

Ops Report

November - December 2023

Executive Summary

The beginning of November saw the launch of the **Canterbury Christmas Campaign**, organised by Canterbury BID, following months of collaborative planning, to advertise Canterbury's festive appeal and to support businesses with their individual Christmas messaging. See page 9 for the topline impact report (the full report will be available in January).

Christmas officially arrived in the city on Friday 10 November, marking our **biggest and most spectacular Light Parade to date** which included a brand new route, weaving its way through more streets and finishing in the Dane John Gardens to prevent overcrowding. The city's 6 miles of Christmas lights were switched on together with the opening of the Christmas Market. Following swiftly on the heels of the Christmas Light Parade was the launch of the **best-dressed Christmas window competition** which celebrated the passion and creativity of Canterbury's businesses in helping make the city look extra festive. Judging took place the first weekend of December with special drop-in visits made by the Lord Mayor.

Perhaps our most successful trail yet, the **Christmas Hornby Train Trail**, proved a huge hit with both visitors and businesses with significantly increased footfall being reported by the 32 participating businesses. The trail's aim was to encourage visitors to not only explore all areas of the city but also to step through the doors of participating businesses, providing entertainment and extra footfall for traders.

The **Visit Canterbury** website, run by Canterbury BID, is now firmly established as a key channel for promoting Canterbury to a national and international audience and continues to grow from strength to strength, focussing attention and visits to the district and to the city. **MyCanterbury** continues to keep locals focused on the city centre with a record number of head-turning special deals and discounts and the Canterbury Gift Card ensuring Christmas giving is ringfenced for the city.

Networking in November and December was as popular as ever, with fully booked events at Socialite in November and the BID's inaugural Christmas Quiz event hosted at The Ballroom raising £765 for Catching Lives. We also brought evening and night time economy (ENTE) businesses together for a 2024 campaign workshop providing an opportunity to network and create a new campaign to promote Canterbury as the number one destination in Kent for a night out to sit alongside our Purple Flag status and Best Bar None Accreditations.

In November we also hosted the **Safety & Security Roudtable**, a partnership with Kent Police, Canterbury City Council, Whitefriars, District Watch (the city's shop watch scheme) and businesses.

We were delighted to welcome **9 new businesses** to the city centre over November-December, and, finally, look out for the launch of our **new year Training Programme** (details on the BID website).

New Businesses:

- Matches Sports Bar - Butchery Lane
- Plan Burrito - St Margarets Street
- Canterbury Fine Art - Sun Street
- The Long Rest - Butchery Lane
- BB Nails & Spa - Palace Street
- Calendar Club Pop Up - Marlowe Arcade
- Canterbury Bakery - Marlowe Arcade
- Eldertree Soapery Pop Up - Marlowe Arcade
- Lovisa - St Georges Street

Lisa Carlson, Canterbury BID



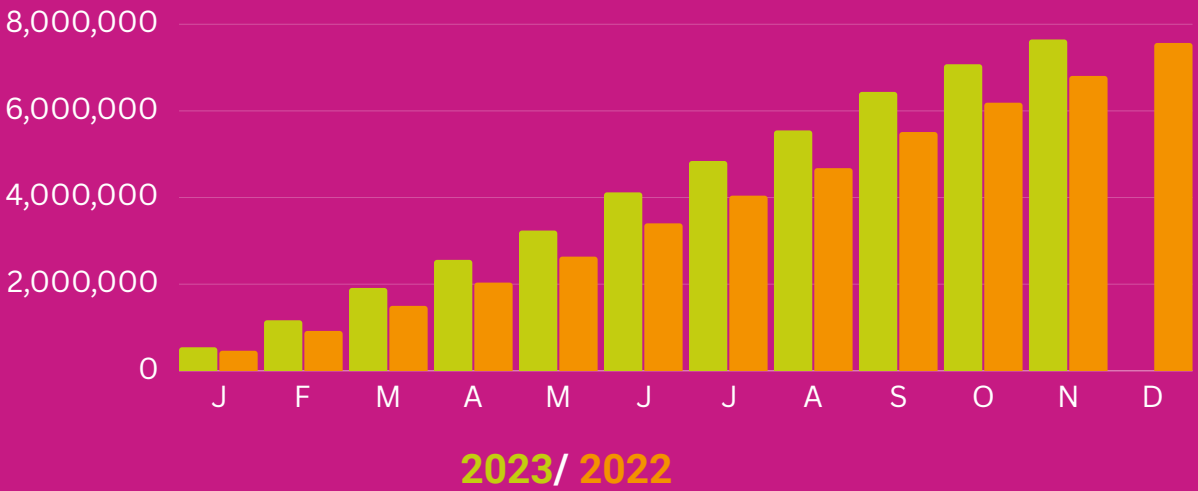
City Centre Performance: November 2023

Footfall

2023 VS. 2022 2023 VS. 2019

Canterbury	-7.5%	-23.6%
South East	-2.3%	-12.1%
Historic City	-0.2%	-10.1%
UK	-0.8%	-12.9%

Total number of visitors for the year to date
7,648,641 which is **12.4%** up on 2022



Total number of visitors this month was **571,523**.
The busiest day was **Friday 24 November** with **30,441 visitors** and the peak hour was **13:00** on **Saturday 18 November** with footfall of **3,240**.

Sales



Canterbury Canterbury UK
2023 vs. 2022 2023 vs. 2019 2023 vs. 2022

Retail sales were up 5.0% and food and drink up 8.4% against 2022. When compared to 2019 (the last normal trading year pre Covid) retail sales were down -5.0% and food and drink sales up 23.0%.

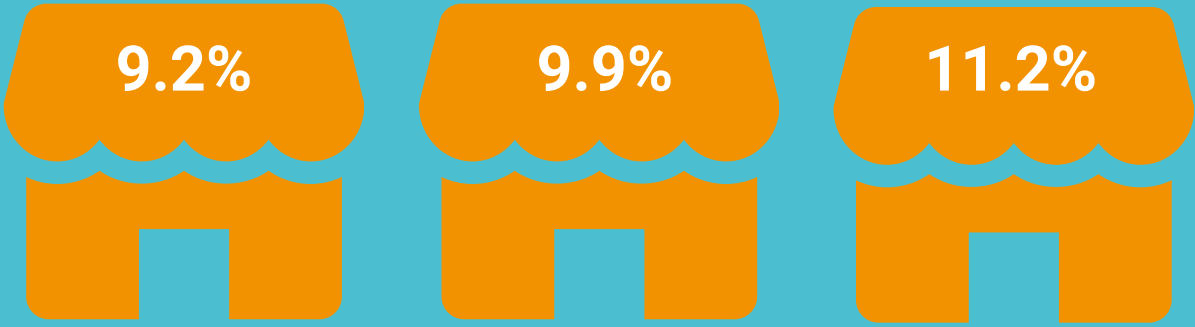
Nationally, total like-for-like (LFL) sales were negative in November, pulled down by poor fashion sales. Following a negative October, this month's negative result will cast further gloom over the important festive retail period and will put additional pressure on retailers, particularly in the fashion sector.

Occupancy



4 openings 5 closures
YTD: 33 YTD: 26
2022 total: 41 2022 total: 33

This months vacancy rate is 9.2%, the same as October and 0.6% lower than the 12 month average.



Canterbury South East UK

(%) ground floor units

City Centre Performance: December 2023

Footfall

2023 VS. 2022 2023 VS. 2019

Canterbury	7.3%	-21.1%
South East	0.0%	-11.7%
Historic City	2.1%	-7.9%
UK	2.1%	-10.9%

Total number of visitors for the year to date
8,465,189 which is **11.9% up** on the 2022



Total number of visitors this month was **816,548**.
The busiest day was **Saturday 16 December** with
40,724 visitors and the peak hour was **14:00** on
Saturday 16 December with footfall of **3,656**.

Sales



Canterbury Canterbury UK
2023 vs. 2022 2023 vs. 2019 2023 vs. 2022

Retail sales were down by -0.5%, for the first time this year, but food and drink was up 5.3% against 2022. When compared to 2019 (the last normal trading year pre Covid) retail sales were down -9.8% and food and drink sales up 21.3%.

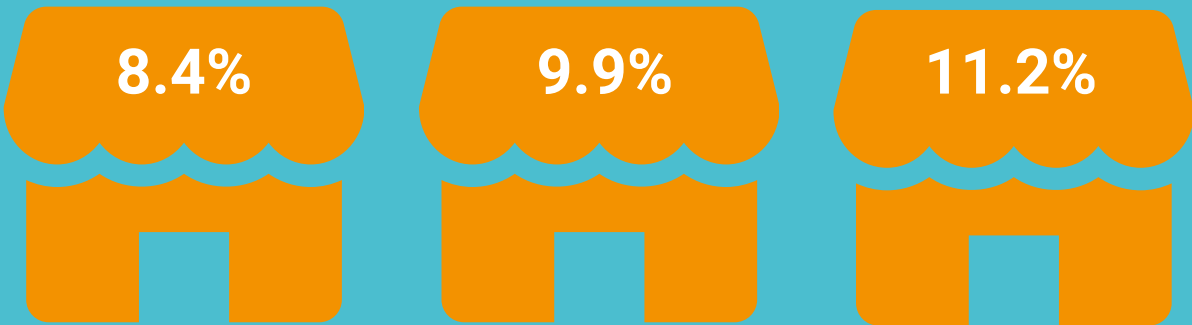
Nationally, negative weekly total like-for-like sales for most of December resulted in the third negative month in a row resulting in a negative 'Golden Quarter'. It's also the first negative December since 2020 and the lowest December figure since 2017.

Occupancy



5 openings 1 closures
YTD: 39 YTD: 27
2022 total: 41 2022 total: 33

This months vacancy rate is 8.4%, 0.8% lower than November and 1.3% lower than the 12 month average.



Canterbury South East UK

(%) ground floor units

Marketing Canterbury Stats for Nov-Dec 2023



14,526 impressions
1,133 followers



7,483 reach
203 followers



19,484 impressions
2,063 followers



16 eNewsletters,
opened **1,857** times
by **813** subscribers



20,259 visitors resulting in
34,328 page views of
BID/MyCanterbury website



BID/MyCanterbury
Total Impressions:
319,390
(+49.97% up from Sept/Oct)



99,745 reach
6,308 followers



109,214 impressions
3,439 followers.



11 eNewsletters,
opened **32,464** times
by **8,154** subscribers



341 new cards posted out
24 offers



Visit Canterbury
Total Impressions:
484,463
(+11.4% up from Sept/Oct)



59,951 reach
10,027 followers



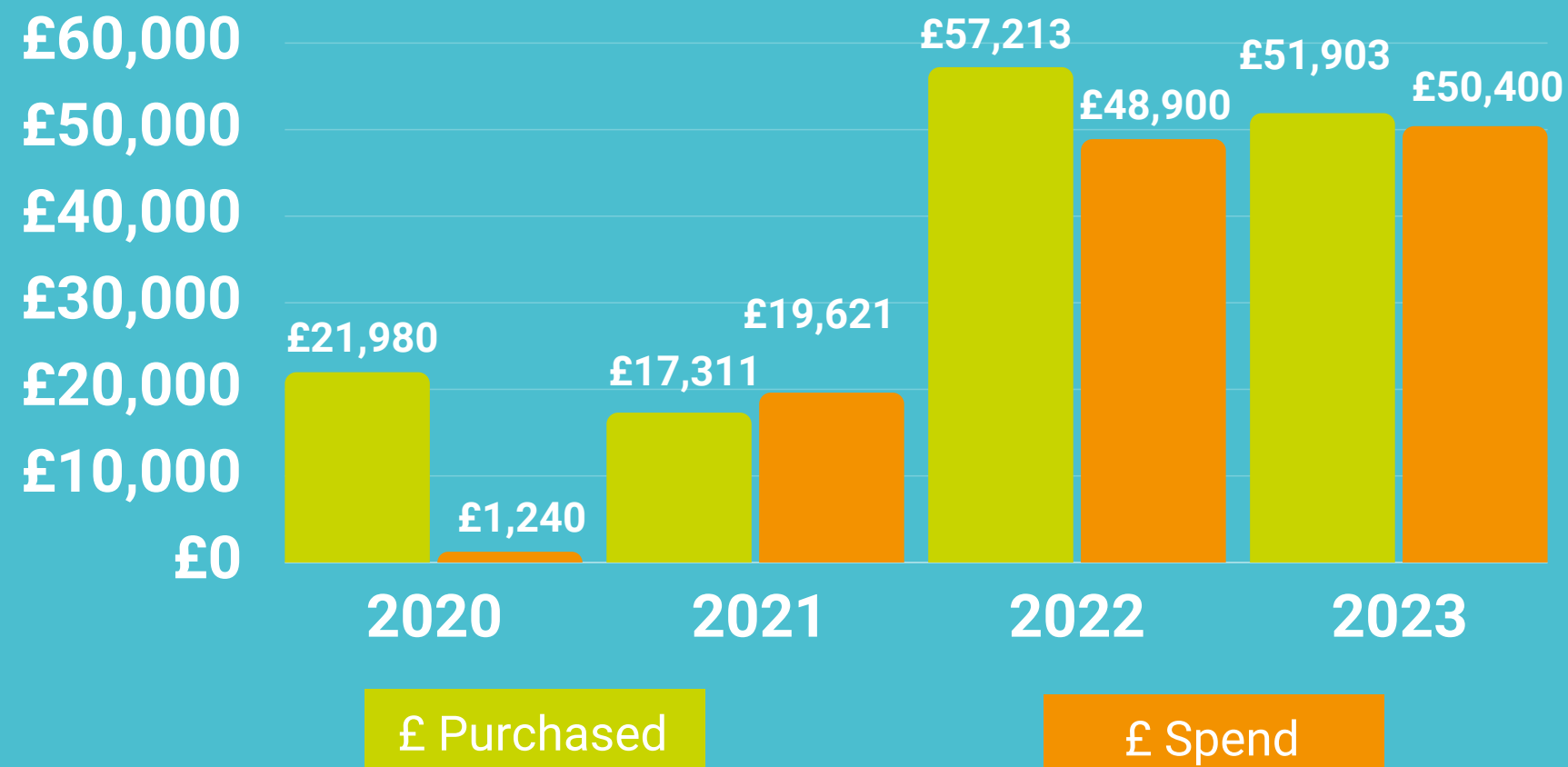
221,766 impressions
18,894 followers



91,444 visitors resulting in
192,141 page views



3 x Monthly eNewsletters
10,605 Subscribers



Since the launch in November 2020:
2,248 cards have been sold totalling **£148,047**
 redemption rate of **81%**
 average card value **£66.02**
 average purchase on card **£18.33**

Canterbury Gift Card



CANTERBURY GIFT CARDS - NEW POINT OF SALE STANDS

To make it clear which businesses accept the Canterbury Gift Card, we created a brand-new stand-up point-of-sale A6 size display card with information for customers on the front and help for cashiers processing the card on reverse. This was delivered by hand to all businesses involved.



Christmas Corporate Giving Campaign 2023

We launched a campaign to encourage businesses use the Canterbury Gift Card as their form of corporate giving, emphasising that every purchase made is a commitment to protecting and helping our city centre and community thrive.



Christmas Light Switch On and Parade



Friday 10 November 2023

This year's Christmas Light Parade was another spectacular event, drawing in thousands of visitors and lighting up the city. The route was extended to include more businesses and spread the footfall, and the countdown was moved to the Dane John Gardens to allow for bigger crowds in a safe space.



Parade Details - 250+ participants

- Led by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress
- 20+ Drumming Band
- 6 x Giant Aladdin characters
- 200+ families in light-up costumes
- Festive 5 piece Marching Brass Band
- 15 Christmas Characters



Extended Parade Route:

Westgate Towers 6pm | St Peter's Street | Guildhall St | Sun St | Buttermarket | Burgate | Longmarket | Rose Sq | Watling St | Dane John Gardens (via main entrance by Boots)

Christmas Window Competition



BEST DRESSED CHRISTMAS WINDOW COMPETITION

With thousands of visitors, press, social media influencers and bloggers regularly visiting the city, the BID's Christmas window competition aims to maximise awareness of businesses and drive footfall and spend.



After much deliberation the judges chose **Franciscan Gardens**, **Rock Paper Scissors** and **Violet Elizabeth** as their favourites, for creating shop windows that combined fun, festive storytelling with unique creative flair. Photos of all the fabulous windows are available on Flickr. .



Christmas Campaign

Christmas Hornby Train Trail



The 2023 Christmas Committee has representatives from Canterbury BID (lead), Whitefriars, Hornby, Fenwick, Canterbury Cathedral, The Marlowe Theatre, Rockhopper (Christmas Market), Southeastern, The Beane House of Art & Knowledge and Visit Canterbury, with each contributing towards the £30k campaign budget. The campaign was focused on the following activities:

- 18,000 Winter Guides (sponsored by Girlings) distributed across the District
- Dedicated Christmas homepage on Visit Canterbury
- Dedicated Christmas blog on MyCanterbury
- Heart FM Radio Campaign
- Smooth FM Radio Campaign
- DAX Digital Campaign (Alexa, podcasts, digital radio channels)
- 6 week Social Campaign for MyCanterbury (Facebook and Insta)
- 6 week Social Campaign on Visit Canterbury (Facebook, Insta and TikTok)
- 56 Poster sites at Southeastern Train Stations
- Poster sites at Canterbury Park & Ride
- Stagecoach Bus Posters (side and rears)
- Christmas Window Competition
- International Influencer Visit
- Banner advertising on Kentish Gazette cover page
- Hornby Christmas Train Trail with flyers, tickets and window stickers
- Kentish Gazette and Muddy Stiletto Adverts
- BID Business Campaign Tool Kit (themed hashtags, copyright-free images, social post ideas and Christmas design elements).
- Visit Canterbury competition



HORNBY TRAIN TRAIL

Running from 18 November - 22 December, this year's Christmas activity campaign featured 40 Hornby train sets placed across the city in businesses' windows for visitors to discover via a trail gathering stamps along the way and collecting a prize at the end. **1,300+** tickets were exchanged at Fenwick for sweets and **500+** entries were received for the big prize give away via Hornby. The BID's Christmas website page was viewed **8.5k** times.

"Thank you so much, we've loved meeting lots of new (young and older) train enthusiasts. Your theme has worked brilliantly at pulling local businesses together and encouraging visitors to come and look at the delights that Canterbury has to offer."

The Children's Trust

MYCANTERBURY CHRISTMAS GUIDE

18,000 Winter Guides printed, distributed door-to-door around the district to hotels, B&Bs, attractions, travel hubs and businesses.



Canterbury's Christmas campaign reach in Numbers



Social Media

Visit Canterbury: **281,717**
MyCanterbury/BID: **250,452**
eNewsletters: **44,926**



Heart FM
1,812,000
Smooth FM
863,000

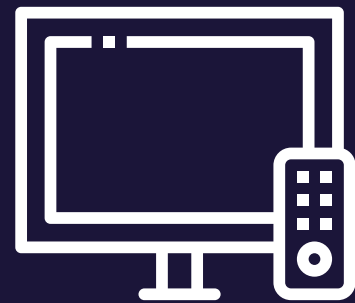


Website Page Visits

MyCanterbury / BID: **34,328**
Visit Canterbury: **192,141**



Christmas Guide
& Trail Map
24,000
Digital Guide
1,727



DAX

Digital
advertising
241,741



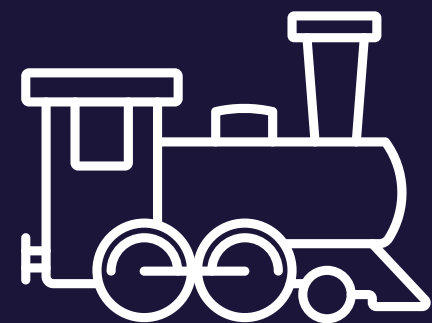
Buses

Stagecoach and
Park & Ride
Super Side
Bus Rear
4,996,662



Visit Kent

Influencer Visit
29,000
Digital Comp.
28,845



Hornby Trail

1,300 prizes collected
equating to **6,500**
trail visits



Advertising

Kentish Gazette - **87,627**
'Cene - **7,573**
Marlowe Theatre - **5,000**
Muddy Stilettos: **21,000**



Footfall

Increased by **+7.3%**
compared to 2022

Total Reach: **22,008,441**

+117% increase on 2022

Cost of campaign per impression: **£0.001**



We were delighted to see two local **businesses bulk ordering** Local Offers Cards for their staff at the end of 2023. Thank you to Burgess Hodgson and Demlyn Group for supporting the scheme - we hope your teams enjoy using them.

The Local Offers **card design** was updated and now features a QR code linking directly to the offers page so users can see all current deals at a glance.

In December we had our first **collaborative Instagram post** with Plan Burrito, to promote their Local Offer and will roll this option out to other Local Offers partners.

The **eNewsletter themes** supported the Christmas campaign and echoed some of the content from the Christmas Guide. This included the Light Parade, Hornby Trail, festive entertainment, food and drink, gift shopping, Canterbury Gift Card and CCAP / sustainability. Three dedicated e-newsletters were sent, two in November and one in December, for BoConcept and CCCU.

MyCanterbury Deals & Discounts launched in Nov/Dec



- Citi Terrace
 - Taco Bell
 - André Rose
- The Refillery
 - Castle House Hotel
 - No.10 Bar
 - Paxton & Whitfield
- The Chinashop
 - Plan Burrito
 - Pilgrims Hotel

341



MyCanterbury Local Offers
Cards ordered and issued



For the Christmas period, Visit Canterbury switched its online profile to heavily promote Christmas, as well as sharing information on the coast and countryside.

Visit Canterbury Website

- Homepage takeover promoting Christmas in Canterbury including
 - Feature links for all campaign partners.
 - Links to all Christmas content.
 - Dedicated festive events banner.
- 1 x dedicated blog featuring details of Christmas in Canterbury.
- 2 x blogs promoting festive food and drink, sustainable Christmas and an interview with panto dame Ben Roddy.
- What's On events search page updated to feature Christmas content.
- Competition to win an overnight stay at the ABode Canterbury, pushed out during the festive season with nods to Christmas campaign and partners.

Website saw significant traffic with **91,444** visitors including **44,995** organic searches.

- Christmas Homepage views: **61,480**. Visitors spiked on 22nd December.
- A competition ran from November and December for an overnight stay in Canterbury and received **5,611** views.

Visit Canterbury Social Media

29 posts/reels were circulated across Instagram and Facebook, including 16 dedicated content for the campaign and its partners. A visit from French influencer Mathilde helped with additional views of Canterbury platforms.

Visit Canterbury e-newsletter

This continues to go from strength to strength with 3 newsletters sent out over this period received by 10,605 people, promoting Christmas content.

New ENTE Marketing for 2024



MARKETING WORKSHOP for evening and night time economy businesses

“Canterbury - THE best place to go for a night out in Kent”

To secure our place as the number one destination in Kent for a night out, we hosted a workshop to help create a new Evening and Night Time Economy marketing campaign to sit alongside our Purple Flag status and Best Bar None Accreditations.

22 people attended the session held at Café du Soleil, representing 16 businesses (workshop questions circulated afterwards to all who didn’t attend)



Club Chemistry
Tokyo Tearooms
The Pound
The Old Buttermarket
The Ballroom
The Cuban

The Foundry
Abode
The Drapers Arms
Bell And Crown
Carpenters Arms

Republic Events
Alberrys Wine Bar
Café du Soleil
Café des Amis
Matches Sports Bar and Grill



Networking



November Networking – Socialite Rooftop Bar & Restaurant

By far our most popular networking event saw places fully booked in just a few hours of launching. We were able to extend the guest list to 60 for the session to accomodate as many people as possible. 55 people attended represntig 31 businesses.



December Christmas BID Networking – The Ballroom

Our annual Christmas event was held at the live music venue and bar The Ballroom where guests were treated to a special Christmas in Canterbury themed quiz in aid of local homeless charity Catching Lives. 54 people attended, representing 35 businesses, raising £750+ for Catching Lives.

New Year 2024 BID Networking:



January Breakfast Networking | MetroBank & Clarendon Fine Art
Tuesday 16 January 2024, 8:30-10am



February Lunchtime Networking | The Marlowe
Thursday 15 February 2024, 12.30-2pm



March Evening Networking | Citi Terrace
Wednesday 20 March 2024, 5:30-7pm



April Breakfast Networking & Litter Pick | The Umbrella Centre
Tuesday 23 April 2024, 8.30-10am



Having Your Say

Canterbury BID is committed to ensuring the business community has their say in policy changes that affect infrastructure, trade, environment and safety by actively promoting and engaging with public consultations related to these matters. Responses are posted on the BID website:

canterburybid.co.uk/representation

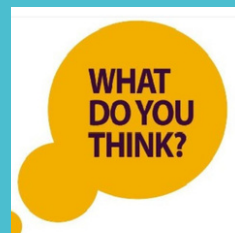
National consultations we helped promote:



CULTURE CALLING: NIGHT TIME ECONOMY & HOSPITALITY & CULTURE

We helped promote a major lobbying campaign on the run-up to the Autumn budget asking for the Government to cut VAT to 12.5% for Night Time Economy, Hospitality and Culture businesses to allow them the financial headroom to survive in the current climate.

Local consultations we helped promote:



- Proposed Closure of Pound Lane to Vehicles
- Proposed Changes to Charges and Conditions in Council Car Parks
- Canterbury City Market and Market Trader fees
- General Fund Budget Consultation 2024/25
- International Rail Survey: Services to Europe

Safety & Security



LICENSING DROP-IN SESSION

Following recent changes to police licensing in Canterbury, we helped promote a drop-in session at the Fruit Works for licensed premises owners to meet the new Police Licensing Officers

SAFETY & SECURITY ROUNDTABLE

We host regular roundtables with businesses, Kent Police, Canterbury District Watch and Canterbury City Council to help address challenges with retail crime and anti-social behaviour. The next Roundtable is on Thursday 11 January where we will be joined by the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner and will discuss Project Pegasus and the National Retail Crime Action Plan.



Business Cost Saving Programme

The Place Support Partnership continued to meet with businesses to help identify cost savings, with £130,184 in savings identified to date. They will be retuning monthly, visiting businesses directly to discuss how savings can be found.



£130,184

Identified in savings for
Canterbury businesses so far



Sustainability

We are activey involved and support the following Climate Change and Biodiversity groups: Canterbury Climate Action Partnership (CCAP) | Plastic Free Canterbury | Canterbury in Bloom | The Biodiversity Network

November - December 2023 Activities



CIGARETTE BUTTS ARE RUBBISH

A new Keep Britain Tidy campaign called 'Cigarette butts are rubbish' has just launched, with graphics, posters and assets to help businesses get the message across and help reduce littered cigarette butts.



BIODIVERSITY NETWORK SURVEY

Canterbury District Biodiversity Network called for feedback on their monthly updates about biodiversity-related issues and events in the district. They also published their Plan Bee Report.



JOIN THE RECYCLE ME CAMPAIGN

Plastic Free Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable have launched a joint Facebook B2C campaign to increase the range of recyclable products and what is sent to landfill, and to decrease recycling 'contamination'.



NEW ECO COACHING PROGRAM

The Kent Community Foundation launched a program for charitable organisations to develop skills and confidence and ways of working which improve environmental impact.



TRAVEL CARBON CALCULTAOR

Southeastern launched a clever Carbon Calculator where you simply enter your start and destination stations, and they'll show you the environmental impact of your journey for both train and car travel.



NEW GREEN GUIDE TO KENT

Southeastern joined forces with LNER, HSI and Visit Kent to create The Green Guide 2024 covering some of the best eco-friendly attractions, destinations and sustainable places to stay, eat and drink across Kent i

Climate Action Awards 2023



Canterbury Climate Action Partnership FESTIVAL AND AWARDS 2023

Winners of the second annual Climate Action Awards were announced at the Climate Action Festival on 9 December. A full list of winners is availbale on the CCAP website: ccap.org.uk



BUSINESS WINNER:

The Refillery

HIGHLY COMMENDED:

LUSH Canterbury, The Foundry Brew Pub, Pilgrims Hospices Store50

Ambassadors



Over Nov and Dec the BID Ambassadors ensured daily Christmas light checks took place in the morning and again at 4pm to check for any outages or issues.

Simon is Best Bar None accredited assessor and he conducted a successful renewal assessment for The Shakespeare Pub and Wine Bar in December.



The BID Ambassadors visited Maidstone BID to observe and understand their practices when supporting businesses and dealing with city centre issues



Business Visits 91



Reports Logged 19



Meetings Attended 15

The business visits are a friendly chat, delivery of guides, shopping maps, promotional materials, support with the Gift Card and anything else a business may require.



November - December Timeline 2023



- **02 Nov** - Christmas Toolkit and Campaign Launched
- **08 Nov** - The BID Foundation Leadership Conference: Safe & Social Spaces
- **10 Nov** - Christmas Light Switch On and Light Parade
- **15 Nov** - BID Board Ballot Prep Workshop 1
- **15 Nov** - November BID Networking at Socialite Rooftop Bar & Restaurant
- **18 Nov** - Hornby Christmas Train Trail Launched across the city
- **23 Nov** - Ambassador Visit to Maidstone BID
- **27 Nov** - ENTE Marketing Campaign for 2024 workshop hosted at Café du Soleil
- **02 Dec** - Christmas Window Competition Judging with the Lord Mayor
- **06 Dec** - BID Board Ballot Prep Workshop 2
- **07 Dec** - ATCM High Street Conversations - Project Pegasus and the New Retail Crime Action Plan
- **09 Dec** - CCAP Climate Action Festival & Awards at St Peter's Methodist Hall
- **12 Dec** - Christmas BID Networking at The Ballroom in aid of Catching Lives

*For more information about the work of
Canterbury BID, including annual reports, city
performance data, campaigns toolkits, training
and networking events, see the BID website:*

canterburybid.co.uk
