



FALMOUTH

Business Improvement District (BID)

Falmouth BID 2020/2021 – review of business

COVID-19

- The year was dominated of course, by COVID which has affected each and every person, business, community and town across the UK and beyond
- From a BID perspective, it has understandably had a huge impact on levy collections and the ability to deliver projects
- We have:
 - *Refocused our budget planning and delivery methodology*
 - *Provided a huge range of supportive structures to the town and business community through the production and rollout of the Positive Engagement Plan and its various components, and:*
 - *Been asked to provide regional leadership across the South West's towns landscape*

The key project areas of the plan have been:

1. Marketing – rollout of business toolkits, marketing support campaigns, safety videos and business films, key comms messaging and advice, support webinars
 2. Operational – install of Falmouth-branded sanitising units, safety template literature and materials for the business community, signage and surface dressing, dressing of vacant units with safety messaging and safe space streets rollout and management
 3. Lobbying – we have lobbied extensively on a number of national and regional initiatives, working with industry partners, and assisted with the regional business grants composition and delivery framework agenda
 4. Leadership – Richard Wilcox chairs the regional BIDs groups for Cornwall and the South West of England, sits on Cornwall Council's Economic Recovery Group and advises on national discussions around high streets. As outlined below, he has also negotiated for further financial support on behalf of the Cornwall BIDs.
- The range of work undertaken through the COVID Positive Engagement Plan can be viewed here - <https://www.falmouth.co.uk/covid-19/>

SUPPORT FOR CORNWALL BIDS

- Richard Wilcox led the negotiations for Cornwall BIDs which subsequently secured a £600,000 loan agreement from Cornwall Council
- This was in response to a real drop in business levy income experienced across the industry and in Cornwall
- A repayable arrangement was agreed upon which would enable:
 1. Cornwall BIDs to continue their vital business support role
 2. Cornwall BIDs to continue delivering on the placeshaping, regeneration and high streets agendas

- The agreement plan can be viewed here - <https://www.falmouth.co.uk/covid-19/cornwall-bids/>

1. MARKETING

Revamped official town website

- The BID funds and manages the official town website, www.falmouth.co.uk, a vital project as determined by the businesses
- Significant development in terms of design and functionality has taken place, enabling the site to be fully responsive across all platforms and smart devices, with greater page content for BID businesses, embedded videos and more
- The website averages around 750,000 unique visitors per year, making it the largest and highest profile such site for the area

Official town social media platforms

- The BID continues to manage the town's official social media activity
- The BID established the town's official platforms that include Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- The Falmouth sites have grown significantly – Facebook has 52,000+ likes, Twitter 11.6k followers and Instagram 17,000 followers. These are now major online platforms to promote and highlight Falmouth

National PR campaign for Falmouth

- As voted for by the business community, the BID continues to deliver the effective destination PR campaign for the town
- Over the past 12 months of the campaign, the messaging and plans have of course changed to reflect the global pandemic situation
- The results can be viewed here - <https://www.falmouth.co.uk/falmouth-press-coverage/>

Regional radio campaign

- The Town Team have coordinated the delivery of a regional radio campaign via the Pirate FM platform during this challenging time
- Messages around COVID safety, the Positive Engagement Plan, reassurance and business reopening were played at key times throughout 2020, with more planned for 2021

2. EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

G7

- Falmouth was chosen as a major venue as part of the G7 Summit held in Cornwall in June 2021, as it hosted the International Media Centre
- The event was quite simply, the largest and most significant in Cornwall's history and the BID was a key regional delivery partner
- The Town Team were heavily engaged with the Cabinet Office & Government Summit Teams, as well as numerous regional partners, on several strategic threads – PR & media engagement, 'Team Cornwall', Security & Logistics and Legacy planning

Tall Ships

- The Team undertook significant planning in respect of Tall Ships 2021, having secured the opportunity to be the Race Start Partner
- The BID as a key delivery partner, has been involved in the marketing, comms, brand, event programming and safety planning aspects
- Unfortunately, the event has recently been cancelled with the Team now in negotiations with Sail Training International on future alternative dates

Tour of Britain

- The team are involved in the planning for the Tour of Britain cycling event in September 2021
- Cornwall is the 'Grand Depart' stage and the race route will see it pass Falmouth.
- The team are coordinating activity with local partners

As a result of COVID, the team had to cancel in 2020, Falmouth Spring Festival, Falmouth Week, Falmouth International Sea Shanty Festival (although a virtual evening was organised) and Festive Weekend

3. PUBLIC REALM

Visual impact

- The BID continues to add value to the street environment by co-ordinating and funding the install of bunting, floral displays, street flags, seating and banners
- This includes over 4,000 metres of colourful branded bunting and 200 street flags at the start of each season to brighten Falmouth's streets and public areas as much as permissions and access allow
- The team are also looking at a substantial transformation along Market Street with a flag canopy array design for the reopening of business June 2021

Volunteer programme/Big Spring Clean

- The BID co-ordinated around 200 volunteers to support improvements at dozens of sites across the town in the Spring of 2021, when the lifting of certain COVID restrictions allowed
- Town businesses, Falmouth Town Council, Cormac, residents, students and staff from the Universities of Exeter and Falmouth have all supported the initiative
- Many areas have been regenerated through a combination of street cleans, green space makeovers, beach and town litter sweeps.

Vacant Units

- No-one wants to see empty retail premises of course but if it does happen, the BID has been proactive in providing colourful vinyl wraps to improve the area until the site is filled
- In 2020 this has included the ex-Pandora site on Market Street, with others being mapped out and permissions sought

4. HELPING BUSINESSES THRIVE

Free car parking

- The BID alongside Falmouth Town Council, has worked extensively as highlighted earlier, to support the business community through the COVID pandemic
- As part of a wider lobbying effort, free car parking was secured through Cornwall Council during the lockdown periods within the town centre

Free virtual business sessions and webinars

- The BID has supported or promoted numerous business support workshops in 2020-21
- These well attended events were undertaken in 2020 with numerous partners such as VisitCornwall and Cornwall Council's Regulatory Team and sought to provide further support and advice for the business community during COVID

For a further breakdown of BID activity www.falmouth.co.uk/media