



Business Improvement
District

Introducing Hexham Business Improvement District (BID)

The Hexham Business Improvement District (BID) has been established following the successful ballot in February 2016. Hexham BID began operating in October 2016 for a period of four-and-a-half-years. The BID is funded by business for business and its job is to support the Hexham business community to thrive and grow.

Hexham BID is now working with businesses and stakeholders to enhance the town centre and industrial estates for businesses, residents and visitors. It will deliver new projects and services and act as a collective business voice on major developments.

What will the BID deliver?

The BID's budget is over £1 million during the first BID operating period from October 2016 to March 2021. A new programme is being established to deliver the BID Business Plan. Some projects will launch soon and others will develop in greater detail first. Local businesses and stakeholders will be engaged in programme design and delivery.

Key themes

- 1. Access and signage:** Businesses told us they want improved signage in the town centre, entrances, commercial and industrial locations. The BID will deliver improvements and work on other areas like traffic flow and car parking.
- 2. Doing business better:** The BID will organise networking events, training schemes and mentoring to support businesses across sectors. There will be support for new business start-ups, inward investment and improved trading facilities.
- 3. Marketing:** Digital technology solutions will be developed to boost trade, including web-based resources and 'shop local' campaigns. The existing strong events calendar will be bolstered and added to increasing footfall and visitor spend. The quality and offer of the markets in the town will be enhanced.
- 4. The Hexham experience:** Hexham is a great place, new BID investment will make it even better making commercial and industrial areas more attractive, cleaner and tidier.
- 5. Business-led:** The BID is business-led, ensuring businesses will have a stronger input into decisions and developments.

The BID Business Plan provides further detail at www.hexhambid.co.uk

How the BID is financed

- ◆ The BID is financed through a compulsory levy applied to approximately 680 businesses within the BID area. The levy is based on the commercial value of an eligible property and is calculated as a percentage of its rateable value. As set out in the Hexham BID Business Plan, the levy charge has been set at 1% of the Rateable Value (RV) of the business premises or a fixed charge of £200 for properties with a RV of less than £20,000.
- ◆ For 2016/17, the BID will operate for six months so a pro rata bill has been issued. The six month levy charge has been set at 1% of the RV, or a six month contribution of £100 for those with a RV of less than £20,000.
- ◆ In subsequent years an annual bill will be issued in April each year. The same rules will apply, a 12 month levy charge of 1% of the RV of business premises, or a 12 month contribution of £200 for properties with a RV of less than £20,000, whichever is higher.
- ◆ Around four out of five businesses in Hexham will pay the minimum amount, which works out at approximately £3.85 per week. In subsequent years, the levy will increase each year by the annual inflationary factor for local non-domestic rate bills as calculated by the Government.
- ◆ The BID levy is payable on all eligible properties within the BID area whether they are occupied or empty. No allowances will be made for listed buildings, serviced buildings or those in receipt of small business rate relief, mandatory and/or discretionary rate relief.
- ◆ There are a small number of exclusions and levy caps that apply which are listed in the FAQ section of the BID website, including for instance local charities. The BID will raise additional match funding through other commercial activity, grant funding and in-kind support.
- ◆ Northumberland County Council collects the levy on behalf of the BID Company and transfers levy funds to the BID to invest in Hexham.

How do I get involved?

Hexham BID is a new, not for profit, independent company limited by guarantee. It is business-led managed by a Board of voluntary Directors drawn from the local business community.

BID levy payers are eligible to be members of Hexham BID. The Board has overall responsibility and is accountable to BID levy payers for delivery. A published annual report will set out delivery against the Business Plan.

To get involved visit www.hexhambid.co.uk for BID news and events to which any levy payer is welcome to attend; or contact Helen Grayshan, Hexham BID Manager.

Contact Details

Hexham BID enquiries

Helen Grayshan
Hexham BID Manager

T: 01434 607962

E: info@hexhambid.co.uk

W: www.hexhambid.co.uk

Billing and payment enquiries

Northumberland County Council
Business Rates Section

T: 0345 600 6400

E: businessrates@northumberland.gov.uk

W: www.northumberland.gov.uk