

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

A seminar to explain and promote Welsh Government's
Business Improvement Districts initiative.

Venues: **The Football Ground, Wrexham - 8th of October 2013**
 The Dylan Thomas Centre, Swansea - 15th of October 2013

Speaker Information

Chris Hurst and Mark Ross – Association of Town & City Management (ATCM)

Chris Hurst is the Town Team Programme Manager at the Association of Town & City Management. Having read BA Geography at the University of Exeter, he went on to complete his MSc Environment, Sustainability and Development at the University of Leeds.

Chris previously worked for Birmingham City Centre Partnership as City Centre Projects Officer, helping to deliver three Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), addressing a wide range of town centre management issues, and implementing parts of the city centre's cleaner, safer, greener agenda.

Chris then began working for Retail Birmingham BID as Projects Coordinator and latterly Operations Manager, helping to deliver several key strategy documents for Birmingham, running the Street Operations portfolio and successfully organising Retail Birmingham's renewal ballot strategy for a second five-year term. Chris has had significant experience at both operational and strategic town centre management levels, and prior to his appointment with ATCM was especially focused on managing relationships between local businesses and several major infrastructure projects currently underway in Birmingham, such as New Street Station.

Mark Ross is a Business Improvement District manager and business consultant with many years of experience in a wide variety of towns, and is the Association of Town & City Management's BID programme manager. He has run BID programmes in Swindon, Oldham and Mansfield. More recently, he served as one of the special advisors, on ATCM's Town Team Support programme covering the East of England. From mid-2011 through the summer of 2013, Mark was an Area Business Manager in the London Borough of Newham, working to join the two centres of Westfield and Old Stratford together as part of the Olympic legacy.

Mark also worked closely with Councils in Greater London running up to the Olympic games, the London Organising Committee of the Games and Paralympic Games Ltd (LOCOG), OPLC (the Olympic Park Legacy Company now London Legacy Development Company), the Metropolitan Police and Westfield's management in respect of defining stakeholders' key issues, especially banks and relevant cash availability.

A company director with fourteen years' experience of running a property and business consultancy firm, Ross is a member of the ATCM.

The Association of Town & City Management and UK BID's is a not-for-profit membership organisation dedicated to promoting the vitality and viability of town and city centres. It has around 900 members including key stakeholders in town and city centres across the UK. 400 of these are town and city centre management practitioners and initiatives, around 60 of which are working with BID's. Nearly all of these work as partnerships, some with several hundred contributing members. They develop and implement shared visions, strategies and action plans for a total of more than 700 district, town and city centres throughout the UK.

ATCM was heavily involved in the development of the original legislation in England 10 years ago and believe that BID's have developed a positive reputation as democratic tools for mobilising private sector investment for regeneration.

Steffan Roberts – Welsh Government.

Steffan Roberts represents the Homes and Places Division in the Welsh Government. Based in Aberystwyth, he has responsibility for regeneration initiatives in mid Wales and is the lead official with responsibility for the £10.3 million Aberystwyth Regeneration Area. He is the policy lead for town centre regeneration, a key component within Vibrant and Viable Places, and manages the BID's programme across Wales. Steffan has an MSc in Regeneration and, to complement policy and delivery work, he is currently researching for a PhD in urban governance and town centre regeneration.

Juliet Liporini – BID's Development Limited.

Juliet is a co-owner of the Kardomah restaurant a long established City centre business, where she is involved in the running of the business on a daily basis and also having the role of Finance Director. She is Vice Chair of the Swansea Business Improvement District. Currently, Juliet is part of the First Minister's Commission which is reviewing the Governance and Delivery of Public Services. Additional roles have included being a guest speaker at the Welsh National Regeneration Summit in November 2012, taking part in a regeneration panel designed to give advice in respect of the regeneration of Newport, and also being a speaker at the CREW site seminar on Meanwhile Uses, which took place in Swansea in December 2012.

The Swansea BID is large by UK standards, with a membership of approximately 850 businesses and an annual levy of about £500,000. It is currently in its second 5 year term having recently secured a new democratic mandate, where support for its continuation was even greater than the original ballot for the first term. The second term has allowed the company to continue the delivery of substantial operational programmes as defined by the business plan, whilst also strengthening its medium and long strategy and objectives. The company operates with a board of 16 directors, CEO and small admin staff.

George Grace - Towncentred.

George has nearly 25 years of experience across the professions and is the founder of Towncentred a high street and town centre regeneration specialist consultancy which facilitates change management in high street and town centres. George draws on a past that includes:

- Strategy and innovation – at retail consultants 20/20;
- Retail entrepreneur – operations and development director of Fresh and Wild (a pioneering community market);
- A Chartered surveyor, working across all property sectors, and having been a partner at King Sturge and a director of Jones Lang La Salle.

George's experience in respect of BIDs and the general financing of town development and regeneration initiatives includes:

- Assisting in the setting up of a pilot BID in Paddington upon introduction of the legislation in 2003;
- Helping to develop one of the first council led LABVs (local asset backed vehicles), now trading as the Bournemouth Development Company;
- Helping to develop one of the earliest TIF (Tax Increment Finance) studies in the UK - Ravenscraig - which has led to its approval;
- Setting up the Bedminster Town Team and BID in Bristol;
- Currently working on the establishment of BIDs in Gloucester Road (Bristol) and in Penarth.

Peter Williams - The Means.

Peter is the founding director of The Means, a place making practice with offices in London and Llanelli. It has ten staff, all of whom have actively worked on more than one BID/campaign. In addition to running feasibility and scoping exercises and managing BID campaigns, The Means currently runs the Portas Town Team in Peckham, regeneration projects in Merthyr Tydfil and is supporting authorities in developing thinking around the Vibrant and Viable framework.

The Means undertakes policy research and were the first to define the concept of 'cluster' BIDs. The Means has recently published research on the perennial issue of town centre parking for the Association of London Councils, and has very actively participated in the last couple of years in numerous events to promote BIDs, both in the UK and abroad, for example at conferences in Holland, Germany, Lithuania, Penang, Singapore, Australia and in Minneapolis in the USA.

In addition to the evaluation of BIDs in Wales for Welsh Government and writing the BIDs Handbook for Wales, The Means currently run 4 BIDs having taken them through ballot – Vauxhall approaching £1million pa and Better Bankside which was initiated in 2000 (£1.5 Million pa). Thus, the Means manages and services two of the largest BIDs in the UK and two smaller operations in Orpington and Streatham.

The Means supported the establishment of the Merthyr Tydfil BID and took it through ballot and managed it for the first 100 days until a Manager was recruited, and is currently leading on BID feasibility/viability exercises in Bermondsey, Stratford and Clapham, and having recently completed one in Newport.

In summary and having regard to depth of experience, The Means has worked on 21 BIDs nationally and three abroad in Malaysia and Singapore, and is currently the external auditor for the British BIDs accreditation scheme.