



EASTERN CITY

EASTERN CITY BID **ANNUAL REPORT** **2024-25**

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FOREWORD

I am delighted to present the 2024/25 Annual Report for the Eastern City Business Improvement District (BID), which summarises our financial performance and the initiatives which have been delivered over the past year to enhance the vibrancy of the Eastern City.

The completion and launch of our Public Realm Vision in October 2024 – a set of ambitious proposals for the Eastern City's streets and public spaces – was a major milestone for the BID and sets up a significant programme of transformational schemes. Due to the collaborative manner in which it was developed, the Vision has strong support from key stakeholders such as local property owners, businesses, the City of London Corporation and TfL. We are working with them already on bringing the proposals to life with projects underway at Fen Court, Fenchurch Street Station, Lombard Street and the network of historic courts and alleyways to the west of Gracechurch Street and Bishopsgate.

Our re-branding exercise went live in September 2024 and was another significant step in the evolution of the BID and the area as a whole. Our new name (Eastern City as opposed to EC), imagery and strapline of 'The community that drives change' conjures a sense of place and destination that this part of the Square Mile previously lacked. It also better reflects the diverse, proud and innovative workforce who make up this globally iconic business district.

Early in the new year, at the half-way point in our 5-year term, we surveyed our levy-paying businesses to ensure we were

delivering against their priorities for the area. The feedback highlighted that 82% were positive or very positive about the Eastern City, however issues raised included a lack of green space and seating, the relatively small culture and entertainment offer, personal safety (theft in particular) and homelessness. I am though delighted to say that the BID pre-empted many of the findings and was already taking steps to address them as demonstrated in this report. The survey information has been used to inform our programme for the remainder of the term and beyond – subject to a successful ballot in 2027 of course.

I would like to thank the Eastern City BID executive team, board members and all our partners for their dedication and hard work throughout the year. Your contributions have been instrumental in shaping the success of our district, and I look forward to seeing what we will achieve together in the year ahead.

Thank you for your continued support.

Nick Carty

Chair of the Eastern City BID Board
Head of Business Services International, AIG

A Sustainable District

Public Realm Vision

In October 2024 we launched our Public Realm Vision for the Eastern City – the culmination of a year-long piece of work with urban design specialists Publica to masterplan future enhancements to our public spaces. Its scope includes wayfinding, lighting, green spaces, seating, heritage enhancement, traffic reduction, sustainable transport and maximising pedestrian space. Following the launch event, we installed an interactive, virtual reality portal on Camomile Street that enabled the public to truly visualise our proposal to transform the street into a new public park. It also included information about other proposed schemes within the Vision.

The list of specific short, medium and long-term projects to be implemented has been well received by the business community, property developers and the City of London Corporation, with a number of these already underway and expected to complete in mid-late 2025.

Alleyways & Courtyards

As recommended in the Public Realm Vision, we commissioned architects Studio Weave to design a network of new greening and seating interventions throughout the alleyways and courtyards to the west of Gracechurch Street and Bishopsgate. The aim of the project is to encourage alternative north-south walking routes and showcase the heritage within one of the City's most historic quarters. This

includes the likes of St. Michael's Alley, George Yard, Change Alley and Lombard Court. The project is expected to complete in spring/summer 2025.

Freight, Servicing & Deliveries (FSD) Consolidation

Following the conclusion of our initial study which identified the potential to reduce freight traffic in the BID footprint, we commissioned detailed implementation plans for 100 Bishopsgate, the Lloyd's building and The Leadenhall Building – all of whom are keen to explore delivery consolidation. These will complete in the summer of 2025 and provide each building with the evidence base, cost-benefit analysis and tools they need to introduce consolidation; in turn reducing local vehicle journeys and environmental impact. We have also helped other local building management teams explore new technologies that improve the efficiency of tenant procurement and delivery scheduling – namely through a product called CurbCargo.

London Festival of Architecture (LFA)

As part of the 'Voices' themed 2024 LFA competition, our panel chose Urban Radicals to design, build and install The Archive Pod – a pop-up podcast studio which doubled as a miniature seed museum showcasing the City of London's history of migration. The pod was in place underneath the Lloyd's building for the duration of the festival and hosted

numerous architecture podcasts and audio recordings from the public capturing their memories and stories. The pod has since been re-homed at Cody Dock, a community centre in Newham.

Fen Court Garden & Fenchurch Street Station Plaza

Both of these public green spaces were beginning to look tired with failing planting schemes that lacked suitable species, visual interest and biodiversity value. We therefore ran a competitive tender process and selected landscape architects Realm – whose notable recent works include Finsbury Circus – to substantially re-design both spaces. Installation of the new planting will take place in spring/summer 2025.

Eastern City Gardener

To help manage the increasing amount of greenery being installed across the BID footprint we funded an additional gardener dedicated to working solely across the Eastern City. Sitting within the broader City of London Gardens Team, they are responsible for enhanced upkeep at Fen Court, Fenchurch Street Station Plaza, the courts & alleyways, Rood Lane, Lime Street, New London Street, Creechurch Lane and St Botolph's Without Bishopsgate Churchyard.

Photo Credit: Realm



An Evolving District

Easter

Our Easter Egg trail took in nine landmarks around the Eastern City footprint, encouraging the public - particularly young families – to explore the area. We arranged discounts at hospitality venues along the route for those taking part to help drive trade, and our social media competition offered the chance to win an overnight stay for two at a local hotel.

Summer of Sport

To showcase the 2024 Paris Olympics & Paralympics, and summer staples Wimbledon and the Tour de France, we installed an outdoor cinema screen at Seething Lane Garden which was open to the public. Our 'Screen on the Green' was also used to host virtual fitness classes and weekly film nights, attracting over 2,600 people across six weeks. Separately, and in partnership with property developer Stanhope, we ran a two-week programme of pop-up fairground games in St Helen's Piazza.

Sculpture in the City

In support of this annual outdoor sculpture festival, we funded a programme of activities over the summer aimed particularly at young families in an effort to attract a different demographic to our district. This involved weekly dance classes and Little Art Critic TV where children take part in a short film touring the various artworks and reviewing them.

Unwind in The City

We worked with local cultural programmers Hive Curates to run a programme of free, public events over eight weeks in July and August. This included fitness classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Afrobeats dance, art workshops, kids' art clubs, gallery exhibitions and live music performances in various public locations. Over 350 people attended the launch party and more than 1,000 took part in the activities.

5&20 Exhibition

We collaborated with Brookfield Properties and the Crafts Council on a public exhibition in the lobbies of 99 Bishopsgate and 30 Fenchurch Street. Between May and September these spaces hosted a showcase of 20 key objects from the Crafts Council's archives in celebration of their 20th anniversary. This was a first step in exploring how we can better activate ground floor spaces across the BID footprint and broaden the area's cultural offer.





Christmas 2024

In November we installed London's tallest Christmas tree at Bishopsgate Plaza, with Dame Joan Collins leading our switch-on event. In addition, we arranged for three smaller trees in various churchyards around the footprint, a festive light projection on to 55 Old Broad Street, six light-up, interactive see-saws at St Helen's Plaza ('IMPULSE') and held five festive workshops including wreath-making, candle-making and bauble decorating.

Our tree at Bishopsgate Plaza received significant media coverage from the likes of Secret London, VisitLondon, City AM, MSN News, Town & Country House and Time Out amongst others; 10,501 people took part in IMPULSE; and footfall across the whole Eastern City area was up by 23% compared to December 2023.

The Observatory

Our annual campaign to raise awareness of and improve mental health in the early months of the year continued with 'The Observatory' – two interactive digital art exhibitions hosted in a vacant retail unit on Old Broad Street throughout January. The first involved a group meditation using EEG headsets that turned brainwaves into art, and the second a virtual reality painting experience encouraging participants to physically display their emotions. 1,741 people attended the exhibitions which achieved 3.3m social media impressions,

76% of surveyed participants said it had improved their understanding of mental health and 95% said they would visit something similar again.

Vacant Property Activation

A socio-economic impact report commissioned this year proved that our Broadworks project at 56 Old Broad Street was a major success – in 18 months it had received over 11,000 visitors, supported 355 creative businesses, generated 182 jobs, hosted 92 events and maintained a 96% occupancy rate for its affordable creative workspace. Following in the footsteps of this, we began a number of new projects to temporarily enliven empty office and retail property.

In partnership with landlords Whitbread, work has started at 35 Crutched Friars, turning this former key cutting and shoe repair shop into a ceramics gallery and studio that will be open to the public for viewings and classes in the summer of 2025. At 117 Leadenhall Street, a partnership with neighbouring Theatre Deli will see this former restaurant temporarily converted into rehearsal studios for the performing arts, with the opening expected in mid-late 2025. At 53-54 Old Broad Street, vitrine galleries have been built into three empty shop windows, and adjacent to The Monument we have begun the design process to transform a disused public toilet into a 'micro-museum' showcasing the famous landmark's history.

Our Community

Ambassadors

Over the course of their Monday-Saturday shifts, our team of three Ambassadors welcomed 61,404 visitors; conducted 831 business visits; and reported 10,427 cleaning/environmental issues. They are our eyes and ears in the footprint – assisting the public and helping to ensure well maintained public spaces.

Area Promotion and Eastern City Brand Campaign

In October 2024, following a six-month consultation and development process, we re-branded to the 'Eastern City' BID with a particular focus on giving the area a stronger destination identity. This was accompanied by a new website and marketing strategy underpinned by video content, authentic social media storytelling and out of home advertising.

Enhanced Street Cleaning

Following a successful trial, we entered into a two-year contract with the City of London Corporation to provide an approximate 40% uplift in the baseline street cleaning service. This equates to three extra daytime cleaning personnel and two nights a week of jet washing in the winter; and an extra four daytime cleaning personnel and three nights a week in the summer. Cleaning routes are focused around areas of heavy footfall such as Gracechurch Street, Liverpool Street Bishopsgate, Fenchurch Street and Eastcheap.

CityINTEL Emergency Alerts

We continued our contribution towards the operating cost of the CityIntel Emergency Alerts service – a platform through which the City of London Police message private security teams and the broader business community with updates on live security incidents or other disruptive events such as protests, road closures and building evacuations.

Night-time Economy Medical Support

Throughout the busy festive period, our cycle medics from St John Ambulance were deployed every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night alongside the City of London Police, helping them respond to medical incidents and vulnerable members of the public. Across 11 shifts the medics attended over 40 requests for assistance ranging from mental health crises to road traffic collisions, intoxication and assaults. 38 people were treated and 28 ambulance call-outs avoided, saving the NHS approximately £13,160 and freeing up valuable police time.



Taxi Marshals at Liverpool Street Station

This initiative, organised by the City of London Crime Prevention Association with funding from us and the neighbouring Aldgate Connect BID, provided taxi marshals outside Liverpool Street Station every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night between 10pm and 1am. Their role is to manage prevent anti-social behaviour, provide help and reassurance to passengers, and prevent the use of unlicensed cabs. In 2024/25 they facilitated 16,178 passenger journeys.

Emergency Testing & Exercising

In March we supported 'Exercise Iron Titan', a live emergency exercise organised by the City Security Council that imitated a train crash at Cannon Street Station. This tested the response of the police, fire brigade, ambulance service, train operating companies and neighbouring businesses with over 400 people taking part.

Charitable Grant Funding

Each year through the ActionFunder platform we provide small grants to local charities and community groups (primarily based in the City of London and Tower Hamlets). Funding given in March 2024 saw 11 projects being delivered across the 2024/25 financial year benefiting 2,2187 people. In March 2025 £48,791 was distributed amongst nine

charities with successful applications chosen by our panel of business representatives. Funded projects include: a refugee employment programme, holiday maths and English bootcamps for deprived school children, youth employment and upskilling, and a community allotment that teaches children to grow and cook healthy meals.

Homelessness Christmas Giving Campaign

Last year, we piloted a Gift Drop Box at 8 Bishopsgate, collecting toiletries and warm clothing for Providence Row. Three cargo bike deliveries were made, and we'll be rolling this out to more buildings for Christmas 2025. Off the back of the pilot, a BID member also generously donated £7,500.

City Giving Day 2024

As in previous years we sponsored the 'Tour de City', a static watt-bike challenge held underneath The Leadenhall Building. 180 cyclists from City businesses took part on the day raising funds for the chosen charities.

ESG Future Growth Forum

We were the lead sponsor for this event that brought together industry leaders to shape the future of responsible, sustainable finance. We also arranged for it be hosted in the City of London for the first time at 8 Bishopsgate and for Policy Chairman at the City of London Corporation, Chris Hayward, to give the opening speech.

We Can Be

Part of the Lord Mayor's Appeal, this unique charity programme helps young women in and around London explore career pathways in the City and develop workplace-ready skills. Alongside the Culture Mile BID we funded the initiative which saw 22 participating businesses host over 300 female students who were given insights into the organisations and CV writing advice.

Employee Wellbeing

Led by the official City of London Guides, we held eight free walking tours around the Eastern City for local employees – some themed around key events such as PRIDE and the London Festival of Architecture, but the majority focused on uncovering the area's hidden history and organised as team activities for groups of colleagues.

In addition, our year-round wellbeing programme included numerous other activities such as health awareness talks, seminars on menopause & perimenopause, and dog therapy sessions; 299 local employees took part.



Promoting the Eastern City

Data Gathering and Research

We worked with Colliers to formally evaluate the impact of our three major events (Screen On The Green, Christmas and The Observatory) to demonstrate their value and help optimise future events. Although we can't rule out the influence of external factors, over Christmas for example we saw a year-on-year footfall increase of 23%; during our showing of Wimbledon at Seething Lane Garden localised footfall was up 120%, and 82% of those surveyed said the Screen on the Green improved their perception of the area.

We also commissioned Augarde & Partners to evaluate our Broadworks empty unit activation (a partnership with Landsec) as a means of showing its socio-economic value and encouraging other landlords to undertake similar schemes. It has also been used to guide discussion with the City of London Corporation about how the City's workspace and cultural offer can be diversified.

Finally, in February 2025 we surveyed our BID members to understand their perceptions of the area and what initiatives we should focus on for the coming financial year. 287 local employees responded, and their feedback was incorporated into our 2025/26 Delivery Plan.

Public Affairs & Media

Our main focus for 2024-25 was on videography, advertising and PR for our major projects - notably the summer and Christmas events programmes, re-brand, empty unit activation and safety in the night-time economy.

MIPIM 2025

In March we collaborated with fellow City BIDs and City of London Corporation on a joint stand at this leading real estate trade show, promoting investment and using a 30-minute film to highlight the development pipeline and changing nature of the Square Mile. We also programmed the London Terrace with a silent disco showcasing London's diverse nightlife, with playlists and interviews from Phil Hartnoll, Charisse C and DJ Tigas.

Dragon Awards

We co-sponsored the 2024 City AM Dragon Awards which brought together 200 leaders and founders from businesses, charities and organisations at The Mansion House. With over 200 submissions, 48 finalists were selected and 12 category winners were honoured for their remarkable contributions to society - from promoting inclusion and tackling global issues to revolutionising healthcare and supporting underserved communities.

Migration Museum

We supported the Migration Museum's Annual Lecture at Merchants Taylors' Hall, an event to help their fundraising efforts ahead of a planned move to a permanent location in the City on Creechurch Lane in 2027.



Partnership With BIDs Across The City

Including Eastern City, there are currently five Business Improvement Districts operating across the City – the other four being Fleet Street Quarter, Cheapside Business Alliance, Aldgate Connect and Culture Mile.

The five City BIDs form part of the Primera portfolio of 12 BIDs operating across central London, delivering significant economies of scale and strengthening our impact on cross-cutting issues. The relationship with our neighbours is a vital one in delivering our joint vision of a thriving Square Mile. We will continue to identify opportunities wherever possible for amplifying our influence and achieving added value through collaboration.

This will include measures such as integrating our respective public realm strategies to ensure a seamless experience for those moving through the City, cross-promoting major events and speaking with a collective voice on the shared issues that affect our business communities.

**ALDGATE
CONNECT**
Welcome everyone

CHEAPSIDE

**CULTURE
MILE BID**

EASTERN CITY

**FLEET
STREET
QUARTER**





2025-26 Budget

INCOME	Total £
Levy Income	4,107,367
Voluntary Income and Sponsorship	82,718
TOTAL INCOME	4,190,079
EXPENDITURE	
An Evolving District	1,249,950
A Sustainable District	1,032,294
Promoting the Eastern City	616,035
Our Community	914,894
Administration Expenses	269,375
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	4,082,548
Closing Surplus Post Tax at Year End	107,531
Previous Year Reserves	2,095,730
Surplus to be carried forward to 2025-26	2,203,261



**If you would like to get involved with the
BID's work please get in touch:**

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