

# CHELTENHAM BID

Local businesses  
improving  
our town



Cheltenham Business Improvement District  
**Annual Review 2017–2018**

# Introduction

**CHELTENHAM**  
**BID** Local businesses  
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## Kevan Blackadder



What has the  
BID done for me?  
It's a question that  
businesses still ask  
me and our staff as we  
go about our day-to-day duties.

We usually have a positive answer for them, but when it comes to looking back on a BID year, the question is bigger. What has the BID really done for all its levy payers?

So, it was with some trepidation that I turned to the 'What's Next' section of last year's Annual Review. Had we really done what we'd said we would?

The overwhelming answer is **Yes**. Of the 11 Town Centre Events we wanted to stage, 10 happened and the other is on its way. Our key aims in the other project area you said was most important to you – Marketing and Promoting – were also achieved.

What about the other project areas? Business Support: Tidy Up Cheltenham campaign, social media training and helping you recruit staff? **Tick**. Public Realm Improvements: lobbying for High Street repairs and new benches and weed removal? **Tick**. Parking and Accessibility: reduced parking costs at key times and better online information? **Tick**.

But there are also some No's. Where is the increased CCTV coverage? Where is the free public Wi-Fi? Where are the Wayfinding schemes? CCTV improvements are coming. We're waiting to tie in with work the borough council is still completing. We are making progress on Wi-Fi. Finding the best way to improve Wayfinding is not as easy as we expected.

It's important with everything we do that it's the right solution rather than a quick solution.

So please continue to work with us. We're definitely getting there – but there is a lot more to do and we are pressing ahead.

**Kevan Blackadder**  
**BID Director, Cheltenham BID**



**“The BID is working on projects  
that will help you directly.”**



"What a triumph. The lights are really beautiful and there was a wonderful atmosphere in the town for the switch-on. Everyone loved them."  
Margaret Cavanagh,  
of Neal's Yard Remedies,  
on the new Christmas  
Lights display

## Town Centre Events

**Our focus this year was on bringing new events to the town and improving popular events that had happened before.**

One new event was **Light Up Cheltenham**, which aimed to encourage people to come to town in February, which is traditionally a quiet time of year. Fourteen buildings were lit up, many spectacularly. The launch of the event also proved an enormous success with illuminated drummers Spark! leading an excited crowd from The Brewery Quarter to Imperial Square.

Another new event, **Cheltenham Beauty Week**, was all about encouraging beauty businesses of all kinds to work together and more than 30 businesses engaged with 50 events across eight days.

We promised to improve the **Christmas Lights** last winter and we had a great response to new displays in areas including Boots Corner, The Promenade and

Montpellier. The switch-on event also had a different look, with events taking place in four different places.

The BID moved its work with Cheltenham Festivals on to a new level by becoming the main sponsor of its **Around Town** programme. This meant dozens more events were held across the BID zone during the Jazz, Science and Music festivals. We're going further at the Literature Festival, where a Monster Trail and Lit Trail will take people to a huge range of BID businesses.

Events the BID launched in 2017 were also brought back bigger and better. The **Independents Sale** delighted businesses and customers alike at its new venue at Cheltenham Ladies' College and the **Chilli Fiesta** and **Cocktail Week** were popular once again.



Hunting down a bargain at the Independents Sale



Cheltenham Beauty Week launch with former Miss Cheltenham, Amy Brown



Enjoying a tippale at a Cocktail Week event at Lily Gins

# Parking and Accessibility

Cheltenham is going through a time of change with the trial closure of Boots Corner just one major talking point.

The BID has represented a range of business views and will continue to ensure that local councils understand the challenges facing many businesses in the town centre.

Getting to and around Cheltenham is a major issue for visitors and locals alike. We worked with Sustrans to create new web pages, pulling vital information into one place, which are now live on [www.visitcheltenham.com](http://www.visitcheltenham.com).

We also worked closely with Stagecoach to promote new discounts available at the two park-and-ride sites they now run at Cheltenham Racecourse and Arle Court.

Our bus travel scheme with Stagecoach continues to be well used with 58 businesses now signed up for the cut-price tickets.



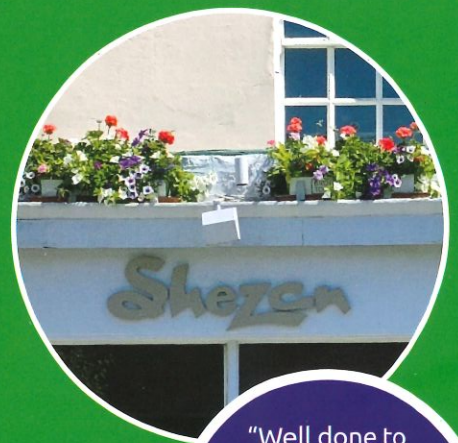
"The BID's scheme with Stagecoach is great as it saves me £20 a month – and I can use the ticket on weekends too."

Kim Sowerby,  
Stock Administrator,  
Martin & Co



After

Before



"Well done to BID in Bloom for cheering up our town with added colour."

Paula Baldwin,  
Director,  
CGT Lettings

# Public Realm Improvements

From flowers to major improvements to High Street, our public realm work was wide and varied throughout the year.

Our **BID in Bloom** campaign saw 100 baskets and troughs outside 25 businesses to the delight of owners and customers alike.

We also launched our **Tidy Up Cheltenham** campaign, which has seen two old benches on High Street replaced, 23 utility boxes repainted, new street signs erected and work underway to smarten up several rundown properties.

We played an equally important role in lobbying local authorities to ensure that major investment is made where needed. The work being done on High Street followed our calls to action to both the county and borough councils. This is only the start though. We will continue to press for this work to be followed by further improvements on The Strand and Cambay Place.

# Marketing and Promotion

One of the overwhelming messages from our businesses when the BID was created was that Cheltenham needed to be marketed properly.

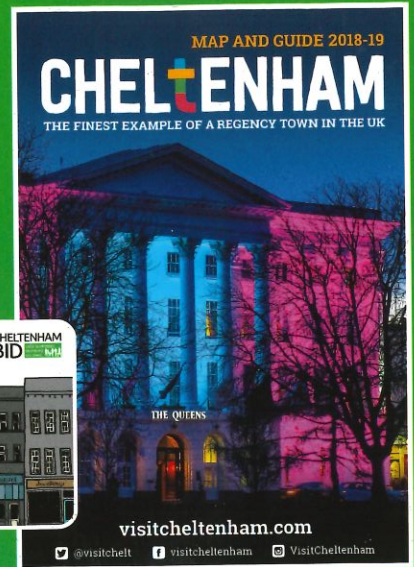
Enormous strides have been made in the last year with the creation of Marketing Cheltenham, for which the BID is the main backer alongside Cheltenham Borough Council.

Marketing Cheltenham has brought a new focus to the way we promote the town to a local, regional, national and international market. The website [www.visitcheltenham.com](http://www.visitcheltenham.com) has been significantly improved and has far more content on everything we have to offer – and everything that is coming up – than in previous years.

In May, the website had more than 27,000 visitors, the highest monthly figure since the site was launched.

We haven't forgotten the need to promote Cheltenham to inward investors and will soon be launching new web pages to attract businesses looking to relocate here or open new premises.

Our new-look Cheltenham Gift Card promotes the key 'spend local' message and is now accepted by more than 80 businesses. We also brought out a new version of the Map and Guide, which is playing a key role in selling Cheltenham to potential day and short-stay visitors.



## Business Support

What better way is there to support our businesses than to celebrate the great things they do?



The Cheltenham BID Awards saw more than 40 businesses nominated for 10 awards. Everyone who attended the awards ceremony at one of our great new venues, The Old Courthouse, agreed it showcased the fantastic range of businesses we have in the town.

We also helped our businesses tackle some major challenges this year. Filling jobs with the right people has become a significant issue and, after running a retail recruitment fair, we have also launched a service to promote vacancies of all kinds. We ran social media seminars and one-to-one courses to help

ensure you promote your business in a modern way.

The work being done on your behalf by our Ambassadors is making a real difference. They have been meeting and greeting passengers on visitor coaches, convincing businesses to take pride in their premises and helping businesses offer new discounts and incentives.

Several businesses have made savings of many thousands of pounds on their utility bills this year thanks to the group purchasing scheme we run with Meercat Associates.

We also like you to have a treat now and again. Through our work with Cheltenham Festivals, we're able to offer four free pairs of tickets to events at each festival.

"Since working with the Cheltenham BID to market vacancies to a wider audience, we have had an increase in the number of applicants."

Andrea Richards,  
Store Manager,  
White Stuff



## The Board 2017–18



**Terri Brewster**  
 BID Chair  
 Operations  
 Manager,  
 Brewery Quarter



**Tim Atkins**  
 Managing Director,  
 Cheltenham  
 Borough Council



**Richard Dare**  
 Co-owner,  
 James of  
 Montpellier



**Julie Finch**  
 Chief Executive,  
 Cheltenham Trust



**Clem Fraser**  
 Manager,  
 House of Fraser



**Philip Jordan**  
 Director,  
 Under The Prom  
 & Coco



**Steve Jordan**  
 Leader,  
 Cheltenham  
 Borough Council



**Chun Kong**  
 Owner,  
 The Mayflower



**Scott Lahive**  
 Centre Manager,  
 Regent Arcade



**Alex Rose**  
 Managing Director,  
 Beards



**Sophie Scarrott**  
 Director, Keith  
 Scarrott Shoes



**Mel Tubby**  
 Food Commercial  
 Manager,  
 Marks and Spencer



**Dustin Wise**  
 Owner,  
 L'Una Design

Retired from  
 the board  
 August 2018:  
**Julie Finch**  
**Clem Fraser**  
**Chun Kong**  
**Scott Lahive**

## New Board members 2018–19



**Oliver Bishop**  
 Director, Elliot  
 Oliver Sales  
 and Lettings



**Caroline Edwards**  
 Store Manager,  
 Boots



**Helen Howe**  
 Company Director,  
 Lumière



**Andrew Koj**  
 Executive Head  
 Chef and Owner,  
 Koj



**Kat Mabbott**  
 Retail Liaison  
 Officer,  
 Regent Arcade



**Andrea Richards**  
 Store Manager,  
 White Stuff

## The Staff



**Kevan Blackadder**  
 BID Director



**Belinda Hunt**  
 BID Operations  
 Manager



**Maria Marriott**  
 BID Administrator



**Mimi Chasebi**  
 BID Ambassador



**Phil Cook**  
 BID Ambassador



**Carolyn Griswold**  
 BID Ambassador

# Financial Report

Description	Budget in Business Plan	Adjusted Budget Y2	Actual	Balance
<b>Income</b>				
Carried forward from Y1	£0	£154,132	£154,132	£154,132
BID Levy	£460,750	£415,434	£415,434	−£45,316
Supporter contributions	£0	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£460,750</b>	<b>£570,566</b>	<b>£570,566</b>	<b>£109,816</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Marketing and Promotion	£86,500	£107,692	£84,274	£23,418
Parking and Accessibility	£25,000	£37,964	£10,041	£27,923
Town Centre Events	£92,500	£100,601	£158,526	−£57,925
Public Realm Improvements	£27,000	£32,642	£5,689	£26,953
Business Support	£85,000	£107,084	£55,036	£52,048
Administration and Overheads	£90,000	£83,287	£51,394	£31,893
Development Loan Repayments	£17,500	£41,730	£17,500	£24,230
Contingency	£23,750	£46,130		£46,130
Collection Fee	£13,500	£13,436	£12,459	£977
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£460,750</b>	<b>£570,566</b>	<b>£394,919</b>	<b>£175,647</b>

Please note that these are unaudited figures. A full set of accounts will be available at the end of November.

In our second year, we have spent considerably more on our businesses' behalf than in our first year, when we chose to spend wisely rather than quickly.

So, despite the financial report showing a balance of £175,647, in fact the preliminary year-end figures show that total expenditure in Year 2 was almost £400,000, compared to £200,000 in Year 1.

The figures show we carried forward £154,000 from Year 1, which is a significant part of the unallocated funds.



# Engaging with BID businesses

As well as keeping our levy payers informed of the work we are doing through our monthly newsletter, our website and on social media, we are celebrating the great things they do.

We have introduced our Business of the Month, where we highlight the work that so many of you are doing to stand out from the crowd.

The winning business speaks at the Cheltenham Business Forum Breakfast.

It's been a new experience for many – but all have passed with flying colours.

We have produced special issues of the newsletter with vital advice on everything from challenging your business rates to reporting issues around homeless people.

On Twitter we now have 1,708 followers and have had 1,011 follows on Facebook.

The board also discussed the long-term future of Cheltenham and we made direct representation to the strategy being drawn up on Gloucestershire in 2050.



**BID Monthly Newsletter** distributed via email and in print

**3 BID Ambassadors** in the town centre

@CheltenhamBID Social Media

**1011** followers on Facebook

**1708** followers on Twitter

## Promote the BID to the town



**Could the BID help with that? Would the BID know?**

We know from the increasing number of phone calls and emails we are receiving that the BID is fast becoming a go-to organisation for all things Cheltenham. That's because we've continued to promote the work we're doing for the town. You couldn't have missed us at

@OurChelt Social Media

**188** followers on Facebook

**415** followers on Twitter

**1254** followers on Instagram

great events like the **Jazz Festival** and the **Midsummer Fiesta**.

BID Director **Kevan Blackadder** talks all things Cheltenham and the BID once a fortnight on BBC Radio Gloucestershire and writes a column for the *Cheltenham Magazine*. Our work is regularly

highlighted in the local press and on TV and radio bulletins.

We have new business-to-consumer social media outlets highlighting **#OurChelt**.

The BID sits on Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce's executive and on GFirst LEP's Retail and the High Street Business Group.



"The support of Cheltenham BID for our ...around town programme adds to Cheltenham's attraction as a cultural destination."

Ian George,  
Festival Director at  
Cheltenham Festivals

## What's next? The BID's plans for 2018-19

Cheltenham BID has entered its third year and is planning new initiatives and further improvements to existing favourites. Here are just some of the activities we have planned in our five key project areas:

### Town Centre Events

- New Christmas Lights switch-on event. There will be an exciting and colourful parade around the town centre with a story for all the family.
- Improved Christmas Lights. We will have lights for the first time in The Strand, Cambay Place, Regent Street and Pittville Street with further additional features across the town.
- Light Up Cheltenham. The event will be extended, and we'll add new features and entertainment.
- Cheltenham Paint Festival. Many of the UK's top street artists will return once again to make their mark in the town.
- Cheltenham Remembers. Supporting a major weekend of events to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One.
- Backing our many winners. Among them will be the Festivals Around Town, the BID Awards, Cocktail Big Weekend and the Chilli Fiesta.

### Marketing and Promotion

- LED screens network. We're looking at introducing digital displays to promote BID businesses and what the town has to offer.
- Marketing Cheltenham. On-going support for the new organisation promoting the town regionally, nationally and internationally.

- Cheltenham Means Business. New online focus to ensure the town is marketed to businesses looking to relocate or open new units.

### Business Support

- Free town centre Wi-Fi. Look at introducing a system which includes smart footfall counters.
- CCTV. Funding to provide coverage in blackspots.
- Continue with social media and recruitment support.

### Public Realm Improvements

- Lobby for further funding to improve pedestrianised areas. The High Street work carried out this year must be followed by further improvements.
- Visitor trails. Our Hidden Cheltenham project will take people around the town – further wayfinding schemes to follow.
- Tidy Up Cheltenham. Continue to work with businesses and the local authority to improve the overall appearance of the town.
- Planters. Use to both smarten the town and protect pedestrianised areas.

### Parking and Accessibility

- Schemes to promote easy access to the town centre for locals and visitors.
- Reduce parking costs for peak times. E.g. Christmas late-night shopping, Race Week.
- Cycle racks. New storage facilities to meet the increasing demand.

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