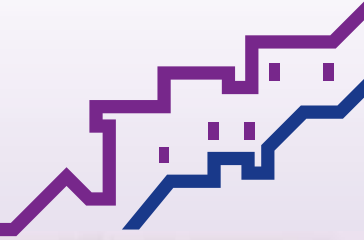


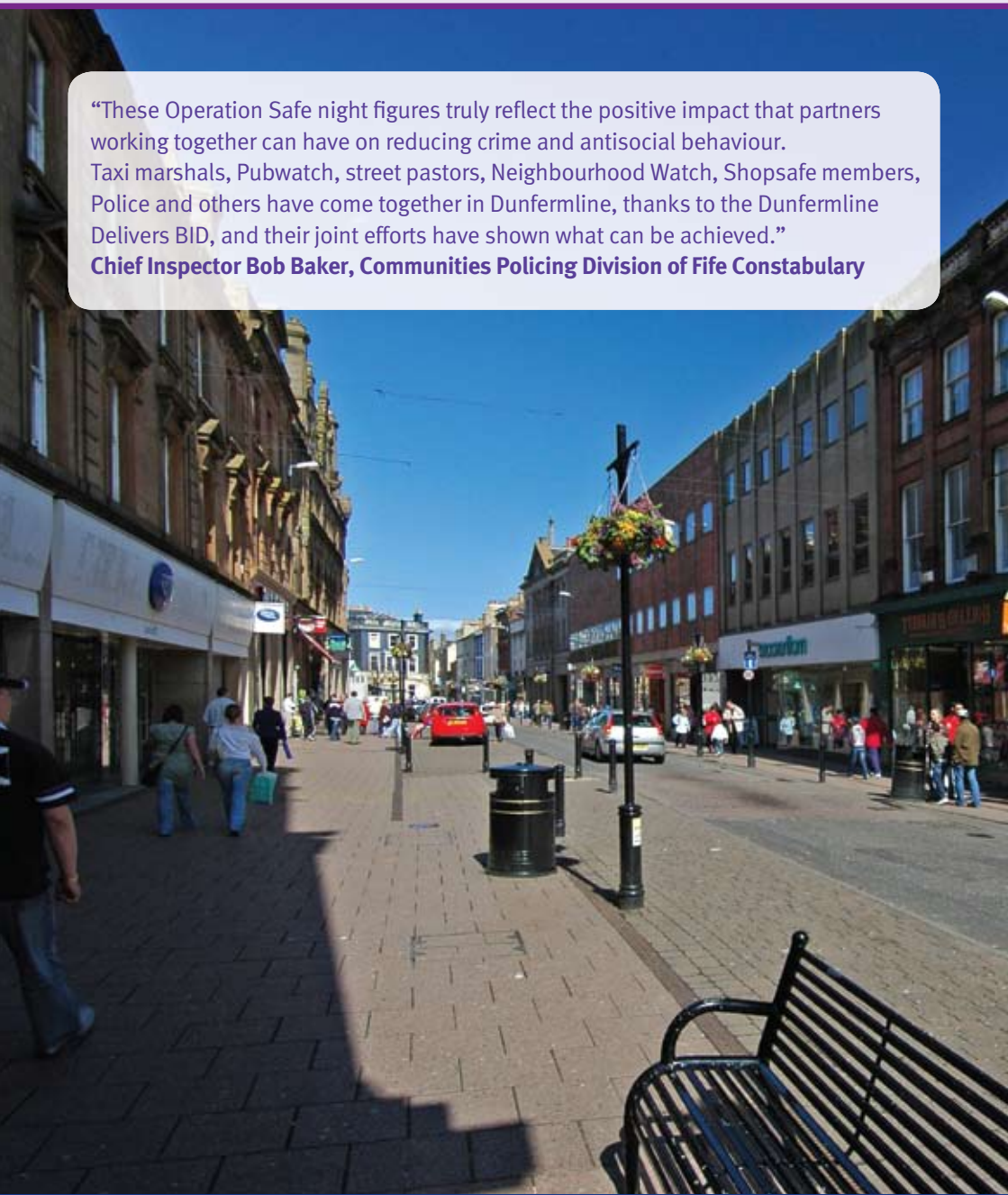
Town Centres and Local High Streets

Benefiting from Business Improvement Districts



“These Operation Safe night figures truly reflect the positive impact that partners working together can have on reducing crime and antisocial behaviour. Taxi marshals, Pubwatch, street pastors, Neighbourhood Watch, Shopsafe members, Police and others have come together in Dunfermline, thanks to the Dunfermline Delivers BID, and their joint efforts have shown what can be achieved.”

Chief Inspector Bob Baker, Communities Policing Division of Fife Constabulary





What is a BID?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is led by business for business and delivers a sustainable financial model to fund local improvements, services and management.

A BID, which is funded by the private sector, allows the private sector to work in partnership with statutory authorities within a flexible mechanism to deliver a wide variety of projects

and services to improve the local economy. It also gives local businesses a unified voice and provides an arena for businesses



and local authorities to increase their understanding of each other's priorities.

A BID can cover almost any project or service that local businesses agree would be of benefit as long as these are additional to services provided by the statutory authorities.

BID projects can tackle issues such as:

- **access**
- **safety and security**
- **cleansing and waste**
- **environmental improvements**
- **marketing, hospitality and events**
- **improved asset management**
- **and give a strong and unified voice for business.**

More innovative projects and services can develop as each BID evolves and matures. Some, for example, are developing projects around waste management, utilities, collective purchasing and cross-selling. Examples include:

- **local procurement**
- **business development**
- **independent business assistance and succession plans**
- **renewable energy**
- **zero waste – recycling, reuse, reduce**
- **European funding.**

“A city or town centre BID is about looking to the future, with the community, the local businesses and council collectively working together to put the vibrancy back into their town and city centres, thus ensuring the future well-being of everyone involved.”

**David Urquhart, Joint Managing Director,
Gordon & MacPhail and Chair Embrace Elgin**



How is a BID established?

Normally, a working group develops the initial BID project and consults with other groups and the local authority to gauge support. It also ascertains whether financial, in kind and secondment support will be provided by the local authority.

After this a wider, more representative steering group is established, made up of predominantly private sector individuals and some public sector representatives.

After consultation with local businesses, a steering group will identify the proposed BID area to be covered, the issues to be addressed and projects to be included in the business plan. The business plan will also set out the BID's delivery mechanisms and performance indicators, as well as the BID governance and management structures.

A BID is not a substitute for central or local government services, but is a way additional funding can be raised. The businesses then decide how the additional funds are spent to

strengthen their local business economy.

A BID is developed, managed and paid for by the business sector by means of a compulsory BID levy which the businesses within the proposed BID area must vote in favour of before the BID can be established. Each business liable to contribute to the BID will be able to vote on whether or not the BID goes ahead.

Levy contributions could be made by a combination of occupiers and property owners, or by occupiers alone.

The interests of both large and small businesses are protected through a voting system that requires a majority in the numerical votes cast and the rateable value of votes cast. A BID proposal in Scotland will only go ahead if more than half the businesses vote in favour and they represent more than half of the rateable value – of those businesses that vote.

A BID has maximum duration of five years after which the BID is required to seek a new mandate from the businesses in the BID area.



How can a BID benefit town centres?

A BID can help the regeneration and management of town centres and local high streets by delivering real and lasting results. All local partners will benefit from the projects and services, and all contribute to the costs. BIDs are, therefore, fully accountable at a local level.

BIDs can help to:

- **create more vibrant and viable town centres and local high streets**
- **generate greater partnership working between public, private, voluntary and community organisations**
- **create a safer, more attractive environment**
- **deliver additional investment to support town centre strategies and action plans**
- **reduce the number of empty properties and create more local jobs by attracting new businesses to the town**
- **bring more visitors to the town centre and the area's other attractions**
- **create greater civic pride and input to town centre regeneration from business owners and managers**
- **deliver additional town centre services and activities – safety, cleanliness, marketing and events.**

A BID can also help to provide:

- **improved staff recruitment and retention**
- **greater efficiencies through local procurement**

- **the opportunity to attract additional funding**
- **strong and effective private/public partnerships**
- **joint effort and drive towards a shared vision**
- **a competitive regional advantage**
- **improved private and public sector investment**
- **a strong local voice for business.**

BIDs contribute towards national and local policy aspirations across a range of areas including planning (SPP8 Town Centres and Retailing), tourism, economic development and regeneration. They can be instrumental in delivering Single Outcome Agreements (SOA) for local authorities. Key policy aspirations supported by BIDs include:

- **creating accessible employment opportunities for local people**
- **assisting in creating a safer environment**
- **supporting wider community regeneration objectives**
- **increasing the value of tourism to the local economy by attracting more visitors to the area**
- **giving a clear steer to the private sector on the level of ambition and opportunity for future change.**

BIDs can help improve the performance of Scottish towns and contribute to Scotland's economic growth.



“The BID gives Dunfermline a green light to embark on an extremely exciting phase in its development. We look forward to working with Dunfermline Delivers and with Dunfermline’s creative and innovative business community to exceed expectations and create a Dunfermline which is a great place to live, work, visit and invest.”

Councillor Tony Martin, Strategic Chair of the Environment, Enterprise and Transportation Committee, Fife Council



BIDs in action

Born out of Town Centre Management Partnerships, the BIDs concept was originally established in Canada in the 1960s, but took off in the USA in the late 1970s.

BIDs have been successfully implemented in New Zealand, South Africa, Jamaica, Serbia, Albania, England, Wales, Germany and Ireland and are now developing across Europe.

The Scottish Government enacted BIDs legislation in 2006 and, in April 2006, the BID pathfinders were established:

- **Bathgate (town centre)**
- **Clackmannanshire Business Parks**
- **Edinburgh (city centre)**
- **Falkirk (town centre)**
- **Glasgow (city centre)**
- **Inverness (city centre).**

There are over 1,500 BIDs in operation worldwide.

Scotland's town centres and local high streets are a source of business, services, employment, residential and leisure activity for their local populations, acting as the hearts of their local communities. They are a key contributor to the national economy, supporting achievement of the Government's central policy purpose of sustainable economic growth across the whole of Scotland, for the benefit of all.

Town centres play a vital role in supporting local communities and attracting visitors to an

area. To be vital and sustainable, towns and businesses need to be able to respond to local needs and changing circumstances in order to be competitive and attractive centres.

A BID resolves local issues and concerns locally, with local accountability and responsibility, with businesses directing the BID management.

There are nine BID towns and cities – **Alloa, Bathgate, Clarkston, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Elgin, Falkirk, Inverness** and **Kirkcaldy**, with the businesses collectively investing over £2.1 million and local authorities investing a further half a million pounds. Additional funding is also being secured from other funding streams, the recent Town Centre Regeneration Fund, local authority funding and revenue funding.

In these challenging economic times it is the activity within Scotland's town centres that will be the first indication of recovery, providing reassurance that local economies are once again witnessing positive signs of growth.

The BIDs model helps local economic growth. It provides the platform for the private sector to invest in towns by delivering a clear and transparent management structure, improving communication and understanding between the private and public sectors and encouraging strong partnership working.

There are ten BIDs in Scotland with a further 18 in development and growing interest from across the country (*as at May 2011*).



Contact
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