

An aerial photograph of a city, likely London, showing a dense urban landscape with numerous buildings, streets, and green spaces. A semi-transparent teal overlay covers the entire image, creating a monochromatic effect. The text is overlaid on this image.

Annual Summary

Overview and Expenditure
2023-2024 / 2024-2025

A circular logo with a teal background, divided vertically by a thin white line. The text "Central District Alliance" is written in a white serif font, centered within the circle.

Central
District
Alliance

BID footprint



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Get in touch with your CDA BID team on:
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Introduction

Central District Alliance Business Improvement District (CDA BID) is committed to advancing and championing the interests of our local businesses and the broader communities within the dynamic areas of Holborn, Bloomsbury, St Giles, Farringdon, and Clerkenwell.

The unveiling of the Elizabeth line in 2022 has solidified our position at the core of London, sparking significant growth. Our prime location is bolstered by the presence of two key Crossrail stations, Tottenham Court Road and Farringdon, with the latter serving as a crucial hub connecting Thameslink and the underground network. This development has transformed the CDA BID zone into a central access point to premier services.

Reflecting on the financial year 2023-2024, we take pride in advocating for over 400 businesses, striving to enhance the quality of life for everyone in our districts. Our initiatives have aimed at improving the locality's appeal by making it cleaner, more sustainable, safer, and more inviting.

Through our Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) programme, we've tackled inequalities and supported those in need within our communities, alongside addressing environmental challenges. Our collaboration with local businesses has been instrumental in our achievements, positioning the area as a preferred destination. We are enthusiastic about the future and the opportunity to work alongside our stakeholders and the business community for ongoing prosperity.

Timeline

2000

Holborn Business Partnership created

2005

One of the first BIDs to be set up in the UK, inholborn wins its first term

2010

Re-elected as inmidtown with an expanded boundary

2015

Re-elected as Bee Midtown

2016

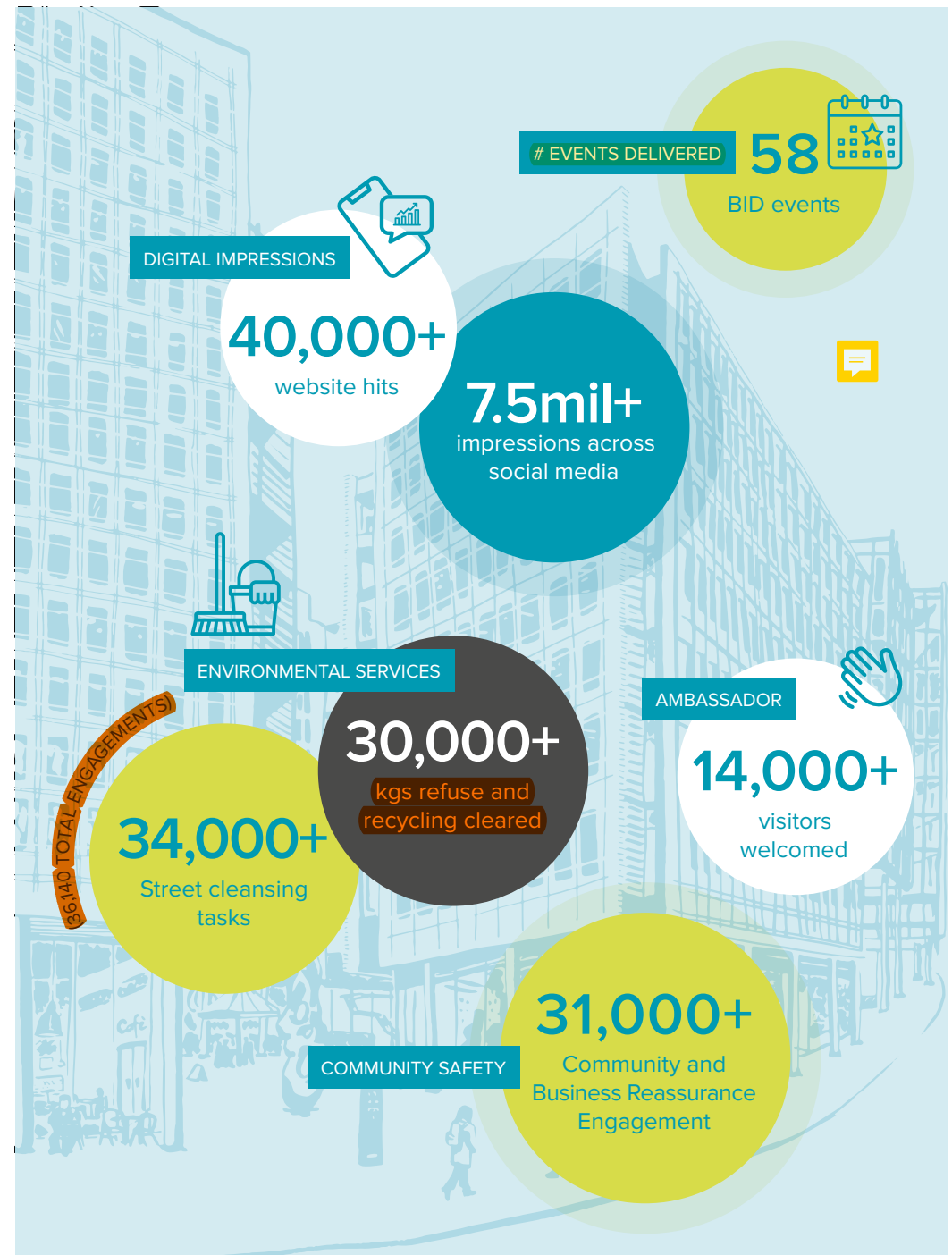
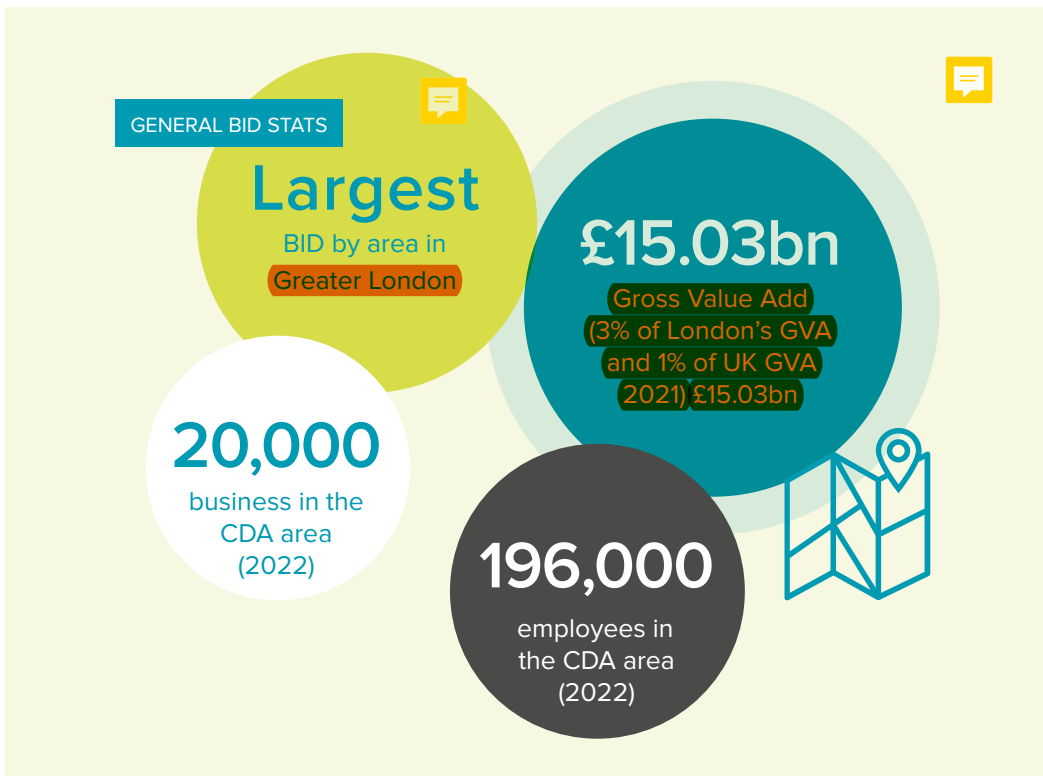
Farringdon and Clerkenwell BID established via successful election and absorbed into Bee Midtown

2020

Re-elected for a fourth term to 2025

2021

BID relaunches as Central District Alliance





Message from CDA's Chief Executive

As Chief Executive of the Central District Alliance Business Improvement District, I'm delighted to reflect on our collective accomplishments and the meaningful impact we've made in nurturing our local business ecosystem.

Our commitment to the dynamic districts of Holborn, Bloomsbury, St Giles, Farringdon, and Clerkenwell remains unwavering, with over 400 enterprises under our wing. Our goal has always been to elevate central London's business landscape to new heights.

Throughout the last year, we've taken significant strides to improve our community. From continuing our specialised security and cleaning teams that maintain our streets, to the introduction of The CDA Club app that forges connections between businesses and visitors while promoting local activities and discounts. In addition to our year-round initiatives, we've brought sparkle and spirit to our community with the enchanting Christmas lights and festive events, illuminating our neighbourhoods and bringing joy to all who visit and reside here. These seasonal celebrations have become a cherished tradition, fostering a sense of togetherness and cheer.

Equally, our summer activations have injected vibrancy into our streets, offering an array of outdoor events, markets, and cultural experiences that celebrate the diversity and creativity of our area. These activities not only enhance the local ambiance but also attract visitors from far and wide, contributing to the economic vitality and cultural richness of our districts.

Our focus on employability and skills, particularly in the digital realm, is more critical than ever. In an age where technology continually reshapes the landscape of work, we've prioritised initiatives that equip our community with the digital skills essential for today's economy.

We are fully aware of the importance of these efforts to our members and are committed to efficiently utilising the resources to bring these services and initiatives to fruition. Our ambition is to ensure Holborn, Bloomsbury, St Giles, Farringdon, and Clerkenwell are not only cleaner and greener but also safer and more inviting for everyone.

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to our members for their ongoing support and dedication towards making our district a beacon of business excellence in Central London. Looking ahead, we are enthusiastic about fostering a thriving, dynamic community together.



Debbie Akehurst
Chief Executive



Clean, safe and welcoming

Our commitment to enhancing the district goes beyond mere maintenance; we strive for excellence in creating a space that is not only clean and secure but also inherently welcoming. Understanding the critical role that a well-maintained environment plays, our teams are dedicated to ensuring that our district stands out, tackling complex challenges with determination and skill.

Our Community Safety team, a key pillar of our efforts, patrols the district with a focus on maintaining a safe and inclusive community. Their proactive approach involves working in partnership with the Metropolitan Police and stakeholders to problem solve and implement robust strategies aimed at reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

Similarly, our Environmental Services team is integral to our mission, focusing on keeping our streets pristine and sustainable. This team's efforts underscore our belief in the importance of a clean, green, and environmentally friendly district as foundational to a vibrant community.

Collaboration is at the heart of our success. By partnering with Camden and Islington Councils, Transport for London (TfL), the Greater London Authority (GLA), the Metropolitan Police, and other key stakeholders, we ensure a cohesive and strategic approach to the ongoing development and care of Holborn and Clerkenwell. Our united efforts aim to cultivate a long-term vision for the area, embodying collective action and thought for the benefit of all who work, live, and visit here.

Environmental Services: Our commitment to a pristine and welcoming environment is paramount within the district. The Environmental Services team enhances the efforts of local councils by offering supplementary street cleaning operations day and night. Additionally, this team is on hand to deliver bespoke janitorial services, ensuring the area remains spotless and inviting.

Community Safety: The Community Safety team collaborates closely with the Metropolitan Police, business security teams, members, and other partners to bolster the safety and security of our district. Our teams are adept at addressing minor crimes and curbing anti-social behaviour, contributing to a safer community environment.

Street Ambassador Service: Our commitment to making the district welcoming for both visitors and locals is embodied by our Street Ambassador service. This team is dedicated to greeting visitors, offering wayfinding assistance, and sharing expert local insights. They also maintain close relationships with local businesses and monitor environmental issues, playing a crucial role in enhancing the district's appeal.



Placemaking

We are committed to working collaboratively with our members, local authorities, developers and landowners to develop improvements to our streets and spaces which is good for our businesses, their employees and the wider community. We are focussed on co-creating space which prioritises people and how they make connections across the district.

We recognise for many businesses and employees, work patterns have changed, reflecting a greater emphasis on quality of life, wellbeing and time spent outdoors; nevertheless, collaboration and building networks remains crucially important. The growing pressures of climate change have also highlighted the importance of environmental sustainability and our relationship with nature.

Our strategic approach to public realm investment is rooted in this context, focusing on enhancing our neighbourhood centres to improve footfall and user experience as well as improving the comfort and legibility of the routes that connect them.

Enhancing the District

Over the course of the last year, we worked with Camden and Islington to deliver some major public realm schemes as well as delivered more neighbourhood focussed enhancements.

Princes Circus: The landmark scheme at Princes Circus transformed 4 lanes of traffic into a green oasis. Providing more planting and seating for people to enjoy the outdoors.

Clerkenwell Green: The BID invested in the green and sustainable urban drainage features in the transformation of public space at Clerkenwell Green.

Robert's Place Pocket Park: At Robert's Place the BID installed a pocket park as part of an Islington Council pilot initiative to respond to the Climate emergency and deliver neighbourhood green spaces.

Grey to Green: Continued work on our Grey to Green initiatives to see planting installed along traffic corridors to soften the hard landscape. Additionally, we continued our rooftop beehives, planters, and hanging baskets programme across the district promoting biodiversity across the district.

Looking ahead

During this upcoming year Camden Council is shining a spotlight on the District through publication of their Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood Transport Strategy and their Holborn Vision SPD. We will work with Camden on a programme of improvements for the area as part of their STARter projects that will provide more welcoming gateways to the district, work to improve walking routes and connect green spaces and visitor attractions always focussing on providing more space for people to use more sustainable modes of transport.

Working with Islington Council we will work with the local community to make improvements to green spaces which are places for local employees to take a break away for their offices and look to improve gateway locations like Farringdon Station. As Islington work towards improvements to walking and cycling routes around the area we will act as the voice for businesses and ensure plans reflect their needs.



Marketing, Communications and Events

At CDA, we're passionate about shining a spotlight on the exceptional offerings of our member businesses, creating a vibrant showcase for the diverse talents within Holborn and Clerkenwell. Our mission is to ensure these districts remain at the forefront of what London has to offer in dining, entertainment, and professional spheres.

In our quest to nurture a thriving business ecosystem, we're dedicated to providing unwavering support to our members, seizing every opportunity to propel growth. As we step into the next year, a year brimming with potential and landmark events, we're ramping up our efforts to connect more deeply with our community. Our marketing and communication strategies are set to unfold a tapestry of engagement opportunities, broadening our horizons with destination marketing initiatives and pioneering thought leadership.

Our vision is to cast Holborn and Clerkenwell in the limelight as the quintessential destinations for an eclectic audience, ranging from visitors to residents, by celebrating the unique mosaic of offerings from our members. We're excited to embark on this journey alongside our members, amplifying their presence and fostering an environment where their businesses not only flourish but set new benchmarks for the year ahead.

Digital Communication: In 2023, we leveraged a broad spectrum of digital marketing tools, from newsletters to social media, ensuring our members stayed informed and connected. Our website served as a dynamic hub, regularly updated with crucial information and insights into the BID's initiatives, keeping our community abreast of developments and opportunities.

Business Networking Events: Throughout the year, we hosted a series of networking events that brought our local business community

closer, fostering collaboration and partnerships. From breakfast meetings to receptions and workshops, these gatherings offered invaluable platforms for businesses to network, share ideas and drive growth.

Local Events: Our commitment to enriching the community spirit was evident in our organisation of events like the Village Fete, Picnic in the Park, and the Dickensian Christmas Market at Tottenham Court Road. These initiatives were designed to create a vibrant and engaging atmosphere, boosting employee satisfaction and contributing to the wellbeing of everyone in the district.

Destination Marketing: Our efforts to position the district as a must-visit location for tourists, residents, and businesses alike were intensified in 2023. Through innovative marketing campaigns, collaborations with tourism bodies, and hosting of events and familiarisation trips, we showcased the unique charm and offerings of Holborn and Clerkenwell.

Festive Lights: The introduction of the Festive Lights programme in 2021 marked a new chapter in our year-round destination strategy. In 2023, we expanded this initiative, illuminating the district with enchanting light displays that enhanced its appeal and festive spirit, contributing to making Holborn and Clerkenwell standout destinations throughout the year.



Advocacy and Insight

In the dynamic and shifting political and economic landscape, the value of astute decision-making and forceful advocacy cannot be overstated. We acknowledge that the foundation of our ambitious vision for the enduring growth and prosperity of our commercial sector lies in data-driven decisions and active, unified lobbying efforts.

By leveraging comprehensive data to guide our strategies and by speaking with a collective voice, we aim to address challenges and seize opportunities effectively, ensuring the continued success and vibrancy of our district. This approach underscores our commitment to fostering a thriving economic environment that benefits all stakeholders.

Monitoring and Data Analysis: In collaboration with leading experts, we gather essential data on footfall, vacancy rates, business turnover, and spending, accessible to our members. Our website is regularly updated for easy access, with specific datasets available upon request, empowering our members with the necessary insights for informed decision-making.

A Respected Voice: Our active involvement with prominent pan-London organisations, such as the Cross River Partnership, BusinessLdn, the London Real Estate Forum, and the London Property Association, positions the BID at the core of pivotal discussions about London, ensuring our district's interests are represented in key city-wide dialogues.

Research: Understanding the economic landscape and its impact remains a priority; we continuously commission research from industry leaders to provide meaningful statistics. This effort is complemented by regular updates to our members on footfall and vacancy rates, aiding in a comprehensive understanding of the district's economic dynamics and informing our strategic direction.

Engaging with Governments: We actively engage with both local and national government bodies to advocate for the interests of our district. This strategic dialogue ensures our community's needs and aspirations are represented at all levels of governance, facilitating policies and initiatives that directly benefit our businesses and residents, and shaping a conducive environment for district-wide prosperity.

Policy Influence: Our involvement extends to shaping policy by providing informed insights and data-driven recommendations to policymakers. This proactive approach allows us to influence decisions that affect our district, ensuring that the policies enacted support sustainable development, economic growth, and the well-being of our community, aligning with our strategic vision for the future.



Environmental, Social and Governance

We are committed to fostering sustainable business growth and district-wide prosperity through a variety of campaigns. In collaboration with our members, Camden Council, and Islington Council, we aim to support initiatives that elevate social value priorities and address the requirements of our diverse communities.

Moreover, we are dedicated to empowering small and micro businesses by offering a suite of projects designed to provide them with essential resources and support. This assistance will enable them to effectively promote their services and achieve success. Our objective is to cultivate a vibrant business ecosystem that positively impacts local residents, employees, visitors, and the environment.

Employability Skills and Training for Local People: We are dedicated to providing local residents with opportunities to develop employability skills and training, ensuring they have access to the tools needed for success in today's job market.

Mayor's Digital and Hospitality Academy Hubs: Our partnership with the Mayor's Academy Hubs focuses on specific sectors such as digital and hospitality, offering targeted upskilling opportunities to meet the evolving demands of these industries.

Charitable Giving: The CDA Community Fund represents our focused effort to support local charities across Camden and Islington, streamlining our charitable activities to enhance community impact. This approach ensures our contributions directly benefit local charitable causes, reflecting our commitment to nurturing the well-being of our communities through targeted support.

Your Future Talent: Launched two years ago, 'Your Future Talent' stands as a testament to our dedication to business support through skills and training. This initiative underscores our long-term commitment to professional development, offering apprenticeship insights, employability opportunities, and upskilling partnerships with the Mayor's Academy Hubs, enriching our community's talent pool.



Financials 2023-2024

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	
Income	£
Levy income	2,250,000
Other income	95,246
Total	2,345,246
Expenditure	
Campaigns and Services	1,588,142
Marketing and Communications	896,984
Public Realm and Transport Infrastructure	709,178
Management and Overheads	492,126
Total	3,686,430
Surplus (Deficit)	(1,341,183)
Previous years closing Reserves	2,605,916
Surplus to be carried forward to 2023-24	1,264,733

* 2023-2024 figures are based on March 2024 management accounts and have not yet been audited

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

*** 5% statutory contingency has been set aside to cover irrecoverable Levy and ratings reductions

Central District Alliance BID activity covers both Camden and Islington boroughs- income and expenditure is split in line with participating members in each local authority area. Split of activity by geographical areas is outlined below:

Camden-Holborn, Bloomsbury and St Giles- 80%

Islington- Farringdon and Clerkenwell-20%

Financials 2024-2025

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	
Income	£
Levy income	2,295,000
Other income	65,000
Total	2,360,000
Expenditure	
Campaigns and Services	969,464
Marketing and Communications	688,605
Placemaking	1,209,537
Management and Overheads**	384,572
Statutory Contingency***	120,000
Total	3,372,178
Surplus (deficit)	(1,012,178)
Previous years closing reserves**	1,264,733
Anticipated surplus at end of 2023-2024	252,555

