

Attendees

<u>Directors</u>	<u>Team</u>
Andrew Dodd – Canterbury Cathedral	Lisa Carlson (LC) – CEO
Blake McCaskill (BM) – Republic Events	Rachel Pilard (RP) – Marketing & Comms
Bill Hicks (BH) – Canterbury City Council	Lucy Martin (LM) – Ops Manager
Claire Bogan (CB) – Fenwick	
Clare Millett – Westgate Hall	<u>Observers</u>
David Lilford (DL) – Lilford Gallery	John Woodward, Kent Police
Jon Mills (JM) – The Foundry	Hilary Brian, Canterbury Society
Joshua Williams (JW) – Brachers	David Kemsley, ACRA
Karl Elliott (KE) – Clague Architects	
Mark Stuart (MS) – Whitefriars (until noon)	
Mike Weed (MW) – CCCU (until 11am)	
Paul Turner (PT) – The Marlowe	
Rachel Sanders – BoConcept	

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies: David Lewis, Café du Soleil / des Amis; Claire Bogan, Fenwick; Dan Grimwood (Refectory)

2. Declarations of Interest

- Canterbury City Council (BH) – Service Level Agreement
- Future of District Watch (MS) – Mark Stuart is a BID Board Director and Chair of District Watch

3. Minutes of previous meeting (16.10.24) and Matters Arising

- The BID Board minutes from 16 October 2024 were approved and signed off.

4. Key takeaways

- Canterbury BID will **integrate Canterbury District Watch's shop/pub radio and intelligence sharing scheme**, pending approval and financial viability.
- **Major local government reform** planned for England, with shift to unitary authorities under a mayoral system by 2026-2028
- **Jon Mills presented plans for an urban mushroom farm and food market development on Stour Street**, pending planning approval and funding.
- Positive updates on **Christmas events and campaigns** across the city.

5. BID Reports

Canterbury District Watch Integration

- Business Case for Canterbury BID to integrate District Watch's shop/pub radio scheme from April 1st circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.
- Integration would enhance BID's safe and secure business support services as outlined in the Business Plan.
- The radio scheme will cover the wider city area but not the coast, although members on the coast could potentially still access the intelligence system, DISC, at a lower fee.
- Contingent on final update on District Watch finances by end of March.
- Support for the transition provided by the current District Watch Chair, Mark Stuart; Chair of the Kent BCRP Group, Alan Dann; and the National Association of Business Crime Partnerships, Sophie Jordan.
- Thanks offered to MS and the District Watch board for the work undertaken over the past 18 months to secure District Watch's future.
- There will be a new committee for District Watch – to be re-named – and the hope is that this will include the current District Watch board.
- **Board approved proposal in principle.**

Comments:

- CM: Really pleased to see this happening. Keen to see more support and training.
 - LC: There will be a transition working group focused on business needs, including training.
- PT: we will need a data sharing agreement in place and communication with existing members.
 - MS: We will write to all members to inform them of the transition with the correct GDPR and privacy policies in place.

Ambassador / Street Team Update

- Plans are now in place to hire a Street Team of three but will start with two and revisit financial position in Q3 once Canterbury BID has integrated District Watch.

Strategic Development (RS/LC):

- **Council Consultation responses** submitted on Parking, Events management Policy, Street Trading License Fees, all available on the BID website, including an objection to any increases on car parking prices.
- A **Transport Campaign Workshop** was held on 8 January with CCC councilors and officers and businesses, hosted by transport expert Dr Susan Kenyon from CCCU. The workshop was focused on promoting Canterbury as accessible and attractive destination, increasing customers' ability and willingness to travel to and stay longer in the city. the aim is to positively impact businesses, by increasing footfall, dwell time and 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. **The Workshop Report will soon be available on the BID website.**
- **Next steps:**
 - Apply for Rail200 funding (second round, likely to be February) – Canterbury BID
 - Seek partner contributions – Canterbury BID

- Develop the campaign brief – Canterbury BID, based on the workshop report, and also the Council’s new wayfinding scheme.
- Commission an agency to develop the campaign
- **Comments**
 - RS: Would like to see support from the Council on marketing and cleaning as both Castle Street Multistory and Riverside car parks are in a bad state and off-putting to customers and staff (needles, offensive waste, tents, ASB). A strong marketing plan really can help us influence people.
 - DL: Would like to see positivity and collective effort to support the business community.
 - BH: Council fully sees the benefit of marketing, but hears the point about ambition. CCC team felt the workshop was very positive and useful. BID feedback is heard and distributed far & wide at the Council, and we would like to stay full involved with the transport workshop and campaign. Financial support and resource to deliver can be a challenge.
 - MS: anecdotal feedback – consistent feedback about parking charges from customers, but most people don’t know there are less expensive car parks so this campaign could really help – lead with the “parking from …” message
 - PT: echo the message that we need to lead with the positive message about how to travel to Canterbury and the less expensive options. Single biggest complaint received is about car parking prices and ANPR issues.
- **Inward Investment (“Choose Canterbury”)**

Finance (PT/LM)

- Finance committee met on 19 November
- Conversations ongoing with the Council about taking **levy billing** in house and issues with reconciliation.
- Producing BID 2, Year 5 **accounts (2023-24)** and they will be reviewed with our accountants on 4 March, followed by Finance subcommittee review on 29 April and Board review on 14 May, in time for filing in June.
- **Summary position for the end of BID 2 (to Sept 2024):** The year ended with total income of £606,042.13 and expenditure at £702,638.51, giving us a budgeted loss of £96ka planned deficit budget to invest the remaining surplus from the pandemic. The main changes the budget since we last met are:
 - **Income:** Levy collection for year 5 (2023-24) is sticky at 90%
 - **Expenditure:** (1) Event sponsorship was slightly under what we budgeted and so was the Medieval Pageant budget. (2) The cleaning budget has decreased as cleaning is ongoing with The Becket. We have also invested in window cleaning vacant units, but this is a small amount.
- **Summary position BID 3, Year 1 (Oct 2024 to date):** Projected year 1 total income is £689,544.00 and total expenditure at £709,974.39, giving us a balance of -£20,430, as we are investing the £33,339.20 estimated surplus carried over from BID 2, Year 5.
- **Formal recovery process ongoing**

Marketing & Events (BM/RP):

- **2025 events and campaigns**
 - New events and campaigns calendar on the BID website for 2025
 - New events flyer being distributed to businesses for staff and customers.
 - Over 40,000 visits per month on Visit Canterbury (90K over the summer) – see separate Visit Canterbury Ops Report.

- **Christmas Switch On (RP)**
 - Successful Christmas light switch-on event with 97% increase in footfall
 - Positive feedback on Christmas markets in Cathedral precincts.
 - 2025 dates confirmed with the switch on taking place on 14 November and the market running from 12 Nov-24 Dec Christmas Market

- **Campaign**
 - Debrief meeting to be scheduled end of Jan / early Feb. Details on the campaign, Winter Guide and Christmas Trail will be available in the Nov-Dec 2024 Ops Report and in the Christmas Report. In a nutshell:
 - Canterbury BID and partners invested £30,000 into this year's Christmas Campaign, including DAB and DAX Radio adverts, Stagecoach and Park & Ride bus sides, Kent-wide Southeastern platform and onboard posters, magazine spreads and loads more - encouraging visitors to choose Canterbury for Christmas.
 - Christmas Trail – 44 businesses involved with a Bagpuss and Canterbury Bear. 1,000 prizes claimed.
 - Winter Guide - 18,000 copies printed, 9,000 distributed door-to-door and the rest available for businesses. Core elements: What's On | Shopping Map | Travel | Parking

- **Gift Card Report (RP)**
 - Report provided to the board
 - **A snapshot of Gift Card Redemptions since 2020:** £221,798 purchased and £151,509 redeemed
 - **Of all the businesses on the Gift Card Scheme:**
 - 62% are Independents
 - 38% are National Brands
 - 47% are Retail
 - 47% are Hospitality
 - 40% are Evening and Night Time Economy
 - **The amount redeemed to date (through to Dec 2025)**
 - 28% was spent in Independents (£41k)
 - 72% was spent in National Brands (£108k)
 - 59% was spent in Retail (£88k)
 - 25% was spent in Hospitality (£37k)
 - 24% was spent in the Evening and Night Time Economy (£36k)
 - Card value varies, particularly with corporate giving, and large purchases from the language school and CCCU.
 - [CCCU Case Study](#) of their Canterbury Gift Card purchase for new students

Governance update (LC)

The governance review and new articles will be circulated ahead of the March board meeting. As discussed in previous board meetings, we are making some changes to the existing Articles to

maintain the continuity and expertise on the Board from time to time, whilst also ensuring that the BID Board is reflective of the community it seeks to serve. We also note that the frequency of meetings, together with the efficiencies of the subcommittees had been considered in the formulation of the forward-looking proposals.

6. Devolution

- **Devolution and local government reform is the government's top priority for local government and is the biggest local government reform since the 1970s.**
 - Strategic mayoral authorities – population of 1.5m plus
 - Full coverage of England by end of parliament
 - Directly-elected mayor
 - Powers and funding usually reserved for central government
 - Devolution Priority Programme
- Kent and Medway submitted a joint proposal to be fast-tracked as a Strategic Mayoral authority. 18 areas across England have submitted expressions of interest, but we don't know who will be included.
- **What does local government reorganisation (LGR) mean?**
 - Creation of new unitary authorities – principal authorities
 - Minimum population of 500,000 (or thereabouts)
 - Expectation that some LGRs take place for 2027 and 2028
 - Expectation that districts, counties and unitaries work together
 - Fewer councils but still the same level of work
 - LGR is a means for government to maximise devolution benefits
- **What does LGR and Devolution in Kent mean?**
 - Breaking up both KCC and Medway
 - Expectation of three to four unitaries
 - One directly-elected mayor covering Kent and Medway areas
- **What does LGR and Devolution for Canterbury mean?**
 - Local Plan – still a requirement to deliver before LGR
 - Discussions about designations – city status, Lord Mayor
 - Leaving a legacy:
 - - un-parished areas – new town councils?
 - - investment in assets and future ownership?
 - - reassessment of corporate priorities
 - Continuing to improve services for residents
- **Comments**
 - CM: Need to protect businesses and involve us in the conversation as this unfolds.
 - LC: We need a city-centre strategy and action plan in place ahead of devolution, so that economic development, regeneration and the needs of businesses are factored into the devolution process.
 - BH: Positive support for this from cabinet as a key aspect to CCC's legacy as a unitary comes forward.
 - LC: Stodmarsh / nutrient neutrality issue that is holding up development on the former Nasons and Development sites – is that now at risks?
 - BH: Joint venture established by Ashford Borough Council and Canterbury City Council – Stour Environmental Credits Ltd to make credits available for the planning process. Starting to move the process forward.
 - Company will act separately to the Local Planning Authorities (LPAs)
 - A nutrient trading platform (established and developing)

- The platform will buy mitigation benefit from mitigation providers
- Credits then sold to developers
- Set up funding and seed funding Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund (LNMF)
- <https://www.stourenvironmentalcredits.co.uk/about-us/>

7. Stour Street Urban Mushroom Farm and Food Market (JM)

- Jon Mills presented plans for a gourmet urban mushroom farm and food market
- Utilizes waste products from brewery/distillery in circular economy model
- Planning application submitted, awaiting flood risk assessment
- Funding decision expected within 10 days
- Aim to open by summer if approved and funded

8. Roundtable (all)

- Cathedral (AD): New strategy was launched last week following consultations last summer and is now available on the Cathedral's website, and includes community partnerships and its relationship with the city.
- Whitefriars / Riverside (MS):
 - Kessons Pilates open and Sunglass Hut underwent a refit.
 - Multiple units under offer in Whitefriars and the Riverside.
 - Working closely with the BID on events and campaigns strategy.
- Westgate Hall (CM):
 - Good January – finishing with Disco for Grown Ups, sold out.
 - Seeing more re-booking including markets with more forward and repeat bookings.
 - Key dates - planning 10th anniversary events: 27 Feb Cultural Forum, 7 March International Womens' Day breakfast, 16-17 May Canterbury Wine Festival (with new Friday evening session), 24 May Open House.
- BoConcept (RS)
 - In sale – January
 - Footfall is a challenge in January – miss the lights!
 - Burns Supper event – 23 January
- The Foundry (JM)
 - Thanks to the Cathedral for the warm welcome during the Christmas market
 - Christmas trading similar to 2023 but considers positive given economic climate
- Clagues (KE)
 - Working on Nasons and Debenhams (slowed by fire until insurance and building control resolved) – concerned that net impact of credit scheme could be challenging for the financial viability of the development of the sites.
- CCC (BH):
 - Tricia Marshall retired from the Council in Dec 2024. There are now two joint Chief Execs – Peter Davies and Suzi Wakeham
 - Consultations now closed and the team reviewing all responses, leading up to budget process for approval in February.
 - Events policy – feedback will be provided.
 - Cultural strategy – still planning a refresh on the strategy for the district and will involve the BID and others.
 - LUF project update – March newsletter will provide more updates.

- Republic Events (BM)
 - Very busy Sept-Dec, great to be involved with light switch on event.
 - Dane John out for events in 2025.
 - City Sound Project – looking at options for this year.
 - Student events ongoing
 - Appointed as SE Regional Ambassador for the Night Time Industries Association – congratulations to Blake.
- Brachers (JW):
 - Hosted quarterly Breakfast with Brachers at the Westgate Hall early Jan, very well attended.
 - Looking at what Brachers can do with the community.
- Canterbury Society (HB):
 - Winter party coming up at The Pound
 - Joining with civic societies from East Kent regions to work together in advance of devolution.
- ACRA (DK): Concerned about residents willingness and ability to entre the city-centre:
 - Cleanliness and maintenance: Schemes don't have enough funding to be looked after, for example, pavement in St George's and cleanliness of car parks
 - Disappointed the bus station upgrade not prioritised, and withdrawal of bus services in the evening.
 - Also concerned about car parking charges
- The Marlowe Theatre
 - Pantomime seen by 98,000 and new self-produced show in the Studio – 102,000 people in 7 weeks.
 - 2025 Pantomime – 55,000 tickets already sold
 - 21 March – new season launch, all directors invited.
 - Marlowe KIT update – planning application going in for next phase of project.
 - Sales going well.
- Lilford Gallery (DL):
 - Looking for footfall to pick up in January.
 - Thank you to CM and Westgate Hall team for a great birthday party venue!
 - Celebrating 25 years later in the year – stay tuned!
- BID team
 - New office on Burgate– moved in end of November.
 - Working hard on levy collection and recovery.
 - Recruitment for new Street Team starting.
 - Inward Investment project – Choose Canterbury – see new case studies featuring Canterbury businesses and upcoming Hotel Summit.
 - Lunchtime Networking on 12 February at The Pound.
 - Training – SEK training, plus our own starting with Zero Tolerance, First Aid and AI.
 - Simone Davies has left the University of Kent and LC will be meeting with the Deputy VC about her replacement on the BID Board.
 - Sales data – looking at new options for collecting this information, using credit or debit card data.
 - New vinyl installed on Guildhall Street promoting social kitchens, near Lily's.
 - Tattinger launch event in Canterbury in February.
 - Hanging flower baskets – new contractor appointed and permissions will be sought for the full BID term shortly.
- Footfall for golden quarter possibly shows a redeployment of footfall coming from less expensive car parks, diverting away from some of the congested areas of the city.

- SEK – new free training online and in person – BID is cascading through eNews, socials and WhatsApp groups

9. Summary of Actions and Decisions

Action Items

- Follow up on ANPR technical issues – BH
 - Finalize Canterbury District Watch integration plans and transition process – LC/MS
 - Monitor local government restructuring developments and implications for BID – LC
 - Support Jon Mills' planning application for Stour Street development – BID
 - Develop positive transport campaign to promote city access and parking options – LC/RP
 - Recruit new street team members and plan office warming event – LC
 - Continue to promote SEK – new free training online and in person – BID is cascading through eNews, socials and WhatsApp groups and Visit Canterbury – RP
 - Circulate transport workshop report to all board members after receiving final comments – LC
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- Unanimous approval for the integration of District Watch into Canterbury BID (MS abstained due to conflict of interest).

Next board meeting scheduled for 19 March 19th, 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Signed:



Paul Turner, Interim BID Board Chair

Date: 19 March 2025