



Cheltenham Business Improvement District Annual Review 2016–2017





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

Introduction

Kevan Blackadder

I want to start my introduction to our first annual review with a thank you to all the businesses that have helped us achieve so much in our first year.

Without your support, we would not have been able to launch many of the projects detailed in this review. We realise that we have much more to do though to ensure that Cheltenham fulfils its enormous potential.

We are lucky to do business in such a wonderful town and are determined to attract many more visitors, more often.

We have been careful in our first year not to rush into projects that would not help directly achieve our two main goals – to ensure our businesses flourish and that visitor numbers increase.

We have already helped you become directly involved in the town’s future in a way that wasn’t possible before. Our 600-plus businesses now have a voice through the BID and, in our dealings with organisations like Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council, your concerns and ambitions are being heard loud and clear.

It is crucial that every BID business feels it has a voice and that the BID is working on projects that will help you directly.

Don’t hesitate to get in touch with me or Operations Manager **Belinda Hunt** direct on **01242 571123** or via **info@cheltenhambid.co.uk**.

Kevan Blackadder
BID Director, Cheltenham BID



“We have already helped you become directly involved in the town’s future in a way that wasn’t possible before.”

Town Centre Events

We staged new and different events to help businesses of all kinds attract new audiences.



Town Hall Boutique Sale

The Boutique Sale brought additional trade for nine independent businesses. Some 500 people attended the event at Cheltenham Town Hall.



Cheltenham Chilli Fiesta

The Chilli Fiesta's stalls and entertainment brought hundreds of new customers to Cambray Place and The Strand.

Cheltenham Cocktail Week

The first Cheltenham Cocktail Week was a major boost for the town's night-time economy. All the paid-for events sold out and businesses were delighted with the new customers attracted to the free events.



2017 OVO Energy Tour of Britain

Our support for the town's application to bring the Tour of Britain to Cheltenham was a major factor in the stage finish being held here on **September 9**.

'...around town' events

We also worked to ensure that existing events reached more people. Cheltenham Festivals' "...around town" event for the Jazz Festival was only possible because of the BID and brought hundreds of people into the town centre, not just to Montpellier Gardens.

"It's been great to be with people from across the Cheltenham independent community."

Jane Saunders,
The Cosmetic Boutique,
at the Boutique Sale

"I've had an amazing time. Things like this need to happen more often."

Jack Turner, from
Tewkesbury, at
Cheltenham Chilli Fiesta

"With such a dense population of creative bartenders, sommeliers and industry professionals, what has taken Cheltenham so long!"

Ben Hawker,
wine & food blogger,
Cheltenham Cocktail Week

"The warmth, friendliness and support of Cheltenham was unprecedented."

Mick Bennett,
Race Director,
OVO Energy Tour
of Britain



Parking and Accessibility

The BID works to help the staff of BID businesses and has lobbied to make the town more accessible to all.



1

We introduced a cut-price bus travel scheme with Stagecoach, which has seen more than 50 businesses sign up and more than 1,200 tickets sold.

2

We are working to help staff struggling to find affordable parking spaces after the introduction of residents' permit parking schemes across Cheltenham.

3

The BID also led the promotion of free parking for local shoppers during Race Week, which saw many businesses improve on takings in comparison to previous years.

Great offer for all BID Businesses

CHELTHENHAM BID
Local businesses improving our town



Travel to work in Cheltenham for just **£10** a week

Catch the bus and save with **Cheltenham BID and Stagecoach**

Full details at www.cheltenhambid.co.uk/stagecoach 



Public Realm Improvements

Our key role is to lobby councils and other organisations to ensure improvements to pedestrianised areas, roads and pavements are made.

- High Street from The Strand to Winchcombe Street is in a disgraceful condition. What should be a gateway to Cheltenham is a blight on the town.
- We have engaged the county council, borough council and the town's MP in key discussions. The pressure for change will continue until realistic budgets are allocated.
- The poor state of The Fountain at Boots Corner and of Grosvenor Terrace have also been highlighted.
- The BID also picked up on concerns about the filthy state of public seating and made sure they were cleaned.
- Much of the BID's work in this area will take time to show results but persistent lobbying will take place.

Marketing and Promotion

Pioneering research for the BID has shown we must do more to attract visitors.

- The research showed that our wonderful town is not on the 'wish list' of most potential day and short-stay visitors. They do not know what we offer and the BID is working in several ways to change that.
- The BID launched a new **Map and Guide** to target tourists in the Cotswolds and further afield who are not coming to Cheltenham. We are also directly involved in a revamp of the Visit Cheltenham website, where our businesses now have a free listing.
- The **Cheltenham Gift Card** has been launched as a loyalty card that will promote a key 'spend local' message.



Business Support

The BID has directly supported businesses to help with their day-to-day challenges.

- From cutting utility bills to improving businesses' digital skills, direct help has been on hand.
- The group purchasing scheme run in conjunction with Meercat Associates has seen many BID businesses save thousands of pounds on electricity, gas and telecoms bills.
- Our work on the #WDYT campaign to link social media users directly with the High Street saw Cheltenham rise to sixth place in The UK Digital Influence Index from a standing position of 22nd.
- We employed Ambassadors to work directly with levy payers. Businesses don't have time to report dirty benches, fallen leaves, broken kerbs, pigeon mess, uncollected rubbish and overhanging trees. The Ambassadors have done it for them by building relationships with key bodies and following up until the job is done.
- First impressions are important. Our friendly, helpful Ambassadors are also on hand to welcome coach parties and direct visitors.
- We supported work to earn Cheltenham 'Purple Flag' status. This means the town is recognised as both a vibrant and safe place for a night out. We continue to use 'Purple Flag' to promote our night-time economy and its business. A new website www.cheltenhamnightout.co.uk has been launched.



The Board



Terri Brewster
 BID Chair
 Operations Manager,
 Brewery Quarter



Tim Atkins
 Managing Director,
 Cheltenham
 Borough Council



Amy Broomhall
 Manager,
 Boots



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



Vicki Shillam
 Manager,
 Marks & Spencer



Dustin Wise
 Owner,
 L'Una Design

The Staff

Contact Cheltenham BID:

Phone **01242 571123**

Email **kevan@cheltenhambid.co.uk**
belinda@cheltenhambid.co.uk

Web **www.cheltenhambid.co.uk**



Kevan Blackadder
 BID Director



Belinda Hunt
 Operations Manager



Mimi Chasebi
 Ambassador



Carolyn Griswold
 Ambassador

Financial Report

Description	Budget	Actual	Balance
Income			
BID Levy	£422,000	£436,514	£14,514
Less Late Night Levy Concession	-£40,000	-£24,474	£15,526
Total income	£382,000	£412,040	£30,040
Expenditure			
Marketing and Promotion	£65,500	£42,972	£22,528
Parking and Accessibility	£20,000	£4,648	£15,352
Town Centre Events	£70,000	£55,143	£14,857
Public Realm Improvements	£12,750	£5,136	£7,614
Business Support	£65,000	£36,705	£28,295
Administration and Overheads	£71,500	£46,775	£24,725
Development Loan Repayments	£42,500	£17,885	£24,615
Contingency	£21,250	£0	£21,250
Collection Fee	£13,500	£12,527	£973
Total Expenditure	£382,000	£221,791	£160,209

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

In our first year, we chose to spend wisely rather than
 quickly. The budget has been underspent because we

needed to ensure we were investing in projects that
 would be beneficial to our businesses in the long-term.
 The market research we carried out to investigate
 why visitors were not coming to Cheltenham in the
 numbers that might have been expected, was a

crucial part of developing that understanding.

We spent the least in our project areas of Public
 Realm Improvements and Parking and Accessibility,
 where the emphasis has been on lobbying authorities
 for crucial improvements in the future.



Engaging with BID businesses

It is crucial that levy payers are kept informed of what the BID is doing for them.

- We quickly built a database to ensure we could always contact our businesses. We now have around 400 personal contacts in place.
- Our monthly newsletter, highlighting the activities of the BID and the town, is distributed via email and by hand, depending on the wishes of the individual business.
- We celebrate the BID's achievements with daily social media postings (more than 1,000 followers on Twitter and more than 500 page likes on Facebook) and on the BID website.
- Businesses can also promote themselves directly on both the BID website and on Visit Cheltenham.
- We have been representing your views as key strategies are drawn up on tourism, parking and place management.
- We have set up and run business groups for individual areas like The Promenade, where we hold quarterly meetings.



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

3 BID Ambassadors
in the town centre



1012 followers on Twitter



545 Facebook follows



Promote the BID to the town

It is important the town knows that the BID is working on behalf of its businesses to improve Cheltenham.

- Regular platforms have been established with the local media to promote the BID's work.
- BID Director Kevan Blackadder features on BBC Radio Gloucestershire's popular Breakfast Show fortnightly and ensures the BID's work is highlighted regularly in the Gloucestershire Echo, on Gloucestershire Live, in Punchline and on radio stations Heart FM and The Breeze. He also writes a monthly column for the Cheltenham Magazine.
- It is also important that the wider business community engages with the BID. Staff present regularly to business groups and local associations. The BID is represented on Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce's executive and at GFirst LEP and played a key role at the Gloucestershire Business Show.





What's next?

The BID's plans for 2017-18.

Cheltenham BID is aiming to make an even bigger difference in our second year. Here is just some of the activity we have planned in our five key project areas:

Town Centre Events

- Improved Christmas Lights. The BID has funded new lights for the town in addition to the money the borough council is spending. We are also arranging new events across the town for the November 25 switch-on
- 'Light Up Winter' plans to brighten up the town with feature lighting in the dark months of January/February
- Cheltenham Beauty Week. Businesses of all kinds will come together next April with events, promotions and offers to attract more customers
- Foodie Cheltenham – events and tours to celebrate what a great place it is to eat and drink
- Hidden Histories, Hidden Treasures – a new trail highlighting the BID zone's best-kept secrets
- Blooming Beautiful – build on the fantastic floral displays in our town with a competition for our businesses
- BID Awards Ceremony – celebrating our best businesses and their best staff
- Sales event for independent retailers – building on the success of last year's Boutique Sale but involving a wider range of businesses
- Backing our winners – continue events that proved successful in Year One: Cheltenham Cocktail Week, Cheltenham Chilli Fiesta, Cheltenham Beer Week

Marketing and Promotion

- Help set up Marketing Cheltenham, a new organisation focused on improving the way the town is promoted regionally, nationally and internationally
- Help redevelop the Visit Cheltenham website
- New version of Cheltenham Map and Guide for 2018

- A Christmas Shopping Guide, which will also promote the Cheltenham Gift Card
- Create a series of videos to promote Cheltenham and everything it has to offer

Business Support

- Tidy up Cheltenham. Work with businesses, partners and landlords to improve the appearance of the town
- Public wi-fi for Cheltenham. The BID will lead a project to significantly improve coverage and download speeds
- Regular workshops and seminars to help give our businesses new skills
- Support businesses to recruit and retain staff
- Investigate the potential of a loyalty scheme where staff of BID businesses are offered discounts by other BID businesses

Public Realm Improvements

- Campaign for urgent action by local councils to improve the town centre's pedestrianised areas
- Introduce better wayfinding to encourage footfall across the BID zone
- Provide funding to increase CCTV coverage in black spots
- Provide funding for extra bench cleaning and weed removal
- Create inspiring installations across the town – eg colourful umbrellas and deckchairs

Parking and Accessibility

- Investigate demand/practicality of subsidised parking for staff of BID businesses
- Reduced parking costs for key times – eg late-night shopping, Race Week
- Lobby for free parking in the evenings and until 10am on Sundays
- New online parking maps showing prices and maximum-stay times