your views.



If you would like to discuss anything about the process or arrange a one to one meeting please contact **Fergus McLardy** the BID Manager at the BID office via telephone **01582 510 657** or e-mail **info@lutonbid.org**

## Meet our Directors and **Get Involved**

Thank you to all our directors, who volunteer their time – without any remuneration – to steer the BID and ensure that all projects and BID events are in line with the business plan objectives that businesses voted for.

The BID is project managed by Partnerships for Better Business Ltd (pfbb UK) who are BID management Consultants specialising in the development and delivery of Business Improvement Districts across the country. It is led by Ian Ferguson and Melanie Ferguson-Allen



**Gavin O'Brien**  
Chair of the Board



**Roy Greening**  
Director



**Sian Timoney**  
Director



**Abbas Shaffi**  
Director



**Marie Kirbyshaw**  
Director



**Martin Blower**  
Director



**Diane Quick**  
Director



**Simon Martin**  
Director



**Stuart Sadler**  
Director

## HOW TO PAY YOUR LEVY

Every business in Luton town centre is required to pay a levy. This is in addition to Business Rates and needs to be paid separately, regardless of how you pay Business Rates. Prompt payment will help ensure that the objectives that were voted on in the Business Plan come to fruition.

You can pay the levy in the following ways:

- **Online or telephone** - please visit [www.luton.gov.uk/payonline](http://www.luton.gov.uk/payonline) or **telephone our 24 hour payment line on 0300 456 2725** and follow the instructions.
- **Pay by cash or cheque at our Payment Kiosk located in the Customer Service Centre, Town Hall, Luton LU1 2BQ.**
- **Bank Transfer (via your own banks website)** Create a new payee for **Luton Borough Council** and use the following account details: **Lloyds Bank, sort code 30-66-76, Account number 172 56 862** please quote your eight-digit account number in the reference box.

**Please always quote your BID account reference. This is an eight-digit number starting with a 5.**

If you have any questions regarding payment of your levy, please contact the revenues office at Luton Borough Council. Tel: **0300 790 0349** or email [revenuesNNDR@luton.gov.uk](mailto:revenuesNNDR@luton.gov.uk)

## OUR FINANCES

Unaudited accounts including estimated accruals as at January 2019

Luton BID has spent money against the four key BID objectives and money to date has or will be spent as follows (as at Jan 2018):

### INCOME

(Excluding in kind and funding secured through other partners\*)

**Total Income** (as at Jan 2019): £366,762.59

### ACTUAL & EXPECTED EXPENDITURE

Luton Promotion	£60,800
Luton Environment	£18,149
Luton Experience	£105,749
Luton Investment & Working Together	£35,823
Costs & Admin:	£33,946
Levy Collection Costs	£18,000

**Total Expenditure** £272,467

Underspend is due to careful budgeting due to slow levy collection rates and the need to retain funds for significant events in 2019 and works around the renewal of the BID.

Luton BID has helped to attract over

# £330,000

of investment into Luton in 2018, including Arts Council Funding and money to help address homelessness. Additionally we have given over

# £63,000

 of in-kind support.

If you would like to get more involved, to suggest projects, are interested in joining our board of directors or a working group, we would love to hear from you.

**Call the BID office on 01582 510657 and speak to our BID Manager, Fergus McLardy or email [info@lutonbid.org](mailto:info@lutonbid.org)**

**Our town – Our future**

**01582 510 657 | [info@lutonbid.org](mailto:info@lutonbid.org) | [www.lutonbid.org](http://www.lutonbid.org)**

For more details on all these projects contact us



**LutonBID**

Luton BID Ltd is project managed by Partnerships for Better Business Ltd. (pfbb UK)