



St Ives BID Board Meeting Minutes

Date – Monday 21st September 2026

Chair – Alex

Present – Sarah, Michael, Louise, Kirsty, Paul, Simon, Justin, Frankie and Steve

1. Visit St Ives Update

Winter Campaigns and Website Traffic

Alex provided an update on planned winter campaigns for Visit St Ives, including banner advertising at approximately £50 per banner per month, with a minimum three-month commitment.

The purpose is to increase traffic to the Visit St Ives website and provide businesses with an opportunity to promote themselves during quieter months.

Paul expressed an interest in purchasing banners for both Host and The Pantry on Fore Street.

Social Media Administration

Alex advised that there will be a change to the administration of Visit St Ives social media. Chloe, Louise's daughter, will take over the social media activity. Chloe currently manages social media for Cornish Escapes and will move across to support Visit St Ives.

It was confirmed that Chloe will be paid directly by Visit St Ives and that this expenditure will not come from the St Ives BID budget.

Sarah discussed proposed changes to the social media strategy and the importance of using social media as a key driver of traffic to VisitStIves.com.

The Board discussed the changing role of websites and social media in destination marketing. Social platforms increasingly provide the initial point of discovery for visitors, with the website providing a more detailed source of information.

2. Tourism Levy and Visit Cornwall Update

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the proposed tourism levy and the potential implications for St Ives and Cornwall.

Sarah advised that further information would be shared following the next relevant meeting with Visit Cornwall. Current discussions indicate a potential levy of approximately 5%, should the proposal proceed.

Impact on Businesses and the Visitor Economy

Board members discussed concerns that a tourism levy could affect the length of the tourism season, particularly if accommodation businesses seek to manage turnover in order to remain below relevant VAT thresholds.

Simon and Steve expressed concern that 5% is a significant level of taxation and raised concerns about the potential impact on St Ives.

Paul commented that a significant proportion of visitors are currently very budget-conscious and felt that an additional charge could negatively affect his businesses.

Sarah reported that feedback being received by the BID from accommodation providers has been strongly opposed to the introduction of the levy. Concerns have also been raised by retailers and other businesses across St Ives, particularly given the current economic climate.

Local Allocation of Levy Revenue

Michael Evemy, representing St Ives Town Council, explained that the Town Council has been considering potential uses of any funding, including public toilets, street cleaning, waste management and general infrastructure.

Michael stated that the town is 'creaking at the seams' as a result of visitor numbers and that investment in infrastructure is required.

The Town Council has asked whether St Ives could receive a proportionate allocation of any tourism levy revenue generated locally, given the infrastructure pressures experienced by the town.

Alex stressed the importance of transparency and information sharing. If a levy is introduced, businesses and residents need to understand precisely where the money will be spent.

Simon Sharp expressed concerns about Cornwall Council administering the money, referring to previous concerns regarding the management of resources.

Day Visitors

Paul highlighted the large number of day visitors to St Ives. Day visitors contribute to pressure on toilets, waste, cleaning, roads, infrastructure and public spaces, but would not necessarily contribute to a tourism levy if it is applied only to overnight accommodation.

This raised concerns that the levy could generate revenue from accommodation visitors while failing to directly address a significant proportion of infrastructure pressure caused by day visitors.

Wider BID Position

Sarah advised that the wider Cornwall BIDs position was currently strongly concerned about the introduction of a tourism levy. Sarah will raise the issue at the next Cornwall BIDs meeting and seek further information on the views of other BIDs.

3. Cruise Ships Update

Sarah provided an update on the BID's ongoing work with the cruise ship industry. Sarah and Catherine have undertaken tours and meetings with international travel agents and cruise operators, with the aim of increasing St Ives' profile and securing future visitor excursions.

The BID will continue developing relationships with TUI, InterCruise and AP Cruises to secure future footfall and support local businesses.

Sarah advised that further discussions with cruise operators will take place over the coming months, including engagement at Falmouth Docks.

Once discussions have taken place, the BID will produce the 2027 cruise ship calendar, allowing businesses to see expected ships, dates and anticipated visitor volumes.

4. Drone Footage and Costings

Sarah presented a proposal for new drone footage of St Ives at an approximate cost of £380 + VAT.

The footage would help visitors understand the layout of St Ives, discover different areas, find less obvious streets and locations, navigate between attractions and better understand the town before and during their visit.

Paul and Alex expressed strong support. Michael Evemy suggested organising footage into geographical zones. Sarah explained that some zoning has already been developed through this year's colour-coded street maps and that the drone footage could complement this.

Decision: Unanimously agreed to proceed with the drone footage at approximately £380 + VAT.

Street Decoration

Sarah reported that this year's colour-coded street decoration and associated bunting have worked particularly well. Sarah will speak to Dom regarding costs for additional decals and bunting for next year.

5. British BIDs Conference

Unanimously agreed that Sarah and Catherine should attend the British BIDs conference.

The Board noted the networking opportunities, Catherine's collection of the British BIDs marketing award, opportunities to engage with other BIDs and Central Government representatives, and the expected discussion of tourism levy proposals.

6. Gold Card Update

The scheme has currently generated just under £4,000 in profit. Three payments of £250 have already been made towards sponsorship of events. Following remaining costs, the anticipated available balance is approximately £3,000 - £3,250.

It was agreed that, as with last year, nominations should be sought for projects or initiatives where Gold Card funds could be spent.

BID Board members unanimously agreed both Gold Card holders and participating Gold Card businesses should have an opportunity to vote on the preferred use of the funds.

7. St Ives Food Festival

The Board discussed the proposed approach to supporting the next St Ives Food Festival. There was concern about simply committing approximately £3,500, as we did last year, without addressing the operational and safety issues experienced at the previous festival.

Sarah will investigate the cost of providing additional street marshal coverage, potentially Friday and Saturday from midday to 2.00am and Sunday approximately 10.00am to 4.00pm.

The Board agreed that further discussions with the police are essential.

The Board also discussed the importance of the BID's involvement in expanding the St Ives Food Village to ensure local businesses are represented and the event is more connected to the town's existing food and hospitality businesses.

Sarah advised that discussions with the police are already taking place. Street marshals will be linked directly to the police via SentrySIS and SIFF radios.

8. Any Other Business

Town Flowers, Hanging Baskets and Community Gardening

Frankie asked whether the BID could develop a scheme similar to the town's existing floral displays, potentially including hanging baskets and additional flowers around St Ives.

Sarah explained that the BID has investigated this previously. Cormac does not currently have the capability to undertake smaller individual floral installations unless a separate local arrangement is established, but has expressed an interest in supporting a community gardening scheme.

The Board discussed identifying community gardening grants and working with the Town Council, including the possible reinstatement of the greenhouses at Trewyn Gardens.

A local growing facility could produce flowers and plants locally, support community involvement, supply businesses with locally grown plants, create a consistent floral standard and support potential future participation in Britain in Bloom.

Pop-Up Businesses

Paul raised concerns regarding the increasing use of pop-up businesses in St Ives, particularly where premises do not maintain consistent opening hours.

His concern was that some pop-ups can result in premises appearing closed or empty for significant periods, which does not necessarily contribute positively to the appearance and vitality of the town centre. Other Board members expressed similar concerns.