

1. Attendees

Directors:

Bill Hicks (BH) – Deputy Director of Place, CCC
Blake McCaskill (BM) – Republic Events
Clare Millett (CM) – The Westgate Hall, Chair
David Lewis (DL) – Café du Soleil/Café des Amis
David Lilford (DL) – Lilford Gallery
David Wilkinson (DW) – Canterbury Cathedral
Joanna Richardson (JR) – Shepherd Neame
Jon Mills (JM) – The Foundry
Karl Elliot (KE) – Clague Architects
Marco Keir (MK) – CCCU
Mark Pegg (MP) – Loake Shoemakers
Mark Stuart (MS) – Whitefriars (9am-11am)

Paul Turner (PT) – The Marlowe, Board Vice Chair
Philip Pothen (PP) – University of Kent
Sarah Wren (SR) – Oscar & Bentley

Observers:

CI Dan Carter, District Commander
PS John Woodward, CSU

BID Team:

Lisa Carlson (LC) – CEO
Emily Wells (EW) – Administrator
Rachel Pilard (RP) – Marketing & Comms
Lucy Martin (LM) – Operations Manager

2. Welcome and Apologies

Welcome:

- Canterbury City Council: Caroline Marlow, Head of Digital, Data and Improvement; Josie Newman, Corporate Projects Manager, Stacey Wells, Public Art Officer (from 9-11am)
- Stephen Allen, One Pound Lane / Canterbury Tales of England (from 9-11am)
- Nicholas Hall, Founder and CEO, Digital Tourism Think Tank and Castle Quarter (11-12)
- Kent Police: Daniel Carter, new District Commander; John Woodward, Community Safety Unit – City Team
- Simon Barker, General Manager at The Abode (11:45-12:15)

Apologies:

- Claire Bogan (CB) – Fenwick
- Clive Relf (CR) – Kreston Reeves
- Dan Grimwood (DG) – The Refectory Kitchen
- Hilary Brian (HB) – Canterbury Society
- David Kemsley (DK) – ACRA
- Rachel Sanders (RS) – BoConcept

CM thanked Kathy for her 8 years of service with the BID and congratulated her on her new role on the Employability team at the University of Kent.

Introductions were made as above and Declarations of Interest listed as follows: BH – Canterbury City Council, Service Level Agreement.

3. Minutes of previous meeting (16.11.22) and Local Plan Workshop (11.01.23) incl Matters Arising

The Board minutes from 16.11.22 were approved and signed off. Actions from this meeting and the Strategic Development sub-committee on 31.10.22 were reviewed, agreed as complete with comments/amends to the following to be carried over:

Fyi, ongoing, carried over from Strategic Development meeting in October): Property database – business case in progress to be reviewed at the next SD meeting on 18 April.

Governance: Board Director update:

- Simon Youden has left, replaced by the new Fenwick Store Director, Claire Bogan
- David Wilkinson has left, temporarily replaced by Kathryn Beldon, Interim Receiver General at Canterbury Cathedral.
- Jo Richardson has left Shepherd Neame.
- All three were thanked for their time and contribution to the BID Board.

Action: Extended Board meeting on 17 May until 2pm to allow time for a strategy session.

4. Levelling Up – Caroline Marlow and Josie Newman

Caroline and Josie presented plans for the Levelling Up Fund “Connected Canterbury – Unlocking the Tales of England”.

Project breakdown:

- **Transforming Heritage Assets and Spaces:** Marlowe KIT, Castle, Westgate Square, Clocktower Square
- **Creating a Green Arrival Experience:** Bus station and surrounding area, Car parks (Longport, St Radigunds, Castle Row), cycle hire scheme
- **Connecting Our Heritage:** Story gardens, Routes (including the city wall), Dane John Gardens

Cross-scheme priorities:

- Designing out crime
- Designing out inefficiencies for our contractors (cleansing, grounds maintenance)
- Designing in efficiencies for our contractors and services
- Targeted lighting improvements
- Co-ordinated wayfinding
- Decluttering
- Soft landscaping - drought tolerant, hardy, pollinator friendly plants only
- Hard landscaping
- App/digital interpretation, augmented reality (in the broadest sense), educational opportunities

Project governance:

- Core team
 - Peter Davies - Project Sponsor
 - Bill Hicks - Deputy Director Place
 - Marie Royle - Deputy Director People
 - Nicci Mills - Deputy Director Finance and Procurement, Section 151 Officer

- Caroline Marlow - Head of Data Digital & Improvement
 - Richard Moore - Head of Transport & Environment
 - Jan Guylar - Head of Legal
 - Stacey Wells - Senior Programme & Project Manager
 - Josie Newman - Corporate Project Manager
- **Sub-groups:** Membership includes: contract manager, subject matter experts, corporate project manager, representative from relevant stakeholder group(s). To include:
 - Lighting group
 - Bus station group
 - Castle group
 - Branding design team
 - Poor Priests group
 - Transportation group (bikes & EV chargers)
 - Story Garden group (site design)
 - We may also need: Stories group - to agree, create and write the stories (largely external membership) and Westgate and Clock Tower square group
 - **External Stakeholders:** Will have their own organisational duties and will be involved in an advisory capacity.

Comments and questions:

- **Is there a timeline for the project?**
A: no fixed timeline yet as procurement confirmation will determine this. Design spec is currently being looked at before can go out for procurement. Next 2-3 weeks this should be finished should be able to share a draft outline of timeline.
- **Timeline over next 2-3 weeks – will stakeholder engagement take place during design of stages?**
A: Survey has gone out regarding Castle as the keystone element of project. Need to establish what red tape, planning consents and boundaries set by English Heritage, KCC/Highways and other statutory bodies before going out to consult with stakeholders. Project team will offer procurement opportunities out to the community when available.
- **Wayfinding is such a key part of what is needed in the city – how can LUF help improve this? Emphasized the importance of involving the business community in the conversation about wayfinding**

The business community has strong concerns about the need for improved wayfinding and the time it's currently taking, and the proposed lag from now until completion in 2025. Can the messaging get out there beforehand and interim measures put in place?
- **Can we also proactively construct a positive narrative for the press, locals and visitors as the project unfolds? Otherwise some businesses may be at risk of closure.**
A: CCC will ensure a comprehensive comms plan is put in place not only to the press but also to the business community. Also The Beaney will have a tangible interface space to keep the community updated and informed.
- **The BID will be installing bunting in the city centre ahead of the Coronation. Could this date be moved ahead?**

A: BID will look at bunting timetable asap

- **What is the scale of the wayfinding element, and will it incorporate routes and information linked to the wayfinding? Is it just going to be information or will it tell stories and more?**

A: Part of the prep is to consult those 'on the ground' and to ensure the interpretation of wayfinding needs are appropriate and future proofed. Initial mapping of the core wayfinding plan needs to take place first followed by a consultation about the messaging required.

- **What is the prognosis for the long-term sustainability of the project, particularly groundskeeping costs?**

A: Sustainability and longevity of greened area will be thought through carefully and anything selected will be of high quality and with future proofing in mind.

- **Could the local election in two month time affect the direction of the LUF plans?**

A: Councillors of all parties have been updated as this project progresses and we don't anticipate any issues.

- **How do we control the disruption to the city during the construction phase of the project, particularly as the St George's Street development was supposed to be phased (but now isn't) and the fencing is of poor quality, not straight and there were no opportunities for banners or hoardings?**

A: Mitigation of this will be given priority including looking at sensitive timings for the work to take place, and areas not of high use will be utilized effectively, and communication with business and the public.

The BID is happy to assist with communications. It is crucial for the messaging to be in much more detail including any changes to plans and the finer (but important) aesthetic details, including more detailed phase timings.

- **What is the risk of not delivering the project during the 2 year window, and are there priorities for starting this in terms of project order?**

A: Working through prioritization and procurement now and will communicate a timetable as soon as possible. Reporting to DLUHC is done quarterly and money is drawn down quarterly based on progress.

- **Will accessibility be woven through wayfinding and routes?**

A: An accessibility consultant will be on hand for all stages

- **Will police engagement be factored into the planning and project roll-out?**

A: Yes, via the Community Safety Unit

Action: BID to circulate CCC survey for Castle to all – LC

5. Canterbury Tales of England – Bill Hicks

BH gave an overview of the Canterbury Tales of England project:

LUF forms the foundations of the Canterbury Tales of England vision which stems from the 2016 Canterbury Connects Heritage Scoping Exercise and the 2018 Destination Management Plan. The idea is to look for additional funding opportunities and to maximize the potential of the current LUF

projects. More information can be found here: www.talesofengland.co.uk

Questions:

Why is the visitor center planned for Westgate Towers area?

A: number of discussions are ongoing so options remain flexible. The Guildhall is a key asset, located in a gateway to the city centre close to transport links.

Has there been much study into feasibility, ie whether any of these plans can actually come to fruition and within the timeframe specified?

Internal feasibility at CCC is ongoing now, particularly focused on LUF projects, and feasibility for the rest is in progress (subject to funding). Essential to build strong evidence and a strong vision in order to ask for funding and to ensure it is connected to the wider vision for the city.

Transport costs to visitors in the city remain a key concern despite plans made. Is this being addressed?

Focusing on what is in our control (BID), the focus is on educating visitors on alternative options and making them more attractive to visitors needs to be done by new forms of information and communications. The key with any travel disruption is giving advance and clear comprehensive notice to enable people to plan alternative methods.

6. Ops Report including Finance Update – Lisa Carlson and Paul Turner

LC presented the latest Ops Reports – both available on the BID website.

City Performance

- Footfall: Total number of visitors for the year to date is 1,167,081, 26.8% up on 2022
- Inbound tourism: Positive trajectory, particularly with the American and some parts of the European market. Asian market is still lagging.
- Occupancy: 41 openings and 33 closures in 2022. 70% independent vs 30% national brands, vacancy rate down to 9.5%.
- Sales: January – Retail sales were up 34.2% and Food and Drink sales up 13.2%; February 2023 – Retail sales were up 19% and Food and Drink sales up 14.5% (does not account for inflation).

Business Representation

- Hosted a Business Improvement District visit by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 24 February.
- Consultations: Local Plan and Parking. Find the BID's consultation responses here: canterburybid.co.uk/representation
- Press engagement
 - 'You and Yours' on 27 Feb: Repurposing former Top Shops
 - BBC Radio Kent live broadcast from Oscar & Bentley's, focus on the recovery of tourism and the student experience
 - Night Out Gift Card: 4 national articles, 1 regional and BBC South East, including a Mother's Day / Gift Card featuring Keira Rodda from Lily's Social Kitchen

Visit Canterbury

- Now run by the BID for the whole district, with funding from CCC for both the city, coastal towns and entire district. Funding also provided by consortium partners. Visit Kent are the delivery

partners.

- Successful soft launch before Christmas
- Consortium formed to govern strategic direction and investment opportunities

Christmas Report

- Increase in campaign reach of 47%, 2022 compared to 2021
- See full report on the BID website.

Gift Card

- Nearly £100,000 in sales achieved – all ringfenced for businesses in the city
- Night Out Gift card launched in February

Social Media reach

- 60% increase in impressions Nov-Dec 2022 compared to Nov-Dec 2021
- 230% increase in impressions Jan-Feb 2023 compared to Jan-Feb 2022

Networking: Total attendance at Nov, Dec, Jan and Feb events: 210 representing 114 businesses.

Training: 7 training sessions offered between February and April:

1. Making the Most of the New Visit Canterbury
2. Business Rates (including new rates relief)
3. How to Run Sustainable Experiences
4. Making the Most of the Canterbury Gift Card
5. Digital Marketing
6. Photography Workshop
7. Utility Cost Reduction Workshop

Evening and Night Time Economy

- Celebrated 11 Years of Purple Flag
- Month long awareness campaign celebrating all of the partners involved in Purple Flag, Zero Tolerance and the Night Out Gift Card. Each day a post is being shared across Canterbury BID's social media channels, and also on Visit Canterbury.
- Evening and Night Time Economy Awards, Funding & Training
- Funding from Safer Streets also enabled us to deliver anti-drink spiking protectors and Safe Havens (refuge points); Zero Tolerance against Harassment training for managers and staff; and Best Bar None accreditation and awards for licensed and ENTE businesses. 19 accredited in the first 6 months, resulting in Kent winning the "Best newcomer" award at the national BBN awards.

PT provided a finance update:

Summary Position: Year 4 total income is now projected to be £638,379.33 and total expenditure at £777,899.15 giving us a balance of -£139,519.82. Reminder: there is a planned deficit budget this year due to surplus of £156,000 carried over from COVID. The Year 3 accounts are being reviewed by the team and will be presented to the Board on May 17.

Approved budget amends are:

- Income: This year we have brought in nearly £142,000 in additional income, which is 30% on top of the levy, in comparison to £114.5k (24% of total income) in year 3. This includes £16,811 in safer street funding to run the Best Bar None scheme and Zero Tolerance training.
- Expenditure

- As agreed with the Advisory Committee we will be investing £21,648.00 in a Utility Savings Initiative for all businesses over the next year, using surplus and savings elsewhere.
- £5,000 spent on offering free Park and Ride on Saturday 10th December 2022 (once again agreed by the Advisory Committee)
- Our communications budget separated into two areas: B2B communications and ballot communications
- Minor inflationary increases to IT and the need to update our database with the latest 2023 rates revaluation information.

Levy collection: ahead of targets, 85.2% of total billed levy has been collected to date, which equates to 90% of our budgeted levy collection for this financial year (Oct 22-Sept 23)

7. Canterbury Quarters

Canterbury BID support specific business-led activity in different quarters of the city, including the King's Mile, the Cathedral Quarter, the newly launched Castle Quarter and soon the Westgate / St Dunstan's Quarter. This includes funding for set-up branding and ongoing support for events. All of the content created by the Quarters feeds through to MyCanterbury, which reaches a local audience, and Visit Canterbury, which reaches a regional, national and international audience.

Nick Hall, from Digital Tourism Think Tank in the Castle Quarter gave a presentation on Canterbury's newest quarter:

- The website sits at the heart of the Quarter with a hyperlocal focus and a shared community element with an events calendar.
- Hearing the stories from individual businesses is key to the Castle Quarter's attraction.
- Currently working on a themed calendar throughout the year.
- Business directory is also a big part with 120 businesses listed so far.
- Lots of content is being generated which is being fed through to MyCanterbury then the wider Visit Canterbury then further to Visit Kent.
- Alerts, notifications and sharing via platforms and businesses can be created to enable more efficient outward feeding of information.
- WhatsApp group is a key communication feature for urgent/immediate messaging.
- Going forward plans to have a business-featured page for support, tying in with the BID and other support networks.

Cathedral Quarter – Mark Pegg

- 50% business in area are actively involved.
- Promotion is largely through social media and about creating awareness of the area.
- Events are largely based around popular tourism dates.
- Enhanced technology element to the quarter would be really desirable.
- Events include Halloween and Easter Trails and Christmas.

The King's Mile – David Lilford

- As the longest standing Quarter in the city has been experiencing member fatigue due to a number of factors including turnover of business/members, changing visitor habits etc.
- Halloween and Gin Fling are the most successful events.
- WhatsApp group would be helpful.
- Kings Mile quarter is a well-known area which is a positive thing for the quarter.

Whitefriars Update – Mark Stuart

- Overall lots of interest from national retailers.
- Beaverbrooks shopfront planning application being submitted imminently with hope of having 2 ground floor tenants open by August/Sept.
- Offer now received on the old TopShop ground floor from a well known and reputable UK retailer. The unit is being split to accommodate CCC on the 1st and 2nd floors which is also progressing well. Expecting the retailer to be open in the autumn and CCC office occupation in Q1 2024.
- The strip out of the former RBS bank has been completed and fit out work set to begin on CCC's new public facing offices. Expected opening is Autumn 2023.
- There are some vacant units in the Marlowe Arcade which are being actively marketed but short term pop up opportunities are potentially available.
- Packed calendar of events for Whitefriars throughout the summer and look forward to supporting Pride with a bigger, better offer this year.
- Working with Rockhopper to finalise plans for this year's Christmas Market.

Riverside

- Actively marketing just one remaining unit
- Fit outs and openings expected from April to August.

Westgate / St Dunstan's – coming soon! Meeting on 21 March

7. AOB

BID: Bunting will be reinstalled by the BID for the Coronation in May, or earlier if possible. Also looking at a decorative umbrella project for Guildhall Street

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Actions:

- Ongoing, carried over from Strategic Development meeting in October: Property database – to be discussed at next SD subcommittee meeting on 18 April.
- Extended Board meeting on 17 May until 2pm to allow time for a strategy session.
- Circulate CCC survey for Castle to all – LC

Next Board Meeting Dates

2023 Board Meeting Dates (all Wednesdays from 9:30 to noon):

- **17 May:** 9:30 to 2pm
- **20 June** (AGM & consultation conference): 5-8pm (note date change)
- **12 July:** 9:30 to noon
- **20 September:** 9:30 to noon
- **15 November:** 9:30 to noon

Signed:



Date: 17 May 2023

Clare Millett, BID Board Chair