



Agenda BID Board Meeting Tuesday 13th January 2026, ASH Restaurant

1. Welcome and Apologies

Mark Wilkinson, BID Chairman, welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Attendees (alphabetical order)

- Alison Clack – Cerda Planning
- Anna Jackson – Sutton Coldfield College
- Cllr David Barrie – Birmingham City Council
- Cllr Richard Parkin – Sutton Coldfield Town Council
- David Hemming – Burley Browne
- Mark Wilkinson – BID Chairman, Coburg Banks
- Michelle Baker – BID Manager
- Stephen Roberts – Shackleton

Apologies (alphabetical order)

- Andy Dixon – Ash Restaurant
- Dagen Thompson – Sutton Coldfield College
- Mark Harris – Harris Accountants
- Stephen Nixon – Enoch Evans Solicitors

2. BID Board Representation

Michelle Baker highlighted the importance of ensuring the Board reflects all BID sectors and levy payers. Vacancies currently exist within the Retail and Leisure sectors. The Board reviewed current sector representation:

- Professional Services: 5
- Education: 1
- Hospitality: 1
- Retail: 0
- Leisure: 0
- Public Sector: 2

Victoria Lawton (I Am Yogi) has applied to join the BID Board to represent the Leisure sector. Stephen Roberts, Anna Jackson and Michelle Baker will meet with her to discuss her application further.

It was proposed that Harvey Norman be invited to join the Board to represent National Retail. The Gracechurch Centre remains a Board member; however, representation is expected to resume in 2026 following their staff changes.

Action: Michelle Baker to contact Victoria Lawton and the Gracechurch Centre.

3. 2025 BID Review

Michelle Baker circulated the draft 2025 BID Review which provides BID members with details on the projects and initiatives the BID delivered.

Feedback included a suggestion from Alison Clack to incorporate supportive quotes from West Midlands Police, businesses and residents to evidence impact.

The final Review will be:

- Professionally printed and hand-delivered to all levy payers
 - Emailed to BID members
 - Published on the BID website
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4. BID Projects – Summary of activity at the end of 2025

Christmas Market 2025

Michelle Baker provided a detailed overview of the Sutton Coldfield Victorian Christmas Market which ran for 8 days (11–14 December and 18–21 December), delivered by LSD Promotions. The BID funded the marketing, extensive advertising and entertainment across both weekends.

Key Feedback Themes from the General Public Following the Christmas Market Consultation

Overall Direction

- Strong public preference for a traditional festive Christmas Market
- Victorian theme did not resonate as intended
- No themed market proposed for future years

Wooden Chalets

- Public preference for wooden chalets as used at the 2024 market
- However they result in significantly higher hire trader fees and installation costs for the operator LSD Promotions
- Gazebos used in 2025 to manage trader fees (similar model used in Stratford-upon-Avon)

Trader Mix

- Public desire for more Christmas gift stalls
- BID cannot compel trader attendance or product range
- BID did underwrite some trader fees in 2024 for the first Christmas Market but this was not financially sustainable for 2025 and those traders in 2024 that were assisted did not return in 2025

Food & Drink

- Demand for traditional festive offerings – mulled wine, bratwurst, roasted chestnuts, flower wreaths, Christmas trees, decorations, gifts
- There were traders selling the above items but some traders withdrew in week two due to low week one sales

Consistency

- Mixed feedback from the public: some want consistent traders; previous feedback requested variation across all dates

Pricing

- Expectation that pricing of goods should feel more affordable than city centre markets

Seating

- Requests for additional seating
- In 2024 the BID funded wooden picnic benches but these were underused and therefore not hired in 2025

Layout

- Need for improved stall placement i.e. dog treats next to candles and mixed smells
- Stall allocation determined by operator, not the BID

Entertainment & Safety (BID Funded)

- Free Meet and Greet with Father Christmas including throne and props, installed in the Gracechurch Centre (4 days)
- Walk-in snow globe for visitors to have a photo inside, installed in the Gracechurch Centre (2 days)
- Illuminated photo frame, installed in the Gracechurch Centre (37 days)
- Brass band on opening day of the market, Victorian dressed stilt walker (4 days), children's festive characters i.e. Gingerbreads and Elves (4 days)
- BID Security Rangers (every weekend and New Year's Eve)

It was noted by the Board that any stakeholder contributions would strengthen future programming.

Footfall

- High weekend daytime footfall
- Low Thursday, Friday daytime and evening trade
- Suggestion to anchor Christmas attractions at either end of the market
- Potential to extend the stall layout into Gracechurch (subject to agreement)

Parking

- Suggestion to extend the free Town Council Christmas parking to weekday daytime hours as the market traders reported low footfall on Thursdays and Fridays – information passed to Cllr Richard Parkin as Town Council representative

Trading Hours

- Traders must adhere to advertised times as some visitors attended and the market had closed early. Decision to close by market operator due to low footfall

Accessibility

- Improved planning required for visually impaired visitors – feedback for operator

Market Length

- Traders favour shorter events
- Public favours longer duration
- 22 days in 2024 considered too long; 8 days in 2025 too short

Board Discussion

The Board discussed appetite and direction for 2026. It was agreed the BID will meet LSD Promotions the market operator in spring to review improvements.

Other Christmas Activity

Town Council Free Bus Travel

Feedback from the public indicated previous users in 2024 were unable to reuse the scheme in 2025. Information passed to Cllr Richard Parkin as the Sutton Coldfield Town Council representative. The BID agreed that the free parking initiative and free bus travel was extremely beneficial for local businesses and the Christmas market.

Gracechurch Contribution

There was no Christmas entertainment contribution or sponsorship from

Gracechurch in 2025, which had an impact on the overall festive programming budget. Historically, Gracechurch has provided the Father Christmas offer and sponsored BID activities; however, as this was not delivered in 2025, the BID stepped in to fund and provide this element to ensure continuity of the town centre Christmas experience.

BID Security Marshals

Received positive feedback from Police which was relayed to the contractor.

BID & Rhodehouse Toy Appeal

Second year the BID sponsored The Rhodehouse Christmas Toy Appeal. This year it was delivered in partnership with Aston Knowles Estate Agents who acted as a drop off point for gifts. All gift donations were delivered to Good Hope Hospital.

5. BID Projects – 3 months January to March 2026

BID Public Art Programme

- Six phone cabinets painted (Sept 2025)
- Birmingham Road panel painted (Nov 2025)
- No vandalism reported which is positive
- Mill Street mural scheduled Spring 2026 (BCC permission granted)

BID Professional Services Networking

- Breakfast event: 3 February
- Venue: Silver Tree Bakery – Arbour Club co-working space above the bakery
- 50 RSVPs from BID members to date
- Handelsbanken (Birmingham) requested attendance; Board agreed priority remains local businesses but mutual benefit may exist

Markets & Events 2026

- Nine Farmers & Craft Markets planned for 2026 (Mar–Nov)
- Two 3-day Food Festivals planned (April & September)
- Carl Chinn talk – 23 June (The Rhodehouse hosting)
- Parade bunting (fourth year installation)

Let's Talk Business – 4th Event

- Potential speaker: Theo Paphitis (23 June availability)
- Proposed free event for levy payers

No decision was made on this proposal due to budget considerations in the BID's final year. However, it was acknowledged that previous speaker events had been

well attended and positively received by BID members, particularly those within the professional services sector who attended the Mary Portas (2023), Sara Davies (2024) and Deborah Meaden (2025) events.

6. Public Safety & Infrastructure

- Birmingham City Council had provided a CCTV quote to Michelle Baker (BID) and Councillors Richard Parkin and David Pears in December 2025 following the site visit in February 2025. The cost is £45,000 for three new digital cameras (including civil works). The BID will formally submit the quote to the Town Council and Pride In Place Board (as funding holders).
 - Bollards: Cost information obtained from Lichfield District Council following their recent installation. This project would benefit The Parade as it is a pedestrianised street but has no restrictions to prevent a terrorist incident. The BID has previously sent costs to the Town and City Council.
 - BID recommended CCTV and bollards through Pride In Place consultation. No confirmation of adoption at this stage.
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7. Birmingham City Council Updates

- The BID has requested updates on the vacant BCC premises (Poundland, former TGI's, Jimmy Spices) which are all owned by the City Council and are in key locations in the town centre
 - Newhall Walk car park complaints have been escalated by the BID to BCC CEO Joanne Roney
 - 2026 rateable values spreadsheet expected from BCC in February
 - Awaiting confirmation of projected BID income (due to adjusted financial year – April – December 2026)
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8. BID Reballot – Early Discussion

Item deferred due to time constraints.

Potential considerations:

- Extension of BID area (Anchorage Road, Upper Clifton Road, Train Station area)
 - Feedback from BCC regarding Sutton Park
 - Mere Green appetite survey required
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9. Round Table Updates

Updates received from:

- Sutton Coldfield College
- Town Centre Regeneration Partnership
- Birmingham City Council
- Sutton Coldfield Town Council

The Town Council has proposed filling two large brick planters on The Parade and Lower Parade with bark chippings due to the heavy shade from surrounding trees, which has made it difficult for plants to thrive in these locations. The BID has contacted Cllr David Pears and offered its support in exploring alternative planting solutions to retain greenery in the town centre, including options such as shade-tolerant shrubs, low-maintenance greenery, or a rockery-style approach.

10. Any Other Business

- BID shortlisted for Chamber of Commerce Award
- Letter of support submitted via BCC Planning Portal for The Royal pub food truck proposal
- 2026 Board meeting dates to be circulated for availability selection

Meeting end.