

Cheltenham Business Improvement District
Annual Review 2018–2019



Town Centre Events ■ Parking and Accessibility ■ Public Realm Improvements
Marketing and Promotion ■ Business Support

Introduction

Kevan Blackadder



It's fair to think of 2018-19 as a giant year for Cheltenham BID.

We wanted the main events we put on this year to be bigger and better than anything we'd done before.

And from the giant witch that caused such a stir at the Christmas Lights switch-on to the giant wheel at Light Up Cheltenham, we achieved just that.

It was, with the BID heavily involved, the year that Cheltenham was rebranded as *The Festival Town*. Festivals are part of our DNA and will be at the centre of how we continue to attract people to the town.

I was delighted that last Christmas also saw us able to expand the area covered by Christmas lights, with the addition of The Strand, Cambray Place, Regent Street and Pittville Street.

We're always trying to ensure that the work we do embraces all areas of the BID zone. The school holiday events linked to our Hidden Cheltenham trail

saw more than 200 parties involved at Easter and 455 in the summer. What a great way to keep children entertained – and to take parents into so many businesses.

But the BID is not just about events. It's about supporting you directly and about getting things done with campaigns like Tidy Up Cheltenham. It's about lobbying local authorities to act in areas like public realm improvements and parking and accessibility. You can read more on all of that in this Annual Review.

And let's not forget to celebrate. Cheltenham was named as the town with the most night-time appeal in national awards for towns and cities awarded the Purple Flag for being safe and vibrant places. That's not down to the BID, that's down to our great businesses.

Kevan Blackadder
BID Director, Cheltenham BID

The BID Board



Alex Rose
 BID Chair
 Managing Director,
 Beards



Philip Jordan
 BID Deputy Chair
 Director,
 Under The Prom
 & Coco



Tim Atkins
 Managing Director,
 Cheltenham
 Borough Council



Oliver Bishop
 Director, Elliot
 Oliver Sales
 and Lettings



Terri Brewster
 Operations
 Manager,
 Brewery Quarter



Richard Dare
 Co-owner,
 James of
 Montpellier



Helen Howe
 Company Director,
 Lumière



Steve Jordan
 Leader,
 Cheltenham
 Borough Council



Andrew Kojima
 Executive Head Chef
 and Owner, Koj



Kat Mabbott
 Retail Liaison
 Officer,
 Regent Arcade



Andrea Richards
 Store Manager,
 White Stuff



Sophie Scarrott
 Director, Keith
 Scarrott Shoes



Kevan Blackadder
 BID Director



Belinda Hunt
 BID Operations
 Manager



Maria Allebone
 BID Administrator



Phil Cook
 BID Ambassador

Joined in 2019



Martin Bundy
 Manager,
 John Lewis
 & Partners



Matt Rudman
 Director,
 Cheltenham
 Martial Arts



Lucinda O'Gorman
 Manager,
 Marks & Spencer

Resigned in 2019



Caroline Edwards
 Store Manager,
 Boots



Mel Tubby
 Food Commercial
 Manager,
 Marks & Spencer



Dustin Wise
 Owner,
 L'Una Design



Deb Goodman
 BID Ambassador



Carolyn Griswold
 BID Ambassador

2018-2019 The year at a glance



Visit Cheltenham

With a new-look website and new team at Marketing Cheltenham, we are well set to promote our rebranded *The Festival Town*.

We're targeting potential visitors in Gloucestershire, from elsewhere in the UK and across the world and ensuring that when they come to Cheltenham, they know all about our businesses.

Spend in Cheltenham

The Cheltenham Gift Card launched in August 2017 and has gone from strength to strength.

More than 100 businesses in the town centre accept the gift card as payment and more than £22,000 worth of cards have been bought, more than £900 per month.

I would recommend the Cheltenham Gift Card to other businesses because it is so easy to use. It supports Cheltenham and gets people shopping locally.

Mel – Toys to Grow



Hidden Cheltenham

Our Hidden Cheltenham trails in the Easter and Summer school holidays, with 580 maps given out, proved incredibly popular with families and our businesses.

Some 67 businesses have now been involved with the trails as locations or by giving prizes and offers.



We are really enjoying it. It is a great thing to do with the kids in the summer holidays. It gets them out in the fresh air and gives them some exercise.

Webb Family

Here to help

The BID's ambassadors are the face of the BID, both through meeting and greeting visitors to the town and by making regular visits to our businesses.

Carolyn, Deb and Phil have focused on helping you deal with issues like uncollected rubbish, broken street furniture and anti-social behaviour.



Support from businesses

From pubs to record shops, a growing number of businesses who do not qualify to be part of the BID, often because of their location, want to be involved.

We now have several voluntary members paying the BID levy. They include The Beehive, Badlands Records, The Logical Utilities Company, Muse, Showcase and Cocoa Couture.

Tidy Up Cheltenham

The BID lobbies the council to keep our town clean, but we also roll up our sleeves, clearing rubbish and weeding.

BID staff, board members and businesses were praised for a one-day clean-up that made a real difference to Regent Street and Ormond Place in July.



Feedback from businesses

Thank you for organising such a positive clean up; lots of work and lots of fun.

Emma Graveney – KIBOU sushi

We thought that having the ceiling of Christmas lights on The Strand was such a good idea and all the kids who come to our studios loved them.

Ian Marshall – Janet Marshall Dance Studios

Town Centre Events

BID businesses made it clear from the start that they wanted events to attract a wide range of people. Events are the heartbeat of *The Festival Town*. Here are just some that were brought to you by the BID.



We wanted to ensure that the **Christmas Lights** switch-on this year gave Cheltenham something different and was a night to remember.

We worked with Cheltenham-based Evenlode Productions and there was a fantastic interaction between their giant witch and hundreds of children.

There was positive feedback from

both the audience and our businesses across Montpellier, The Prom and along High Street.

Then in February we extended our **Light Up Cheltenham** event with dozens of buildings lit and a giant wheel in Imperial Gardens. Some 10,000 people rode the wheel and footfall across the town centre increased by 3.8 per cent

at what is a notoriously quiet time of year.

Across the four main Cheltenham Festivals, the BID's support for their **Around Town** programme has ensured that visitors leave the main Montpellier Gardens site and spend their time – and money – across the zone. There was a significant increase in activity this year with highlights including an astonishing

570 performers at the **Jazz Festival Around Town** events and 1,300 taking part in the **Lit Crawl** in October.

The BID also plays a big part in helping other organisations get their events off the ground. Great examples this year were the **Cheltenham Paint Festival** – the BID'S contribution paid for the wonderful mural in High Street car park –

and the **Street Velodrome** outside the Municipal Offices, which raised vital money for the Cheltenham Hospital Scanner Appeal.

We ran our ever-popular **Boutique Sale** in January, attracting new businesses and 500 customers, and had more businesses involved in our **Cocktail Week** and more competitors in our hottest chilli-eating contest at the **Chilli Fiesta** than ever before.

As seen on Social Media



Hidden Cheltenham Summer Trail

The trail itself was very interesting and I learnt some new Cheltenham facts on the way round. It also made me visit parts of town I hardly ever venture into.

Stephloveshoney blog



Cheltenham Remembers

Creative and original, putting Cheltenham on the map by engaging with residents. It's given the town a heartbeat with the hive of activity it creates for us all to enjoy and share.

Kate Daws on Facebook



Light Up Cheltenham

Never seen Cheltenham so colourful!

Mandy Falshaw on Facebook

If you are in Cheltenham while 'Light Up' is taking place... then I would say take a stroll... look at the streets; the beautiful buildings bathed in light... and, if you can, take a turn (or three) on the wheel (and then perhaps stay a little longer for a very lovely dinner)...

Nichola Vaughan on Facebook

Marketing and Promotion

There are currently 25 festivals held in Cheltenham and, in July, Visit Cheltenham – *The Festival Town* was born.

New Festival Town banners and Tourist Information Points have already appeared across the town and the brand will be used extensively.

Marketing Cheltenham, which is a joint initiative between the BID and Cheltenham Borough Council, now has a team of five professional marketers, led by David Jackson, who previously ran tourism in the Isles of Scilly.

All BID businesses are entitled to a FREE listing, worth £250, on VisitCheltenham.com. All you need to do is email Maria Allebone – maria@cheltenhambid.co.uk – and she'll send you a form to complete and let you know what size images you need to provide. It's that simple.

The work is already having a dramatic impact. Page views on VisitCheltenham.com were up from 425,849 for the six months to mid-August 2018 to 614,779 in the same period this year, an increase of 44.37%.

**VISIT
CHELTENHAM
THE FESTIVAL
TOWN**



Financial Report

| Description | Budget in Business Plan | Budget Y3 | Actual | Balance |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Income | | | | |
| BID Levy | £460,750 | £426,910 | £439,669 | £12,759 |
| Voluntary Contributions | £0 | £1,162 | £462 | -£700 |
| Carried forward after audit | £0 | £76,277 | £237,865 | £161,588 |
| External Contributions | £0 | £45,000 | £51,325 | £6,325 |
| Total Income | £460,750 | £549,349 | £729,321 | £179,972 |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Town Centre Events | £95,000 | £262,100 | £275,186 | -£13,086 |
| Marketing and Promotion | £95,000 | £119,350 | £127,079 | -£7,729 |
| Business Support | £85,000 | £72,960 | £77,530 | -£4,570 |
| Public Realm Improvements | £28,500 | £22,920 | £22,536 | £384 |
| Parking and Accessibility | £30,000 | £7,180 | £6,968 | £212 |
| Administration and Overheads | £90,000 | £69,375 | £65,114 | £4,261 |
| Levy Collection Fee | £13,500 | £13,200 | £13,202 | -£2 |
| Total Expenditure | £437,000 | £567,085 | £587,615 | -£20,530 |
| Reserves carried forward | | -£17,736 | £141,706 | |

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

In planning the budget for Year 4, a significant proportion of the £141,706 reserves has already been allocated across a range of projects.

Business Support

It's important that the BID works directly with our businesses.

The county council launched a new digital scheme for business permits in November. It would have meant parking times would have been cut and added unnecessary administration. The BID objected and the plan was significantly amended.

And we helped large town-centre employers who were concerned about how their staff got to work because of increasing parking costs. We worked with Sustrans on travel-to-work plans for Regent Arcade, Marks & Spencer and House of Fraser.

We are partnering with Cheltenham-based The Logical Utilities Company to offer all BID businesses significant savings on their electricity bills and merchant service fees.

We celebrate the great work our businesses do with the annual BID awards, which saw the number of nominations double to 179 this year. From customer service winner Emma Durrant (Monrose Boutique) to retail manager of the year Chantelle Stemp (Hotel Chocolat), we had some very popular winners.

The BID helps businesses in distinct areas of town work together. As well as regular meetings for The Prom, we now host meetings for the Montpellier Association with the borough and county councils.



“ I just wanted to thank you again for the awards evening. I've just about calmed down! I have noticed a big difference in my sales since winning the customer service award. It's absolutely fantastic. ”

**Emma Durrant –
Monrose Boutique, pictured above right**



“ Thank you to Cheltenham BID for making Cheltenham look vibrant and bright with its beautiful display of flower baskets. Also thank you for your contribution to keeping the streets cleaner. It's much appreciated. Towns are struggling so anything that can be done to enhance them is welcomed. ”

Giles Barton – Horace Barton & Son

Public Realm Improvements

One important aspect of the BID's work is in lobbying local authorities. We have concentrated this year on The Strand and Cambray Place and the county and borough councils have now committed £1.8 million to an upgrade. Our Tidy Up Cheltenham campaign has really made a difference, with a focus on getting businesses to work directly with us. We ran BID in Bloom for a second year, adding 100 displays to 20 businesses.



Before



After

Parking and Accessibility

In any town, parking and roads are a thorny subject – and Cheltenham is no different.

We ran a survey on the impact of the Boots Corner trial closure. The level of response from businesses was disappointing but there was a clear message, which we highlighted to the borough council, that the trial was having a negative impact on some businesses.

We also highlighted issues around

the Arle Court Park and Ride after complaints from visitors that it was frequently full. The county council and Stagecoach took this issue on board and have introduced a new scheme to stop employees at local businesses from parking there.

Our discount scheme with Stagecoach continues to be very popular with staff from more than 100 businesses now signed up for cut-price tickets.



Engaging with BID businesses



How do we know that we're communicating regularly and effectively with our businesses?

We have introduced a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to track everything we do and ensure that we follow up on your behalf. There are thousands of entries already.

Our Business of the Month award celebrates all of you who help the wider town – with the winner promoting themselves at the Cheltenham Business Forum breakfast.

We've increased content on the BID's website – more than 70 stories in the news section in 12 months – and highlight what we, our businesses and the town is up to through our booming social media outlets (see figures below).

Promote the BID to the town

The BID was directly involved in the campaign to increase the number of life-saving defibrillators– you'll see our branding on phone boxes on The Promenade and in Montpellier.

We produce regular press releases highlighting our work and BID Director Kevan Blackadder has a fortnightly slot on the BBC Radio Gloucestershire breakfast show and writes a monthly column in *Cheltenham Magazine*. He has spoken to groups including the Chamber of Commerce's AGM, the Cheltenham Civic Society and the Business Forum about the BID's work.

@CheltenhamBID

f 1,524*
followers on Facebook,
an increase of **979** year on year

🐦 2,371*
followers on Twitter,
an increase of **1,359** year on year

📷 1,052*
followers on Instagram,
an increase of **532** year on year

@OurChelt

From **January 2018**

f 1,077*
followers on Facebook

🐦 1,079*
followers on Twitter

📷 1,890*
followers on Instagram
*figures up to September 2019

What's next?

Some BID favourites and some fantastic new ideas are planned as we carry out our fourth year of activities.

With another spectacular Christmas Lights switch-on and a new late-night shopping event, it really will be a festive season to remember.

We've started planning Light Up Cheltenham in February 2020 and, as well as the return of the giant wheel, we're working with the borough council on a landmark projection event, which will

celebrate the town's links to GCHQ.

As The Festival Town grows, we've supported the first Cheltenham Wellbeing Festival and Cheltenham Paint Festival, in what is a big year for Marketing Cheltenham.

We'll help security in the night-time economy by sponsoring Cheltenham Guardians' new emergency care team vehicle. We have also directly funded a new CCTV camera to cover Ormond Place.

We're going to be closely involved in the Town Centre Team, a great new

initiative, which will see staff from a range of partners, including the BID's ambassadors, work together to tackle anti-social behaviour.

We'll be running more job fairs after the success of our event at Cheltenham Library in September and have set up two discount packages with the University of Gloucestershire encouraging students to spend in the BID zone.

Most importantly of all, we'll continue to be your voice – don't forget to use us.



The Christmas Lights switch-on event was superb and created a real buzz on our high street. It was great to see such a big gathering right across town, especially the look of amazement from all our younger audiences. Can't wait for the 2019 event. **Martin Bundy, Manager – John Lewis & Partners**

