



LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER

ANNUAL REPORT

2023/2024

VICTORIA WESTMINSTER DISTRICT



FOREWORD



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We are delighted to present the Annual Report for the Victoria Westminster Business Improvement District (BID) for 2023-2024. This year has been one of historic significance and global attention, with the area playing host to The Coronation of King Charles III.

This glorious display of British ceremony at the beginning of the year gave way to political uncertainty that hung over most major decision-making for business and government alike. Against this backdrop, the Victoria Westminster BID has continued to play a crucial role in enhancing the area's appeal, safety, and vibrancy.

Throughout the past year, we have remained committed to our core mission of enhancing the Victoria Westminster area for businesses, residents, and visitors. From improving public experience, by advancing our Wayfinding Strategy, to marking the Coronation of King Charles III with a nature-inspired trail, the year has been a varied one that has put the area on the World's stage.

We have advanced key improvement projects such as the Arc that promotes a new walking route from Cardinal Place to Storey's Gate; vital to linking key low-emission walking routes through the area. We worked to strengthen community safety through proactive patrols, business checks, and collaborative efforts with the Met Police and local outreach teams. We ensured the area had clean and welcoming spaces through the hard work of our dedicated cleansing team, contributing to a more pleasant environment for all. We promoted Victoria Westminster as a destination through dynamic digital marketing and engaging events, showcasing the best our area has to offer. We also championed sustainability and prosperity through wellness initiatives, charitable partnerships, and support for local businesses.

We are partnering on a strategic project with the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, Westminster City Council and AECOM to harness low carbon energy from the River Thames, TfL ventilation shafts and the London sewer system. The Business Case was submitted for Ministerial review in 2023, approved in February 2024 and stakeholder engagement is progressing. The estimated programme is phased delivery with first heat on from 2027 to 2035 and capable of producing zero-carbon heat with a saving of 75,000 CO2 per year. This project presents an enormous opportunity for the BID to support low carbon delivery to our local businesses and drive forward our sustainability goals.

Acknowledging some of the challenging anti-social behaviour experienced in the footprint, the BID supported the establishment of a joint working group with the Metropolitan Police and Westminster City Council focused on addressing offending in the area. This success of this group has led to Partnership Operation Group Meetings taking place across Westminster.

We have been working closely with the Victoria Neighbourhood Forum to advise and support the development of a local Neighbourhood Plan. The BID has facilitated area meetings, contributed to engagement workshops and provided detail on specific challenges and opportunities in Victoria. The Neighbourhood Plan will further promote 'good growth' with an emphasis on sustainability, greening and climate resilience.

These achievements reflect not just the hard work of the BID team, but the collective effort and support of our member businesses, local authorities, and community partners. Together, we are creating a more vibrant, safe and sustainable Victoria Westminster.

We have continued to work with our neighbouring 'sister' BIDs in Victoria, Whitehall and Northbank and have this year worked to further promote our shared umbrella brand; 'London Heritage Quarter' which reflects the world-renowned nature of the BID footprints. We hope to build on the visibility and recognition of this name and continue to share in the increased impact and economies of scale this shared brand brings.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our BID team, the support of our board and steering group members, and the engagement of our local businesses and community. As we look ahead, Victoria Westminster is in a strong position with no vacancies for prime office stock and a positive development pipeline, emphasising investor confidence and the attractiveness of the area to occupiers. We remain committed to driving positive change and ensuring that Victoria Westminster continues to be a thriving, welcoming, and dynamic district. We continue to ask that the business members in the area engage with the opportunities on offer and communicate your priorities to us. We hope to see you at our upcoming events and look forward to working with you in the year ahead.



Nigel Hughes MBE
Chair



Ruth Duston, OBE, OC
Chief Executive

MORE THAN MONUMENTS

2023/2024

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

As the year draws to a close, we reflect on the numbers that defined the past 12 months.



7,644

business welfare checks carried out



190K+

Social media impressions



500

Christmas hampers donated to elderly and vulnerable residents



15,607

interactions with visitors



7,886

Total website page views



25,000

illustrated maps distributed to businesses and tourists



23,435

proactive security checks carried out



407

bags of litter have been collected



144M +

visitors to the Victoria Westminster Area



899

bags of recycling have been collected



41,000

entries for our annual Advent Calendar, which featured 57 prizes from local businesses



£40,000

contributed towards ActionFunder projects



PLACEMAKING



We continued to...

implement strategic improvement projects, enhance public spaces, and advance environmental and sustainability initiatives. Working with local BID members and local stakeholders, we have collaborated on these projects and continued exceptional relationships with Westminster City Council, Transport for London, and residents.

There have been positive developments in relation to our strategic improvement projects, as we have completed the RIBA Stage 2 Concept Design Report for the Arc project and developed a prospectus outlining final proposals and costs. For King's Scholars' Passage, we completed the RIBA Stage 2 report, costed popular schemes, and discussed implementation with residents and the council.

The BID continued to support Project SWAN, a low-carbon heat network for the London Heritage Quarter area. Through our collaborative approach with Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, Westminster City Council, our members and partners, a sustainable energy network is being developed. Early feasibility stages have been undertaken by AECOM and an outline business case was created for the project. We have also continued to further develop the Future Victoria project, with Network Rail, Westminster City Council, the Greater London Authority and design consultants, Allies and Morrison, to produce a new place plan and vision for the Victoria Station area, which supports area sustainability, heritage-sensitive design and street enhancements that benefit the local economy and community.

To further improve local lighting and accessibility, a lighting design for Westminster Chapel's façade was completed by Lighting Design London while Norman Rourke Pryme and John McAslan + Partners proposed pedestrian improvements for Castle

Lane. We also delivered phase two of our wayfinding strategy, with CITY ID conducting an audit for neighbouring BIDs across the London Heritage Quarter and supported the public realm vision for the Whitehall BID, facilitating strategic alignment.

We continued to improve public spaces by commissioning a landscape management review of Christchurch Gardens through discussions with Westminster City Council. We also funded a falconer to address pigeon issues locally.

To support local environmental sustainability we were a member of the Zero Emission Group for a second year. Through the group we commissioned a freight pilot at 110 Buckingham Palace Road to reduce the number of deliveries to the building in collaboration with their tenants.

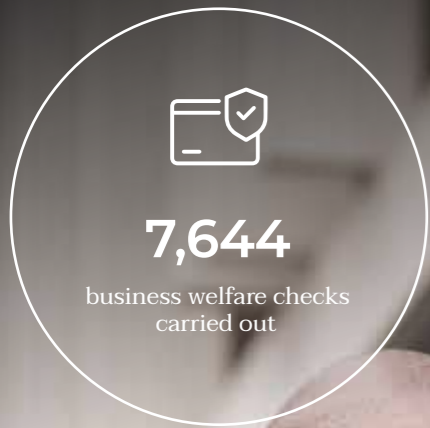
Additionally, we worked with Colliers to analyse local footfall and consumer metrics and provide valuable pedestrian insights to our business partners, in collaboration with our Destination initiative, and held regular meetings with the Public Realm and Sustainability Steering Groups to oversee and enhance sustainability efforts within the BID.



FREIGHT PILOT
commissioned to reduce the number of deliveries



ZERO EMISSION GROUP
member for a 2nd year



COMMUNITY SAFETY & BUSINESS RESILIENCE



We have maintained..

our commitment to reducing crime and anti-social behavior by collaborating with the Greater London Authority (GLA), the Metropolitan Police Service (Met Police), Westminster City Council (WCC), and Outreach teams. By working alongside the British Transport Police (BTP) and key partners such as the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI), we have strengthened business resilience and minimised the risk of more serious incidents.

The Victoria Westminster Patrol Team, consisting of two officers, patrols the BID area from 7am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. They address low-level crime and anti-social behaviour, using body-worn cameras and radios for their duties.

We continued the vital work of the Community Intervention Team, which is funded by the BID and run by The Passage, over the past year to support those who are sleeping rough and to help them find a route off the streets. From April 2023 to March 2024 the team had 1,484 encounters with 994 clients, leading to various support actions and client engagement with homelessness services.




We enhanced the area's safety through various measures including the 4G 'Victoria Radio Link' network, which has been used by 10 local businesses, security operatives, and on-street teams to report non emergency issues. The Victoria Emergency Notification System, crisis-communications platform, has continued to be a key resource for the BID with 351 users receiving 58 broadcasts during the year in relation to protests, event road closures, crime prevention and training opportunities. In April, the patrol team received training on the effects of Spice and how to react if they encounter individuals who have taken it. A Counter Terrorism tabletop exercise was held in May, supported by the West End Security Group (WESG), focusing on a realistic right-wing extremist attack scenario.

As part of our ongoing work to address evening and night time safety and violence against women and girls, we funded medics at Victoria Station, during December, to help vulnerable individuals over the festive period. The team treated and provided welfare support to 14 patients over this time. We commissioned Six Till Six to carry out a surveying exercise which has fed into the development of a strategic programme for delivery over the next financial year, with results presented in February 2024. The BID also purchased anti-drink spiking kits and branded squeeze alarms, which were popular at crime prevention stalls, including a session at Victoria Station with Southern Trains, The Passage, and The Samaritans.

Additionally, three ACT online sessions were conducted, bleed control kits were delivered to 14 businesses and bike marking sessions were held at Cardinal Place and Victoria Station; marking 23 bikes.






15,607
 interactions
 with visitors

CLEANING & GREENING


407
 bags of litter
 collected


380 KM
 of paving has been swept
 and litter picked



Victoria Westminster BID prioritises...

clean and welcoming open spaces in Victoria Westminster. In partnership with Westminster City Council (WCC), our street team actively works every day to improve the area, creating a more pleasant environment for living, working, and visiting.

Our street cleansing service operates Monday to Friday, 6:30am to 5:30pm, delivering street-sweeping, litter-picking, graffiti and sharps removal, and bin and pavement flushing. We also provide an on-call janitorial service with a 2-hour response time. Additionally, the team sets up tables and chairs outside the Blewcoat School throughout the year.

Our visible Ambassador team provide a warm visitor welcome and street concierge service, enhancing the Victoria Westminster experience and driving footfall into the local economy. The team has continued to support visitors with wayfinding this year and visited our businesses to gain information on the ground. They also logged and monitored environmental issues.




899
 bags of
 recycling collected


353
 business visits have
 been carried out


598
 environmental issues have
 been reported to Westminster
 City Council and Transport
 for London



42.4K +
individual emails
were circulated in
over 29 campaigns*

3,410
subscribers on our News,
Events and Offers mailing
list as of April 2024

DESTINATION

27,251
subscribers on our
Privilege Card mailing list
as of April 2024

*These were sent to subscribers who opted to receive information about News, Events and Offers, and Privilege Card Offers. Both had an average open rate of 37%.



We actively promote...

the area through our digital platforms, including our website and social media, to highlight events and activities organised by us and our local business partners.

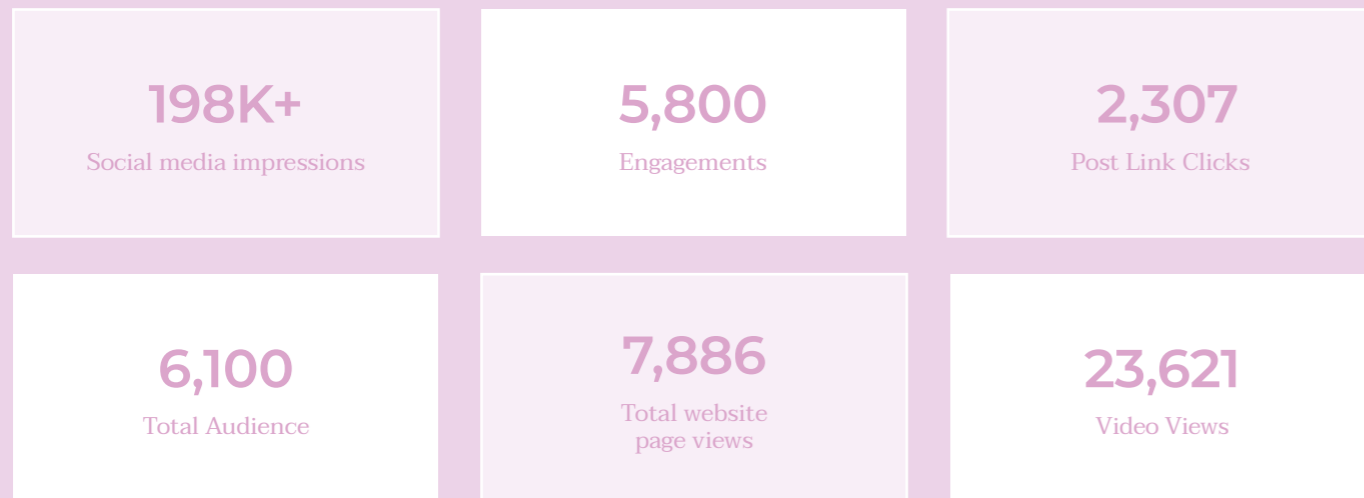
Digital Marketing is used to increase awareness of the BID's project work, promote companies within the footprint, as well as comment on important London themes. This year we have supported various companies through collaborations and competitions to increase brand awareness and social media following. Frequent content was scheduled across Instagram, X (Twitter), and LinkedIn, on our website, and through email communications.

This year, we enhanced our brand by engaging a communications agency to provide additional PR and media support. During this time, we produced branded materials and published three issues of the "Victoria London Starts Here" magazine, each with a circulation of 25,000. We attended MIPIM to highlight the increasingly significant role BIDs play in London to increase inward investment, and to showcase our upcoming strategic projects such as Future Victoria and Project SWAN. We also collaborated with

the Northbank, Victoria, and Whitehall BIDs, alongside Peter Murray and Lord Peter Hendy, on a Route Master Bus Tour through South Westminster to highlight key developments and public realm initiatives across the areas'. Additionally, we sponsored the BusinessLDN BID Summit and worked with Colliers to analyse local footfall and consumer metrics and provide valuable pedestrian insights to our business partners, in collaboration with our Public Realm & Greening initiative.

We held memberships with various organisations throughout the year to join conversations relating to BIDs and other relevant policies and investment in London. These included BusinessLDN, London & Partners, Central London Alliance, Westminster Property Association, Opportunity London, and the NLA. We also completed two research projects; a 2040 Vision report with Arup and an economic assessment of the London Heritage Quarter with Volterra, to aid our future work.

DIGITAL MARKETING STATISTICS



EVENTS PROGRAMME

To kickstart the celebrations for The Coronation of HM King Charles III, the London Heritage Quarter Districts hosted a dinner at Banqueting House. The evening saw 200 guests from local businesses and charities enjoying a performance from the Household Division Band. On the night we raised £1,652 from our Charity raffle.

We continued to mark The Coronation over the summer by hosting a Nature Trail featuring six wicker animals, which symbolised The King's passion for the environment. We received over 2,900 web page views and distributed 25,000 illustrated maps to businesses and tourists via our Ambassadors. We also collaborated with Wide Eyed London on a walking tour highlighting stories of the monarch. In June, South Westminster served as a 'Destination' for the London Festival of Architecture, which is a month-long celebration of architecture through a series of installations, exhibitions, workshops, talks and special events. A walking tour, talk, and 10 additional events by local businesses were hosted as part of our programme.

During the year we hosted networking opportunities for the local business community including an EA/PA Network venue showcase ahead of Christmas, where 27 local venues exhibited to over 40 PAs and EAs. For International Women's Day we hosted a Lunch and Learn at the Guards Museum, featuring three inspirational women from Wellington Barracks who shared their military experiences with over 40 local business delegates.

We delivered various initiatives to celebrate Christmas in 2023 including our annual Advent Calendar, which featured 57 prizes from local businesses and saw record participation with 41,000 entries, up from 25,000 in 2022. We brought a life-size gingerbread house to Victoria Station from 7-10 December, attracting over 2,000 photo groups and 4,000 interactions. We also distributed candy canes, 2,200 leaflets and a DIY Gingerbread kit competition garnered 85 social media engagements. Festive workshops for local employees returned, including biscuit decorating and wreath-making which proved extremely popular with 45 attendees and a 100% turnout.

For the third year we placed a Christmas tree in Christchurch Gardens to bring festive cheer to the public space. Collaborating with our neighbouring BIDs, Victoria and Whitehall, we hosted a Christmas light switch-on event at Christchurch Gardens with over 40 attendees enjoying mulled wine, mince pies, and carols by St Matthew's Primary School.

Following our online Advent Calendar's success in January, the four districts introduced an After Calendar from 15-19 January, coinciding with Blue Monday week. The calendar featured a wellness prize per day from local businesses and received over 1,000 entries.

Our Ambassadors have continued to play a key role in enhancing the Victoria Westminster experience by offering a warm welcome and street concierge service to visitors, which helps drive footfall into the local economy. This year they've assisted with wayfinding, gathered information from local businesses, monitored environmental issues, and provided important updates about the area.





ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE (ESG)



120

attendees for the
Wellness Day focused
on women's health



500

Christmas hampers
donated to elderly and
vulnerable residents



£40,000

contributed towards
ActionFunder projects

We will continue to...

ensure Victoria Westminster remains a thriving business hub, this is crucial for the area's future success. The Victoria Westminster BID is committed to partnering with local businesses to sustain the economy and support staff through education, skills development, wellbeing initiatives, and networking opportunities.



We collaborated with the other BIDs in London Heritage Quarter to host several wellness events and workshops for our members throughout the year. To support mental health awareness and education, we hosted a week long programme of workshops for Mental Health Awareness Week with Masterpeace, Jar & Fern and The Rubens Hotel. Each workshop aimed to boost creativity and mental clarity for 15 participants. On World Mental Health Day in October, we hosted a Winter Wellness webinar with The Wellbeing People for 50 members, focusing on navigating the season and boosting immunity. We also held a Wellness Day focused on women's health with Dr. Apul Parikh from the Harley Street Clinic, attracting 120 attendees at The Conrad Hotel. To combat January Blues, we ran a January Blues After Calendar, offering daily wellness prizes and attracting over 1,000 entries.



For the festive season, we ran popular Pumpkin Carving and Festive Wreath Workshops, each accommodating 15 members. We also continued our support for Westminster Connects, donating 500 Christmas hampers to elderly and vulnerable residents, with business members volunteering to help with deliveries.

We continued to provide support to local charities this year through our partnerships with organisations including ActionFunder and Hotel

School. With ActionFunder we supported eight local charities across the London Heritage Quarter over the winter and began preparing a new fund with other BIDs across Central London, to support both existing and new charities in Westminster. We supported Hotel School and planned a 2024 'Meet the Charities' event with The Passage and Hotel School to encourage further support from businesses in our districts.

The BIDs also partnered with The Passage to offer Corporate Volunteering Opportunities to our business members. Teams of up to 8 business members completed a Kitchen Takeover which included preparing lunch and serving clients at The Passage. Further volunteering opportunities included working in their clothes store and assisting with Passage run events.

Our popular Privilege Card scheme grew further last year with over 9,000 additional cards being distributed across the SW1 area and over 200 offers available to be redeemed at local businesses. We also commissioned a developer to produce a bespoke new app to digitalise our Privilege Card scheme, cut our plastic production and provide offers across the whole London Heritage Quarter area. This app was launched in the next financial year.



BOARD MEMBERS

Nigel Hughes MBE	Victoria, Victoria Westminster and Whitehall Business Improvement Districts (Board Chair)
Beverly Payne	Conrad London St James (to April 2023)
Bernadette Gilligan	Conrad London St James (from December 2023)
Lee Oxley	Channel 4
Mark Fisher	Tuckerman
Mark Taylor	QEII Centre
Ruth Duston OBE, OC	Victoria, Victoria Westminster and Whitehall Business Improvement Districts
Stuart Burrows	DEFRA

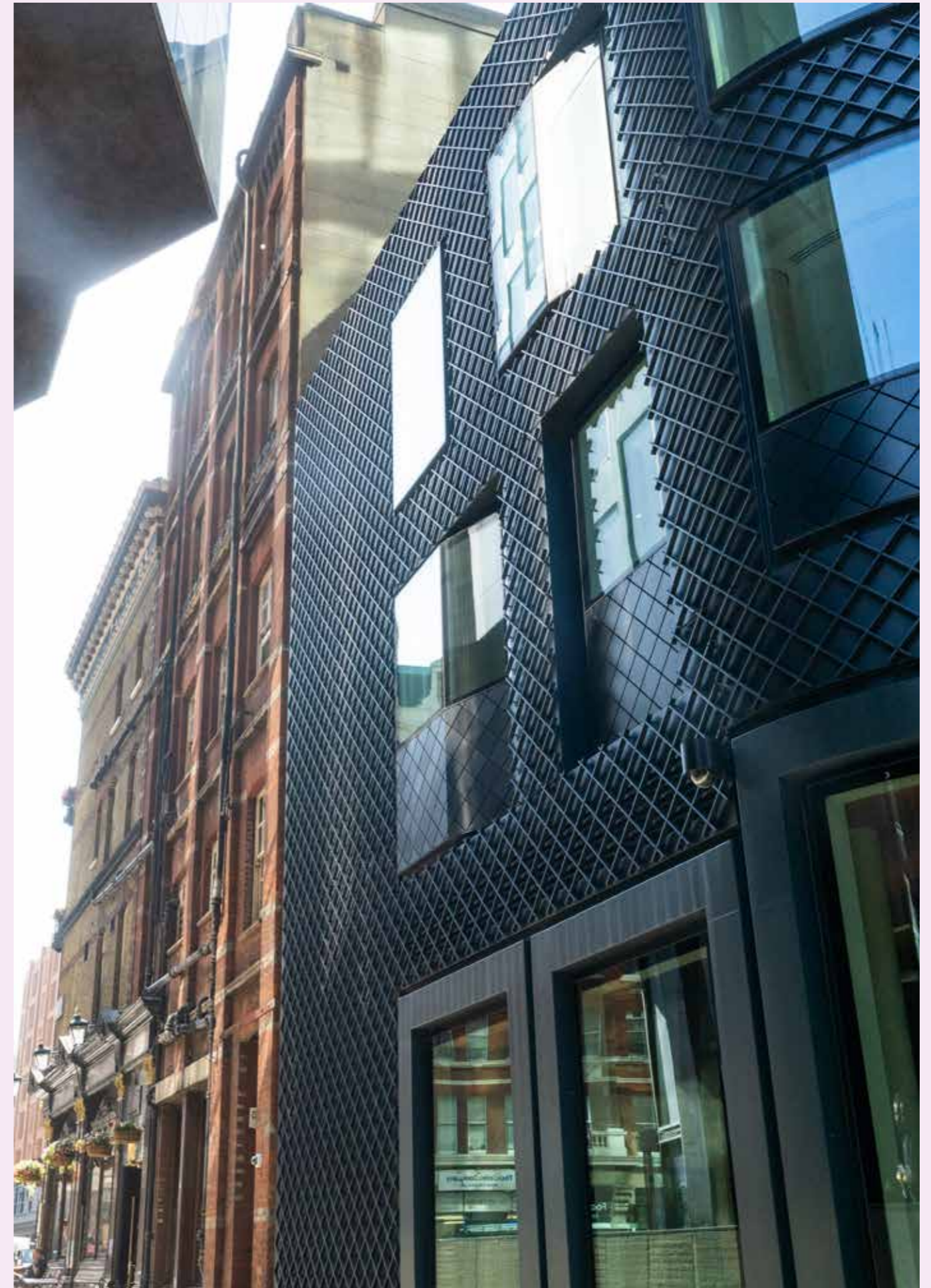


BOUNDARY MAP



PROFIT & LOSS

	TOTAL 2023/24 £	COMPARATIVE TOTAL 2022/23 £
TURNOVER		
BID Levy	1,066,803	885,914
Voluntary Contributions and Other Income	40,056	1,996
TOTAL	1,106,859	887,910
COST OF SALES		
Cleaning and Greening	133,432	146,360
Community Safety and Business Resilience	94,591	136,631
Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)	62,421	105,692
Destination	194,163	244,195
Placemaking	134,042	245,233
TOTAL	618,649	878,111
GROSS PROFIT	488,210	9,799
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES		
BID Team Support	76,932	77,972
Rent and rates	27,576	29,468
Estates Costs	887	0
Insurance	1,846	1,035
Office Consumables	1,821	770
Office Expenses	9,963	58
Subscriptions	203	0
Training Costs	199	0
Legal & Professional Fees	17,820	13,467
Audit Fees	8,633	7,250
IT costs	14,637	343
Telephone	1,426	0
BID Levy Collection Fee	16,118	14,776
BID Admin Costs	5,817	18,993
BID Renewal Costs	0	0
Bank Charges	510	401
Depreciation	1,253	545
Corporation Tax	4,622	379
TOTAL	190,263	165,457
Surplus brought forward	398,911	554,569
Profit/(Loss) for the year	297,947	(155,658)
Surplus carried forward	696,858	398,911







LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER

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MORE THAN MONUMENTS