

Championing



Rugby



Rugby BID Business Improvement District

Issue 1 September 2004

Welcome to Championing Rugby



Rugby BID – making the town centre cleaner, safer and friendlier

Welcome to this first issue of Championing Rugby, a monthly newsletter to keep you up to speed with developments in our proud town.



These newsletters are designed to involve you and let you know about the progress being made as Rugby aims for BID status – that is to become an official business improvement district.

As well as regular newsletters, further information is also available on our website at www.rugbybid.co.uk. In addition to that, please keep an eye out in the local press for the latest news about progress and what it will mean for businesses and the people of Rugby.

We will also be staging a series of public meetings to identify how we can work together to deliver a town centre which will be a real showpiece.

As you'll see later in this newsletter, your involvement is absolutely critical and we'd love you to be Champions of

Rugby – that's why there's an opportunity for you to let us know your thoughts by completing and returning a feedback form.

Finally, I'm trying to meet as many business people as possible – if I've not already been in touch with you to arrange a meeting, then please give me a call and we can meet up to discuss Rugby BID in more detail. I'd love the chance to answer any questions you might have.

John Armstrong
Rugby BID Project Director
01788 569436
john@rugbybid.co.uk

What are BIDs?

Business improvement districts (BIDs) allow businesses in a defined area to vote for which additional services they would like to improve their local environment.

If you are a ratepayer in the area shown on this map, you are entitled to vote. Providing a majority approves the proposals we decide together, then all business ratepayers will contribute to the improvements.

We think the best way to improve our town is by making it cleaner, safer and friendlier but we'd like your ideas about how to do this – the ultimate goal being to make Rugby more appealing for its residents and visitors alike.

This is one of the main reasons why BIDs are so special – they are joint ventures between the public and private sectors. Initial funding is provided by

Rugby Borough Council, Warwickshire County Council and the Rugby Town Centre Company. The set-up of the BID and the process itself is being funded by Advantage West Midlands (AWM) while it's all being pulled together and managed by the Rugby BID Company which is a partner of the Rugby Town Centre Company. These organisations work alongside other key parties such as Warwickshire Police and just as importantly, you, the general public.

You have an opportunity to make a difference. If you're a business ratepayer, then your vote counts.

If you live in Rugby or visit the town, then business ratepayers are interested in your opinion – they want you to work, live or play here. Everyone's feedback counts.



Map showing the BID area of benefit



A word from the Rugby Town Centre Company



“Ever since Rugby was announced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as one of just 22 pilot BIDs in the UK, it’s been a time of real excitement and anticipation. This is one of the best opportunities we’ll ever have to make a tangible difference to our town centre which is why it’s so important that as many people become as involved with the process as possible.

“At the Town Centre Company, we are always looking for ways to improve Rugby’s central areas and the BID is a perfect opportunity to do just that. Our initial plan is to make our town safer, friendlier and cleaner – that will make Rugby more attractive to business and leisure audiences, and that in turn will hopefully increase the number of visitors and the amount of time and money they spend here in our town.

“While our primary role at the Town Centre Company is to deal with strategic issues which affect the town’s long-term future (indeed the BID was one of our

strategic desires), our partner company – the Rugby BID company – will actually bring about action and make things happen at the sharp end.

“So what can you expect from Rugby BID? Firstly, the BID will deliver services above and beyond those currently being provided by us and Rugby Borough Council. Secondly, it will provide new services which local businesses want to see in place and, thirdly, it will bring together Rugby businesses to provide the town with the impetus and vision to greatly improve the overall environment.

“What will these services be? Well, based on a survey of over 110 businesses in the BID area, the following are the priority requirements and in this order:

- **A much improved CCTV system along with a state-of-the-art control room**
- **A greater presence on the street eg town centre wardens (police-trained) that will act as eyes and ears for the police, be integrated with the CCTV**



- **control system and offer customer service to visitors and residents alike**
- **Improved marketing of the town centre**
- **Improved cleaning services**
- **Improved street services.**

“All of these will be put to a vote and you – the businesses within the BID area – decide the priorities.

“Some people have already questioned why there should be an increase in their business rates to fund such improvements when, perhaps they feel the public sector should fund the activity. I would urge them to consider two points.

“The first is to put the increase in rates in perspective. How much would you pay for an advertisement in the local paper? Or for new signage outside your premises? Yes – it is a cost for businesses but one that will deliver lasting benefits for you and the rest of the town.

“The second point is that it’s business that will benefit most from the programme. The money doesn’t go to the local authority or to Central Government – it goes to the Rugby BID Company which is run by local businesses who then decide how to spend their own money.

“If you want to get a job done, do it yourself and this is a case of business pulling together to improve business and with a healthy side effect – a showpiece town centre. The Rugby BID Company is a business run by local business people, dedicated to the service of Rugby town centre’s commercial community.

“It’s all about ownership – your ownership.”

**Robin Richter, Managing Director
Rugby Town Centre Company
01788 572150
robin.richter@rtcccompany.co.uk**

The difference we will make to Rugby town centre – together

BIDs are a proven method for businesses to take control of their own environments and that’s just the opportunity we have here in Rugby. By making the central parts of Rugby town centre cleaner, safer and friendlier we can increase our competitiveness as a business and tourism destination.

Other BIDs have made huge differences and have delivered improvements beyond

original expectations, such as:

- More visitors coming to the area
- Reductions in crime
- Safer shopping areas and car parks
- Higher cleaning ‘scores’
- Improved perception
- Greater influence on their Council’s developments
- Greater fairness in which all businesses contribute towards improving their operating environments.





Why we're behind Rugby BID



Cllr Gordon Collett

"We all know that Rugby is a town with immense history and tradition and that we have the potential to make it even more special. That's why our town is worthy of being one of just three BID projects in the Midlands, the others being Birmingham and Coventry.

"It's really encouraging to see how Rugby BID is bringing together the public and private sectors – in fact it even has cross-party support! That's because we can all see the benefits that would be delivered to the town, such as cleaner, safer and more welcoming streets to make people want to stay here longer.



"We're also pleased to see the impact a successful BID would have for people with disabilities visiting Rugby. It's time we did something to make our streets more easily navigable, especially for wheelchair users, and it's really encouraging to see that within the BID budget there are allowances to improve access for people with disabilities.

"The initiative has to be taken and how marvellous it is that businesses here in Rugby have an opportunity to play a part in taking that initiative. It's a great chance to be involved with the decision making process.

"If all three main political parties can agree to support Rugby BID – hopefully you will as well!"

Cllr Gordon Collett

How it worked in Washington DC

Okay, so Rugby isn't Washington but that's the beauty of BIDs – with the right support and careful thinking, they can work anywhere.

The Downtown DC challenge

- To retain, attract and expand businesses and investment and to help establish the centre of Washington as the premier business, cultural and entertainment destination in the region



How they did it

- Downtown SAMs (safety and maintenance) – teams of specially-trained hospitality and maintenance workers recognisable by their bright red attire, assisting visitors to the city
- Physical improvement with better lighting, signage, street furniture & landscaping
- Better transport thanks to programmes to discourage gridlock, guides to parking & a shuttle service
- Increased marketing activity including integrated advertising, PR, events & activities
- Providing services for the homeless such as funding outreach workers

The results

The Washington BID, Downtown DC, measured trends over the four years 1997 to 2000. These are the results it delivered:

- a 50% decrease in office vacancies
- a 6% increase in hotel occupancy
- a threefold annual increase in people visiting the area for events to 8.9 million
- its community safety programme led to a 28.1% reduction in serious crime
- theft from cars fell by 71.6%
- pick-pocketing fell by 50%
- removal of 117,000 bags of trash
- removal of 209,000 pieces of gum



What people said about the BID

"I think that it is great that Washington is showing how much they care about assisting/helping others. Keep up the good work."

"I'm new to the DC area, and I have to tell you how impressed I am with your SAMs. They make me feel very comfortable and they all display knowledge and a sense of humour."

"SAM is really making a difference in Downtown DC. We saw your street cleaning machines in operation ... our clients were really impressed."

"I want to compliment and congratulate Downtown DC on how well the SAM employees made me feel welcome during my visit. SAM employees sought me out when I looked like I needed help and offered guidance and advice. What a pleasant surprise and what great customer service from your city!"



How we're getting involved



“Rugby School consistently aims to deliver the highest standards of education and care for its pupils and personal security is one important element of this objective.

“We are therefore keeping in close touch with the development of the BID process which we hope will bring benefits to the whole community of Rugby.”

Gerry Randall, Bursar, Rugby School

“Businesses are always asking for improved services and this is a perfect opportunity to choose and implement positive changes.

“Improvements to Rugby’s town centre can only be good news for everyone. If it’s a more attractive town, then we see more visitors coming here and that’s good for business

“The welfare of the Rugby town centre is the key to the prosperity of the businesses that operate here. If we can make effective improvements such as cleaner and safer streets, then everyone – businesses and visitors alike – will feel the difference.



“If that’s what the BID will deliver, then it can only be seen as a positive step forward and it deserves our support.”

Paul Knapman, Prontaprint, 01788 565650, sales@rugby.prontaprint.com



CLOCK TOWERS SHOPPING CENTRE RUGBY

“We all want more visitors to come to Rugby, to spend more time here and, most importantly, to keep coming back. They’ll only do that if the town is an attractive destination and the BID is a great opportunity to do just that.

“Choice, variety and vitality are critical to improving what we already have on offer here in Rugby and the BID will help make that difference.

“That sort of success spells out good news for retailers and tenants as well – it will offer them better prospects from a business point of view.”

Tony Spencer, Clock Towers Shopping Centre, 01788 572630, email tony@clock-towers.co.uk

and tourism alike. It’s not just about the benefits the BID will bring to individual businesses – the whole place will benefit which is why as many people as possible should support the idea.”

Cliff Cooper, Brethertons, 01788 553377, cliffcooper@brethertons.co.uk

Bottle of bubbly for your thoughts!

Rugby BID is all about empowering Rugby businesses to manage their own environment. That’s why we want to hear from you. Please fill in the form below or contact us on 01788 569436 or email info@rugbybid.co.uk, each month there will be a prize draw and one lucky winner will receive a bottle of champagne for their feedback.



Name: _____

Company: _____

Position: _____

Telephone No: _____

Return this form to: Jane Birks, The Rugby BID Co Ltd, Suite 23/24, 9 North Street, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 2AB.

Your comments: _____

Tick which you believe will make the biggest difference:

- CCTV
- Marketing
- Town centre wardens
- Improved cleaning
- Inward investment
- Better street services
- Any other: _____