



Annual Report

Culture Mile
Business
Improvement
District

2023/24



CULTURE
MILE BID



Foreword

I am pleased to share with you the first Annual Report from the Culture Mile Business Improvement District.

Following a successful ballot, the BID was launched in April 2023 and this report provides a summary of our financial accounts and an overview of the projects and initiatives we have been able to support and deliver during the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024. The year focused on delivering some key initiatives from our 2023-28 BID Proposal, the document endorsed by our membership during the inaugural ballot process.

It has been great to see our team of Ambassadors take to the streets and quickly establish themselves as a vital part of the neighbourhood, providing a welcoming and reassuring presence and getting to know the local businesses. Welcoming an enormous number of people to the Culture Mile, the Ambassadors provide the public face of the BID, assisting with everything from reporting environmental issues to giving directions to visitors to the area's many cultural attractions.

Our Community Fund was launched in partnership with Action Funder, supporting projects, charities and community organisations across the footprint. This initiative has not only supported a diverse range of activity but really helped to foster a sense of community, bringing organisations together in new ways so they can support and help one another for the benefit of all.

A Public Realm Vision and Strategy report has been commissioned to draw together and build on existing strategies, public realm schemes and developments. Aiming to provide a collective vision for public realm in the Culture Mile to guide and inform future initiatives and projects the BID can deliver, support and collaborate on.

I have also been pleased to see the variety of events the team has put together over this first year, exploring how our public spaces can be used in innovative and creative ways such as a Poetry Take Away Van serving up free poems and commissioning our very own Morph sculpture which stood proudly at the Guildhall throughout the summer, getting the Culture Mile's diverse workforce together to connect and enjoy the area, providing added value to their commute.

The Corporation of London and City of London Police are key local statutory partners for the BID. We have collaborated very closely with the Police on community safety, women's night safety and business resilience which has had some really tangible results. In addition, we have worked with Corporation of London on the City's Climate Action strategy striving towards a net zero BID district by 2040.

There is so much going on here in this area that hasn't stood still for 2000 years and we are delighted to be at the heart of it, always looking for new ways to support businesses, and the wider community to make the most of everything the Culture Mile has to offer.

I'd like to thank the Culture Mile BID executive team, board members and steering group members for all their hard work over this first year, helping to get the Culture Mile BID firmly established in the area and I look forward to building on that as we look forward to what we will achieve together over the next year.



Andrew Smith,
Chair of Culture Mile BID



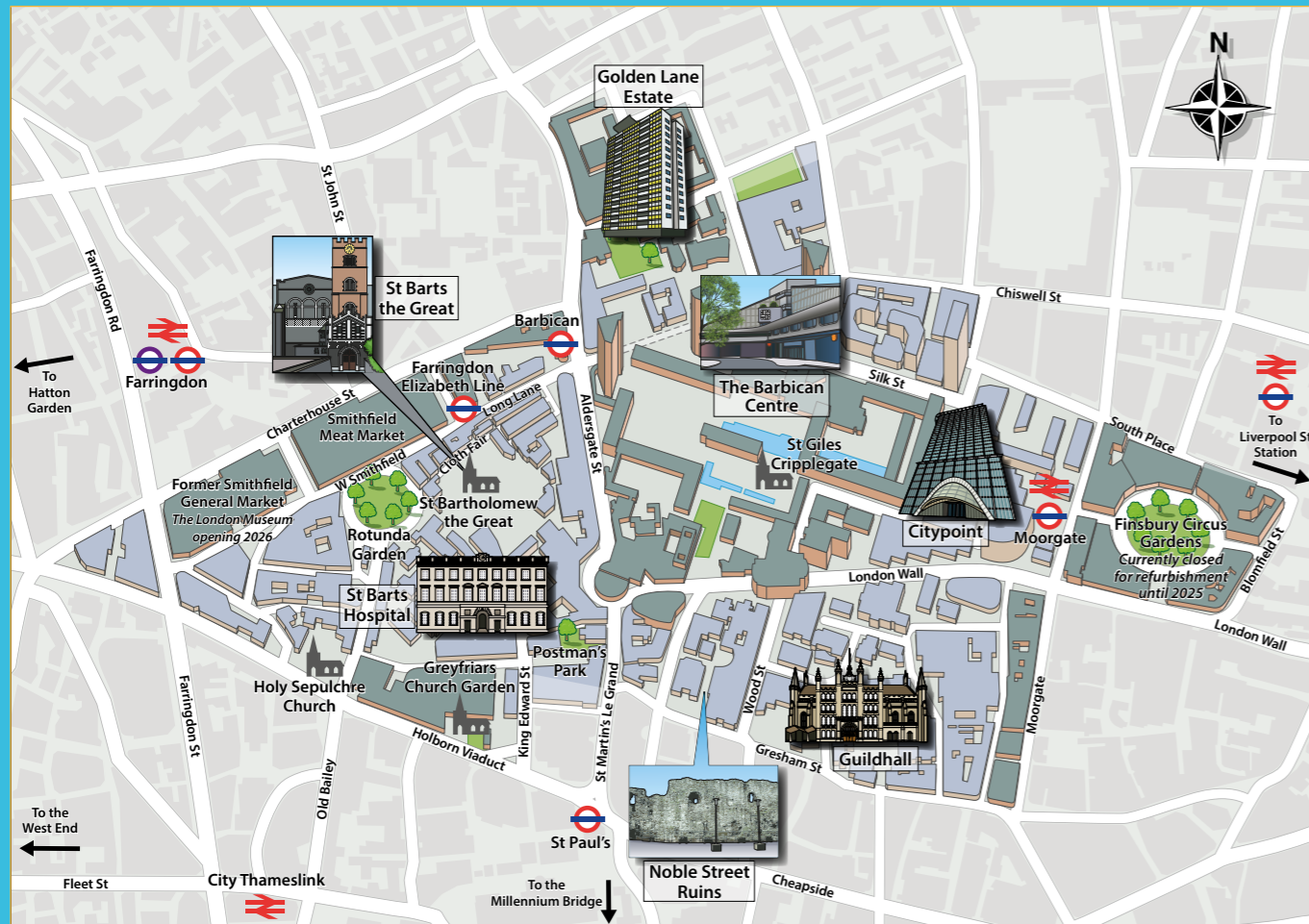
Contents

Foreword	3
BID Boundary	4
Sustainable Environment	6
Connected Business Community	8
Inspiring Places	14
Cultural Destination	16
Board Members & Team	20
Financial Accounts	21

The BID Boundary



There's so much going on here in this area that hasn't stood still for 2,000 years and we are delighted to be at the heart of it, always looking for new ways to support businesses, and the wider community to make the most of everything the Culture Mile has to offer.





Sustainable Environment

The Culture Mile BID is proud to drive an ambitious sustainability agenda to support the delivery of the City of London Corporation's Climate Action Strategy and play an integral part in making the City greener, cleaner, less polluting, and more resilient. We are partnering with Transport for London, the GLA, landowners and other bodies to drive and realise ambitions, investing in programmes that help businesses carry out their work in more sustainable, climate resilient ways.

Net Zero Events in partnership with Heart of the City
Working with the Heart of the City, the BID brought together representatives from small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) and residents across the footprint, to deliver workshops aiming to support them with their Net Zero ambitions, in line with the City of London's Climate Action Strategy. Attendees were signposted to the Heart of the City's 4 Step online learning course to underpin and cement their learning, to develop long lasting and meaningful sustainability practises.

Eco City World Summit 2023
We were proud to be a sponsor of this global summit held at the Barbican Centre in June. The theme was Connecting Communities and drew visitors from all over the world to take part in some groundbreaking sessions focussing on everything from Climate Migrants; building self reliant communities after natural disasters, to the challenges and opportunities of retrofit. The Culture Mile BID hosted the closing reception at the Haberdasher's Hall where we heard from our Chair Andrew Smith and from the London Museum who outlined the groundbreaking innovation and sustainability practises being used to build a Museum for the future, at the heart of Smithfield. (Opens 2026) With over 11,000 delegates over the 3 days, this was a perfect opportunity to highlight the

BID's ambitions to support our members and the City of London to reach a Net Zero future as well as showcase this unique and varied area to a global audience.

Ambassadors Environmental Reporting
In November our Street Ambassador team hit the streets for the first time working to monitor and record environmental issues to make the area cleaner and greener. The Ambassador team use mobile devices that send reports direct to the City of London cleansing contractors, logging instances of uncollected rubbish, e-bikes, littering, waste management and cleansing. They also visit premises on a regular basis to inform and support local businesses such as Smithfield Market advising on abandoned trolleys and pallets and maintaining good relations with all business visitors to the Culture Mile BID. In a very localised sense; e-bikes have proved to be a significant issue and much work has been undertaken to collate and detail how this impacts the local area. Working with other City BIDs, the Street Ambassadors have contributed to a wider London report on how to deal with this increased nuisance and what policies can be put in place to counteract the problem. Graffiti and fly posting is also a large area of focus for the street team.



Pollinator Bed - Barbican Wildlife Garden
Through our Community Fund, the Culture Mile BID was delighted to fund a new pollinator bed for the Barbican Wildlife Garden with peat free soil and new planting designed to attract a more diverse range of insects and wildlife to the garden and surrounding area. 50 pollinator friendly species were planted and 3 people were trained in best planting techniques. The Barbican Wildlife Garden is one of three residents' Gardens on the Barbican Estate in the City of London. It lies within the Barbican and Golden Lane Estate Conservation Area and is classified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. It is tended by a group of local residents, the Barbican Wildlife Group. More than 300 species of birds, mammals, amphibians and invertebrates have been noted in the Garden and research and data collection is ongoing. Species

identified include the Lesser Stag Beetle and House Sparrow, both of which are listed in the City's Biodiversity Action Plan as under severe threat in London.

Footways Map
Footways London were commissioned to produce an interactive digital map, with easily navigated routes, which also features points of history, culture and interest along the way, to encourage movement around the Culture Mile on foot. The map has been embedded in the Culture Mile BID website and made available to other local websites helping to promote the area. The community were invited to contribute to the map and it can continue to evolve and develop over time with new places and things to do added.

Connected Business Community

The BID aims to help businesses make new connections, look for ways to encourage growth and unlock potential for innovation across the area. Encouraging workers back to the office and providing added value to their commute by providing practical opportunities for them to collaborate and learn has been a key focus for the BID's programme during this first year. We have provided activities and opportunities that champion wellbeing, inclusion and social mobility, while providing a bridge between commerce and culture.

Ambassador's Welcome

Our Street Ambassadors are our eyes and ears on the ground and provide a warm welcome and reassuring presence across the footprint. Engaging with businesses and the public to amplify the BIDs work and to provide information and directional advice to those moving around the area.

Over their first 300 days, they have visited more than 550 businesses and assisted 38,481 visitors with wayfinding and more. They record all interactions providing valuable data on who is coming, why they are coming and what they are looking for when arriving in the Culture Mile.

Community Safety

Drawing together the expertise of local security Managers, Culture Mile BID has created it's first ever Safety and Security Group who have met to look at ways of communicating with each other as well as discussing local concerns with the team and Senior City of London Police Officers. The Group liaise closely with the Culture Mile Street Ambassador team on a regular basis, particularly over protest action and disturbances and Counter Terrorism training and information sharing. We also held a business-wide Community Safety Briefing in partnership with COLP and Ask Angela and Wave training for hospitality businesses.

Community Engagement

As part of our commitment to our local residential community, Culture Mile BID has started to build our relationship with residents via community meetings and the creation of two forums. A Neighbourhood Forum is supported in it's aims to be the voice of local people in terms of public realm and planning and a Community Framework includes plans for regular forum meetings

and a series of consultation workshops. We have also attended a number of local ward member meetings where we have engaged with over 150 residents and we welcome resident observer representatives on all our Steering Committees.

The BID worked with Willoughby House residents and Barbican Estates to deliver a Red Cross First Aid training day for staff and residents as well as purchasing a state of the art defibrillator for installation within the Car Park for use by anyone living, working or visiting the area.

Wellbeing events

The BID team has developed and delivered a programme of events and workshops with a focus on wellbeing and networking, these have included:

Horticultural workshops, such as hand-tied bouquets, wreath making and kokedama creating sessions.

Art and mindfulness family workshops, with featured artists such as Amrit Singh.

Christmas activations with entertainment, carol singing and festive food & drink.

Partnering with Nuffield Health to provide high impact and more mindful fitness classes.

More than 5,900 people attended events put on or sponsored by the Culture Mile BID throughout the year, partnering with property owners, charities and cultural institutions to ensure a high quality and varied offer.

Community Fund

In the summer of 2023 we launched our first ever community fund totalling £60,000 – a larger funding pot than other City BIDs due to the greater numbers of residents living in the Culture Mile area in the Barbican, Golden Lane and Barts Close areas of our footprint, approximately around 4,000 in total.



38,481

Visitors Welcomed and Supported

17 per hour on average with peaks at certain times of the day

550+

Business visits carried out

Top destinations:

The Barbican, Moorgate station and Bart's Hospital

Culture Mile Community Fund

Overview

Culture Mile's Community Fund 2023/4 supported local communities within the BID's boundaries.

Through our community fund, Culture Mile sought to support a breadth of local projects that drive positive, local social impact. Open to non-profits working across the impact spectrum, Culture Mile launched a fund of £60,000 in September 2023.

 **13** projects funded

 **£59,135** invested in the community

 **18,202** people benefitted

 **177** volunteers engaged

Applications were open to all non-profit organisations; registered charities, community interest corporations (CICs), and informal community groups. Up to £6,500 was available to each non-profit, with the chance to join together to put in a joint application for funding.

During the matching process, 41 non-profits applied for funding, meeting all the criteria set out in the fund and finally 13 non-profits were selected for funding.

Focus areas & top 3 SDGs

The non-profits chosen provide a range of activities to meet different social impact aims.

The focus areas were developed based on how local-level non-profits describe their work and align to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The specific focus areas selected were as follows:

- Arts and culture
- Education and employment
- Climate and nature
- Food action
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Neighbourhood
- Physical health and sport
- Poverty and homelessness
- Sustainable consumption and production

“

They have been amazing at introducing us to the business community within Culture Mile BID, we have had 1:1 meetings with three different businesses that have shown an interest in supporting XLP Ready to work programme by providing internship and apprenticeship placements.

XLP Youth Charity

“

The ease of the grant process has been fantastic – we loved being able to simply post updates as we went along.

Barbican Wildlife Group

“

The introduction to the Culture Mile BID team has been extremely valuable and will continue beyond the life of this grant. We are now planning a project together for September.

Drum Works

“

We feel valued and supported in our quest to provide Music Education to benefit the wellbeing and opportunities for children in the local area.

Music School at Golden Lane Community Centre

“

Culture Mile Bid gave us flexibility for this project e.g. offering various small projects as well as ongoing projects under this project. They were always very supportive, very prompt answers regarding to any questions.

Forget me not memory cafe

“

Easy process. It has been simple and straightforward with a human touch of picking up the phone.

WeSwim CIC

“

Our project could not have happened without the Fund. We also benefited from the BID's support, encouragements and links with other groups and organisations in the area. The fact that we were working with the the support of the BID was important.

Footways London



Barbican wildlife garden

Community Project Highlights and Statistics



700

Neighbours and families attended

£875

raised for St Mungos Charity from donations from the Summer Party Stalls

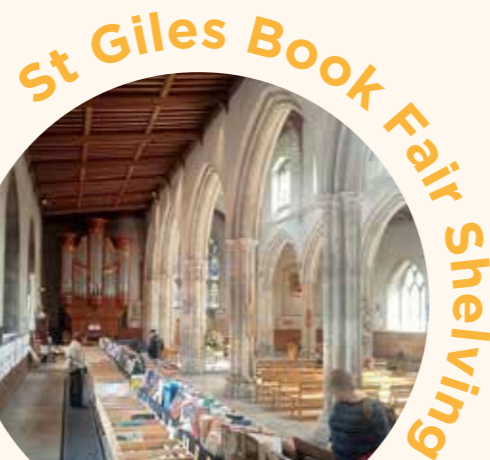


4,000

books stored safely and easily

105

shelves made by a local craftsperson



2,300

visitors to the Culture Mile BID area due to the London Open Gardens Scheme



25

Volunteers engaged in the project donating **76** volunteering hours



100%

increased their confidence and felt more socially connected

23

local disabled members of the community benefitted

83%

stated they had an **increased** sense of purpose

63%

stated saw an **improvement** in their mental well being



Inspiring Places

The BID has committed to driving a high quality placemaking programme, to bring vibrancy to our public spaces and deliver a culture-led public realm across the footprint, stimulating imaginations and supporting wellbeing and productivity. This year the team has focused on discovery, wayfinding and uncovering the rich stories of the people and places in the Culture Mile, throughout it's long history.

Walking Tours

A series of local walks have been curated and delivered to assist with wayfinding and to foster a sense of belonging and ownership for those working and living in the area. These have included:

1,000 years of Royalty The best, the worst and the Very Horribilus, tales of Royalty in the Culture Mile, delivered David Harry, London Spy.

Culture Mile: Barbican to Old Bailey Black History Walk. Researched and delivered by acclaimed black historian Tony Warner.

The Fashion History of the Culture Mile Walking Tour, delivered by Susannah Cohen of Square Mile Secrets, ex fashion journalist, green badge guide and Culture Mile resident!

Christmas Lights

The BID delivered two bespoke giant baubles in the Culture Mile for members of the public to enjoy and interact with. These were situated at St Bartholomew

Close and in Holy Sepulchre Churchyard and drew over 1,000 passing visitors taking pictures and sharing on social media throughout the festive season.

Public Realm Vision

The BID commissioned a Public Realm Vision & Strategy for the area. This piece of work will draw upon and tie together existing strategies, public realm schemes and developments. The overall ambition is to provide a collective vision for public realm in the Culture Mile, guiding future initiatives and tackling urban realm and movement challenges.

Engagement took place with key stakeholders including the City of London and London Borough of Islington, as well as snapshot public engagement with visitors, residents and local workers to identify key issues and opportunities, alongside detailed spatial, heritage and transport analysis by the project team. The BID team look forward to launching this Vision & Strategy in autumn 2024.



Seats at the Table, LFA2023 © Luke O'Donovan

London Festival of Architecture - Seats at the Table

In June 2022 LFA launched the competition 'Co-designing Equity in the Public Realm' in collaboration with the City of London Corporation, Culture Mile and Foundation for Future London. The competition invited multidisciplinary design teams to deliver one or more temporary public realm interventions in Smithfield and East London that would collectively develop a deeper understanding of the public's experience of streets and public spaces.

The winning design was Seats at the Table by Re-Fabricate and The DisOrdinary Architecture Project, with their proposal to work with diverse individuals to create and add a multitude of chairs and other artefacts that represent their relationships to, and accessibility requirements for, enabling equal places at the table.

To create the Seats at the Table installations, the team ran a series of codesign workshops across the Culture Mile and East Bank with disabled artists, young people from Special Educational Needs (SEN) and mainstream schools, built environment students, the general public, and makers from the Bartlett B-Made workshops at UCL Here East. The final scheme was installed in Postman's Park in June 2023, alongside a number of site interventions designed to make the Park a more accessible venue which included aural, tactile and visual sensory additions to parts of the park; and an audio-described soundscape and BSL video to enhance engagement with the Park's Memorial to Heroic Self-Sacrifice.

Seats At The Table was such a welcome addition to the Park that the Diocese of London agreed to extend the length on the installation from 30 June until 23 July, after which the seats were rehomed, most of them being received by the schools who participated in the co-design workshops.

Cultural Destination

The BID aims to support the City of London Corporation's Destination City approach and work with the area's world-class cultural institutions to promote Culture Mile as a major UK destination for culture and leisure. This first year has been spent seeking to understand who visits the Culture Mile presently, why they come, how long they dwell and what they want from the area. This in turn will inform future partnerships, cultural events and activity, for the long term ambition of increasing and diversifying the visitor base, enriching people's perceptions of the area leading to a boost to the local economy and supporting retail and hospitality businesses to thrive.

Morph's Epic Art Adventure

Culture Mile BID funded a Morph statue in the London-wide trail that took place during the summer in support of Whizz-Kidz Charity and was the first ever step free outdoor art trail. Featuring a number of 6ft Morphs and Mini Morphs across Central London the trail as a whole attracted 11,402 app downloads and 424,947 sculpture "collections." "DiverseCity" by artist Amrit Singh stood proudly at the North Wing entrance to the Guildhall throughout the summer and was "collected" 4199 times! The team programmed a meet and greet with the artist to talk about the work, before heading via a step-free route to the fully accessible CodeNode venue to take part in a guided workshop on mark making and mindful colouring.

The trail concluded in August with a celebratory weekend at Guildhall Yard, featuring free children's activities. Additionally, 382 participants entered a competition to win a £500 City Gift Card.

Bartholomew Fair

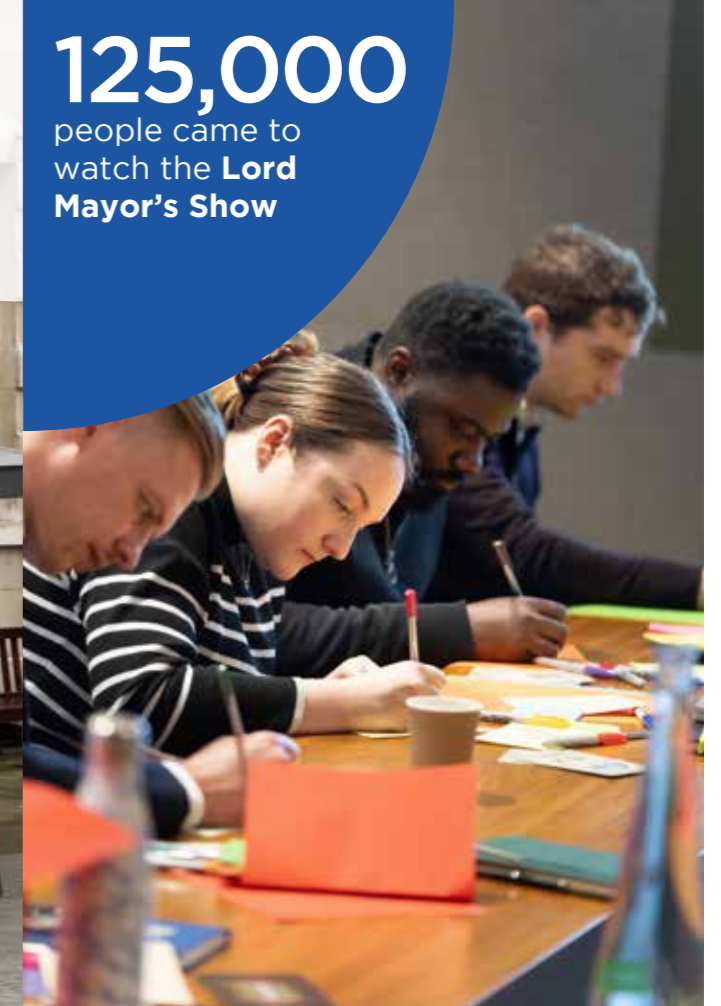
Part of the City of London's Destination City programme included the revival of Bartholomew Fair, an historic event that was traditionally part of London's cultural calendar for hundreds of years. We supported by engaging with our hospitality businesses asking them to stay open over the weekend, and also with marketing to our members and networks.



5,900+
people attended events throughout the year



125,000
people came to watch the Lord Mayor's Show





Oktoberfest

The BID was delighted to partner with Brookfield Properties to sponsor the bandstand and its programming at the Citypoint Oktoberfest, which took place over 3 days at lunchtime and after hours. Culture Mile members and stakeholders made the most of the activities and the event brought more than 1,400 people together over the duration, enjoying food, drink, tug of war and axe throwing!

Lord Mayor's Show

Together with the 4 other City BIDs, the Culture Mile participated in the historic Lord Mayor's Show 2023, with Morphs from the summer art trail aboard our float. The float was featured on BBC coverage of the event with millions tuning in, and was seen in person by more than 125,000 people who came along to watch on the day.

Slow Horses

Highlighting the Culture Mile as a filming location we worked with Apple TV+ to deliver a press launch for Slow Horses (Season 3) based on the best selling Slough House books by Mick Herron. An exclusive screening in the Barbican Cinema was followed by a Q&A with the author and the executive producer Will Smith, facilitated by Ranvir Singh, before drinks and networking on the Barbican Conservatory Terrace. With more than 100 attendees including from the GLA and national press, this event really put the Culture Mile on the map as a vital film hub for central London.

Christmas in the Culture Mile

For our first Christmas in the Culture Mile we sponsored the Red Cross Christmas Market in the Guildhall, where we had a stand and were able to talk

to 250+ people over 2 days to tell them about the BID and our work. More than 2,000 people attended the Market over the 2 days, raising £13,500 for the charity. There was a Royal reception, with our Chair in the line up, and a vast array of stall holders, from the Livery companies to local craftspeople.

We also sponsored the Candlelit Carol Service at St Bartholomew the Great in aid of Singing for Syrians / Hands Up Foundation. There were 515 attendees on the night, raising £118,942 for the charity. Communications reached more than 93,028 people throughout the campaign, really helping to get the Culture Mile name out there to a wide audience. It was a star studded affair with David Dimbleby, Peter Capaldi and Talulah Riley appearing and joining the attendees for a drinks reception afterwards.

We gathered around the bauble in Barts Close Square for an evening of carols led by Music in Offices and traditional Christmas storytelling, festive food and drink and even a snow machine. There were 300 attendees throughout the course of the evening and it was a great opportunity for the Team to get to know many of our members and other stakeholders in the area.

An outdoor carol service was held at Holy Sepulchre Church where our second light installation was placed. Music was provided by the church musicians and attendees were asked to bring along offerings for the City Hygiene Bank which runs from there. We supported and promoted the Hygiene Bank throughout our Christmas campaign, with businesses and residents from across the footprint making drop offs and volunteering to pack boxes.



International Women's Day

The BID sponsored a fantastic project and performance called City of Women, dedicated to amplifying the voices of women past and present from the City of London. For 2024 the piece expanded its scope to incorporate voices of current inspiring women working in the City, a number of whom are working in the Culture Mile area. Words from their interviews and their names were "sung in to history" in the final promenade performance which everyone was invited to be part of and which garnered coverage from ITV News and national print media.

Advocacy

The BID acts as a key locate advocate promoting the Arts and Creative sector in the local area.

During the year we welcomed Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay to the area, who at that time was the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts and Heritage at the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS). He visited our Christmas Activation at St Bartholomew's Close and St Bartholomew the Great Church.

We also commissioned a piece of research by Centre for London funded in association with GLA. The report - Art for All - will focus on investigating how Londoners engage with culture and the arts, who statistically are shown to engage less than in other English regions. The Barbican Arts Centre, one of our key BID partners, will participate in the study.

The aim of this work is to spread the word about our key cultural institutions and to encourage more visitors from within the local London catchment area.





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. The BID term started on the 1st April 2023 and

runs until 31st March 2028. The BID's activities are driven by a set of steering groups leading each key strategic theme of the BID. The Executive Team manages the projects that deliver the BID's ambitions.

BID Board & Team

Board Directors

Andrew Smith Chair, BDB Pitmans
 Andrew Heald Robert W Baird Group
 Charles Knight Barts Health NHS Trust
 David Banks Phillips 66
 Gwynne Master Lloyds Banking Group
 Jennifer Reeve Legal & General
 Laura Winter Simply Business
 Rajeev Shaunak MHA
 Ruth Hoy DLA Piper
 Sian Brittain Guildhall School of Music & Drama
 Timur Tezisler Bank ABC
 Claire Spencer Barbican Centre (resigned August 2024)
 Lewis Clark Barclays (resigned August 2024)
 Manisha Patel PRP (resigned August 2024)

Board Observers

Ruby Raw City of London Corporation
 Randall Anderson / Madush Gupta City of London Corporation
 Bhakti Depala City of London Corporation

Executive Director

Ruth Duston Primera Corporation

BID Team

Austin Casey CEO
 Will Dyson Director of Placemaking
 Sarah Baker Head of Partnerships & Engagement
 Caroline Hanson Director of Communications & Marketing
 Mohammad Saqib Finance Manager
 Dhino Panchalingam Marketing & Events Manager
 Ashley Foreman EA & Team Administrator

Ambassadors

Gavin Kirkwood
 Noemi Cappello
 Grieg Oldbury
 Sean Caulfield



Financial Accounts 2023/24

	Total £
BID Levy Income	2,294,512
Total Income	2,294,512

	Total £
Sustainable Environment	132,649
Connected Community	226,607
Inspiring Places	172,816
Cultural Destination	459,764
Staffing*	60,241
Overheads**	123,597
Contingency**	-
Total Expenditure	1,175,674
Audited Closing Reserves 2023-24	1,118,838







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