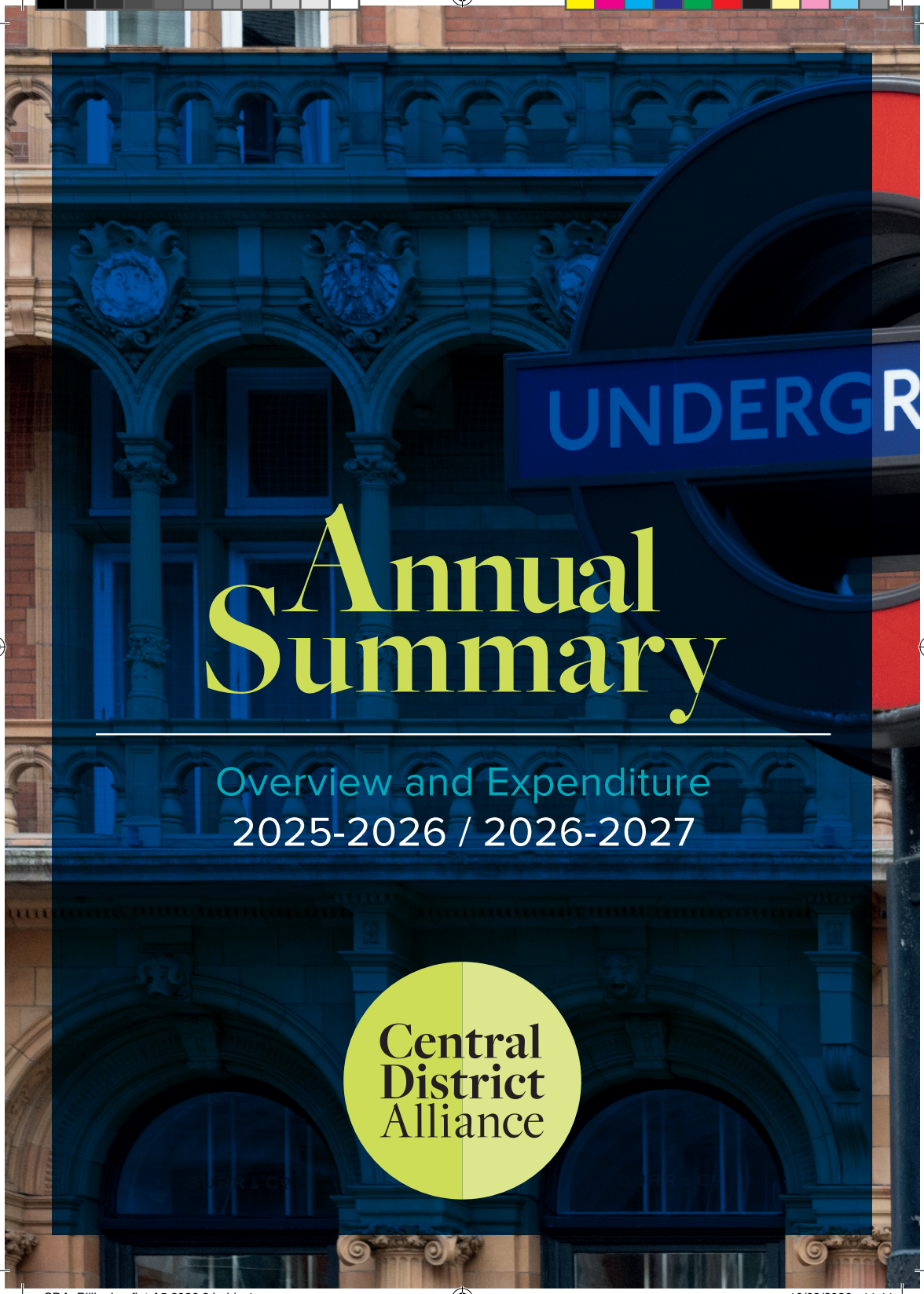


Annual Summary

Overview and Expenditure
2025-2026 / 2026-2027

Central District Alliance

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BID footprint



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Introduction

As Chief Executive of Central District Alliance (CDA) Business Improvement District (BID), I am pleased to look back on our shared achievements and the significant impact we have had in strengthening our local business community.

As we enter the second year of our new term, we would like to thank our businesses for their unwavering support and commitment over the last year and previous years. Your investment and collaboration mean that we can continue to be a voice for you, our businesses. We look forward to continuing to help shape our neighbourhoods into thriving, dynamic spaces for all and remain committed to championing your interests and the broader communities within the areas of Holborn, Bloomsbury, St Giles, Farringdon and Clerkenwell.

Reflecting on the past year, we are proud to have promoted the interests of our businesses, as well as trying hard to enhance the quality of life for everyone with a stake in the CDA BID area. We have continued to invest in the area's prosperity and resilience while strengthening our collaboration with public and private sector partners.

Our collaboration with you has been instrumental in our achievements, positioning the area as a preferred destination.

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
Central District Alliance

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Community Safety

Our Community Safety programme continued to advance its strategic objective of fostering a safe, resilient and business-friendly environment. Through a proactive, intelligence-led partnership-driven approach, the team delivered visible reassurance, rapid response and ongoing support to businesses, employees and visitors.

High-visibility patrols were deployed across streets, transport hubs and commercial districts, focusing on crime prevention, anti-social behaviour reduction and direct business support. Close collaboration with the Metropolitan Police and local authority partners enabled intelligence sharing, joint operations and coordinated incident responses. Complementary initiatives, including reassurance visits, wayfinding assistance and on-call business support ensured a safe and welcoming environment across the district.

Innovation and technology continued to strengthen programme delivery and operational effectiveness. Our CDA Secure Comms and CDA Alerts apps enabled real-time intelligence sharing, streamlined incident reporting and enhanced coordination between on-street teams and key partners. These tools supported early intervention, improved situational awareness and facilitated efficient resource deployment.

As we move into 2026-2027, CDA's security programme enters a new phase with Dardan Security as our service provider. Building on strong foundations, we will continue to prioritise high-visibility patrols, intelligence-led deployment, business engagement and partnership working, ensuring alignment with our priorities and the district's evolving needs.

Through ongoing investment, innovation and collaboration, the Community Safety Team remains committed to creating a safer, more welcoming and resilient district, scoping out and exploring initiatives, such as bystander training, mobile phone marking, night-time economy collaboration, Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) initiatives and Police Partnership Patrols.

Our key objectives for 2026-2027

One: To continue with our highly popular Community Safety Patrol Team and on-call business support service.

Two: To deliver an inclusive women's safety strategy with key partners and business members to complement existing local authority, police and Greater London Authority initiatives.

Three: To strengthen security vigilance and business continuity through innovative and industry leading community safety and business resilience forums in collaboration with the Metropolitan Police and Camden & Islington Councils.

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Environmental Services

CDA's Cleaning and Environmental Services programme continued to support its core objective of delivering a clean, safe and well-managed district that attracts investment, supports businesses and enhances the visitor experience.

Throughout the year, a proactive and highly visible team operated both on foot and using Electric Assisted Vehicles (EAVs) across the area, providing reassurance and maintaining consistently high standards within the public realm, delivering a comprehensive programme of activity, including district-wide litter collection, street sweeping, jet washing and sticker and graffiti removal. From April 2025, its service coverage was extended into a wider zone.

Regular janitorial services ensured that key locations received consistent and thorough attention, with the deployment of our zero-emission EAV cargo bike enhancing response times while supporting CDA's sustainability commitments. In addition to frontline cleaning, the team proactively monitored and reported environmental issues such as fly-tipping, overflowing bins, pavement defects, missed collections and street damage, ensuring early intervention and resolution.

For 2026-2027, we will focus on maintaining a strong, highly visible on-street presence to ensure consistent service delivery and stakeholder confidence across the district. Collaborative partnerships with local authorities, enforcement teams and waste management providers will be strengthened to drive coordinated action, enhance operational efficiency and uphold environmental standards.

Proactive identification, reporting and resolution of environmental issues will remain a priority, using data-led insights and responsive deployment to address challenges swiftly. These efforts will support a clean, safe and resilient business environment, enhancing the district's appeal.

Our key objectives for 2026-2027

One: To continue to provide a hard working on-street Cleaning and Environmental Services Team and working collaboratively with our key stakeholders to make the area a better place to live, work and visit.

Two: To proactively monitor, report and resolve environmental issues and street defects with our local authority partners on a daily basis.

Three: To work in closer partnership with Camden and Islington as well as independent waste collectors to support a more cohesive approach to the management of street cleansing across the BID area.

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Placemaking

Our placemaking efforts are aimed at reinforcing the character of our five neighbourhoods; collaborating with local stakeholders to ensure proposals are well-aligned with the community's needs, whilst creating public spaces that foster economic and social activity.

Listening to the needs of our businesses over the past year, we have worked to promote safe, active travel, improve climate resilience in the public realm and enhance connectivity, aesthetic appeal and functionality, creating streets and spaces that encouraged more people to visit, work, stay and enjoy our neighbourhoods.

Our focus has been on co-creating spaces that prioritised people and facilitated better connections across the district.

Our strategic approach to public realm investment reflected this commitment, with key initiatives including support for St John's Street, Red Lion Street, the Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood and Bloomsbury Vision schemes, the introduction of new planters across the district and improvements to the area outside Farringdon Station. These efforts were designed to enhance neighbourhood centres, increase footfall and more generally improve the comfort and legibility of the routes that connect them. We also ran our Dr Bike sessions, providing free cycle maintenance to encourage active travel in the district.

Our key objectives for 2026-2027

One: To cultivate an active community that prioritises CDA neighbourhood placemaking initiatives, championing these efforts on behalf of our businesses.

Two: To collaborate with Camden and Islington Councils, building on recent policy work and TfL programmes, to deliver local neighbourhood priorities across St Giles, Bloomsbury, Holborn, Farringdon and Clerkenwell.

Three: To work with partners to secure, shape and manage both private and public investment across the CDA footprint to maximise positive and 'joined up' impacts, driving a range of placemaking projects from ground floor activation through to creating a climate resilient public realm.

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Marketing, Communications & Events

Marketing, communications and events play a vital role in positioning CDA's neighbourhoods as vibrant, desirable destinations in which to work, live and visit. Our curated events provide great networking opportunities for businesses, while our digital platforms are designed to help drive business growth and engagement.

We joined the Elephant Family and Clarence Court eggs for 'The Big Egg Hunt 2025', hosting eggs in Russell Square, Farringdon Station and the Brunswick Centre, with over 13,000 people 'collecting' them on the CDA Club App and introducing new footfall to the area.

In partnership with BusinessLDN, we held a business breakfast on understanding the new Growth and Skills Levy, providing attendees with an update on the changes to the levy scheme and a chance to hear from Capital City College Group interns. We followed this with our summer activation, 'Party in the Park', which drew hundreds of attendees. The team also took part in a public awareness campaign, led by Islington Council, at Farringdon Station, distributing informative leaflets and engaging with the public to help raise awareness about the issue of unlicensed donation collectors operating in the area.

We rounded off the year with our AGM and networking event at the Malmaison and our Christmas members networking party at Bloomsbury Ballroom, before closing our programme of events with our festive activations, hosting our 'Mulled & Merry' Mini Market charity fundraiser, followed by 'Cosy Christmas Crafting', a two-day workshop, which gave the community the opportunity to make wreaths and paint baubles.

Digital communication remained a central pillar of the team's engagement strategy, with over 7,000 followers across social platforms and consistent engagement rates exceeding 7%. The CDA Club App continued to grow as a digital hub for offers and events, connecting local employees and visitors and facilitating business growth and promotion opportunities.

For 2026-2027, we are committed to continuing our drive to create an engaging programme of events. We will also be overhauling our CDA Club App to further increase engagement from both a business and user perspective and hosting two major business breakfasts that will provide both value and insight for our business community.

Our key objectives for 2026-2027

One: To ensure a tailored approach to place marketing by building on the existing identities and characteristics of each neighbourhood and positioning them as attractive places for businesses and their employees to locate and remain.

Two: To host an ongoing calendar of relevant and engaging local events throughout the year, including those that facilitate networking opportunities for businesses and engaging outdoor events that increase the appeal of the area for both visitors and local employees.

Three: To support and promote local businesses through digital marketing and promotion, business collaborations and our CDA Club App.

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Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)

CDA's guiding principle remains to strengthen links between businesses and the local community. We continue to believe that long-term success depends not only on economic growth, but also on responsible environmental stewardship and meaningful community support. By embedding ESG principles into our decision-making, we promote sustainable practices and measurable impact across the district.

We recognise the critical importance of skills development in helping young people back into work. Through initiatives such as Skills Hubs, the green skills agenda, the Women's Technology Programme, Lifesciences and Leading Inclusive Futures through Technology (LIFT), we support clear pathways into employment, equip young people with in-demand technical and digital skills and support workforce diversity. These programmes reflect the priorities of the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper, emphasising employer-led training, practical experience and progression opportunities for all learners.

Through our Community and Social Fund, we supported eight local charities with grants for projects benefiting residents across Camden and Islington. Our ongoing partnerships with Camden Giving and Islington Giving ensured support reached the most vulnerable, while structured corporate volunteering, including our gardening programme, connected multiple businesses with schools, charities and community projects.

For 2026-2027, we are strengthening local talent pipelines through Skills Hubs, employer-led training and inclusive recruitment, providing young people with clear pathways into work and supporting economic growth. By rebuilding the London Apprenticeship Ambassador Network (LAAN) and expanding employer engagement, we ensure access to high-quality, progression-focused apprenticeships.

Targeted initiatives such as the King's Trust, LIFT and other skills programmes equip young people, women and underrepresented groups with in-demand hospitality, technical, digital and green skills, reflecting the priorities of the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper to improve post-16 outcomes and widen participation.

Our key objectives for 2026-2027

One: To work with our businesses, local, regional and national government and education providers to support the employment, training and upskilling needs of our local communities linking into Good Work Camden and Islington Working.

Two: To deliver charitable funding initiatives reflecting the current socio-economic conditions of the five neighbourhoods and to support social inclusion.

Three: To support our member businesses with their ESG commitments, through corporate volunteering environmental sustainability initiatives and other opportunities that enhance local development and communities.

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Advocacy & Insights

CDA continues to play a pivotal role in advocating for the needs and interests of our members and the wider community. Through strategic initiatives, partnerships and data-driven insights, we aim to influence policy and practice that benefit the district, ensuring it remains vibrant and prosperous.

Our participation in public affairs and conferences, alongside working with our local authorities, the Greater London Authority and Government, provided us with platforms to advocate for Holborn and Clerkenwell at regional and national levels. These engagements allowed us to influence broader policy discussions and align our district's needs with wider urban and economic strategies. CDA remained an active advocate for Central London businesses throughout the year. Chief Executive Debbie Akehurst continued her leadership role as Chair of the London Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) advisory board, ensuring business needs shaped the future of skills delivery across the capital.

We maintained close engagement with the Mayors of Camden and Islington, ensuring the voices of our members are heard in local government decisions. Our regular dialogues with these key figures help us advocate effectively for policies and initiatives that support the economic and social wellbeing of our district.

CDA supported the New London Architecture 'Skills for Places' report which identified career pathways into the built environment, aiming to inspire young people to enter the industry while addressing the critical challenges of building a more skilled, sustainable, and inclusive workforce. Consolidating key data on current and future skill requirements, highlighting innovative programmes, and setting out actionable recommendations to remove barriers to entry and bridge the gap between education and employment.

The organisation also contributed to research and lobbying efforts on topics including business resilience, ESG alignment, and the future of London's economic centres. CDA's data partnerships provided members with valuable insights into workforce patterns and economic performance.

Our key objectives for 2026-2027

One: To continue investing in advanced analytics and research tools to continuously gather, analyse, and apply data reflecting the evolving needs of our district with a focus on the five neighbourhoods. This will enable more informed advocacy efforts and strategic decision making aligning with the interests of our stakeholders.

Two: To foster stronger relationships with key decision makers, businesses, and community leaders at both local and national levels. This will involve regular consultations, reports, and forums to ensure the district's priorities are effectively represented and supported in policy discussions.

Three: To develop and implement a robust external and public affairs strategy regularly sharing insights, progress and advocacy outcomes with our community. This will help build trust and ensure our efforts remain aligned with the expectations of our stakeholders.

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Financials 2025-2026

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	
Income	£
Levy income	2,937,561
Other income	12,009
Total	**2,949,570**
Expenditure	
Campaigns and Services	1,155,935
Marketing and Communications	575,629
Public Realm and Transport Infrastructure	516,694
Management and Overheads	542,371
Statutory Contingency	145,496
Total	**2,936,124**
Surplus (Deficit)	13,446
Previous years closing Reserves	606,395
Surplus to be carried forward to 2026-27	**619,841**

* Figures are based on full year forecast made in February 2026 (unaudited)

** 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

**** Surplus retained and carried forward for potential BID wind-down costs required in the final year of the term.

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%

As set out in the CDA BID levy rules established at the commencement of the current term, we intend to apply a 2.5% uplift to the BID levy multiplier for the second year, increasing the rate from 0.80% to 0.82% in accordance with the annual inflationary increase. This proposed adjustment has been reviewed and agreed by the Board to proceed.

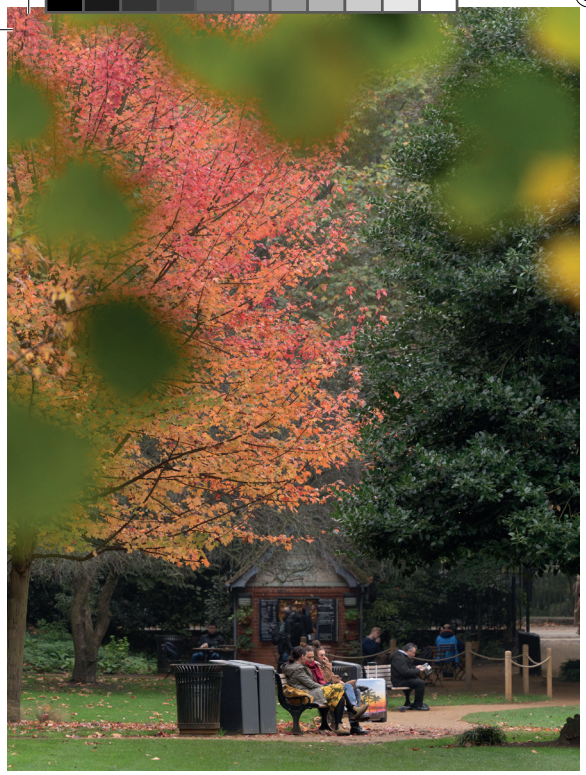
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Financials 2026-2027

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	
Income	£
Levy income	3,025,513
Other income	10,000
Total	**3,035,513**
Expenditure	
Campaigns and Services	1,297,476
Marketing and Communications	731,120
Placemaking	532,679
Management and Overheads**	530,398
Statutory Contingency***	151,276
Total	**3,242,949**
Surplus (deficit)	(207,435)
Previous years closing reserves**	619,841
Anticipated surplus at end of 2026-2027**	

Scan here to see our plans for 2025-2030

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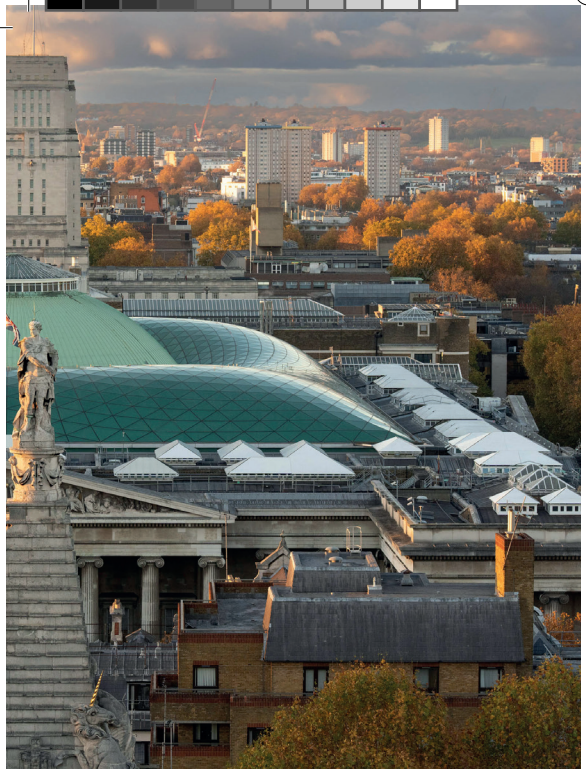








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Central District Alliance

The BID for Holborn and Clerkenwell

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