



Birmingham Accommodation BID Ballot FAQ's

ABOUT THE BIRMINGHAM ACCOMMODATION BID

Why is the Birmingham ABID important?

Birmingham has the ambition, venues and infrastructure to compete with the best. The ABID provides the mechanism to bring the city together, creating a shared fund and unified approach to attracting major events and visitors. By working collectively, Birmingham can seize more opportunities, strengthen its reputation and deliver lasting benefits for businesses, residents and the wider economy.

What is the Birmingham ABID levy?

The Birmingham ABID levy is the proposed legally enforceable amount charged to accommodation establishments that fall into the Birmingham ABID boundary.

Will Birmingham be the first city to introduce the ABID model?

No, Manchester and Liverpool already operate the scheme successfully and are currently heading to ballot for their second term.

ABOUT THE BID LEVY

How is the quarterly Levy calculated?

STR (part of Co-Star) will provide an area-wide average occupancy rate for each month. For each eligible provider, the Levy is calculated as: $(a \times b) \times (c - d) =$ Monthly Multiplier, where:

- (a) numbers of rooms/units available per night
- (b) the number of nights per month
- (c) the STR Published 'Birmingham Average' occupancy rate for each month
- (d) the 'allowance' to allow for potential non-collection/prior or group bookings etc

The Monthly Multiplier is then multiplied by £2 to calculate. For example – a hotel has 100 bedrooms and in October 2027, the STR 'Birmingham Average' occupancy

rate is 65%. 'The allowance' is 10% (reducing to 5% after the first year). Therefore the levy calculation is:

(100 rooms x 31 nights) x (65% - 10% = 55%) = 1,705 (the 'Monthly Multiplier') ABID Levy = 1,705 x £2 = £3,410.

To view the full details on the funding mechanism, read our 2027-2032 Business Plan: <https://birminghamhospitality.co.uk/abid/>.

Will the monthly STR figures be shared?

Yes, and this will help accommodation providers who will be know the amount of their bills ahead of the demand arriving and it will also help to ensure that the money collected through the City Visitor Charge is sufficient.

What happens to the City Visitor Charges?

Each provider retains them until it receives a levy bill from the local authority (quarterly in arrears) and then uses the Charges collected to put towards payment of the bill. This may be subject to change if a better value collection method can be sourced, however the quarterly in arrears invoicing will not change.

How much is the City Visitor Charge?

It is recommended that each provider charges the same £2 per room/unit per night. Each provider must take their own advice, but it is likely that VAT will need to be charged in addition (there will be no VAT on the Levy bill).

Does every accommodation provider have to make the City Visitor Charge?

No, in order to charge it each provider will need to add it to their standard terms and conditions. If they do not do so, they should understand that their Levy bill will still be payable.

Is this the same thing as the idea of Mayors charging visitor taxes?

No. There is currently no mechanism by which Mayors can currently make accommodation providers charge such taxes at this time. If this is introduced in the future, it is anticipated that the West Midlands Mayor will recognise that the ABID scheme is already in place and not put in place a double charge.

What is the 'allowance'?

It is a reduction on the STR rate to account for pre-bookings etc where the City Visitor Charge could not be made. In the first year of the ABID, the area occupancy rate will be reduced by 10%; thereafter it will be reduced by 5% for the remaining years.

Who will issue the Levy charge invoice?

BCC is responsible for issuing BID levy bills, in line with other BIDs in the city. However they can instruct other parties to do so on their behalf if that offers.

How much will this generate?

It is expected that the ABID will have an average of circa £2.9 million a year to spend.

What happens to the money?

It will be paid by the collecting agency to the Birmingham Hospitality Association (BHA) and spent on projects and services to increase visits to the city and, particularly, overnight stays.

What will the BHA spend it on?

Theme 1: Brand Birmingham Promotion:

- a) Welcome - an opportunity to build upon the successful ambassador and volunteering programme activated during the Commonwealth Games. It will also assist the Councils and the existing BIDs to improve perceptions of safety and cleanliness, particularly when the city needs to look its best for new visitors.
- b) City Pride- to fund on-going campaigns and communications to develop a greater sense of pride in the city and its surrounds.
- c) Subvention - larger venues currently miss out on attracting large scale events to the city as there are no central funds available and no mechanism by which accommodation providers and other key stakeholders can collaborate and prioritise their targets. The ABID will provide both the money and the structure to ensure that the city can compete on an international scale.

Theme 2: Brand Birmingham Marketing:

- a) International Business Conference and Association Business - ensuring that the city is on the rota for those international events that move between cities and countries. This will include working with the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), Universities, Chamber and Visit Britain, and expanding the West Midlands Growth Company's exhibition and outreach programme. Also involved will be the formalisation of an ambassador programme with the Council.
- b) Domestic Marketing - by identifying shoulder periods, the ABID will create dedicated leisure marketing campaigns to target different priority visitors.
- c) Event Collaboration - working with partners such as the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Cultural Compact, Birmingham Museums, the Botanical Gardens etc, the ABID will curate and promote a home-grown events programme including an annual cultural experience. In addition, it will support and expand collaborative projects including some of the City Curator initiatives such as Birmingham Light Festival. Each year a food and drink campaign will feature.
- d) Investment Activity - to provide the mechanism by which the hospitality sector can work with the wider business community to create a long-term strategy to encourage investment in the city.

You can find the full details of the plans for ABID funding in our 2027-2032 Business Plan: <https://birminghamhospitality.co.uk/abid/>.

Who decides on how it is spent?

BHA will create an ABID board made up primarily of accommodation providers who will always have the majority say. The Board will be representative of a mixture of

hotel / accommodation provider types. There will be robust criteria in place for any applications for funding and strict approval guidelines in place. There will be working parties for spending streams, these will be made up predominately of hoteliers and hospitality experts.

How will I know whether the ABID has been successful?

The aim is to ensure that all accommodation providers enjoy more visits, more overnight stays and higher spend in their hotels.

In addition, the ABID will file annual accounts and will send a copy, together with an annual report, to each accommodation provider and to the local authority. As a minimum an annual meeting for accommodation providers will be held and, at this, the results of an annual survey of contributors will be presented. The ABID will regularly report on activity and spend.

Do interconnecting rooms class as two rooms?

Yes, each room should be charged the City Visitor Charge.

What happens when new properties open?

All new properties will be included once they have a rateable value and the effective date will be the date of entry onto the ratings list.

How do we anticipate how virtual cards/bill-back customers will work?

This is for each provider to decide but, in terms of the Levy charged, it should be covered by the 'allowance'.

Are all accommodation providers included?

No, only those within the defined ABID boundary, who have a rateable value of £70,000 or more, and are classed as either 'Hotel and premises' or 'Aparthotel and premises' or 'Hotel, club and premises'.

How are pre-booking deal with ahead of the start date?

The City Visitor Charge should be charged in such instances. We would advise hotels to begin referencing a possible City Visitor Charge in contracts issued as soon as possible.

What happens if visitors extend their stay?

The City Visitor Charge should be applied to the extra payment; if it cannot be charged, the assumption is that the 'allowance' should cover this.

Is there a cap on extended stays?

No.

Is the City Visitor Charge to be refunded in the case of cancellations, early departures or no shows?

These are not classified as a sold/occupied room/unit and should be refunded.

What will happen with the on-line travel agent (OTA) commission?

The OTA operator should charge the Visitor Charge in addition to the charges that otherwise apply. As in the majority of cases in Manchester and Liverpool, commission should not be charged on the City Visitor element.

What about hotels under exclusive use for Government Contracts?

Where a hotel is not available for public booking (including rooms within it), it will not be required to pay the levy. However if the whole premises is not available for private booking at the time of notice of ballot, it will not receive a vote. If a hotel is on public sale it will be accountable for levy charges.

Have OTAs already been engaged with?

Yes, since similar schemes already operate in Manchester and Liverpool, the BHA has reached out to Bookings.com to make them aware of the upcoming ballot.

What if I have 000 rooms and can't sell them?

There will be a process by which hotels can appeal a levy demand if they have a significant number of rooms out of order for a period of time.

ABOUT THE BALLOT

How will the vote work?

Birmingham City Council (BCC) will send each accommodation provider a ballot paper (one each if they have more than one premises). The ballot will be held over 28-days and, once finished, if a majority of those ballots counted are in favour and the rateable value (RV) of those voting 'yes' exceeds those that vote 'no', the ballot will have been successful.

Who can vote in the ballot?

Each eligible hereditament within the proposed Birmingham Accommodation BID area is entitled to vote. Ballot papers will be sent directly to the nominated ratepayer for each eligible property.

When does voting open?

Voting opens on **20 August 2026** and will remain open for 28 days, closing at **5pm on 17 September 2026**. Eligible businesses will receive their ballot papers by post ahead of the opening date.

How is the ballot decided?

For the ballot to be successful, it must achieve a majority both by the number of votes cast and by the rateable value represented by those votes.

What happens if the ballot is successful?

If the ballot is successful, the Birmingham Accommodation BID five-year term will commence on **1 April 2027** and run until **31 March 2032**, delivering investment to attract major events, increase overnight stays and drive economic growth across the city.

I can't find my ballot paper, can I order a replacement?

Yes. If you require a replacement ballot paper, please get in touch with heather.woodhouse@birminghamcolmore.co.uk to let us know.

Once your request has been processed, you will receive a confirmation email from Civica, the company running the ballot on behalf of Birmingham City Council. Replacement ballot papers will be sent by courier and are expected to arrive on **Monday 14 September 2026**.

Please then complete and return your vote as soon as possible, as the ballot closes the same week, at **5pm on Thursday 17 September 2026**. Replacement ballot envelopes **must not be posted**. They should be delivered by hand to the Council House on Victoria Square before the deadline.

If you require assistance returning your replacement ballot paper, please contact Heather Woodhouse on 07508 263 657 for further advice.

What if I have questions before voting?

The Birmingham Accommodation BID team is available to answer any questions about the ballot, proposed business plan or levy arrangements. Businesses are encouraged to get in touch to discuss how the ABID will benefit them and the wider visitor economy: joanne.gray@birmingham.staybridge.com.

Why should I vote Yes?

A 'Yes' vote is a vote for Birmingham's future and the future of our hospitality and visitor economy.

It is an opportunity for hoteliers to help shape the city's future and influence how Birmingham evolves. The ABID will unlock the investment, partnerships and ambition needed to raise Birmingham's profile, attract major events, bring more visitors to the city, increase hotel occupancy and spending across the visitor economy, and showcase Birmingham on a national and international stage.

For hoteliers, this is about more than today. The ABID is about creating the right conditions for sustained growth, stronger demand and greater opportunity for years to come.

By voting Yes, you are helping Birmingham compete with confidence, ensuring we do not fall behind our regional competitors. The ABID is backing a city that is ambitious, vibrant and ready to realise its full potential.