



BID Members Consultation  
(September 2013 – February 2014)

Overview

**Dunfermline Delivers  
 BID Members Consultation (September 2013 – February 2014)  
 Summary of Findings**

**Introduction**

As part of the ongoing evaluation of its activities, Dunfermline Delivers undertook a survey of BID members September 2013 – February 2014. This survey sought to gain an understanding of how BID members viewed the activities of Dunfermline Delivers, priorities for the future and to gauge how BID members were likely to vote in the forthcoming renewal ballot.

The survey took the form of one to one interviews and on-line surveys. To date (February 14) 83 completed survey questionnaires form the basis of the analysis, although not all respondents completed every question. Generally a minimum of 100 survey returns is regarded as providing a reasonable sample size to provide representative results, so a few more returns would have been preferable to provide more robust findings. However, questionnaires are still coming in and the research finding will be updated at the end of March and April 2014.

Where appropriate the results of the 2013 BID members survey are compared to earlier surveys – one undertaken by Fife Council in 2007 during the BID development process and the other undertaken by Dunfermline Delivers in February 2011 which secured 196 returns through a face to face survey. However, the questions asked are different and hence the three surveys are not directly comparable.

Dunfermline Delivers has four main priorities

- Improving the perception and image of Dunfermline
- Projects to stimulate business growth
- Marketing and promotion of Dunfermline
- Providing business support and communication

A range of activities have been undertaken under these broad strands and the consultation sought to ascertain how effective BID members considered these have been.

**Perception and Image Projects**

Thirteen projects were listed and BID members were asked to rate whether they considered these had improved the city centre and if they were important to Dunfermline and for BID members. The findings are generally very positive with upwards of 69% of survey respondents saying that they agree or strongly agree with the projects in the survey form. The projects are ranked in Table 1 according to BID member's responses.

<b>Table 1 Perception and Image Projects</b>	<b>% BID respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the project</b>
Safer Towns	90%
Orientation Board	86%
Dunfermline in Bloom	80%
3-D Graphics/Window Displays in Vacant Units, etc	78%
Key Building and Attractions Illumination	76%
Street Ambassador	75%
Blue Plaques	75%
Going Green	74%
Premises Improvement Grants	72%
Dunfermline Wi-Fi	72%
Digital Signal	71%
Gutter Project	69%
High Street Banners and Decorations	69%

The Safer Towns project is viewed as the key project within the Perception and Image portfolio and indeed almost 50% of survey respondents strongly agree with this project. There was also good awareness of this project in the 2011 BID member survey.

Few respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the individual projects but those finding least favour were Going Green where 6% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this project and Street Ambassadors where 5% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this project.

Disappointingly, there was relatively poor awareness of some projects including the Gutter Project (11% were unaware), Digital Signal (9% were unaware) and Premises Improvement Grants (9% were unaware).

Overall 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Perception and Image projects should be further developed and 75% agreed or strongly agreed that Perception and Image projects had improved the appearance in and around the BID area since 2009.

Respondents were asked for comments and suggestions in relation to improving the perception and image of Dunfermline. Some 16 chose to provide additional comments or suggestions and these can be grouped as

- 2 positive comments re BID activities
- 3 negative comments re BID activities having limited impact
- 4 negative comments re some specific projects

Suggestions related to having more hanging baskets, taking steps to remove addicts and beggars, having a one-off registration for free wi-fi to then using data for market research, taking steps to encourage landlords to maintain vacant property and applying for lottery funding for a peacock enclosure (at The Glen one assumes).

### Business Growth Projects

Fourteen projects were listed and BID members were asked to rate whether they considered these had had a positive effect and if they were important to Dunfermline and for BID members. Whilst the findings are generally positive, the Business Growth projects are generally less well regarded than the Perception and Image projects. The projects are ranked in Table 2 according to BID member's responses.

<b>Table 2 Business Growth Projects</b>	<b>% BID respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the project</b>
Working to attract inward investment to Dunfermline	84%
Existing Business Development/Shop Front Grants	81%
Festival and Event Marketing Packs	76%
Dunfermline Wi-Fi	75%
Digital Signage	73%
Positive matching/marketing of vacant units to potential tenants/purchasers	68%
New Business Start Up Grants	65%
BID Member connectingwithyou.com listing	59%
Tourism Grant	56%
Procurement	52%
Advert Design Service	44%
Training Workshops and Forums	42%
BID Member Promotional Videos	37%
Logo Design Service	35%

Working to attract inward investment is viewed as the key project within the Business Growth portfolio and this is the only project in this strand where more than 40% of survey respondents strongly agree with this project.

Relatively few respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the individual projects but those finding least favour were the Logo Design Service, and Promotional Videos where 9% disagreed or strongly disagreed with these projects, followed by the Advert Design Service where 8% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this project.

Disappointingly, there was poor awareness of many projects including the Tourism Grant and Promotional Videos (18% were unaware of these), Training Workshops and Forums (14% were unaware) and Advert Design Service (12% were unaware).

Overall 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Business Growth projects should be further developed but only 54% agreed or strongly agreed that BID Business Growth activity has been helpful and effective.

Respondents were asked for comments and suggestions in relation to Business Growth activity. Only 10 chose to provide additional comments and these were generally negative although there were two suggestions relating to making vacant units available for short term lets and making sure start up businesses are linked to the BID at an early stage.

Given the findings of this survey in relation to Business Growth activity, it is suggested that there is perhaps scope to reduce the range of projects (e.g. videos, advert design, logo design, etc) and focus on those that BID members consider as being most effective.

### **Marketing and Promotion Projects**

Ten projects were listed and BID members were asked to rate whether they considered these had raised awareness of and increased footfall in Dunfermline and are important to Dunfermline and BID members. The findings are generally positive, with the Marketing and Promotion projects generally regarded more positively than Business Growth projects but less well regarded than the Perception and Image projects. The projects are ranked in Table 3 according to BID member's responses and Festivals are viewed most positively of all by respondents

<b>Table 3 Marketing and Promotion Projects</b>	<b>% BID respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the project</b>
Festivals	89%
Website – BID member listing and visitor info	72%
Wi-Fi and Digital Signage	72%
Bus Advertising	71%
Social Media	71%
Business Advertorials/features	70%
Promotional Leaflets	69%
Events	68%
Shop Local Campaign	64%
Radio Advertising	64%

Festivals are viewed as a key element within the Marketing and Promotion portfolio, with 54% of survey respondents strongly agreeing with this type of project.

Relatively few respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the individual projects but those finding least favour were Events where 8% disagreed or strongly disagreed with these projects, followed by Radio and Bus Advertising where 6% disagreed or strongly disagreed with these projects.

Awareness of projects was generally better than for Business Growth projects but there are still issues with 9% of respondents saying they were unaware of the Website, 8% saying they were unaware of the Events and 7% saying they were unaware of the Shop Local Campaign, Social Media activity, Wi-Fi and Digital Signage and Business Advertorial/features.

Overall 82% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Marketing and Promotion projects should be further developed, with 61% agreeing or strongly agreeing that BID marketing and promotional activity has been helpful and effective.

Some 11 respondents chose to give a comment or make a suggestion. There were some negative comments about the impact of activity on certain parts of the city centre but other comments focused on the need for more to be done to promote and publicise festivals and Dunfermline in general.

In terms of ascertaining whether the marketing and promotional activities of Dunfermline Delivers have increased the footfall to the city centre, counters were installed at six locations in April 2013. A report covering April to September 2013 concludes that where data is available for full months, the footfall is relatively stable. Saturdays are generally the busiest days and Sundays the quietest. This data is of limited use at the moment but will be helpful in monitoring trends over time.

### Business Support and Communication Projects

Twenty projects/activities were listed and BID members were asked whether they considered these had had a positive effect and are important to Dunfermline and BID members. The findings are generally positive, although overall Business Support and Communication projects are less well regarded than the Perception and Image projects. The projects are ranked in Table 4 according to BID member's responses.

<b>Table 4 Business Support and Communication Projects</b>	<b>% BID respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the project</b>
Exploring free city centre parking	84%
Lobbying for reduced business rates and rateable value re-evaluation	80%
Influencing Fife Council policies	78%
Attracting additional funding to Dunfermline	76%
Representing BID members	73%
Working with Fife Council to make planning process easier	72%
BID member newsletter	72%
Festival and Event – Business Marketing Packs	72%
Procurement	72%
BID website, etc	71%
Leaflets and Bulletins to communicate with BID Levy payers	69%
Opportunities for stakeholders to meet BID staff to discuss issues/ideas	69%
BID lobbying against out of town development	61%
Working with City Centre Steering Group on regeneration projects	60%
Pub Watch – admin and support	59%
Business Forums	58%
Representation of Dunfermline on city centre cross parliamentary groups	58%
Promotion and Loo design support	57%
Lobbying for Fife College to locate into city centre	56%
Training courses	44%

It is clear that much of the activity under Business Support and Communication is valued by BID members, particularly where Dunfermline Delivers takes a lobbying or representative role.

Relatively few respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the individual activities but those finding least favour were lobbying for Fife College to locate to the city centre where 9% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this activity, followed by opportunities for stakeholders to meet with BID staff to discuss issues/ideas where 6% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this activity.

Awareness of activities was generally better than for Business Growth projects but there are still issues and many respondents do not seem to appreciate the role Dunfermline Delivers plays in representing business interests and lobbying on their behalf e.g. 14% of respondents said they were unaware that the BID had a representative role on the city centre cross parliamentary groups, 13% said they were unaware of the BID's activity lobbying against out of town development and 11% didn't know that the BID worked with the City Centre Steering Group on regeneration projects.

Some 12 respondents chose to make additional comments or suggestions, with many of these being negative about lack of progress or lack of awareness of activities. There were some positive suggestions about changing the location of markets, improving signage and trying to develop a cinema in the city centre.

## Priorities for the Future

Survey respondents were asked to provide opinions on range of activities that might be priorities for the future. Feedback is provided in Table 5 below and it can be seen that there is a good appetite for most potential projects and activities with upwards of 59% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with all suggested priorities.

<b>Table 5 Future Projects and Activities</b>	<b>% BID respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the project</b>
Development of Dunfermline as a Cultural Destination	89%
A strong voice to lobby on issues affecting BID area businesses	88%
City Centre Regeneration Initiatives and a Business Development Support Programme	85%
Geographic promotion of areas within Dunfermline e.g. Heritage, Cultural, Village and Shopping Quarters	85%
More communication between BID and BID levy payers	83%
Streetscape Improvements	81%
Street theatre/on street activity	80%
Encourage café culture/on-street relaxed dink/dine environment	80%
National and international marketing of Dunfermline	79%
Bigger festivals	78%
Late night shopping nights	78%
Pop-up exhibitions	77%
Wider promotion of BID businesses outwith Fife	76%
Development of Dunfermline Fringe	72%
Full pedestrianisation of high street	72%
Develop activities with twinned cities and towns	71%
Getting commercial waste bins off the street	66%
More activity between 5pm and 8pm	65%
Retail loyalty card	62%
Pop-up shops	59%

There are two suggestions that over 50% of respondents strongly agree with – City Centre Regeneration Initiatives and a Business Development Support Programme plus Developing Dunfermline as a Cultural Destination. However, over 40% of all respondents strongly agree that 12 of the potential projects and activities should be priorities for the future. The least strongly supported projects are more activity between 5pm and 8pm and developing activities with twinned cities and towns.

Few BID respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the suggested activities and projects but those finding least favour are developing activities with twinned cities and towns where 6% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this activity and development of the Dunfermline Fringe where 5% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this suggestion.

Additional comments were provided by 10 respondents and although some were negative others suggested there is a need for better communication with BID members to ensure they appreciate what the BID does and achieves.

In the original 2007 business survey the key enhancements that businesses wanted to see generally related to increasing the retail mix, improving perception and image and better accessibility. The 2013

business survey suggests that future priorities are more firmly focussed on activities designed to create a more vibrant city centre.

### The Future of Dunfermline Delivers

The BID members responses to the activities and projects discussed above are generally positive and this is reflected in the fact that 81% indicate that they will be voting in favour of the BID continuing for the next five years. Only 8% say they will vote no and 11% are undecided. This is a much more positive position than in the run up to the original ballot when only 58% were in favour of the BID, 10% said they would vote no and 32% were undecided or did not answer.

### Who Participated in the Survey?

Although survey respondents were asked for contact details, only around 20% provided these and of those

- 41% were retailers
- 29% were professional services
- 29% were food and drink providers
- 12% were property owners
- 12% were lifestyle and wellbeing
- 6% were visitor attractions

### Summary of BID Business Consultation

The BID member’s responses to the projects and activities under all four categories – Perception and Image, Business Growth, Marketing and Promotion and Business Support and Communication - are all relatively positive and this is encouraging for Dunfermline Delivers. Overall, Perception and Image projects are the most highly regarded and Business Growth the least well regarded in terms of their effectiveness and importance for Dunfermline city centre and BID members. This is perhaps not surprising as Perception and Image projects are, by their very nature, more highly visible than some under the other strands. Counter monitors have recently been installed at six locations in Dunfermline city centre and these will be useful in the longer term to monitor trends and back up views with hard data.

As illustrated in Table 6 below there is generally a high level of agreement that existing strands of activity should be further developed.

<b>Table 6</b>	<b>Has been beneficial (agree and strongly agree)</b>	<b>Should be Further Developed (agree and strongly agree)</b>
<b>Strand</b>		
Perception and Image	75%	85%
Business Growth	54%	85%
Marketing and Promotion	61%	82%
Business Support and Communication	Not asked	Not asked

The key projects and activities across all strands of activity – defined as 80% or above of responses agreeing or strongly agreeing with their effectiveness and importance are listed in Table 7 below.



<b>Table 7 Project/Activity</b>	<b>% BID respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the project/activity</b>
Safer Towns	90%
Festivals	89%
Orientation Board	86%
Working to attract inward investment	84%
Exploring free city centre parking	84%
Existing Businesses Development/Shop Front Grants	81%
Dunfermline in Bloom	80%
Lobbying for reduced business rates and rateable value re-evaluation	80%

Overall few respondents (less than 9% across the whole range of projects) disagreed or strongly disagreed with any projects and activities. The findings of this survey should however, be used to help decide whether some of the projects and activities considered as least effective and important by BID members should be changed, rationalised or perhaps even discontinued

There are awareness issues with some projects and activities under all strands and this is disappointing, although is least apparent in Perception and Image projects.

When asked about future priorities, there is a good appetite for most potential projects and activities with upwards of 59% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with all suggested priorities. Those finding most favour are included in Table 8 below.

<b>Table 8 Future Projects and Activities</b>	<b>% BID members agreeing or strongly agreeing with the project</b>
Development of Dunfermline as a Cultural Destination	89%
A strong voice to lobby on issues affecting BID area businesses	88%
City Centre Regeneration Initiatives and a Business Development Support Programme	85%
Geographic promotion of areas within Dunfermline e.g. Heritage, Cultural, Village and Shopping Quarters	85%
More communication between BID and BID levy payers	83%
Streetscape Improvements	81%
Street theatre/on street activity	80%
Encourage café culture/on-street relaxed dink/dine environment	80%

Compared to the original 2007 business survey, the 2013 business survey suggests that future priorities are more firmly focussed on activities designed to create a more vibrant city centre.

There are a limited number of comments and suggestions made throughout the survey although many are not particularly helpful or constructive and are criticisms of the BID. However, a full examination of all survey forms would probably find it is the same respondents making comments throughout the questionnaire, indicating that it is a minority who are expressing dissatisfaction.

The overall response to the activities and projects currently undertaken by Dunfermline Delivers is generally very positive and this is reflected in the fact that 81% of respondents indicate they will be voting in favour of the BID continuing for the next five years. Only 8% say they will vote no and 11% are undecided. This is a much more positive position than in the run up to the original ballot when only 58% were in favour of the BID, 10% said they would vote no and 32% were undecided or did not answer.



## **Summary of BID Consultation Meetings**

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### Group Meetings

Groups meeting have on the whole been quite positive. Issues that have arisen in the majority of meetings are related to four key areas:

Rates – businesses believe that non-domestic rate are too high and do not allow them to compete with out of town retail parks and on-line businesses.

Car parking – businesses believe that parking facilities in the city centre are too expensive and not flexible enough in the method that payment is required or in the time allocations for charges.

Pedestrianisation – some businesses, particularly those at the west of the High Street believe that traffic should be re-introduced into the area and that short-term parking be reinstated.

Promotion – businesses feel that there should be on-going generic advertising of Dunfermline and its offering.

Dunfermline First – some members have asked for further information about the group and its links with Dunfermline Delivers.

### Individual Meetings

These, in the main, have also focussed on the above points. Generally when the BID and its activities have been discussed there is a positive response. There are those businesses that will not be persuaded that the BID is a good thing. However, these tend to be businesses that do not engage with the BID and its activities.