



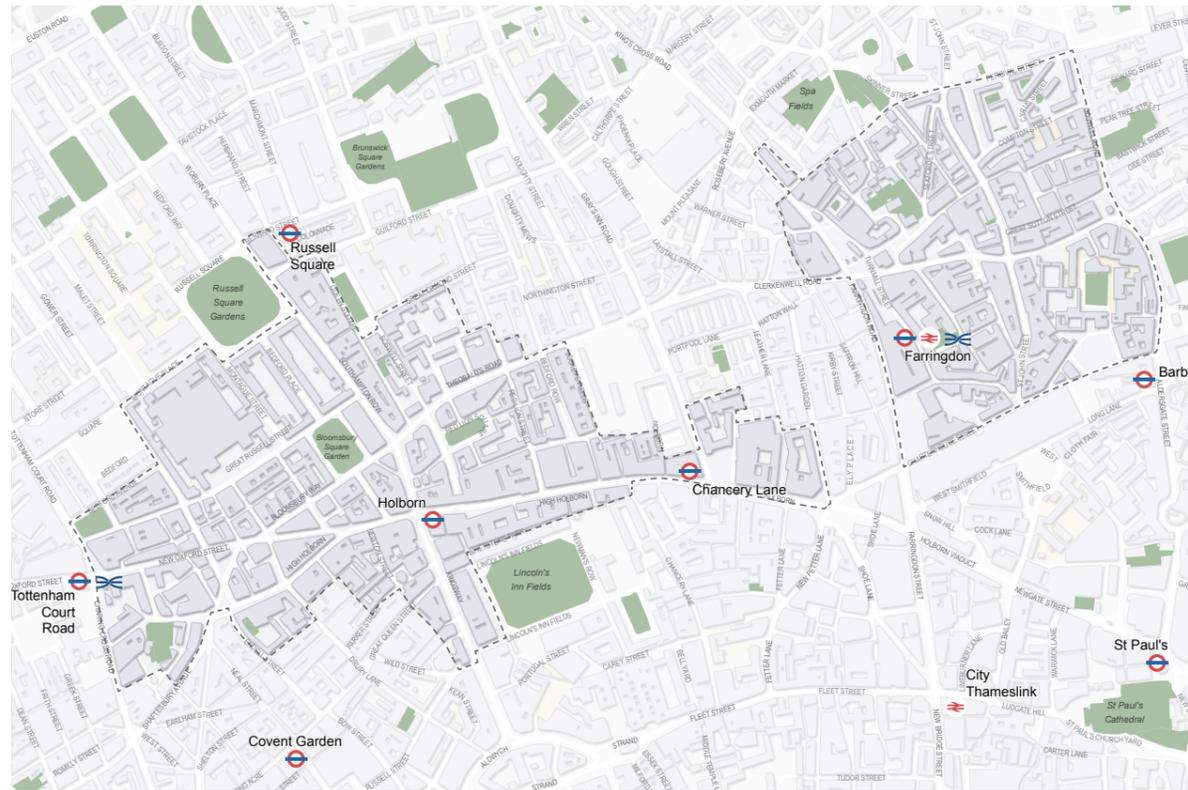
**Central  
District  
Alliance**

The BID for Holborn  
and Clerkenwell

# Annual Report

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2021-2022



Central District Alliance (CDA) is the Business Improvement District (BID) representing Holborn, St Giles, Bloomsbury and Clerkenwell and Farringdon.



# Foreword

CDA is committed to maintaining and improving the economic vitality of the area which benefits its member businesses and the communities in which it operates. This annual report covers the period 6 April 2021 – 5th April 2022 and provides a high level overview of our projects and achievements.

CDA’s mission is to create an exciting business and cultural environment with maximum return on investment for its members and the local community. Following its successful re-ballot, which concluded at the end of February 2020, CDA was delighted to have received a strong YES from its district businesses; to continue to a fourth term.

Business Improvement Districts are a means of supporting and managing business communities; they are a force for good and attract and retain businesses in the area. Central District Alliance BID is one of the

largest and most successful BIDs in the country. It serves 400 businesses, aiming to make this area the destination of choice for business.

Holborn, Farringdon and their surrounding areas are some of the best-connected locations in central London. The architecture in this part of the city is diverse, spanning centuries; many well-kept green spaces exist such as Lincoln’s Inn Fields, Bloomsbury Square and Red Lion Square. These gardens provide a welcoming feel to the area and offer respite to workers, visitors and residents.

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# Welcome

We are pleased to bring you our 2021 – 2022 Annual Report, it has been a really busy year for the BID and this report gives you just a ‘snapshot’ of the activity that has taken place.

Part of our commitment is the continued delivery of our core priorities as well as being a voice for our business community – lobbying government and working closely in partnership with other stakeholders and our local boroughs of Camden and Islington.

Policy-makers have pursued policies to increase the number of people working and living in their cities’ centres for the past thirty years. The reason for this is economic: concentrated economic activity generates productivity gains. There are social equity and sustainability benefits too. Theatres and museums thrive on being in close proximity to each other, as do hotels, retailers, restaurants and their complex supply chains. It is important that we invest in the ecosystem that will encourage office return and thus boost the local, London and national economy.

We continue to pursue neighbourhood economic development by working with businesses, landowners and property owners in order to improve our district. This means proactively attracting new businesses, helping existing businesses thrive and grow and ensuring that the area meets the requirements to provide a safe and productive return to the workplace.

Our core priorities are central to the work we do in making our district safer and more welcoming. This means continued investment in delivering important services, such as street cleansing activities, security patrols, and removing graffiti. These services are enhancements and in addition to services provided by local authorities. We have a commitment to make our district a safer and more welcoming place for everyone.

The CDA is also working to create a stronger connection with the community. This means hosting events such as our Village Fete, supporting local skills and employment initiatives, and other community building activities.

On behalf of CDA’s Chief Executive and Board Directors, I would like to express our gratitude for your ongoing support and generosity. If you have any ideas or suggestions as to what we should be doing and where we could make improvements, please do get in touch.



*Alexander Jan*

Alexander Jan  
Chair



*Debbie Akehurst*

Debbie Akehurst  
Chief Executive

The Central District Alliance Business Improvement District, a coalition of businesses in Camden’s Holborn, Bloomsbury St Giles and Islington’s Farringdon and Clerkenwell neighbourhoods, has been a champion of the area for over fifteen years.

We invest in and foster economic and social sustainability by developing and providing environmental and social programmes and services to local businesses that also benefit the local communities in which we operate. Our Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) priorities are developing and growing, and we look forward to sharing more of these with you over the coming year.

Our investment into these priorities, as well as delivering on our core priorities ‘clean, green, safe and welcoming, sees much needed investment into the area. The opening of the Elizabeth line at Farringdon Station is now heralded as ‘London’s New Front Door’ giving people direct access to the BID area and we must ensure that we maximise this investment for all.

The BID has been successful in implementing many improvements over its tenure; these include new signage that directs visitors toward popular destinations in the area, as well as an interactive app that pinpoints nearby restaurants, bars, clubs and cafés.

The BID also provides a number of services for local businesses, including marketing and branding campaigns, maintenance of common areas such as parks and roads and an information hub that offers advice on everything from business plans to tax breaks.

In addition, we have created partnerships with local government agencies such as the Greater London Authority and Transport for London as well as our local authorities Camden and Islington Councils, in order to secure funding for its initiatives. All of these efforts have helped to improve the appearance and reputation of the area, which in turn has attracted more residents and businesses.

We are pleased to present the Central District Alliance Annual Report for the year 2021-2022. This report provides a summary of our activities, achievements and financial performance for the financial year 2021-2022.



**“On behalf of CDA’s Chief Executive and Board Directors, I would like to express our gratitude for your ongoing support and generosity.**

Alexander Jan, Chair, Central District Alliance

# Clean, Green, Safe and Welcoming

Our clean, green, safe and welcoming priorities are essential to the success of any business or community. Our On-Street Teams provide immediate additionality to the local area, improving how it looks and feels to both visitors and residents.

We believe that achieving and sustaining a high local environmental quality is important for all, whether you are a business, a transport operator, a local authority, a landlord or an individual householder.

At CDA, we are committed to the communities in which we operate both business and residential. We know that our success is directly linked to your success, and that's why we work hard every day to provide a welcoming environment for you.

That's why we created our On-Street Team to make sure that you feel safe and comfortable in our city. Our Clean Team provides an extra layer of litter picking

and janitorial washing along our public highways, while our Security Patrol is there to offer all manner of support to help encourage a safe atmosphere, including sensitively dealing with anti-social behaviour.

The third element of our on-street presence is our Ambassador, Greig. He has an important role to play being another set of eyes and ears on the street, helping people with wayfinding and directions, and making sure that the street is presentable.

Together, these three elements give confidence to business owners and individuals alike.





“We all know what it feels like to be part of a team. When a team is working together in partnership, there is a sense of trust, respect and cooperation. Each member of the team knows that they are working towards the same goal and are willing to support each other to achieve it. At Central District Alliance we take pride in the work we do to make the area a more enjoyable experience for workers, visitors, and residents. We have more to do, but we look forward to the challenge ahead!”

Edgars Groms, Clean Team Manager

# Communications, Marketing, and Advocacy

The BID is the area’s champion, supporting businesses and seeking to reveal its talents and share its gems. The priority was, and continues to be, supporting our members as they safely assist their employees back to the workplace, and as we seek to support attractions for both the local and domestic audience, we will actively develop initiatives to raise the profile of the area.

We are continuing our work on behalf of local businesses, which is flourishing as a result of our targeted approach to supporting them. We have also implemented a number of new initiatives in order to support local businesses as they begin to recover from the pandemic.

### Destination Modelling

Holborn and Clerkenwell are some of the most dynamic urban cores in the world. They are home to world-renowned events; area hotbed for real estate development and innovation; and a centre for social activity and civic engagement. Central District Alliance highlights the district through key measures and statistics to magnify elements that make Central London a unique and important anchor to our entire region. CDA is creatively positioning some of the world-class institutions like the British Museum, in ways to improve the area.

### Communication

We keep the district’s property owners, businesses, residents and visitors updated on news, events, and development through our monthly newsletter, social media, local media and website. Our website is a go-to resource for our research, data and development updates. We also support our partners by publicising their initiatives.

### Events

Our Events are the bright spot of our year, as people of all ages gather to celebrate arts, culture and our city’s heritage. Central London’s energy rises to a new level when these events happen, since they play a vital role in reinvigorating the area and drawing residents to the

business core. CDA celebrated the winter season by putting on festive lighting for the first time in the district. This addition was thoroughly welcomed by businesses and residents throughout the district.

### Advocacy

As Holborn and Clerkenwell’s full-time advocate and biggest champion, the Central District Alliance collaborates with stakeholders, policymakers and property owners to ensure local policies effectively and efficiently address our most pressing issues. In coordination with our strategic partners, we engaged directly with leaders, policymakers and city staff teams to offer expertise, data and testing, which resulted in improved policies and processes.

### Research

CDA conducts primary research on district-related issues, as well as compiling and analysing third-party research. Our website is a central repository for data on economic development, real estate, mobility trends and more. This information enables members of our team and the community to make data-driven decisions to shape the district’s future.

### Commuter Club

This year we introduced The Commuter Club, a collection of immersive stories, music and podcasts designed to take you on a journey from your train carriage, bus seat or tube platform to another world. The Commuter Club will transport you from your train carriage to a rooftop bar in the City; from your seat on the bus to tranquil garden squares; from the Northern Line to the kitchen of a Michelin-star restaurant.



“The Central District Alliance is an important voice across Camden and Islington. Their work to improve the area and represent the needs and opinions of their members is hugely welcome. As Mayor, I was honoured to take part in their event to support women back into work, and the launch of their apprenticeship programme.”

Cllr Sabrina Francis, Bloomsbury Councillor and Mayor of Camden 2021-2022



# Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG), and Inclusive Economy

The idea that companies can do well and do good at the same time has never been more relevant than now, as we come together in an effort to rebuild our lives and the economy. Our Business Improvement District will deliver a changing portfolio of campaigns to support sustainable business development and district-wide prosperity.

Working in partnership with members and Camden Council & Islington Councils, we will support projects that enhance social value priorities and support our diverse audience.

Our goal is to inspire and empower the community. We are working with key stakeholders, including Camden Council, Islington Council and business owners, like yourselves, to understand what you need from us as an organisation.

### Business Data Intelligence

Business intelligence and footfall monitoring are vital tools for businesses seeking to plan for the future. As we look to recover from the pandemic, insights provided by these tools will be invaluable in helping us prepare our members for what's ahead. Businesses need to know what's happening in their markets. They need to be able to see the trends before they happen, so that they can act on them and take advantage of opportunities or avoid problems. Monitoring and intelligence tools will provide these insights for businesses as we recover.

### Action Funder

The Central District Alliance Community Fund is a community-building initiative that encourages collaboration between local businesses and community groups in Camden and Islington. Working in collaboration with Action Funder, the fund was established as a way to support the organisations that make our neighbourhoods such vibrant places to live and work. The CDA Community Fund awards grants to local charities and volunteer groups in Camden and Islington, who are doing exceptional work, with limited resources(DA3).

### International Women's Day

Building a Fairer London by highlighting the large economic benefits of increasing the number of women in work. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected us all. But it has had a disproportionate impact on women. On International Women's Day 2022, CDA hosted an event in partnership with Dress for Success Greater London, for 35 local women from Camden and Islington, who engaged with representatives from 15 businesses spanning many sectors. At the same time, we also launched our Un\_Biased project – a year-long research and engagement project, which looks to produce actionable recommendations for a truly inclusive economy, with a strong focus on women's employment and opportunities.

### Apprenticeship Week 2022

This is a CDA Social value initiative to support our business partners as part of London's recovery plan. We focused the event in the following sectors: Digital /Creative Arts, Hospitality, and Transport. At CDA we strongly believe apprenticeships are a proven way of reducing youth unemployment. Our Chair Alexander Jan delivered the keynote speech to an audience of employers and key stakeholders. Highlighting the positive benefit both to employers and individuals, he also explained that by boosting the skills of the current workforce employers will help to improve our economic productivity.



International Women's Day Event

### App

CDA tasked Konekt Group to develop an app that will provide relevant information to visitors, residents, and businesses. This app will be developed to work on both iOS and Android platforms. The app will contain a directory of local businesses and services in the area, as well as discounts, offers and information about events taking place in the area. It will also provide access to maps that show where the nearest shops, restaurants, galleries and other venues are located.

### Direct Business Support

CDA leveraged £100,000 of additional funding to support local businesses. The funding pots were used to improve the street furniture, provide marketing support, and enhance greening in the area. We continuously apply for additional funding to improve the district.

### International Women's Day

Our guest list of inspirational speakers included Sabrina Francis – The Worshipful, the Mayor of London Borough of Camden Councillor, Chief Inspector Rhona Hunt & Avi Collins – Metropolitan Police, Fionnuala Shannon – CEO Dress for Success Greater London, Dr Angela Herbert MBE, Ruth Duston OBE, OC, Primera Corporation Managing Director, Debbie Akehurst – CDA Chief Executive Officer, and Divya Patel – Outreach Recruitment Manager London Fire Brigade.

### Your Future Talent launch during Apprenticeship Week 2022

Our panel included – Mark Hilton – Membership & Skills Policy Director – London First, Lisa Humphreys – UK Strategy Development Director, WPP – Chief Transformation and Integration Officer, Group, Nina Scuffil – Apprenticeships Coordinator Regeneration and Planning Supporting Communities – London Borough of Camden.





**“We are totally committed to supporting local women to achieve sustainable jobs and advocate for better training and skills. We firmly believe that when you support a woman you are also investing in her children’s future.”**

Fionnuala Shannon, Executive Director; Dress for Success Greater London

# Public Realm, Greening and Gateway Plan

CDA is improving and greening its public realm through a series of investment programmes. The aim is to create a greener and more attractive environment for workers, residents and visitors. The investment programme includes upgrading parks, planting trees and making improvements to pavements and street furniture. The aim is to create more attractive, accessible and inclusive spaces for residents, workers and visitors.

## Holborn and Clerkenwell Place Plan

We are investing in a Place Plan to see how we can improve the local public realm which will benefit the area for all. It is important that we invest in both physical and human capital to make a truly cohesive environment.

We want to make the area more attractive and vibrant. To do this, we are working with local businesses and residents to plan improvements that will make the area more appealing to tourists, as well as its current residents. We plan to highlight the area's cultural assets, such as museums and art galleries, as well as its parks and green spaces. The goal is to make this area a more attractive place for people to live, work, and visit. We want it to become a model of sustainable development and liveable communities.

## Gateway Development Plan

CDA secured additional funding to develop the Gateway Development Plan. The GDP focused on pavement cleaning and refurbishing street furniture in the area. In order to clean even the toughest of grime, the GDP will use advanced jet-washing techniques. The street furniture will be cleaned thoroughly, hand abraded, spot primed where necessary, and given a full coat of matching paint. The GDP will also focus on the aesthetics of the area. The goal is to create a clean, well-maintained environment that's attractive and secure for visitors, residents and businesses alike.

## Princes Circus

Construction has now begun on the long-awaited improvements to Princes Circus. The redesign will improve the pedestrian route between Covent Garden and the British Museum. Distinctive woodland-style planting, with new places to sit and enjoy the area, will

make the space inviting and provide places to rest. The historic drinking fountain will be restored and relocated and the neglected structure at the north end of the circle will be covered over by a decked seating area.

## Red Lion Street

We supported Camden Council's Safe and Healthy Streets project on Red Lion Street, Dane Street, and Bedford Row. The project's aims were to address high numbers of motor vehicles using these roads as cut-throughs, making them feel unsafe. Red Lion Street will have a 30-metre-long pedestrian and cycle zone with a two-way paved cycle track and new cycle parking stands. Pavements in this zone will be broader, with high quality paving and shade from new trees. This will help create a safer environment for active travel - important for health and wellbeing - as our summers grow hotter, providing shaded outdoor public space.

## Grey to Green

Strategies that showcase our intentional placemaking include activating parks and public spaces with additional services and programs and aesthetic improvements, such as planters and landscaping, to make the area more biodiverse. CDA installed 20 new planters across the district enhancing the greening of the area.

## Streateries

We worked closely with Camden Councils to create two new Streateries in Museum Street and Bloomsbury Square. The aim of a Streateria is to help boost hospitality businesses and this help the economic recovery of this sector, by creating additional dining spaces outdoors and thus supporting increased customer numbers.



20 new planters installed across the district



# Governance and board

## Governance

The BID is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee led by a Board of Directors made up of representatives from across sectors within the BID area and an Executive Team.

## Board

**Alexander Jan** Chair

**Julie Rogers** Deputy Chair, Mitsubishi Corporation

**Tony Matharu** Blue Orchid Hotels and Integrity International Group Ltd

**Lisa Humphreys** WPP

**Susan Freeman** Mishcon de Reya

**Joe Edwards** British Museum

## Executive Directors

**Ruth Duston** Primera Corporation

**Austin Casey** Primera Corporation



# Income and expenditure 2021-2022

Central District Alliance's mission is to drive long-term economic and social growth by aligning corporate strategy with responsible and sustainable business practices. In light of the unprecedented consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, whilst our objectives remain, they will be re-focussed.

The coming year will be critical in ensuring our area thrives within the wider London ecosystem. Our main

aim during the 2022 - 2023 delivery period is to be a stabilizing influence for member businesses and a focal point for activity.

We will help to safely encourage the maximum number of workers back to the area, providing the life blood for the face-to-face sector so that once again our theatres, gyms, shops, bars and restaurants can thrive, adding to the rich tapestry of life in the central district.

Income and Expenditure to 31 March 2022

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE		£
<b>INCOME</b>		
Levy income		2,528,672
Other income		77,591
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,606,263</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Campaigns and services		1,026,137
Public realm and transport Infrastructure		180,758
Marketing and communications		453,778
Management and Overheads*		279,856
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,940,531</b>
Post Tax Surplus (Deficit)		665,732
Closing 20 -21 Reserves**		3,273,218
<b>Surplus to be carried forward to 2022-23</b>		<b>3,938,950</b>

\* There is one management team in place to cover EC1 and WC1 areas

\*\* Included within closing reserves is a ring fenced £1m to be spent on infrastructure projects

# History of the BID

**Term 1**  
one of the first  
5 BIDs to be set  
up in the UK

2000

Informal business group  
set up in Holborn

2005

**Term 2**  
re-elected and expanded  
to join up West End and City  
boundaries as Midtown

2010

**Term 3**  
re-elected and plans  
for the Farringdon  
& Clerkenwell BID  
were formed

2015

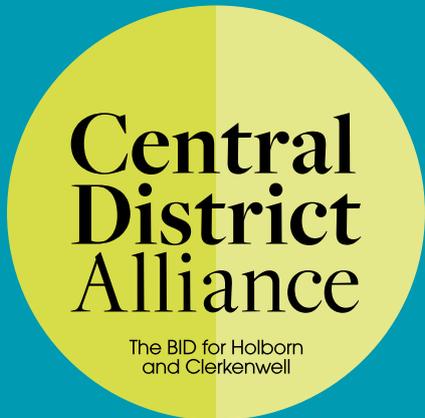
Farringdon &  
Clerkenwell BID  
established via  
successful election

2016

2020

**Term 4**  
re-elected for a fourth term  
to 2025 & rebranded CDA





[centraldistrictalliance.com](http://centraldistrictalliance.com)

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