

The BID team led by Broadmead manager, John Hirst (right), is collaborating closely with retailers in shaping its plans



Now, an initiative is under way aimed at achieving a significant transformation. It will not only improve the customer experience, but also ensure that traditional Broadmead (that part not being redeveloped in the Bristol Alliance's scheme) will not be left behind.

Broadmead is one of 22 projects from cities and towns throughout the UK to be chosen as pilot Business Improvement Districts (BIDs).

In simple terms a BID is a new opportunity which enables businesses in a clearly defined area to join together in funding projects that address specific, pressing needs.

Last year, the government introduced legislation giving a binding legal framework for the UK BID programme. This means that if the majority of retailers in a defined area vote to back a BID, then every business in the area must pay the levy.

In Broadmead's case, this will be 1.5 per cent of the rateable value over an initial three-year period. That will raise almost £1m over three years towards new projects – this will provide much needed resources allowing the team to make strategic improvements.

It is anticipated that if a majority of Broadmead's 300 retailers agree to pay this levy, it will provide the resources to achieve a serious shift in perceptions of the shopping area, which will encourage voluntary contributions from other partners such as property owners.

John Hirst says he does not underestimate the enormity of the challenge. He said: "I know that there are many issues in Broadmead which need resolving and these are going to cost a considerable amount of money. As a post-war development, Broadmead is approaching pensionable age and showing signs of wear and tear."

Broadmead has made great progress over the last five years with many significant improvements. It is cleaner thanks to additional Bristol City Council funding, for example, and safer following the introduction of a dedicated police team.

## House of Fraser's decision to become the anchor retailer for the Broadmead expansion has given a boost to the £500 million development.

"One of the great differences with BIDs compared to anything else previously attempted in the UK is that we are going out and consulting with occupiers rather than just informing them what is planned. Not only are they telling us what they want, they will also be helping us to decide what should be tackled first.

"First indications are that retailers want to see environmental improvements – real, tangible changes to the shopping experience."

The Broadmead BID team completed its consultation with retailers during March and will publish its business plan this month.

"I hope for a really big turn-out when we vote on whether to proceed – Broadmead can make the step change

But, as ever, one question always arises when major enhancement in any UK town centre is considered – who pays? The BID process offers a solution, says Broadmead Board co-chair and Business West executive chairman John Savage.

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## The Timeframe

### ● December 2004 – February 2005

Consultation with Broadmead retailers to understand their priorities

### ● February – March 2005

Review feedback and develop the BID proposal

### ● April – May 2005

Launch the Broadmead BID business plan

### ● June 2005

Proposed BID vote date

■ What do you think could be done to improve Broadmead? Email us your views to: [visionwest@businesswest.co.uk](mailto:visionwest@businesswest.co.uk)

