

# READING CENTRAL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Reading UK   
Growing opportunity

**BUSINESS PLAN & RENEWAL PROPOSAL 2019-24**



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## A Business Improvement District is ...

A defined area where businesses have voted to invest collectively in local improvements to enhance their trading environment. BIDs provide extra services within their areas, funded via a BID levy charge, which is payable by non-domestic ratepayers. BID services are additional to the services provided by the public services and local authority. See page 18 for our BID area.

Reading UK exists to boost business and enhance visitor experiences in a way that improves the quality of life of all in the Reading region.



**Graham Mountford**  
General Manager, Broad  
Street Mall & BID Chair

'Our Business Improvement District has been front and centre of Reading town centre's economy for 12 years and during that time it has added incredible value to our town.'

## Businesses come together to support Reading BID renewal

(Left to right) Andreas Christou – Nationwide Building Society, Inspector Sarah Sanderson – Thames Valley Police, Bobby Loneragan – Reading BID, Andy Briggs – The Oracle, Becky Ottery – Eclectic Games, Graham Mountford – Broad Street Mall and BID Chair, Richard Forte – McDonalds, Trine Oestergaard – House of Fisher, Nigel Horton-Baker – Reading UK, Darren Reed – Nationwide Building Society, Sara Wilder – John Lewis, Grant Thornton – Reading Borough Council, Danny Fraifeld – Purple Turtle.





# It is vital Reading continues to invest in a positive future

**Dear BID Business,**

Reading Central BID has been in existence since 2006. In this time it has been successfully renewed by vote on three occasions and in the last five years, provided approximately £2.2 million extra private investment in the town centre funded by a nominal levy, equivalent to 1% of rateable value paid by local businesses. Reading UK has worked with many partners including Reading Borough Council and Reading UK's BID Committee – made up of 18 town centre businesses and partners to deliver our strategy.

The current BID period ends on 31 March 2019. Reading UK has invited the BID Committee to formulate a renewal proposal for what will be a challenging 2019-24. For the BID to continue, businesses must vote in favour in a postal ballot between January and February 2019.

**We plan to deliver all the services set out in this document while holding the BID levy at just 1% (excluding businesses licensed after midnight, see pages 15 and 19).**

We commit to maintain the added value additional services that have made the town centre more attractive and secure and which shoppers, visitors and our own business community have come to expect. We will explore new approaches to combating crime, increasing footfall, attract and retain skilled staff and support the night-time economy. We will involve the wider business community and those investing in Reading to create a more cohesive town centre.

We must avoid complacency at all costs. Reading town centre is amongst the busiest in the South, prospering despite difficult national trading conditions. It is vital that we continue to invest in the extra services laid out in this document to ensure that we maintain our pre-eminent position in the coming years.

On behalf of the businesses in Reading, we urge you to read this proposal and vote YES 2019-24!



Yours faithfully,

*Adam*

**Adam Jacobs**

Co-owner Jacobs the Jewellers,  
Chair, Reading UK



# Some BID highlights since 2014

- Over 45000 hours of extra PCSO presence and over 8500 hours of additional manned CCTV
- Piloted a Business Warden working with town centre businesses to combat ASB and shoplifting which proved enormously successful
- 2500 floral displays including hanging baskets, troughs and planters adorning the town centre
- 280,000 sqm. pedestrian thoroughfares deep cleaned to remove chewing gum and detritus to maintain an attractive environment
- Grew the popular free weekly cardboard recycling collection scheme from 3 tons (47 businesses registered) per week in 2013 to 5/6 tons per week 2018 (over 130 businesses)
- Festive lighting scheme – the biggest in the South East outside London. Over 400,000 LED lights and a series of moving illuminations
- A broad and exciting programme of street events to attract footfall, including Eat Reading, weekly Artisan Food Market Wednesdays and Fridays (Market Place) and a programme of events annually including ARENA the summer cultural and Christmas programmes
- Pivotal financial support for the First Stop Hub and Street Pastors who offer medical and pastoral help to the public until 3.30am in the town centre
- Anti-Begging and ASB initiatives with partners and police to tackle incidences of anti-social behaviour and aggressive begging





# More BID highlights since 2014

- Introduced 'DISC' – a cloud based system to share information on offenders and ban them from town centre premises
- Silver Award winner in the BID category of the National Finals of 'Britain in Bloom' 2015 and 2016. Silver Gilt Award Winner 2018
- Regular BID socials, AGMs and digital monthly newsletter communications to over 500 BID contacts with printed versions for businesses not connected by email
- Achieved and renewed Purple Flag Accreditation, a scheme that recognises Reading Central's best practice and excellence in the safe management of the town centre at night time
- 3900 hours of night time security (2014-16) provided at town's taxi ranks at weekends by BID employed Taxi Marshals providing security for visitors to the night time economy
- Initiated new intelligence elements including footfall counters and mobile phone sensors to generate monthly footfall/local national trend and KPI reports
- Close partnership working with Townsafe Radio Scheme involving over 80 businesses and RBAC (Reading Business Against Crime) to combat theft, shoplifting and ASB. Supported and hosted annual Police initiatives such as Project Griffin counter terror and anti-fraud workshops
- Worked with the Prince's Trust 'Healthy High Street' initiative, and commercial partners including M&S, Santander, Greggs, Wilko, EE and Boots to foster initiatives to maintain a vibrant high street



**Fiona Brownfoot**  
Director, Retail & Leisure,  
Hicks Baker

'The retail landscape is facing challenges from many directions, therefore it is imperative that town centres do everything in their power to ensure that the micro environment is as attractive and welcoming and safe and accessible as possible.'





# Even more BID highlights since 2014

- Funded 'ARENA' for arts and culture. The programme of free events complemented many of the town centre's annual showpieces such as the inaugural Reading-on-Thames Festival and Reading Year of Culture 2016
- Established the 'Reading Indies' digital platform for local businesses to promote the 'independent' retail sector
- Collaborated with police and licensed trade in the renewal of the 'Best Bar None' Scheme and PUBWATCH in town centre licensed premises which are now thriving
- Annual marketing campaign specifically supporting the Christmas offer including the 2018 campaign with match funding from Reading Borough Council to maintain the town's position as a prime retail/business destination
- Worked with Reading UK Economic Development to promote annual Job Fairs and training events to BID businesses
- Some BID sponsored and supported annual initiatives:
  - Reading Fringe Festival
  - Open for Art
  - Reading Retail Awards
  - Reading Year of Culture
  - Reading Cultural Awards
  - Reading on Thames Festival
  - Pride of Reading
  - Friends of Reading Abbey
  - ALT Reading Awards



# Your feedback – What you told us was important to your business

We consulted widely among town centre businesses to get your feedback on what the current BID has delivered over the past five years and what new initiatives you would like to see.

## This is how you responded

- More improvements to town centre public realm
- Better day and night-time security with a rigorous partnership plan to lessen Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) shoplifting and begging
- Continued investment in our Christmas campaigns and enhanced marketing and promotion of Reading's town centre offer
- Expand our successful cardboard recycling initiative to include paper, glass and other waste including coffee grounds
- Innovative year-long events diary to maximise day and night footfall and positive public perception of the town centre. Explore possibilities of exploiting Reading's heritage offering – Abbey Ruins, waterways and Reading Prison etc. – to the same end
- Further initiatives that build on our award winning floral displays and street deep cleansing
- Improved communication and networking among BID members
- Partner working that promotes a safe and welcoming night-time experience in Reading
- Improved intelligence, marketing, communication, networking and engagement with key stakeholders

In 2012 Reading's vacancy rate of 11.29% was 28% below the national average. At **8.71% in 2017** Reading continues to demonstrate excellent resilience in its retailing performance

Hicks Baker



**Kevin Little**  
Owner, Frosts Fishmongers

'The BID brings so much to Reading – Christmas lights, chewing gum-free streets and flowers in the summer. The money we have to pay to be members of the BID is so little compared to what we get back, including the cardboard collection and many other events through the year.'



# Reading in numbers

**Leading UK city for growth.**  
For the third year running, Reading (with Oxford) is the highest performing city

This reflects continued improvement across a range of measures including jobs, income and skills.

DEMOs/PwC Good Growth for Cities 2018



**1425** people treated at First Stop Hub 2014 – 2017

NHS



**26,678,525**

Reading bus passengers 2017/18. Up 4% on 2016.

Reading Buses 2018

Since 2016 more commuters come to Reading by train (**over 25,000 daily**) than leave

ORR



Reading ranked in the **top 20** British retail centres by total retail spend

RDH 2016





**Retail newcomers.** In the retail sector in 2017, 54 lease deals rented over 100,000 sq. ft. of floor space. Many of those newcomers were in the restaurant sector, including Veenoo, Pho and The Botanist.

CoStar

## A high productivity centre

Reading is the third most productive city in the UK with average productivity per person of £68,900.

Centre for Cities



## A UK Smart City Reading is ranked among the UK's top 20 leading 'smart cities'.

Reading is a key challenger city which has laid the foundations to become a 'smart city'. Using technology to tackle urban challenges, Reading is expected to make major strides over the coming years. The report highlighted the launch of the Reading 2050 Vision and the Thames Valley Low Carbon Project in particular as key smart initiatives.

UK Smart Cities Index, commissioned by Huawei UK

Reading's Broad Street currently enjoys average footfall of **2.5 million** per month

Springboard



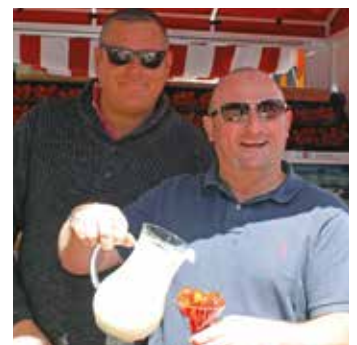
**75%**

Three quarters of millennials in south east UK would consider relocating to Reading for work.

Reading UK research

**Strong demand for office space.** Within Greater Reading in 2017/18, 124 office lease deals were concluded, leasing a total of nearly 644,000sq ft. of office space, with an average deal of just over 5,000sq ft. across 78 buildings.

CoStar



# Business proposal BID4 2019-24

In May we undertook a consultation of businesses and stakeholders in the BID area which took the form of printed, online and face-to-face surveys and meetings. Almost 200 businesses – 45% of the total 453 hereditaments responded.

This proposal is anchored on the successful services that have proved most popular over the past 13 years. We have also taken your feedback on board to set out a raft of new initiatives with a goal of taking Reading to the next level as the prime regional destination to shop, work and visit.

## Fastest growing economy to 2021

Reading is forecast to be the fastest growing city/town in the UK, with 2.3% Gross Value Added (GVA) growth per year over the period 2018-2021.

EY's UK Region and City Economic Forecast



**Darren Reed**  
Senior Branch Manager,  
Nationwide

'We are keen to support not only the centre of Reading but surrounding areas also, helping to encourage them to come into town. The BID helps create an attractive retail environment with the extra services it provides and Nationwide is pleased to invest in Reading.'



## More business

We will continue to challenge perceptions, increase profile and raise the bar to demonstrate ambition with regard to the quality of the experience on offer, focusing on family, workers, children, evening economy, culture and heritage and supporting annual seasonal and festive activities.

### New

- Launch a comprehensive new 'Reading-What's On' website to attract more visitors to the day and night time economy
- Introduce a discount scheme for almost 25,000 workers in the BID and Abbey Quarter to maximise spending in the BID area
- Execute eye-catching marketing campaigns regionally and nationally to highlight Reading as a principal shopping, business and leisure destination
- Investigate partnerships to introduce mooring facilities on Kennet & Avon Canal at/near town centre to attract more visitors to stop in town instead of passing through
- Promote the town centre through Reading UK membership of the Great West Way visitor marketing consortium from Bristol to Heathrow, targeting group and overseas travel markets, increasing the number of visitors all year round

Investing  
**£557k**  
2019-24



### Continue

- Continue to fund and manage Reading's annual Christmas lights (the biggest seasonal display in the region outside London) and imaginative Christmas events and promotions programme
- Deliver and support an annual programme of events and festivals including Reading on Thames Festival, Reading Fringe and ARENA summer arts programme
- Develop the social media initiative 'Reading Indies'. @rdgindies launched in 2017 to celebrate Reading's unique independent offer, provide digital training for independents with the aim of achieving 10,000 followers
- Work with Reading UK's in-house Employment & Skills resource to promote job fairs and training opportunities to help underpin resilience and staff retention
- Produce over 100,000 Town Centre visitors' guide/maps
- Manage and license a range of agreed street activities, such as street entertainment, events and promotions

## More secure

### New

- Following a tremendously successful trial in 2018 – employ two full time professional Business Wardens working with the police and associated agencies to patrol the BID area, building on recent successes combatting shoplifting, aggressive begging, drug taking, rough sleeping and anti-social behaviour
- Build on our initial work to support National Business Crime Solution's crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Manifesto launched in 2018 and working with business leaders and SMEs to demonstrate best practice in combatting shoplifting and ASB
- Invest in security fencing and automatic gating for St Mary's Service Yard area which is used by over 50 businesses and has historically attracted notorious levels of ASB

### Continue

- Employ 1.5 equivalent CCTV operators to help ensure that the BID area achieves near 24hour camera coverage
- Fund two versions of 'DISC' a cloud based system to share information on offenders and ban them from town centre premises. A collaboration with both Reading Business Against Crime (RBAC) and Betwatch
- Increase support to Reading Business Against Crime (RBAC) and Town Safe radio scheme used by over fifty businesses, linking them with CCTV, PCSOs, Business Warden and Police
- Continue to lobby for more town centre police presence day and night to help combat nationally fast-growing levels of crime and ASB
- Maintain close working with partners – police, council, member organisations and the voluntary sector to maximise town centre security for visitors, residents and workers

To ensure the proposals above are an effective contribution to town centre safety and crime reduction there will be a comprehensive review of this element of the proposal at the end of each year.

Investing  
**£676k**  
2019-24



**Becky Ottery**  
Owner, Eclectic Games

'The past few years of the BID have been full of great work – a new Town Centre Warden, continuing beautiful flowers and lights, regular deep clean of the streets, and a packed calendar of events promoting Reading and attracting people to the town throughout the year.'





**PC Vince Moore working closely with BID Warden Daniel Hughes to reduce shoplifting, crime and anti-social behaviour in our town centre**

In the last quarter of 2018 there were 50 arrests made resulting in prison sentences, Community Protection Notices (CPNs) and Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) which exclude persistent offenders from the town centre. As a result of ongoing police and warden work, aggressive begging is at its lowest in five years and business feedback reports shoplifting is down almost 40% on early 2018.

**Some of the positive feedback received from BID businesses**

"I simply cannot express enough how grateful we are as a store to the BID, they have made a real difference in our life by employing really fantastic and hands on security."

"Losses have reduced from £2.5k per week to just under £1k per week. Dan and Vince have been amazing support."

"The support I have received from Dan and Vince has been fantastic, always responding quickly and regularly popping in to make sure all is well."



## More attractive

### New

- Deliver enhanced bi-annual seasonal and floral displays (summer and winter)
- Invest in innovative and eye catching lighting and planting projects on Queens Walk, Hosier Street and Dusseldorf Way to improve the public realm, make the area more appealing and dispel ASB
- Initiate a new annual summer floral festival to build on the BID's awards in Britain in Bloom 2015, 2016 and 2018
- Investigate and initiate recycling schemes taking in paper, plastics, coffee grounds and glass

### Continue

- Increase participation in the hugely successful free cardboard collection scheme which has grown from 47 subscribers in 2014 to 130 currently and removes 4-6 tons of cardboard weekly from town centre free of charge
- Investigate further partner working with match funding to make tangible improvements to the town centre public realm
- Twice annual deep cleansing and gum removal of 64,000 sq. metres of pedestrian thoroughfares

Investing  
**£644k**  
2019-24



#### Andy Briggs

General Manager, The Oracle

'The BID has brought so much to Reading over the past twelve years. Many businesses will not remember Reading without Christmas lights and chewing gum free streets, but these are exactly the sort of services we stand to lose if we do not renew the BID.'





## More night-time

A second-tier levy is planned to those businesses operating a licence after midnight to fund additional services specifically for that sector. The monies raised will be ring-fenced for the initiatives below to promote the evening and late-night economy, reduce crime and disorder and improve safety for the public, workers, the police and premises.

**If you run a licenced premises (alcohol or non-alcohol open at any time of the year after midnight) your charge will include the standard 1% Levy plus the 2% Night-time Levy.**

### New

- Launch a comprehensive new 'Reading-What's On' website to attract more visitors to the night time economy

### Continue

- **Purple Flag Accreditation.** The BID, in partnership with numerous bodies including Reading Borough Council and Thames Valley Police achieved Purple Flag Status for Reading in 2016 (with a commendation in 2017). Purple Flag is the nationally recognised marque that celebrates best practice in operation and managing a vibrant, cultural and safe evening and late night-time economy
- **First Stop Hub.** Providing a facility at St Mary Minster at weekends until 3.30am for NHS treatment, triage assessment and a place of refuge. BID funding will continue to support ongoing costs of NHS medical practitioners and security
- **Friday Night Briefings.** Continue to work with PubWatch and the police to support the Friday Night Briefings where safety, banning and dispersal issues are planned, discussed and shared with door staff and town centre venue managers
- **Best Bar None.** Audit to ensure that licensed premises management teams are using best practice in their operations
- **Reading Street Pastors.** Much respected volunteers, part-funded by the BID, working from the First Stop hub, engaging with town centre visitors and those in distress during busy weekend periods
- **PubWatch.** Sharing intelligence with officers from Thames Valley Police and Reading Borough Council on licensing and crime. Implement 'DISC' – a cloud based system to share information on offenders and ban them from town centre premises
- **Doorwatch.** Briefings and ongoing training for door supervisors

Investing  
**£197k**  
2019-24



**Danny Fraifeld**  
Owner, The Purple Turtle

'We continue to support the BID and the partnerships it fosters. We are proud that, BID led, Reading has achieved 'Purple Flag' status again with a commendation for demonstrating best practice in the safe management of the night time economy for the public and our staff.'

## More connected

### New

- Provide enhanced professional intelligence/forecasting and information dissemination capability
- Regular BID member socials and networking events including work-life balance initiatives to maximise staff loyalty and retention
- Develop [www.livingreading.co.uk](http://www.livingreading.co.uk), [www.readingbid.co.uk](http://www.readingbid.co.uk), @readingindies and social media as key channels of communication to get the most from our conversation with stakeholders

Investing  
**£136k**  
2019-24

### Continue

- Promote Reading Central for inward investment and increased footfall through the high-profile use of the Reading UK brand
- Re commission footfall intelligence infrastructure in the town centre
- Proactively place stories in regional, national and international media to promote Reading Central profile more widely
- Monthly newsletters to BID members and interested stakeholders
- BID LinkedIn page

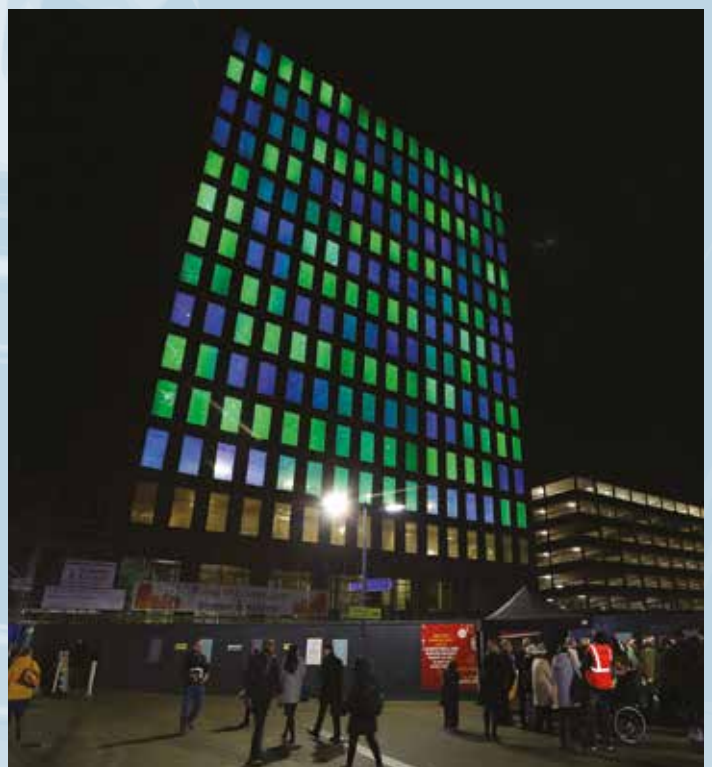


**Robert Williams**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Reading Buses

'We know that the success of our transport business is strongly linked to the success of the Town Centre. Tens of thousands of people choose to work, shop and visit the town centre every day and the BID has been instrumental in making it an exciting place to be.'

**UK digital capital.**  
Reading has eight times the UK average concentration of tech businesses

Tech Nation 2018





## More ambition

### Our vision beyond 2019

Following consultation in the Abbey Quarter district, Reading UK is embarking on an ambitious plan to deliver a second business orientated BID.

This historic area of over 300 predominantly commercial enterprises employs over 11,000 workers. This proposed BID area will compliment and buttress the current Reading Central BID (full details [www.abbeyquarter.co.uk](http://www.abbeyquarter.co.uk)).

Voting will take place simultaneously with this Reading Central BID vote.

**A high wage economy.** Reading is one of the most dynamic economies for wages, jobs, high skills, productivity and business start-ups in the country

The Centre for Cities



Among Europe's **top 25 cities** for investment

Reading has been ranked among the top 25 European business cities of the future for foreign direct investment.

European Cities of the Future Awards 2018/19

## Enlarged BID area

We are proposing slight alterations to the current boundary to fully take in the main retail, financial and hospitality 'quarters' of the town centre. These minor additions close the gaps between the existing BID area and sites that have been or are planned to be regenerated.

### Streets included in BID 2019-24

Blagrove Street, Bridge Street (part), Broad Street, Butter Market, Castle Street, Chain Street, Cheapside, Clonmel Walk, Cross Street, Cusden Walk, Duke Street, Dusseldorf Way, Friar Street, Garrard Street, Gun Street, Forbury Road (part), Hosier Street, High Street, Kings Road (part), King Street, London Street (part), Market Place, Merchants Place, Oxford Road (part), Queen's Road (part), Queen Victoria Street, Queens Walk, San Francisco Libre Walk, Station Approach, Station Hill, Station Road, St Mary's Butts, The Forbury (part), Union Street, West Street, Wiston Terrace and Valpy Street.





# Essential information

## BID levy and liability

The initiatives outlined in this business plan can be delivered from an initial levy of 1% of rateable values. The liability to pay the levy is on all hereditaments (listed in the 2019 Non-Domestic Rating List that have a rateable value of £10,000 or more, and that are within the proposed BID area).

### What will be the cost to my business?

At a 1% levy, the cost to all business in the BID will be:

Rateable value of property	Annual levy	Weekly cost	Daily cost
£10,000	£100	£1.92	£0.27
£20,000	£200	£3.85	£0.55
£50,000	£500	£9.60	£1.37
£100,000	£1,000	£19.23	£2.75
£250,000	£2,500	£48.08	£6.89
£500,000	£5,000	£96.15	£13.74

If you run a licenced premises (alcohol or non-alcohol open at any time of the year after midnight) your charge will include the Night Time Levy (described in this document) made up of 1% as above plus the 2% night-time levy. Total 3% see below.

### Night-time economy levy

Rateable value of property	Annual levy	Weekly cost	Daily cost
£10,000	£300	£5.76	£0.81
£20,000	£600	£11.55	£1.65
£50,000	£1500	£28.80	£4.11
£100,000	£3,000	£57.69	£8.25
£250,000	£7,500	£144.24	£20.67
£500,000	£15,000	£288.45	£41.22

If you would like to find out the rateable value of your business, refer to your rates bill or check it at [www.voa.gov.uk](http://www.voa.gov.uk)

### The BID levy, liability and collection

For businesses located within the BID area, a BID levy of 1% of rateable value will be charged on all hereditaments that appear in the local Non-Domestic Rating List, as of 1 January 2019. This figure will remain unaltered throughout the term of the BID (regardless of further changes that may occur to provide certainty and defend against fluctuations). No individual hereditament within the BID area will be disregarded or exempted from the BID levy.

The BID levy may increase by an inflationary factor of up to 3% in successive years (e.g. up from 1% to 1.03% in year 2). In the case of an empty, partly refurbished or demolished hereditament (rateable property) the property owner will be liable for the BID levy, and will be entitled to vote. There will be no void period and every property will pay for all 365 days of the year.

The BID levy will be collected by Reading Borough Council with a provision for instalments.

### Funding priorities

Reading UK is committed to keeping overhead costs to a minimum and directing most resource to frontline projects and services. It will seek in-kind and pro bono support from partners to cover overhead costs, and voluntary contributions to augment the BID 2019-24 budget.

### Financial arrangements and budget allocations

Reading Borough Council will collect and reimburse Reading UK with BID levies on a monthly basis and at a prudent level of contingency. Reading UK will provide Reading Borough Council, BID committee, board and auditor with regular updates detailing expenditure under the BID and cash flows.

## The BID ballot

### Voting entitlement

A ratepayer will be entitled to vote in the BID ballot if they are listed as a non-domestic ratepayer on the date of notice of ballot. The ballot will have to meet two tests.

1. A simple majority of those voting must vote in favour.
2. Those voting in favour must represent a majority of the aggregate rateable value of those hereditaments that have voted.

Each person entitled to vote in the BID ballot shall have one vote in respect of each hereditament that they occupy or own in the geographical area of the BID on which non-domestic rates are payable.

### Commencement and duration of the BID

The BID, if approved, will start on 1 April 2019 and will operate for five years. A postal ballot of business ratepayers in the BID area, based on the list of non-domestic ratepayers, will take place between 24 January and 21 February 2019. The result of the ballot will be published on the Reading Borough Council website, on 22 February.

# Governance

## Who is proposing the BID?

The BID proposer is Reading UK who initiated and managed Reading's previous BIDs. Reading UK is a non-profit, Community Interest Company limited by guarantee, established in 2005.

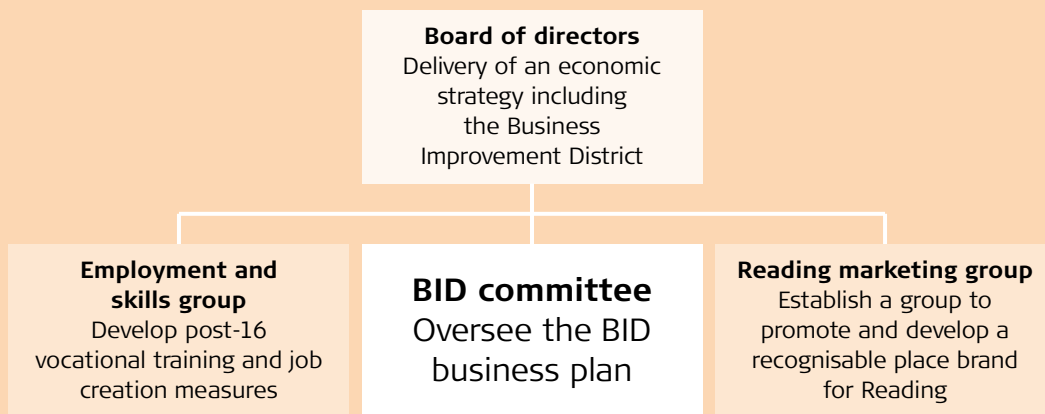
BID committee members are stakeholders and volunteers appointed on an annual basis from representative business, local agency sectors from appropriate geographical areas within the BID. This BID Committee is 'managed' by the BID Manager, who is a staff member of Reading UK.

## Management of the BID

Reading UK considers the Reading Central BID an integral part of economic development, and will oversee its delivery. Reading UK will act as the 'BID Body' but will continue to delegate operational control to a committee of the Company's Board of Directors – the BID Committee. The Board appoints the committee chair and delegates authority to the BID committee to deliver the business plan.

Variations can be made by the BID Committee where alterations represent less than a 25% variation of budget. For larger variations, an EGM or AGM will be held.

## Reading UK governance structure



## Present BID committee

Retail



Local authority



Hospitality



Police



Service business



Reading UK





# Projections for 5 year budget, 2019-24:

2019 Income (1% levy): **£492,000**  
 2024 Income Night-time programme (additional 2% levy): **£43,000**  
 Total annual projected levy income: **£535,000**

Income	Year 1 2019	Year 2 2020	Year 3 2021	Year 4 2022	Year 5 2023	Totals
BID4 levy at 1% all businesses	492,000	490,000	490,000	490,000	485,000	2,447,000
BID4 night-time levy at 2% additional	43,000	42,000	40,000	39,000	39,000	203,000
Voluntary contributions confirmed	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	140,000
Additional voluntary contribution target	10,000	12,000	14,000	15,000	20,000	71,000
Sponsorship target	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	29,000
<b>Total income</b>	<b>578,000</b>	<b>578,000</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>2,890,000</b>

Expenditure	Year 1 2019	Year 2 2020	Year 3 2021	Year 4 2022	Year 5 2023	Totals
More night-time	41,000	40,000	39,000	39,000	38,000	197,000
More secure	128,000	130,000	135,000	140,000	143,000	676,000
More business	113,000	113,000	113,000	110,000	108,000	557,000
More connected	30,000	28,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	136,000
More attractive	130,000	131,000	129,000	127,000	127,000	644,000
BID service plan expenditure	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	442,000	2,210,000
Net BID balance	+136,000	+136,000	+136,000	+136,000	+136,000	680,000
Management and administration	*110,000	110,000	113,000	115,000	115,000	563,000
Contingency	18,000	18,000	15,000	13,000	13,000	77,000
Levy collection	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	40,000
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>578,000</b>	<b>578,000</b>	<b>578,000</b>	<b>578,000</b>	<b>578,000</b>	<b>2,890,000</b>

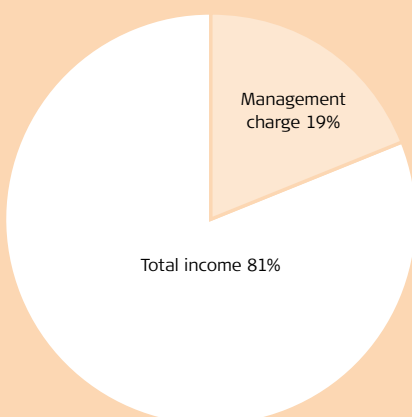
- Levy income based on a 97% collection rate
- Fixed costs shown under the heading of 'management and administration' will be funded through voluntary contributions where possible and revenues freed will be allocated to extra/expanded agreed projects
- \*Management and administration figure of £110k represents 19% of projected income, in keeping with the Industry Criteria and Guidance and includes all levy collection charges. Where possible this will be funded through non-BID levy income to release further resource to programmes

- In the event of extraordinary circumstances during the lifetime of the 2019-24 BID, Reading UK will bill at the rate on the local Non-Domestic Rating List, as of 1 January 2019
- Expenditure Year 1 actual budget, years 2-5 will be reviewed on a year by year basis

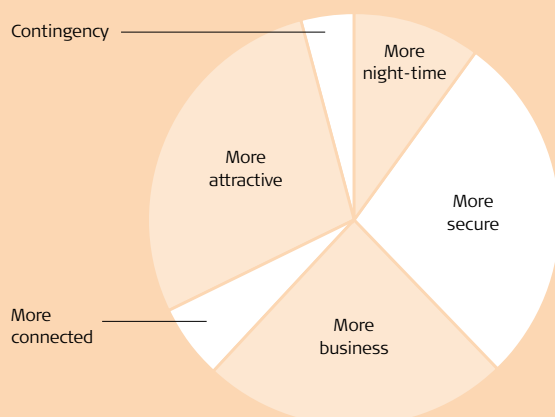
### Alteration to bid arrangements

The BID area and the BID levy percentage cannot be altered without an Alteration Ballot.

### Management charge as a percentage of total income



### Total expenditure per programme area



## Measuring success

Formalising a series of quantifiable KPIs will allow for a full evaluation of success. The following will measure critical factors to inform future decision-making. KPIs will be monitored by the BID team and reported back to the levy payers at bi-monthly BID management meetings.

- Cleansing review (Excellent = 10. Very poor = 0) review **monthly**
- Maintenance (Excellent =10. Very poor = 0) review **monthly**
- Footfall % +/- review **monthly**
- Crime levels % +/- review **quarterly**
- Vacancy rates/empty units % +/- review **quarterly**
- Business climate % +/- review **quarterly**
- Visitor +/- review **bi-annually**
- Number of marketing campaigns – review **annual**
- Number of events. Plan **tbc**

To ensure that BID resources are directed towards delivering real added value, a positive partnership with Thames Valley Police and Reading Borough Council will continue ensuring meaningful dialogue on baseline services including highways, street furniture, maintenance, cleansing, CCTV, community safety, market trading, licensing, enforcement of street activities, lighting, landscaping, environmental health and trading standards are maintained and higher standards met where possible.

## Frequently asked questions

### Will the levy be adjusted for inflation?

The levy will be subject to an annual adjustment in line with the (All Items) Retail Price Index, to account for inflation, up to a maximum of 3% on the previous year's levy.\*

### Are the major shopping centres in the BID area?

The Oracle and Broad Street Mall shopping centres are not in the BID area. However, they both have units that face directly onto the BID area. These businesses will be charged the levy, and the same principle will apply to centres and arcades such as Kings Walk, Harris Arcade and Bristol & West Arcade. Both shopping centres pay a voluntary levy through their management companies on behalf of their tenant businesses.

### Who collects the levy?

The BID levy will be collected by Reading Borough Council on an annual basis and the funds transferred to Reading UK net of collection costs. Final yearly accounts will be produced and submitted to Companies House by Reading UK.

### When will I need to pay?

The levy will be due in full on 1 April each year that Reading Central BID is in operation, and will be invoiced on a separate bill from the business rates.

### Will the levy change as a result of a rating valuation appeal?

There will be no adjustments during the year to reflect changes in individual rating values due to appeals. Changes in rating values will be reflected in a corresponding change to the levy collected from the appropriate properties in the following year.

### Will new businesses be liable for the levy?

Where a new assessment is brought into the rating list (e.g. a newly erected property, a refurbished property or a property resulting from a split or merger), the BID levy will be due on the new assessment from the effective date of the entry in the rating list, and the BID levy will be apportioned accordingly. Where there was no liable person as at 1 April of each financial year, the liable person as at the effective date of the rating list entry will be liable to pay the BID levy for that year.

### What will happen following a removal from the rating list?

Where a property is taken out of rating (e.g. due to demolition or a split or a merged assessment), the BID levy will be due up to the date of the removal from the rating list and the annual. BID levy will be apportioned accordingly.

### Will there be discounts for empty properties?

For empty properties, there is no void period.

### How will the BID ensure recovery action?

Write-off action has only been authorised by Reading UK's BID Committee after extensive and thorough recovery action has been exhausted. Reading UK will make a provision for non-collection of levy and a prudent contingency will be established in each financial year. In the event of non-payment, Reading Borough Council will issue appropriate reminders. Summons will be issued and court action may be taken, for which extra costs will become payable by the levy payers concerned.

### What is the relationship of 'Reading UK' to the BID?

'Reading UK' is the not for profit inward investment company for Reading and has managed and delivered Reading's last three BIDs. Reading UK is the proposer of this BID renewal.

\* This option has never been implemented thus far, in the BID's 12 year existence.



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# How to vote

## **Postal ballot will take place ...**

A postal ballot of business ratepayers in the BID area will take place between 24 January and 21 February 2019.

## **On 10 January ...**

The Notice of Ballot along with a Ballot Statement outlining the key points of the BID proposal will be sent to the voting contact for your business.

## **On 17 January ...**

The full proposal will be mailed to voters.

## **Your ballot ...**

Your ballot paper will reach the named BID voting contact for your business on 24 January and must be cast and returned by 5pm on 21 February 2019. ERS is the designated independent electoral organisation carrying out the election on behalf of Reading Borough Council.

For more information on the ballot process or the business plan proposal, contact the BID Manager, Bobby Lonergan, on **0118 937 4462 / [bid@livingreading.co.uk](mailto:bid@livingreading.co.uk)**

**If you want Reading's success to continue we urge you to vote YES for the 2019-24 BID.**



**Jo Lovelock**

Leader of Reading Borough Council

'Funding from the Reading BID, coupled with in-kind support from the Council, has created an attractive and vibrant heart to Reading, bringing benefit to town centre businesses, Reading residents, visitors and the many thousands of people who work in the area.'





# VOTE YES!

We are proud of the BID achievements to date. If you want this success to continue, you must vote yes for the next BID.

## Find out more

Please call at any time for further information on this proposal, a member of the BID team will be happy to answer your questions or visit you personally.

Reading UK  
The Library Building  
Abbey Square  
Reading RG1 3BQ  
T 0118 937 4462  
E [bid@livingreading.co.uk](mailto:bid@livingreading.co.uk)  
[www.readingbid.co.uk](http://www.readingbid.co.uk)

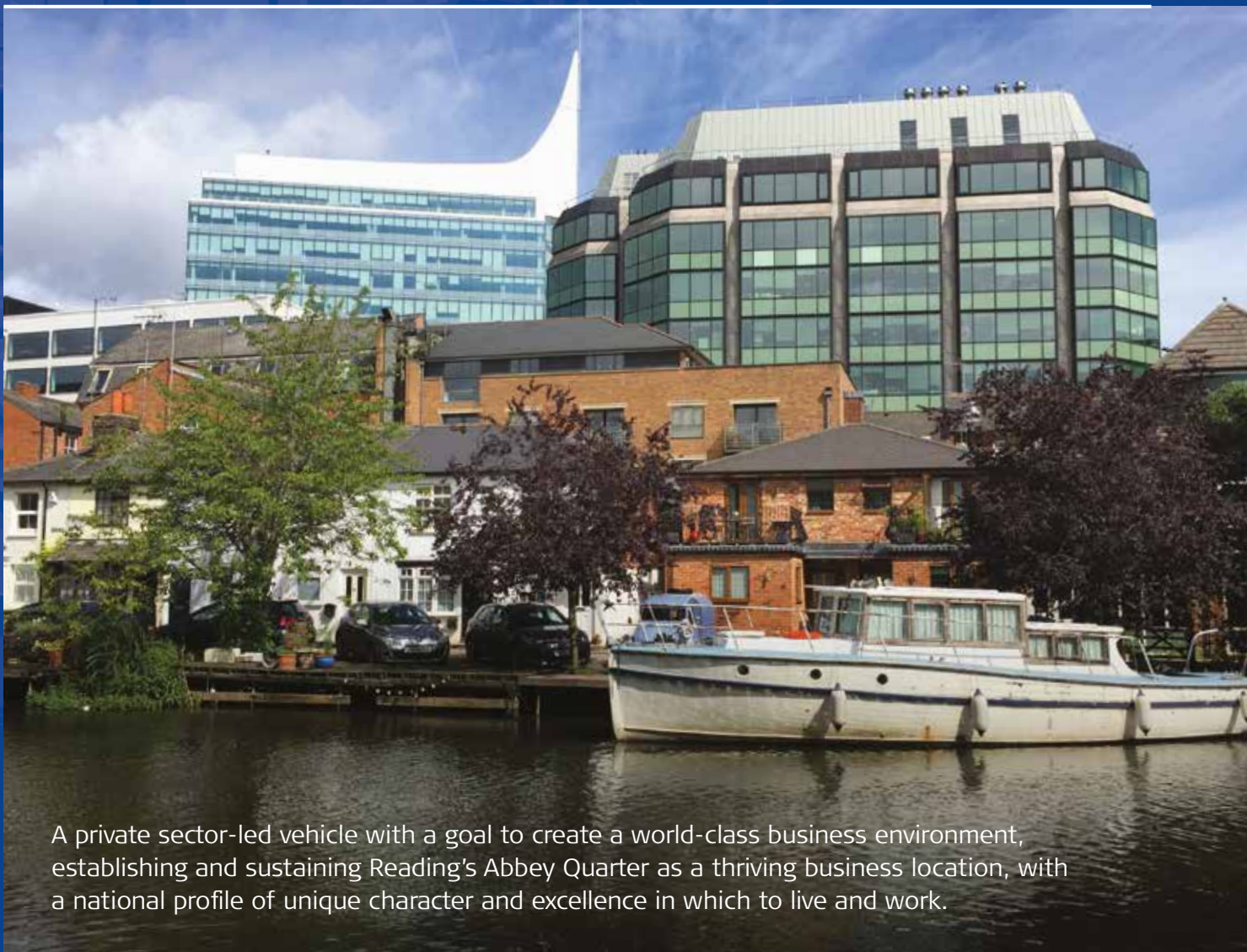




# ABB EY QUARTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

**BUSINESS PLAN 2019-24**

Reading UK  
Growing opportunity



A private sector-led vehicle with a goal to create a world-class business environment, establishing and sustaining Reading's Abbey Quarter as a thriving business location, with a national profile of unique character and excellence in which to live and work.

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## What is a Commercial BID?

This is an area which has a mandate to create extra services in addition to those already provided by the public authorities to maximise the experience for businesses, shoppers and workers. The decision to create and continue a BID is enabled through a vote of all eligible businesses in the BID area. If carried, they contribute a small levy on their business rates (typically around 1%) to deliver the plan of extra services.

There are over 300 business improvement districts across the UK including the current Reading Central BID which 530 town centre businesses have voted to maintain on three occasions since 2006.

Reading UK exists to boost business and enhance visitor experiences in a way that improves the quality of life of all in the Reading region.

## Who is proposing the BID?

The BID proposer is Reading UK who initiated and manage Reading's previous town centre BIDs. Reading UK is the inward investment company for Reading. It is a non-profit, Community Interest Company limited by guarantee, established in 2005. The Board of Reading UK is made up of founder members of the company, local stakeholders and major financial contributors including:

- Jacobs the Jewellers
- Peter Brett Associates
- Broad Street Mall (Chair Reading BID)
- First Great Western
- M & G
- Barton Willmore Partnership
- Reading Borough Council
- University of Reading
- Mapletree (Green Park)
- Oracle Shopping Centre
- Reading Football Club
- Reading College
- Lichfields
- PWC
- Reading UK



# Invest in a positive Abbey Quarter future

## Dear Colleague,

You are a business operating within the area surrounding Reading's historic Abbey Ruins and prison. Reading UK, the economic development and marketing company for Reading, has consulted on whether there is interest from businesses such as yours to develop a new BID to deliver improvements in areas such as public realm, place marketing, regenerating the waterways, safer and cleaner public spaces and a clear commercial requirement to attract and retain the very best talent.



Yours faithfully,

**Adam Jacobs**  
Co-owner Jacobs the Jewellers,  
Chair, Reading UK

A business improvement district (BID) model is proposed for the Abbey Quarter. BIDs are funded by a small levy that is collected as a supplement to business rates and the BID model is one that operates successfully all over the UK and internationally.

A BID gives our local business community a direct say in where money should be invested.

**Based on a 1% levy, the total amount raised that could be directly invested for the benefit of the Abbey Quarter would be in excess of £400,000 annually.**

A BID can only be implemented after a ballot takes place and a majority 'yes' vote is achieved. Only organisations with a rateable value in excess of £10,000 per annum are entitled to vote. It is therefore crucial that every organisation in the proposed area participate in the ballot.

The BID would come under the auspices of Reading UK, Reading's economic development and marketing company which already runs Reading Central BID in the retail core. It will be managed by an independent operating board made up of representatives from amongst the business community which will decide the priorities for activity. A modest investment will deliver a world-class business district and a positive return on your investment.

As Chair of Reading UK and owner of a business in Reading Central BID, I ask you to consider this exciting proposition and vote 'yes' to the benefits it offers business in Reading's historic Abbey Quarter community.



# Abbey Quarter BID area

## Streets included in BID 2019-24

Abbey Square, Abbey Street, Abbots Walk, Crane Wharf, Duncan Place, Forbury Road, Forbury Square, Highbridge Wharf, Kenavon Drive, Kennet Side, Kennet Street, Kings Road (partial 1-121), Queens Road (partial 3-75), The Forbury (partial) and Watlington Street (partial 1-25).





# Reading in numbers

## Leading UK city for growth.

For the third year running, Reading (with Oxford) is the highest performing city

This reflects continued improvement across a range of measures including jobs, income and skills.

DEMOs/PwC Good Growth for Cities 2018



## Strong demand for office space

Within Greater Reading in 2017/18, 124 office lease deals were concluded, leasing a total of nearly 644,000sq ft. of office space, with an average deal of just over 5,000sq ft. across 78 buildings.

CoStar



## Fastest growing economy to 2021.

Reading is forecast to be the fastest growing city/town in the UK, with 2.3% Gross Value Added (GVA) growth per year over the period 2018-2021

EY's Regional Economic Forecast 2018

## Among Europe's top 25 cities for investment

Reading has been ranked among the top 25 European business cities of the future for foreign direct investment.

European Cities of the Future Awards 2018/19

# Abbey Quarter – Your priorities

We consulted widely – in writing, by survey, face to face, building tenant meetings and digitally to get your feedback on what initiatives you thought important or would like to see over the coming five years.

## Here is a brief summary of your feedback:

- Eye catching enhanced public realm
- Re-generate the historic Abbey Quarter waterways
- Extra security tackling crime and antisocial behaviour
- Seasonal lighting
- Seasonal floral displays
- Focus on safety measures for staff around car parks and waterways
- Fast response to issues surrounding security and ASB
- Staff work-life balance initiatives/fitness/cultural/wellbeing events
- Vibrant events calendar highlighting cultural, historical and leisure opportunities to attract and keep a stable motivated workforce
- Communal recycling schemes and programme of sustainability projects
- Improved communication/intelligence and networking opportunities
- Improved wayfinding and signage
- Positive working and money saving shared service procurement with the current Reading Central BID
- Regional and national place marketing
- Celebrate the Abbey Quarter's historic and cultural qualities to brand the area as an iconic business destination
- Acting as your voice, co-ordinated lobbying



**Kim Cohen**  
Partner, Barton Willmore

'As an employer who cares about the working environment of our staff and maintaining a positive trading environment to build a world class business destination, Barton Willmore supports a positive vote for the Abbey Quarter Commercial District.'

## A UK Smart City Reading is ranked among the UK's top 20 leading 'smart cities'

Reading is a key challenger city which has laid the foundations to become a 'smart city'. Using technology to tackle urban challenges, Reading is expected to make major strides over the coming years. The Index highlighted the launch of the Reading 2050 Vision and the Thames Valley Low Carbon Project in particular as key smart initiatives.



# Reading Abbey Quarter Commercial District aims to be:

A private sector-led vehicle with a goal to create a world-class business environment, establishing and sustaining Reading's Abbey Quarter as a thriving business location, with a national profile of unique character and excellence in which to live and work that can:

- Achieve a positive return on your investment
- Attract enthusiastic qualified workers to the Abbey Quarter and maximise staff retention by building an attractive, healthy work environment
- Coordinate businesses as a powerful single voice to promote the improvement in both the Abbey Quarter's public realm and the quality of its commercial, cultural and leisure provision
- Create a confident sense of place through an imaginative planned programme of events
- Increase the Commercial District's desirability, attract inward investment and achieve regional competitive advantage
- Work with public sector partners to create and sustain a safe, clean and vibrant environment in which to live, work and visit
- Provide a mechanism for stakeholders to influence the formation and delivery of policies for the improvement of the Abbey Quarter

Our proposal is presented with propositions within the following work streams and programs:

- Cleaner and Greener
- Safer
- Branded
- Connected



**Bill Gornall King**  
Partner, Boyes Turner  
President Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce

'With the re-opening of our historic Reading Abbey and plans being discussed to re-vitalise Reading Prison, now is a unique opportunity for all of us in the 'Abbey Quarter' to come together, to build on these positives and to position ourselves as one of the pre-eminent business locations in the south. I urge colleagues in this historic area to engage with the proposal and explore the possibilities the proposed 'Abbey Quarter' Commercial District can offer to all of our businesses, our staff and visitors.'

## Cleaner and greener

The BID will identify streets that its constituent businesses see as a priority and will seek to lever in public sector match funding to enable a programme of improvements to be made over its five-year lifespan.

- Investigate re-generating the historic Abbey Quarter waterways by:
  - Adding semi-permanent art lighting installations on the bridges between Duke Street and the Prudential (Kings Road) to attract visitors and lessen fear of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) among staff leaving work at night time
  - Introduce punting on the Kennet between Oracle and Reading Prison as a leisure facility
  - Deliver waterside coffee concessions and berthing for barges to attract visitors and minimise perception of risk and ASB
- Seasonal floral displays (200-300 floral baskets, troughs and planters)
- Seasonal lighting and decorations scheme at Christmas
- Implement initiatives that will improve business efficiency and profitability, such as consultancy advice
- Energy cost reduction initiatives and innovative waste management and recycling including paper, cardboard and coffee grounds. Further savings can come from working positively with current Reading Central BID initiatives
- Identify 'hotspots' that require street washing and deep cleaning which have high footfall, ASB, concentrations of bars, restaurants and fast food outlets
- Organise a rapid response to supplement Reading Borough Council (RBC) services dealing with the removal of graffiti, pavement detritus, fly-tipping, fly-posting etc. including within private property (that would not otherwise be dealt with by the local authority) in timescales acceptable to businesses in a world-class business district

**£501k**  
investment  
over five  
years

## A high productivity centre

Reading is the third most productive city in the UK with average productivity per person of £68,900.

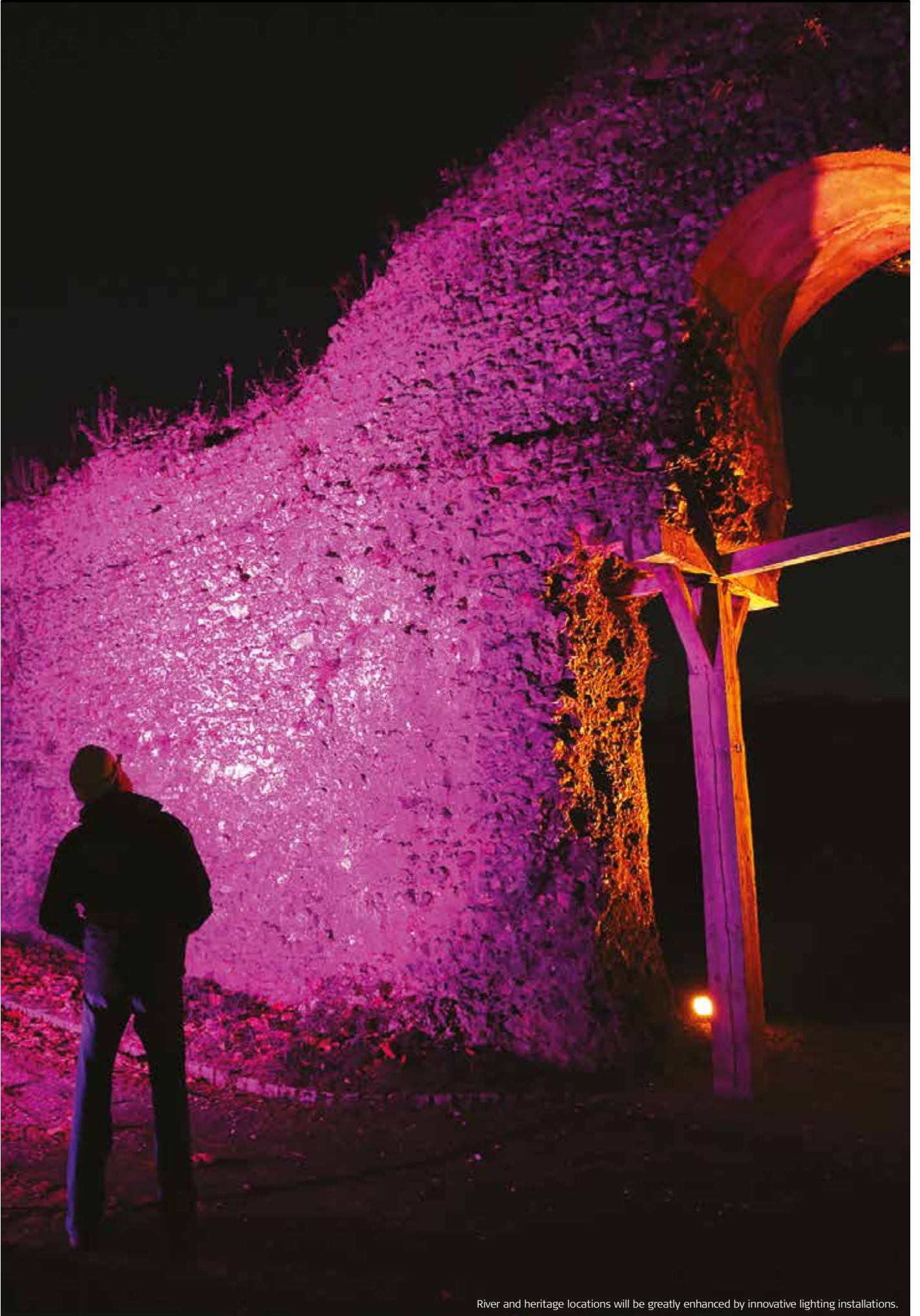
Centre for Cities



**John Ellis,**  
Reading Office  
Senior Partner,  
PricewaterhouseCoopers

'The 'Abbey Quarter' Commercial District that is being proposed, deserves everyone's attention. With business support this initiative could result in our area gaining greater profile as a premier business location nationally.'





River and heritage locations will be greatly enhanced by innovative lighting installations.

## Safer

- Security/warden service, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, employing full-time professional wardens working with your business, the police and associated agencies to patrol the area combatting drug dealing/taking, rough sleeping, shoplifting, littering, aggressive begging and anti-social behaviour
- Funding support for the CCTV operation to help ensure that Abbey Quarter business benefits from near 24hour CCTV with additional coverage introduced where necessary
- Increase support to Reading Business Against Crime (RBAC) and Town Safe Radio Scheme currently successfully deployed by over fifty businesses in the town centre, linking them with CCTV, business wardens and Police
- Lobby for greater police presence day and night to help combat nationally growing levels of crime and ASB
- Working with Reading Business Against Crime (RBAC), fund 'DISC' – a cloud based system to share information on aggressive beggars, shoplifters and ASB offenders and ban them from areas and premises
- Provide an interface with businesses on street based issues to liaise with the police, the council, its service providers and contractors on street management and maintenance and business continuity during construction work
- Build close working with partners – police, council, member organisations and the voluntary sector to maximise security for visitors, residents and workers promoting the Abbey Quarter as a 'low risk' location

**£370k**  
investment  
over five  
years

**A high wage economy.** Reading is one of the most dynamic economies for wages, jobs, high skills, productivity and business start-ups in the country

Centre for Cities



**Nigel Horton Baker**  
Executive Director,  
Reading UK

'I firmly believe we can promote the Abbey Quarter nationally as a unique, iconic business location and an appealing place to work by exploiting the historic Abbey Ruins re-opening, making full use of the untapped opportunities our waterways afford.'

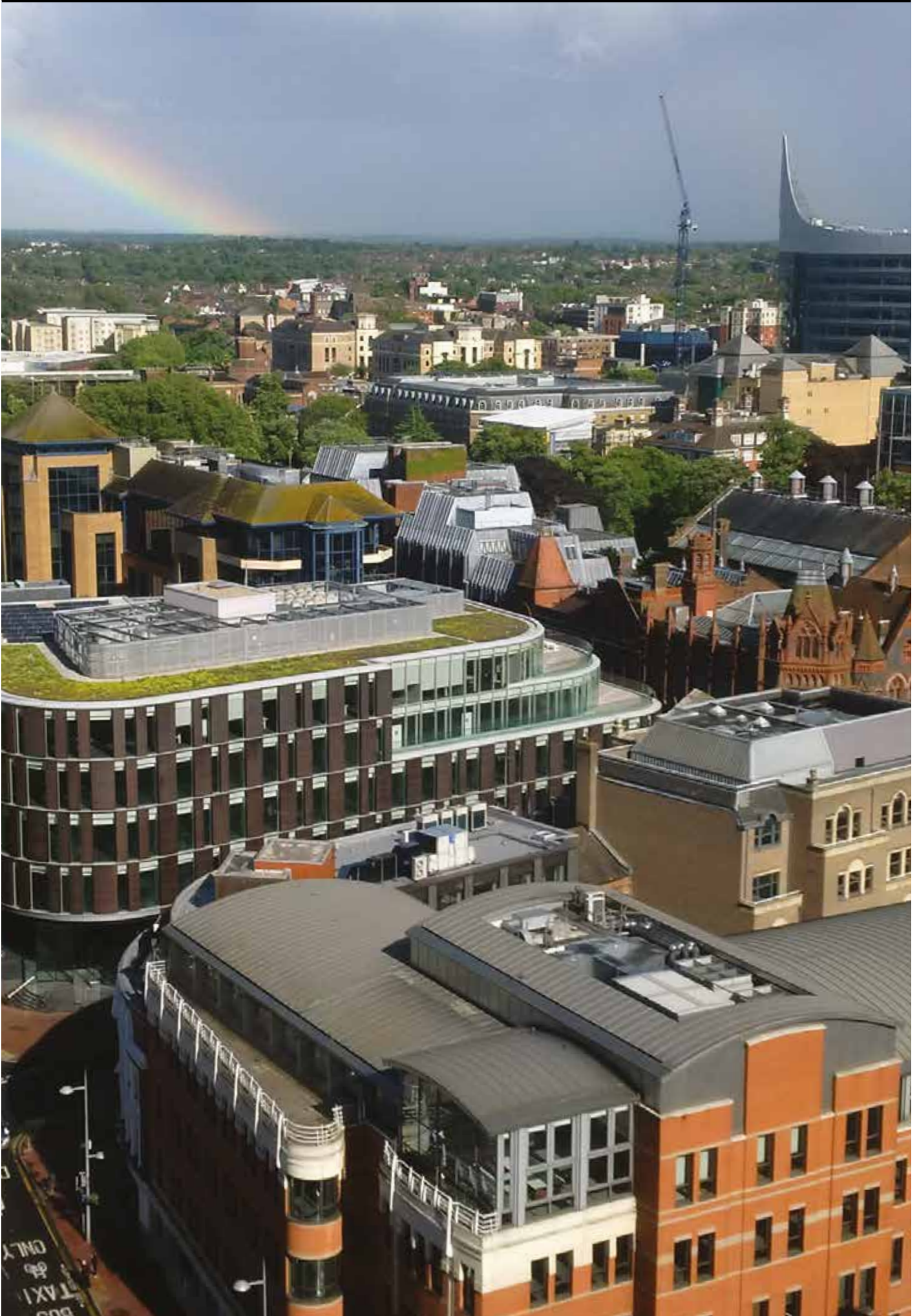




**Reading UK will ensure the considerable security successes achieved in Reading Central BID will be enjoyed by your business and workers in the Abbey Quarter. PC Vince Moore working closely with BID Warden Daniel Hughes to reduce shoplifting, crime and anti-social behaviour in our town centre.**

In the last quarter of 2018 there were 50 arrests made resulting in prison sentences, Community Protection Notices (CPNs) and Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) which exclude persistent offenders from the town centre. As a result of ongoing police and warden work, aggressive begging is at its lowest in 5 years and business feedback reports shoplifting is down almost 40% on early 2018.







## Connected

This theme covers events and a communications plan to foster positive work-life balance perceptions among workers that maximises staff retention and loyalty.

- Host a calendar of regular eye-catching events to animate public spaces in the Commercial District at strategically selected points in the year including the festive season, Valentine's Day, Easter, summer holidays and Halloween to ensure a vibrant environment for workers
- Introduce an ongoing networking schedule allowing businesses to showcase their offer and provide valuable business to business opportunities
- Initiate and manage a series of Abbey Quarter health and social initiatives such as choirs, aerobics classes, mindfulness, health screening, jogging and many more activities to encourage workers and businesses to engage with each other, identify with their environment and strengthen loyalty and staff retention
- Introduce an Abbey Quarter Staff Benefits Scheme offering your employees the chance to enjoy exclusive discounts at a large range of outlets including bars, restaurants and shops throughout the town centre. This can be tied to a developing scheme underway in Reading Central BID which could involve over 25000 local employees
- Reading UK has built-in capacity to support the Abbey Quarter in the areas of employment and skills and will communicate and market these opportunities on an ongoing basis

**£300k**  
investment  
over five  
years



**UK digital capital.**  
Reading has eight times the UK average concentration of tech businesses

Tech Nation 2018



**Trine Oestergaard**  
Managing Director,  
House of Fisher

'I am convinced a positive response in the Abbey Quarter, to the proposed Commercial District, will offer significant benefits over the coming years to our key stakeholders, guests and staff.'

## Branded

- Identify and implement branding initiatives throughout the Abbey Quarter and through related marketing collateral to reinforce its sense of place, identity and excellence
- Celebrate the Abbey Quarter's untapped historic and cultural heritage showcasing Reading Prison, the newly opened Abbey Ruins and surrounding waterways to brand the area as an iconic business destination
- Regional and national place marketing. Improved wayfinding and signage including a digital 'How to get to' guide/map
- Produce a multi-media tool that provides a broad range of information for new, existing and potential businesses, investors and visitors – from where to buy a sandwich through to information on rental values and inward investment opportunities
- Support and lobby the agencies charged with attracting inward investment to the city region, ensuring that the Commercial District remains a key driver of our economy

**£444k**  
investment  
over five  
years



**Jo Lovelock**  
Leader of Reading  
Borough Council

'The historic Abbey Quarter which takes in The Forbury, Abbey Ruins, Reading Prison and the waterways that run through it, is a precious asset. BID status will kick-start a new programme of activity and development allowing businesses a proper say in shaping this.'



# Essential information

## BID levy and liability

The initiatives outlined in this business plan can be delivered from a levy of 1% of rateable values. The liability to pay the levy is on all hereditaments (listed in the 2019 Non-Domestic Rating List that have a rateable value of £10,000 or more, and that are within the proposed BID area).

### What will be the cost to my business?

At a 1% levy, the cost to all business in the BID will be:

Rateable value of property	Annual levy	Weekly cost	Daily cost
£10,000	£100	£1.92	£0.27
£20,000	£200	£3.85	£0.55
£50,000	£500	£9.60	£1.37
£100,000	£1,000	£19.23	£2.75
£250,000	£2,500	£48.08	£6.89
£500,000	£5,000	£96.15	£13.74

If you would like to find out the rateable value of your business, refer to your rates bill or check it at [www.voa.gov.uk](http://www.voa.gov.uk)

### The BID levy, liability and collection

A BID levy of 1% of rateable value will be charged on all hereditaments that appear in the local Non-Domestic Rating List, as of 1 January 2019. This figure will remain unaltered throughout the term of the BID (regardless of further changes that may occur to provide certainty and defend against charge fluctuations). No individual hereditament within the Abbey Quarter area will be disregarded or exempted from the levy.

The levy may increase by an inflationary factor of up to 3% in successive years (e.g. up from 1% to 1.03% in year 2). In the case of an empty, partly refurbished or demolished hereditament (rateable property) the property owner will be liable for the levy, and will be entitled to vote. There will be no void period and every property will pay for all 365 days of the year.

The levy will be collected by Reading Borough Council with a provision for instalments.

### Funding priorities

Reading UK is committed to keeping overhead costs to a minimum and directing most resource to frontline projects and services. It will seek in-kind and pro bono support from partners in the wider community to cover overheads and voluntary contributions to supplement the 2019-24 budget.

## The BID ballot

### Voting entitlement

A ratepayer will be entitled to vote in the BID ballot if they are listed as a non-domestic ratepayer on the date of notice of ballot. The following rules apply: the ballot will have to meet two tests.

1. A simple majority of those voting must vote in favour (50%+).
2. Those voting in favour must represent 50%+ of the aggregate rateable value of those hereditaments that voted.

Each business person entitled to vote in the BID ballot shall have one vote in respect of each hereditament that they occupy or own in the geographical area of the BID on which non-domestic rates are payable.

### Commencement and duration of the BID

The BID, if approved, will start on 1 April 2019 and will operate for five years. A postal ballot of business ratepayers in the BID area, based on the list of non-domestic ratepayers, will take place between 24 January and 21 February 2019. The result of the ballot will be published on the Reading Borough Council website on 22 February (the same day as Reading Central BID vote is announced).

## Levy projected income and expenditure

Income Based on 97% collection	Year 1 2019	Year 2 2020	Year 3 2021	Year 4 2022	Year 5 2023	Totals
Abbey Quarter levy 1%	409,000	409,000	409,000	409,000	409,000	2,045,000
New additional voluntary	0	0	5,000	5,000	10,000	20,000
Sponsorship target	0	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	35,000
<b>Total income</b>	<b>409,000</b>	<b>414,000</b>	<b>424,000</b>	<b>424,000</b>	<b>429,000</b>	<b>2,100,000</b>

Expenditure Based on 97% collection	Year 1 2019	Year 2 2020	Year 3 2021	Year 4 2022	Year 5 2023	Totals
Branding/place marketing and events	70,000	90,000	100,000	100,000	84,000	444,000
Work life balance/connected	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	300,000
Public realm/cleaner	80,000	147,000	113,000	83,000	78,000	501,000
Security/safer	70,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	370,000
BID service plan expenditure	280,000	372,000	348,000	318,000	297,000	1615,000
Net BID balance						
Management and administration*	69,000	71,000	73,000	75,000	77,000	365,000
Contingency	16,000	16,000	16,000	22,000	0	70,000
Levy collection*	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	50,000
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>377,000</b>	<b>471,000</b>	<b>449,000</b>	<b>428,000</b>	<b>385,000</b>	<b>2,100,000</b>

Variations in the budget can be made by the BID Committee where alterations represent less than a 25% variation of budget. For larger variations, an EGM or AGM will be held.

- Fixed costs shown under the heading of 'management and administration' will be funded through voluntary contributions where possible and revenues freed will be allocated to extra/expanded agreed projects
- \*Management/administration and levy collection figure of £415k represents just 19% of projected levy income over 5 years, well within the BID Industry Criteria and Guidance and includes all levy collection charges. Where possible this collection will be funded through non-BID levy income to release further resource to programmes
- In the event of changes in circumstance during the lifetime of the 2019-24 BID, Reading UK will bill at the rate on the local Non-Domestic Rating List, as of 1 January 2019

## Measuring success

Formalising a series of quantifiable KPIs will allow for a full evaluation of success. The following will measure critical factors to inform future decision-making. KPIs will be monitored by the BID team and reported back to the levy payers at bi-monthly BID management meetings.

- Cleansing (Excellent = 10. Very poor = 0) review **monthly**
- Maintenance (Excellent =10. Very poor = 0) review **monthly**
- Footfall % +/- review **monthly**
- Crime levels % +/- review **quarterly**
- Vacancy rates/empty units % +/- review **quarterly**
- Business climate % +/- review **quarterly**
- Visitor +/- review **bi-annually**
- Number of marketing campaigns – review **annual**
- Number of events. Plan **tbc**



To ensure that BID resources are directed towards delivering real added value, a positive partnership with Thames Valley Police and Reading Borough Council will continue ensuring meaningful dialogue on baseline services including highways, street furniture, maintenance, cleansing, CCTV, community safety, market trading, licensing, enforcement of street activities, lighting, landscaping, environmental health and trading standards are maintained and higher standards met where possible.

## Frequently asked questions

### Will the levy be adjusted for inflation?

The levy can be subject to an annual adjustment in line with the (All Items) Retail Price Index, to account for inflation, up to a maximum of 3% on the previous year's levy.

### Who collects the levy?

In accordance with the regulations, the Abbey Quarter levy will be collected by Reading Borough Council on an annual basis and the funds transferred to Reading UK net of collection costs. Final yearly accounts will be produced and submitted to Companies House by Reading UK.

### When will I need to pay?

The levy will be due in full on 1 April each year that the Abbey Quarter BID is in operation, and will be invoiced on a separate bill from the business rates.

### Will the levy change as a result of a rating valuation appeal?

There will be no adjustments during the year to reflect changes in individual rating values due to appeals. Changes in rating values will be reflected in a corresponding change to the levy collected from the appropriate properties in the following year.

### Will new businesses be liable for the levy?

Where a new assessment is brought into the rating list (e.g. a newly erected property, a refurbished property or a property resulting from a split or merger), the BID levy will be due on the new assessment from the effective date of the entry in the rating list, and the BID levy will be apportioned accordingly. Where there was no liable person as at 1 April of each financial year, the liable person as at the effective date of the rating list entry will be liable to pay the BID levy for that year.

### What will happen following a removal from the rating list?

Where a property is taken out of rating (e.g. due to demolition or a split or a merged assessment), the BID levy will be due up to the date of the removal from the rating list and the annual BID levy will be apportioned accordingly.

### Will there be discounts for empty properties?

For empty properties, there is no void period.

### How will the BID ensure recovery action?

Reading UK will make a provision for non-collection of levy and a prudent contingency will be established in each financial year. In the event of non-payment, Reading Borough Council will issue appropriate reminders, summons will be issued and court action may be taken, for which extra costs will become payable by the levy payers concerned.

## Governance

### Who is proposing the BID?

The BID proposer is Reading UK who initiated and manage Reading's previous town centre BIDs. Reading UK is the inward investment company for Reading. It is a non-profit, Community Interest Company limited by guarantee, established in 2005. The Board of Reading UK is made up of founder members of the company, local stakeholders and major financial contributors including:

- Jacobs the Jewellers
- Peter Brett Associates
- Broad Street Mall (Chair Reading BID)
- First Great Western
- M & G
- Barton Willmore Partnership
- Reading Borough Council
- University of Reading
- Mapletree (Green Park)
- Oracle Shopping Centre
- Reading Football Club
- Reading College
- Lichfields
- PWC
- Reading UK

### Management of the BID

Reading UK considers the Abbey Quarter District an integral part of economic development, and will oversee its delivery. Reading UK will act as the 'BID Body' but will continue to delegate operational control to a committee of the Company's Board of Directors – the Committee. The Board appoints the committee chair and delegates authority to the committee to deliver the business plan.

Business District committee members are stakeholders and volunteers appointed on an annual basis from representative business, local agency sectors from appropriate geographical areas within the Abbey Quarter. This Committee is managed by the BID Manager, who is a staff member of Reading UK. In addition, Reading UK has built-in capacity to support the Abbey Quarter in the areas of employment and skills, economic development, marketing and communications.

# How to vote

A postal ballot of business ratepayers in the BID area will take place between 24 January and 21 February 2019. On 10 January, the Notice of Ballot along with a Ballot Statement outlining the key points of the BID proposal will be sent to the voting contact for your business.

Your ballot paper will reach the named BID voting contact for your business on 24 January and must be cast and returned by 5pm on 21 February 2019.

ERS (Electoral Reform Services) is the designated independent electoral organisation carrying out the election on behalf of Reading Borough Council.

## Find out more

Contact, Bobby Lonergan,  
**0118 937 4462 / [bid@livingreading.co.uk](mailto:bid@livingreading.co.uk)**  
**[www.abbeyquarter.co.uk](http://www.abbeyquarter.co.uk)**











Reading UK  
The Library Building  
Abbey Square  
Reading RG1 3BQ  
T 0118 937 4462  
E [bid@livingreading.co.uk](mailto:bid@livingreading.co.uk)  
[www.abbeyquarter.co.uk](http://www.abbeyquarter.co.uk)



## Reading Central and Abbey Quarter BIDs

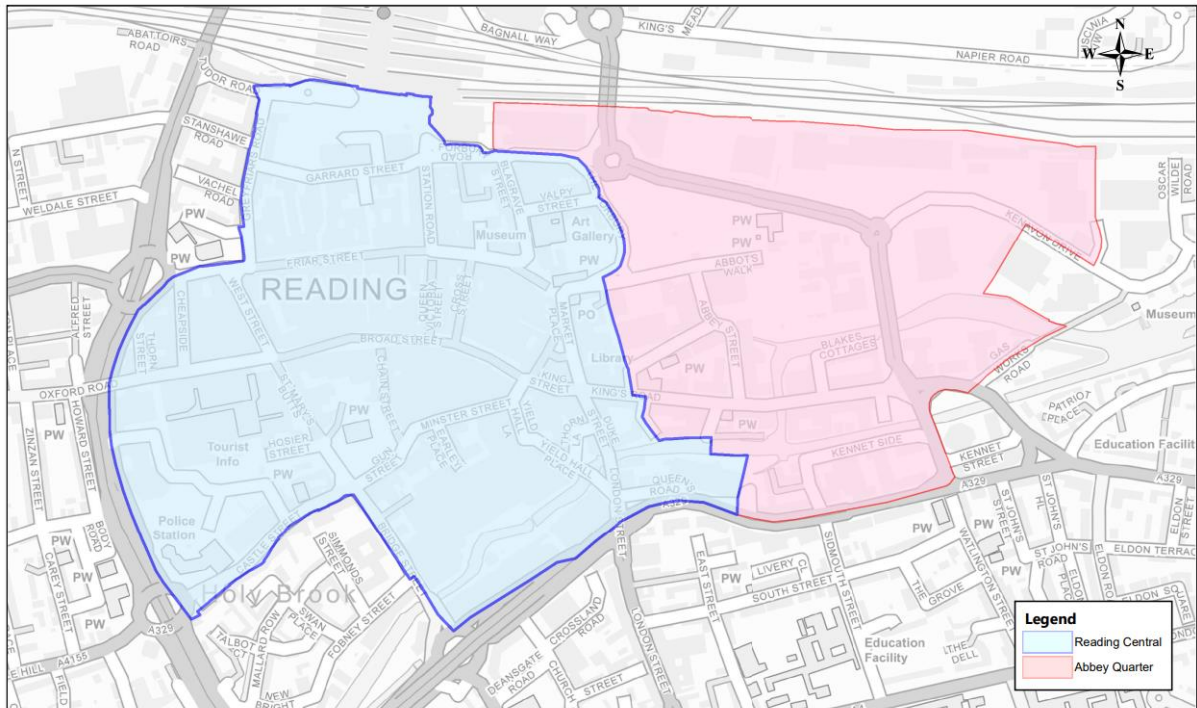
### List of Streets

Abbey Quarter BID	Reading Central BID
Abbey Square	Blagrove Street
Abbey Street	Bridge Street (part)
Abbots Walk	Broad Street
Crane Wharf	Butter Market
Duncan Place	Castle Street
Forbury Road	Chain Street,
Forbury Square	<i>Cheapside</i>
Highbridge Wharf	Clonmel Walk
Kenavon Drive	Cross Street
Kennet Side	Cusden Walk
Kennet Street	Duke Street
Kings Road (partial 1-121)	Dusseldorf Way
Queens Road (partial 3-75)	Friar Street
The Forbury (partial)	Garrard Street
Watlington Street (partial 1-25)	<i>Greyfriars Road</i>
	Gun Street
	Forbury Road (part)
	Hosier Street
	High Street
	Kings Road (part)
	King Street
	London Street (part)
	Market Place
	Merchants Place
	<i>Minster Street</i>
	Oxford Road (part)
	Queen's Road (part)
	Queen Victoria Street
	Queens Walk
	San Francisco Libre Walk
	Station Approach
	Station Hill
	<i>Station Hill Development</i>
	Station Road
	St Mary's Butts
	The Forbury (part)
	Union Street
	West Street
	Wiston Terrace
	Valpy Street
	<i>Newly proposed streets</i>



# Reading Central and Abbey Quarter BID Area Maps

Produced by RBC's GIS & Mapping Services team



Title: **BID Areas**  
**Reading Central and Abbey Quarter**

Drg.No.: GIS00525

Date: 30/06/2023 Scale at A4: 1:6000

Produced by GIS & Mapping Services

Ref: G:\Mapinfo\Data\Client datasets\Chief Executives\Business Improvement District\BID Areas 2023



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<b>Project / Proposal Name or Reference:</b> <i>Reading Central &amp; Abbey Quarter BID Ballot</i>	<b>Date:</b> 30-Aug-23	<b>Your Name:</b> Alexa Volker
---	---------------------------	-----------------------------------

<b>1. IMPACT ON CARBON EMISSIONS</b>				
HOW WILL THIS PROJECT/PROPOSAL AFFECT:	CONSIDERATIONS <i>See guidance below on determining whether negative or positive impacts are High, Medium or Low</i>	IMPACT? <i>Use drop down list</i>	GUIDANCE IF NEGATIVE/NIL RATING HAS BEEN AWARDED	SUMMARISE HOW YOU PLAN TO MANAGE AND REDUCE ANY NEGATIVE IMPACTS
1 ENERGY USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* More energy will be consumed or emissions generated (by RBC or others) = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No extra energy use is involved or any additional energy use will be met from renewable sources = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Energy use will be reduced or renewable energy sources will replace existing fossil fuel energy = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Low Positive	Consider: - Energy efficiency measures - Renewable energy - Reducing demand for energy	By promoting actions to reduce energy use in office, commercial and retail businesses. We have regular contact with 600+ businesses in the town centre. We will provide business advice (1:1 and group training) and providing employees with basic information on climate change and how to reduce the impacts. At Christmas we have a seasonal lighting display throughout the town centre (mid November to end December), for the enjoyment of visitors making it more attractive to shop, socialise and visit. We use only LED low voltage lights, the usage has been calculated to be the equivalent of only 870 homes turning on 1 x 100watt light bulb per house each day. They run of the Council's electricity supply to the street lights which is 100% 'green' electricity which is certified through REGOs (Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin). We will re-contract this service in 2024 and seek to further reduce, pro rata, the emissions of the new scheme.
2 WASTE GENERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* More waste will be generated (by RBC or others) = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No waste will be generated = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Less waste will be generated OR amount of waste that is reused/ recycled will be increased = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Low Positive	Consider: - Re-usable/recycled goods - Recycling facilities - Reducing/reusing resources	Through the BID's weekly cardboard collection service and quarterly small electrical recycling services (both contracted through Reading Borough Council), we ensure recycling is done locally, also offering businesses an easy to use service that encourages them to recycle continuously. We seek to increase the uptake of these services and research other schemes including the recycling of laptops into local community training for work projects around the borough.
3 USE OF TRANSPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* RBC or others will need to travel more OR transport goods/people more often/further = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No extra transport will be necessary = Nil Impact</li> <li>* The need to travel, the use of transport and/or of fossil fuel-based transport will be reduced = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Low Positive	Consider: - Use of public transport - Reducing need to travel or transport goods - Alternative fuels/electric vehicles/walking and cycling	All marketing and promotional activities positively reinforces the use of the trains, buses and active travel options. For events in the town centre public transport options are listed encourage both staff and visitors to the town centre to use these. Active walking campaigns include the Annual Reading Walking Festival and the BID's weekly WalksWorks sessions. The TravelPax initiative will also encourage money off travel when using Reading Buses.
<b>2. IMPACT ON RESILIENCE TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE</b>				
HOW WILL THIS PROJECT/PROPOSAL AFFECT THE ABILITY OF READING TO WITHSTAND:	CONSIDERATIONS <i>See guidance below on determining whether negative or positive impacts are High, Medium or Low</i>	IMPACT? <i>Use drop down list</i>	GUIDANCE IF NEGATIVE/NIL RATING HAS BEEN AWARDED	SUMMARISE HOW YOU PLAN TO MANAGE AND REDUCE ANY NEGATIVE IMPACTS
4 HEATWAVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Increased exposure of vulnerable people and/or infrastructure to heat stress = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No increase in exposure to heat stress = Nil Impact</li> <li>Reduced exposure of vulnerable people and/or infrastructure to heat stress = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Greater need for cooling, ventilation, shading and hydration methods	We are not planning any infrastructure projects. At outdoor events in the town centre weather forecasts will be monitored, risk analysis undertaken and provide suitable first aid services in the event that any one is affected by high temperatures on the day. Research has begun with the Council's Highways team on urban planting and the trees for streets campaign.
5 DROUGHT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Water use will increase and/or no provision made for water management = Negative Impact</li> <li>* Levels of water use will not be changed = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Provision made for water management, water resources will be protected = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Greater need for water management and perhaps reserve supplies	We undertake bi-annual deep cleaning of the payments using water. We will take care to avoid drought periods when undertaking this service.
6 FLOODING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Levels of surface water run-off will increase, no management of flood risk = Negative Impact</li> <li>* Levels of surface water run-off &amp; flood risk are not affected = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Sustainable drainage measures incorporated, positive steps to reduce &amp; manage flood risk = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Consider flood defenses mechanisms or alternative arrangements (business continuity)	We will have no direct impact.
7 HIGH WINDS / STORMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Exposure to higher wind speeds is increased or is not managed = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No change to existing level of exposure to higher wind speeds = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Exposure to higher wind speeds is being actively managed &amp; reduced = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Greater need for stabilisation measures, robust structures resilient to high winds	We will have no direct impact. Weather forecasts will be monitored and risk assessments undertaken. We will act on the information at the time and cancel events if they could be affected by storms or high winds in a way that would cause physical damage or risk to individuals. This includes the weekly WalksWorks initiative.
8 DISRUPTION TO SUPPLY CHAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Exposure to supply chain disruption for key goods and services is increased = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No change in exposure to supply chain disruption for key goods and services = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Exposure to supply chain disruption for key goods and services is reduced = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Source key goods and services locally as it reduces exposure to supply chain disruption and boosts the local economy	We always seek to source goods and services locally to minimise supply chain disruption caused by travel distances, as well reducing CO2 emissions. We work with our supply chain ensure they understand the actions needed to respond to the impact and effects of climate change.

**Weighing up the negative and positive impacts of your project, what is the overall rating you are assigning to your project?:**

**Net Low Positive**

*This overall rating is what you need to include in your report/ budget proposal, together with your explanation given below.*

**Guidance on Assessing the Degree of Negative and Positive Impacts:**

*Note: Not all of the considerations/ criteria listed below will necessarily be relevant to your project*

Low Impact (L)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* No publicity</li> <li>* Relevant risks to the Council or community are Low or none</li> <li>* No impact on service or corporate performance</li> <li>* No impact on capital assets, or relates to minor capital assets (minor works)</li> </ul>
Medium Impact (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Local publicity (good or bad)</li> <li>* Relevant risks to the Council or community are Medium</li> <li>* Affects delivery of corporate commitments</li> <li>* Affects service performance (e.g.: energy use; waste generation, transport use) by more than c.10%</li> <li>* Relates to medium-sized capital assets (individual buildings or small projects)</li> </ul>
High Impact (H)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* National publicity (good or bad)</li> <li>* Relevant risks to the Council or community are Significant or High</li> <li>* Affects delivery of regulatory commitments</li> <li>* Affects corporate performance (e.g.: energy; waste; transport use) by more than c.10%</li> <li>* Relates to major capital assets (larger buildings and infrastructure projects)</li> </ul>

In the box below please summarise any relevant policy context, explain how the overall rating has been derived, highlight significant impacts (positive and negative) and a plain actions being taken to mitigate negatives and increase positives. This text can be replicated in the 'Environment and Climate Impacts' section of your Committee Report, though please note you may need to supplement this climate impact assessment with commentary on other (non-climate) environmental impacts:

The aim of the BID is to improve the economic vitality of the town centre - retaining its strengths and repurposing it in order to attract new business, visitors and residents. It is important that we address the sustainability of the town centre by undertaking activities that do not have any negative impact on climate change or mitigate against the impacts it could have. We have introduced a theme to our new BID Business Plans for the next 5 years 'Environmental and Sustainable', to promote, train and provide businesses advice to help them and their employees adapt to the changes and reduce impact. We will also seek to minimise any climate impact of the services we offer. Overall our judgement of the BID Business Plans is that the impact on resilience will be "Nil" and the impact on emissions will be "Low Positive" indirect effect through education, promotion and training. The overall impact therefore of the new BID Business Plans proposed is a Net Low Positive and Low Impact (L) in terms of publicity and risk to the Council's impact on services and capital assets.



## Baseline Statements for the Reading Central & Abbey Quarter Business Improvement District (BID) 2024 – 2029

As a BID we must deliver services that are in addition to those provided by our statutory partners, Reading Borough Council and Thames Valley Police. To demonstrate this, we establish a 'baseline statement' that is effective on the day of the ballot, setting out what services are provided by those partners and allowing the BID to pledge additional support.

Details of the baseline statements from Reading Borough Council and Thames Valley Police delivered in the two Reading BIDs areas are detailed below:

### Public Highway Maintenance

Highways & Traffic Services Manager, Reading Borough Council

- Managing the Urban Traffic Management System.
- Leading on policy development for strategic policies e.g. planning, transport, urban design, resilience, energy, licensing, digital connectivity, public health, community safety.
- Managing the network to secure expeditious movement of traffic and to reduce/ prevent road casualties/improve air quality including managing planned works on the public highway (street works), and maintenance of traffic signalling equipment and CCTV cameras.
- Conducting bi-weekly highway inspections in accordance with the Council's inspection policy and hierarchy, identifying safety defects and arranging repair as per the Council's investigatory levels for action.
- Undertaking maintenance projects in accordance with the asset management principals.
- Maintaining and servicing all street lights on adopted public highways, including signage and road marking.
- Publishing licences for skips, scaffolding, utility works, A-boards and pavement cafés on the public highway.
- Enforcing and arranging removal of obstructions on the public highway.
- Managing Council-owned car parks and on street parking.
- Providing bus service allocation, bus stops, coach parking and taxi ranks, including bus shelter maintenance.
- Investing in the town centre to improve and update the public highway infrastructure.

### Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing

Community Partnerships Service Manager, Rough Sleeping Initiatives Team Leader, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer, Reading Borough Council

- Co-ordinating a strategic response to crime and disorder.
- Managing and maintaining Town Safe Radio.
- Managing town's CCTV network.
- Promoting business continuity to minimise business impacts during periods of disruption, via Berkshire Business Continuity Forum.
- Offering advice and guidance and preparing businesses for town centre evacuation and shelter plans in conjunction with the SECTU courses.
- Co-ordinating local authority liaison at the scene of emergencies.
- Co-ordinating the promotion and distribution of adverse weather warnings or emerging risks.
- Commissioning substance misuse treatment services and working with commissioned providers.

- Working in partnership to deliver harm reduction initiatives.
- Commissioning homelessness services and continue to work closely with Wardens.

### **Waste Collection and Street Scene**

Neighbourhood Services Manager, Reading Borough Council

- Providing a bagged domestic waste collection to residential properties within the town centre on a Tuesday morning.
- Providing a trade waste collection service from bins presented on the day of collection and collect pre-paid trade sacks.
- Delivering a street cleaning service to comply with the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005 - the town centre must be returned to an A1 graded standard before 8:30am.
- Providing a general town centre cleansing service (the area within the IDR) 7-days a week from 5.30am until 7.30pm every day of the year except Christmas day. The service will clean and sweep the main retail / shopping area of the town centre daily and will then move to a weekly cleansing schedule for the residential areas on the periphery of the town. Staff generally work on a 5/7 shift pattern, based on a 37-hour working week.
  - 5.30am – 1.30pm: mechanical sweeping, graffiti and washdown, manual sweepers, vehicle tippers emptying litter bins.
  - 11.00am – 7.30pm: mechanical sweeping, manual sweepers/electric cart emptying litter bins and bagged waste
- Providing and maintaining benches throughout town centre.
- Providing litter bins throughout town.
- Managing and maintaining parks and green spaces.
- Undertaking tree maintenance and management.

### **Cultural Operation of Museums, Libraries and Events**

Assistant Director of Culture, Reading Borough Council

- Facilitating and licencing major events and festivals including Reading Festival, Reading Half Marathon and Reading Pride.
- Commissioning and/or delivering an annual events programme for the town which includes Armed Forces Day, WaterFest and Children's Festival.
- Managing and maintaining cultural and public buildings and activities including Council-run museums, libraries and theatres.
- Working across the arts and creative industries, venues, practitioners, relevant council services and other stakeholders offering practical support and advice in order to champion Reading's creative industries.
- Providing adult learning programmes through New Directions as well as supporting skills, initiatives and projects through REDA.
- Supporting REDA's activities in promoting tourism and hospitality within Reading.

### **Sustainability and Climate Emergency Services**

Head of Climate Strategy, Reading Borough Council

- Hosting and serving as 'accountable body' for the Reading Climate Change Partnership (on whose Board REDA is also represented), particularly in development and delivery of the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy.
- Developing and delivering the Council's corporate Carbon Plan and projects arising from this to decarbonise Council assets and services.



- Initiating or participating in strategic initiatives designed to help Reading meet its net zero ambitions (e.g. developing green energy projects, heat network proposals or strategic sustainable transport initiatives).
- Raising awareness of climate change issues and encouraging positive action to reduce carbon emissions by staff, partner organisations, residents and businesses.
- Helping communities, residents and businesses understand and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate and to become more resilient to those impacts.

### **Planning, Transport and Public Protection**

Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services, Reading Borough Council

- Being responsible for planning policy, planning applications, building control, enforcement and pre-applications services.
- Managing licensing policy and regulation of licensed premises – public houses/restaurants etc where the sale of alcohol or regulated entertainment takes place.
- Licensing of late night (after 11pm) food providers and street trading consents.
- Licensing of taxis.
- Being lead body for pollution matters which include noise (industrial and commercial noise/licensed premises), air and land pollution.
- Being the lead body for consumer protection including product safety, fair trading, weights and measures, counterfeiting, food standards, underage sales of alcohol and tobacco; food safety, health and safety at work, including registration of new businesses; inspections in terms of food safety compliance (targeted at high risk businesses).
- Licensing of large Houses in Multiple Occupation in the private rented sector.
- Ensuring private rented sector accommodation meets minimum housing standards.
- Overseeing transport strategy, all modes of travel, including active travel, public transport and other vehicle journeys.
- Managing Council parking assets (Broad St Mall, Queens Road, Pay & Display), including civil enforcement.
- Being responsible for animal welfare and dog wardens.

### **Finance**

Revenues & Benefits Manager, Reading Borough Council

Provision of Business Rates and BID Levy processing and reporting systems.  
 Collection, administration and enforcement of Business Rates and BID Levy.  
 Administration of reliefs and exemptions of the above, where applicable.  
 Application for Liability Order at Magistrates Court, enforcement of Business Rates and BID levy debtors.  
 Financial accounting and payment of levy income to the BID, quarterly.  
 Annual and previous year reconciliations of BID payments.

## **Policing Services**

Chief Inspector & Deputy LPA Commander, Thames Valley Police

- Engaging with local residents and business communities to understand their needs and priorities
- Work with our partners by sharing information, to identify and manage risk and vulnerability.
- Work in partnership (to include Neighbourhood Policing Teams, BID wardens, CCTV) to engage with the community to problem solve our shared priorities.
- Working with our partners (Including Reading Business Against Crime – RBAC) to problem solve issues of crime and disorder and manage persistent offenders.
- Have an increased focus on prevention and disruption of Neighbourhood crimes, Violence Against Women and Girls and Knife crime.
- Increased visibility through targeted patrols in hot spot areas
- Take an active involvement with PubWatch to prevent persistent offenders from frequenting licensed premises within Reading.
- Work with our partners to create Safer Spaces for Women and Girls across Reading
- Support bystander training in support of the Violence Against Women and Girls agenda
- Taking an active role with Reading's BID Committees to address the needs of the business community.

## Reading Central and Abbey Quarter BIDs

### Formal Consultation Results

The results of an earlier pre-consultation helped formulate the formal consultation carried out in early Summer. Sent out to all BID businesses and stakeholders, respondents were asked to rate the services delivered during the current BID term and give ideas on initiatives going forward.

Responses between Reading Central and Abbey Quarter were a 70/30 split, with a high percentage of overall replies coming from the office sector, followed by those based in retail, then hospitality and leisure and finally the night time economy.

From the results of both the pre-consultation, formal consultation, and feedback, five themes were created that encapsulate the various priorities. These themes sit across both BID areas in varying degrees of priority.

Social & Healthy – the physical and mental wellbeing of staff is a priority to all businesses, and being able to offer activities and pursuits to improve both have already been welcomed. Alongside these businesses often ask for initiatives where they can ‘give back to local communities’ prompting the need for creative, social value initiatives that business can engage in.

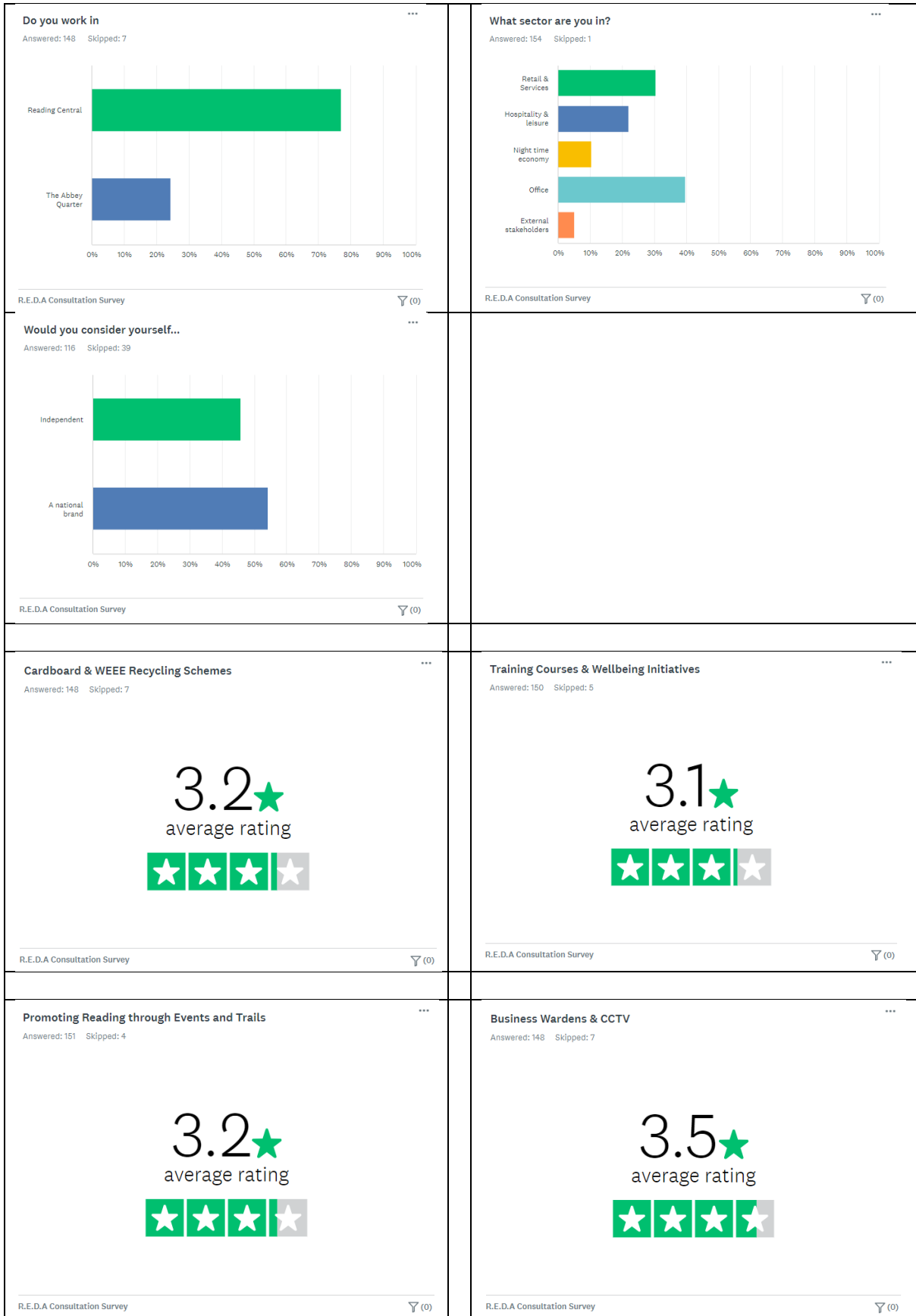
Enhancing & Exciting – the retail landscape is changing as are the habits of shoppers, no longer do people visit the town centre to shop it is now also important to animate the town centre with events and experiences that everyone can take part in. Already seasonal trails and food markets have shown positive feedback and plans going forward will improve on these.

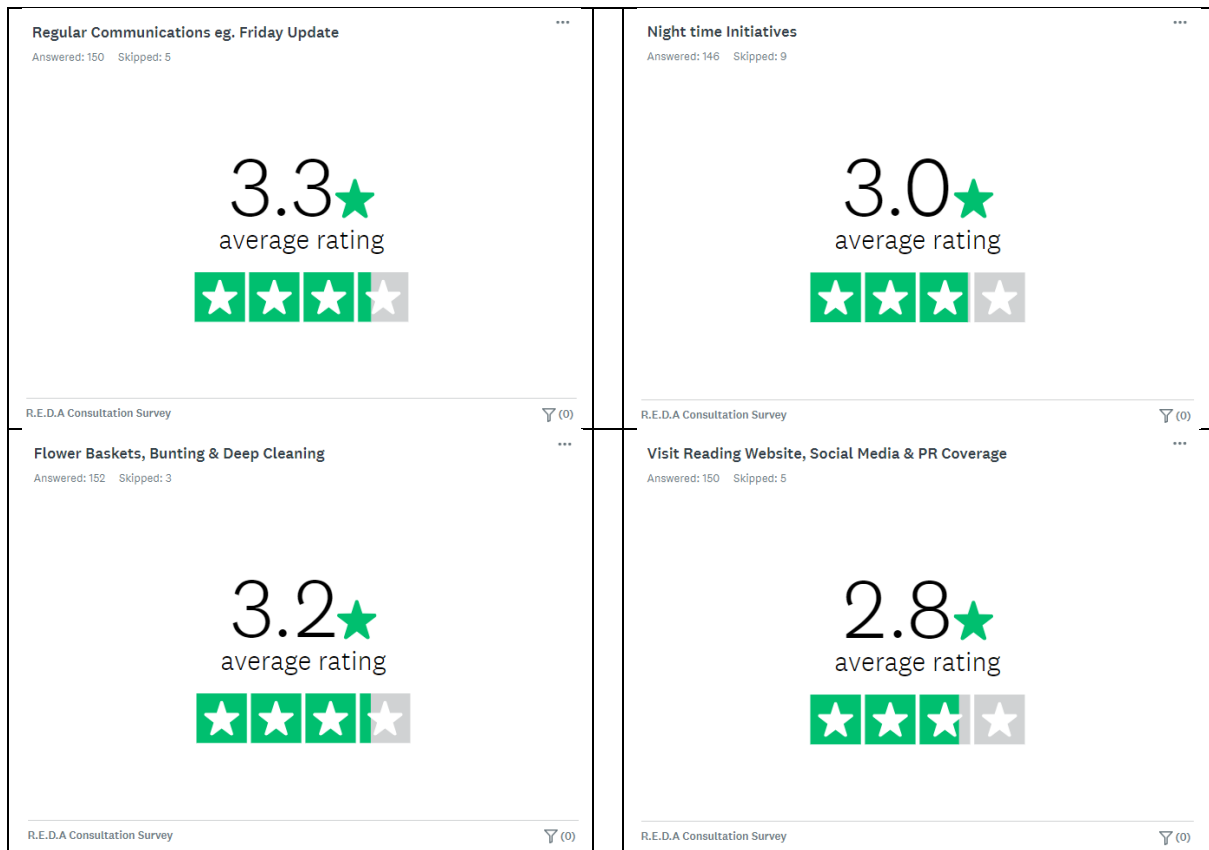
Safe & Secure – unsurprisingly the highest scored initiative by all business sectors. Retailers and night time economy feedback mentions there not being enough Wardens to cover the area, asking for more Warden coverage, and references made regarding uncertain CCTV coverage and the need to improve this. The proposed new BID term acknowledges the need for more Warden coverage.

Environmental & Sustainable – landlords, managing agents, national retailers and corporate sector BID businesses are insisting on more climate and sustainability related initiatives both for their staff to be involved with but also for the town they choose to base themselves in, to be aligned to. Practical recycling initiatives have been well received; these will be extended with other recycling outlets explored. Carbon literacy training for businesses and staff will be rolled out across the town centre.

Informed & Represented – the BID and REDA sit in an ideal position to help lobby on behalf of businesses, acting as a collective voice on town centre, regional and national matters. With our relationships and working closely with partners the BID can bring help businesses with a joined up approach on town centre issues. Continuing the provision of training courses and jobs fairs the BID will help with retention and recruitment of staff, while regular sales and footfall data will inform businesses of the high street health.







#### Feedback comments:

- Alexa and team has and always been doing a great job! Keep it up!
- A "Town Manager" who can coordinate initiatives and events.
- Potential security drop ins to the branch to show face and let staff know they are there for protection if needed.
- Dusseldorf Way and Queens Walk need paving slabs mended and daily litter picking please! And a PCSO/similar who can issue a fine to litterers! This exists round the UK already. Install a "Queens Walk" street sign.
- The feedback from the Reading office has been that the wellbeing and personal development opportunities offered by Reading BID are extremely good value. Initiatives with Yoginah, F45 and training courses offered through the scheme have always proven popular and we would be keen for these kind of development opportunities (whether physical, mental or professional) to continue going forwards. Emotional intelligence courses and management topics would be well received. The office has also appreciated being made aware of new local business openings/introductory offers and ideas - and venues that might be relevant for staff events.
- As a business that rely on footfall on the outside of town centre, it will be great to be able to do more activities on the ground of Davidson House and also for the council to support with seasonal application for the summer. As we invest and support in the local area, we find that this is one part that needs more focus.
- Not on emails used to work them but not anymore.
- Reduction of bikes/e-scooter through Broad Street

- With the BID wardens we don't always feel the two of them is enough and there's times when no one is working.
- More CCTV coverage (especially for bicycles) and securities to help prevent shoplifting.
- We could try promoting Reading with some extra adds around the train station.
- Perhaps an Apprenticeship Event to engage BID businesses more and help businesses meet their staffing gaps.
- Please continue what you are doing. Personally I have found the wellbeing events inc yoga and the networking initiatives invaluable in the return to office and an encouragement to play a part in the wider community. It has made me feel proud that we have such a thriving Reading business and town centre.
- ASB Training for management team
- Identify more what the council does, and what the BID services are, people think the council do a lot. Love the lighting in Chain Street and Union Street. Need more graffiti removal. Electric bikes and scooters are a problem in the town centre.
- What happened to extending the loading bay in Friar Street? State of pavement is poor, the number of buses are causing severe ruts in the road. Ebikes and Escooters travelling at speed on pedestrian areas and the wrong way down one way streets
- I think it's time for the BID to be run by a new organisation with vision, creativity and one that actually delivers a bold new future and initiatives for Reading.
- more creative writing, art
- more writing workshops!
- Staff members mention an improved library but as that is already in the pipeline they will be very pleased.
- A lot of the benefits of the BID are not well known within our office. I am also unsure about the overlap between BID provided services and those which are provided by our building owners.
- Better marketing for social events and seasonal activities
- no - main thing is safety, wardens, CCTV, which is all being done.
- Supporting homelessness and theft of retail stores.
- More food festivals, always gets town busy
- Not at present
- Big fan of the F45 classes, have made more attention to Reading BID announcements following the classes being implemented
- BID meetings, Crime Reduction meetings and Gambling Licensee meetings were all really beneficial and interesting before COVID hit, getting back to regular meetings involving these topics would be great for our business.
- street art, enhanced street cleaning
- The training courses being offered (eg First Aid) are really good. More training like this is always useful as, although it should be done regularly anyway, finding the time and money to send staff on courses can often be a barrier to smaller independents.
- Working half my week in Soho and half in Reading, the drug problem Reading has and the same faces begging on the high street and around the station is so very apparent and really reflects badly on the town and people coming in, I know this is a huge social issue and feel sorry for them, I also feel bad raising it, but as we are trying to make Reading more attractive to investment and working here, it is an issue that is adding to the perception issue.



- Council CCTV needs improving along St Marys Butts and Hosier Street. Often asked for ours from Police re early morning incidents after our venue has closed.
- Expanding slightly to include Oxford Road and Cemetary Junction.
- Town Security
- All important (above question).
- Sort out Echo Tango!!
- Reading Rep sits just outside the Abbey BID. However, much of our work occurs in this and Reading Central BID. I would like to suggest more time is taken to look at what cross promotional activity might be possible with prestigious institution's in the town that can help shine a light on Reading from a national POV. Reading Rep's work is frequently in the national press and we are an organisation that we know the town is proud to host. Affiliating organisation to initiatives to drive people into the town is beneficial for the organisations and the town.
- Working in partnership with local charities to improve the Reading and support residents in these area's.
- Street begging can be an issue in some parts of the BID. In other towns I work with there are schemes available for the public to donate to local homeless charities on a contactless payment sign in the street. This discourages the public from giving cash to beggars and the hope is in turn that those individuals move on and disturb businesses and locals less.
- Not included in the BID up to now , so have not been part of all the initiatives. I think its vitally important the town has the organisation, and I look forward to being part of it .
- Training is a great opportunity, as well as wellbeing. For accommodation suppliers, it might be good to have access to brochures and / or discounts to events (for example, I will try to promote better Henri I if there is another performance next year) REDA does an amazing job though!
- encouraging people to explore further such as the river side parks
- Planting of trees, more recycling schemes, community activities
- No and thank you for all you do :)
- it will be good to have more networking events and pop up food stalls.
- Love the newsletter, please continue with this - Could you ask The Oracle Marketing to feature in any suitable events - IE our rollerskating event happening now.
- Continue providing wellbeing activities, staff engagement events, safety & security in Reading, business (retail & restaurants) discounts, energy saving tips etc
- Support for full time workers to study & develop along their job/on the weekend.
- As an individual I cannot comment on the value of the projects to the business I am employed by. I would suggest that the organisations are working in silo. I have only taken part in the yoga sessions. I have no visibility on the other projects, I cannot comment on the impact on Reading town nor do I know that they hoped to achieve and to what degree they were successful. I did like the weekly round up as it gave visibility of events that as a Reading resident I would otherwise not have known about
- I found yoga and other wellbeing classes and events extremely valuable, and the Healing Music Festival was wonderful and would love to have it in town again/more regularly.
- Really enjoy the wellbeing sessions (yoga and F45) would love to see a larger variety! :)
- Really nice Friday update! Please continue providing the courses eg fire fighting etc.
- Specific mention and plan re begging, homelessness and ASB. Approach this head on, noting it would be partnership with RBC, Police, Launchpad etc etc but that BID will take a leading

role in it. All the elements in Nigel's current 18 point town centre plan should be covered off too. thanks!

- Keep the Central Library central and in the Abbey Quarter. We love the Central Library building

## Reading Central and Abbey Quarter BID Themes – 2024 – 2029

<b>Social &amp; Healthy</b>	
<b>Reading Central BID</b>	<b>Abbey Quarter BID</b>
Breast Cancer/Movember campaigns	Breast Cancer/Movember campaigns
Wellbeing activities	Business networking
Winter Warmer initiative	Staff engagement initiatives
Greater Change donation schemes	Wellbeing activities
Walk Works	PA/EA Networks
Business networking	Winter Warmer initiative
	Young professionals networking
	Greater Change donation schemes
	Walk Works

### **Social & Healthy :**

- Donation schemes – support the continued implementation and growth of contactless giving schemes that benefit local charities and life-changing organisations we work with.
- Winter Warmer initiative – in collaboration with NetworkRail grow the initiative of Reading based staff donating their used Winter clothing for local distribution using the train station as a central hub.
- PA/EA Networks – continue to grow this networking group, introducing local hospitality venues to PAs and EAs from large corporates in the town.
- Wellbeing activities – research more wellbeing activities throughout the week that are suited to staff and businesses, eg running clubs and creative initiatives.
- Staff engagement initiatives – continue supporting, research and build on events that encourage more people into the office, that bring together staff in competitive events eg Sports Day, Launchpad's Pancake Race.
- Business networking – 'meet your neighbour' events encouraging regular, local business networking.
- Breast Cancer Awareness and Movember campaigns - corporate businesses are keen to be involved with national campaigns such as these, promoting health and wellbeing among their staff and giving them the opportunity to become involved. Equally associated retailers want to be involved in these campaigns in creative ways such as talks, demonstrations and discounted shopping opportunities.
- Young professionals – research and build an event to engage young professionals, under-30yrs, to help them build their own local networks, to be hosted by various corporate employers focussing on networking and introductions.
- Walk Works – continue our collaboration with Walk Works to lead weekly networking walks around our town, facilitating networking opportunities and introducing walkers to the history and undiscovered gems in our town. Continue theming walks around awareness days eg Mental Health Awareness etc.



## Reading Central and Abbey Quarter BID Themes – 2024 – 2029

<b>Enhancing &amp; Exciting</b>	
<b>Reading Central BID</b>	<b>Abbey Quarter BID</b>
Seasonal events	Seasonal events
Theatre and music events	Theatre and music events
Seasonal maps and trails	Multi-cultural celebrations
Multi-cultural celebrations	Floral installations
Floral installations	Christmas lighting
Christmas lighting	Pavement deep cleaning
Pavement deep cleaning	Food and drink maps
Food and drink maps	Gift cards
Support street art installations	
Encourage vinyls on windows and site hoardings	
Gift cards	

### **Enhancing & Exciting :**

- Seasonal events – continue supporting Reading Food Festival, Vegan Festival and Chilifest. Research more regular markets, ie antiques markets, to drive footfall. During December grow the Advent calendar of events focussing on after work activities for the office population during the week and activities that attract visitors and families at the weekends.
- Theatre and music events – promote and support local music and theatrical productions such as Reading Fringe, Rabble, Down At The Abbey and Are You Listening? drawing new audiences into the town's evening economy.
- Seasonal maps and trails – create different themed maps and trails for visitors and shoppers to enjoy while visiting the town centre, all to be provided at no charge to the public and where possible to cover high street retailers and shopping malls to create a cohesive feel and encourage visitors to discover hidden gems within the town.
- Multi-cultural celebrations – celebrating the multi-cultural society of both residents and staff, sponsoring Bastille Day, Diwali and Chinese New Year celebrations, researching further cultural festivities.
- Summer floral installations – continue growing our floral installations throughout the town centre, creating feature areas with baskets, troughs and tiered planters. Research floral installations in Union Street.
- Christmas lighting – redesign the theme of the town centre's Christmas lighting installation, look to expand festive lighting into new areas. Include more standalone lighting installations in the Abbey Quarter office area.
- Pavement deep cleaning – work in collaboration with Streetscene to purchase an industrial hoover for use in the town centre, targeting areas of grime normally out of reach to mechanised street sweepers. Continue with the bi-annual deep cleaning programme.
- Food and drink maps – design and produce visitor maps highlighting the many and varied food and drink offerings in the town centre including a handy guide on where to find them.
- Supporting street art and window vinyl installations – work with the Council on the policy supporting street art installations, explore themes to create a street art tour of the town, identify suitable locations and work with the landlords/agents.
- Work with landlords, agents and businesses to install REDA designed artwork on window vinyls and hoarding to improve empty units and construction sites.
- Gift cards – research the viability of gift cards.

## Reading Central and Abbey Quarter BID Themes – 2024 – 2029

<b>Safe &amp; Secure</b>	
<b>Reading Central BID</b>	<b>Abbey Quarter BID</b>
Business Wardens	Business Wardens
CCTV staffing	CCTV staffing
Street Pastors & First Stop	Improve pedestrianisation of Broad Street
DISC barring system	Enhance lighting and street furniture.
Purple Flag accreditation	Community Safety Committees
Night time economy	
Improve pedestrianisation of Broad Street	
Reading Business Against Crime	
Town Safe Radio Scheme	
Enhance lighting and street furniture.	
Community Safety Committees	

### **Safe & Secure :**

- Business Wardens – over the course of the next BID term increase the number of Wardens on rota, giving them the ability to increase their visibility in all areas of the BID and allow them to focus on lower level ASB issues as well shoplifting issues.
- CCTV staffing – work with the Council to move the management of CCTV, ensuring closer management of CCTV operators, increasing the numbers of CCTV operators and improving flexibility in coverage of CCTV, ensuring the town centre is adequately covered during the busiest times.
- Street Pastors & First Stop – continue to support Reading’s Street Pastors and First Stop services that enhance the visitor experience of our night time economy. Work with this group to gain insights into the night time visiting economy, themes to explore and merging issues to address.
- DISC barring system – continue to provide the DISC barring system for use in managing anti-social behaviour, collect evidence for use in prosecutions, and share intelligence with retailers and venues signed up to the system.
- Purple Flag accreditation – continue to lead on the Purple Flag accreditation process, identifying and showcasing good practice from across the town centre, including organisations with a stake in the town’s night time economy including Reading University and College.
- Night time economy – support the night time economy through their PubWatch group, helping with initiatives and projects, lobbying agencies where possible.
- Lobbying to improve pedestrianisation of Broad Street – ensuring vehicle access is managed, and dangerous cycling reduced for the safety of all people using this area.
- Reading Business Against Crime (RBAC) – continue promoting and supporting monthly security meetings, encouraging security staff to attend and benefit from the intelligence shared with retailers by Police, Wardens and Council staff.
- Town Safe Radio Scheme – continue using this radio scheme for the Wardens, promote the use of the radio to retailers and venues and encourage take up.
- Lobbying to improve lighting and street furniture – continue to work closely with the Council to identify areas for improved lighting and public realm infrastructure for the purpose of designing out crime.
- Represent businesses at Community Safety Committees raising concerns and lobbying for solutions.

## Reading Central and Abbey Quarter BID Themes – 2024 – 2029

<b>Environmental &amp; Sustainable</b>	
<b>Reading Central BID</b>	<b>Abbey Quarter BID</b>
Support the Council's NetZero agenda	Support the Council's NetZero agenda
Cardboard recycling	Cardboard recycling
WEEE recycling	WEEE recycling
Energy saving introductions	Energy saving introductions
Litter picking initiatives	Litter picking initiatives
Trees for Streets initiative	Trees for Streets initiative
Carbon Literacy training	Carbon Literacy training
Climate Change Festival	Climate Change Festival
Waterways – day-tripper mooring availability	Waterways – greener/faster commute options
Feasibility study – rooftop beehives	Feasibility study – rooftop beehives

### **Environmental & Sustainable:**

- Work with the Council's Climate Strategy team to promote and support NetZero messaging, activities and campaigns.
- Cardboard recycling – build on the already successful cardboard recycling scheme operated in conjunction with the Council and The Oracle. Encourage more businesses to take part. Promote the scheme through local marketing and social media to encourage more take up.
- WEEE recycling – increase the usage of this scheme by promoting through social media campaigns. Encourage more businesses to use the scheme and promote the cost saving incentives.
- Energy saving introductions – research energy saving initiatives and energy cost saving introductions
- Litter picking initiatives – build on litter picking initiatives like RAYS (Reading Adopt Your Street), encourage businesses keen on local environmental initiatives to take up this scheme in their local areas.
- Climate Change Festival – continue supporting and promoting this annual event with network partners.
- Trees for Streets initiative – research further with the Council's Highways teams this initiative, identify areas for trees, install in collaboration with local businesses building a tree in their local areas.
- Carbon Literacy training – introduce training for all businesses and staff, helping them to reach their carbon reduction goals and support the Councils' climate change goals.
- Waterways – research opportunities to utilise the local waterways (Kennet & Avon canals and The Thames) more effectively, including private moorings for day-trippers to visit the town centre, as well as a greener daily commute option.
- Work with professional apiarists to research the feasibility of installing beehives on high rise building rooftops, including the continued management of the beehives.



**Reading Central and Abbey Quarter BID Themes – 2024 – 2029**

<b>Informed &amp; Represented</b>	
<b>Reading Central BID</b>	<b>Abbey Quarter BID</b>
Footfall data	Business promotions
Sales data	Jobs Fairs
Business promotions	Training courses
Jobs Fairs	Marketing and social media
Training courses	Friday Update
Marketing and social media	REDA inward investment and campaigns
Friday Update	
REDA inward investment and campaigns	

**Informed & Represented :**

- Footfall data – the BID will contract the provision of footfall data intelligence, this will be available to all BID businesses who register to receive it. The data will show the use of the town centre, informing all sectors of business the peaks and troughs of footfall throughout the day and night.
- Sales data – the BID will contract the provision of sales data intelligence, this will be available to all BID businesses who register to receive it. The data will show the health of high street sales.
- Business promotions - BID businesses can book commercialisation spaces within the town centre's pedestrianised areas to promote their businesses. This is normally a paid for service to external businesses.
- Jobs Fairs - Regular jobs fairs organised in conjunction with DWP's JobCentre are held centrally in the town centre, attracting large numbers of job seekers. BID businesses will be invited to have a stall at these events to assist in recruiting new staff.
- Training courses – build the annual training prospectus based on business feedback, continue delivering Emergency First Aid, Mental Health Awareness, Coaching, Deaf Awareness, Basic Life Support Awareness Training and Disability Awareness courses.
- Marketing and social media – promote Reading town centre events and businesses through BID and REDA public relations, marketing and social media channels. This includes associations with Heritage Open Days, regional tourism groups, group travel organisations, property professionals and investor groups.
- Through REDA promote inward investment, develop a long-term strategy for Reading as a destination, conduct visitor research, build the conferencing website page.
- Friday Update – continue to produce our weekly newsletter to all businesses in the BID area highlighting events and offers available to you and your staff. As a way of advertising BID businesses can include special offers for the town centre.

**Draft Budgets (September 2023)**

First draft of budget for Reading Central BID.

REDA Board and BID Committee amendments, final decisions and sign off – November 2023

Reading Central BID					
5 Year Budget Plan					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
BID Levy Income *	£761,410.90	£761,410.90	£761,410.90	£761,410.90	£761,410.90
Operating Costs	£112,000.00	£117,600.00	£123,480.00	£129,654.00	£136,136.70
Safe & Secure	£148,675.00	£156,108.75	£163,914.19	£172,109.90	£180,715.39
Environment & Sustainable	£17,500.00	£18,375.00	£19,293.75	£20,258.44	£21,271.36
Enhancing & Exciting	£338,420.00	£355,341.00	£373,108.05	£391,763.45	£411,351.63
Social & Healthy	£9,600.00	£10,080.00	£10,584.00	£11,113.20	£11,668.86
Informed & Represented	£66,225.00	£63,338.75	£65,820.69	£68,426.72	£71,163.06
Contingency	£68,990.90	£40,567.40	£5,210.23	-£31,914.81	-£70,896.09
Total Expenditure	£692,420.00	£720,843.50	£756,200.68	£793,325.71	£832,306.99

\* Total BID Levy Invoiced = £801,485.16

95% payment rate = £761,410.90

**Draft Budgets (September 2023)**

First draft of budget for Abbey Quarter BID.

REDA Board and BID Committee amendments, final decisions and sign off – November 2023

Abbey Quarter BID					
5 Year Budget Plan					
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
BID Levy Income *	£659,114.75	£659,114.75	£659,114.75	£659,114.75	£659,114.75
Operating Costs	£88,000.00	£92,400.00	£97,020.00	£101,871.00	£106,964.55
Safe & Secure	£98,475.00	£103,398.75	£108,568.69	£113,997.12	£119,696.98
Environment & Sustainable	£19,500.00	£20,475.00	£21,498.75	£22,573.69	£23,702.37
Enhancing & Exciting	£142,700.00	£149,835.00	£157,326.75	£165,193.09	£173,452.74
Social & Healthy	£90,900.00	£95,445.00	£100,217.25	£105,228.11	£110,489.52
Informed & Represented	£41,975.00	£44,018.75	£46,164.69	£48,417.92	£50,783.82
Contingency	£177,564.75	£153,542.25	£128,318.63	£101,833.82	£74,024.77
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£481,550.00</b>	<b>£505,572.50</b>	<b>£530,796.13</b>	<b>£557,280.93</b>	<b>£585,089.98</b>

\* Total BID Levy Invoiced = £693,805.00

95% payment rate = £659,114.75