

# Central District Alliance

The BID for Holborn and Clerkenwell

# Annual Report 2022-2023



# Central District Alliance

The BID for Holborn and Clerkenwell

## Contents

Introduction	3
Foreword from CDA's Chief Executive	8
Statement from CDA's Chair	9
Clean, Safe and Welcoming	13
Placemaking	14
Advocacy and Insights	17
Environmental, Social and Governance	18
Marketing, Communication and Events	20
Governance	24
Financials 2022-2023	25

# Introduction

The Central District Alliance (CDA) is pleased to present its Annual Report for the fiscal year 2022-2023. The report provides an overview of the initiatives, projects, and achievements that have taken place.

CDA has remained committed to its mission of creating a thriving business and cultural environment that yields sustainable returns for its members and enriches the local community. This report highlights the progress made in our core priorities of ensuring our district remains clean, green, safe and welcoming.

Principal accomplishments include the work of our On-Street Teams, who have provided essential services such as litter picking, washing, security patrols, and ambassador services. These activities have significantly contributed to maintaining a high local environmental quality place. Making the Central District a comfortable and safe place for residents and visitors alike.

In addition to these services, the CDA has also invested significantly in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) initiatives and Placemaking strategies.

Our commitment to sustainable and responsible practices is evident in our projects and partnerships, which aim to create an inclusive, socially and economically vibrant district.

The Holborn and Farringdon District have been hubs of exciting events over the past year, bringing together businesses, community members and visitors to celebrate our unique culture and spirit. These events have not only enhanced the vibrancy of our district but also fostered a sense of community and belonging.

This report serves as a testament to the collective efforts of our partners, businesses and other stakeholders and the tangible impact of our initiatives. We invite you to review the details of our work over the past year, as we continue to invest in the future of this remarkable part of central London.

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

[X @CDALDN](https://twitter.com/CDALDN)

[Instagram @CDALondon](https://www.instagram.com/CDALondon)

[in Central District Alliance](https://www.linkedin.com/company/central-district-alliance)





BID footprint



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





# The district in numbers

**5** neighbourhoods **2** boroughs **1** district

**500+** Total BID members

## Camden

**332** levy payers

CDA Camden footprint

**681,000** sqm

Residents (2021)

**10,400**

Business Count (2022)

**15,065**

**39%** of Camden's businesses

Employee Count (2021)

**110,000**

**29%**  
of Camden's  
employees

## Islington

**200** levy payers

CDA Farringdon footprint

**433,000** sqm

Residents (2021)

**16,151**

Business Count (2022)

**4,360**

**18%** of Islington's businesses

Employee Count (2021)

**76,000**

**31.3%**  
of Islington's  
employees

# A year of results

## Ambassadors

**32,657** visitors welcomed  
**51%** increase from year previous

## Clean Team

**36,140** total engagements

**27,639**

pavements and bins washed

**7,693**

on street waste, graffiti, and  
fly-posting removed

**533**

parklets and gardens cleaned up

## Miscellaneous

**100+**

Flower baskets installed

**38**

new trees planted

**4**

Electric Assisted Vehicles

## Security Patrol

**65,000** total engagements

**60,000**

business and street welfare checks  
**60%** increase from year previous

**387**

rough sleepers engaged  
**32%** increase from year previous

**1,163**

begging and anti-social behaviour engaged  
**33%** increase from year previous

## Marketing stats

**1.3 million**

social media impressions

**40+**

BID events

**26,000**

website visits

# Foreword from CDA's Chair

The Central District Alliance (CDA) Annual Report for 2022-2023, provides an opportunity for me to reflect on the strategic direction of our district. The landscape of Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell is evolving, and our contribution to looking after this vibrant area is as important as ever.

Our Annual Report for 2022-2023 provides an overview of a year marked by significant progress and growth. With Covid firmly in our "rear-view mirror", I am struck by the way in which the district has returned to growth and recovery. Bolstered by our new Elizabeth line stations at Tottenham Court Road and Farringdon, we are finally seeing investment and vacancy rates both at street level and in major developments reach a turning point. We are proud of the role CDA has played in keeping the public realm of the neighbourhoods we are part of cleaner, greener and safer than would otherwise be the case. These achievements are only possible through the hard work of the executive team led by our Chief Executive Debbie Akehurst, the co-operation of our boroughs Camden and Islington, the Metropolitan Police, surrounding BIDs and our contracting partners Welcome People.

Our investment in ESG initiatives underscores our commitment to responsible practices that benefit not just our levy payers but also our community and environment. The delivery of schemes under CDA's placemaking programme have been another highlight of the year. By focusing on creating vibrant, inclusive spaces, we have been able to foster a sense of community and belonging in Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell. The numerous events we have hosted over the year, each one a celebration of our neighbourhoods' culture and spirit, have contributed further to this sense of community. None of these achievements would have been possible without the very considerable efforts of our various partners and service providers. Their commitment to maintaining a high quality local environment and ensuring the safety and comfort of our levy -payers, residents and visitors is as strong as ours.

As we move forward, I am optimistic we will all see further improvements being delivered. New developments such as the Earnshaw and Dar buildings will be open. Princes Circus will finally be revealed.

New space at the Shaftesbury and Phoenix Theatres is coming on-line. Outernet with its remarkable immersive experiences is fully up and running.

In chairing the CDA I am grateful to my fellow board members who give their time and advice freely and generously. The experience they bring to the governance and management of CDA is invaluable. Furthermore, the level of business engagement we are achieving through our property owner and the safe and secure groups is very gratifying.

CDA's commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) initiatives and placemaking strategies is a strategic choice. We believe that the path to a thriving district lies in sustainable and inclusive practices. By creating vibrant, inclusive spaces, we are not only enriching the present but also shaping the future of Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell. With our finances in good health we are able to deploy levy-payer resources into everyday vital service delivery as well as targeted activities and programmes of capital work.

In summary, this has been another year of growth and positive change for CDA. Guided by our mission to create a thriving, sustainable business and cultural environment, we are committed to working closely with our levy-payers, public sector partners and other stakeholders to improve the neighbourhoods we serve. Their support and partnership are invaluable. We look forward to working together to shape the district even more positively over the coming months and years.



*Alexander Jan*

**Alexander Jan**  
Chair



# Welcome from CDA's Chief Executive

As the Chief Executive of the Central District Alliance, I have the unique privilege of witnessing first-hand the resilience, innovation, and spirit of collaboration that defines Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell.

This Annual Report for 2022-2023 encapsulates these qualities provides a comprehensive overview of a year marked by significant progress and growth.

Reflecting on the past year, I am particularly proud of the progress we have made in our Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) initiatives. Sustainability is not just an abstract concept for us at CDA; it is a guiding principle that informs our actions and decisions. Our investment in ESG initiatives underscores our commitment to responsible practices that benefit not just our environment, but also our community and businesses.

Our Placemaking strategies have been another highlight of the year. By focusing on creating vibrant, inclusive spaces, we have been able to foster a sense of community and belonging that makes Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell truly special. The numerous events we have hosted over the year, each one a celebration of our unique culture and spirit, have further contributed to this sense of community.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the tireless efforts of our On-Street

Teams. Their commitment to maintaining a high quality local environment and ensuring the safety and comfort of our businesses, residents and visitors is truly commendable.

As we move forward, I am optimistic about the future of the district. The challenges we face only strengthen our resolve to continue working towards our mission of creating a thriving business and cultural environment. I am deeply grateful for the continued support and partnership of our boroughs, Camden and Islington, and our wider community. I look forward to shaping the future of Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell together.



*Debbie Akehurst*

**Debbie Akehurst**  
Chief Executive









# Clean, Safe, and Welcoming

CDA is dedicated to making the neighbourhoods we serve clean, safe, and welcoming for all. These three pillars are integral to our mission of creating a thriving business and cultural environment. They are the bedrock of our initiatives and embody our commitment to enhancing the quality of life in our district.

Cleanliness, safety, and a welcoming atmosphere – play a crucial role in shaping the experience of those who live, work, and visit our district. Our On Street Team instill a sense of confidence and assurance in both business owners and individuals. Its collective efforts contribute to a welcoming environment that is appreciated by our entire community. Through their dedication, they help to ensure that Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell remain clean, safe, and inviting for everyone who visits, works, and lives here.

## Security

Our team of security professionals provide an enhanced level of safety from Tottenham Court Road to the Barbican by conducting regular high visibility patrols, often in partnership with the Metropolitan Police.

Focused on providing a community reassurance presence and addressing local crime and antisocial behaviour issues, the team have a regular presence at our main commuter hubs as well as providing direct support to our business community via bespoke taskings to address issues.

Through regular training, our officers are equipped with the skills and knowledge to significantly enhance public safety, particularly around crowded places and the night-time economy to ensure our neighbourhoods continue to be safe and welcoming places to work and visit.

## Ambassadors

Creating a welcoming atmosphere is key to the experience we offer in our district. Our Street Ambassador service plays a crucial role in this regard, providing a friendly face and expert local knowledge to visitors and locals alike. The team is on hand to assist with wayfinding and to engage with local businesses, while also reporting on local environmental issues. Their work ensures that Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell remain welcoming districts.



## Cleaning

A clean environment is fundamental to the appeal and functionality of our districts. Our dedicated On Street Team works tirelessly to supplement the efforts of local authorities, providing additional street cleaning services both day and night. This commitment extends beyond public spaces, with our team also offering services to businesses upon request. This approach tries to ensure our district remains clean, tidy, and inviting at all times.

## Electric Assisted Vehicles

In our drive to enhance our services and reduce our environmental impact, we have invested in three new Electric Assisted Vehicles. These vehicles not only increase the efficiency of our cleaning operations but also align with our commitment to sustainability by reducing carbon emissions. This investment is an example of our commitment to maintaining a clean, tidy, and inviting district while also prioritising environmental responsibility.



# Placemaking

CDA is committed to shaping our public spaces with a focus on sustainability and people-centric design. Our placemaking initiatives are driven by the understanding that the environment we create significantly influences the wellbeing, productivity and overall quality of life of our local community.

As work patterns shift and the importance of outdoor spaces becomes increasingly evident, our strategic investments in the public realm aim to meet these changing needs. Working with Islington and Camden, we are enhancing our neighbourhood centres and the routes that link them, fostering spaces that encourage collaboration and nurture a sense of community.

In the face of climate change, we are committed to sustainability. We strive to create spaces that not only serve our community but also respect and enhance our natural environment. Through our placemaking efforts, we envision Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell as thriving, sustainable districts where people can use green spaces to strengthen relationships, between each other and the environment.

## Enhancing our district

We work in partnership with Camden and Islington Councils to support the delivery of major public realm projects throughout the BID area. This financial year, we have invested in the transformation of two new landmark public spaces at Princes Circus and Clerkenwell Green, both a stone's throw from the new Elizabeth Line stations at Tottenham Court Road and Farringdon Station. Due to complete in summer 2023, both projects will deliver substantial pedestrian-focused public spaces for everyone to enjoy.

In addition to creating contemporary and welcoming spaces, our commitment to climate resilience ensures the creation of well-shaded public spaces in the summer and sustainable urban drainage to capture heavy rain throughout the year.



## Enhancing our neighbourhoods

We are committed to strengthening the visibility, vitality and distinctiveness of the streets that form the heart of our Holborn, Clerkenwell, St Giles, Bloomsbury, and Farringdon neighbourhoods.

At the heart of our Holborn neighbourhood, we have helped to improve Red Lion Street by creating wider pavements and shared spaces for pedestrians and cyclists, restricting heavy vehicle use, and planting new trees.



In partnership with Islington, our unique collaborative project in the Farringdon neighbourhood at St John's Garden are designed to improve health and wellbeing while creating a safe and inclusive space for people to connect with nature.

## Enhancing your doorstep

Public spaces are key to nurturing a sense of community. Our Greening the Public Realm projects are focused on improving biodiversity across the BID area as well as working closely with Camden and Islington councils to deliver the Parks for Health Strategy and achieve Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) status.

## Active Travel

In line with our commitment to sustainability and wellbeing, we are promoting and facilitating active travel within Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell. We recognise the numerous benefits of active travel, from reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality to enhancing physical health and mental wellbeing. Our initiatives include free bike maintenance events throughout the year to encourage cycling and highlighting our Low-Pollution Walking Routes as a safer and more enjoyable way to travel.

## Princes Circus

Our investment in Camden's Princes Circus project has helped transform a once-underutilised space

into a vibrant and welcoming area that now connects Covent Garden and St Giles to Bloomsbury and the British Museum. We've worked to enhance the area's aesthetic appeal while also improving its functionality and accessibility. The result is a space that fosters community, encourages leisure and recreation, and enhances the overall experience of those who visit, work, and live in the area.

## Red Lion Street

Our work on Red Lion Street exemplifies our commitment to creating spaces that are not only visually appealing but also practical and inclusive. We've focused on enhancing the pedestrian experience, improving accessibility, and creating a welcoming atmosphere. The enhancements to Red Lion Street contribute to our vision of a district where people can thrive, businesses can prosper, and nature can flourish.

## Clerkenwell Green

Clerkenwell Green is another example of our commitment to climate resilience and sustainable green infrastructure. Through the planting of additional trees, rain gardens and plants as well as introducing sustainable urban drainage, we've helped to transform this popular historic area into a less polluted, people-friendly space. By prioritising green spaces, we are promoting wellbeing, enhancing biodiversity, and contributing to the fight against climate change.





# Advocacy and Insight

In an ever-evolving landscape, the importance of informed decision-making and effective advocacy increasingly important. At CDA, we recognise the critical role that insights and advocacy play in shaping the future of Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell. This section of our Annual Report underscores our commitment to these crucial aspects of our work.

Our advocacy efforts aim to represent the interests of our members and the wider community, ensuring their concerns and ideas of improvement are heard in discussions and decisions that impact our district. Meanwhile, our insights work focuses on gathering and analysing data to inform our strategies, initiatives, and services. Together, these enable us to respond effectively to the needs of our district, influence policy and practice, and drive meaningful change.

## London Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

Our commitment to strategic partnerships and collaboration is exemplified by our engagement with LSIP. Under the leadership of our Chief Executive, we have been able to influence and contribute to important discussions and decisions that impact our district. Our Chief Executive, Debbie Akehurst became Chair of the LSIP board in January 2023.

## Place Commission Board

Our involvement with the Place Commission Board allows us to advocate for the interests of Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell at a strategic level. We contribute to discussions and decisions that shape the future of our district, ensuring that our community's needs and aspirations are considered.

## Camden and Islington Engagement

Engagement with the Mayors of Camden and Islington and the boroughs leadership teams is a key part of our advocacy work. Through regular dialogues and collaborations, we ensure that the voices of our levy payers and the wider community are heard and considered in local government decisions and initiatives.

## Central London Forward – Arup Report

Our collaboration with Central London Forward and our contribution to this ARUP report highlight our commitment to informed advocacy. These efforts enable us to influence policy and practice based on robust data and insights, driving meaningful change in our district.

## Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network

Our involvement in the Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network underlines our commitment to nurturing talent and promoting opportunities within our district. We support apprenticeships as a valuable pathway to employment, contributing to a skilled and diverse local workforce.

## Public Affairs / Party Conferences

Our engagement in public affairs and participation in party conferences provide us with platforms to engage politicians regarding the interests of our district at a national level. We seize these opportunities to influence policy discussions and decisions that impact our community.

## Inward Investment

We actively promote inward investment as a driver of economic growth and prosperity in our district. Through our engagement efforts, we attract businesses and investors to Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell, contributing to a vibrant and thriving local economy.

## Data and Insights

Our data and insights work is integral to our efforts. We gather and analyse data to inform our strategies, initiatives, and services, enabling us to respond effectively to the needs of our district. This work also increasingly provides valuable insights to our members, supporting their decision-making and planning processes.

## Un\_Biased: A blueprint for change

Our Un\_Biased initiative is more than just a platform for promoting diversity and inclusion; it's a comprehensive report that delves into the challenges women face when entering, progressing, and managing the workplace. Through this initiative, we aim to challenge biases, shed light on challenges, and foster an inclusive community where everyone, regardless of gender, feels valued and respected.





# Environmental, Social and Governance

At CDA, we recognise the positive impact that businesses can have on society and the environment. Our commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles reflects our dedication to creating a sustainable, inclusive, and well-governed district.

We believe that an holistic ESG approach is not only the right thing to do, but it also makes good business sense. By integrating ESG principles into aspects of our work, we are building a district that is resilient, attractive, and future-ready. In the following sections, we will explore our ESG initiatives, highlighting our achievements and outlining our plans for the future.

## Mayor's Skills Academies: Hospitality and Digital

We are proud to support the Mayor's Skills Academies in both the Hospitality and Digital sectors. These initiatives provide valuable training and development opportunities for individuals in our district, equipping them with the skills needed to thrive in these dynamic industries. Our involvement underscores our commitment to nurturing local talent and supporting economic growth in Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell.

## Employability Skills and Training

At CDA, we recognise the importance of employability skills in today's competitive job market. We are committed to providing training opportunities that enhance these skills, helping individuals in our district to improve their employment prospects and career progression. Our initiatives in this area range from workshops and seminars to mentoring and networking events.



## Dress for Success

Our collaboration with Dress for Success is a testament to our commitment to social inclusion and empowerment. Through this partnership working with the landlords United Ventures and their agent Catella APAM, we have been able to support individuals in our district by providing professional attire and career development services. Our help in the acquisition of premises for Dress for Success further solidifies our commitment to this cause and allows us to extend our reach and impact.



ESG Breakfast at the Shaftesbury Theatre

## Charitable Giving

Our charitable giving initiatives reflect our dedication to supporting our local community. Through partnerships with Camden Giving, Islington Giving and Action Funder, we have supported projects that align with our mission and values. These initiatives range from education and employment programs to health and wellbeing services, all aimed at enhancing the quality of life for the less well off in our district.

## ESG Business Breakfast

Our ESG Business Breakfast events provide a platform for our members to discuss ESG priorities and share best practices. These events foster a collaborative approach to ESG, encouraging businesses in our district to learn from each other and work together towards common goals. They reflect our commitment to promoting ESG principles and driving positive change in our district.

## Clerkenwell Photography

CDA supported the Clerkenwell Photography competition. This is a Clerkenwell based community photography contest celebrating the best of the area.

## Enterprise Week

Jobseekers had the chance to find out more about new employment opportunities and gaining work skills when they attended a Careers and Enterprise Day at Westminster Kingsway College supported by CDA.





# Marketing, Communications and Events

Effective marketing, clear communication and engaging events are key to creating a vibrant and connected district. At CDA, we use these tools in enhancing the profile of Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell, fostering a sense of community, and driving economic growth.

Our initiatives in this area aim to showcase the unique offerings of our district, engage with our members and the wider community, and create memorable experiences for all. In the following sections, with marketing and communication strategies, highlight some of events, and share our plans for the future. Through these efforts, we aim to make CDA not just a place to work, but a destination to explore, enjoy, and celebrate.

## Village Fete

Our annual Village Fete is a celebration of the vibrant community spirit in Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell. This event brings together residents, businesses, and visitors for two days of fun, food, and festivities. It's a great opportunity to showcase local talent, promote local businesses, and foster a sense of community.

## Picnic in the Park

Our Picnic in the Park event series is an example to our commitment to creating welcoming and inclusive public spaces. This series invites everyone in our district to enjoy relaxation and recreation in one of the districts parks. It's a celebration of our green spaces and a chance for our community to connect with each other. We provide a space for people to stop and dwell – to take just a little time out of their day to relax.

## Festive season

The holiday season in Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell is a magical time, and our Christmas events are a highlight of the year. In our commitment to making the festive season even more special, included more Christmas lights, creating a dazzling display that attracted

visitors to our district. From festive decorations to holiday markets and performances, we aim to create an atmosphere that truly celebrates the spirit of the season.

## International Women's Day

Our International Women's Day events celebrate the achievements of women in our district and beyond. Through panel discussions, workshops, and networking events, we aim to inspire and empower women, promote gender equality, and highlight the important role of women in our community.

## Business breakfasts

Our business breakfast events offer the chance for our members and local businesses to meet and network, whilst hearing from experts. They aim to educate and inspire through-provoking conversations.

## Digital Marketing

Our social media channels are an important tool for engaging with our stakeholders, promoting initiatives, and sharing news and updates. We use these platforms to showcase the best of the district, engage with our followers, and foster a sense of community online.

## Website

Our website is a hub of information about our district, our initiatives, and our events. It's a resource for our members, residents, and visitors, providing everything from news updates and event listings to business resources and community information.



CDA Village Fete in Southampton Place

## London Real Estate Forum

Our participation in the London Real Estate Forum (LREF) allows us to showcase our district to a wider audience, promote investment opportunities, and engage with industry leaders. It's also an opportunity to highlight the unique offerings of Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell and position our district as a desirable location for business and investment.

## Foreign Press Association

Our collaboration with the Foreign Press Association (FPA) led to a significant event that showcased the opening of the Elizabeth Line to international journalists. This event highlighted the importance of this new piece of vital infrastructure, positioning Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell as key hubs in London's transport network. It was a testament to our commitment to fostering partnerships and collaborations and promoting our district on a global stage.

## Centre for London Conference

Our involvement in the Centre for London Conference allows us to contribute to important discussions about the future of London. It's an opportunity to share our insights, learn from others, and influence policy and practice in our city.







**240,000+**  
LEDs installed in 2022 festive season

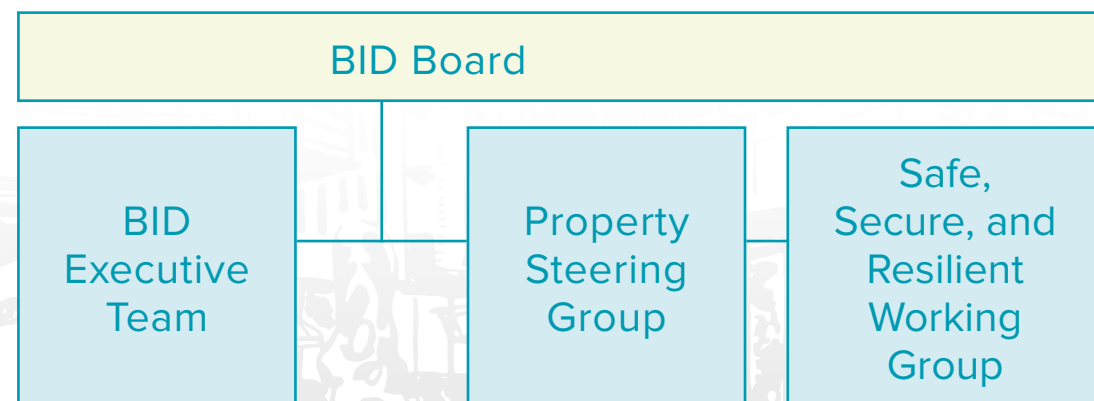


# Governance and Board

Alexander Jan – Chair  
 Joe Edwards – Vice Chair, British Museum  
 Susan Freeman – Mishcon de Reya  
 Lisa Humphreys – GroupM  
 Tony Matharu – Blue Orchid Group  
 Ruth Duston – Primera  
 Austin Casey – Primera  
 Amy Brown – Google (appointed February 2023)

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. An Executive team manages the projects that deliver the BID ambitions.

The Remuneration Committee of the BID is established to ensure the remuneration and compensation practices within the organization are fair, competitive, and aligned with the BID's strategic goals, performance, and sustainability.



# Financials 2022-2023

CDA activity covers both Camden and Islington boroughs. Income and expenditure split is in line with participating members in each local authority area as outlined here:

Income and Expenditure to 31 March 2023

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE		£
<b>INCOME</b>		
Levy Income		2,348,443
Other Income		70,827
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,419,270</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Campaigns and Services		1,521,593
Public Realm and Transport Infrastructure		1,048,942
Marketing and Communications		886,047
Management and Overheads*		295,747
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3,752,329</b>
Post Tax Surplus (Deficit)		(1,333,059)
Closing 21 –22 Reserves**		3,938,950
<b>Surplus to be carried forward to 2023-24</b>		<b>2,605,891</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







