



PENRITH BID

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Proposal to create a
Business Improvement District

The purpose of this Proposal Summary is to outline:

what is a Business Improvement District

why there is a need for a BID in Penrith

what you told us during consultations

what projects and services will be delivered

where is the area covered by the BID

how the BID will be funded and managed

who will decide yes or no

when will the decision be made

how much it will cost you

Six good reasons to support the BID:

1. Led by businesses for the benefit of businesses
2. Investing in the town's future
3. A ring-fenced fund to address your priorities
4. Economies of scale and potential cost savings
5. Additional to existing public services
6. A significant business voice with real influence

“A ‘Yes’ vote in favour of establishing a Business Improvement District for Penrith would be a real catalyst for change. It has the potential to generate £500,000 over the next five years to deliver the ideas local businesses have put forward to realise the town's potential. The cost of backing the BID for businesses would be only price of a packet of crisps!”

Kelvin Dixon

Seagraves and Dixon Electricals and Chair of the Penrith BID Shadow Board

What is a Business Improvement District?

The BID is a business-led initiative where local businesses and organisations are invited to come together, in partnership with the local authority, to make decisions and to take action. The BID is a means by which local businesses and organisations have the power to raise funds that can be used for local initiatives with the aim of improving the trading environment. It is an investment scheme where local businesses can collectively agree on the priorities and how to invest their money to benefit themselves, their staff and their customers.

The Penrith town centre BID provides an opportunity to focus on:

- Improving the trading conditions for businesses
- Improving the competitiveness of the local area
- Reducing the operating costs for businesses.

In November 2012 you will be asked to vote on this proposal. If the majority of businesses support the proposal then a Business Improvement District will be established in Penrith town centre and commence on 1 April 2013.

Why we need a BID in Penrith

Penrith has a lot to be proud of:

- Its history - Penrith is an historic market town granted a Royal Charter to hold markets in 1222 and strong tradition as a centre for trade and commerce;
- Its character - Penrith is a fine red sandstone town rich in heritage with impressive architecture, and a streetscape characterised by narrow yards and lanes linking open squares;
- Its people - A place where traditions survive, independence is commonplace and in the face of adversity, the community is extremely resilient;
- Its location - Penrith's envious location is in the heart of Cumbria and surrounded by some of England's finest landscapes.

Penrith has a number of undoubted assets as a community and as a place, but there is a growing realisation that investment is needed to help the town centre to adapt to some significant changes that are affecting high streets and town centres across the country.

Penrith's town centre must adapt to the increasing influence of supermarkets, the growth in online retailing, an ageing population and all this during difficult economic times.

Today, the choice for Penrith's business community is stark. It is between:

- a) a reactive and piecemeal approach reliant on the goodwill of a handful of individual businesses taking action ad hoc as time and resources allow, and where planned investments are almost entirely dependent on the availability of increasingly scarce public resources; or
- b) a proactive and cohesive approach involving the whole business community, where collaboration brings with it the benefits of shared experience, common objectives, and the pooling of resources brings the required economies of scale to have much more impact at lower per capita cost.

“This is the best opportunity Penrith’s businesses have ever had to be masters of their own destiny. For the first time they have a real opportunity to come together and spend money on things decided solely by them without interference from anyone else. It is a one off opportunity for them to make things better. It could not be better timing in this difficult economic climate.”

David Whipp
Starfruits and Eden District Councillor

“We can all list things that we want to see and happen in our town centre, plans are made, hopes are raised and so often simply fade away. Well, a positive vote for the BID will mean the businesses of Penrith can make things happen. The BID will give the opportunity to fund meaningful projects and have the resources to see them through. We must all get behind it and vote YES!”

Philip Cranston
President, Penrith Chamber of Trade and Commerce

What you told us

The content and priorities of this proposal comes from the business ratepayers in Penrith. We have consulted with businesses and organisations operating in the town centre since the autumn of 2011, including:

- Business ratepayers questionnaire survey hand delivered to around 360 town centre business properties (November 2011 to January 2012) with an online version advertised in the local press.
- One-to-one interviews held with representatives of over 180 businesses and organisations in the town centre (November 2011 to March 2012).
- Public presentations and BID workshops held involving around 50 businesses and organisations (December 2011 to January 2012).
- Business lunch focus groups held to consider draft proposals involving 13 invited business representatives, including representation from different sectors, sizes of organisation and from a variety of locations around the town (May 2012).

You told us what the main challenges are, what was good about Penrith, and what the priorities for action should be. The most common responses are summarised here using a small selection of the actual comments we received:

The challenges	The positives	The priorities for action
<p>Lack of identity.</p> <p>No clear definition of what kind of town Penrith is today.</p>	<p>Geographic location of town - excellent access to Lake District.</p> <p>On crossroads of major roads and main rail line links.</p>	<p>Business collaboration in promoting the town.</p> <p>Co-ordinated marketing.</p> <p>Getting the town's identity back.</p> <p>Organise street festivals and events.</p>
<p>Keeping public realm in good repair - pavements and paintwork.</p> <p>Need to regain public confidence in Penrith as a place worth visiting.</p>	<p>The people.</p> <p>Safe place to live.</p> <p>Town's history.</p> <p>Distinctive buildings.</p> <p>Nice architecture.</p> <p>The 'slow' town image - relaxed and friendly.</p>	<p>Making town more appealing.</p> <p>Get New Squares finished and tidied up.</p>
<p>Getting car parking right for locals and visitors.</p>	<p>Small size enables visitors to see everything.</p> <p>Small and easy to get around for locals and older people.</p>	<p>Better parking and better communication about parking.</p>
<p>Update approach of some businesses - use of websites and social media and Sunday shopping.</p>	<p>Many small businesses offering excellent individual service.</p> <p>Diversity of small independent shops and businesses.</p>	<p>Smarten up businesses.</p> <p>Training needs for town centre to improve the layout and refresh some shops.</p> <p>Need to get businesses to work together.</p>

The process of canvassing businesses in the town, listening to them and addressing their priorities means that this proposal for a BID is very well informed and relevant to the businesses and organisations in the town centre.

“I was really delighted to see that Penrith was aiming to create a Business Improvement District and am pleased and proud to be involved with the BID. I believe it will be of real benefit to the town which has so much going for it. The planned projects seem very appropriate and it is clear that the consultation process has really drawn out the key priorities as seen by businesses themselves. Working together with different businesses will derive many synergies and I look forward to seeing Penrith make huge strides in the months ahead.”

Amyl Fazal
Chief Executive (designate), Penrith Building Society

“The BID is an opportunity to develop a more inclusive approach by working with community and voluntary groups, sharing their skills, knowledge and time.”

Jacqui Taylor
Chief Officer, Eden Mencap Society

“Having a Business Improvement District established in Penrith will provide the funding and resources for the town to fully develop the considerable skills already in place and ensure that service delivery is efficient and profitable for all.”

Steve Pinguey
Partner, Armstrong Watson Accountants and Financial Advisers

What the BID will do for Penrith

For the Penrith BID there are four key objectives, each of them grounded in the evidence and concerns we have heard from business ratepayers.

They are:

- To market and promote Penrith as a centre for retail, leisure and tourism, including better use of digital and mobile technologies, and extending cultural activities, festivals and events;
- To take pride in Penrith by looking after the whole of the town centre, investing time and resources where they are needed to enhance its appearance, and ensuring that an attractive, welcoming environment is maintained for workers, residents and visitors;
- To make it easy and affordable to park in Penrith by introducing measures to simplify access to the town centre for those in the car, as well as on foot and by cycle;
- To invest in people and businesses to create a professional Penrith that builds on its reputation for specialist services and works in collaboration to deliver high quality customer services and an effective network across the town centre.

This Proposal is for a five year programme of improvements to Penrith town centre through a Business Improvement District (BID), delivering projects and activities across these four priorities:

- A comprehensive marketing, promotion and events campaign for the town;
- Improvement works designed to raise standards of appearance of the town centre;
- Trial of a new car parking initiative in Penrith, extending the current provision of free parking in the town centre;
- A series of initiatives to achieve business excellence, better business networking and deliver cost savings for individual businesses.

“I am particularly keen to see the parking initiative being progressed. Many of my customers complain about the current parking restrictions and I have lost custom as a result. Trade appears to occur mainly in the morning and lunch time period so encouraging afternoon trade will be well worthwhile.”

David Lister
Finesse Jewellery

Release Penrith's Potential

The priorities for Penrith's Business Improvement District can be summarised as four 'P's': **Promote** Penrith, **Pride** in Penrith, **Park** in Penrith and **Professional** Penrith

Promote Penrith

A comprehensive marketing, promotion and events campaign to ensure that the Penrith town centre 'offer' translates into an improved identity and perception of the town, improved sales and an improved customer and visitor experience.

This will be delivered through 3 projects:

Project One: Marketing and Promotion

Penrith BID will devise and implement a five year marketing programme to deliver two high quality, targeted promotion campaigns to bring residents and visitors into Penrith town centre.

- 1) Capturing Penrith and Eden Valley shoppers by:
 - Improving the awareness of what Penrith town centre has to offer to "lost" customers. Branding and promotional activity will re-invent Penrith as a service centre for East Cumbria re-engaging lost shoppers.
 - Building on one of Penrith's undoubted strengths, the campaign will maintain and reward the town's "loyal" customers.
- 2) Maximising the tourism spend
 - By building on its existing reputation for speciality shops, high quality goods and food and drink outlets, Penrith can seek to maximise revenue from this target audience.
 - Proposed campaign can work in partnership with strategic partners, featuring Penrith at the 'heart of Cumbria' in a shared vision to promote the county as 'Europe's Number One rural tourism destination'.

Project Two: New Media, New Business initiative

This project will take advantage of the economies of scale provided by 400+ businesses and organisations collaborating through the Penrith BID to extend the application of online and mobile smart technology to businesses and service providers in the town centre, specifically:

- Developing a new consumer website with an opportunity for levy paying businesses to have their own page with a link to their website. As a minimum it will include information on shopping, eating and drinking, events, activities and attractions;
- Developing a free-to-download 'App' with an opportunity for levy paying businesses to have their own details easily accessible through smartphone applications.

Project Three: Festivals and Events

The BID will contribute to the development of existing and new festivals in Penrith town centre, raising the profile of the town regionally and nationally, and generating increased footfall and spend through a seasonal programme of events that draw on the lessons from successful festival programmes elsewhere. There will be support to promote more widely the enhanced events programme, including markets, and street entertainment as well as the festivals.

Pride in Penrith

Pride in Penrith has 3 areas of activity:

- 1) A new partnership between businesses, community groups and the local authority will plan and deliver the maintenance of the town centre's floral displays, securing a joined-up, planned and consistent approach that adds value to the public realm.
- 2) Support for a community-led 'Greening Penrith Initiative' that adds colour and brightness to the town centre, including hanging baskets, planters and appropriate street furniture that make the town centre a more welcoming place to visit all year round.
- 3) A new 'Townscape Initiative' that pump-primed community-led projects using arts, culture and heritage that generate pride in the town and contribute to Penrith as a place of interest to visitors.

Park in Penrith

Subject to partnership negotiations with Eden District Council, the Penrith BID intends to contribute to the trial of a new car parking initiative in Penrith. This could mean the introduction of an experimental traffic order to extend the provision of free parking in the town centre through a "Free after Three" scheme for a period of 12 months.

This proposed new initiative draws on the evidence of success in similar initiatives in Chester, and elsewhere, where evaluations demonstrate considerable success. For instance, Chester's "Free After Three" Scheme has been described as 'a resounding success', resulting in a 23% increase in footfall in the city after 3pm.

It is a simple cost effective promotion that makes it easier, and more affordable, to access the town centre during a period of the afternoon that has considerable scope to increase both the number of customers visiting the town centre, and the overall spend in local shops and services.

Professional Penrith

This will be achieved through 3 key projects:

Project One: Business Training

The BID will invest in customer service initiatives pushing for the very highest standards to be achieved throughout the BID area, to build on the established strength of "specialists" and place fresh emphasis on the "shopping plus" potential in Penrith - ie developing the knowledgeable and friendly service offered at point of sale.

Project Two: Business Networking

Business networking will be facilitated for all sectors to highlight local expertise and to encourage trading of knowledge and services within the Penrith BID area.

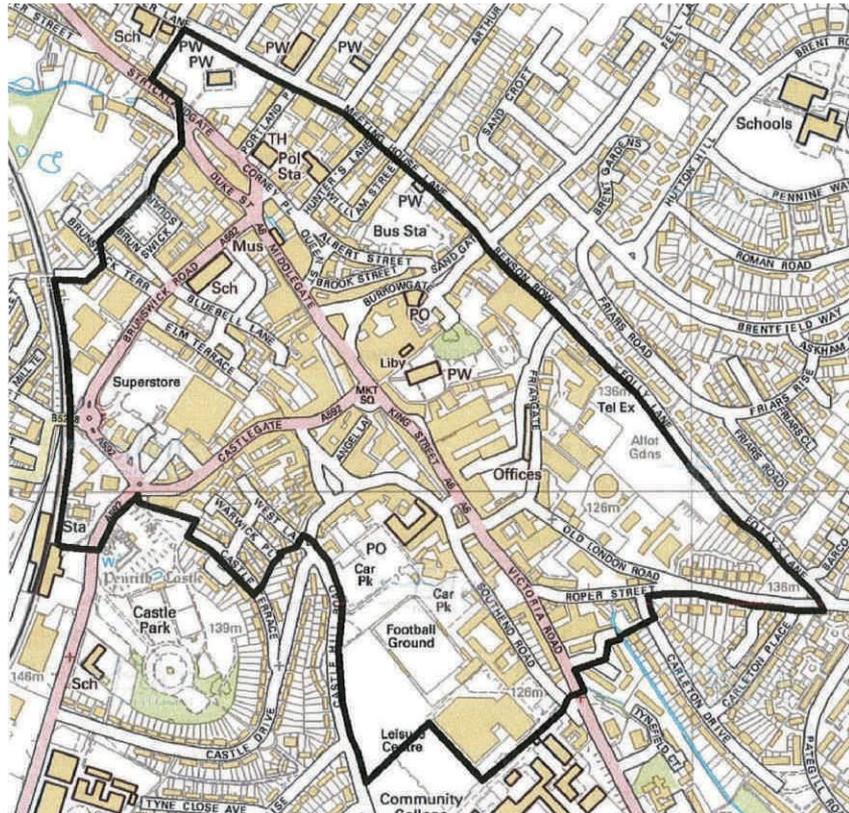
Project Three: Better Deals

Penrith's businesses can benefit through economies of scale by centrally negotiating better deals for some routine services resulting in tangible cost-savings to businesses such as insurance, decoration, trade waste, etc.

Where is the area covered by the BID?

Map of Penrith Town Centre

Business Improvement District*



* BID area includes the New Squares development area west of Southend Road.

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How the BID will be funded

BID Levy

The income required to deliver a five year programme of investment within Penrith's town centre BID will be mostly drawn from the BID Levy, collected on behalf of all the businesses involved by Eden District Council and fixed at one per cent of the current Rateable Value (using latest available VOA survey data) of each property.

The BID Levy will apply to all properties (hereditaments) within the defined BID area including all those in receipt of charitable relief, but excluding those with a Rateable Value of less than £3,000.

The Penrith BID area includes 402 rateable business properties with a Rateable Value of £3,000 and over. Their combined Rateable Value (RV) is currently estimated to be £9,518,000 and will therefore raise £95,180 gross per annum or £475,900 over the 5 years term of the Penrith BID.

None of the pre-ballot BID development work or ballot costs themselves will be recovered through the BID Levy, but Eden District Council will make charges for setting up and administering the collection of the BID Levy on behalf of the Penrith BID.

Other funding

The Penrith BID will not be limited to income derived from the BID Levy and can expect to raise further funds from:

- voluntary contributions
- grants
- sponsorship

Penrith Partnership will continue to seek funding contributions towards specific items or activities identified within the programme of projects to be implemented through this Business Plan. In particular, businesses within the town and surrounding district will be encouraged to support the implementation of the Penrith BID and its considerable potential to deliver wider benefits to the town and local area. Voluntary contributions can help to ensure that the benefits of activities such as marketing extend to areas beyond the defined BID area.

The Penrith BID creates a significant fund that has the potential to draw in further investment, including grant assistance from sources such as the National Lottery and public authorities and agencies.

Half a Million Pound Programme

The total income for the delivery of this five year programme based on income from the BID Levy and income from other contributions will be just over half a million pounds (£535,900).

BID budget forecast for five year term

INCOME	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	total
BID Levy	95,180	95,180	95,180	95,180	95,180	475,900
Voluntary Contributions	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	60,000
TOTAL	107,180	107,180	107,180	107,180	107,180	535,900

EXPENDITURE	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	total
1. Promote	32,000	38,000	57,000	59,000	64,000	250,000
2. Pride	3,700	3,800	4,800	5,000	5,250	22,550
3. Park	30,000	30,000	0	0	0	60,000
4. Professional	12,000	12,000	14,000	16,000	18,000	72,000
BID Running Costs	20,000	20,400	20,808	21,224	21,648	104,080
Contingency 5%	5,680	5,566	5,216	5,216	5,592	27,270
TOTAL	103,380	109,766	101,824	106,440	114,490	535,900

Budget Year 1: 2013

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
BID Levy	95,180	1. Promote Penrith	
Voluntary Contributions	12,000	-Marketing and Promotion	20,000
		-New Media, New Business	6,000
		-Festivals and Events	6,000
		2. Pride in Penrith	
		-Greening Penrith Initiative	2,000
		- Townscape Initiative	1,700
		3. Park in Penrith	
		-Free after Three Car Park Trial	25,000
		-Experimental Order legal fees	5,000
		4. Professional Penrith	
		-Business Training Events	10,000
		-Business Network	2,000
		-Better Deals	1,000
		Total Project Costs	78,700
		Management overheads	5,000
		Administration (Levy collection)	10,000
		Total Running Costs	15,000
		Start-up costs	5,000
		Contingency	5,680
		Budget carried forward	2,800
TOTAL	107,180	TOTAL	107,180

How the BID will be managed

BID Proposer

Penrith Partnership is a not for profit community interest company limited by guarantee. Its primary purpose is: "the promotion for public benefit of urban and rural regeneration in areas of social and economic need and in particular for the town of Penrith and neighbouring communities (the Area of Benefit).

Penrith Partnership Limited is an open and inclusive organisation seeking to represent a broad range of knowledge and interests through a Board of up to 15 Directors, each sharing common aims to promote the social and economic well-being of the town.

In compliance with Regulation 3 of the Business Improvement District (England) Regulations 2004, Penrith Partnership is a membership body with objectives considered by the Board to be consistent with the intentions to establish and manage a Business Improvement District in Penrith town centre. As such Penrith Partnership Ltd is the 'BID Proposer'.

BID Management Board

Subject to a successful vote, a Penrith town centre BID will be managed under the auspices of Penrith Partnership Ltd by a Penrith BID sub- committee, with its own ring-fenced accounts, and with membership open to nomination and election from all businesses, organisations and individuals contributing through the BID levy. This will ensure that the control, delivery and responsibility for the BID sit firmly with the business

community itself. The Penrith BID sub-committee should consist of 6-8 members who in turn elect a chairperson.

Every levy paying business will be eligible to vote at Annual General Meetings on the activities of the Penrith BID.

Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

The BID will monitor progress in partnership with Eden District Council using baseline information collected during the autumn of 2012 as part of a 'benchmarking' exercise to assist in monitoring the progress and impact of initiatives in the town. The use of a suitable set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will provide the necessary clarity needed to monitor and measure the effectiveness of the projects delivered through the BID. This will provide vital quantitative information which can be used both to tailor the annual delivery of the five year programme implemented through the BID, and to provide suitable evidence of performance to enable all the businesses and organisations contributing to the programme to see for themselves the effects of their investments in the BID.

Who will decide and when will it start?

BID Ballot

In November 2012 the decision will be made through a ballot, to be conducted through a confidential postal vote, on whether or not to introduce the BID. If the majority of businesses and organisations support it, then a BID will be established in Penrith town centre and will commence on 1st April 2013.

To achieve a 'yes' vote, the ballot must satisfy two tests:

- 1) A majority in number of those voting;
- 2) A majority in Rateable Value of those voting.

Who can vote

Each eligible business ratepayer will have a vote, provided they are listed on the National Non Domestic Rates List for the defined BID area on the day of the ballot - scheduled for 30 November 2012. Exemptions, relief or discounts will not apply.

Those responsible for unoccupied and part-occupied rateable properties will be liable for the full BID levy. The BID levy will not be affected by the small business rate relief scheme and businesses who already pay service charges to landlords will not receive any discount. Where a property is vacant, undergoing refurbishment or being demolished, the registered business ratepayer will be entitled to vote and also obliged to pay the BID levy with no void period.

Each person entitled to vote will have one vote in respect of each property within the Penrith BID area where business rates are payable. A proxy vote is available and details will be sent out with ballot papers.

Who pays?

Subject to a 'yes' vote, a 1% levy will be charged to each qualifying ratepayer using the most current Non-Domestic Ratings list to calculate the amount payable. The BID levy will be set by 1 April each year based on the most current Non-Domestic Ratings list.

It will be updated for any changes in ratepayer, appeals, additions or removals.

Proposed Timetable

Again subject to the outcome of the vote, the Penrith Business Improvement District will start in April 2013 and will last for a period of five years. Penrith Partnership will endeavour to secure additional voluntary contributions to supplement the levy throughout the five year lifetime of the BID.

What's in it for you?

If you moved your business to a new business park or shopping centre you would expect a park or centre manager to maintain and promote the environment you have invested in. Being in the town centre should be no different. Someone should be looking after your patch, promoting an inviting and dynamic environment for your customers.

Penrith BID is designed with this in mind and in the years ahead the BID will ensure public service contracts are delivered and that opportunities for improvements are taken. The BID Management Board will identify advantageous opportunities that levy- payers can benefit from as members of a BID collective purchasing group.

In summary, Penrith BID is an opportunity for businesses to have more say in a better run town centre, with increased promotion, easier access and improved value for money.

“Many shops, like mine, have been passed through family generations and work because of loyal customers spanning these generations. I support the BID as it will encourage proactive decision making for the good of the whole town as well as become a point at which decisions can be made and most importantly, actioned.”

Sarah Graham
Arragon's Cycles

How much will it cost you?

For the majority it will be no more than the daily cost of a small snack bar or packet of crisps.

Rateable Value	Annual cost @ 1%	Weekly cost	Daily cost
< £3,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
£3,000	£30	58p	8p
£5,000	£50	96p	14p
£8,000	£80	£1.54	22p
£10,000	£100	£1.92	27p
£15,000	£150	£2.88	41p
£25,000	£250	£4.81	69p
£30,000	£300	£5.77	82p
£50,000	£500	£9.62	£1.37
£75,000	£750	£14.42	£2.06
£100,000	£1000	£19.23	£2.75
£1,000,000	£10,000	£192.31	£27.47

Remember to cast your vote and really make a difference to Penrith Town Centre.

VOTE YES!

Find out more

The full Business Plan for the Business Improvement District can be viewed and downloaded at: www.penrithtown.co.uk/partnership-bid
www.penrithchamberoftrade.org.uk/penrith-bid www.eden.gov.uk

If you require further information or have any queries relating to the Business Improvement District proposals please contact:

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PENRITH BID

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Photography courtesy of John Burrows for Eden District Council

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The European Agricultural
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Europe investing in rural areas



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