

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Hereford **BID**
Investing in our City



Discover the latest news and updates from Hereford Business Improvement District.



Chief Executive Update

Dear BID Member,

Six weeks on, the success of Hereford BID's **flagship Hereford Medieval Festival** continues to be talked about across the city. On behalf of everyone at Hereford BID, I'd like to thank our BID members, partners, sponsors, volunteers, performers and the thousands of visitors who helped make the event such a memorable success.



As lead organisers, Hereford BID was proud to deliver this flagship event in collaboration with Hereford Cathedral, with valued support from our sponsors, including headline sponsor Hereford City Council. Together, we created an unforgettable medieval experience that generated exceptional footfall, showcased our fantastic businesses and highlighted everything that makes Hereford special.

None of this would have been possible without the continued investment and support of our BID members. Thank you for helping us strengthen the city centre economy and raise Hereford's profile.

After a well-earned rest and time to reflect, planning is already underway for the festival's return in **2028**. We'll build on everything we've learned to make our next flagship event even bigger, better and more memorable.

Until we meet again on the medieval battlefield... may the spoils be plentiful!

Mike Truelove, Chief Executive, Hereford BID

Free Networking Event for BID Members

The Business that Adapts, Survives & Thrives | Networking Breakfast

Looking to grow your business, make valuable new connections and leave with practical ideas you can use straight away? Join Hereford BID's exclusive Business that Adapts, Survives & Thrives Networking Breakfast, open exclusively to BID members.

Enjoy a **FREE** cooked breakfast while networking with fellow city centre businesses, then hear from three inspiring speakers. Hereford BID CEO Mike Truelove will provide a fast-paced BID update, bestselling author and performance coach Garry Jones will share strategies for developing a winning mindset, and our very own marketing expert Peter Hubbersty will reveal practical & easy, low-cost marketing ideas backed by over 40 years' experience with leading global brands.

Date:
Wednesday
30 September
2026
Time: 7:15 am – 8:45 am
Place: The Green Dragon Hotel

Fresh ideas, valuable contacts and practical advice—all before 9 am.

Places are limited, so email info@herefordbid.co.uk today to book your **FREE** place.



Security Update

DISC

DISC is a simple and powerful app that helps you report and respond to business crimes. From your mobile device, you can:

- View mugshot galleries of prolific offenders currently active in Hereford.
- Quickly report shoplifting or anti-social behaviour, including uploading photos.
- Receive notifications when police review your submitted reports.

DISC is one of the most effective tools available for combating petty crime and anti-social behaviour – and the more local businesses use it, the stronger our city's network of protection becomes.

Support and in-person training are available. If you haven't done so, now is the perfect time to book a training session for you and your team. It takes just minutes to get up to speed, and the impact can be significant. The more information we share about criminal activity, the better protected we all are from repeat offenders.

If you are not currently using DISC, reach out to ryan.dorn@herefordbid.co.uk, and we will get you set up on our security database.

ShopWatch Banning Scheme



The Hereford SHOPWATCH Scheme helps businesses work together to tackle shoplifting, anti-social behaviour and violence through shared intelligence on the DISC system.

Businesses should report all incidents on DISC. An offender linked to one verified incident within a 12-month period may receive a formal warning. If they are linked to two or more verified incidents within 12 months—or commit a serious offence involving violence, threats or abuse—they may be considered for exclusion from all participating SHOPWATCH businesses.

Team Hereford reviews cases monthly, and bans are approved by a majority vote. Standard exclusions last 12 months, with longer bans possible for repeat or serious offenders.

All members are encouraged to submit incident reports promptly, display their SHOPWATCH window sticker and support agreed banning decisions. By working together, we can create a safer city centre for businesses, staff and customers alike.

If you are interested in joining the ShopWatch Banning Scheme, reach out to ryan.dorn@herefordbid.co.uk.

Handy Team Projects

Making Hereford Sparkle

One of the highlights of this summer has undoubtedly been our floral displays. The hanging baskets have looked fantastic, and I'd like to thank everyone who has taken the time to tell us how much they've been enjoyed. This year's display has been one of the best we've delivered.



That said, I'd also like to be open about the challenges we've faced. Because of difficulties recruiting staff and an exceptionally hot summer, much of our Handy Team's time has been spent keeping more than 450 hanging baskets watered, often requiring additional hours to keep them at their best. As a result, we haven't been able to stay on top of weeds and graffiti as much as we'd like.



We are recruiting - do you know a good handyperson? The good news is that we're currently recruiting a Handy Person to join the team. We're looking for someone with practical DIY, cleaning and self-management skills who can help us keep Hereford looking its very best. If you know someone who might be interested, we'd love to hear from them. Contact us on the email below. touch.

Marketing

We have a number of tools for you to use to promote your business, offers and campaigns.

Website listing – check yours and let us know if it needs updating.

What's On Section – Do you have an event or promotion we can feature for you.

Social Media Channels:

If you have an event or promotion we can feature it, so please don't hesitate to let us know. FB 15,000 followers and Instagram 5,000 followers.

Email database (19,500 signed up for promotional messaging) – Do you have an event or promotion we can feature for you?

Trails are excellent awareness tools, as trails bring people to your shop windows.

Tourists and visitors love our **city maps**. Keep a stock in and hand them out to customers who need them.

Gift Card – Display POS and state that you accept the Gift Card on your website, social media, and email.



Autumn & Christmas – Driving Footfall into Hereford

As always, Hereford BID has an exciting programme of events and activities planned to increase footfall, encourage visitors to spend longer in the city and support our fantastic businesses. From cocktail trails and Halloween to Christmas magic, plenty is happening over the coming months.



Shaken & Stirred Cocktail Trail

Running until 24th December, our popular Shaken & Stirred Cocktail Trail is the perfect excuse for residents and visitors to discover Hereford's fantastic bars, pubs and hospitality venues.

Trail maps are available from 24th September at participating venues and Hereford Tourist Information Centre.

Halloween Returns – Saturday 31 October

On Saturday 31 October, Hereford BID's annual Halloween spectacular returns to High Town, promising another spooktacular day of family fun. Expect roaming characters, live entertainment, music, themed performances and fantastic photo opportunities that draw thousands of visitors into the city centre. It's become one of our most popular events, creating a real buzz throughout Hereford while encouraging families to stay longer, explore more and support local businesses.

Our popular Trick or Treat Trail will also return, encouraging families to visit participating businesses across the city centre. If your business will be open on the day and would like to take part, please get in touch as soon as possible. Spaces are limited and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

A Magical Christmas in Hereford

Christmas preparations begin in late November with the installation of Christmas trees for participating BID businesses using our new hanging basket brackets. Each tree will be professionally installed and supplied with battery-operated lights, although businesses are welcome to power their own displays where practical.

Traditionally, free parking has been available on Wednesday evenings leading up to Christmas to support late-night shopping. At the time of writing, Herefordshire Council has yet to confirm this year's arrangements. We continue to make the case on behalf of businesses and will update members as soon as we receive confirmation.

Our festive programme then gets into full swing from Saturday 19th to Monday 21st December. High Town will once again host Santa's Magical Grotto, with snow effects and our popular Ski Slope photo opportunity with festive entertainment, alongside our fantastic Christmas Elf Trail, where every participating child receives a prize and one lucky winner will take home a Hereford Gift Card.

We look forward to welcoming thousands of visitors into the city throughout the autumn and festive season, helping to make Hereford a vibrant place to shop, eat, drink and enjoy.



Review of Medieval Hereford Festival

Hereford's Flagship Medieval Festival Delivers a Weekend to Remember

Hereford city centre came alive as thousands of visitors descended on Hereford BID's flagship Hereford Medieval Festival, creating an unforgettable weekend of history, entertainment and community spirit.

Led by Hereford BID in collaboration with Hereford Cathedral, the festival transformed the city into a bustling medieval marketplace, complete with spectacular battle re-enactments, living history encampments, traditional music, storytelling, puppet shows, interactive family activities and hands-on experiences. Children explored medieval life by trying on armour, families followed the city trail, and brave volunteers – including a few willing bosses and colleagues – took their turn in the ever-popular stocks!

The festival created a fantastic atmosphere throughout the city centre, with cafés, restaurants, shops and attractions welcoming more visitors. Many businesses embraced the occasion by decorating their premises, running special offers and helping to create a truly memorable experience for residents and visitors alike.

More than just a weekend of entertainment, the festival showcased Hereford's rich heritage while supporting the local economy by encouraging people to stay longer, explore more and discover the city's fantastic independent businesses.

A huge thank you goes to our BID members, sponsors, performers, volunteers, Hereford Cathedral, Hereford City Council and everyone who helped make the festival such a success. The overwhelmingly positive feedback has been incredibly rewarding. Although the dust has only just settled, Hereford BID is already looking ahead to the festival's return in 2028, when we hope to make our flagship event even bigger, better and bolder.



Hereford BID Welcomes Parking Strategy but Warns Consumer Habits Have Changed

The draft Parking Strategy for 2026–2041 is a welcome opportunity to rethink how parking supports Hereford. There is much to praise, including its focus on accessibility, improved technology, pay-on-exit systems and a more customer-focused approach. However, it also overlooks one of the biggest challenges facing our city centre: consumer behaviour has changed.

Parking needs to feel fair, proportionate, offer value for money and, above all, encourage people to visit. We recognise Herefordshire Council faces significant financial pressures and must recover the costs of operating and maintaining its parking service. But parking policy must also help businesses compete in an increasingly difficult retail environment.

Our latest footfall data shows visitor numbers are around **20% lower than this time last year**, continuing a worrying long-term decline seen over many years. Consumer confidence plays a part, but shopping habits have changed dramatically. For around **£4.99 a month**, consumers can subscribe to services such as Deliveroo or Uber Eats and have meals, groceries and everyday products delivered to their door, often within **45 minutes**. This is a rapidly expanding area of growth for businesses such as Superdrug and Waitrose. With that convenience, many people naturally question whether it is worth driving into the city, paying for parking, and making the journey at all.

People still want to visit Hereford, but increasingly they come for an experience rather than to shop. That makes parking more important than ever. It should be viewed as an investment in footfall and the local economy, not just a source of income.

We welcome this consultation and the opportunity for an honest debate. Stakeholders must be consulted for an all-round view at ground level. The current model no longer delivers the footfall our businesses need, and the evidence is clear. If we want a thriving city centre, parking must become part of the solution.



Hereford Gift Card

After a fantastic year with campaigns that included Christmas, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Corporate gifting and teacher gift purchases, the Hereford Gift Card is celebrating a record-breaking fifth year, with an impressive £58,113 spent in local businesses. The scheme continues to do a fantastic job of keeping money within the Hereford economy, driving footfall and encouraging spending across the city centre.

Currently, the Hereford Gift Card can be used in over 130 businesses across the city centre.

Even more excitingly, we're launching tokenised digital gift cards. This new technology means businesses can accept Hereford Gift Cards through all compatible payment terminals, removing swipe-only limitations and making the scheme easier than ever to use. It's a major step forward that will help more businesses join the scheme and make redeeming gift cards seamless for customers.

Want to get on the digital Gift Card waiting list? Email ryan.dorn@herefordbid.co.uk to get your business ready to accept a wave of Gift Cards before Christmas 2026!

STAY CONNECTED!

For weekly and monthly updates, make sure you're following Hereford BID and are subscribed to our email newsletter.

www.herefordbid.co.uk

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