



## Academy Business Improvement Districts

**Academy BIDs (Business Improvement Districts) provides a flexible and integrated tool to allow Academy NDR customers to administer BID levies with the minimum of effort.**

Business Improvement Districts are now firmly established as a method of improving the trading environment within a defined area. Traditionally established within town centres, more and more BIDs are being established in other areas such as industrial estates. Local authorities now face the challenge of administering multiple BIDs, based on a variety of models each with different durations, payment methods, bid levy calculation methods and reliefs in operation.

The administration of BIDs represents a significant administrative overhead for local authorities. Charges need to be raised and then potentially recalculated every time there is a change in occupancy, property deleted, a relief awarded/revoked, amendments made to rateable values, splits or mergers. Local authorities are also accountable for proceeding with recovery actions against unpaid levy charges.

Capita Software Services offers Academy BIDs - the only specialist BID software available to local authorities in order to effectively administer BIDs with the minimum of effort. Academy BIDs is highly flexible and able to accommodate the many different BID arrangement models. It is fully integrated with Academy NDR, allowing it to calculate levies and reliefs using ratepayer and liability information held within Academy NDR.

The following functionality simplifies administering a BID in accordance with its levy rules:

- **Separate BID accounts** - seamlessly integrated with Academy NDR while providing a completely separate bill from the regular business rates and a separate account for charges to be paid into
- **Support for multiple levy calculation methods** – levies can be based on a fixed amount, percentage of the rateable value, percentage of the rateable value on a given date (as agreed within the BID arrangements) or a combination of a fixed amount plus a percentage element of the rateable value
- **Automatic calculation of reliefs** – BID reliefs can automatically mirror those for NDR or follow an alternative model. Details of how BID levies and reliefs were calculated for each customer are available
- **Cash posting warning messages** – should an NDR account be paid so that it is in credit, but the corresponding BID account be in debit, a warning is reported allowing the user to transfer funds between the accounts where appropriate
- **Recovery suite** – reminders may be issued and the recovery of debts progressed and tracked in the same way as NDR debts.

# CAPITA

Academy BIDS provides the following benefits over sundry debt systems and manual methods:

**Automatic calculation of levies** – BID levies can be calculated automatically using information about rateable values and reliefs already in Academy. There is no need for manual calculation and time consuming manual transfer of information between Academy NDR and a sundry debtors' system.

**Easy to use** – Academy BIDS offers similar functionality to Academy NDR, allowing staff to administer BIDS in a similar way to NDR without the need to learn a new system.

**Less confusion** – NDR and BID accounts are held in the same system and both are easily viewable by the user. Errors (such as customers crediting their NDR account with the balance due for both accounts) are identified by the system and rectified by the user.

**Easy to set up** – BIDS can be set up quickly and easily. Properties that form part of a BID may be added to Academy BIDS directly from Academy NDR either individually or by street or VO code. There is no need to manually create individual accounts for BID members.

**Future aware** – when new businesses are added to Academy NDR the system will notify the user if this address could be part of a BID, helping the authority to comply with the BID agreement and maximise revenue.

**Minimal resource requirements** – Academy BIDS can administer BID levies with minimal user intervention. Collecting BIDS need not become a significant administrative overhead for an authority.

**Flexibility** – changes in NDR levies can automatically be reflected in BID levy calculations, ensuring that the customer always pays the correct amount.

**Reduced annual maintenance** – Academy BIDS can accommodate BIDS that last multiple years. Future years' BID levies may be automatically calculated using NDR data without the need to manually calculate BID levies and enter into a sundry debtors system.

“ When evaluating how we would administer the billing and revenue collection of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) we found we had a choice of using a Sundry Debtors System or utilising the Academy BIDS module. The Academy BIDS module was chosen, because it is fully integrated with NNDR offering superior functionality and the greatest flexibility. Year on year obligations and changes in liability are handled easily; these would have been impossible to manage using a Sundry Debtors System. Features such as support for a variety of calculation methods mean that the module is scalable to support future BIDs.

We currently have three BIDS operating in Westminster, two in their second term with around 1,500 properties on the Academy BIDS module. The BID collection rates have been excellent and the three BID boards have been more than satisfied with the administration of BIDs.

I would not hesitate to recommend this module to other authorities. ”

**Martin Hinckley**  
Assistant Director Revenues & Benefits  
Westminster City Council

To learn more about administering your BIDS more effectively with Academy BIDS contact your Account Manager.