

We're recycling for Bath

The Bath Business Improvement District – the Bath BID Company – operates to improve the profitability and sustainability of more than 600 businesses in the city centre of Bath. The group is run by an elected board of directors and supports a diverse range of businesses across the city, ‘managing, promoting and saving’ on their behalf.

THE CHALLENGE

Bath is one of the UK’s most visited cities – with Roman heritage, Georgian architecture and events year-round making it popular with visitors from across the world. The city centre is compact and a great deal of effort goes into ensuring the city looks its best at all times.

The Bath BID set about developing an ambitious project that has been proposed by many cities, but never implemented – providing a subsidised recycling and waste management collection service for all businesses in the BID area. This is a full trade waste and recycling service, with the benefits being:

- + Reduced recycling and waste collection costs for Bath BID members.
- + Reduced number of vehicles collecting waste in the compact city centre, tackling congestion and pollution.
- + Timed collections of waste, so that bags are not left around, improving the city’s streets in this World Heritage site.
- + Increased recycling levels for businesses.
- + The provision of free ‘seagull proof’ sacks made from a hessian-type material to prevent scavenging.
- + A zero-to-landfill service.



THE SOLUTION

The Bath BID worked with an independent environmental consultancy, Eunomia, which supported them through the procurement process to select a contractor. Bidders attended information sessions and were invited to submit tenders. The number of contractors was reduced at each stage of the procurement process until national recycling and waste management company, SITA UK, was selected as the preferred bidder in April 2013.

Following the award of the contract, the Bath BID and SITA UK team began the process of encouraging businesses to sign up to the new service and reduce their recycling and waste management costs. The service was jointly branded and launched in the local media and at members’ meetings.



RESULTS AND BENEFITS

With over 660 businesses contributing to the Bath BID, the target for year one was for 100 members to sign up to the new service. This target was achieved in just six weeks and Bath BID members were reporting that the streets were noticeably cleaner as the benefit of having timed collections was being felt.

One of the city's largest employers, an international publisher, has made annual savings of over £20,000 across four sites in the city. A five-star hotel has paid a voluntary contribution to join the Bath BID in order to access the preferential rates and has saved over £17,000. And a local fine dining restaurant has also been able to save over £4,500 a year on their recycling and waste costs. In fact, the average saving for businesses is around 50 per cent and this, along with a much improved service level, has led to the huge success of this initiative. In addition, businesses that aren't levy payers can contribute to the Bath BID to benefit from the recycling and waste management service.

More information

If you would like to find out more about setting up a recycling and waste management contract in a business improvement district, the Bath BID team can provide a consultancy service explaining the process carried out in Bath and some of the pitfalls to avoid.

To find out more, please contact Andrew Cooper at the Bath BID team – andrew.cooper@bathbid.co.uk

As the only recycling and waste management company that has successfully worked on a project of this kind, you can also find out more from SITA UK by contacting us at bathbidhelpdesk@sita.co.uk

WHY SITA UK?

Andrew Cooper, Chief Executive Officer of the Bath BID said: “We had a steep learning curve throughout the procurement, but the hard work has paid off. The savings we have been able to offer Bath BID levy payers on the cost of their waste management is, in some cases, more than the cost of their levy. The project is providing fantastic value for money for our businesses.”

Leslie Redwood, Bath BID Project Manager said: “We have been able to deliver a much higher quality of service to our levy payers, for a much cheaper price. This provides a tangible benefit to Bath BID businesses and to voluntary levy payers.”

David Palmer-Jones, Chief Executive Officer of SITA UK, said: “We have been very pleased to work with the Bath BID on this pioneering project. This model has huge potential and we can see it being adopted by other cities across the UK, as it offers clear benefits for businesses and the environment. We have been delighted to help make it a success.”

