



Annual Report 2025-2026

Your award-winning Business Improvement District, recognised nationally with the goal of supporting and facilitating your success.



Canterbury is an award-winning BID...

...and proud member of



The impact of your BID

Canterbury BID exists to champion and support the city's business community. We are committed to enhancing the trading environment, helping to address the city's challenges and encouraging both residents and visitors to make the most of Canterbury's unique offer – from its rich heritage and vibrant culture to its outstanding shops, restaurants, pubs and more.

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are independent, business-led, not-for-profit partnerships. Through a ballot held every five years, businesses vote to invest collectively via a levy, funding projects and services that strengthen the local trading environment. Canterbury BID was first established following a successful ballot in July 2014 and has since been renewed in July 2019 and again in July 2024 for a further five-year term.

Nationally, there are over 352 BIDs in the UK, including three in Kent (Canterbury was the first), investing over £184 million every year,

giving business an independent voice and investing in business-led initiatives.

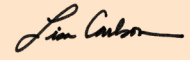
Our vision is for Canterbury to fulfil its potential as a vibrant, award-winning destination – a city that others look to as a model of success.

We recognise the challenges ahead – including global political and economic uncertainty, sales and footfall volatility and rising operational costs – but remain committed to doing everything we can to ensure Canterbury is a thriving place to do business.

This report offers a snapshot of our activity over the past year. For more information, please visit our website or sign up to our weekly eNews for the latest updates.



Gemma Purt
Chair, Canterbury BID and
Partner at Girlings Solicitors



Lisa Carlson
CEO, Canterbury BID

A snapshot of 2025-26



Raised over £234k in addition to the levy (a **42% increase**)

- the highest amount to date.

Welcomed **10 new Board Directors** to represent the city's diverse business community (see the back cover for details).



Grew the City Watch with 143 radios in circulation (**37% increase**) and 244 members (**50.6% increase**). Increased Street Team operational activity, supporting business with incidents, first aid and reporting



Hosted **17 networking and training sessions**, including First Aid, AI Ready Websites, Business Rate Updates and Terrorism Prevention – and our **annual competitive Litter Pick (73.9 kg collected!)**.



Welcomed **37 new businesses**



Set **Gold Standard for Safe Nights Out** with a record **40 Best Bar None** licensed venue accreditations, alongside ongoing Zero Tolerance training for staff.



Launched a **Pollinator Flower Basket Trail** alongside installing 400+ hanging baskets, with window stickers highlighting the pollinator-friendly planting routes.



Created a **new-style Christmas Switch-On** spread throughout the city with 12 activation points, 4 switch-on sites, 7 miles of lights and 40% footfall increase YoY, and a **Christmas Window Trail** featuring **LEGO Christmas trees**.



Delivered a 6-week **Christmas campaign** distributing **18,000 winter guides**, received **2,706 competition entries** handed out **5,000 LEGO prizes** and received over **2.5 million impressions** on digital content alone!

2025 - 2026 Financial Report

■ Budget
■ Projected

Income

| | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Levy | £526,787 | £549,078 |
| Other Income (MyCanterbury / City Watch) | £57,494 | £67,675 |
| Visit Canterbury | £29,000 | £57,500 |
| Voluntary Membership | £35,000 | £22,632 |
| Sponsorship | £25,500 | £43,303 |
| Service Level Agreement (CCC) | £19,000 | £19,000 |
| Grants | £27,760 | £24,329 |
| Total* | £720,541 | £783,508 |

Expenditure

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Promote Canterbury | £212,826 | £265,273 |
| Support Businesses | £99,416 | £84,170 |
| Enhance the Experience | £282,795 | £284,528 |
| Levy collection costs | £11,200 | £11,200 |
| Management & Overhead | £112,998 | £125,814 |
| Total* | £718,998 | £770,985 |

8 ways to get maximum value from your BID levy:

- 1 Stay informed** - sign up to receive our regular e-newsletter.
- 2 Grow your network** - join our monthly business networking events.
- 3 Access support** - contact our Street Team for on-the-ground advice and assistance.
- 4 Keep your business safe** - join City Watch, our accredited Business Crime Reduction Partnership with real-time radio and intelligence sharing.
- 5 Promote your business** - use your FREE subscription to the Canterbury & Coast app to share your offers and events with residents and visitors.
- 6 Join the conversation** - follow us on social media and tag us in your posts.
- 7 Be part of promoting Canterbury as a destination** - get involved in our seasonal and citywide promotions, including the Medieval Pageant, Student Welcome, Halloween, Christmas and more.
- 8 Share your story** - send us content for inclusion in our weekly e-newsletter.



Led a **new Welcome Back to School programme** with partner organisations and businesses, supported by Council and Police funding, engaging young people in sports, games and creative activities to foster a positive atmosphere and a strong sense of belonging.



Launched a **new pocket-style city map** featuring a vibrant, beautifully illustrated map & guide to Canterbury, and circulated **38,000 seasonal guides**.



Sponsored a programme of events **to drive and spread footfall, attract new audiences and encourage repeat visits**, including the Great Stour RiverFest, Pride Canterbury, Shakespeare Festival and the inaugural Castle Quarter Dog Show.



Expanded the **City Animation Programme** with new festoon lights on Guildhall Street, Best Lane and St George's Street, and added 17 new vinyls on the former Debenhams.



Provided **wayfinding, digital marketing and event support** across the quarters.



Supported **Student Welcome and Freshers events** in September & October to help the city's 50,000 students feel connected to their new home.

Led the **13th successful Purple Flag re-accreditation**, supporting Canterbury's evening and night-time economy through this successful partnership.



Supported a **Spooktacular Halloween** across the city's Quarters including trick or treating, inflatable mazes and ghostly storytelling.



Welcomed the **106th Archbishop of Canterbury, Dame Sarah Mullally**, and launched a 12 month campaign celebrating Canterbury's pioneering women.

Also brought to you by Canterbury BID...

My Canterbury



*Notes

- An explanation of how the levy is calculated (the "Levy Rules") is available on the BID website.
- As the BID's role is to invest levy income into the city, cash reserves are only built up for three key reasons: to maintain liquidity between levy payments, both from year to year and between BID terms (including any potential delays), to cover closure costs if operations cease, and to provide a contingency for unexpected events such as reduced income or new opportunities. Each year, funds are set aside to build and maintain reserves, ensuring the business has sufficient cash to cover closure costs if required, at the end of the BID term in September 2029.
- The financial year ends on 30 September 2026. These are projections for the final quarter and all subject to confirmation in the year-end accounts which are published in full on Companies House.

Coming soon...

Canterbury & Coast

a new digital hub and app enabling businesses to have direct marketing contact with residents and visitors.

Visit Canterbury

new branding and website with fresh content, videos and imagery.

A bespoke 'Canterbury Paper Tapestry' as part of this year's Medieval Pageant

to tie in with the arrival of the Bayeux Tapestry in London and the Year of the Normans in 2027.

Meet our Street Team - Megan, Jamie and Reece



BID Board Directors 2025-2028

Canterbury BID is operated by a BID team led by a voluntary Board of Directors, representing the businesses and organisations who operate in the city, plus observers from Kent Police, the local authority and resident groups.



Gemma Purt
Chair
Girlings Solicitors



Andrew Dodd
Canterbury Cathedral



Bill Hicks
Canterbury City Council



Blake McCaskill
Supermodified



Clare Millett
Westgate Hall



Dhvani Patel
KPGP Services



David Lewis
Café des Amis / Café du
Soleil



Eddi Taylor
Azets UK



James Clague
The Latchmere House
Partnership



Jon Mills
The Foundry Brew Pub



Jonathan Brothwell
Pybus Opticians



Mark Stuart
Whitefriars and the
Riverside



Melissa Browne
University of Kent



Mike Weed
Canterbury Christ Church
University



Paul Turner
The Marlowe Theatre



Philip Collins
Oliver Bonas



Rachel Sanders
BoConcept



Steven Flower
Steven James Hairdressing



Zoe Rodda
Lily's Social Kitchen CIC



Kent Police
Observer



David Wilson
Observer,
Canterbury Society



David Kemsley
Observer,
ACRA

Meet the
Canterbury
BID team



Find out more about
Canterbury & Coast
Digital Hub



Sign up to our
eNews BID
Newsletter



Enquire about
City Watch
membership



To sign up for
paperless billing:
[canterbury.gov.uk/
paperlessbidbill](https://canterbury.gov.uk/paperlessbidbill)



For questions about your levy bill:

Canterbury City Council is responsible for the administration and collection of the BID levy.

If you experience any problems with payment of the BID levy please phone **01227 862 316** or email **businessrates@canterbury.gov.uk**