

2026–2027

Understanding your BID Levy Bill

St Martin's

Property Owner BID



WHAT IS HEART OF LONDON BUSINESS ALLIANCE (HOLBA)?

Heart of London Business Alliance (HOLBA) is a 500-strong multi-sector business membership organisation in the heart of London's West End.

HOLBA has been the catalyst for positive, tangible change in London's West End for the past 20 years, with a proven ability to improve the commercial, cultural and trading environment of the Heart of London area.

WHAT DOES HOLBA DELIVER?

HOLBA mobilises the business community to tackle current challenges, drive future prosperity and realise its full potential as a place for culture, heritage and commerce.

Comprising property owners and occupiers from all sectors, we bring businesses together to consider, agree on and invest in improvement plans for their individual and shared trading environments. This delivers economies of scale, joint procurement of key services, greater influence and better results for all.

WHERE IS THE HOLBA AREA?

The Heart of London area spans three districts in London's West End, including, Piccadilly & Jermyn Street, Leicester Square & Piccadilly Circus and St Martin's. The area plays a significant role in the wider London and UK economies. Each of the three districts, distinctive in character, is neighbouring, complementary and contributes to the ecosystem of the whole area.

HOW IS HOLBA FINANCED?

BIDs are funded via an annual business levy. HOLBA is an entirely not-for-profit company and 100% of its income is ring-fenced to spend on the BID priorities. HOLBA has a strong track record of securing additional non-levy investment for the area.

WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)?

Business Improvement Districts are business led and funded partnerships which are created through a ballot process to deliver additional services to local businesses.

There is no limit on what projects or services can be provided through a BID. The only requirement is that it should be in addition to services provided by local authorities.

WHAT IS THE DURATION OF A BID TERM?

BIDs have a maximum term of five years. Once completed they automatically cease and require a new ballot to continue.

The BID term start and end dates for all HOLBA BIDs are not aligned and so not all ballots are held simultaneously.

HOW IS HOLBA MANAGED & GOVERNED?

The Board of Directors is responsible for the long-term success of the company. Its role is to provide oversight of the company's strategic and fiscal management. It is made up of non-executive directors and presided over by an elected chair. The membership of the board is representative of all business sectors operating in the HOLBA districts. The Board of Directors is unpaid and the liability of each director is limited to £1.

IS HOLBA PART OF WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL?

HOLBA and the statutory providers including Westminster City Council are separate entities. HOLBA is non-political. It is established, controlled and funded by businesses via an independently regulated ballot and has a maximum five-year term. It is an entirely not-for-profit company and 100% of its income is ring-fenced to spend on business priorities.

Here are last year's delivery highlights across our five areas of focus, as well as those planned for the coming year.

For a more thorough look at HOLBA's delivery please visit:
www.holba.london



MANAGE

To caretake the streets, keeping them clean, safe & attractive, elevating the experience for everyone.

LOOKING BACK 2025 – 2026

- ◆ Provided 24/7 private security team, resulting in 1,500 incidents logged and dealt with over the year.
- ◆ Enhanced street cleaning, including pavement washing and stains, chewing gum and graffiti removal. Over 30,000 street cleaning issues managed.
- ◆ 1,059 pieces of graffiti removed, 10,275 items of flyposting removed and 1,045 fly tipping items removed.
- ◆ Reduced over 5,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions via our Waste and Recycling Scheme.
- ◆ Improved the response time of our Street Cleaning and Rapid Janitorial Response service to under 45 minutes.
- ◆ Achieved a Keep Britain Tidy rating of 95%.
- ◆ Over 1,000 people sleeping on the streets received one-to-one support via our Outreach Programme with The Connection at St Martin's.

YEAR AHEAD 2026 – 2027

- ◆ Provide a 24/7 private security team, radio network and an online crime reporting system to deter and tackle crime.
- ◆ Establish a bespoke West End Crime Reduction Strategy that delivers a multi-agency crime taskforce, CCTV and dedicated policing and enforcement patrols. Establish a bespoke West End Crime Reduction Strategy that delivers coordinated, joint-tasked patrols in partnership with the police and local authority.
- ◆ Provide a 7-day-a-week programme of sanitation and pavement washing, removing stains, chewing gum and graffiti.
- ◆ Carry out daily street audits, ensuring quick fix rates from agencies.
- ◆ Support people sleeping on the streets by providing one-to-one support via our Outreach Programme with The Connection at St Martin's.



SHAPE

To shape a resilient, sustainable & investable district that values the role culture & commerce play in its success.

LOOKING BACK 2025 – 2026

- ◆ Delivered an Inward Investment and Curation programme for the area using insights from our Economic Real Estate Reports.
- ◆ Delivered a Net Zero programme including, audits, discounted waste and recycling services and circular economy solutions.
- ◆ Progressed on our priority street improvement projects including St Martin's Lane, Sackville and Vigo Streets, Green Park Gateway and Charing Cross Road.
- ◆ Delivered an enhanced al-fresco dining offer in St Martin's Lane as part of the Summer Streets initiative.
- ◆ Coordinated partners to look at the future of Piccadilly Circus as a place of spectacle.
- ◆ Developed a strategy on the role of digital signage in the West End.
- ◆ Secured cross-agency alignment around a shared vision of a West End International Centre - a single, unified West End geography, reflecting the full ecosystem of culture, hospitality, retail and creative industries.

YEAR AHEAD 2026 – 2027

- ◆ Advancing the Arts Quarter vision to strengthen the creative economy and deliver public realm improvements in coordination with significant private sector redevelopments.
- ◆ Secure maximum benefit for our members from The Crown Estate and Westminster City Council's public realm improvement proposals, including Piccadilly Circus and Haymarket.
- ◆ Continue to make the case that the West End warrants special recognition and treatment by the decision-making authorities, due to its significance to London and the UK.
- ◆ Advance the vision for Charing Cross Road to enhance public space, improve road safety, pedestrian comfort, air quality and way-finding.
- ◆ Progress implementation of the Evening and Night-time Economy Strategy, focusing on opportunities for enhanced lighting, security and improving the 24-hour economy.



PROMOTE

To curate a programme of standout events, experiences & campaigns that celebrate the area's illustrious cultural offer.

LOOKING BACK 2025 – 2026

- ◆ Delivered 2 new permanent statues to Scenes in the Square, part of HOLBA's evolving programme of statues that celebrate Leicester Square as London's home of film and entertainment – host to 50+ premieres annually.
- ◆ Delivered the 2025 Festive Lights and partnered on the 2025 London Ramadan Lights Programme with supporting marketing campaigns.
- ◆ 1.53B press reach generated from 2025 through destination marketing projects.
- ◆ Delivered the 2025 Art After Dark programme supporting galleries and businesses throughout the area.
- ◆ Promoted our members to engaged audiences – local, regional and international – through our Heart of London Club and consumer channels.

YEAR AHEAD 2026 – 2027

- ◆ Collaborate with businesses, partners and wider community to programme a bespoke calendar of events and experiences that celebrate the district's rich culture and heritage.
- ◆ Deliver a programme and supporting marketing campaign for annual Ramadan and Festive Lights.
- ◆ Delivered the 2026-27 Art After Dark programme supporting galleries and businesses throughout the area.
- ◆ Deliver a rolling programme of advertising and PR campaigns via HOLBA's consumer marketing channels: Art of London, Discover LSQ and London West End, showcasing the district at its best.
- ◆ Provide dedicated marketing platforms, including a marketing forum, weekly newsletter and venue hire directory.
- ◆ Deliver the Heart of London Club - an employee privilege scheme offering member experiences and discounts.



ADVOCATE

To unite and empower members to protect, defend and promote shared interests.

LOOKING BACK 2025 – 2026

- ◆ Launched a national campaign to advocate for HOLBA's Hybrid Business Rate solution to ensure a fairer business rates system for all.
- ◆ Secured 80 additional police officer posts for London's West End and a high-profile West End tour with the Mayor of London and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner.
- ◆ Secured formal consultation process with Transport for London to regulate and licence pedicabs. As a result, a new licensing scheme is scheduled to come into force in Spring 2026.
- ◆ Engaged with Government at all levels on licensing reform leading to publication of a new National Licensing Policy Framework requiring licensing authorities to explicitly consider economic growth for the first time.
- ◆ Advocated for the Experience Economy leading to its inclusion in the Mayor's Growth Plan as one of five key growth sectors for London.
- ◆ Promoted member priorities at critical meetings including London Business Forum, West End Security Network, London's Tourism Advisory Group, TfL's Business Advisory Group, and Westminster City Council's BIDs Group.
- ◆ Issued monthly political and policy progress updates to public affairs contacts and senior representatives across the HOLBA membership
- ◆ Engaged with national, regional and local press to raise the profile of the West End and our core issues, with a PR reach of 4.67B.

YEAR AHEAD 2026 – 2027

- ◆ Advocate for Government to adopt HOLBA's Hybrid Business Rate solution ahead of the 2026 Budget.
- ◆ Support the Association of International Retail and other key partners with their campaigns to reinstate tax-free shopping.
- ◆ Collaborate with TfL to launch and promote the new regulations and licensing scheme for pedicabs and work with the statutory bodies to ensure compliance and enforcement.
- ◆ Campaign for step free access at tube stations in the Heart of London area and extension of the night tube on Thursday evenings to support the experience economy.
- ◆ Work with the Greater London Authority to shape new Mayoral licensing powers and Westminster Council on their review of licensing policy.
- ◆ Supporting members to prepare for the outcome of the Westminster Council elections in May 2026 via dedicated events and briefings.
- ◆ Continue engaging with Transport for London and the GLA about the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street to ensure HOLBA member interests are fully reflected.



SUPPORT

To provide exceptional support & services that help members thrive & strengthen the community network.

LOOKING BACK 2025 – 2026

- ◆ Delivered monthly reporting on the area's footfall, visitor behaviour, demographics and spend. Alongside quarterly and annual insights on the economic and real estate
- ◆ Business visits and meetings with 497 member businesses with a total of 15,700 interactions.
- ◆ Kept members informed with digital communications covering area updates, news alerts, new reports, offers and member benefits.
- ◆ Supported members with free employee training and upskilling opportunities.
- ◆ Hosted briefing and networking events that reached over 400 member businesses.
- ◆ Achieved 4,277 Heart of London Club redemptions
- ◆ Promoted 61 local venues through our online venue directory.

YEAR AHEAD 2026 – 2027

- ◆ Act as a one-stop shop to deliver business support and a wide range of services to help members save time and money.
- ◆ Provide sustainability support, through toolkits and actionable steps that reduce emissions and save money.
- ◆ Facilitate networking events, business introductions and partnership opportunities.
- ◆ Provide planning and licensing support.
- ◆ Share area and real estate performance data and insights to support members in making business decisions, forward planning and investment.
- ◆ Provide businesses with relevant information, resources, news and alerts about what's happening in the area.
- ◆ Promote local volunteering and sponsorship opportunities.



INDICATIVE BID BUDGET 5 YEAR CASH PROJECTION

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	TOTALS
INCOME (£)							
BID LEVY	389,819	448,375	461,826	475,681	489,951	504,650	2,770,303
OTHER	54,463	39,512	40,697	41,918	43,176	44,471	264,238
TOTAL	444,282	487,887	502,524	517,599	533,127	549,121	3,034,540
EXPENDITURE (£)							
SUPPORT	18,605	19,065	19,637	20,227	20,833	21,458	119,826
ADVOCATE	14,937	15,520	15,986	16,465	16,959	17,468	97,336
SHAPE	57,602	84,131	86,655	89,255	91,932	94,690	504,265
PROMOTE	82,247	95,093	97,946	100,884	103,911	107,028	587,110
MANAGE	107,966	129,603	133,491	137,496	141,620	145,869	796,044
BID RENEWAL	6,215	12,061	6,594	6,792	6,995	7,205	45,863
CORE COSTS	99,568	110,515	113,831	117,246	120,763	124,386	686,308
CONTINGENCY	19,491	22,419	23,091	23,784	24,498	25,233	130,160
TOTAL	406,631	488,408	497,231	512,148	527,512	543,338	2,835,948

Budget figures are indicative, based on the anticipated levy income using 2023 Rateable Values. Core Costs will cover all costs associated with the core staffing, legal, accountancy and accommodation for the BID. Assumed 0.03% annual inflationary increase and 95% levy collection rate. Contingency based upon 5% of BID levy income. Levy income may fluctuate and is subject to the market at the time of the ratings assessment. Projects and services expenditure reflects current priorities; these may change causing variances across the BID term. Any material variations will be approved by the Board.