

Developing a positive transport marketing campaign for Canterbury: workshop report

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Overview

This report presents key findings from a workshop, convened by Canterbury BID on 8 January 2025.

The workshop aimed to support the development of key messages to underpin a positive transport campaign for Canterbury. The campaign will focus on promoting Canterbury as an accessible and attractive destination, increasing customers' ability and willingness to travel to and stay longer in Canterbury. This will positively impact local businesses, by increasing footfall, dwell time and, therefore, spend. The campaign will incorporate all ways that people can access the city, including bike, bus, car, Park & Ride, rail and walking.

The workshop was attended by participants from six local businesses and Canterbury City Council. A seventh business submitted written observations. Businesses were selected to represent a range of business types and customer profiles, from across Canterbury's Quarters.

Key findings

Campaign purpose

A positive travel campaign should:

- Increase awareness of the accessibility and attractiveness of travelling to Canterbury / staying for longer;
- Tackle negative perceptions that are currently acting as barriers to travelling to Canterbury / staying for longer; and
- Avoid minimising or trivialising practical barriers to travelling to Canterbury / staying for longer, which are outside of our control.

Target audience

The target audience can be segmented in the following ways. To be effective, the campaign should either be a broad campaign, designed to appeal to all, or targeted at a specific group / purpose.

Segmentation 1. Current visitors / new visitors

- Those who are already travelling to Canterbury: the aim is to increase dwell time and direct to other experiences/retail/services, by raising awareness of their attractiveness and accessibility and tackling negative perceptions of travel and/or staying for longer.
- Those who are not currently travelling to Canterbury: the aim is to increase awareness of attractiveness and accessibility.

Segmentation 2. Nature of visit

- Visiting for a range of reasons, including business to business, entertainment, leisure and tourism, retail, services.
- Visiting from a range of destinations, including local, regional, national and international.
- Visiting on different days, at different times, for different durations.

Segmentation 3. Propensity to change¹

- Visitors who are *able and willing* to travel more / stay longer.
 - For these visitors, Canterbury is accessible and attractive.
 - This is the primary visitor segment to target.
 - Key messages will focus on reinforcing this, drawing attention to new developments/improvements in activities and travel, alongside introducing travel alternatives that may be more attractive and emphasising the accessibility, availability and attractiveness of additional activities.
- Visitors who are *not able, but willing* to travel more / stay longer.
 - For these visitors, Canterbury is not accessible, but is attractive.
 - This is the secondary visitor segment to target.
 - Key messages will focus on improving knowledge of travel options, highlighting the acceptability/accessibility/affordability/availability of different modes and nudging visitors to consider options beyond their default, including remote, reroute, retime.
- Visitors who are *able, but not willing* to travel more / stay longer.
 - For these visitors, Canterbury is accessible, but not attractive.
 - This is the third segment to target.
 - Key messages will focus on improving perceptions and knowledge of travel / Canterbury, highlighting the acceptability/accessibility/affordability/availability of different modes and the range of activities that are available and accessible in this compact, walkable city.
- Visitors who are *neither able nor willing* to travel more / stay longer.
 - For these visitors, Canterbury is neither accessible nor attractive.
 - The campaign would not, in the first instance, target this visitor segment.

¹ Raw data are included as Appendix 1.

Key messages

Table 1, below, highlights key messages, to increase visitors' ability and willingness to travel to Canterbury more often and/or stay for longer.

	Increasing awareness of positives and tackling perceptions of negatives
<p>Accessibility</p> <p>*illustrative examples only</p>	<p>Canterbury is a compact, walkable city, with defined walkways through scenic, green, traffic-free spaces.</p> <p>In Canterbury, you are only minutes away from your next adventure. Come for the Marlowe and walk just three minutes to the historic quarter*.</p> <p>Think you know Canterbury? Download our shopping itinerary / history itinerary / explore Canterbury itinerary..., including wayfinding.</p> <p>Canterbury is a cyclable city.</p> <p>Walk from our central bus and train stations through our historic gardens to the shopping quarter in just five minutes*.</p> <p>Try something new / save time and money with... our new improved park and ride (take care to ensure reality matches message).</p> <p>Park in Castle Street for just £1.90 per hour and take a beautiful walk, just five minutes from the Cathedral*.</p> <p>Need to charge your EV? No problem! Park in (car park) for just £1.90 an hour.</p>
<p>Attractiveness</p>	<p>Park with confidence in our Park Mark accredited car park (name) (Note: accreditation will need to be gained).</p> <p>Park in the centre of the action (name) just 5 minutes' walk from (attraction).</p> <p>Appeal to the reasonable cost of car park X.</p> <p>Appeal to the safety of the walking environment; appeal to navigability to reduce fear of getting lost.</p> <p>Appeal to vibrant spaces – people are out and about early/late.</p> <p>Appeal to place-making: branded quarters / identity / culture. Shop back in time...</p> <p>There's lots to do, why not stay for longer? Visit the Marlowe and stay for a bite / Come for the shops, stay for the nightlife...</p>

Table 1. Key messages to underpin a positive transport campaign².

² Raw data, including barriers that are outside of a marketing campaign, are included as Appendix 2.

Appendix 1. Applying the key messages to increase visitors’ ability and willingness to travel to Canterbury more often and/or stay for longer: raw data.

<p>Customers who are able and willing to travel more / stay longer</p> <p>Explore more of the city Find out what’s new / what’s in Things to do Canterbury Pass Target key geographical areas: London, west Kent, Essex Develop suggested itineraries for making the most of your day, with transport options embedded Canterbury is small and very walkable (from cheaper car parks) Come for X, stay for Y Build new habits AND help to do what they already do, but better (stay for longer in light of new information)</p>	<p>Customers who are able, but not willing to travel more / stay longer</p> <p>Overcoming barriers via information after these have been identified Information about alternatives e.g. Park and Ride, parking spaces, accessibility, walkability, transport options Information about Canterbury itself – range of businesses Improve perceptions and knowledge Walkability / scenic routes Incentives or discounts for locals and employees Access anxiety Information about travel times at different times of day when it is less busy and stressful [links to retime] Use it or lose it Try something once e.g. Park and Ride; try Park and Ride for free for a day to myth bust Avoid the parking hunt, use car parks / park and ride, it’s accessible Tackle negativity in the press</p>
<p>Customers who are not able, but willing to travel more / stay longer</p> <p>Way finding Route marking Information about transport and diversity of options to see if they are viable You can come in at different times – it’s less busy / more attractive / more transport options Are they not able because they are wedded to their default mode</p>	<p>Customers who are neither able nor willing to travel more / stay longer</p>

Table 3. Applying the key messages to increase visitors’ ability and willingness to travel to Canterbury more often and/or stay for longer: raw data.

Appendix 2. Key messages to underpin a positive transport campaign: raw data.

	Increasing awareness of positives	Tackling perceptions of negatives	Barriers outside of a marketing campaign
Accessibility	<p>Walkability (link to Walk Canterbury) Cyclability Pedestrianised city centre (no traffic, safety) Scenic green space with defined walkways Only five minutes from... From here you are very close to... Come for X and stay for Y Centrality of bus and train stations Location of car parks (tackling cost and wayfinding) Information about existence / location of electric car charging points Information about accessible drop off points</p>	<p>Parking locations – closer than you think Parking cost – cheaper than you think 'It isn't cheaper to go to Bluewater' Improvements in wayfinding are on the way Improvements to Park and Ride are on the way Improvements to Castle St are on the way You said, we did – improvements have happened Map</p>	<p>Parking prices Real time parking information Park and Ride running earlier and later, important for employees and nighttime economy Opening hours of shops/services Accessibility improvements for people with disabilities Bus lanes Provision of monetary incentives Lack of Wi-Fi Lack of electric car charging points Lack of drop off points Transferable parking permits for businesses / employees Validating parking Stop talking about parking price at Xmas</p>
Attractiveness	<p>Safe walking routes Vibrant spaces – people are out and about early/late Place making: branded quarters / identity / culture Lots to do, stay for longer (dwell time) – linking businesses, businesses supporting each other</p>	<p>Safety: falling crime levels Safety of car parks: publicise park mark Safety of walking Convenience of park and ride</p>	<p>Safety: car parks Safety: bicycles in city centre, particularly Deliveroo/Uber Eats Cleanliness of car parks Traffic congestion, affecting travel by bus, car, Park and Ride, bicycle School times (congestion and pupils)</p>

Table 4. Key messages to underpin a positive transport campaign: raw data.