



## **Epsom Business Improvement District 2018 - 2023**

### **Background**

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a defined area where business ratepayers invest together in local improvements to boost trading conditions. A BID is business-led and business-managed and established through a ballot open to all businesses in the BID area.

During 2016/17 a group of local businesses and stakeholders formed a BID Steering Group to develop a Business Improvement District in Epsom. The Group had representation from businesses throughout Epsom proposed BID boundary and all businesses were consulted about a possible BID. The BID Steering Group are shown on pages 4-5 of the BID Business Plan available to view at [www.epsom.bid](http://www.epsom.bid)

### **BID ballot**

In November 2017 the Electoral Reform Service conducted an independent 28-day postal ballot. All eligible businesses in the BID area received a copy of the five-year BID business plan together with a ballot paper and asked to vote 'yes' or 'no' to Epsom achieving BID status.

Of businesses that cast their vote 85% of businesses by number and 85% by rateable value voted in favour of the BID proposals. The successful Epsom BID ballot result was announced in December 2017. There are currently 290 established BIDs across the UK including in Sutton, Dorking, Camberley, Kingston, Guildford, Richmond, Twickenham, Croydon and Staines.

### **BID projects**

Epsom BID projects are grouped into six themes:

- **Theme 1 – Marketing and promotion**
- **Theme 2 – Epsom events**
- **Theme 3 – Environmental improvements**
- **Theme 4 – Parking and accessibility**
- **Theme 5 – Safer Epsom**
- **Theme 6 – Business support**

Consultation with businesses in the Epsom BID area identified key issues that formed the BID projects and initiatives set out in the BID Business Plan which can be viewed at [www.epsom.bid](http://www.epsom.bid)

### **BID levy**

To fund the work of the Epsom BID each eligible business within the BID area pays a compulsory annual contribution. This is the BID levy. The BID area is shown on page 25 of the Epsom BID Business Plan at [www.epsom.bid](http://www.epsom.bid)

In line with legislation collection of the levy is done on the BID's behalf by the Local Authority, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council; the money is ring-fenced and paid back to the BID in its entirety. Collection is enforced under the same rules and processes as business rates collection. Any queries about the following should be raised with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council:

- levy payment
- recovery notices
- bills or reminder bills
- disputes over liability for properties

## **How to work out your levy**

The BID levy is based on the rateable value of the property that a business occupies. This is also how business rates are calculated. In Epsom the BID levy applies to all business premises with a rateable value of £10,000 and above.

The BID levy is calculated at 1.5% of the premises rateable value, with the maximum BID levy payable on any one hereditament and also those with multiple hereditaments (business premises) capped at £8,000 per year.

For businesses located within The Ashley Centre the levy is 1.25% of rateable value to reflect the managed environment and service charge.

Charities do not receive a discount.

BID levy will not increase during the five year term 2018-2023.

## **Exemptions**

The following types of hereditament (business premises) will be excluded from paying the BID levy (and therefore also from voting in any BID ballot): workshops and warehouses, communications stations / telecom masts, ATM cash machines.

Charities are not exempt.

## **Empty property relief**

Owners are usually liable for unoccupied properties. Under business rates rules, businesses receive a 3-month period where they are exempt from paying business rates. However, a BID levy charge of 100% of the normal liability applies as soon as a property becomes vacant (i.e. no 3-month grace period).

## **Levy bills**

- In line with BID regulations, levy bills will arrive at the same addresses used for business rates bills.
- First year levy bills are sent out in March 2018 when the BID commences on 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- Bills will be sent each March, at the start of the BID year, for the five years of the BID term.
- One levy bill will arrive for each eligible property on the rating list. So for example a business occupying three rateable properties will receive three bills.

## **How to pay the levy**

The BID levy is payable in one instalment on 1 April. Please see the reverse of the BID levy bill for methods of paying the bill.

## **Reminder notices**

Businesses will receive a reminder notice if they have not paid within 14 days of the payment due date.

## **Refunds**

On vacation of a property the Council will not apportion the annual BID levy on a daily basis. The rate-payer, who is entitled to possession of the property on 1 April 2018 and on each subsequent 1 April of the five year BID term, is liable for the whole financial year, regardless of any change in occupation.

## **BID accounts**

Fully audited accounts will be made available for all levy payers at the end of each BID year online at [www.epsom.bid](http://www.epsom.bid) and at the BID Annual General Meeting AGM.

A review of the annual BID activities and details of completed projects and project expenditure will accompany the following years BID levy bills.

Contact details for the BID are given on the front of your BID levy bill