

OUR STORY SO FAR



Sunderland's Business Improvement District



Sunderland Business Improvement District is a business led, independent not-for-profit company which has been running since 2014 for the benefit of Sunderland city centre. As we look to develop the business plan for the next five years here's a snap shot of what's been done so far.

WHAT IS A BID?

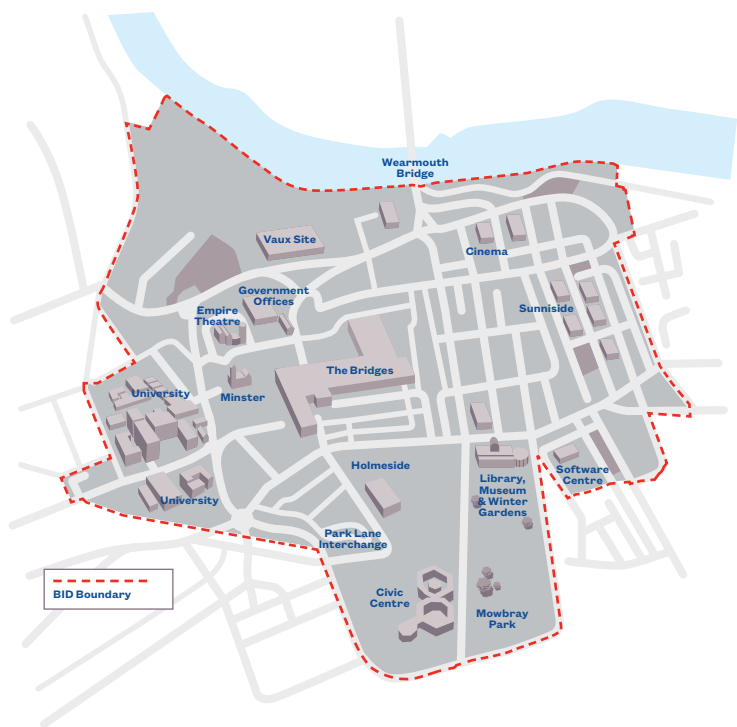
BID's have been operating in the UK since 2014 and now there are 300 BID's across the country.

BID's are created through a ballot process and operate within a defined geographical area. Businesses in this area who's rateable value is above the set threshold are charged a levy in addition to their business rates bill. This levy is used to develop projects which will benefit businesses in the local area to help areas thrive.

Sunderland BID is a business led partnership, involving businesses in local activities and supporting the business community to improve the local trading environment.

The aim of **Sunderland BID** is to enhance and promote what the city centre has to offer, while at the same time working with businesses to address issues they face.

Map of Sunderland BID Boundary:



A snap shot of WHAT'S BEEN DONE since 2014

Since our launch in 2014 Sunderland BID has worked in partnership – with businesses, the cultural sector, the local authority, police and countless other parties – to deliver an exciting and relevant programme in the city.

Here's just a snap shot of the highlights from the past four years...

A VIBRANT city centre

- Delivering high profile events during crucial trading periods supported by marketing campaigns including;
 - Annual **Christmas programme** which has included: Ice rink in Keel Square, Markets, Community Spirit Programme, VIP Shopping Night, Street Entertainment & Christmas Light Switch On
 - **Summer Sports Fanzone** for the Euros in Park Lane
 - **Summer Alice Festival** over 4 weekends including a giant maze in Keel Square and Mad Hatters Tea Party in Sunnyside
 - **African Festival**
 - **Healthy High Streets Party**
- Supporting over **100 events** to take place in the city centre including:
 - Sunnyside Live
 - Chinese New Year
 - Retail & Style Awards
 - Great North Snowdogs
 - Blues & Roots Festival
 - Small business Saturday market
 - Journal Culture Awards
 - Sunderland Pride
 - Sunderland Shorts Film Festival
- Organising the highly successful, bi-annual **Restaurant Week** which brings diners from across the region into the city
- Working with the Bridges shopping centre to introduce **Thursday Late Night shopping** enhanced with a collaboration with the council to offer **free parking after 3pm**



A PROMOTED city centre

- Working in partnership with 8 other key city organisations to produce the **Vibe Magazine**. A quarterly publication which is distributed through every door in Wearside and contains a 'What's on Guide' and positive features about the city.
- Established '**Sunderland experience it here**' social media pages, to promote anything and everything that is happening in the city centre.
- Developed the **Sunderland BID website** with a comprehensive '**What's on Guide**' and used as a platform to sell ice rink tickets and download vouchers for restaurant week.
- Weekly e-newsletter to consumers featuring news/updates on **#ShopSunderland**, **#EatingDrinkingSunderland**, **#WhatsOnSunderland**
- Produced a number of printed publications to encourage people to come into the city centre including a **Eat Drink Sunderland Guide** and a '**Getting into Sunderland**' guide to transport and parking.
- Weekly page in the **Sunderland Echo** promoting city centre businesses
- **PR campaigns** promoting the city across the region, featured in over 20 media outlets on a regular basis.
- Introduced **Mak'em Smile** ambassador training programme to ensure visitors receive a warm welcome.

A SAFER & CLEANER city centre

- Clean up initiatives including **Clean Sweep & Clean for the Queen** to remove graffiti, pick litter and refresh rundown buildings.
- Working with **Pubwatch** and **Shopwatch** to keep the city safe and crime free.
- **Operation Kraken** to reduce and deter crime during the peak Christmas period.
- **Operation Asteroid** – targeting anti-social behaviour
- Driving forward the **Public Space Protection Order** to improve the city centre environment.
- **Liaison with the police** and businesses around public demonstration to minimise disruption.
- **Liaison with the police** around public events to ensure safety for visitors.
- Working with **absent landlords** around **vacant properties** to bring them back into use and improve cityscape.



Working in PARTNERSHIP for a better city centre

- Lead on the **Healthy High Streets Initiative** with well known retailers including Boots, M&S, Greggs, Wilkos & Santander to gain intelligence and promote the city collaboratively.
- Working closely with **Sunderland City Council** on regeneration, creative and strategic projects/ initiatives to improve the city's trading environment.
- Working with Great Annual Savings to **reduce business bills**.
- The team sit on a number of groups to provide a business voice in a range of forums including; Tall Ships, City of Culture bid, City Centre Management Team, Transport Strategy Group, Infrastructure & Investment Group, Hostel Strategy Group.
- Actively working with the Sunderland Business Group and Vibrancy Group to work on city projects including; Vibe Magazine & City Welcome.

ENGAGING with businesses

- Send out a monthly **newsletter** and weekly **e-bulletin** keeping businesses up to date on BID activities.
- **Area forum** meetings held to discuss relevant business issues.
- **Working groups** set up for specific projects to engage businesses.
- Members of the **Sunderland Business Group & Vibrancy group**
- **BID website** business pages with project info and news stories
- **Business Booster Calendar**
- Free training sessions delivered on customer service, social media, Microsoft Excel
- Members of BID industry groups including:
 - British BIDs
 - Northern BIDs Group
 - BID Foundation

What's Next:

It's really important to us, your BID team, that we go into a second term with a business plan and focus that is relevant to you, our levy payers, and will help the city centre thrive.

To ensure we fully understand your issues and where the opportunities are for the city to thrive, we will be consulting with you through various means over the next few months.

Consultation Phases

Phase 1:

The first round of consultation takes the form of a **questionnaire** which is enclosed in this pack. We are asking for your views on the priorities we have formed, based on research and what we have learned over the past four years.

Phase 2:

We want to talk to you about the issues you face and listen to what you think we should be doing in the next five years. It's great to get this feedback in a questionnaire but we'd also like to engage with you face to face, so we will be running **workshops**

throughout May & June. Don't worry if you can't make them, we will meet with you 1:1, just get in touch and tell us when will be best. Look out for these invites coming soon.

Phase 3:

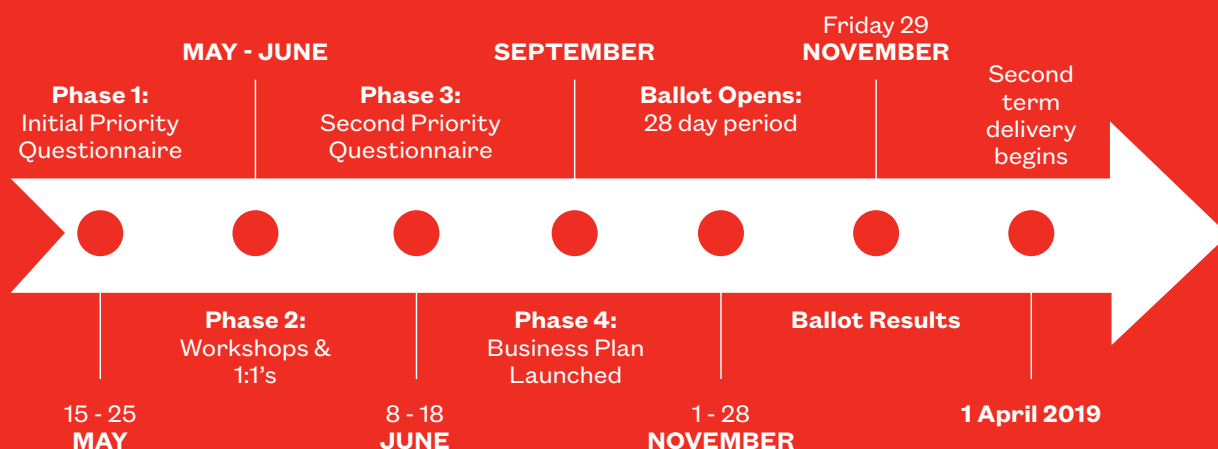
Once we have gathered your views together, to make sure we have heard your views clearly, we will send out another **questionnaire**. This gives you another opportunity to feed into the next five year term business plan. We also plan to run a roadshow that will explore the priorities in more detail, so we really can deliver a strategy to ensure Sunderland city centre can thrive.

Phase 4:

We'll gather all of the feedback together to develop your new business plan, which will be launched in September 2018.

And then it's up to all of us to ensure that Sunderland continues to have a Business Improvement District for the next five years and that the BID levy fund continues to be invested into the priorities you set out.

BID Renewal Proposed Timeline



Sunderland's Business Improvement District



Get in touch

Get in touch with us if you'd like us to come and visit you to discuss anything mentioned in this document in more detail.

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