BID FOR GALASHIELS
Business Improvement District

Business Plan
2019 – 2024

www.bidforgalashiels.co.uk
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‘Business’ or variations of the word ‘business’ are used throughout this document. The word ‘business’ in this context refers to property owners or tenants and occupiers of properties who are liable to pay the non-domestic rate, whether they pay business rates (NDR) or not. This includes all properties itemised on the Scottish Assessors database with non-domestic ratable value, many of whom may be a charitable organisation, public sector organisation, social enterprise or community group who may not consider themselves a ‘business’.
Welcome to the BID for Galashiels Business Plan. We’ve seen significant change in Galashiels in recent years. The re-opening of the Borders Railway, the development of the Galashiels Masterplan, investment in the new road system and the decision to host the Great Tapestry of Scotland in Gala reflect a huge financial investment in the town.

Of course, as businesses, we’ve had our fair share of challenges too. Energise Galashiels Trust and the Town Centre Co-ordinator project made headway in addressing some of these. However, it quickly became clear that a larger, more impactful project was needed for there to be meaningful and sustainable improvement for the town. With this in mind, Energise Galashiels Trust and Galashiels Chamber of Trade worked together to secure funding to enable plans for a Galashiels Business Improvement District (BID) to be developed.

The timing is right for a Galashiels BID. We will not get another opportunity like this. The Borders Railway has made the town more accessible than it has been for half a century and when The Great Tapestry of Scotland opens to the public early in 2020 it will bring an estimated 45,000 visitors each year. We need to be ready for 2020. We need to make sure that those visitors have an exceptional experience and are inspired to visit us again, stay longer and spend more! We also want Galashiels residents to have a renewed sense of pride in the town. And we want to create an environment where business can flourish and that is attractive to inward investment.

Creating a Business Improvement District is a pathway to achieving these aims. Establishing a Galashiels BID Company, with a Board of Directors nominated by you, will allow us to work together to a 5-year business plan to achieve much more than we could ever hope to achieve as individual enterprises. Becoming a BID will allow us to apply for funding not available to individuals or volunteer groups. By coming together as businesses, we can speak with one voice and ensure we have a seat at the table to influence and take full advantage of current and future investments in the town. A BID will benefit us individually as BID Members and collectively as the town. It will give us the opportunity to make Galashiels the best it can be and to showcase our beautiful Borders town to the wider world.

I’m delighted to introduce the BID for Galashiels Business Plan to you on behalf of the Steering Group and hope that you will join us in voting ‘YES’ to the creation of a Galashiels Business Improvement District.

Craig Murray, Alex Dalgetty & Sons Ltd
Chair BID for Galashiels
What we plan to invest in

We have spent a lot of time listening to businesses in Galashiels and you have told us that you want the BID to:

- Increase footfall to Galashiels
- Make the town more welcoming to shoppers and visitors
- Attract new businesses to the town
- Represent all levy payers and have a strong united voice with statutory service providers
- Position Galashiels as a prime visitor destination

In order to achieve these aims, we have identified four themes for action. We’ve indicated what we plan to achieve in each theme in the first and subsequent years of the BID Company business plan which will run for 5 years between April 2019 and March 2024.

- Developing Events & Attractions
- Promoting a vibrant Galashiels
- Creating a welcoming environment
- Business Development

DEVELOPING EVENTS AND ATTRACTIONS

Background

You’ve told us that you want to see more events in the town targeted at increasing footfall and visitor spend. The re-opening of the Borders Railway makes Galashiels more accessible than it has been in decades, and the Great Tapestry of Scotland will bring us an estimated 50,000 visitors a year. The Exhibition space located within the Tapestry building will provide a new opportunity for the town to host touring exhibitions and attractions. We need to capitalise on these opportunities and make sure that people visiting our town have a memorable experience for all the right reasons. We want them to enjoy visiting Galashiels and leave with great memories, and a desire to visit again.

What the BID will do

- Deliver a series of annual events to include (potentially) a Food Festival. These events will become synonymous with Galashiels, the BID focus will be to increase footfall and visitor spend year on year.
- Deliver an annual high-end Christmas event including a seasonal market and enhanced Christmas lights and decorations (YEAR 1)

Plus We will

- Work with key partners including Scottish Enterprise, South of Scotland Enterprise Agency and Scottish Borders Council to influence decision-making and secure visitor hotel accommodation in Galashiels (beginning Year 1)
- Connect with Energise Galashiels Trust, established businesses, groups and organisations to build working relationships and ensure that Galashiels is proactively involved and takes full benefit from activities and events taking place in the area (eg Abbotsford, MacArts Centre, LIVE Borders, Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership, Galashiels Cycle Trails, Galashiels Community Council and Galashiels Waterways Group) (Beginning Year 1)
- Work with Midlothian and Borders Tourism Action Group, Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership, Borders Railway Community Partnership, One Dalkeith and others to build on Regional tourism offerings and develop new visitor packages. (Beginning Year 1)
Promoting a vibrant Galashiels will require significant investment in 2019 and sustained in the years ahead!

PROMOTING A VIBRANT GALASHIELS

Background
In Galashiels, we’ve got a great story to share; our history as a world-renowned centre for textiles and a future as the home of the Great Tapestry of Scotland, a beautiful Borders town in outstanding scenery, a town with a proud past and an exciting future. With the Borders Railway, we have potential markets in the Edinburgh and Lothians area, and beyond, within easy reach Galashiels. We need to be ready to shout about the town and show the world what a great place we are.

What the BID will do
- Create a powerful ‘brand’ for Galashiels with an engaging Galashiels website and linked Social Media channels (beginning Year 1)
- Review and relaunch the Visit Galashiels shoppers map
- Create a Galashiels App (Year 1)
- Introduce a Galashiels Gift Card, encouraging shoppers to shop local (Year 1)

Plus We will
- Work with partners (such as LIVE Borders and VisitScotland) to explore options for promoting Galashiels events and exhibitions (beginning Year 1)
CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

Background
When visitors arrive in Galashiels we want them to feel welcome and to have a sense that they’ve arrived somewhere special. And we want Gala residents to have a real pride in the town. We’ve got a lot going for us; lots of good quality public space in the town centre, a river running though the town and the beauty of Bank St Gardens, access to stunning countryside and a gateway to other Borders towns. We need to make the most of these assets and work together to create a Galashiels that we can all be proud of.

What the BID will do
- Work with Energise Galashiels Trust and Scottish Borders Council to contact owners of empty shops and, speaking with a united voice for all BID members, seek to ensure that properties are kept to a minimum standard of cleanliness and made available to create ‘Welcoming Displays’ (Year 1)
- Work with partners to secure seasonal Borders Railway Ambassadors to welcome visitors arriving in Galashiels by train (Year 1)
- Develop a town trail in partnership with local artists and crafters
- Provide improved street furniture, art and sculptures
- Audit the current mobile coverage and investigate the need and options for public Wi-Fi

Plus We will
- Work with partners to develop the Gala Water area around Douglas Bridge drawing on the Galashiels Masterplan
- Explore provision of a covered, all-weather events space in the town centre within the Galashiels Masterplan
- Develop a colour palette for Galashiels and work with Scottish Borders Council to ensure signage complies with this (beginning Year 1)
- Review current visitor (pedestrian) signage to make sure it’s fit for purpose for all of Galashiels’ attractions (Year 1)
- Make sure that statutory cleaning services are being met and supplement these where necessary (eg annual deep clean to remove chewing gum) (Year 1)
- Work with partners to develop a safer town centre and dispel the perception that Galashiels is unsafe
- Work with Scottish Borders Council to audit current parking provision.
- Have better signposting to parking.
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Background
The BID will benefit businesses individually as well as the town collectively. We want to create an environment within which businesses can thrive. We want to be able to demonstrate that Galashiels is a good place to do business and use this to attract inward investment.

What the BID will do
- Establish a Galashiels Business Network with regular newsletters and networking events
- Provide opportunity for financial savings through smart procurement of utilities and services (potentially making the BID cost neutral for members) (Year 1)
- Extend the Shop Watch scheme piloted under the BID Development Project
- Provide specific online marketing and communications support so that businesses can make best use of websites and social media
- Introduce tourism development and customer care training opportunities for BID members
- Work with Scottish Borders Council to review the positioning of footfall counters (Year 1)
- Establish a Staff Development fund to which BID members can apply
- Work with Galashiels Academy, Borders College and the School of Textiles and Design at Heriot Watt University to encourage knowledge transfer and student/intern placements to the benefit of both students and businesses.

The proposed projects will be developed and delivered over the five-year period of the BID. The priorities for Year 1 (April 2019 to March 2020) have been outlined. The time frame for delivering other projects within the five years will be decided by the Board of Directors within the agreed budget.
The bid budget, levy & funding

The Business Plan is ambitious and comprehensive. We believe that the projects we have itemised can make a real difference to Galashiels and help shape the town into a more vibrant and profitable place that is attractive to visitors as well as those looking to set up home and business here. We need to secure a budget to help us reach those aims and this, in part, is funded by a levy charge paid in respect of each eligible property within the BID area.

The BID Steering Group have set the levy charge with an eye to affordability and value for money. Properties with a rateable value (RV) of less than £10,263 will pay a flat rate of £195. Properties with an RV between £10,264 and £1,315,789 will pay the equivalent of 1.9% of RV. Properties between £1,315,790 and £1,800,000 will pay a flat rate of £15,000. Properties with an RV over £1,800,000 will be capped at £25,000.

The BID aims to attract other investment, sponsorship and trading income to increase the amount available to spend on the projects that we, as local enterprises, develop.

Funds will be sought from but not restricted to Visit Scotland, Event Scotland, The BIG Lottery, Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Borders Council Localities Fund and other appropriate sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rateable Value</th>
<th>Annual Charge to Business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than £2,500</td>
<td>Voluntary membership by donation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £2,501 and £10,263</td>
<td>£195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £10,264 and £1,315,789</td>
<td>1.9% rateable value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £1,315,790 and £1,800,000</td>
<td>£15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over £1,800,000</td>
<td>Up to £25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The rateable value of the property is set by the Scottish Rate Assessors (www.saa.gov.uk).
**The Annual Charge to business is not linked to what businesses actually pay in rates (ie where a concession is in place) but is based solely on the rateable value of the property.
A BREAKDOWN OF FUNDING AND EXPENDITURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated BID Levy</td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>190,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENDITURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing events and attractions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting a vibrant Galashiels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a welcoming environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL project expenditure</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BID DELIVERY and RUNNING COSTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Contingency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total delivery and running costs</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>190,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Galashiels Bid Company financial year will be from 1st April to 31st March.

The above costs are indicative only. The Board of Directors and the BID Management Team will proactively seek matched funding and in-kind support for specific projects within each theme.

EXCLUSIONS

The BID Steering Group decided that the following categories of property will be exempt from payment of the levy and therefore not eligible to vote in the ballot or become members of the BID.

- Properties with a rateable value of less than £2,500
- Registered charities where there is no commercial activity (charity retail shops will be included with the BID)
- Places of worship
- NHS health centres and GP surgeries
- Schools
- Advertising stations
- ATM points
- Territorial Army
- Police Scotland (residential)

These non-domestic properties can become an “associate member” by paying a voluntary levy.

In 2017 BIDs across Scotland achieved...

- 47p extra funding secured for every £1 invested
- £19.6m in leveraged additional income
Performance monitoring

The BID Board of Directors will monitor and oversee the efficient delivery of the BID projects to ensure that the projects proposed in the BID Business Plan are impactful and are progressing well. Once in place, specific outputs and regeneration outcomes will be developed.

Strategies for measuring the success of projects will include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OVERALL TOWN PERFORMANCE MEASURES</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>KPI</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Footfall</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>% increase/decrease</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Development</td>
<td>Business performance</td>
<td>% increase/decrease</td>
<td>Individual How’s business survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turnover</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business confidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer / Visitor Satisfaction</td>
<td>Consumer / Visitor</td>
<td>% increase/decrease</td>
<td>Individual Shoppers/consumer survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perception of Galashiels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Units</td>
<td>Number and square</td>
<td>% increase/decrease</td>
<td>Biannually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>footage of vacant units</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BID PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>% increase/decrease</th>
<th>By event and with year on year comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Footfall numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visitor numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visitor Spend / Stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Impact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Media coverage</td>
<td>Column inches, airtime</td>
<td>By event/campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Online marketing</td>
<td>Website and social media</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Business perception</td>
<td>Positive/negative perception</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Public perception</td>
<td>Positive/negative perception</td>
<td>By event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Development</td>
<td>Business perception</td>
<td>Positive/negative perception</td>
<td>By event/project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The BID will operate with an open door approach to communications with BID members, stakeholders and the public. The BID will undertake regular feedback meetings with BID members and partners.

The BID will undergo an independent evaluation of its activities at the half way point and towards the end of the 5-year term.
There are circa 343 eligible properties located in the bid area.
Following a successful yes vote, a new BID company will be established by 1 April 2019. The current BID Steering Group will manage the operations of the BID until the new Company and Board of Directors is established. The BID levy will commence from 1 April to generate income for the BID company to manage and deliver the business plan.

The Company will operate in an open and transparent way, answerable to the businesses in the area. The Board of Directors will ensure that a Code of Conduct (including a Register of Interests) and Management and Governance procedures will be created and agreed as policy by the Directors. There will be a detailed set of protocols which will cover the management of the BID Company and billing, collection and transfer of the levy.

A Board of Directors will be established, consisting of no fewer than 6 (and a maximum of 12) Directors. Every eligible person that pays the levy will have the opportunity to nominate themselves or someone else from within the BID area to be elected onto the new Company Board but limited to one eligible person from each eligible property. The new Company will be run by the businesses for the businesses. The Board will be responsible for all decisions relating to staff, contracts, the delivery of the approved business plan and other activities generated by the BID. The Board will recruit staff to manage and deliver the business plan. Nominations for a person out with the BID area will be solely at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

The Board will be representative of the businesses and stakeholders in the area. The Board will include one Elected Member representative from Scottish Borders Council. Other non-voting members or local groups may be co-opted onto the Board at the Board’s discretion.

The BID Company Board will have the authority to adapt or alter the projects and services from year to year to reflect any change in economic circumstances or any new opportunities that may arise. This will be in the best interests of the levy payers and without recourse to an alteration ballot.

The streets listed with the map on Page 11 are to be included in the BID area. This is based on properties located within the Scottish Borders Council Retail Class zones for Galashiels with an adjustment to exclude properties to the extreme north west of the town.
**The ballot**

**18/10/2018**
Ballot papers together with a copy of the BID Business Plan will be posted to every eligible person in the BID area.

**29/11/2018**
Ballot papers must be returned by 5pm. Papers received after this date and time will be deemed null and void.

- BID for Galashiels will provide all those eligible to vote with a copy of the Business Plan along with the ballot paper. A copy of the Business Plan will also be available on the BID For Galashiels website (www.bidforgalashiels.co.uk).

- A copy of the full BID Proposal will be made available on the BID for Galashiels website and, in hard copy, on request to anyone eligible to vote.

- The BID ballot is a confidential postal ballot conducted by Scottish Borders Council on behalf of BID For Galashiels Steering Group in accordance with Scottish BID legislation.

- Voting papers are easy to complete. Simply place a cross on either “Yes” or “No” to the question “Are you in favour of a BID?” The ballot paper must then be signed by the person eligible to vote and returned in the pre-paid envelope.

- For the ballot to be successful there must be:
  - A minimum of 25% “turn-out” by number of eligible persons reflecting
  - A minimum of 25% of the overall rateable value contained within the BID area.

- Of those that vote, a successful ‘Yes’ vote requires:
  - Over 50% by number of ballots and
  - That those votes represent over 50% of the rateable value contained within the BID area.

The ballot papers will be counted on **30/11/2018** and the results announced by Scottish Borders Council within one week.

Following a successful ballot, the BID will commence on **01/04/2019** and will run for a period of five years until **31/03/2024** when a renewal ballot must be held.
What is a Business Improvement District?
A Business Improvement District (BID) is a business led partnership, created through a ballot process to deliver additional services to the benefit of local businesses and the wider community for a 5-year period.

Is BID a new thing?
No. The first BID was in Canada back in 1970. Since then successful BIDs have been established around the world; the USA, Germany, New Zealand, Jamaica, South Africa, Ireland, The Netherlands and more. In the UK there are over 1200 BIDs. BIDs have been successful in boosting footfall, reducing business overheads, attracting investment and contributing to the wider District financial regeneration. In Scotland there are 36 operating BIDs. Many of these BIDs are now in their second 5-year term, with BIDs consistently securing re-election with higher voter turn-out and higher YES votes.

Who gets to vote in the BID ballot?
All eligible persons (i.e. those persons liable to pay non-domestic rates) will have one vote or where a person is liable for non-domestic rates for more than one property, that individual shall be eligible to cast more than one vote however they will be required to pay the levy for each of the properties that they occupy. Where an eligible property is vacant the voting papers will be sent to the property owner.

Who decides what projects are undertaken by the BID?
The beauty of a BID is that the businesses within the BID area set the agenda, so the activities delivered directly meet the expectations of the businesses. BIDs have had success in a wide range of areas; signage and security, joint marketing and promotions to increase footfall, securing better deals for utilities and other services through collaborative negotiation, for example.

Isn’t that what I pay my business rates for?
The BID project is careful to ensure that projects and services delivered through BID are additional to those statutory services provided by the Local Authority, Police Scotland and other statutory bodies through business rates.

How is the levy structured and collected?
A BID levy is an equitable and fair way of funding additional projects and services, which the Local Authority and other statutory bodies are not required to provide. It has been agreed by the BID Steering Group that the levy rate will be a fee structure based on the rateable value of the property on the day of the ballot (28/11/2018) and throughout the 5-year term of the BID. The BID improvement levy will be paid by the occupier (the eligible person liable to pay the non-domestic rate), however, the property owner will be liable to pay the levy where a property is vacant on the day the levy invoice is issued and for all the period thereafter when the property is vacant.

There will be no increase in the levy amount during the term of the BID.

- There are approximately 343 commercial properties in the BID area which will generate a BID investment levy income of approximately £190,000 per annum and an estimated total levy income of £950,000 over 5 years.
- All eligible occupiers (of eligible properties) i.e. the eligible person liable to pay the non-domestic rate that are listed on the Local Assessors Valuation Roll on the ballot date will be liable to pay the levy.
- The levy payments are not linked to what non-domestic properties actually pay in rates but are based on the rateable value of the property.
- The levy must be paid either in one payment within 28 days from the date of the levy notice or in monthly Direct Debit payments as arranged with the billing body.
- When an occupier leaves a property, the property owner will be responsible for the BID levy until a new occupier is found.
- Any new commercial development, sub division of existing properties or merging of properties or new business with a non-domestic rateable valuation coming into the area during the 5 year term of the Town business improvement district will be liable for the BID Improvement Levy.
- If the property is vacant or empty on the date the levy is issued and for any subsequent vacant periods, the property owner will be liable for the full levy amount, which must be paid within 28 days.
- Scottish Borders Council are to be contracted to collect the levy on behalf of the BID Company.
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