

Attendees

BID Board Directors

Bill Hicks (Canterbury City Council) | Clare Millett (Westgate Hall Community Trust) | Gemma Purt (Girtings) | James Clague (The Latchmere House Partnership) | Jon Mills (Foundry BrewPub) | Jon Brothwell (Pybus Opticians) | Mark Stuart (Whitefriars/Riverside) | Melissa Browne (University of Kent) | Phil Collins (Oliver Bonas) | Mike Weed (Canterbury Christ Church University) | Rachel Sanders (BoConcept) | Steven Flower (Steven James Hairdressing) | Zoe Rodda (Lily's Social Kitchen)

BID Team: Lisa Carlson (CEO) | Rachel Pilard (Head of Marketing and Comms) | Lucy Martin (Ops Manager – Finance, Data and Governance) | Jamie Bentley (Ops Manager – Street Scene / Safe & Secure)

Welcome: Leah Brown (The Wayfinders Group) | Cllr Chris Cornell (Canterbury City Council)

Apologies:

Andrew Dodd (Canterbury Cathedral) | Blake McCaskill (Republic Events) | Claire Bogan (Fenwick) | Dhvani Patel (KPGP Services) | David Lewis (Café du Soleil / des Amis) | Paul Turner (The Marlowe Theatre)

1. Welcome, Apologies and declarations of interest

- **Declarations of interest:** Canterbury City Council (Service Level Agreement)
- **Director updates for Companies House:** All directors advised of the Companies House Board Director Identity Verification process and deadline of 18 Nov.

2. Minutes of previous meeting (15 May and 15 July)

- Actions were reviewed and explained for new Directors and the minutes from 15 May (Board Meeting and EGM) and the 15 July (AGM) were approved and signed off.

3. Governance – new Articles

Board Director Training

Leah Brown from The Wayfinders Group joined us again for Board Governance Development with a focus on governance foundations & legal duties including:

- Legal structure and responsibilities
- Fiduciary duties and financial oversight
- Levy accountability and transparency
- Conflict of interest management

Board news

- Directors were reminded that there vacancies for **Board Chair, Marketing & Events Chair and City Watch Chair**, and to express an interest either with Lisa or Paul ahead of our January meeting where we aim to formally appoint these roles.

- In other Board director updates, we're sad to share that **Claire Bogan** will be leaving Fenwick in December to take up an exciting new role with Fendi at Harrods. Huge congratulations to Claire on this next chapter, and heartfelt thanks for her valuable contributions to the Board. We also extended our sincere thanks to **Josh Williams**, who stepped down from the Board following his departure from Brachers. We're grateful for all the insight and energy Josh brought to the role, and we're glad he'll still be based in Canterbury.
- In line with our process, the role will be offered to the next eligible candidate from the most recent vetting and voting round, provided there is a vacancy within their sector.

4. Operations and sub-committee reports

September – October Operations Report

- Lisa provided an overview of the Ops Reports, published every two months covering the activities and impact of the BID and also city performance data (footfall, sales, occupancy, transport). In summary over Sept-Oct we organised and supported 13 events, welcomed 9 new businesses, received our Purple Flag Award and published a new city map and a Winter Guide.
- Rachel briefed directors on
 - BID (B2B), MyCanterbury (B2C) and Visit Canterbury (B2C) communication channels and their impact, including top performing social posts and eNewsletters which are analysed to help us fine-tune our comms. See the Sept-Oct Ops Report on the BID website for more detail.
 - Plans for Christmas including a new-style Lights Switch On event over 12 locations.
- Jamie briefed directors on the impact of City Watch, our Business Crime Reduction Partnership, which has been integrated into the BID as of April 2025. Since then:
 - Engagement and reporting on DISC (the GDPR compliant intelligence sharing tool) has significantly increased, resulting in more actionable evidence being passed on to CCC and Kent Police.
 - We have also supported the recovery of over 50% of stock since April.

Impact and ROI data

Lucy briefed directors on

1. The BID's database which enables us to track interactions and return on investment, and
2. The new city performance tool being trialed with Canterbury City Council which tracks overall footfall, visits by street, dwell time and where visitors are traveling from (all data is anonymized, aggregated and GDPR compliant).

Finance

The Finance minutes from 23 September were tabled and an update included here for transparency as these minutes are published on the BID website for members:

- **Summary Position:** BID 3, Year 1 total income is at £696,303 and expenditure at £755,936, giving us a balance of -£59,634, a planned deficit budget to invest the remaining surplus from the pandemic (£33,339.20). The reasons for the overspend and the main changes in the budget since we last met are:

Income:

- Levy collection – collection is tracking at 91.29%, no levy was collected in August, which is unusual. This was flagged as a concern with Partnership (P1) who advised that during August some payments were received however, there was change in occupation that

affected the BID liability for a levy that had previously been paid which in effect cancelled the payment out. P1 now has access to the Council's unreconciled payment list to check for levy payments. We hope to receive some levy payments in September.

- Sponsorship – this budget has increased £2.5k due to the city map and networking sponsorship.
- District Watch – this budget has been revised down by £2.2k to reflect those that currently have radios. Plans remain in place to grow the scheme.

Expenditure:

- Staff wages – have been adjusted downward to reflect savings from the National Insurance employer allowance.
- Medieval Pageant – is forecast to come in under budget by £1k
- Rent and Rates – this has been revised down by £1.5k to reflect our known costs.
- City Watch – the annual budget has been fully spent, with a slight overspend, which was anticipated due to the increased costs associated with the new City Watch programme. Businesses participating in City Watch are billed annually in April for radio usage. However, this billing does not fully cover operational costs, including equipment, support, insurance, and licensing. The strategic plan is to build a surplus over two years, enabling future reinvestment into the programme.

A short-term deficit of between £10,000 and £20,000 is currently projected, depending on the final levy collection fee, which is yet to be agreed. The committee noted that while cash flow is currently tight, it's being closely monitored and managed.

- **Non-levy debtors:** Totals £16,140, made up predominantly of City Watch invoices. Invoices have been issued and reminders sent. Recovery action includes calls, emails and visits. National businesses face delays due to complex supplier documentation. Local businesses have been given a deadline—non-payment by month-end will result in radio retrieval to encourage payment. No recommended write offs for the committee to review.
- **Levy billing process:** A meeting was held on 6 June with representatives from Canterbury City Council and Partnership One to discuss levy billing arrangements. The BID team had anticipated a discussion about taking levy billing in-house. However, the council confirmed that billing will remain under their control, and they proposed measures to improve the process, including enhanced enforcement and the option of an annual advance to support cashflow from one BID year to the next. These measures were subsequently agreed between the BID and the Council.
- **Annual inflationary increase to the BID levy.** BID rules permit up to a 5% annual increase. Budget projections include:
 - 3% uplift in commercial income (e.g. City Watch)
 - No projected change in grant or sponsorship income currently
 - All costs updated with some anticipated inflationary increases.

The overall budget remains tight, with a projected deficit partially offset by reserves.

Concerns raised about long-term impact of modest increases. A 4% increase was proposed by directors to strengthen the BIDs finances which would generate an additional £15,000,

creating a £25,000 buffer and a projected £35,000 closing balance for Year 2. The committee approved a 4% levy increase for the upcoming financial year.

- **Reserves policy:** The committee reviewed the Finance Reserves Policy and agreed to aim for increasing reserves from £70,000 to £90,000 by the end of the current five-year BID term. This adjustment accounts for staffing changes, supplier contracts and potential wind-down costs. The committee clarified that any levies left unpaid after the BID winds up will still be owed to the City Council as stipulated by BID regulations, which would also handle any remaining liabilities.

Marketing & Events

The M&E minutes were tabled. For transparency, these were the actions:

- **Christmas Switch On** will take place on 14 November from 5-8pm with the illumination of the city at 6pm with 12 activation points across the city.
- **Christmas Campaign Briefing and Toolkit** will be sent out to all members end Oct
- **Christmas Market** – will soft launch on 12 Nov
- **The Winter Guide** features local businesses and Kentish food (18,000 copies printed – advert space available), launching in early November.
- **Christmas Competition** will be run through Visit Canterbury and MyCanterbury and a new lego trail will launch on 14 Nov.
- **Visit Kent Liquidation:** Following the new of Visit Kent's liquidation (and that of Locate in Kent), Visit Canterbury remains under the management of Canterbury BID. Discussions with Kent County Council and Visit Kent board ongoing alongside discussions with the other districts that have been impacted. Steve Samson is our key contact through KCC who is liaising with the VK board and the liquidators. Rachel highlighted the importance of this continuity, especially with the upcoming Christmas period.
- **2026 Event Planning / Levelling Up Project:** Canterbury City Council would like to pull together a season of events which they will help to promote as a package. All of which can help highlight the locations that the Levelling Up Project has transformed. First step is to have a 2026 events calendar planned out. CCC are looking for events that not only utilize the new spaces but can also help to highlight our literary links. This will help with a UNESCO City of Literature bid in 2027. Events that can help maximise use of Westgate Towers and smaller venues, helping bring the community to these spaces would be great.
 - Canterbury Wine Festival in May could be a great opportunity to help showcase local produce.
 - Alex Valentine mentioned the success of a new writing festival at The Marlowe in 2025, and the importance of championing emerging playwrights in the region.
 - Ian Blackmore and Derek Theobald focused on maximizing the use of city event spaces, including the Westgate Towers and smaller venues that have been underused.

5. Canterbury City Council Updates

Cllr Chris Cornell provided a draft report on the Council's Town Centre Strategy process and asked for feedback by 14 November on

- Quick win ideas
- Do the Reflections resonate?
- How bold should the Council be?

- What would you consider essential in a 10–15 year strategy, and be disappointed to see omitted?

6. AOB

Board roles & updates

- If you're interested in learning more about the Board Chair roles (both full board and committee positions), let Lisa or Paul know.
- In other Board director updates, we're sad to share that Claire Bogan will be leaving Fenwick in December to take up an exciting new role with Fendi at Harrods. Huge congratulations to Claire on this next chapter, and heartfelt thanks for your valuable contributions to the Board. She will be greatly missed! We also want to extend our sincere thanks to Josh Williams, who stepped down from the Board following his departure from Brachers in September. We're grateful for all the insight and energy Josh brought to the role, and we're glad he'll still be based in Canterbury.

Quick links, guides and reports

- [Canterbury City Council's Draft Cultural Strategy](#) out for consultation (deadline 12 January) - we will a BID response based on feedback received through the Marketing & Events committee and call outs for feedback over the past several months.
- [BID responses to consultations](#) - published on our website fyi
- [Christmas in Canterbury 2025 - full guide on Visit Canterbury](#)
- [Christmas Lights Switch On](#): 14 November | 5-8pm | 12 locations across the city
- [Winter Guide 2025](#) (digital version) - please let us know if you would like paper copies delivered to you.
- [New City Map](#) (digital version) - copies available at The Beaney
- [Canterbury City Council update](#) (Local Plan, Cultural Strategy, Parking)
- [Board Governance Training Nov 2025](#)

Decisions to make in January

- Board roles: Board Chair, Marketing & Events Chair, City Watch Chair
- Change in committees:
 - The Strategic Development Committee will no longer operate as a standing sub-committee. Instead, it will convene on an as-needed basis - for example, as a task-and-finish group to support BID Impact and ROI reporting, a workshop to gather consultation feedback, or a full Board briefing on key local authority strategies, as we did at the November Board meeting.
 - City Watch to be integrated as a standing sub-committee of the board

7. Actions

- Expressions of interest on board director roles to Lisa or Paul by the end of the calendar year – ALL
- The Board agreed to add a January meeting to the diary to focus on Away Day follow up (Leadership Manifesto and Actions), Board director roles (decisions needed), Next Board Development Training session. Doodle Poll - January Board meeting on Tuesday 13th or Wednesday 14th from 12-2pm - ALL
- Companies House director identity checks - the deadline is 18 November – ALL
- Town Centre Strategy feedback by 14 November – ALL
- Council's Draft Cultural Strategy if you would like to reply directly – ALL
- Impact / ROI working group – LC/LM Q1 2026
- Decision making matrix for directors – LC
- Risk register – LC / LM
- Review complaints procedure for the annual policy and compliance review – LM

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Paul', written over a horizontal line.

Date: 13 January 2026