

# Setting up the BID partnership

## Demonstration projects

Where funds allow, delivering projects during the start up phase will show the kinds of benefits establishing a BID in the area would bring, but this is not essential. Characteristically these projects concentrate on initiatives that have the most immediate impact on improving the area commercially by making it:

- cleaner
- safer
- more attractive

Ideally demonstration projects should:

- deliver tangible and visible results that can be used as a sales tool to promote establishing a BID;
- be sufficiently memorable that they will not be forgotten before the BID ballot;
- be strongly associated with and enhance the credibility of the fledgling partnership;
- be of sufficiently high priority in the local area to be capable of engaging the local businesses and wider stakeholders;
- not require disproportionate staff resources;
- assist in making the partnership 'BID-ready';
- make it clear that a BID has to be set up for these services to continue;
- be badged to show that they were funded through the BID partnership.



Examples of projects that have high impact, and are relatively easy to organise 'quick wins', are one-off cleaning blitzes, anti-flyposter treatments, improving lighting and implementing environmental improvements like hanging baskets.

Demonstration projects should be delivered in the later stages (last six months) of establishing the BID partnership, after work has been completed to engage the business community and understand their priorities. This will ensure that money is not wasted on inappropriate projects and that they have maximum impact in the run up to the campaign and ballot.

### Evidence from The Circle Initiative

The Circle Initiative pilots benefited from SRB funding and were able to deliver demonstration projects over a three to four year period. Their experience indicates that certain initiatives make successful demonstration projects while others are more difficult, expensive and/or time consuming to deliver and should perhaps be avoided during the early stages. However, most of the Circle pilots felt that demonstration projects were the only concrete thing that they had to sell the BID and therefore these



projects were vital.

## Appropriate demonstration projects during the start up phase

### Making the area cleaner

**Better Bankside** ran several cleaning pilots including deep-cleansing contracts, regular enhanced sweeping, graffiti removal and installing sixty extra Better Bankside branded litter bins.



**The Holborn Partnership** got the council to help in doing a clean up blitz around the Tube station with council operatives wearing BID branded tabards. The BID partnership was also able to negotiate a three fold increase in council street sweeping services by drawing attention to the significant increase in employees in the area. After this cleaning contract was enhanced there was no need for the BID partnership to provide extra cleaning. However the street rangers monitor litter and black bag collection.

**Paddington BID** implemented a range of projects over four years as a pilot. Anti-graffiti treatment was applied to more than 50 premises. The treatment ensured that any further graffiti was easily removed and shop keepers were also trained in the health and safety aspects of using the chemicals provided to remove graffiti. Anti-flyposting and sticker treatment was applied to street furniture in 25 streets. Monthly visual audits were conducted where a multi-agency team (led by the community safety team) inspected environmental and cleansing conditions and tracked changes. This also led to some other project priorities being established. Postcards were distributed encouraging businesses to use the council's Environment Action Line to report a whole range of environmental issues.

**Waterloo Quarter** established a graffiti removal programme in partnership with the council, with graffiti surveys taking place every three weeks.

### Making the area safer

**Better Bankside** organised a quick win project setting up a 'safe route' to transport interchanges. The area had a lot of dark streets and railway arches and the BID partnership could not tackle all of these so they identified and improved one route by reducing hedge heights and increasing lighting.

**The Holborn Partnership** were particularly active in tackling antisocial behaviour in the area because this was a business priority. They initiated the first privately funded ASBO against a local drug dealer, with local solicitors providing pro-bono legal work. They also worked with the [Design out Crime](#), Crime Prevention Design Advisor identifying doorways and recesses that caused problems, paid for extra police overtime and organised personal safety training sessions for businesses in the area. Their alternative giving poster campaign '[Spare change or real change](#)' encouraged people to give to homeless charities



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instead of beggars. The Holborn street rangers also make referrals to outreach workers.

**Paddington BID** facilitated a pub watch scheme in the area putting pubs in contact with each other by radio link so they could advise other pubs of problem groups or activities. The pilot also tackled pedestrian and road safety issues working with the local authority and Transport for London.

**Waterloo Quarter** had an early quick win project replacing the lights in Lower Marsh with lighter, whiter bulbs. They worked with the local Police Safer Neighbourhood teams to make them more accessible to businesses and were part of a project to install CCTV cameras linked into a borough wide monitoring centre.

### Making the area more attractive

**The Holborn Partnership** branded and improved a disused shop frontage. Winter lights that were designed by central St Martins students were installed in the area and Holborn branded lampposts and the Tube station entrance with banners.

**Paddington BID** carried out a number of initiatives including removing unauthorised advertisement hoardings, replacing them with an extensive street level greening scheme in Praed Street; replacing unsightly hospital fencing with heritage style railings; production of a shopfront improvement leaflet and installing hanging baskets throughout the BID area



**Waterloo Quarter** installed 42 hanging baskets within the proposed BID area.

### Less appropriate demonstration projects

#### Making the area cleaner

Although most of these projects were successful they were relatively expensive or time consuming schemes to run and are probably best delivered by a formal BID rather than a pilot, unless substantial funding is available.

**Heart of London** employed their own dedicated Clean Team to keep the streets around Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square, one London's prime tourist and leisure destinations, clean and pleasant to use. On average, the clean team has collected over 2,200 bags of rubbish a month in addition to those picked up by the council. They also tackled cleaning areas like the steps to the Underground because these were not identified as the responsibility of any other organisation. Maintaining a clean team is an expensive long term project, inappropriate as a demonstration project.



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**Paddington BID** conducted trial deep cleansing in two areas (pressure washing and removing chewing gum) but this was quite expensive and the results were short lived, with chewing gum in particular coming back very quickly, and businesses did not think this was an appropriate use of money.

**Waterloo Quarter** offered a graffiti removal scheme but this required waivers from businesses to allow the council to treat shopfronts which consumed a lot of Board member's voluntary time. They also trialled an anti-graffiti treatment scheme but this pilot failed because of an error where the council contractors sprayed anti-graffiti treatment over a perforated shop grille covering the shop window.

The BID partnership also cleaned Leake Street, an unattractive route underneath Waterloo Station. This made a significant but short lived difference, as the tunnel soon became dirty again, and it would have been too costly and time consuming to repeat the project.

### Making the area safer

With the exception of Waterloo Quarter, Circle partnerships' safety improvement projects included either directly employing or funding the provision of street wardens, rangers or additional police officers. The Circle partnerships undertook these projects because they were funded to test how BIDs would work in the UK. However, directly employing or contracting for services of this kind is a major financial commitment which is not appropriate as a demonstration project.

**Better Bankside** also ran a wardens' scheme for over two years sharing a team of five wardens with the neighbouring Pool of London Partnership.

**Heart of London** originally employed their own Street Team via a private contractor for the year before BID ballot, but moved to jointly funding City Guardians with Westminster City council as this proved less costly.

**Holborn** worked in partnership with the police and service providers in the area to introduce a highly successful street ranger scheme. The team were originally employed via a private contractor but after the first year were taken in-house. The Rangers provide a welcoming and reassuring presence to visitors to the area and report on issues of anti-social behaviour and environmental concerns. The Holborn street rangers deal with an average of 8,000 enquiries from their information kiosk every month and make on average 30 reports to the police and 53 to the council every month. The majority of these are acted on immediately.



**Paddington BID** began by introducing a team of rangers to assist with community safety, business liaison and environmental audits. The team was piloted for twelve months. Following business feedback, concluding they were not sufficiently visible, proactive and had no powers, they were replaced by a police



team of one Constable and three Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), supervised by a Sergeant.

**Waterloo Quarter** operated a shop watch scheme, with a radio link similar to pub watch. Although this was popular with the small shops in the area which participated in the initial pilot it proved time consuming to get the necessary aerial installation to extend the scheme, which delayed the project considerably.

### Making the area more attractive

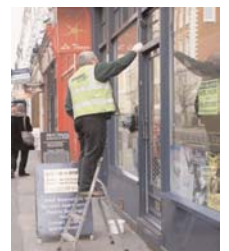
As above, these projects, concerned with making the area more attractive, tend to be long term and involve a high commitment of staff and/or resources making them unsuitable as demonstration projects.

**Better Bankside** initiated long term improvements to the railway arches which dissect the area, including Arch 401, a route to Tate Modern. They encouraged the arch owners to undertake necessary repairs and the council to fulfil their obligations by increasing the ambient level of lighting, and local businesses funded the distinctive 401 artwork. Better Bankside also developed a greening programme focused on initiating a local composting scheme, planting street trees and establishing business green grants that funded planting outside business premises (businesses paid 50% of costs). These projects grew out of consultation but take-up and delivery was slow and the desired impact was lower than hoped. However, these projects did increase business engagement. Hanging baskets/containerised planting made a huge difference to the area but it was difficult and time consuming to get business contributions unless the business was already well engaged with the partnership. A further lesson was that maintenance must be planned in to projects of this kind.



**Heart of London** property owners funded development of a long-term vision for Coventry Street which runs between Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square. They also funded initial consultation with local businesses on these improvements. This represented a huge added value to the BID, not funded through SRB, but it did not produce tangible results and so is less appropriate as a demonstration project.

**Paddington BID** implemented nine shopfront improvements, through direct grant or assistance with architects and planning fees, in the Bayswater Conservation Area. A leaflet was produced setting out advice and examples of how to achieve a frontage which respected the Victorian character of the street while meeting modern requirements. This project proved very staff resource intensive as there are many channels to go through, but was a very good demonstration project for the BID. They found that a number of small scale improvements like repainting shop fronts were far less effective



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than one major new shopfront.

**Waterloo Quarter** was initially involved with some environmental capital projects which, although significant local priorities, proved extremely resource-intensive, taking the focus off the BID development process. Waterloo Quarter have subsequently made improvements to Emma Cons Gardens, a key space at the centre of Waterloo Quarter's area, which had become a focus for street drinking. They had an



early quick win by partnering the Old Vic in a scheme to put decorative lights in the trees. Improvements to the landscaping was a more time consuming project but the end result has made the area much more attractive, particularly at night. The improvements have resulted in 243 fewer fires started by street drinkers, resulting in a saving of £200,000 for the Fire Brigade as there are now only approximately 3 emergency calls per annum. Waterloo Quarter were

successful in getting this space to be one of the ten priorities in the Mayor's 100 public spaces initiative and further improvements are planned in this long term project. This project was critical for the area and successful although time consuming.

Waterloo Quarter also had a shopfront scheme, which like Paddington BID's, proved very resource intensive and not particularly productive.

They also commissioned a street market management study for the Lower Marsh street market which, along with the retail area had been in decline for some time. The key conclusion of this report was the need for proper full-time management of the street market. The BID partnership worked with the Local Authority to joint fund the appointment of a Market Manager, unfortunately the individual appointed became sick long term and the project did not progress.

### **Match funding for demonstration projects**

**Waterloo Quarter** with no pre-existing big business organisation or the catalyst of property owners or developers, had difficulty in generating cash or in-kind time from businesses with which to match the SRB funding which came with a 1:1 condition.

