



LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER

NORTHBANK BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

2025/2026

THE NORTHBANK DISTRICT



Contents	
Foreword	3
The Year in Numbers	5
Cleaning & Greening	6
Community Safety & Business Resilience	8
Destination	10
Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)	14
Placemaking	16
Board members	20
Boundary Map	21
Profit and Loss	22

FOREWORD

We are pleased to present the Annual Report for the Northbank Business Improvement District (BID) for 2025–2026. This has been a year of continued progress and delivery across the district, and the third year of Northbank BID’s second five-year term. Our work has focused on public realm improvements, destination activity, sustainability, safety and creating a cleaner, more welcoming and resilient district for everyone who lives, works and visits here.

The Northbank is a unique district in central London; connecting the West End and the City and bringing together exceptional green spaces, historic architecture, world-leading cultural and academic institutions, and a vibrant hospitality and business community. From the Strand and Aldwych to the Embankment, Temple and Charing Cross, the area continues to evolve, with major developments, new businesses and investment creating opportunities for the future.

Improving the public realm remains central to our vision. This year, we continued to build on the transformation delivered at Strand Aldwych, while progressing projects to improve the experience of moving through and spending time in the district. Work across Strand West, Villiers Street, the Embankment and Temple Gardens has continued, alongside longer-term plans to improve connections, wayfinding, lighting and accessibility. We have also explored opportunities to strengthen the area’s identity through walking routes, heritage initiatives and new public realm interventions. Alongside these improvements, we have supported local projects that bring the district’s heritage, culture and public spaces to life, including the ‘Decades’ installation at St Mary le Strand and supporting the church to secure £4.6 million in National Lottery Heritage Funding for the Jewel in the Strand conservation project.

Creating a cleaner, safer and more welcoming district remains fundamental to our work. Our dedicated cleansing service operates seven days a week, responding to issues raised by the business community and maintaining high standards across the area. Our Patrol team provides a visible presence, supporting businesses and visitors, responding to incidents and helping tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB). During the year, we increased patrols and took a more targeted approach to identified anti-social behaviour hotspots, while strengthening partnership working to address crime and the needs of vulnerable people. We have also strengthened business resilience through our Radio Link network, emergency communications, and Counter Terrorism and crime prevention training, working closely with Westminster City Council, the Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police and other partners.

We continued to champion the Northbank as a destination through our work as part of London Heritage Quarter, with the ‘More Than Monuments’ campaign encouraging Londoners and visitors to discover the area beyond its most famous landmarks. Through digital activity, events and partnerships with local businesses, the campaign showcased Northbank’s cultural attractions, hospitality offer and hidden gems, helping to drive awareness and footfall. Destination activity has also continued through seasonal events, heritage initiatives and opportunities to experience the area’s unique character.

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) priorities have remained a key focus, reflecting our commitment to a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient district. The launch of the London Heritage Quarter Sustainability Action Plan provides a clear framework for action, while our work on air quality, biodiversity, the circular economy, sustainable transport and climate resilience continues to grow. Our commitment to greening and biodiversity has continued through planting, maintenance and longer-term initiatives to create healthier, more resilient streets and public spaces. We have also supported the development of Project SWAN, a transformative low-carbon heat network spanning Victoria, Whitehall and the Strand, alongside wider initiatives to improve the environmental performance and resilience of the district.

Growing interest in the role property owners can play in the Northbank’s long-term success has led to feasibility work exploring the potential for a Property Owner BID alongside the existing occupier BID, creating opportunities for collective investment and development.

Partnership working remains central to our approach. Through London Heritage Quarter, we continued to work with neighbouring BIDs, businesses, policymakers and public sector partners to champion the Northbank, influence decision-making and address issues affecting the district and wider London economy. This included engagement with HM Treasury on the potential impact of a visitor levy on the hotel sector, discussions with MOPAC on public safety and business resilience, collaboration with Rachel Blake MP on rough sleeping and support for vulnerable people, and the launch of our Young Londoners research exploring how London can attract and retain young talent.

None of this would be possible without the commitment of our BID team, Board, steering groups, business members and partners. As the Northbank continues to evolve through investment, public realm improvements and stronger collaboration, we remain committed to working together to build a vibrant, sustainable and resilient district that contributes to the success of central London.



Andrew Hicks
Chair



Ruth Duston, OBE, OC
Chief Executive

MORE THAN MONUMENTS



2025/2026 THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

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



124+ million

visits to The Northbank District between April 2025 and March 2026



40+ million

times our More Than Monuments campaign was seen at Victoria and Embankment London Underground stations



2 million

views of our More Than Monuments TV advert on Channel 4 and 4OD



41,000+

Street audits completed by street safety and welfare checks completed by our Patrol Team



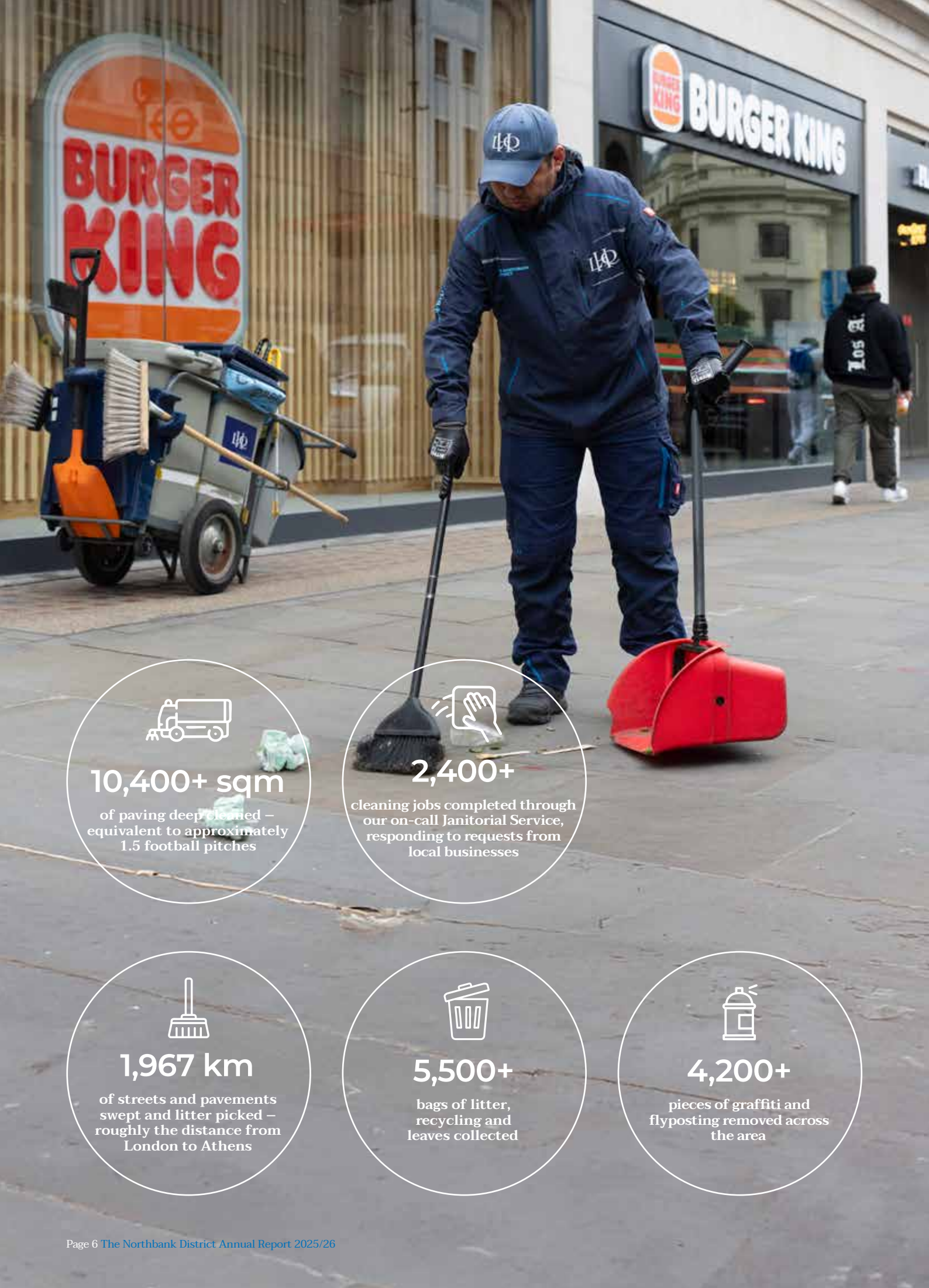
15,000+

beneficiaries reached through ActionFunder



16,000+

deals redeemed through the LHQ Hub App




10,400+ sqm
of paving deep cleaned –
equivalent to approximately
1.5 football pitches


2,400+
cleaning jobs completed through
our on-call Janitorial Service,
responding to requests from
local businesses


1,967 km
of streets and pavements
swept and litter picked –
roughly the distance from
London to Athens


5,500+
bags of litter,
recycling and
leaves collected


4,200+
pieces of graffiti and
flyposting removed across
the area




95%
of environmental
issues reported in the
area resolved

CLEANING & GREENING

The Northbank District is home to an exceptional mix of iconic landmarks, historic streets, hidden alleyways and courtyards, and we remain committed to keeping these spaces clean, welcoming and well maintained. Our dedicated Cleansing Team works throughout the district to deliver regular deep cleaning and respond to local issues, helping to maintain a high-quality environment for businesses, workers, residents and visitors.

Our dedicated street cleansing service operates seven days a week, from 6.30am to 5.30pm, providing street sweeping, litter picking, sharps and graffiti removal, and bin and pavement flushing.

An on-call Janitorial Service also operates as part of the provision, responding to cleansing requests from the business community within a two-hour window. Working closely with the Metropolitan Police, Westminster City Council services, our patrol team and Veolia, we carried out monthly cleaning operations at Adelphi Terrace in response to encampments and associated anti-social behaviour.

From September 2025, London Heritage Quarter assumed responsibility for the day-to-day management and enhanced cleansing of Strand Aldwych, helping to ensure the Northbank district is maintained to a consistently high standard.

Enhanced deep cleaning on Villiers Street also continued throughout the year, taking place every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. This included regular flushing around Shaw's Flowers and the Royal Coffee stalls, complementing Westminster City Council's regular cleansing programme.

Agar Street also received additional flushing due to the presence of food kitchens operating seven days a week. Regular flushing was carried out at other high-footfall hotspots around Charing Cross Station, Adelaide Street, Welling Street, Northumberland Avenue and Craven Street, helping to maintain cleanliness across the district.

We continued to work closely with Westminster City Council to identify and report public realm issues, including damaged pavements, broken bins and faulty street lighting, helping to keep the district safe, attractive and well maintained.

In May, we hosted our third annual Smarten & Sparkle event, bringing together more than 40 employees from the local business community to volunteer their time to improve the area. Working alongside our Cleansing Team, volunteers took part in practical activities to clean and enhance the local environment, providing an opportunity for businesses to come together and make a visible difference to their neighbourhood.



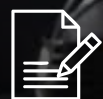
41,000+

41,000+ street safety and welfare checks completed



11,000+

issues involving street population responded to



940+

incidents of anti-social behaviour responded to



450+

calls through the Radio Link network responded to



10,450+

business welfare checks carried out

COMMUNITY SAFETY & BUSINESS RESILIENCE

Tackling low-level crime and anti-social behaviour is a key priority for the BID, as these issues can have a significant impact on residents, workers and visitors across the area. Through close collaboration with the Greater London Authority, Metropolitan Police Service, Westminster City Council, British Transport Police and the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure, we work to prevent crime, improve safety and strengthen resilience across the district.



Our Northbank Patrol Team continued to provide a visible presence across the area, with four officers patrolling in pairs from 6.30am to 11.30pm every day. The team carried out welfare checks, visited businesses and responded to safety incidents on the street, using body-worn cameras and radios to support their work.

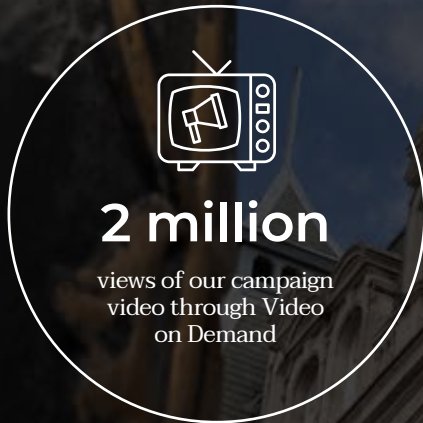
The Patrol Team also worked alongside the Metropolitan Police and Westminster City Council on four joint partnership deployments throughout the year, targeting known crime hotspots, engaging with people sleeping rough and carrying out weapon sweeps across the area. The deployments brought together teams from different organisations to share intelligence, address local concerns and provide a coordinated response to issues affecting businesses and the wider community.

Northbank Radio Link network and Emergency Notification System continued to support effective communication across the area. The Radio Link network is now used by 90 local businesses, security operatives and on-street teams, enabling non-emergency issues to be reported and shared in real time, while the Emergency Notification System reached 359 users through 65 broadcasts covering protests, event-related road closures, crime prevention and training opportunities.

To help educate the local business community about homelessness and build greater understanding of the challenges faced by people sleeping rough, we also delivered a Homelessness Education event on 21 October, in partnership with our Environmental, Social & Governance programme. The event was attended by 63 people and provided practical guidance on how businesses can respond appropriately and offer support.

We also delivered initiatives to support community safety, including four bike marking sessions throughout the year. Three were held at the London School of Economics and one at Victoria Embankment Gardens, with 124 bikes marked and 137 serviced by professional bike mechanics, helping cyclists protect their bikes and keep them in good working condition.

To strengthen business security awareness and emergency preparedness, we delivered three ACT (Action Counters Terrorism) and four SCaN (See, Check and Notify) training sessions, attended by more than 200 people. Three Diphoterine chemical attack kits were also made available across Northbank, providing access to specialist first-aid equipment in the event of a chemical incident.



DESTINATION

The Northbank District is one of central London’s most distinctive cultural destinations, bringing together world-renowned theatres, museums, galleries, historic institutions and hospitality businesses across Strand, Aldwych, Charing Cross and the Embankment.



Its combination of culture, heritage and contemporary experiences makes it a destination for visitors, workers, students and residents, while its diverse business community adds to the character and vibrancy of the area. Throughout the year, we continued to raise the profile of Northbank and encourage people to explore and experience more of what the area has to offer.

local promotions, the app recorded more than 16,000 deal redemptions during the year, encouraging users to explore businesses across all four BID areas and supporting local trade.

We also began working with Huq to better understand how people use and spend within Northbank, using local footfall and spend data to provide valuable insights into visitor behaviour and consumer activity. This information is helping inform our work across our Destination and Placemaking themes and providing useful intelligence for our business community.



Our More Than Monuments campaign was central to this work, encouraging Londoners and visitors to look beyond Northbank’s best-known landmarks and discover its wider cultural attractions, independent businesses and destinations. The campaign extended along Strand, with 40 street flags installed between Waterloo Bridge and Charing Cross, alongside advertising across TFL and Channel 4, social media and digital activity, and visitor maps highlighting local businesses and attractions.

Alongside our destination activity, we continued to engage with wider conversations about the future of London through memberships of BusinessLDN, London & Partners, Westminster Property Association, Opportunity London and the NLA. At MIPIM, London Heritage Quarter promoted Northbank as a destination for investment and business growth, strengthening relationships with investors, developers and public sector partners and showcasing the area’s ongoing transformation.

This was supported by year-round digital activity promoting local businesses, BID projects and the wider destination across Instagram, LinkedIn and TikTok, as well as our website and email communications. We also worked directly with businesses through collaborations and competitions, creating opportunities to increase their visibility and connect with new audiences.

We also commissioned Public First to explore why young Londoners are rethinking life in the capital. The research identified affordability, fair pay and safety as key factors influencing whether young people choose to stay in London. These findings will help shape our conversations with businesses and partners about how we can contribute to making London an attractive place for young people to build their futures.

The LHQ Hub App provided another way to connect people with businesses and experiences across London Heritage Quarter. Featuring exclusive offers, competitions and



Events Programme

Our events programme brought Northbank's cultural and heritage offer to life throughout the year, creating opportunities for people to experience the area, engage with its history and discover its businesses and venues.

We took part in The Big Egg Hunt, bringing artist-designed egg sculptures to Northbank and the wider London Heritage Quarter as part of the city-wide trail. Easter storytelling workshops complemented the activity, encouraging families to explore the area and discover more about its heritage.

Our PA/EA Network continued to connect corporate event bookers with Northbank's hospitality and events businesses through networking events and a venue showcase. Representatives from across London Heritage Quarter took part, with the split-venue format generating new enquiries, partnerships and future booking opportunities.

Throughout spring and summer, pop-up activations at Aristocrat, Eighty Strand, The Grand Building and One Strand brought London Heritage Quarter events, business support and local offers directly to occupiers, creating further opportunities for businesses to engage with their employees and the wider BID programmes. Northbank's heritage was also showcased through Heritage Open Days, with six organisations taking part. Two Temple Place, the RSA, Methodist Central Hall, The Guards Museum, St Clement Danes Church and the Lyceum Theatre welcomed more than 4,600 visitors over the weekend.

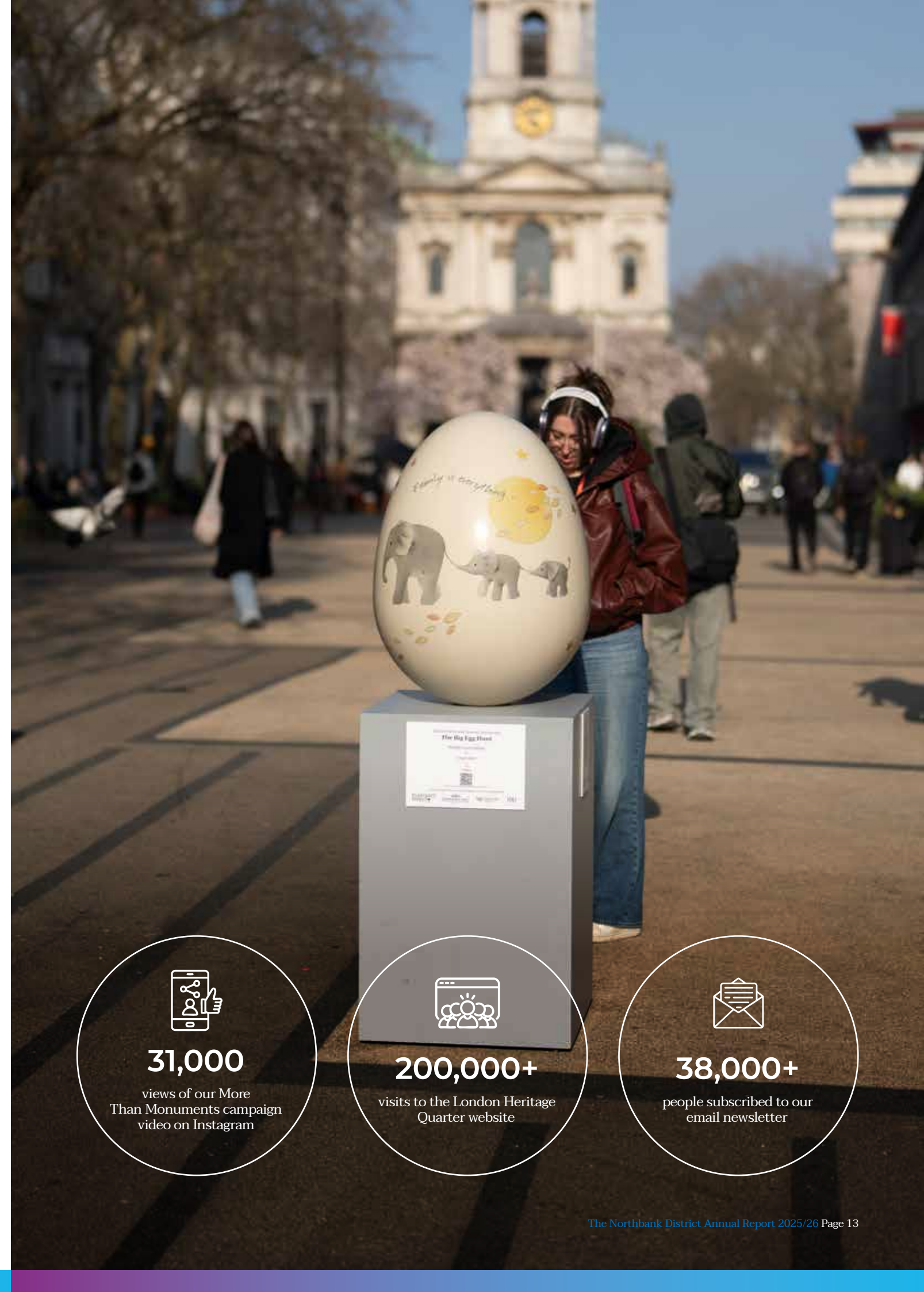
More than 110 attendees joined our Annual General Meeting at The Waldorf Hilton, where we reflected on the year's achievements, launched London Heritage Quarter's Sustainability Action Plan, showcased ActionFunder partnerships and featured performances from the Royalties programme.

We continued our sponsorship of West End LIVE, one of London's largest free outdoor theatre festivals, reaching around 70,000 attendees through event branding, advertising and promotional activity.

Our Christmas programme brought together a range of activity across Northbank. The Enchanted Snow Globe transformed Charing Cross Station into an immersive experience celebrating The Nutcracker and London's theatre heritage, with live ballet performances, interactive giveaways and photo opportunities attracting around 1,200 visitors over five days. Our heritage-inspired festive lighting scheme returned across Strand and Villiers Street from November to early January. Inspired by the Savoy Theatre's pioneering use of electric lighting, the scheme celebrated Northbank's heritage while enhancing the area during the festive and evening period.

Our Online Advent Calendar generated more than 74,000 competition entries, a 30% increase on the previous year, providing businesses with opportunities to promote exclusive prizes and offers. Our Christmas programme also delivered fully booked family workshops, encouraging people to spend time in Northbank and engage with its experience offer during the festive season.

In the new year, we supported Westminster City Council and Create London's Decades installation at St Mary-le-Strand, marking the church's 300th anniversary. The installation and accompanying guided tours received excellent feedback. Across Strand Aldwych, footfall exceeded three million visits during November and December, highlighting the continued strength of the area as a destination during the festive period.



31,000

views of our More Than Monuments campaign video on Instagram



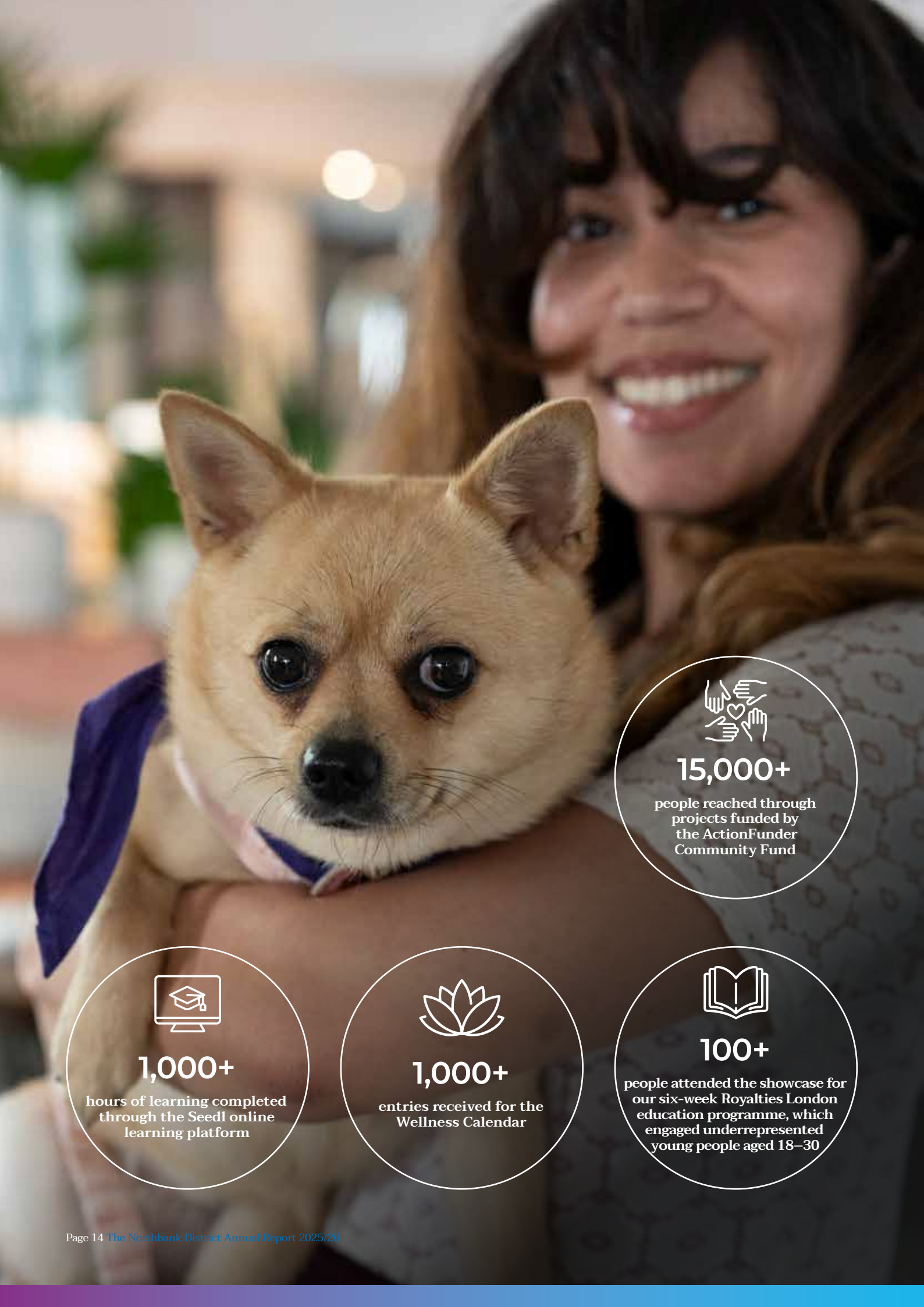
200,000+

visits to the London Heritage Quarter website



38,000+

people subscribed to our email newsletter



ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE

Supporting a strong, inclusive and resilient business community through a dedicated Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) programme remains an important part of our work across Northbank.

Throughout the year, we delivered a broad range of initiatives focused on skills development, wellbeing, community support and inclusion, helping businesses and employees access opportunities, build connections and contribute positively to the local area.

Our online learning platform, SeedL, continued to provide businesses and employees with access to more than 200 live and on-demand courses covering topics including leadership, project management, wellbeing and sales. In its second year, the platform welcomed more than 200 additional users, who collectively completed over 1,000 hours of learning and earned professional development certificates. We also supported Westminster Adult Education Service through its Apprenticeship Awards, recognising the contribution apprentices make to local businesses and promoting skills development across the district. Our partnership with Hotel School also continued, creating valuable opportunities for businesses to engage with programmes designed to develop the skills, confidence and experience required for careers within the hospitality sector.

Employee wellbeing remained a key priority throughout the year. During Mental Health Awareness Week, we worked with local businesses including Brigit's Bakery to deliver activities such as a Colour and Chat Afternoon Tea and Cuddle Club dog therapy sessions, engaging more than 80 business members. Seasonal workshops delivered in partnership with Jar and Fern included pumpkin carving and festive wreath-making sessions, attracting almost 100

attendees. In January 2026, the successful Wellness Calendar campaign was relaunched with support from five local businesses, generating more than 1,000 competition entries while promoting local wellbeing providers. Further wellbeing activity was delivered through the Spring Reset programme with Together Collective, providing creative workshops that supported both employee wellbeing and wider ESG objectives.

Through the London Heritage Quarter ActionFunder Community Fund, we supported seven organisations reaching more than 15,000 beneficiaries. We also partnered with the Sir Simon Milton Foundation and Westminster Connects to distribute 750 Christmas hampers to elderly and vulnerable residents, including 470 funded by London Heritage Quarter. Alongside this, we continued to champion equality, diversity and inclusion through initiatives including Black History Month events, a volunteer appreciation day during Ramadan.

Working in partnership with Royalties London and Volcano, we delivered a youth development programme for Londoners aged 18–30. Through a series of workshops, expert-led sessions and real-world projects, participants developed practical skills in branding, project management and business strategy. The programme culminated in a participant-led showcase attended by more than 100 guests, receiving excellent feedback from attendees and partners alike. Its success has led to the programme being extended for a second year.




10,000
walking maps distributed to encourage walking and active travel across the area


£4.6 million
in National Lottery Heritage Funding secured for the Jewel in the Strand conservation project at St Mary le Strand Church


40+
businesses engaged in shaping the future of Project SWAN through three stakeholder meetings


40
riverside flags installed to promote Northbank's cultural and visitor offer along Victoria Embankment


12
heritage locations featured in the Lamps and Lanterns on the Northbank walking trail



PLACEMAKING

Stretching along the River Thames, Northbank is a distinctive part of central London where heritage, culture, business and innovation come together. Its historic architecture, internationally recognised cultural institutions, riverside setting and network of streets and public spaces create an environment that attracts people to work, visit and spend time.

Our placemaking work focused on protecting and enhancing Northbank's distinctive character while ensuring the district continues to evolve for businesses, residents and visitors. Throughout the year, we delivered practical improvements alongside long-term strategic projects, working with Westminster City Council, Transport for London, Network Rail, landowners, cultural partners and BID members to improve public spaces, connectivity and sustainability.

Strand Aldwych remained a strategic priority, strengthening its role as a vibrant pedestrianised public space through high-quality management, enhanced cleansing and a year-round programme of events, markets, trails and public art. The space's quality, accessibility and management were recognised through a Green Flag Award, while partnership support helped St Mary le Strand Church secure National Lottery Heritage Funding for the Jewel in the Strand conservation project. Through partnership working and stronger contract oversight, the BID transitioned Strand Aldwych cleansing arrangements, which achieved £137,862 in savings over seven months, with future annual savings forecast at around £180,000.

Across the district, we improved public spaces through new street-cleaning arrangements, progressed regeneration plans for Charing Cross Station and the future restoration of the Grade II* listed Eleanor Cross, and advanced our Ground Floor Uses Strategy to encourage hospitality, alfresco dining and active frontages. Projects in Southampton Street, Agar Street, Portugal Street and the Adelphi improved connectivity, biodiversity and the visitor experience, while a Zero Emissions study explored opportunities to improve servicing.

The Villiers Street Steering Group progressed proposals to enhance York Water Gate, lighting and links

with Victoria Embankment Gardens and Charing Cross Station. We also supported Project SWAN, engaging more than 40 businesses to help shape proposals for a low-carbon heat network.

Sustainability remained central to our placemaking programme. We launched the London Heritage Quarter Sustainability Action Plan, published our Urban Forest report, installed three Breathe London air quality sensors and delivered four Zero Emission Group events to support the Sustainable City Charter. Our circular economy programme engaged almost 60 participants, while additional work included supporting Westminster City Council's public conveniences programme, contributing to Wilder Westminster and the London Climate Ready Partnership's Climate Costs Guide, and launching Project Reshare to promote reuse across the district.

Across Temple and the riverside, we refreshed public spaces, improved wayfinding and promoted the area's cultural offer. Enhancements to Temple Gardens were complemented by a summer riverside campaign, while opportunities to improve walking routes around Waterloo and Hungerford Bridges were explored.

Greening, biodiversity and active travel remained priorities, with Pollinator Pathways expanded across Northbank and greening projects delivered in Temple Gardens and Victoria Embankment Gardens. We promoted walking through 10,000 Footways maps, created a World Environment Day mini woodland and launched the Lamps and Lanterns on the Northbank heritage trail. Footfall data continued to inform investment decisions, while partnerships with Cross River Partnership, BusinessLDN and the Global Cultural Districts Network strengthened planning, policy and long-term development.



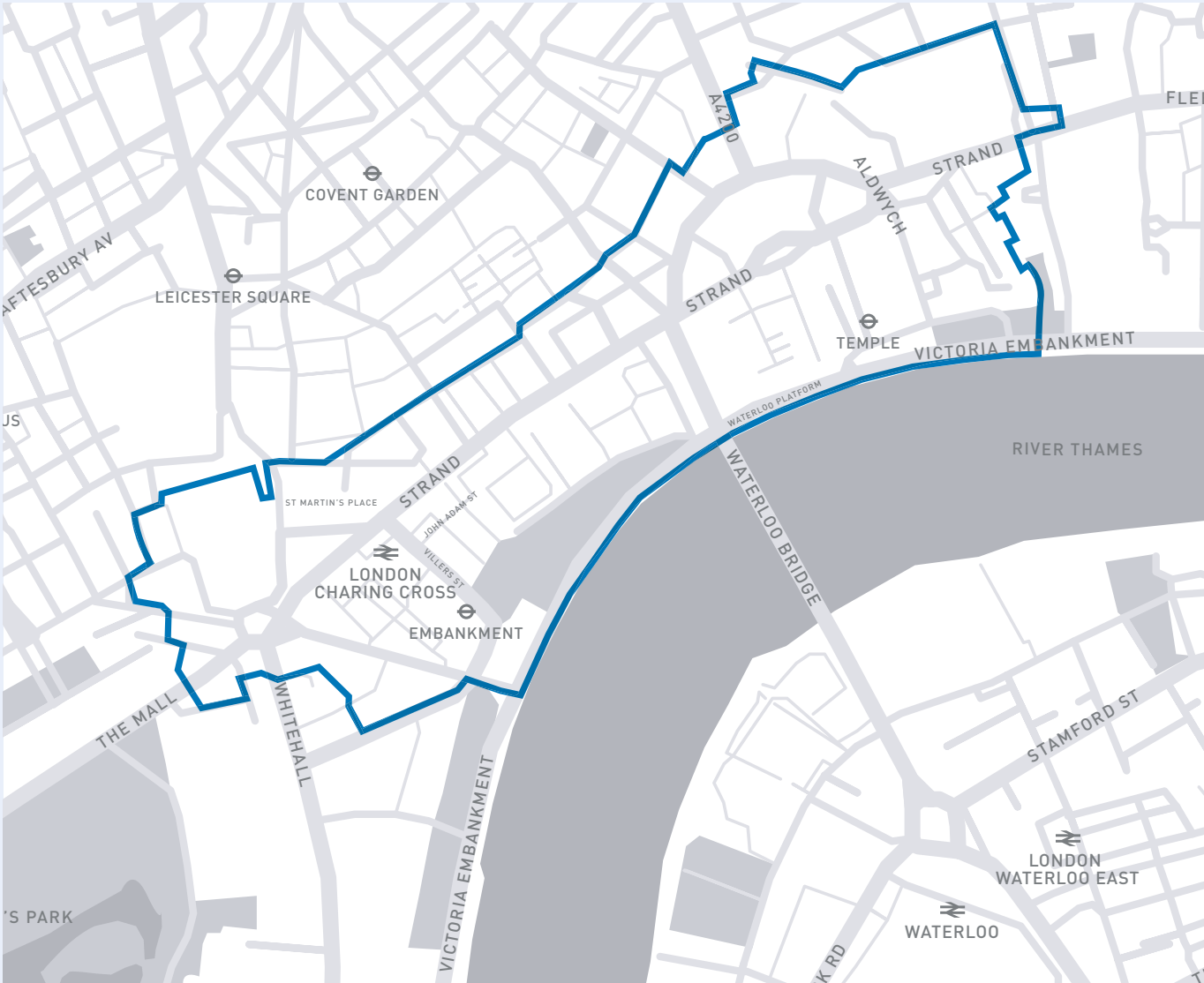


BOARD MEMBERS

Andrew Hicks	Shaftesbury Capital PLC (Board Chair)
Julian Robinson	The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) (Board Vice Chair)
Jonathan Reekie	Somerset House Trust
Geoff Smout	Bain & Company
Guy Hilton	The Waldorf Hilton
Claude Abi-Gerges	Capital Arches Group Ltd
Michael Izzo	Corinthia London
Janine Marshall	One Aldwych
Robin McIver	King's College London
Nigel Hutchinson	PwC UK
Ruth Duston OBE, OC	London Heritage Quarter
CO-OPTED MEMBER	
Xhola Cambridge	CBRE
OBSERVERS	
Cllr Tim Mitchell	Westminster City Council



BOUNDARY MAP



PROFIT & LOSS

	BID LEVY £	VOLUNTARY / OTHER INCOME £	TOTAL 2025/26 £
TURNOVER			
BID Levy	2,226,388		2,226,388
Voluntary Contributions and Other Income		20,567	20,567
TOTAL	2,226,388	20,567	2,246,955
COST OF SALES			
Cleaning & Greening	435,928		435,928
Community Safety & Business Resilience	295,779		295,779
Destination	443,481		443,481
Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)	163,791		163,791
Placemaking	277,869	10,000	287,869
TOTAL	1,616,848	10,000	1,626,848
GROSS PROFIT	609,540	10,567	620,107
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES			
BID Team Support	145,953	10,566	156,519
Rent and Rates	50,517		50,517
Estates Costs	5,124		5,124
Insurance	10,092		10,092
Office Consumables	8,679		8,679
Office Expenses	33,836		33,836
Subscriptions	706		706
Training Costs	647		647
Legal & Professional Fees	27,174		27,174
Audit Fees	12,537		12,537
IT costs	15,016		15,016
Telephone	1,872		1,872
BID Levy Collection Fee	33,132		33,132
BID Admin Costs	13,157		13,157
Bank Charges	770		770
Depreciation	6,261		6,261
Corporation Tax	4,115		4,115
TOTAL	369,588	10,566	380,154
Surplus brought forward			194,132
Profit/(Loss) for the year			239,953
Surplus carried forward			434,085

COMPARATIVE BID LEVY £	COMPARATIVE VOLUNTARY / OTHER INCOME £	COMPARATIVE TOTAL 2024/25 £
1,967,090		1,967,090
	109,697	109,697
1,967,090	109,697	2,076,787
384,559		384,559
343,408		343,408
518,542		518,542
201,447		201,447
559,065	69,270	628,335
2,007,021	69,270	2,076,291
(39,931)	40,427	496
113,074	40,427	153,501
44,648		44,648
3,931		3,931
10,538		10,538
7,977		7,977
9,176		9,176
405		405
912		912
21,296		21,296
10,213		10,213
27,266		27,266
2,829		2,829
31,625		31,625
11,505		11,505
869		869
6,928		6,928
5,781		5,781
308,973	40,427	349,400
		543,036
		(348,904)
		194,132



LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER

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london-hq.co.uk

[@londonheritagequarter](https://twitter.com/londonheritagequarter)

MORE THAN **MONUMENTS**