

Acocks Green BID



Welcome



Following three years of working together to make the Village a better place for business, there is a clear consensus that we have both the potential and the need to do more.

We have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to trial a number

of schemes such as street planting, Easter Trails, specialist training and business grants. These have been successful in improving the sense of community in Acocks Green, giving businesses a hand up in making important improvements, and ensuring that Acocks Green offers a better customer experience.

The city council has also invested in more street cleaning, new bins and highway improvements. Our 'Design Framework' identifies proposals to create a better customer experience in the Village such as creating more car parking, open spaces and improving the pavements.

There is of course a long way to go, but there are other customer priorities that, as businesses, we can address ourselves through a Business Improvement District (BID).

Birmingham already has seven BIDs, including local centres like ours. Kings Heath and Erdington became BIDs three years ago and Solihull became a BID last summer. These areas have created stronger

identities, increased their footfall, enjoyed cleaner and greener environments and improved visitor perceptions.

Now Small Heath, Sparkbrook, Shirley and Washwood Heath are also looking at becoming BIDs in the near future.

I believe we have the raw ingredients for a fantastic centre that delivers on today's customer expectations and, by investing together, we can all achieve this goal.

To get involved or simply find out more please contact the BID champions, contact details can be found on the back page.

Over the coming months I will be keeping you informed of our progress towards a BID. For now please take the time to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it no later than 31 March.

Debby Coulles
Chair of Acocks Green Village Partnership
Dennetts Furniture



Shop Local

Save time
Save money
Save energy
Save jobs

BACKING BIRMINGHAM

Rediscover your local shops



What is a Business Improvement District?

- A defined area within which the local business community collectively invests in projects and services to improve the business environment
- An independent business-led 'not for profit' company committed to delivering services additional to those provided by public authorities
- A fair and transparent 'levy' on all eligible occupiers within the BID area
- A ballot with a majority 'YES' vote required, both by number and rateable value, for the BID to be implemented

What would an Acocks Green BID deliver?

A clean, bright and welcoming centre that deters crimes such as shoplifting, graffiti, littering and anti-social behaviour and encourages more people to 'choose local'.

A five year investment plan for the centre, led by businesses with other local stakeholders – council, police and shoppers also closely involved.

In talks with businesses so far, we have identified the following priorities:

- **Improved visitor experience** – making the area brighter, cleaner and safer
- **Good for business** - reducing crime, particularly shop theft and anti-social behaviour
- **Stronger, positive image & profile** – getting more people to choose local
- **Effective business voice** – business led partnership with resources and influence
- **Transparency** - developed, decided and delivered by businesses
- **Fair and inclusive** – modest investment and no 'freeloading'

Why Pay More?

Although your business rates are collected by the city council, it is central government that receives the proceeds. You have no control over how this money is allocated and spent.

100% of the relatively small BID levy you would pay will be reinvested in the Village, in addition to existing statutory services provided by the city council.

The city council, as an occupier of local buildings and car parks would also pay the BID Levy.

The BID would also seek voluntary contributions from other organisations with an interest in the Village, such as property owners.

The BID Area

The map below shows the proposed BID area. It forms the natural boundary of the commercial area.



Next Steps

Putting Together the BID Proposal

The results of the questionnaire will help form our 'BID Proposal' - a document that sets out exactly what businesses would want a BID to deliver.

So it is essential that you get your businesses priorities registered via the enclosed questionnaire, which will be independently analysed.

Building On Success

A BID working group, made up of BID Champions (local traders), local people and the Town Centre Manager, has been set up to drive forward the proposed BID. The working group is supported by experts who have successfully set up BIDs in Birmingham city centre and across the UK. The group is also looking closely at other BIDs around the UK to find out how other commercial centres have turned their fortunes around.

As a local trader you are very welcome to add your experience to the BID working group. Contact the Town Centre Manager for information on future meetings.

Keep Talking

Once you have completed your questionnaire, the opportunities to help shape the future of the Village don't end there.

We plan to hold open sessions over the coming months; more details will appear in future newsletters. You can also talk about the BID and your individual priorities directly with one of our BID Champions or the Town Centre Manager.

You can contact the BID champions via email agvp@hotmail.co.uk or the Town Centre Manager acocksgreentcm@birmingham.gov.uk or call 07823 534935.



Keep Right Up To Date With Email Bulletins

We can provide more information, more often and more cost effectively via email.

If you don't already receive Village information via email simply send an email to agvp@hotmail.co.uk putting 'register' in the title.

Are We Talking To The Right Person?

We need to work with your business on our Acocks Green BID proposal. It is vitally important that we are speaking to the 'right' person.

We need to know full contact details of the person who can represent the needs and views of your business and will be entitled to vote in the BID ballot. This could be the owner, director or general manager.

Again, you can email this information to agvp@hotmail.co.uk or call 0121 4640106.



What Businesses Are Saying

"A BID will give the smallest businesses the greatest opportunities, whilst benefiting larger businesses by creating a more customer focused, appealing and inviting environment – from the minute people arrive in the Village to when they step through the door."

Kate Wright
The Wright Way

I knew I needed to improve my business but wasn't sure which direction to take. Access to professional training and advice as well as funding has given me the confidence and push to make the right changes. But no matter how much I invest in my business, I still need others to do the same to attract new customers to the Village.

The BID will also bring other opportunities that many of us can not afford, do not have time to implement, or are simply impossible to achieve individually."

Ian Jeffries
Jeffries Hardware

"Customer expectations continue to rise and as businesses we need to rise with them. Major investment in places like Shirley, Yardley and Sheldon is only going to make trading conditions harder for Village businesses.

The BID represents a huge opportunity to change the way we do things in Acocks Green. Shopping centres, business districts and even industrial estates up and down the country have successfully adopted the BID model.

Acocks Green becoming a BID offers the kind of potential we will never otherwise experience.

If it works elsewhere, why wouldn't we go for it too?"

Karen Vaughan
Karen's Estate Agents

What Local People Are Saying

I shop in the Village because...

"there are lots of small shops selling a large variety of goods."

"I want to keep our local amenities such as banks, Post Office, insurance companies etc."

"it's local, but Tesco will be even more local."

I would use my local shops more often if....

"they looked brighter and in some instances cleaner."

"there were wider footpaths and less stuff on them."

" you could draw more businesses to empty shops selling things we have to go to Solihull for."

If I could say one thing to local shopkeepers it would be...

"work together and take a pride in your environment."

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to share their views and we will be publishing more comments in future editions of this newsletter.

If you would like to talk to one of our BID Champions or the Town Centre Manager about Acocks Green BID you can email agvp@hotmail.co.uk or call 07823 534935.



Delivering the Working Neighbourhoods Fund