

Attendees

Directors:

Andrew Dodd – Canterbury Cathedral
Blake McCaskill – Republic Events
Clare Millett (Chair) – The Westgate Hall, Chair
Dan Grimwood – The Refectory Kitchen
David Lilford – Lilford Gallery
Jon Mills – The Foundry
Karl Elliott – Clague Architects (left at 10:15)
Lee May – Brachers
Marco Keir – Canterbury Christ Church University
Mark Stuart – Whitefriars
Paul Turner (Vice Chair) – The Marlowe

Rachel Sanders – BoConcept
Simone Davies – University of Kent

Guest: **Dr Julie Grail** – The BIDs Business

Observer: Hiliary Brian – The Canterbury Society

BID Team:

Lisa Carlson (LC) – CEO
Rachel Pilard (RP) – Marketing & Comms
Lucy Martin (LM) & Julia Wierucka (JW) – Ops Managers

1. Welcome and Apologies

Welcome: Dr Julie Grail (to run the business plan workshop) and Simone Davies (replacing Philip Pothen from the University of Kent).

Apologies: **Bill Hicks** – CCC, **Claire Bogan** – Fenwick, **David Lewis** – Café du Soleil / des Amis

Thank you and best wishes expressed for Sarah Wren for her contribution to the BID Board and more widely in Canterbury. She is stepping down from the Board following the closure of Oscar & Bentleys in January.

2. Declarations of Interest

- None at this meeting

3. Minutes of previous meeting (15.11.23) and Matters Arising

The Board minutes from 15 November 2023 were approved and signed off.

Matters arising

- BID – Councillor meeting scheduled for 16 February, 9-11am
- Parking and Market consultation replies submitted and available on the BID website.
- The Canterbury Tales of England feasibility brief is live on the Kent Business Portal. The deadline for the return of tenders is 19 February and completion is expected by June 2024.
- The Year 4 accounts are in progress and will be brought to the March board.
- PT requested an update from CCC on the different funding streams currently available, what might become available and the timeline, eg UKSP and SELEP funding.
- Invite Locate in Kent to the next Board meeting following the funding they have received to produce an Inward Investment Toolkit.
- The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the feedback from the Parking consultation on Thursday 25 Jan at 7pm, including the permanent closure of Pound Lane. Discuss

- BID presence at the meeting.
- Two additional Council consultations are now live
 - The Corporate Plan, which is its medium-term vision for the future, used to make decisions and prioritise limited resources.
 - The Levelling Up Landscape Concept Designs (by HTA Designs) - concept designs for each Levelling Up site have been produced. Email your comments on the concept designs to connectedcanterbury@canterbury.gov.uk by 8am on Monday 29 January.

4. Ops Report Nov-December 2023

The November-December 2023 Ops Report was tabled. The Ops Reports include BID impact reports and city-wide performance data, plus highlights of recent activity, and are designed to be shared with staff, other businesses, and with your networks.

Highlights

- **Christmas**
 - **Lights Parade with** 6 giant Aladin Characters created by Canterbury College, 2 live bands (drumming and brass), 200+ local school children with their families and 15 Christmas Characters. The route was extended to include The King’s Mile, Buttermarket and Cathedral Quarter, and finished at the Dane John with live music, speeches from Marlowe Panto stars and a snow machine.
 - **Christmas Campaign Report** – with a total **reach** of over 22 million, a **117% increase** on 2022, in part due to fewer train strikes, but also Visit Canterbury and new digital channels. The **Hornby Train Trail** also had a significant impact across the city with 1,300 prizes collected, equating to **6,500 trail visits**.
 - **Christmas Window Competition** saw 40+ entries, and the winners were selected as Franciscan Gardens, Rock Paper Scissors and Violet Elizabeth.
- **City Performance**
 - **Openings / closures.** There were 9 openings and 6 closures. In total, there were 39 openings and 27 closures in 2023 compared to 41 openings and 33 closures in 2022.
 - We **welcomed** 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, and two Christmas pop-ups in the Marlowe Arcade - Calendar Club and Eldertree Soapery, Canterbury Bakery - Marlowe Arcade, and Lovisa - St Georges Street
 - **Vacancy fell to 8.4%**, the lowest since January 2020.
 - **Footfall:** Total number of visitors for 2023 was 8,465,189 which is 11.9% up on the 2022
- **Marketing and Gift Card**
 - The BID’s **local marketing channel, MyCanterbury**, performed well in Nov-Dec with 10 new offers introduced on the MyCanterbury Offers Card. Impressions on social media **increased 50%** from Sept-Oct. Blogs / social media content supporting the Christmas campaign, the Lights Parade, the Hornby Trail, the Christmas Window Competition, sustainable Christmas featuring “make your own” ideas and workshops from retailers plus enticing details on festive entertainment, food and drink and gift shopping.
 - **Visit Canterbury** is the tourism channel for the Canterbury district, run by Canterbury BID. Reach was up 11% from Sept-Oct. The 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.
- **Canterbury Gift Card** sales reached £148,047 with a redemption rate of 81% and the average card value at £66.02. New Point of Sale kits were introduced and Corporate Giving grew significantly.
- **Workshops / Networking / Training**
 - **Evening and Night Time Economy** businesses participated in workshops to develop a new campaign that will launch in February 2024 to promote Canterbury as THE best place to go for a night out in Kent.
 - **Networking** remains popular with our focus on showcasing businesses around the city. November was at Socialite with 55 people representing 31 businesses. December was a special charity quiz event held at The Ballroom with quizmaster Steve Lilly, all in support of Catching Lives, with 54 people, representing 35 businesses, raising £750+ for Catching Lives.
 - We host regular **Safety and Security roundtables** with businesses, Kent Police, Canterbury District Watch and Canterbury City Council to help address challenges with retail crime and anti-social behaviour. The latest one took place on 11 January where we welcomed Kent Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott and Canterbury City Councilor Connie Nolan.
 - The BID's annual **training programme** was launched, with funding from the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund via Canterbury City Council: canterburybid.co.uk/business/training/

5. Workshop on BID Business Plan for Term 3

Dr Julie Grail from The BIDs Business, joined the meeting to lead the third workshop on preparing for ballot and the next BID term. The focus was on Developing the Business Plan Step 2: Mission, key priority areas and levy.

This followed the workshop in December where the Board focused setting priorities, including a briefing from the team on the analysis from the 2022 & 2023 surveys and a budget analysis. We split into four groups and looked at the investment potential of BID activity based on the survey feedback, and workshop / anecdotal feedback. A summary of the survey priorities, workshop feedback, and next steps was provided in the BID Board Workshop 2 Priorities and Challenges Matrix.

The key questions we will ask ourselves as we develop the next business plan:

- Who is best placed to resolve the top challenges raised by businesses in the consultation?
- How can the BID help?

Our challenge is to invest £500,000+ annually on behalf of 650 businesses with an executive team of 8 (FTE 6.2) and a voluntary board of 17, all of whom own or manage businesses and organisations in the city.

Principles

- The BID levy is a pot of money that businesses can invest directly in improving the trading environment, no matter what the trading environment looks like (and it certainly remains challenging), unlike business rates over which businesses have no control.
- A BID can't do everything – we have to understand our role and responsibilities versus others.

Key factors in setting the levy:

- Given the challenging Local Authority budget situation, we know that the activity that the BID delivers would not be delivered by anyone else.
- To continue delivering at the scale and value we have been, we will need £500,000+. Given levy collection rate between 90-95%, we need to bill at least £550k. Overall in the city, business rates re-evaluation means that 48% of businesses will still pay less BID levy, and the vast majority of those that pay more in BID levy will pay much less in business rates.
- The board and team will consider additional scenarios at a follow up meeting in late Jan/early Feb.

Overall satisfaction with the BID:

- Satisfaction: 88% are satisfied with the BID overall.
- Value for Money: 91% agree that the BID provides value for money.
- Impact if the BID did not exist: 84.4% feel there would be a negative impact on the city centre

Feedback on BID activity:

I think BID brings all **different communities** together.

Outstanding work.

Thank you for all your **support** to businesses in Canterbury.

The BID makes **such a difference** to the city.

The BID is **essential** for the city.

Amazing job.

Very **proud** to be a member of BID. Very, very proud of our **beautiful city**.

Approachable and **helpful**.

Very **proud** to be a member of BID. Very, very proud of our **beautiful city**.

Importance of activities – identified in the 2022 and 2023 surveys (overlap in bold)

2023 Survey	2022 Survey
Business insights	Inward investment (attracting new businesses)
Support & help	Events
Ambassador service	City decorations (lights, flowers, vinyls , bunting)
Safety & security	Safety & security
Cleaning	Improving the visitor economy
Maps	Maps for wayfinding
Visit Canterbury	MyCanterbury (guides, maps , offers, social, gift card)
Christmas lights	Networking
Events	PR and media appearances
	Promotional campaigns for locals & tourists
	Representation, lobbying and consultation
	Ambassadors / Support reporting issues
	Cleaning

Overlap in bold

New suggestions / ideas for Canterbury

2023 Survey	Discounted / free parking	2022 Survey	Support for quarters and small businesses
	Attract new / high end / diverse businesses		Inward investment
	Public realm improvements		Tourism and leisure support
	More events		Cleaning
	National & international promotional campaigns		Improve city centre wifi and phone signal
	Security / wardens / more Police presence		More ambassador support
	Promote the retail offer		Business awards
	Safer streets		Make Canterbury is a good place to live & work
	Wayfinding and signage		Lobbying / representation, esp KCC/Highways
			Marketing / promotion

Key challenges for the city identified in the survey

- Anti-social behaviour
- Recruitment / retention
- Parking charges
- Inflation / cost of living
- Decline in customer numbers (capture rate)
- City marketing and profile
- Investment in public realm
- Inward investment
- Pandemic recovery (business support)
- Climate change

Discussion

- Chamber peer-to-peer funded support and informal peer-to-peer “mentoring circles” – linked to pandemic recover listed as an ongoing challenge
- Wayfinding
- Parking
- St George’s Street concerns – when will it be cleaned? Will there be a review of the seating / planters? When is the lighting due to take place. The board would still like to hold a debrief with the Council, which was due to take place at the December board meeting.
- Safety & Security Roundtable – really powerful case study of BID impact and joint working with Whitefriars, CCC and Kent Polie.
- Mark Stuart briefed the Board on the Whitefriars security team and their conflict resolution approach to support customer service and loss prevention. The focus is on visibility and awareness.

Summary of Decisions and Actions

Decisions

- To continue delivering at the scale and value we have been, the board agreed that the BID needs to bill at least £550,000 in levy in the next BID term.
- The board approved the next step in the ballot process which is for the BID to write to the Secretary of State with the Notice of Intention to hold a ballot in June 2024.

Actions

- St George's Street debrief – reschedule with the Council – LC
- Review options to raise £550k in levy with a threshold of £5,000 – LC with MR/WH/CM/PT (scheduled for 5 Feb, all Board directors invited).
- Write to the SoS with the Notice of Intention by 25 Jan 2024.
- Prepare Year 4 Accounts for the March 2024 Board.
- Attend the 25 Jan LUF / HTA Landscape Concept Designs consultation session – LC, CM, RP
- Prepare BID response to the Landscape Concept Designs – LC
- Discuss representation at the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 Jan at 7pm re Parking and Pound Lane closure – LC / CM
- Prepare BID response to the Corporate Plan Consultation for discussion at the March / May board meetings – LC

Next Board Meeting Dates

2023-24 Board Dates (9am for 9:30, until noon)

- 20 March (moved forward to 13 March)
- 15 May
- 17 July

Networking Dates

- 22 February, lunchtime at The Marlowe
- 19 March, 5:30-7pm, Citi Terrace
- 23 April, 8.30-10.30, Umbrella Centre (Breakfast + Litterpick)

Ballot: 6 June to 11 July 2024

Event calendar: canterburybid.co.uk/events/month/

Signed:



Date: 13 March 2024

Clare Millett, BID Board Chair