

# RESTORING ALDGATE FOR ITS BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY

**ALDGATE CONNECT BID**





# SUPPORTING A SMOOTH, SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE REOPENING OF THE ALDGATE AREA.

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## INTRODUCTION

This document sets out some strategic and operational priorities for 2021/22. The BID's main aim during the delivery period is to be an agile influence for the community and businesses, and to respond to the relaxation of restrictions and as we transition into a recovery. It will be important for us to work in partnership to optimise movement of people and commerce as we emerge from lockdown and varying restrictions.

Despite an uncertain economic horizon caused by the Pandemic, we also have a duty to tackle some of the structural inequalities as they emerge as part of our role in London's recovery.

Over the next year we do imagine the area to have reduced capacity with some businesses having to leave and find other homes as more profound effects of the Pandemic become clear. The hybrid working model will also have an effect of the character of the area. This being said, we are confident and reassured by the individuals, community at large and its businesses that Aldgate has all the ingredients to become the thriving mixed and bustling community once again.

The BID will use its resources to restore confidence in Aldgate, travelling to, through and around as a safe and secure place to return to work. We will connect with residents and the existing community to ensure it's truly a destination for all.

To support a smooth, safe and sustainable reopening of the Aldgate area, the BID will work with both local and central government, TfL and other statutory bodies during the current restrictions and through the anticipated relaxation of movement and commercial activity, as we start on the road to economic and place recovery.

We will be going into the 2nd year of the BID and looking forward to riding out the challenges ahead and embrace recovery together. We are excited for the area to begin to thrive and become a bustling mixed community once again in 2021.



# STRATEGIC OVERVIEW & PRIORITIES

The 2020 > 2025 Aldgate Connect Business Plan was approved by the businesses in the ballot in February 2020 with a 92% yes vote.

As we look into the second year of the pandemic, we will do everything in our power to bring the inspiring and willing office worker population and visitors back into Aldgate and neighbouring districts and restore Aldgate's vibrancy. We will be considering with every intervention a 'joy factor' – to make sure that we continue to have a fully positive impact on the local area. This emphasis on fun, creativity and colour hopes to improve the resilience of the area and the community for a 'better than good' recovery! This past year has shown that our residents are an asset to the area; meaningful and good business communications and interaction will be really important to consider. This will ultimately result in a cohesive and positive neighbourhood. The BID does have enormous agency in this and we look forward for this to be a tilt in focus.

This period has shone a light on the use of our public space and transportation. The BID will be looking at ways the district can be enhanced as a place for all.

We will work with governing bodies and our local community stakeholders to ensure we take into account the current economic climate and we will work towards supporting business recovery and ensuring ongoing operational delivery.

This Delivery Plan will be overseen by our steering and property groups, with the large spend on projects proposed to the board.

All the BID's ambitions and realities coincide with the Mayor's Recovery Board's Missions ensuring our successes are part of a wider London recovery.

The current priorities, as voted on in the BID ballot, are based around activities and programmes that contribute to make the area::

- STRONGER
- WELCOMING
- APPEALING
- PROTECTED

## PRIORITY ACTION PLAN



# KEY AGENDA: STRONGER AREA

**Ambition:** Aldgate embarks on a strong, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, supporting equality of opportunities for SMEs and local people who have been severely impacted by recent events.

**A VOICE FOR ALDGATE** Continue to act as a local voice where appropriate and relevant to do so, providing a collective voice for business members and the community restoring power from within.

**SME MESSAGING** Continue to circulate messaging from Government and update relevant signposting throughout the area.

**JOBS, SKILLS AND TRAINING** By supporting various employment and skills programmes we want to demonstrate an ambitious commitment to local capacity building, local skills and employment development and opportunities across all age and ethnic groups.

**RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES** Continue to work with residents and vibrant communities to promote inclusiveness and opportunities for all. Examples of these will include Aldgate in Winter, Lord Mayor’s Parade, loyalty schemes, funding opportunities to support community programmes etc.

**LOCAL FOOD SHORTAGE** The Aldgate district has deprivation levels that are among the top 20% in the UK with local food shortage being highlighted as an issue even before Covid-19. With unemployment rates increasing, the BID will continue to utilise resources and corporate donations to aid this issue in a sustainable way.

**RESEARCH** Look at commissioning Phase 2 of Socio-Economic Research.

**VOLUNTEERING AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS** Volunteering has been shown to be critical to people’s wellbeing during the pandemic. We will be looking at programmes to help transition and provide opportunities to reconnect and match the need in Aldgate.

**THE JOY FACTOR!** A ‘Joy factor’ will be introduced and flow through all themes; this emphasis hopes to drive forward a sense of fun and creativity for the community and new visitors alike!





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# KEY AGENDA: APPEALING AREA

**Ambition:** Demonstrate a strong desire to promote and unlock vital public realm improvements that suit the businesses and community. Helping to restore and reshape the area to be fit for people to move around safely and securely, whilst enlivening it as a place to be in and relax.

**PUBLIC REALM MASTERPLAN AND VISION DOCUMENT** Establish a key strategic document laying out an in depth place vision including realistic but visionary projects to drive forward the future for the area.

**MEANWHILE SPACE** Be responsive to the changing circumstances and implement vacant space schemes working with landlords and the local authorities.

**PETTICOAT LANE MARKET AND MIDDLESEX ST INDEPENDENT BUSINESS** Expand on supporting the independent businesses on Middlesex St and Petticoat Lane and continue the improvements to the alfresco environment.

**CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION AND LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS** Continue engagement and support on local area recovery plans and projects and provide feedback from businesses.

**ALDGATE CYCLING** Despite overall journey numbers being significantly reduced due to lockdown restrictions, cycling has increased by 22% in outer London, with a 7% rise in inner London. We will develop an action plan based on the BID's cycle audit (2020) and look for opportunities to implement projects identified in the report, in order to sustain this increase in a healthy lifestyle. This programme hopes to secure the area bringing back commuters without the reliance on public transportation.

**CLIMATE AND NET ZERO** Promote and align with the local authorities new Climate change and air quality aspirations.

**RECYCLING, CLEANSING AND WASTE** Explore the opportunity to reduce costs for business members through a preferred supplier scheme. Continue the discussions with Tower Hamlets council regarding their waste and recycling services. Investigate whether there is an appetite from the business community to supplement services over and above what is a statutory duty.

# KEY AGENDA: WELCOMING AREA

**Ambition:** Aldgate begins its recovery to be a strong, creative and entrepreneurial area for residents and businesses; a hotbed for new and emerging talent and businesses. Its creativity and vibrancy will blossom as people start moving around the area once more.

**A ONE SHOP STOP WEBSITE** Develop a one shop stop website with excellent service directories to sectors in the business community. Enhancing sales and business engagement access channels.

**ALDGATE AMBASSADORS** A dedicated street steward service to improve the welcome factor and the reporting of on the ground issues back to the council, businesses and the Police forces.

**BUSINESS AND PROMOTION ENGAGEMENT** Strategic promotion and welcome back campaigns to support hospitality, retail and leisure in the area.

**INSIGHT & HEALTH AND WELLBEING EVENTS** Introduce business sector specific, health and wellbeing and health and safety seminars. Curate sessions with experts from across the industry sectors and discussions on topical themes.

**CITY GIFT CARD AND LOYALTY PROGRAMME** Support retail, hospitality and leisure through the City wide Gift Card programme – promoting local spending and locking in the economy. With a renewed appetite for spend into the local economy, we will also continue to offer the Advantage Card, a loyalty card for the businesses in the area, used by Aldgate residents, workers and visitors, offering exclusive promotions.

**MARKETING, COMMUNICATION AND COLLATERAL** Support across all priority and project areas including high quality locally inspired creative.

**EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS IN KEY OPEN SPACES** Activate our key open spaces with exhibitions and events (as possible) for businesses and community to enjoy, visit and relax.





# KEY AGENDA: PROTECTED AREA

**Ambition:** Through a safe and secure network of businesses and community organisations coming together with the authorities – we will start to look at Aldgate being an owned space by the community; sharing knowledge and reporting crime and help support the area as one that people feel safe to be in and return.

**BUSINESS CRIME REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (BCRP)** Enhance business intelligence sharing and communication with a formalised partnership and cross working with City Police, Met and BTP. Be aware of changing circumstances and change of responses.

**EXTRA CYCLE CRIME PREVENTION OPERATIONS** A big factor behind not cycling is the fear of theft in Aldgate. Whilst developing plans for more secure parking, we will continue to support the police forces' extra patrol and specialist cycle crime prevention operations.

**SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN** Where necessary provide social distancing measures, hygiene packs and appropriate refuse bins across the area.

**PLACEMAKING / GREENING** Support hospitality, retail and leisure sectors to investigate a medium to long term plan to enhance the street scape with outside seating; encouraging safe visits and dwell time for workers and visitors whilst deterring ASB.

**CROSS-DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP WORKING** Encourage joint working and knowledge sharing and foster stronger relationships with bordering BIDs/ Partnerships delivering a strong recovery for all.

**NEW DEVELOPMENTS** We will work with new developments to ensure crime prevention is incorporated at design stage working towards crime reduction and public safety agendas.

# BRINGING INCOME TO THE AREA

The Aldgate Connect BID's income comes from a mandatory levy and it invests it in local projects and programmes to support the Aldgate area as an inspiring and innovative destination for all.

A BID in your neighbourhood adds value beyond funding specific projects. Since the establishment day to day activity has included:

- Raising about £120k of voluntary, grant and additional funded income into the area
- Lobbying for extra investment into southern Middlesex St to support restaurants stay open through the Pandemic and plan for continued investment into this area through 2021
- Made introductions that supported a local school with 1000 PPE masks
- Distributed 100 Aldgate loyalty cards and crime prevention materials to City residents
- Answered over 25 surveys and consultations, and attended over 50 high level events/meetings to feedback to authorities on the effects of the Pandemic on businesses and the community

- Represented business concerns to the TFL, City of London, Tower Hamlets and Parliament in regards to furlough extension, additional SME and creative funding support, lockdown rules and restrictions
- Promoted wellbeing and community initiatives that reconnect, revive and bring joy to individuals at home at this time when mental health is so important
- Issuing and signposting to free support services and resources through popular communication channels
- Collaborated with the other BIDs and Business Partnerships to collect robust survey results from local businesses on coming back to the office. Surveying will be continued as tides turn

**Thank you for your support.**

# CORE OPERATIONS

Executive and Staff – maintain the highest standard for all project delivery across the different strategic themes

Accounts – ensure that all budgets, due diligence and compliance are met in delivering the Aldgate's strategic and operational activities

Commissioned services – Aldgate Ambassadors

Local authority BID levy collection

supporting business recovery and ensuring ongoing operational delivery

For more information on projects and expenditure from Year 1 (2020/2021) please see the Billing leaflet online on the BID Page [www.aldgateconnect.london](http://www.aldgateconnect.london)





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