



A destination for business and culture

**Victoria
Westminster**



VICTORIA WESTMINSTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20



Victoria Westminster Business Improvement District

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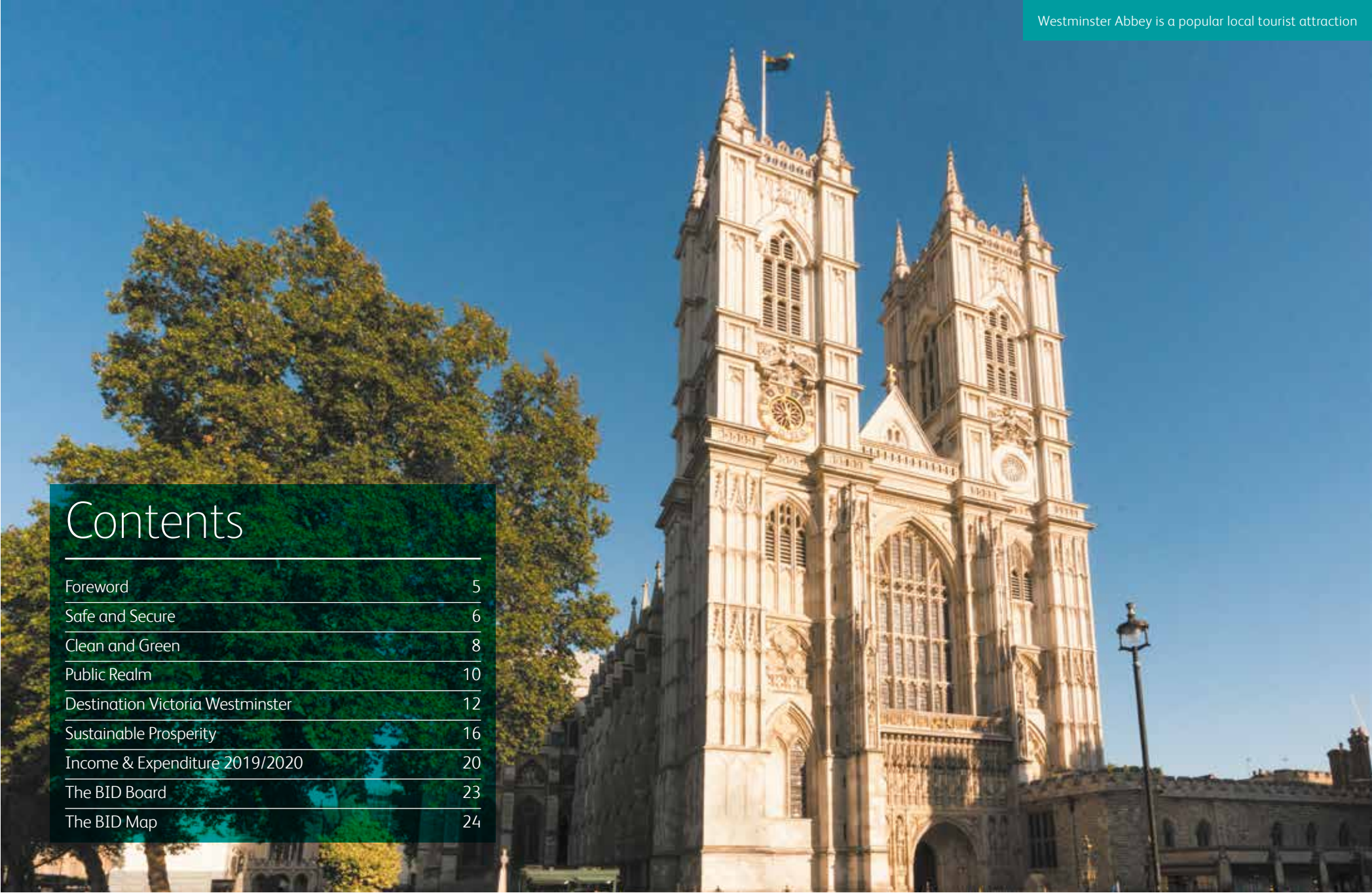
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Our friendly ambassadors assist with wayfinding in the local area



Westminster Abbey is a popular local tourist attraction

Contents	
Foreword	5
Safe and Secure	6
Clean and Green	8
Public Realm	10
Destination Victoria Westminster	12
Sustainable Prosperity	16
Income & Expenditure 2019/2020	20
The BID Board	23
The BID Map	24



Foreword

This Annual Report marks almost the halfway point in the first term of the Victoria Westminster BID. Since the BID went live in October of 2018 our achievements have been numerous and far-reaching, as the Executive Team works tirelessly to deliver on the strong mandate secured in our first ballot. In just two years the Victoria Westminster BID has become a familiar and reassuring force for good in the area, building strong relations with our business community and laying strong foundations for the years to come.

During the last year, taking us up to March 2020, we are proud to have continued to support our business community, delivered some major transformational projects and set an ambitious course for the future of the area. While of course we are now facing a long and challenging recovery due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the strong foundations laid down by the BID will ensure Victoria Westminster is well positioned to navigate through the coming months and years, and able to maximise the potential growth opportunities that must be seized.

As you will see from this Annual Report, last year we continued to deliver against our core themes of ‘Public Realm’, ‘Clean and Green’, ‘Safe and Secure’, ‘Sustainable Prosperity’ and ‘Destination Victoria Westminster’. Our work is varied and ambitious, from improving the public spaces in the area to supporting the most vulnerable in our community, providing a reassuring on street security presence and curating a compelling programme of events. Our lobbying work, to position Victoria Westminster favourably within the borough and London more widely, is helping to promote major transformation projects such as the redevelopment of Christchurch Gardens and a future vision for Parliament Square and other key locations such as around St James’s Park underground station.

Particular highlights include our diverse series of events and activations which have attracted visitors to the area and celebrated key moments in the year such as International Women’s Day. We also published our new Public Realm Strategy ‘People Wanted’ which will pave the way for future placemaking improvements in the area.

We have increasingly collaborated with our sister BID in Victoria this past year and also the Northbank BID – collectively forming the South Westminster Business Alliance. Together, we represent a sizable area of central London, representing multiple sectors and thousands of businesses. Our collective strength gives us a powerful and influential voice in London, and we are proactive in promoting the issues and concerns of our business community to political leaders and decision makers. We have undertaken economic analysis research, which we plan to update in the post COVID period, and also sponsored research with Centre for London looking at the future role of BIDs and how they are evolving to engage all part of their communities.

And while much has been achieved this past year, our work is not done. We are committed to being an agile and future facing BID, able to respond to changing times and altered priorities.

The COVID-19 crisis and the recovery period will have lasting impacts for the world, and businesses across London will require significant support in the coming years. In Victoria we have a diverse and vibrant mix of businesses, including a burgeoning retail and hospitality offer. These are among the hardest hit sectors and all are vital to the usually thriving London eco-system of inter-dependent businesses, office workers and visitors. Some of our businesses have been more resilient to the crisis than others, but all have felt the impacts of the pandemic and as your local BID we are here to respond to changing needs and priorities.

Thank you for your continued support as we progress through our first term. We do not take your support for granted and will endeavour to meet and surpass your expectations in the coming months. We hope you find this Annual Report interesting and look forward to working with you as we deliver our ambitious plans for the rest of the term.



**Nigel Hughes MBE,
Chairman**
Victoria Westminster
Business Improvement District



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



Safe and Secure

Safe and Secure

This year, our Head of Security & Business Resilience has continued to work closely with key partners such as the Metropolitan Police (Met Police), British Transport Police (BTP) and Westminster City Council (WCC), in order to enhance business resilience within the local business community.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY, COUNTER-TERRORISM (CT) & MEMBERSHIPS

OUTPUTS / ROI

- A Marauding Terrorist attack seminar, two SCan seminars, a Project Fairway, a business resilience seminar, a Project Diffuse and two ACT Awareness briefings were held to train local workers on business continuity, counter terrorism, corrosive substance attacks and the 'Insider Threat'. Over 260 business representatives attended

- This year we continued to provide the Victoria Emergency Notification System (VENS) to our business community
- The crisis management tool, which was launched in 2019, aims to alert businesses in case of a major emergency in the area in near real time
- Two hundred businesses are currently signed up and we held three crisis management workshops with local businesses during the year to educate them on the platform

COST £333

RADIO LINK

OUTPUTS/ROI

- A scheme of more than 120 local radios has been managed with operatives now using the upgraded 4G Victoria RadioLink network
- Radios are carried by the BID's on-street teams and local police

COST £3,953

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR (ASB)

OUTPUTS/ROI

- Each day a team of two security officers, patrol the BID footprint from 6.30am – 3.30pm, equipped with radios and body worn cameras, dealing with low-level crime and ASB
- Weekly joint operations have been established with Met Police, WCC Inspectors and the Victoria Security Team to tackle ASB in the area
- 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 1,100 encounters with over 330 clients. Over 300 of these individuals had on average 4 interactions meaning they were either taken into accommodation, signposted into other services or started interacting with The Passage

COST £118,364



Our cleaning team work across the footprint five days a week

Clean and Green

Clean and inviting open spaces are a key priority for businesses in Victoria Westminster. 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.

ENHANCING THE VICTORIA WESTMINSTER BID 108 ACRE FOOTPRINT

Area-wide cleaning each weekday helps to ensure the area looks clean each day

OUTPUTS / ROI

- Five days a week between 7.30am and 5pm our dedicated cleaning team, of 4 cleaning operatives and a cleaning manager, work across the Victoria Westminster BID footprint

- The team perform duties such as street sweeping, litter-picking, sharps-removal, graffiti-removal and flushing. They also perform ad-hoc night-time duties and an additional janitorial cleaning service is available to businesses (with seasonal variations)

- The Janitorial Service is available Monday – Friday, 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

- Over the past year the team have made 34,501 cleaning reports of which, 294 were in relation to the Janitorial Service

- A dedicated cleaning manager ensures the team’s efforts are best directed and that they can be more responsive to any issues

COST £131,352



Our Janitorial Service is available to respond to cleaning issues raised by businesses

'The Arc' was highlighted in our 'People Wanted' Strategy as a potential future public realm improvement project



Public Realm

Victoria Westminster's public realm is vital to people's perceptions of the area. Although much improvement has been made, there is still limited access to relaxing green spaces and the area remains congested which can affect our wellbeing.

This year the BID has continued to explore options on long-term enhancement projects with the publication of our 'People Wanted' Public Realm Strategy, which puts forward some potential concept ideas for placemaking improvements to the public realm. We have also built on our work towards the redevelopment of Christchurch Gardens with construction currently underway on site. The garden will be reopening in late Summer 2020.

STRATEGIC PROJECTS

CHRISTCHURCH GARDENS

OUTPUTS/ROI

We have continued to work in partnership with Victoria BID and Westminster City Council, who allocated over £2.5m of funds for this project, and key local and project stakeholders on the Christchurch Gardens project to see this venture through to completion

PEOPLE WANTED

OUTPUTS/ROI

We launched our new Public Realm Strategy 'People Wanted' in early 2020 which is an important resource to help people who live, work and visit Victoria Westminster enjoy its public spaces and surroundings

COST £62,400



An image taken at the Christchurch Gardens site before construction began



Destination Victoria Westminster

Our integrated marketing and event activities ensure that we engage with the local workforce and attract visitors all year round, showcasing Victoria Westminster as a vibrant destination offering various experiences. The Victoria Westminster BID actively markets the area through the use of our digital platforms, such as our website and social media, to promote events and activities run by ourselves and local business partners.

This year the BID has covered a wide range of events, in collaboration with the Victoria BID, including participation in key London events such as London Design Festival. We also enhanced our Christmas campaign this year with a large-scale installation in Westminster and an interactive advent calendar on the BID's website.

VICTORIA WESTMINSTER BID AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

Our multilingual team of 2 Ambassadors help visitors, commuters, tourists and Londoners find their way around the immediate area and to London wide destinations

OUTPUT/ROI

- Last year 74,922 people were welcomed to Victoria Westminster by the BID Ambassadors

COST £65,136

EVENTS PROGRAMME 2019/2020

OUTPUTS/ROI

Our yearly programme of curated events aim to attract visitors, workers and residents to spend their leisure time in the local area

COST £36,835

WELLBEING & SPORTS EVENTS

OUTPUTS/ROI

- A series of Wellbeing events were held in May with a number of partners to mark Mental Health Awareness Week. The 'Improve your health and wellbeing' series was a joint initiative with the Sustainable Prosperity theme and included 8 sessions ranging from wellbeing seminars to fitness and health sessions. Over 100 people attended
- The sixth annual Victoria Football Cup took place which saw over 120 players from 16 different businesses across Victoria and Westminster take part. The Cup was won by reigning champions World Fuel Services after playing Silversea Cruises in the final

LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL

OUTPUTS/ROI

- In 2019 we collaborated with Victoria BID to expand on their work in the previous year's London Design Festival (LDF). The Victoria Connections Design District was re-established with an

extension into Westminster.

- The District comprised of 12 partners from local businesses who each held an event as part of the festival. Partners of the Victoria Connections Design District were; Westminster Cathedral, The Apollo Victoria Theatre, WICKED, Landsec, Patternity, Olivia Designs, Ying Chang and 50m, Victoria Place Shopping Centre, Eccleston Yards, Westminster Abbey and Victoria and Victoria Westminster BIDs
- As part of LDF the BID also sponsored a Festival Commission, Life Labyrinth, which was placed on Westminster Cathedral Piazza for the duration of the festival. We anticipate on average there were 500 visitors per day at the installation
- The victoriaconnections.london design district microsite was updated with the 2019 programme and received over 5,000 page views. This is an increase of 26 % compared to the previous year

FESTIVE ACTIVITY

To build on our previous year's Christmas campaign we installed a large-scale installation in Westminster and an interactive advent calendar on our website

OUTPUTS/ROI

- A networking drinks event was held at RICS to celebrate the festive season with our business members, over 50 people attended
- We installed a festive bauble sculpture outside the QEII Conference Centre in Westminster for 4 weeks, where passers-by could interact with the BID on social media
- An online advent calendar was created on the BID website for the month of December with 34 prizes, from local businesses. We received over 4,300 entries for the prize draws

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

OUTPUTS / ROI

- The International Women’s Day (IWD) ‘New Vision, New Decade: the future of women in the workplace’ breakfast panel event was held on 3 March at Central Hall Westminster, in collaboration with the Victoria and Northbank BIDs
- Five well-respected journalists and businesspeople took part in a wide-ranging panel discussion, which was chaired by Nina Nannar, Arts Editor for ITV News
- The panellists included Sadie Morgan OBE (founding director of dRMM), Dowshan Humzah (independent board director and Steering Board member of 50:50 Parliament), Roianne Nedd (Global I&D Lead at Oliver Wyman) and Anna Butler (Head of Legal at HB Reavis)
- The event was partnered with Smart Works Charity, who held a clothing drive and charity raffle. 150 items of clothing were donated and £4,000 was raised
- The event was well-attended with over 300 guests. The BIDs will look to build on this event for next year

- As part of the IWD campaign, we recorded a series of Vox Pop videos with Ruth Duston OBE OC, panel member Dowshan Humzah, Cllr Rachael Robathan (Leader of WCC), Béatrice Bigois (Chief Executive of EDF Trading), Ruth Owen OBE (Chief Executive of Whizz-Kids) and Matira Wheeler (Marketing & Communications Manager at Young Westminster Foundation). The campaign was shared on the BID’s communication channels

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

We published and distributed 100,000 copies of local magazine; Victoria, London Starts Here. The magazines are distributed seasonally and are an important resource for promoting our local businesses and the BID’s activities

COST £12,845

ONLINE PROMOTION

- We circulated monthly electronic newsletters to over 500 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 on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn

COST £6,250

PR SUPPORT AND MEDIA

- We engaged a consultant part-time to support with communications & PR to promote Victoria BID and the wider area
- We appointed two London communications agencies during the year to provide us with additional PR and media support

COST £23,154

Our respected panel represented a wide range of sectors





Sustainable Prosperity

This year the Sustainable Prosperity theme has seen an enhanced focus on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) which includes activities around wellbeing of local staff, education & skills and business networking within the local community.

Ensuring that Victoria Westminster is a good place to do business is vital to the future success of the area. Victoria Westminster BID is dedicated to working in partnership with businesses to sustain a local economy which is prosperous over the short, medium and long term.

WELLBEING INITIATIVES & CSR

OUTPUTS/ROI

- In a joint initiative with the Victoria BID, a series of Wellbeing events were held in May to mark Mental Health Awareness week

- 5 gardening workshops were held throughout the year for our business community to attend. These events were extremely popular and explored topics from succulents to Christmas wreaths. Over 140 people attended
- A series of wellbeing events and strength workshops were held with wellbeing expert Charlotte Wiseman during the year. There were 140 attendees over 6 workshops
- We also commissioned Charlotte to produce a 'Workplace Wellbeing – Best Practice Guide' which was published in January and is available on the BID's website
- A community week was held in September which included activities such as a WalkFit around the area, a talk at The Passage, 2 community litter picks with local businesses and an assembly at St. Vincent De Paul Primary School
- A colouring in map was also placed in 6 areas of the community across the week. Afterwards the 6 pieces were put back together to create a completed

colourful map for use on the BID communications channels

- The BID worked with Wellbeing People to host three of their health and wellbeing Kiosks in nine different locations across Victoria and Westminster over a 3-month period. Across the locations, the kiosks had a total of 3,122 users. The final report showed that across the Victoria and Victoria Westminster BIDs footprints most responses were on or below average – i.e. less stressed or unhealthy than the standard
- As part of our education and skills CSR programme we have worked with the Young Westminster Foundation and 2-3 Degrees on the 'Mastering my Future' programme to deliver employability events and workshops. Over 100 young people have been engaged in the programme
- Our annual Christmas Gift drop campaign took place again, supporting two local charities. With your support, over 1,200 gift donations were collected from 18 gift drop boxes. A further £1,327 was raised on

the Gift Drop online donation form which was split equally between The Passage and Cardinal Hume Centre

- We ran a Summer Fundraising Challenge to raise money and awareness for local charity, St Vincent's Family Project. 3 local businesses took part and over £2,200 was raised
- We supported Community events, such as South West Fest and The Passage Garden Party
- A breakfast panel discussion event was held in collaboration with Westminster City Council (WCC) and the Victoria and Northbank BIDs, to explore 'The Hidden Network' campaign and how businesses can help to end rough sleeping in Westminster
- Small grants were given to 3 local charities to deliver projects within the area, focused on education and skills, in line with the Steering Group's priorities

COST £14,591

PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND RESEARCH

OUTPUTS/ROI

- The BID has commissioned research through King’s College London to focus on mental health in the workplace and Volterra to focus on economic analysis and productivity within the wider context of South Westminster

COST £27,593

BUSINESS NETWORKING AND SPONSORSHIP EVENTS

OUTPUTS/ROI

- The BID attended several business networking and local charitable activities and provided sponsorship for events including Beating Retreat, The Passage Garden Party, Night Under the Stars, West End LIVE, London Handel Festival and Centre for London Neighbourhood Essays

COST £34,203

PRIVILEGE CARD

OUTPUTS/ROI

- Our popular Privilege Card scheme has grown with over 75,000 now in circulation. There are now over 200 offers and discounts for local shops and restaurants

COST £11,786

COVID-19

As we embark on our third year as a BID the world has been partly halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic will now play an unexpected role in shaping the remainder of our first term, with recovery at the forefront of our plans.

The next year will focus on supporting our local business community and the difficulties that a post COVID world will play.

We know that there may be tough times ahead but we look forward to working with you all closely over this time.



Footfall on the streets of Victoria Westminster has decreased due to COVID-19



Enhanced signage has been installed by the BID to help people adhere to social distancing locally

Profit and Loss Account

For the year ended 31 March 2020

TURNOVER	2019/20 – 12 MONTHS	COMPARATIVE 2018/19 – 6 MONTHS
BID Levy	966,912	429,117
Interest receivable	1,204	-
TOTAL	968,115	429,117
COST OF SALES		
Public Realm	154,648	52,148
Clean and Green	144,263	26,416
Destination Victoria Westminster	211,030	91,062
Safe and Secure	176,010	63,023
Sustainable Prosperity	127,982	59,151
TOTAL	813,934	291,800
GROSS PROFIT	154,182	137,317
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES		
BID support team	99,084	52,805
Office expenses	3,648	4,348
Audit fees	6,250	5,750
BID levy collection fee	13,460	6,790
Establishment expenses	-	27,500
TOTAL	122,442	97,193
Surplus brought forward	40,124	-
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	31,740	40,124
Surplus carried forward	71,864	-



There are over 200 offers to be used in the local area with the Victoria Privilege Card

The Board

Board Directors

Ruth Duston, OBE OC (Chief Executive) [Victoria Westminster BID](#)

Nigel Hughes MBE (Chair) [Victoria Westminster BID](#)

Andrew Smith [BDB Pitmans LLP](#)

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](#)

Tony Matharu [Integrity International Group](#)

The Boundary

