



A destination for business and culture

**Victoria
Westminster**



VICTORIA WESTMINSTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19



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Foreword

After the resounding mandate secured in the ballot of 2018, our first term has begun well. With just six months of delivery underway, already this iconic area is growing in confidence, identity and opportunity. Our remit was never to change the vibrant and diverse Victoria Westminster area, but simply to make it as good as it can be, drawing on the great assets around us. The last six months is a good example of how our efforts are achieving this goal.

The team has been busy working across the five core themes identified by our business community. Our work on Safe & Secure projects, Clean & Green initiatives, Public Realm enhancements, Destination activities, and Sustainable Prosperity is well underway and momentum is being built.

In the space of just a few months, significant activity is happening. Work is soon to be getting underway on the transformation of Christchurch Gardens, and thousands of people have already been welcomed to the area by our new street ambassadors. Our on street patrols are adding real value, dealing with low-level crime and anti-social behaviour, and our area-wide cleaning team are enhancing the footprint and making it an even more attractive place to live, work or visit.

These initiatives and more are demonstrating the tangible benefits the BID is delivering. This report sets out what’s been achieved, demonstrating delivery against our commitments to you.

As you read our Annual Report, you’ll notice that partnership sits at the heart of our achievements. We of course work closely with our ‘sister’ BID in Victoria, and increasingly are joining up with The Northbank BID, and indeed other central London BIDs, on big, cross-cutting issues such as security and air pollution.

Operating under the banner of the ‘South Westminster Business Alliance’ this partnership approach will provide the Victoria Westminster BID with an even louder voice on the issues impacting our business community. With a Mayoral election next year, and increasing competition across the capital, being able to push the priorities of Victoria Westminster businesses is more vital than ever.

Our work with Westminster City Council continues across many projects, notably on Christchurch Gardens, our street teams and on the education and skills agenda, supporting young people into work.

We continue to tackle the challenges London faces. From air pollution to global competition, the BID is playing its part to make London the best place to invest, to work, to live and to play.

We hope you enjoy reading about what your BID team has been doing on your behalf - we are here to support your aspirations, address concerns and ultimately, help our business community thrive. We’ve started our first term with enthusiasm and determination, and together, we look forward to more good growth in the years to come.



Andrew Smith
Chairman
Victoria Westminster Business Improvement District



Ruth Duston, OBE, OC
Chief Executive
Victoria Westminster Business Improvement District



An early CGI of the Christchurch Gardens Scheme

Public Realm

Our ‘Public Realm’ theme works to ensure that the local public realm provides an experience that benefits all those who live, work and visit here. The area’s public realm is a first impression for all visitors and it is essential this experience is positive.

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

- In collaboration with Victoria BID we embarked on a comprehensive public realm project, People Wanted, with BDP and Urban Flow to review, renew and expand the Victoria BIDs 2015 Public Realm Vision study, and prepare a new strategy for the whole area

PUBLIC SPACE ENHANCEMENTS

- The BID continued to support the Christchurch Gardens landscaping project, working closely with Westminster City Council Officers and the landscape architect, ReardonSmith Landscape LLP
- £2.5m was allocated by Westminster City Council (WCC) towards the Christchurch Gardens Project

COST £52,148





Clean and Green

The ‘Clean and Green’ theme delivers projects that keep the open spaces of Victoria Westminster inviting for businesses. Through collaboration with Westminster City Council (WCC) our street team works to enhance the footprint daily to provide a nicer place to live, work and visit.

GREENING AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- The team regularly report issues to the council regarding street, highway, cleaning and maintenance issues to make sure that the area is well looked after

ENHANCING THE VICTORIA WESTMINSTER BID 108 ACRE FOOTPRINT

- From February 2019, five days a week between 6.45am and 5pm, our dedicated cleaning team litter pick across the area, remove graffiti and offer a Janitorial Service to business members, to enhance the BID footprint
- The Janitorial Service is available Monday – Friday from 9am – 5pm. Local businesses can contact the team to report spillages, mess and overflowing bins they see in the area or request a wash down of their entrance or pavement
- A dedicated cleaning manager ensures the team’s efforts are best directed and that they can be more responsive to any issues

COST £26,416





Working together with local partners to raise the profile of the area

Destination Victoria Westminster

The ‘Destination Victoria Westminster’ theme covers our integrated marketing and event activities that ensure we engage with the local workforce and attract visitors all year round, showcasing Victoria Westminster as a vibrant destination offering various experiences.

ON STREET SERVICES

- Our multilingual team of 2 Ambassadors help visitors, commuters, tourists and Londoners find their way around the immediate area and to London wide destinations
- From February 2019, 5,324 people were welcomed to Victoria Westminster by the BID Ambassadors

COST £13,565

CULTURAL AND PROMOTIONAL EVENTS PROGRAMME 2018/2019

- A networking drinks event was held at The Supreme Court to launch the Victoria Westminster BID and a new publication, Victoria the Great, with over 60 attendees
- There was an ice sculpture installation outside the QEII Centre for a day over the festive period for passers-by to interact with the BID on social media
- An on street photography exhibition was held in December with the Press Association to commemorate the centenary of the first women to vote in a general election, which was on 14th December. The exhibition explored the topic ‘100 years of Women’ and highlighted significant moments over the past 100 years along with questions about the next 100. The BID worked with award-winning dance company, Combination Dance, to present a short but dynamic “Equality Chant” which was performed outside the QEII Centre in Westminster on the 14th December

- A panel discussion was held at The House of Lords to mark International Women’s Day 2019. The event explored the topic Breaking Down Barriers; Women in Industry and saw 6 key women from the property, politics and hospitality sectors sit on the panel. The event was chaired by award winning journalist from the Evening Standard Laura Hampson and had over 115 attendees
- The De-Stress Fest was held across two days in March. Events included a Live Kitchen which had 6 slots throughout the day from Coffee Geek and Friends, DT by Hilton, Taj Hotel, The Soak by The Grosvenor, T2 and Vagabond. There were also two De-stress Stations at Victoria Station Main Concourse and Westminster Underground Station which included an interactive colour wall, smoothie bikes and, hand, arms & head massages from local partners; Molton Brown and The Slow Life Concept

COST £47,069

MARKETING STRATEGIES

- We published 25,000 copies of the Spring ‘Victoria London Starts Here’ magazine increasing the previous circulation to local businesses within Victoria Westminster
- Materials including branded bags and informative leaflets about the BID were printed to promote the Victoria Westminster BID locally
- We circulated monthly electronic newsletters to over 100 people about events and news in Victoria Westminster
- We worked to enhance our social media presence with a regular programme of engaging updates on local activity over Twitter, Facebook and Instagram
- We engaged various consultants and communication agencies during the year to provide additional communications, PR and media support to promote Victoria Westminster BID and the wider area

COST £30,428



Safe and Secure

The ‘Safe and Secure’ theme is guided by local businesses and organisations to help the Victoria Westminster BID team strengthen the area as a safe and secure district for business to flourish. Through working with partners such as Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and British Transport Police (BTP), the BID ensures important information is spread through the community.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY, COUNTER-TERRORISM (CT) & MEMBERSHIPS

- ACT Awareness and Project ARGUS briefings were held to train local workers on Business Continuity and Counter Terrorism with over 130 attendees
- The Victoria Emergency Notification System (VENS), powered by Sentinel, was launched in January and is being used to keep thousands of visitors, commuters and workers informed in the event of a major incident
- Over 100 business members are now signed up to receive notifications regarding security

COST £18,388

COMMUNITY SAFETY & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

- From February 2019 each day a team of two security officers, equipped with radios and body worn cameras, patrol

the BID footprint dealing with low-level crime and ASB

- The BID Security officers collected intelligence which is passed on to the Metropolitan Police under our Information Sharing Agreement for counter-drug and illegal immigration operations
- The Community Intervention Team (CIT) is a dedicated daytime street engagement team, funded by the BID and run through The Passage, consisting of three experienced outreach workers that cover the BID footprint. The team look for, and support, individuals rough sleeping in the area in order for them to move away from being involved in detrimental street activity and find a route off the street, in close collaboration with local homelessness services. Those who are bedded down in the area are invited into the Passage Resource Centre to be assessed and to get their basic needs met
- Over the past year the CIT had over 2,300 encounters with over 280 clients. 44%

of individuals the team only met once meaning 123 individuals were either taken into accommodation, signposted into other services or started interacting with The Passage

COST £24,670

CRIME PREVENTION SEMINARS AND MATERIALS

- 4,000 crime prevention items including anti-skimming card defenders and personal/ handbag alarms were purchased and will be distributed via BTP and MPS engagements in the area
- A cyber threats and information security briefing was held to share information on the latest cyber-crime trends and how to protect businesses from online fraud

COST £19,966



Providing opportunities for businesses to work together through partnerships

Sustainable Prosperity

The ‘Sustainable Prosperity’ theme focuses on encouraging a vibrant and rich local economy providing businesses with opportunities to work together through CSR initiatives, education and skills, networking opportunities and wellbeing activities for staff. The BID also lobby’s where appropriate on Victoria Westminster and London wide issues.

BUSINESS NETWORKING

- A Mental Health Awareness and 5 Ways to Wellbeing workshops were held with MIND in October to mark World Mental Health Awareness Day
- In a joint project with the Destination Victoria Westminster theme the De- Stress Fest was held across two days in March. Events included a Live Kitchen and two De-Stress Stations at Westminster Underground Station and Victoria Station Main Concourse

COST £21,157

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

- An apprenticeship event, was held in collaboration with Westminster City Council (WCC) to inform businesses of the best ways to utilise the Apprenticeship Levy
- An event was held in collaboration with WCC to celebrate STEAM week in Westminster
- The Victoria BIDs Annual Christmas Gift Drop campaign was extended into Victoria Westminster and 1,544 presents were donated. Local charities The Passage and Cardinal Hume Centre received these donations. This is an increase in gifts of 42% compared to the previous year
- The BID sponsored several local charitable and visitor activities including Beating Retreat, The Passage Night Under the Stars, Lord Mayor’s Gala Dinner, Centre for London Neighbourhood Essays Project and Commonwealth Youth Orchestra

COST £15,767

RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT

- The BID has supported the Victoria Neighbourhood Forum and continues to provide in kind support as part of the Steering Committee, moving towards the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan
- The popular Victoria Privilege Card scheme has been promoted to businesses within Victoria Westminster and has seen circulation increase to 56,000 cards. There are now over 150 offers and discounts for local shops and restaurants
- This year has seen the BID lobby on behalf of businesses in Victoria Westminster at the highest levels. The BID attended the world’s largest property conference, MIPIM, and an event was held with other Central London BIDs to attract interest and investment in Victoria Westminster

COST £22,227

Profit and Loss Account

For the period ended 31 March 2019

TURNOVER	TOTAL
BID Levy	£429,117
TOTAL	£429,117

COST OF SALES	
Public Realm	£52,148
Clean and Green	£26,416
Destination Victoria Westminster	£91,062
Safe and Secure	£63,023
Sustainable Prosperity	£59,151
TOTAL	£291,800
GROSS PROFIT	£137,317

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	
BID support team	£52,805
Office expenses	£4,348
Audit fees	£5,750
BID levy collection fee	£6,790
Establishment expenses	£27,500
TOTAL	£ 97,193
Net surplus/(deficit) for the period	£40,124



The Board

Board Directors

- Andrew Smith (Chair) [BDB Pitmans LLP](#)
- Ruth Duston, OBE,OC (Chief Executive) [Victoria Westminster BID](#)

Board Members

- Charmaine Rees [Derwent London](#)
- Niccolo Barrattieri [Northacre](#)
- Claudia Binkert [EDF Trading](#)
- Lt Col William Duggan [Wellington Barracks](#)
- Beverly Payne [Conrad London St. James](#)
- Mark Taylor [QEII Centre](#)
- Stuart Burrows [Office of Government Property](#)

Board Observer

- Mark Fisher [Tuckerman](#)



The Boundary

