






Braintree BID is here to help your business, read on to see how you can get involved

-  **Business Showcase** – Braintree BID is working with Business Development Services to deliver this event which is to be held at Braintree Arts Theatre on Thursday 26th July.
-  **Mary Portas puts forward her views to the future of our high streets** – commissioned in 2011 by the Government, Mary Portas has come up with 28 recommendations read on to find out more!
-  **Reaction on the street** – We've been visiting businesses to get your feedback on what issues are important for the BID to cover in our final programme.
-  **Energy Consultants make a difference to local business** – wouldn't you like to save money?
-  **Regular opportunities for businesses to attend BID meetings** – another way to share your views and get involved in the future of your town.

An opportunity for 80 businesses to market themselves to hundreds of visitors... Do you want a part of it?


We are delighted to announce that the Business Showcase 2012 will take place at the **Braintree Arts Theatre on Thursday 26th July** - this new facility offers modern amenities set in a convenient location. There is plenty of exhibition space available, providing the perfect opportunity to promote your company to business people right across Braintree district – an opportunity not to be missed. An added incentive for **BID members** is a **50% discount** on exhibition space. Further information will be available shortly, we promise to keep you right up to date with our progress.

The impressive theatre hall is seen below together with the exterior of this new facility, which is located next to Notley High School, Notley Road.



The Portas Review – Mary “Queen of Shops” strikes the right note with the need to take action for the future of our high streets

Mary Portas presented 28 recommendations that she feels would be helpful for the future development of High Streets. Read on for a snapshot of some of the key pointers that Mary made:

-  **‘Town Teams’** playing a crucial role they should be made up of a cross section of businesses from the local community as well as: local stakeholders, town centre managers, BID’s and local authorities.
-  **Successful Business Improvement Districts are seen as a significant asset** to a town. She suggests beefing up BIDs so that they develop sound plans for improving the trading environment for businesses.
-  A great deal of emphasis was placed on defining the roles of **landlord’s responsibilities**. One suggestion given was to empower local authorities to step in when landlords are negligent with the upkeep of empty shops. Taking this a step further it was proposed that empty property rate relief was removed to discourage long periods of vacancy.
-  **“Big retailers: big responsibilities”** she recommended that large retailers should support and mentor local businesses and independent retailers.
-  **“High Street Pilots”** Creativity was at the core of the report promoting fresh ideas for our town centres - her ideas included: national market days, swap-shops, town loyalty cards and local collection points for online businesses.

If you are interested the full report can be downloaded via the Braintree BID website, visit www.braintreebid.co.uk and go to our news section on the homepage.

It’s up to us to work together to see what we can glean from the report and how we can work together as an important part of a ‘Town Team’ for the improvement of Braintree town centre.



Mary Portas



We listen to what local businesses want - we are acting on your views now!

We have been out and about speaking to local businesses recently asking what is important to them. This is the wish list from the businesses we have spoken to: **increased footfall, marketing particularly advertising, regeneration of vacant properties in the town, improving the market, waste management, street signage and parking.**

We see that there is a growing demand for increased footfall into the town centre and we want to be flexible in our approach. As a result, we are going to redirect a substantial amount of our complementary **marketing budget** towards **advertising**. We will focus on **promoting** the “**Sparks will Fly**” cultural week of activities in June, the **Music Night** in Market Square planned for the 22nd June and the **Community Market** which we are organising for the bank holiday weekend in August.

One element of the complementary marketing campaign that we still wish to push forward is creating a **consumer facing website**, where BID members can promote their offers to a larger audience. We intend to have the website up and running soon. This will give more businesses the chance to get involved.

There are of course more businesses we need to speak to and we would like to add **your ideas** to the melting pot. You can give us a call on 01376 551818, drop us an email at admin@braintreebid.co.uk or pop by. We want to create a programme that reflects what the BID members want to do that we need your input!

Still want more ways to get involved?

We would like to **interview a business** each month asking them what they want to see improved in Braintree, if they have any ideas how to achieve this and what they think to the BID. This interview would be shared with all BID members via the monthly newsletter. If you want to have your say, no holds barred, then give us a call. We'll share your thoughts unedited (well the legal and honest items!) – we can't be fairer than that!

Energy Consultants BCR Associates are a hit

Brendan McCarthy of BCR Associates, has been busy trying to reduce the energy costs of Braintree businesses. Brendan and his team are able to help with cost reduction for gas, electricity and oil. Their knowledge of the market and the buying power they bring could potentially give your business immediate savings. Here is what two local businesses have said about the service:

Gen Rowell, Business Development Services: “We are actually going to save £534 this year on our gas bill. Bearing in mind our BID contribution would be £297 in theory we are already in credit! Brendan was fantastic, he can't do enough for you – we couldn't have done it without him.”

Jen Wharrier, Ladyslayers: “We found BCR Associates to be extremely helpful and on the ball - they worked around the clock to get the job done. We are staying with the same supplier but they managed to get us a better deal, so we will be saving £200. It saved me time as well as they did the legwork and they had the expertise to get me a great deal.”

Car Park initiative feedback

We are keen to hear your views on Braintree District Council’s 10p parking initiative.

The pilot is currently being run until the end of March. We understand that visitors and traders alike are keen to minimise parking costs, although we must remind ourselves that this is a commercial business decision for the Council and must be sustainable over the longer term.



The aim of the 10p campaign is to encourage extra people into the town during typically quieter periods boosting business for traders and increasing the atmosphere in the town. But we’d like to know what you think? email us at admin@braintreebid.co.uk or call 01376 551818.

BID meetings for members

We are delighted that more people have found the time to attend our regular BID meetings. As the numbers of visitors are increasing we felt that we needed to rethink how we manage these sessions. It goes without saying that we welcome people openly; to ask questions and to get involved - but the monthly management is might not be the most appropriate vehicle for this.

As a result we will be hosting **open meetings** available to BID members on a bi-monthly basis and the alternate months will remain closed sessions for the BID Management Committee only. The next open meeting is Thursday 16th February at 12 noon in the BID office at George Yard Shopping Centre Management Suite. We hope to see you there.

Date for your diary:

Our **IT conference** will be held at the University of Essex on **Thursday 28th June**. More information to follow shortly. Are there any topics you would like to see covered?

