



NORTHFIELD

Business Improvement District

FREE!



Friday 19th - Sunday 28th July 2013
NORTHFIELD HIGH STREET

Visit Northfield presents

CULTURE MASH

week long festival



Free events • after the event outdoor theatre
NORTHFIELD BEACH • LIVE MUSIC • CRAFT FAIR

Following the success of last year's beach, this summer we're holding Culture Mash, a week long festival of free events to attract visitors into the town centre and bring the streets alive.

To do this of this scale, we've secured extra support from Northfield Town Centre Partnership, Work in Progress theatre company, Awards for All, Northfield Community Chest and Northfield Community First, while Arts Council England is funding the play.

We hope your business has been able to take advantage of the extra footfall in the town centre! Northfield BID has also been giving out a new map, which lists every business, to raise awareness of what's on offer and encourage visitors to return to Northfield.

Newsletter 7 - July 2013

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It's been a busy few months for Northfield Business Improvement District (BID) with many new initiatives set up to improve and promote the town centre, and support businesses.

The BID enables us to improve our trading environment by collectively investing over £500,000 over the next five years in tackling the areas we've identified.

Northfield BID is managed by a board of directors, representing different business sectors. As BID Manager, I deliver projects that help us achieve our priorities, which are:

- **Improve**
Create a clean, safe and attractive environment.
- **Promote**
Create a Visit Northfield brand that appeals to a wider catchment and promote our shopping, services and events offer.
- **Support**
Support existing businesses, provide a business 'voice' and encourage inward investment.

We also intend to encourage other organisations to use the town centre and help us to achieve:

- **Involve**
Encourage local people to feel part of the town centre and showcase 'homegrown' talent

By businesses working together, and with others, it will enable us to achieve much greater successes than just the sum of our investment.

One of Northfield BID's key strengths is in encouraging coordinated action from other organisations to help us achieve our vision for Northfield town centre, and bringing with this extra funding and resources.

Liz Newton

Liz Newton
BID Manager

Did you know?

There are now 150 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) across the country, including 10 in Birmingham (five in the city centre and five in the suburbs).

Although there are some common themes, each one is different as they have locally-decided priorities and tackle them in the most appropriate way to improve their trading environment.

Email newsletter

To sign up to our monthly email newsletter, please email: liz.newton@visitnorthfield.co.uk

more reasons to visit Northfield

Northfield BID is one of the two organisations working to create and promote 'more reasons to Visit Northfield'.

The two organisations have distinct, but complementary, aims:



NORTHFIELD
Business Improvement District

Improving and promoting the town centre for the benefit of businesses



NORTHFIELD
Town Centre Partnership

Helping the community

In order to achieve greater success, and where it is mutually-beneficial, Northfield BID works on joint projects with Northfield Town Centre Partnership, West Midlands Police, Birmingham City Council, Northfield Shopping, Birmingham PlayCare Network and other organisations.

We are currently revamping the Visit Northfield website:
www.visitnorthfield.co.uk

You can also keep up to date with BID activities by following us:

- www.facebook.com/visitnorthfield
- www.facebook.com/northfieldbid
- www.twitter.com/visitnorthfield
- www.twitter.com/northfieldbid



SHOP WATCH

MAKING NORTHFIELD SAFER



Northfield BID works with West Midlands Police to run the ShopWatch initiative that aims to make Northfield safer and help retailers are aware of the identity of offenders and can proactively deter criminals.

One element is the popular Northfield Retail Radio Link, which enables businesses to share real-time information with each other.

A huge thank you must go to Northfield Shopping Centre for their great work acting as 'control' for

the scheme.

The Retail Crime Operation (RCO) enables member businesses to submit brief details and photographs of offenders, and also issue exclusion orders banning offenders from participating stores.

The information is shared through monthly photograph bulletins.

ShopWatch also helps tackle emerging or seasonal crime trends with specific crime prevention projects.

Norman Barnes, head of security for Northfield Shopping, says: "The Retail Radio Link has been a godsend, and has helped bring the town's businesses together to support each other and share live information as incidents are happening.

"The RCO bulletins are crucial in helping up know who offenders are and flagging up anything of note, for example specific methods of shoplifting or if they are known to carry a weapon.

"The scheme gives us all more eyes and ears, as members across the town are looking out for the same people."

◀ *Our very cold All Out Day in March where the police, fire brigade and Council's Environmental Health team tackled issues.*



Christmas crime prevention

Northfield Neighbourhood Police Team carried out high visibility patrols of the town centre last December as part of their annual Operation Wonderland.

Christmas is an important time of year for Northfield's businesses but busy Christmas shoppers can become a target for opportunistic thieves.

We want our customers to feel safe, therefore Northfield BID also bought 'Northfield jingle bells' that attach to purses.

The bells are not only a deterrent for thieves, but they also act as a reminder to customers to secure their wallet or purse.

These bells were given to businesses who were identified to have many elderly customers, and PCSOs also handed them out to vulnerable shoppers.

If you would like any free purse bells to distribute to your customers, please get in touch.



Car parking charges

Last Autumn Birmingham City Council proposed increasing Northfield's car park charges.

On behalf of the businesses, Northfield BID attended Northfield District Committee and argued strongly against the rise.

Although we were not successful in stopping it, they did agree to postpone its implementation until January 2013, therefore not

affecting the critical Christmas trading period.

National Grid road works

National Grid carried out statutory work to replace a gas main that runs along the high street.

We couldn't stop this work but Northfield BID was instrumental in revising their work plan to reduce the impact on traders.

Also, to make sure customers could still access Northfield, National Express was involved to ensure that buses could still run along

their usual routes and, where necessary, temporary bus stops were introduced.

In October it became clear that work was running behind schedule, and Northfield BID was insistent that they close the hole and not return to the site until after Christmas in order

to not affect this vital trading time.

During February, National Grid returned to complete their work at the Church Road junction, then continued to work on the pavement between the market and Midland Carpets until the end of March.

PRIDE IN NORTHFIELD EACH DOING OUR BIT

We're calling on all businesses to support 'Pride in Northfield' by helping keep the pavement in front of your business and the rear of your premises clean. If we each do our bit, we can help reduce the litter in the town.

As you know, cigarette butts litter our streets and one of the main problems has been the lack of cigarette bins.

We have a number of free wall-mounted cigarette bins available - if you would like our caretaker to install one on the front of your building or at the rear of the premises, simply call us.

Both this summer and last year you will have noticed flower boxes on railings near the main junctions.

To have greater impact, we concentrated the flowers in three areas. Also potential customers driving past Northfield on the relief road were reminded that we're here!

We also called in contractors to remove the derelict phone box that had been an awful eyesore for many years, and re-lay the paving slabs - it looks as good as new now!

To keep on top of environmental problems, we will now be carrying

out a monthly walkabout of the town centre to identify issues to report, for example to Birmingham City Council, Amey, Centro or BT. It will also help us identify new projects or issues for the BID caretaker to tackle.

If you'd like to join us on a walkabout, please give us a call.



Improve

Northfield BID was delighted to be awarded an extra £100,000 funding by Northfield and Weoley Councillors to mark the start of the BID.

One of our first priorities was new robust litter bins with inbuilt cigarette bins.

We held a lamp post design competition in 20 local primary schools, and the winning entries were installed across the town centre to add colour to the high street.

You will have also seen that the 19

metal grilles around the base of the small trees were a magnet for litter, cigarette butts and weeds.

Our contractors replaced them with bonded-pebble surrounds to prevent this unsightly problem.

It's very frustrating that progress is slow due to red tape, but we are still working with Birmingham City

Council to install:

- Welcome to Northfield signs
- Fingerpost sign and notice board on Tay Corner
- Planter boxes

We're looking forward to seeing the finished results!



Flagship events

Last year saw the introduction of two large flagship events to create the feel-good factor and draw new people into the town centre to see what we have to offer.

We want to put Northfield on the map and for the public to start associating Northfield with positive good-news stories.

We worked hard to promote the events widely through leaflets, posters, schools, nurseries, press releases, social media, decoration

(eg bunting), cryptic messages (eg buckets & spades) and through large organisations' internal communication (Council, police and Royal Orthopaedic Hospital).

Northfield by the Sea

At the start of the school summer holidays last year we held 'Northfield by the Sea', a five-day urban beach event with free beach, deckchairs and buckets & spades.

It was a roaring success with fantastic feedback from visitors and many businesses reporting that the town centre was buzzing and much busier than usual!

with Olympic torch, arts & crafts and Punch & Judy shows. We also put on face painting, limited-edition Northfield rock, children's ride and children's games.

the event to their customers) and also enter the summer window competition. We're delighted to announce the winner was British Heart Foundation clothes shop, closely followed by Sue Ryder and The Flower Centre

The event was packed with free activities including dance performances, stilt walking, balloon modelling, samba band, photos

Businesses were encouraged to take advantage of the event (eg put on special offers/free samples, have a presence at the event or promote

Special thanks go to Thomas Cook who held a colouring competition for a UK holiday.





NORTHFIELD WONDERLAND

Following the success of the summer event we put on Northfield Wonderland, a two-day event to appeal to families and draw people into Northfield at Christmas.

We recreated the North Pole with Elf Workshop marquees and the biggest snowman bouncy castle in the UK on Price's Square, and Santa's Grotto in Northfield Shopping Centre.

Children were given a Northfield Town Centre Passport and encouraged to complete free arts & crafts activities to 'earn' passport stamps and graduate as an Official

Northfield Elf. This went down a storm and we had lots of fabulous feedback from the public about how these events are exactly the type of thing Northfield needs.

Coinciding with the children's event, we also put on Northfield Christmas Market with a selection of stalls from handmade cards to honey to jewellery.

Christmas lights

In 2012 we were again lucky to secure funding towards Christmas lights from the local councillors through Northfield and Weoley Community Chest funds.

We used this towards motifs on lamp posts and a Christmas tree on Tay Corner from mid-November until the end of December.

The BID felt it was important that we pay for an additional Christmas tree on the piece of land next to Gino's, which is at the northern gateway to the

town, so that we highlight the town to people passing on the relief road.

We did ask the Council to investigate whether we could have another tree installed at the southern gateway, but they reported that it wasn't possible at that time.





THE BIG PROJECTS

MAKING NORTHFIELD CLEANER

We launched 'The Big Projects' campaign to make Northfield cleaner, and each month will be holding a 'walkabout' to identify environmental issues and report faults.



THE BIG TIDY UP

Both last Spring and this Spring, Northfield BID has brought in a specialist company, Ramora, to carry out a jet wash of paving slabs across the BID area. The work takes place over several nights and we plan to deep clean the streets each year.

We have also held a high-profile clean-up of the town centre.

BID Manager Liz Newton was joined by staff from McDonalds, Northfield Ecocentre, Northfield Town Centre Partnership, Northfield Neighbourhood Police Team and members of the public. The three

hotspots tackled were:

- Clearing litter & weeds from the alleyway next to Farmfoods and the driveway to the car park behind Price's Square
- Removing weeds from between paving slabs on Price's Square

- Clearing weeds, leaves, broken glass & rubbish from outside businesses near the Maddox Building

In all, over 50 bags of rubbish were collected and great comments received from the public impressed at the pride being taken in the area.



THE BIG CARETAKING SERVICE

Through The Big Caretaking Service, we now tackle hotspots in the town centre, for example removing litter, graffiti, fly posters, abandoned trollies, weeds and overgrowth.

We commission part-time BID caretaker Tony Adams to carry out a programme of regular environmental tasks, and he also deals with any new issues that we identify.

The caretaker will not carry out work that should be done by the Council, and instead will concentrate on areas that get missed but let the town down.

We're sure you'll notice the difference.

Feel free to contact us to suggest other areas to tackle.



Tony Adams, BID Caretaker



BID levy

Birmingham City Council has sent out invoices for next year's BID levy for the period April 2013 to March 2014.

The Council is responsible for collecting the levy on behalf of Northfield Town Centre BID Limited, and transferring this money over to the BID company. Collection of the BID levy carries the same enforcement weight as the collection of Business Rates.

If you have any queries about your

levy collection, please contact Birmingham City Council directly (their contact details and your reference number will be on correspondence from them).

For queries about BID projects, please contact: Liz Newton on 0121 411 2157 or liz.newton@visitnorthfield.co.uk

Energy efficiency

Confused about the range of new energy schemes out there and how your business could benefit?

Northfield Ecocentre is offering free help to local businesses to reduce their energy bills and lower their environmental impact. They can also advise on government grants and initiatives such as the Green Deal and feed-in-tariffs.

For more information call Northfield Ecocentre on 0121 448 0119 or email advice@northfieldecocentre.org

Join our board of Directors

Northfield BID is led by a board of directors who meet monthly and take decisions on the BID's work to improve and promote the town centre and support local business.

The majority of our directors are from local businesses, along with stakeholder representatives for the Council and Police.

If you would like to apply to join the board of directors, please contact us.

To find out more about Northfield BID or to get involved with any of our projects, please contact: Liz Newton on 0121 411 2157 or liz.newton@visitnorthfield.co.uk

NORTHFIELD GIVES BACK HELPING OUR COMMUNITY

If you want to help 'give back' by helping the community, please contact us.

We want to show local people that Northfield businesses care about their customers.

There are different ways you can get involved, and we will publicise your business's contribution:

- Donate non-perishable food and toiletries to Northfield's new Life Line Food Bank, which provides emergency food parcels to local people who are desperate.
- Help with events.
- Nominate local projects for your organisations' corporate grant schemes.
- Share your skills with another business or community organisation, perhaps through mentoring or pro bono support.