

## Northumberland County Council

### Business Improvement District Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is a BID?**

A Business Improvement District or BID is a defined area within which the local business community work together and invest collectively in new projects and services that they have prioritised to address opportunities and problems that affect their businesses, staff and clients.

- **Who is liable to pay the BID Levy?**

Any person, company, charity\* or non-profit making organisation who is the occupier or leaseholder or where the property is empty and a lease does not exist, the owner, of the non-domestic rated property within the BID area is liable for the BID levy. The rules about BIDs are set out in the Business Improvement District Regulations 2004 legislation available at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/business-improvement-districts>

***\*Note some Local Charities with a rateable value of less than £20,000 will be exempt from the BID levy. Local is defined as "a charity established for purposes which are directed wholly or mainly to the benefit of residents and users in Hexham (whether stated in the trusts of the charity or implicit in its purposes"***

- **Are there any exclusions within the BID?**

Certain types of assessments have been excluded from paying the BID Levy. These include:-

- Public Conveniences;
- Automated Teller Machines (ATM's);
- Telecommunication Masts;
- Advertising Hoardings;
- Schools

- **Are there any Caps within the BID**

Manufacturing and industrial businesses (as per standard industrial classification codes) with a rateable value of £1m or more will have their levy capped at £10,000 to mitigate against a disproportionate charge that they would otherwise be liable for at a levy of 1%

- **Where is the BID Area?**

To view the map of the area covered by the Hexham BID go to <http://hexhambid.co.uk/about-the-bid/>

- **How long will the BID last for?**

The BID period for Hexham commenced from 1 October 2016 and will run for a period of 4 and a half years, ending on 31 March 2021.

- **Why is the BID operating for four and a half years instead of five years?**

Following the successful ballot the BID was due to begin operating in April 2016 for a period of five years. However an appeal was lodged with the Government which delayed the launch. The outcome of the appeal which upheld the ballot result was not announced until September 2016. As such the BID began operating in October 2016 for four and a half years until March 2021.

- **How is my bill calculated?**

For properties with a Rateable Value (RV) of less than 20,000, the charge will be calculated at £100.00 in the first year, and then £200.00 with an adjustment for inflation in subsequent years.

For businesses with an RV of 20,000 and over, the Bid Levy is 1% of the RV in the first year, then adjusted for inflation in subsequent years.

- **What happens if I move out?**

If you move during the financial year, your levy will be apportioned on a daily basis up to the point when you ceased to be liable for the premises.

- **What happens if my RV changes?**

The levy will be calculated on the RV that applies on 1 April of the financial year the charge relates to (or the RV on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 in year 1 of the BID). If the RV should increase or decrease during the financial year, there will be no effect on the levy until the following financial year.

- **I have appealed against the rateable value of my property; do I still have to pay?**

Yes, you will still be required to pay your BID Levy regardless of any appeal you have with the Valuation Office. Once the RV has been amended, the Council will adjust your bill from the following financial year.

- **Do I have to pay the levy if the property is empty?**

Yes. All properties within the designated BID area are subject to the BID Levy even if they are empty.

- **Are there any reductions available?**

The BID levy is payable on all properties within the BID area whether they are occupied or empty. No allowances will be made for listed buildings, serviced buildings or those in receipt of small business rate relief, mandatory and/or discretionary rate relief.

- **How can I pay my BID Levy**

There are a number of payment options available for you to pay your BID Levy. These include

1. **On the Internet** - You can pay online 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by debit card or credit card (including Electron) on the Council's website at <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/SelfService/Pay.aspx>

2. **By telephone** - We accept debit and credit card payments (including Electron) by telephone. Please call 0345 600 6400 and select Option 5 to speak to an operator.
3. **Internet Banking** - Payments can be made online through your bank via the internet banking service. In order to make a payment your bank will need the Council's bank sort code, bank account number and a billing reference number.

**Payee Details:** Northumberland County Council

**Bank Name:** Barclays Bank

**Sort Code:** 20-58-17

**Account Number:** 53023915

4. **By Post** - Cheques and postal orders, made payable to 'Northumberland County Council' should be sent to the Cashiers Section, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF

**Please write your Bid Account Reference (as shown on your bill) and the name and address of your business on the back of your cheque or postal order.**

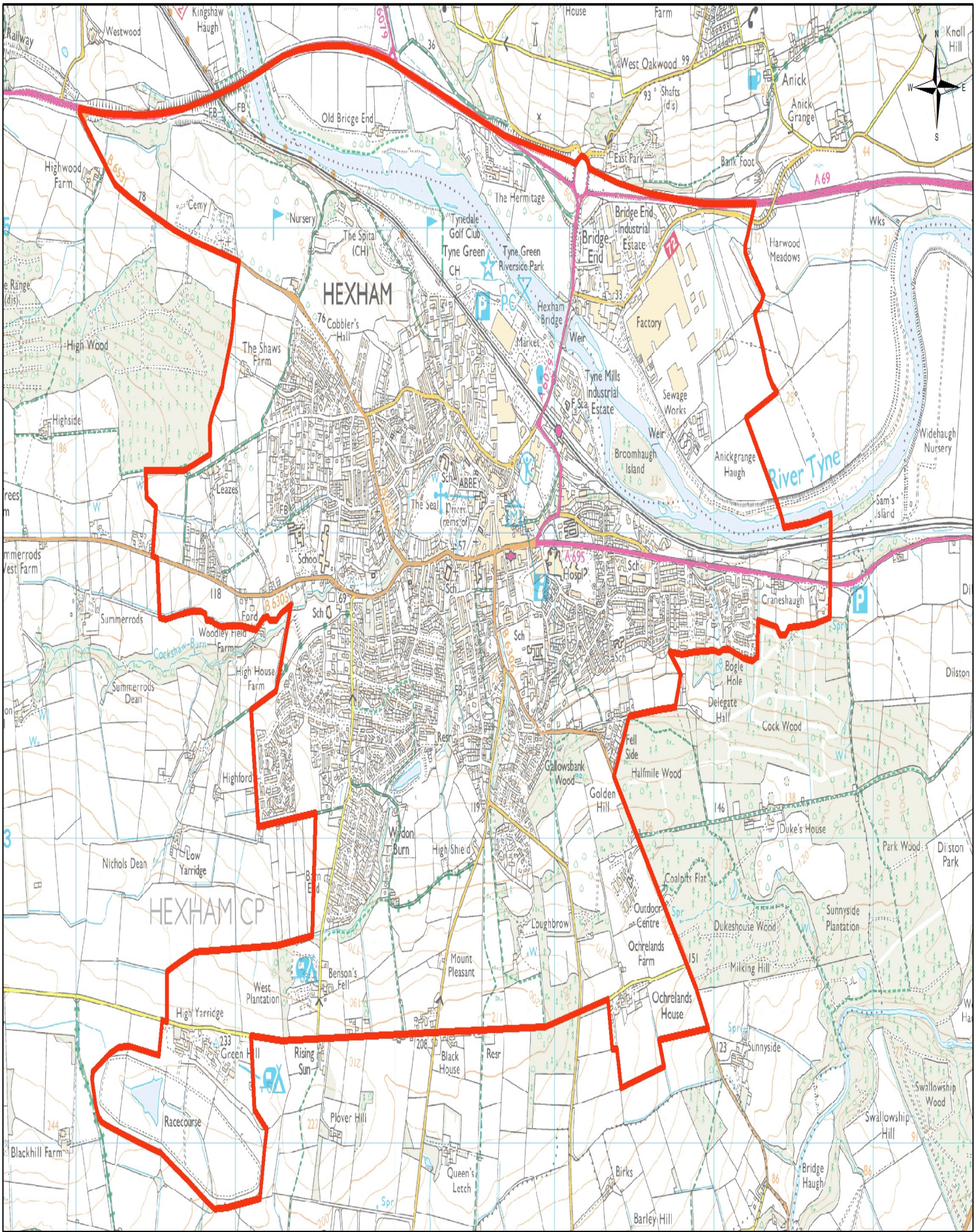
**Please note that payments sent by post can take up to 4 working days to reach your BID account.**

- **What happens if I do not pay?**

In the event of non-payment, the Council will issue a reminder notice requiring payment of the levy within 7 days. If payment is not received within a further 7 days, a court summons will be issued, which will incur £50.00 costs.

If payment of the outstanding levy and costs are not received before the court hearing, the Council will then apply to the Magistrates for a liability order against the ratepayer, as well as a further £50.00 in costs.

For more information regarding what the BID is or how the money collected will be used, please visit the Hexham BID Website at [www.hexhambid.co.uk](http://www.hexhambid.co.uk) or email your enquiries to [info@hexhambid.co.uk](mailto:info@hexhambid.co.uk)



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