

Cambridge Business Improvement District: Supporting our City and High Street

Annual Review 2021/22





Overview

Cambridge Business Improvement District (BID) is a collaboration of 1,200 businesses, working together to create a world-class experience for all who visit, live and work in Cambridge, a global city.

Launched in April 2013, the organisation received a mandate in November 2017 to continue its work for a second five-year term, following a Renewal Ballot in which 80% of voters gave their backing to the Business Plan for 2018-2023. In the process, the BID Area was extended to incorporate the CB1 area and Station Square; the threshold above which businesses pay a levy was also increased from £20,000 to £30,000.

During this second term, almost £5million of private sector funding will be invested in the city through Cambridge BID. This will be used to underpin existing projects – delivered under the Welcome, Experience and Support workstreams – and enable new initiatives that will attract new talent and business, while raising the city’s profile still further on the global stage.

Board of Directors

Nominated by the local business community and representing a cross-section of sectors from within the extended BID Area, our Board of Directors drives forward the agenda on which BID Area businesses voted at the beginning of the BID term.

The following directors were in post at the end of March 2021:

Roger Allen (Chair)	The Lion Yard	(Shopping Centre)
Ian Sandison (CEO)	Boudoir Femme	(Independent)
Anne Bannell	Jacks on Trinity	(Independent)
Alison Wright	Fitzbillies	(Independent)
Dominic Joyce	John Lewis	(National)
Robert Davey	Metro Bank	(National)
Simon Wallis	Brookgate	(Professional)
Valerie Lambert	HCR Hewitsons LLP	(Professional)
Nick Finlayson-Brown	Mills & Reeve	(Professional)
David Ormrod	The Regal	(Night-time)
Andrew Lloyd	Cambridge University	(Educational)
Glen Sharp	Trinity Hall College	(Educational)
Rosy Moore	Cambridge City Council*	
Gerri Bird	Cambridgeshire County Council*	
Philip Greer	University Arms Hotel**	(Visitor Economy)
Chris Douglas	Graduate Hotel**	(Visitor Economy)

*Local Authority Appointed **Appointed April 2022

Foreword from the Chair

Over the last two years we have seen the world change in many ways with businesses large and small having to make some difficult decisions.

Cambridge is in a fortunate position and when restrictions began to ease again in spring/summer 2021 the city began to bounce back quite quickly. Footfall has been higher than the national picture with many weeks hitting numbers higher than the 2019 (pre Covid-19). Footfall does not always equal cash in tills, but we remain optimistic that our city is well and truly on the road to recovery.

Throughout the year we had to change some project delivery decisions, mainly around our events schedule due to the high Covid-19 rates however the team still worked incredibly hard to support the city and the businesses community.

The Cows About Cambridge Trail was an outright success for the city, with over 500,000 people enjoying the trail and close to £20m in economic value delivered. During the summer months at a time when there was still a nervousness about going out and getting ‘back to normal’ the trail provided an excellent reason for people to come back to Cambridge and explore in a safe and comfortable way. It really did deliver everything we had hoped for and more.

“The Cows About Cambridge Trail was an outright success for the city, with over 500,000 people enjoying the trail and close to £20m in economic value delivered.”

The coming months are looking busy with a full calendar of events including the screening of Wimbledon and the Commonwealth Games near the station, film nights in the Market Square and the renewal of our safer night-time award; The Purple Flag. Work is also underway for the BID re-ballot in October and planning for BID Term 3.

The BID team are ready for the challenge, and I have every confidence that they will continue to work hard to ensure that our city is in the best shape it can be.

Roger Allen
Chair of Cambridge BID



The Stats

- 55 Streets cleaned
- 8 Hot spots cleaned regularly
- 80 CAMBAC Memberships paid
- 27 Streets illuminated for Christmas



Welcome

Cleaning & Rapid Response

The street cleaning schedule continues as does the 7 day-a-week Rapid Response service in addition to the schedule, the cleaning team have been assisting with cleaning some of the street furniture across the city including signage, tables and benches.

City Dressing & Festive Lighting

Christmas lights and city dressing continue with new bunting being placed in Rose Crescent ahead of the busy summer period. Enhancing the beauty of Cambridge across the seasons is a key objective to Cambridge BID, it encourages people to look up and enjoy their surroundings.

City Ambassadors

The Ambassador team are the face of the BID to many businesses. On street each day, working with the business community and assisting visitors on all things Cambridge the team are a huge asset to the city. A recent addition to the team is the Electric Bicycle which doubles up as an information point. This has been hugely popular by the team and visitors alike and enables the team to get across the city easily and quickly.

CAMBAC (Cambridge Business Against Crime)

CAMBAC has had a successful year, including the recruitment of 10 new businesses, and the introduction of Business Crime Forums to support retailers. They organised the install of three temporary CCTV cameras on Fitzroy St. and Burleigh St. in response to

heightened concerns from retailers around theft, antisocial behaviour and begging. There has been a technical upgrade to the two way radio system, to improve communication across the city. We pay the CAMBAC membership cost, for all levy-paying businesses in the Cambridge BID area that pay for the radio scheme.

Purple Flag

Purple Flag is an accreditation recognising locations with safe, vibrant and well-managed nightlife. In September 2021 Cambridge BID and CAMBAC led the renewal of our Purple Flag award. We celebrated with free, live music at the end of Freshers' Week (hosted by Old Ticket Office; Clayton Hotel; The Orator). In November 2021 we trained staff at 15 venues in WAVE (Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement) and the Ask for Angela scheme. We continue to support the Taxi Marshal scheme organised by CAMBAC, and the Street Pastors.



Case Study: 1

Visit Cambridge PR

Following the closure of Visit Cambridge & Beyond during the pandemic, Cambridge BID identified the need to promote Cambridge on a national level to encourage staycationers during 2021/22. As people started to travel again following Covid-19 it was clear that given the restrictions still in place during early 2021 the focus should be on domestic travellers and the staycation market. Cambridge BID therefore appointed Hills Balfour, a leading travel PR company, to work with us to promote Cambridge as a fabulous destination for a staycation.

Prior to Covid-19 Cambridge attracted somewhere in the region of 8 million visitors per year, many from overseas markets. With international travel seriously disrupted by Covid-19, Cambridge BID recognised the importance of looking to the domestic market to attract visitors. As a popular tourist destination in previous years very little marketing of Cambridge has ever taken place, giving us the opportunity to rewrite the narrative for Cambridge – to ensure that the complete Cambridge offer was known – and position Cambridge as an attractive destination for a city break.

Over the last year, working with Hills Balfour we have written four bespoke pitches that have been distributed to a tailored media list, pitched Cambridge to numerous media following requests for content, reactivated the Visit Cambridge social media platforms and published multiple posts every week on Facebook and Instagram, hosted two press trips and delivered an influencer trip with five attendees.



Results over the last year

Our 2021/22 Press Activity has led to Cambridge content appearing in 21 different articles (a combination of online and in print) with a combined circulation of over **2 million** and a monthly unique users reach of over **30 million** and an advertising equivalent value of **£122,052**

30M Monthly unique users reach

£122K+ Advertising equivalent value

The reactivation of the Visit Cambridge Facebook and Instagram social media profiles has led to:

8K+ Instagram followers and growing

42.4K People reached via Facebook, +1136%

9.1K Engagements via Facebook

74k Minutes of video viewed on Facebook

Example Facebook Post – A photo promoting that Cambridge features in Conde Nast Traveller's 2021 Reader Choice Awards within the best UK city and worldwide small city category received **3,793** impressions, **3,776** people reached, **17** reactions and **8** shares.

The Influencer Trip 2022

The influencer trip in March 2022 generated the following results:

308.7K Total Followers

170 Pieces of content

162.6K Total reach

206.3k Total impressions

124K Total video views

152.3K Instagram stories views

10.7K Total engagements

Experience

Cows About Cambridge

After an initial delay due to Covid-19, we finally welcomed the herd to Cambridge in June 2021 and what a summer it turned out to be. In total 41 large cows and 40 small cows created the biggest public art trail Cambridge has seen. The trail attracted over 550,000 visitors with approx. 2.3 million interactions with the bespoke app created for the trail. But the biggest achievement was the auction, raising over £256,000 for the charity partner, Break, whose work supports young people across the region. The economic impact to the city is estimated to be £19.5 million with a GVA of £5.95 million. Families from across the region enjoyed the trail, encouraging people to come out and explore the city, after a turbulent 18 months.



Large Screen Events

2021 did see the return of our large screen events with two film nights hosted in the Market Square and the Olympics being shown in the CB1 area. Attendance was high, which shows there was an appetite for life to get back to normal and people craving events and activities they can enjoy with friends and family.

Christmas

Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic in December 2021, the Switch On event was taken online once again. In partnership with Star Radio we delivered an afternoon or Christmas activity culminating in a pre-recorded video being shared online of the city being lit up ready for Christmas.

The Christmas Magazine was published in mid-November with a print run of 100,000 ensuring Cambridge is positioned as the only place to shop and enjoy during the festive period.

Love Summer

The annual Love Summer Magazine was published and distributed ahead of the Easter break and includes everything from hotels to shopping, eating and night life – positioning Cambridge as a great destination to visit.

The Stats

550K	Visitors to Cows about Cambridge trial
2.3M	Interactions with the bespoke app
£256K+	Raised for charity partner Break
£19.5M	Economic impact to the city

The distribution model includes local, regional, and national locations enabling us to encourage people to come to Cambridge for a short break as well as reminding residents what the city offers for them too.

Restaurant Week

In March 2022, Cambridge BID in conjunction with our Love Cambridge brand organised the second Restaurant Week, running from the 14th-25th March. The first Restaurant Week ran in March 2019 and a 2020 one was all set to go but had to be cancelled due

to the first lockdown, so it was great to bring Restaurant Week back and provide a much-needed boost for eateries in the city.

Almost 40 businesses across the city got involved with Restaurant Week on this round, providing discounted menus ranging from £20 for a two course meal at Garden House to £5 for coffee and cake at the Clayton Hotel. With almost 2000 voucher downloads, businesses such as Steak and Honour and Jack's Gelato receiving over 100 voucher redemptions and most businesses rating the overall experience with 3 out of 3 stars, we believe it was an excellent initiative for bringing customers back into the city after two years of unrest for many food establishments alike.

Window Wanderland

In January 2022, Cambridge BID brought a community arts project called Window Wanderland to Station Road for the first time. We commissioned four artists to design and decorate ground floor windows of office blocks. Coinciding with the lifting of work-from-home restrictions, we hoped the project would inject colour and life into the daily commute. The windows were Cambridge-themed, including intricate paper-cut installations of the Fitzwilliam and Botanic gardens, the literary life of the city in a book-themed display, and even a celebration of Cambridge United Football Club. Thanks to our participating businesses: Mott MacDonald, 50-60 Station Road, WeWork and Clayton Hotel, and to the brilliant artists: Anna Doherty, Adam Bridgland, Lois Cordelia and Lucy Gough.

Case Study: 2

Cambridge BID Covid Support Grant

The global pandemic hit our city hard and we were not able to deliver a full range of projects in 2020. We wanted to use these savings to repay and support our levy payers as they recovered and in early 2021, we agreed to allocate £150k to a business support grant that we launched in May 2021.

Up to £4,000 per business was available, it did not need to be matched and it could be used for a whole host of projects that would improve a business, the customer experience and the city. Applications covered a whole range of things, such as staff training, developing a new website, creating an online shop, buying new equipment, installing new customer booking systems, new signage and lighting for a business and creating new promotional materials. The principle was that if a business improves their premises, product offer, or online presence then this is beneficial for them but also for Cambridge as a city and the customer who uses the city.

The grant scheme was introduced in May 2021 and was available until March 31st, 2022.

'The Cambridge BID Covid Support Grant enabled my business to buy two A frames to advertise directly outside our restaurant, The Cambridge Chop House. This really helped us in the time of need when cash flow during Covid-19 was difficult and enabled us to communicate much better with the customer'

Oliver Thain
Managing Director, Cambuscuisine

'The Cambridge BID Covid Support Grant enabled my business to invest in Ta Bouche branded cafe banners in compliance with our outside tables and chairs licence. Not only has this improved our customer service and enabled us better control of our outside area, it has also given our venue more visual prominence and helped to increase our takings.'

Charlie Anderson
Owner, Ta Bouche Café & Cocktail Bar

The grant was very innovative, and we are not aware of any other BID allocating £150k of levy income to give back to businesses, the scheme was carefully developed with our board and a simple but robust application, validation, claim and payment process was implemented. Below are some examples of businesses that received the grant and how they used their payment;

Travel Agents

What we would like to do is mail all past bookers back to our Cambridge branch to start to enquire and book their holidays for 2022/23. We would like to highlight the many reasons why they should spend time in the city as well as spend time catching up with our travel experts planning their next overseas adventure.

'The Cambridge BID Covid Support Grant enabled my business to install much-needed additional, and more energy-efficient lighting. Not only has new lighting helped to make our kitchen and production area brighter, but new low-energy LED lighting in our windows makes our shop stand out, and far more inviting on the King's Parade.'

Richard Parsons
Marketing and Communications Manager, Fudge Kitchen

'The Cambridge BID grant has enabled the Old Ticket Office at station square to offer a premium terrace. We used our grant to purchase some new outside furniture and re-launch our outside terrace. This has elevated the guest experience and we have seen our business grow as a result! The Old Ticket Office is now the best place at the station to grab a light bite, craft beer and soak up the sun'

Jessica Bliss
Area Operations Manager, City Pub Co.

Highlighting booking your holiday face to face has a greater value than people previously may have thought. Especially around the huge confusion that surrounds travel and the millions of pounds clients have lost via booking with people that were unprotected or not willing to give refunds.

Menswear store

We are quite new to online trading and still learning and finding our feet. This money would enable us to better understand the communication and advertising required for us to be better placed in the online trading environment. More focused and detailed marketing will help the customer experience by having a more aimed and precise message about what we do and how we deliver that information.

Independent Jeweller

The changes we want to make will brighten up the studio so it looks brighter and fresher for our customers when sitting down for consultations. We believe it will also open up the studio to look bigger. The jewellery will be easier to look at and new carpets with a low pile will again make it more comfortable for customers who sit on average around a hour for each appointment. Lastly a better service from the team as a refreshed studio and environment will give a better wellbeing which will reflect better on our customers.



Support

LOVE CAMBRIDGE'S
HIDDEN GEMS
Shop Local. Eat Local. Love Local.

Independents Support Fund

The support fund has continued at pace and continues to deliver a range of projects for the Independents across the city. Projects have included Meet the Owner videos and interviews, advertorial content in Velvet Magazine, Cambridge Independent and Cambridge Edition as well as tailored trail across the city which are on the Love Cambridge website and promoted through social media.

Events & Festivals Grant Pot

Supporting external events and festivals and enabling others to deliver a wide range of activity throughout the year is another key project for Cambridge BID. Over the last 12 months we have supported Open Cambridge, Cambridge Literary Festival, Cambridge Film Festival, The North Pole Ice Rink and Cambridge Music Festival.

Sustainability

In November 2021 we launched Mission Compostable, delivered in partnership with Countrystyle and Envar. We run a service collecting food scraps and compostable packaging from four public bins, and it is turned into soil-enriching compost at Envar's facility in St. Ives. We're working with retailers using compostable products, encouraging their customers to maximise the potential of the project. Sustainability is a complex area and we continue to seek ways we can intervene and support the city and its businesses to become more environmentally sound.

Mystery Shop

During 2021/22 the Cambridge BID Mystery Shop Project ran again. Over 120 BID Businesses received two mystery shop visits during 2021 and the opportunity to attend a personalised one-to-one feedback session with Storecheckers, the independent company that undertakes the mystery shops on our behalf.

January 2022 saw the return of the Cambridge BID Awards, which recognise outstanding customer service amongst BID businesses based on their Mystery Shop scores. It was great to return to an in-person event that was attended by over 80 people and we were delighted to work with Cambridge Independent who covered the evening as we presented the Winners and Runners Up with their Awards across our 14 categories.

Jimmy English, Manager of GANT, Winner of the National Business Fashion Award commented: "Thank you from the whole team! I'm really pleased to accept this award for the quality of our customer service. We want to help our customers express their personality through their clothes, so it's brilliant to hear that our staff members are doing a great job of liaising with them."

Love Cambridge Gift Card

2021/22 was a fantastic year for the Love Cambridge Gift Card with sales exceeding £100,000 for the first time. As the Love Cambridge Gift Card can only be used in person, within participating BID businesses these sales represent money that is ringfenced for BID businesses. We currently have approximately 180 businesses signed up to accept the Love Cambridge Gift Card. Redemptions across participating businesses in 2021/22 almost mirrored sales with £99,186 of Love Cambridge Gift Cards being spent.

Very strong sales occurred in the run up to Christmas again, following a social media campaign, competitions and corporate campaign which all worked well to drive sales and ensure December 2021 was our most successful sales month to date.

City Performance Monitoring

Cambridge BID continues to publish a range of documents to help understand how Cambridge is performing. In 2021/22 two new footfall counters were installed in East Road and on Silver Street to add to our existing count lines across the city. Data from these two new counters will start to appear in our weekly and monthly reports from August 2022 once YOY data is available. Each Tuesday we publish footfall from the previous week so businesses like yours can see how footfall fared compared to the previous week and year both as a whole and by counter location. We also publish monthly footfall data for these seven counters in the few days after the month finishes.

Our monthly Cambridge Performance Report brings together footfall counter information alongside footfall data from shopping centres, car parking usage and both Park & Ride and Guided Busway usage. It also shows the work of our City Ambassadors by indicating how many visitors they have seen, for example. All this information provides a good basis to understand how Cambridge is performing.



Case Study: 3

Back to Work Scheme

This project aimed to encourage office-based employees back to the city, via targeted marketing, partnership work with employers and building managers, and engagement with Cambridge retailers. As the route out of permanent working-from-home was so unknown, we tried to get companies thinking about why they are based in Cambridge, and what the location offers them, particularly for staff engagement and wellbeing.

The complex (and still ongoing) nature of the 'return to work' process meant Back to Work was a long time in planning, with a few false starts on intended delivery date. It rolled out in September 2021 and March 2022. In September, Cambridge BID paid for gifts from local retailers and personally delivered them to office staff. We were pleased to deliver books from Heffers; pre-mixed cocktails from Bottleproof by La Raza; notebooks and accessories from Paperchase; pastel de nata from Norfolk Street Bakery; fresh coffee from Real Eating Co; sweet treats from Fudge Kitchen; pastries from Tradizioni, Signorelli's Deli and Stem + Glory; tote bags from Giles & Co, and house plants from Cambridge Bee to brighten up long-forgotten desks.

The retailers were given the opportunity to get their brand in front of customers, and share 'welcome back' offers of their own – giving the project more momentum. The office-based companies used our project to create an occasion worthy of meeting together in person for, and we had great feedback about increased team morale and a feeling of connection to the city. Were it not for the Covid-19 pandemic, Cambridge BID would have delivered our usual program of live events targeting the office sector (both Wimbledon and the Christmas Lights Switch-on were cancelled, though we were able to deliver the Olympics live footage). The Back to Work scheme meant we could still connect with this sector as they began to build up numbers of returning workers.

In March 2022 we gifted over 300 £10 Love Cambridge Gift Cards to levy-paying offices. The Love Cambridge Gift Card is accepted by 180+ businesses, so the project gave a BID-funded cash injection to local businesses that accept the gift card. The giveaway was timed to coincide with the city's Restaurant Week, and to boost the economy through promoting a 'shop local to your office' message. Companies told us they used the gift cards as rewards, on team building days, and to celebrate milestones like long service employees.

The pandemic emphasised how reliant local businesses are on a city's workers; the reverse is also true, as more pressure is now on companies to tempt staff to head into the office. The project helped Cambridge BID to connect meaningfully with employers to understand the challenges of bringing staff back to the city. This closer relationship gave us intelligence about numbers of staff returning, and when, which helped us to anticipate the city's recovery course. We were pleased to hear from participants that the project had a very positive impact on staff returning to their offices, it reminded them of the city they were working in, and offered retailers a fresh profile with these office workers.

'Offices in 50-60 Station Road have continued to benefit from the fantastic initiatives supported by Cambridge BID.'

Love Cambridge Gift Cards have been a great way to encourage employees to spend locally and explore further what Cambridge has to offer – especially the wide range of independent retailers and unique food outlets'.

Jodie Welch
Transport Planner at Stantec



Finances

2021/22 Financial Snapshot

Income

BID levy	£977,604
Sponsorship	£10,762
Map Advertising Sales	£1,050
Interest receivable	£92
Other income	£74,944
Total	£1,064,452

Expenditure

Operating costs	£203,818
Welcome	£440,074
Experience	£164,902
Support	£252,014
Total	£1,060,808

(Deficit)/surplus for the year (£6,691)

Over 98% of businesses that remained trading paid their levy in 2021-22 and we delivered almost a full project programme.

We allocated savings from the previous year to our £150k business support grant, support of the visitor economy through our PR campaigns and hiring a new social media and digital co-ordinator.

The extent we can support the city going forward is wholly dependent on our levy being paid and we thank those that are up to date with this.

Over the past twelve months, the Board of Directors has ensured that both levy payments and voluntary contributions were used efficiently by Cambridge BID, to meet the stated aims of promoting and improving the city of Cambridge for businesses, organisations, visitors, and residents.

Looking Ahead to 2028

If we looked back five years who would have thought we would have had a global pandemic for two of them, still be feeling the negative impacts of Brexit, be on the brink of recession and have a war in mainland Europe.

That is why predicting the future is tough. One thing is certain, Cambridge will remain a place to live, work and visit, it will remain a place of strong inward investment, one that nurtures brilliant minds who go on to develop world changing ideas and form global leading companies. All our minds need a place to play, a place to relax, a place of vibrancy and diversity, a place to meet friends, to do business, to live and work and that is what Cambridge is.

Cambridge BID and our projects underpin and support so much of this activity, this annual report sums up the many touchpoints of where we add value to our levy payers, to visitors and residents. This October our levy payers will have the chance to vote for a third term and five more years of Cambridge BID so our work will continue until 2028.

Our focus during this time will be in two project areas, Welcome & Experience and Connect & Support, we will continue many of our current projects but deliver new activity to give visitors a great welcome and experience encouraging them to stay longer, stay overnight and to explore the region with Cambridge as a base. We will also deliver new activity by connecting people with our city, these could be office workers, residents and students and we will support our businesses in doing so.

During these five years we will deliver over £6.5 million in new investment to the City, along with this Annual Report we have produced a Final Consultation document that outlines our plans for our third term and in September we will launch our new business plan. This will be showcased at our Business Plan launch and Mystery Shop Awards evening on September 29th at The Cambridge Union.

As you can see Cambridge BID is essentially a community business fund, which supports businesses, makes the city vibrant, promotes the city, supports many cultural events, and works with other agencies to make our city safe and clean. Your BID levy funds these projects. We are a not for profit, so all your levy is invested in these projects and the team to deliver these. All BID Directors represent businesses and organisations in Cambridge so we understand the pressures that individual businesses are facing because we too are experiencing these on a personal level.

That's why I would encourage you to Vote Yes in the ballot later this year. We are here to help your business succeed, and we can achieve more if we all work together towards the common goal of seeing our city thrive.

Ian Sandison
CEO, Cambridge BID



Keep in Touch

To tell us what else you would like to see Cambridge BID deliver, or to comment on any of our projects, email becky.burrell@cambridgebid.co.uk

To receive regular email updates from Cambridge BID on issues relevant to your business, send your preferred contact details to info@cambridgebid.co.uk

Connect with us on Social Media

For consuming-facing projects and events, where we regularly support social media campaigns run by BID businesses and organisations, visit:

 [@LoveCambridge_](#)

 [@LoveCambridge_](#)

 [@LoveCambs](#)

[#LoveCambridge](#)

For B2B messages, shared for and on behalf of businesses within the BID area, visit:

 [@CambridgeBID](#)

 [Cambridge BID](#)

[#CambridgeBID](#)

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