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**ALDGATE
CONNECT**

Welcome everyone

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Your overview of
projects and expenditure

2022/2023 and 2023/2024

**ALDGATE
CONNECT**

Welcome everyone

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Contents	
Developing an inspiring destination for all	5
Introduction	6
Appealing Area	8
Welcoming Area	12
Stronger Area	16
Protected Area	20
Projected financial position 2022/2023	23
2023/2024 Budget	24



Developing an inspiring destination for all

In January 2020, businesses and ratepayers across Aldgate were asked to vote on whether they would like to see a Business Improvement District (BID) established in the area to deliver on the projects and improvements that were set out in the BID Proposal. The BID is funded by a local business levy and this in turn is spent by the levy payers on improvements in the local area.

A BID is established based on two demands; a majority of actual votes and the majority of aggregate rateable value (RV). For the Aldgate Connect BID, 92.4% businesses and 94% by RV were in favour of the BID.

The purpose of a BID is to provide additionality above and beyond the statutory duties of the City of London Corporation, Tower Hamlets Council, TfL and other public bodies. It gives the business community an opportunity to have a voice in defining, funding and overseeing the projects that you feel will add value to the locality.

The BID term started on the 1st April 2020 and will run until the 31st March 2025. The BID's activities are delivered through a not-for-profit company directed by a voluntary Board of local business leaders, to which the BID executive team is accountable.

We give the business community an opportunity to have a voice in defining, funding and overseeing the projects that you feel will add value to the locality.



Introduction

2022/23 was another challenging year but one in which the BID was able to launch some big programmes of delivery, whilst building on some fantastic initiatives that weren't fully accessible through Covid restrictions. Meeting in person again was a game changer and the steadying of the public health messaging and hybrid working stability enabled a lot more certainty in an uncertain world. This document reports on our 4 strategic themes and projects from the last 12 months building on the successes of year 2 of the BID.

Aldgate Connect has focused on destination activation, hospitality support and looking strategically at the public realm. With specialist partners, we have been well placed to respond to the cost-of-living crisis, treating our role in the local community seriously. Joined-up thinking with the 3 other City BIDs has provided a boost to the City fringe as the economic power and an ongoing voice for business.

The BID's activities have been designed to support conditions to bring workers back to the office, strengthen local small businesses, the economy, and the community around us. After seismic

change to the way that we interact with each other and our environment, we've held pilot events to creatively test out interventions and activities. In this way, we've sensitively brought forward a wide range of events and activities from small scale activations through to laying the groundwork for future catalyst projects in the public realm.

The Aldgate Connect BID Board chose not to apply an inflationary increase for the forthcoming year. Though this impacts our budgets as laid out in the BID 5 year Business Plan, we felt it would be beneficial to our business community that we scale our budgets accordingly.

A Delivery Plan for 2023/24 will be available in April 2023, laying out forthcoming projects in practice. Please contact us for a hardcopy of this Billing Leaflet or the 2023/24 Plan.

Thank you for your continued support



Appealing Area

Our year's ambition

Promote and implement public realm improvements that suit the businesses and community. Help 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.

This year saw the completion of the first Public Realm Vision and Strategy for Aldgate. This will lead the way for further improvement and developments in the area combining to reach for a unified goal **'To Establish Aldgate in its Iconic Location as a well-connected, Cohesive Community known for its intricate Network of Green Spaces, and celebration of its unique Artistic and Cultural Heritage'**.

For this to happen, the Strategy defines 4 fundamentals:

- A well-connected district supported by multiple active modes of transport.
- Spaces for art, culture and social exchange.
- Improve the quality of existing open spaces and introduce new public areas to form a meaningful green-space network.
- Enhanced settings and celebrate heritage assets.

This has been part of a collaborative approach between local businesses, communities along with the City of London Corporation and Tower Hamlets council. This Public Realm Strategy will act as a binding blueprint for the area to recover with strength for years to come. Please contact the BID for a copy.

ALDGATE'S PUBLIC REALM VISION AND STRATEGY COMPLETED

The BID published Aldgate's first Public Realm Vision and Strategy setting out key interventions for the short, medium and long-term. Our ambitious Vision aims to knit the area together raising its urban attractiveness and cultural value, making it a vibrant destination that people want to enjoy. It will be an enabler for future interventions, developments and community projects.

COMING UP...We look forward to beginning the '**Gateways project**' - the activation and lighting of the railway tunnels and continuing aspects of the Petticoat Lane priority projects.

PETTICOAT LANE DINING QUARTER

As per our Public Realm Strategy, one of the priority projects was to build on the success of the temporary alfresco scheme in Middlesex St supporting the independent restaurants in the immediate area. The Strategy advocates revisiting the function of the street to make the public realm work better for all. In 2022, the BID **commissioned a feasibility study** with Tower Hamlets Council to look at the long-term viability of the street supporting a shared environment for businesses, market traders and other access requirements.

COMING UP...This feasibility study will enable us to explore opportunities and design options that we can look to take forward with Tower Hamlets in 2023/24 and beyond.

SHOWCASING ALDGATE'S GREEN AND ACTIVATION SPACES

We implemented a varied cultural programme to enliven and enrich the area. We produced **Aldgate Sounds**, a live music series in Aldgate Square; also **Petticoat Lane Thursdays** - entertainment and seating for workers to enjoy lunchtimes in the market. We partnered with London Festival of Architecture and hosted a site specific installation providing greening and seating places. These **Mobile Arboretum's** have been rehomed in Vine Street, activating the street for students and visitors. This is the first moveable park as identified in the Public Realm Vision and Strategy.

COMING UP...The Strategy designates Aldgate Square, Petticoat Lane, Braham Park and the Crescent as key activation zones. We will continue to produce our seasonal cultural programmes and work with LFA and London Metropolitan University again delivering interventions that support the Strategy's aims.



Petticoat Lane

CLIMATE AND NET ZERO

The BID promoted and aligned with the local authorities' climate change, biodiversity strategies and air quality aspirations, events and seminars. We sponsored the City of London's **Plastic Free Awards**, encouraging companies to be innovative in the way they implement plastic free business practices. Realising there were a number of underfunded grassroots climate action projects, we launched the **Aldgate Community Fund** which has enabled us to support 6 climate action projects that aim to bring forward climate education, local sustainable environments and challenge the fast fashion industry.

COMING UP...Through these small grants projects, we will deliver outcomes that support climate change and action. We will continue to work with the local authorities in striving to achieve their climate and net zero ambitions. We will support Plastic Free City awards scheme helping businesses continue to innovate.

CLEANSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

Our Aldgate Ambassadors have continued to report cleansing and environmental issues direct to the councils so they can respond. These include uncollected waste, overflowing bins, graffiti, gum, street furniture, abandoned vehicles, broken paving and unkempt roadworks. They will continue these vital care-taking and partnership role this year.

PETTICOAT LANE GOES DIGITAL

With Petticoat Lane being at the heart of our Public Realm Vision and Strategy, it is essential we set out a clear communication plan. In 2022, we began building a **dedicated website and social media strategy for Petticoat Lane**. This will be transformational for the area's online presence and visitor traffic. We are priming the Petticoat Lane area to thrive with its iconic historic reputation and location in the inner East End.

COMING UP...We will manage these digital channels to provide clearer messaging, reaching workers, residents, tourists and visitors with genuine information to enrich their experience of Petticoat Lane and its proximity to other key locations.



Braham Park



Welcoming Area

Our year's ambition

Aldgate carries forward 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.

The start of 2022 gave us new challenges for us to work through with our businesses and communities. Hybrid working became more established and there was no doubt of the economic impact caused by the diverse weather and strikes disruptions. Building on the experience of providing support and events for workers and the existing community throughout Covid restrictions, we have worked with local businesses to implement 'draw back programmes' to entice and excite people back in the area.

Projects 2022/23

Total year spend: £192,655

HUB FOR ALL THINGS ALDGATE

We continued to develop our one stop shop website, showcasing local events, news updates, BID initiatives, local directories, and dedicated pages for both businesses and the community.

COMING UP...We will continue to update the Aldgate Connect website to keep everyone within the local community up to date on the latest updates and happenings in the area.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

Since April 2022, we have seen a steady increase in combined statistics for our Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn channels, which showed that on the 400 posts across the channels to a **total audiences of 2,887.***

We used paid ads to promote the key seasonal activities taking place, including Aldgate in Winter and Summer in Aldgate Festivals with well-above average engagement levels.

During the same period, we continued to send out our **monthly newsletters**, showcasing the latest events and news updates in the area.

COMING UP...We will continue to develop our marketing and communications strategy and look at the best ways to reach our audiences and encourage all to engage with our digital platforms.

THE ALDGATE AMBASSADORS

As part of the BID's dedicated street steward service, the Aldgate Ambassadors provide an on-ground welcoming presence, five days a week for all in Aldgate.

Since April 2022, the ambassadors have **welcomed and informed 8,567 visitors** and conducted **521 business visits.***

COMING UP...The Aldgate Ambassadors will continue their hard work welcoming and informing those who need it in the area, as well as being the on ground presence for the local businesses.

CITY GIFT CARD

The City Gift Card promotes spending across the City engaging with employees to purchase locally. There is now a total of **3,156 cards** in circulation, totalling to a **value of £71,505** being invested back into the local businesses.

COMING UP...We will continue to work with the other City BIDs and look at developing the City Gift Card scheme further by looking at ways to aid user experience by exploring going digital and create a recruitment campaign for both local businesses to register, as well as for purchases of the City Gift Card.



BUSINESS AND PROMOTIONS ENGAGEMENT

Over the last year, the BID team has developed bespoke marketing campaigns to **promote the offer** in Aldgate, including, 'Get Festive in Aldgate', 'Dining Outdoors in Aldgate' and 'Royal City: Marking the Jubilee'. The BID has featured in the media, including the City Matters, Evening Standard and The Guardian promoting the area to a wider audience. The BID has also continued our **partnership with One City London**, who promote Aldgate as a destination across their highly successful channels, which target the young working population.

COMING UP...We will continue our promotions and partnerships, showcasing Aldgate and putting it on the map as an outstanding destination to visit and work in, utilising our brand of 'Welcome Everyone'.

IN THE CITY APP

The **In The City App** provides offers and discounts to local businesses in Aldgate and rest of the City, whilst also featuring events, blogs and acting as a local connector through its business directory.

Since the app launched in January 2022, we have **1,970 users** registered to the app. The app has also showcased **190 events** in the area.

COMING UP...We will continue to work with the other City BIDs in developing a bespoke marketing campaign to support and enhance the In The City App experience to users and businesses alike, whilst widening it's reach across the key target audiences.

*Statistics based on reporting period
1st April - 31st December 2022.

THE COMMUTER CLUB

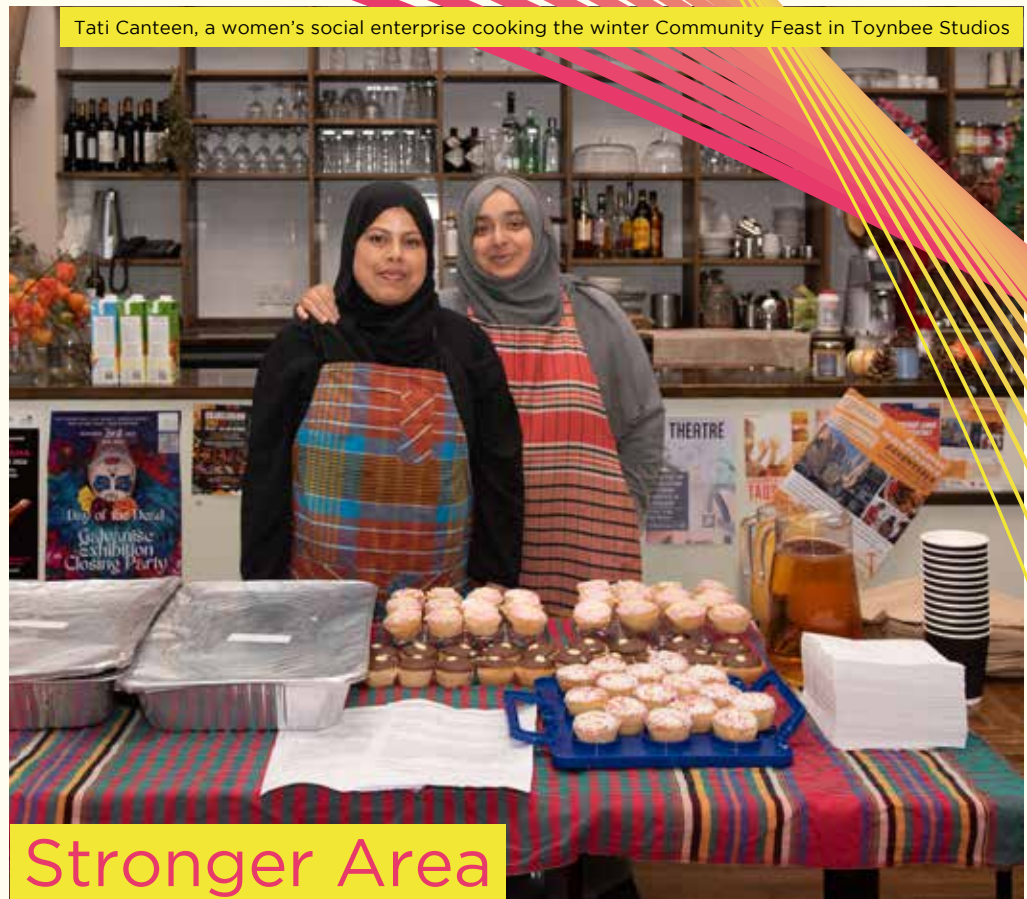
The **Commuter Club** provides podcasts, long reads and playlists to commuting Londoners with points of view and insights from business and characters across the City.

COMING UP...We will continue to encourage more people to return to work on their commute or to enjoy on their work from home days, as well as finding new audiences who want to find out more about the City of London and Aldgate.





Aldgate in Winter Festival



Tati Canteen, a women's social enterprise cooking the winter Community Feast in Toynbee Studios

Stronger Area

Our year's ambition

Promote inclusive and sustainable economic and community growth, support equality of opportunities for SMEs and local people.

World events and pressures shone a brighter light on the need for an inclusive approach on recovery, health and wellbeing of the residents, employees, and the economy of the area.

Capitalising on Aldgate's diverse and mixed communities and economy, we've been able to implement programmes that level up and benefit all in the society, but also providing an opportunity for further corporate social responsibility and encouraging a liveable and accessible neighbourhood.

A 'Joy Factor' was introduced in 2021, aimed for in every project we supported or implemented. This emphasis drove forward a sense of fun and creativity for the community, returning workers and new visitors alike at a time of great unease.

PROVIDED A VOICE FOR ALDGATE

We acted as a local voice, where appropriate providing a collective voice for business members and the community. We've responded to 2 national consultations, 2 planning permissions, been involved in strategy, economic and planning forums helping guide and plan for our area. We've also conducted a survey to understand how our businesses are coping with the cost of living crisis.

COMING UP...We will continue our strategic partnerships leveraging outward and inward economic messaging. Through our partnership with Central London Alliance we are working towards a safe and strong economic recovery of central London, ensuring its continued viability as a leading global city.

PROMOTING DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE CREATIVITY

We supported the Whitechapel Gallery's **youth employment and skills programme** with an ambitious commitment towards equal opportunities in creative skills and employment. These introduced artistic and curatorial careers to young people in the East End and transformed a room in the Gallery into an interactive space dedicated to support people with neuro-disabilities to engage with culture and art.

COMING UP...Next year we will work with the renowned Gallery again introducing new cohorts to artistic and curatorial careers.

EVENTS AND COMMUNITIES

As part of our inclusive event series, we held the **BaLaCo Festival** in Aldgate Square focusing on music and cuisines from the Bangladeshi, Latino and 'Cockney' cultures. In its 6th year, the **Aldgate in Winter festival**, brought to life the community and provided volunteering opportunities for employees to get involved in local community projects. In November, we had an Aldgate float in the **Lord Mayor's Show** spotlighting Aldgate and the history of weaving.

COMING UP...We will invest more in to community cohesion events building resilient neighbourhoods for communal prosperity. We will look at measurement of our social value so that our members can truly identify the ESG value. We will plan activities to celebrate the Coronation and Wimbledon to enliven our social spaces.



Lord Mayor's Show

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. The cost-of-living and the shockwaves of the past few years have increased the demand on local food services for vulnerable people. We support the local foodbank **Food For Aldgate** referring donations and employee volunteering. We also have a formal arrangement with **Providence Row** funding their food distribution service.

COMING UP...While we are encouraging the narrative of the area being known for its good food and restaurants, we are mindful that food poverty is still a genuine issue. We will continue to work with Providence Row hunger programme to make sure that for every pound that we put into promoting good food and eating out, a percentage goes back into tackling food poverty and food waste in Aldgate.

VOLUNTEERING AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

We've acted as a **broker between the charities and the businesses** through direct links and via our online CSR portal. Our **Aldgate Gardening Club** continues each month offering employees a chance to create and meet others in the area whilst enhancing a sense of wellbeing. We've partnered with a **community garden in Middlesex St** to offer employees volunteering hours improving their green skills. Aldgate in Winter also provided 18 volunteering roles for employees across the day.

COMING UP...We will continue to support these networks aligning with business objectives, offering community engagement opportunities for staff, bringing genuine value to the local community. We will continue to offer sell-out Mental Health First Aid courses through the year.

EXPERIENCE ALDGATE

Our curated use of **influencer communications and digital seasonal guides** has supported Aldgate's attractions - we now are home to at least 10 experience-based attractions and hidden gems. This intelligence gets filtered down through our **concierge tours** offered as part of our hospitality support.

COMING UP... We will produce print media to promote the experience and hospitality offer. We will also continue with our regular neighbourhood tours.



The Bus Lantern made by The Aldgate School for the Aldgate in Winter Festival



Our year's 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 to help support the area as one that people feel safe to be in and return to.

Over the past year, there has been some additional pressures on the safety, security and wellbeing of the area with an increase in strikes, protests and a slight increase in low level crime with people coming back into the office. We continued to work with the police, TfL, BTP and the council to do training, joint patrols, increase the surveillance, and improve the lighting of key hot spot areas.

It is vital that the BID works alongside these agencies by sharing information and with this partnership method create a safer neighbourhood that we can all feel comfortable and protected in.

BUSINESS CRIME REDUCTION

The BID has run **3 Safe and Secure Steering Groups**, formed of local businesses and City of London Police, Met Police and British Transport Police to facilitate information sharing. We've introduced WAVE Training, Cyber Griffin and anti corruption workshops to businesses. We've launched a **free message sharing platform** to disseminate urgent and crisis messaging from the authorities or on the ground intelligence. We've issued road closures information; fire alerts; avoid the area incidents and travel advice. City of London Police have held **3 crime and bike marking surgeries** at our events.

COMING UP...We will continue to grow the message sharing platform and host our safe and secure steering groups, as well as provide a series of crime surgery pop ups.



PROVIDENCE ROW'S WELCOME AREA AND RESOURCE CENTRE

The BID funded Providence Row's Welcome Area and Resource Centre for the 2nd year, providing immediate and focused care for the most vulnerable in society. This has **supported over 1,200 people**. Clients were provided with a warm safe space, where they were able to make contact with staff and volunteers, receive information and guidance and experience a sense of community. During the cold snap over the winter, the Centre has been transformed into a temporary dormitory as part of severe weather measures. It's hoped that through this programme, that clients can start their rehabilitation journey off the streets.

COMING UP...We will continue to work with Providence Row and other homelessness services to assist with underfunded programmes supporting the wellbeing of the area and the people within.



CROSS DISTRICT WORKING

We have worked with new developers and our **neighbouring City BIDs** to ensure crime prevention is incorporated at the design stage of their plans, working towards crime reduction and strong recovery for all. We have leveraged intelligence sharing through our ambassadors and from working in partnership.

BRAHAM PARK WORKING GROUP

We have a standing agenda item on the Safe and Secure Steering groups to collectively place attention to crime and ASB in Braham Park. A memorial for TfL workers is being placed in the western end which hopes to brighten and make the space more contemplative alleviating some of these issues.

COMING UP...We will begin to host events in the space enhancing its cultural offer. We will start to look at the number of people dwelling in the location against the number of incidences of ASBs to get a full picture. We will also continue to highlight this as a hotspot to the police for continued patrolling.



*Statistics based on reporting period 1st April - 31st December 2022.

NIGHT SAFETY

The BID is part of the **GLA's Women's Night Safety Charter** and has offered the business community best practice, training and advice to support employers and businesses to help keep their employees safe day to day, travelling and leaving work.

COMING UP...We're working with partners to improve access to knowledge and expertise, foster innovative and creative ideas in ways to combat violence against women, girls and gender diverse people in the built environment. This aims to help implement new projects and innovative best practice tools to challenge this issue. We'll bring in presentations and issue out advice and literature online.



Petticoat Lane Thursdays

Forecasted position*

2022/23

	TOTAL (£)
BID Levy Income	682,092
Voluntary Income Grants and Sponsorship	30,983
TOTAL INCOME	713,075
An Appealing Area	196,630
A Welcoming Area	216,593
A Protected Area	107,478
A Stronger Area	107,531
Staffing and Overheads**	170,145
Contingency***	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	798,377
Closing 2021-22 Reserves	476,436
2022-23 Closing Reserves	391,135

* Based on full year forecasts made on 7th March 2023

** Covered firstly by voluntary income

*** Statutory contingency profiled as agreed by board

****To be utilised as an Opportunity Fund as agreed by board

Budget

2023/24

	TOTAL (£)
BID Levy Income(assuming 95% Collection)	646,962
Voluntary Income Grants and Sponsorship	40,000
TOTAL INCOME	686,962
An Appealing Area	227,912
A Welcoming Area	145,000
A Protected Area	105,000
A Stronger Area	105,000
Staffing and Overheads**	170,000
Contingency***	98,600
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	851,512
Closing 2022-23 reserves	391,135
2023-24 Closing Reserves****	226,585

The Business Improvement District is cross borough and covers 2 boroughs - City Of London and L B Tower Hamlets

Levy income derived from each borough equates to 69% and 31% respectively - spend is allocated to each borough accordingly

Staffing and Overhead costs include statutory collection fees charged by both boroughs to administer BID Levy.