



PROGRESS



COLMORE BUSINESS DISTRICT
ANNUAL REPORT 2020

YOUR COLMORE BID WORKING FOR YOU

➤ Colmore Business District is the Business Improvement District (BID) that provides projects and services to the commercial heart of the region. Funded by a 1.5% Levy on Business Rates, the work described in this report stands as a testament to the investment in, and commitment by businesses into the city of Birmingham.

Over the last 11 years, Colmore BID has delivered on a broad range of successes, from enhanced street cleaning and city dressing to major public realm works that reshape the landscape through which we walk every day; from initiatives to improve the wellbeing of those who work here to our signature Food Festival which draws over 30,000 people each year.

The Colmore BID team are proud to present our work for this year, and are excited to reveal our roadmap for the next 12 months.





*Colmore BID Chair
Nicola Fleet-Milne with
Deputy Chairs Alex Tross
and Paul Fielding*

2020 AND BEYOND

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Having been involved in Colmore BID as a Board Director for the last 7 years, I am immensely proud to have been voted into the role of Chair of the BID. After 11 years at the helm, Gary Cardin stepped down from the role in 2019. Gary has steered the BID towards success during his tenure as Chair and I would like to thank him for all of his work as a member of the Board.

The BID has been a catalyst for change over the last 11 years. As we enter a new and ambitious phase of the city's growth, fuelled by continued development at the Paradise estate, the growth of 103 Colmore Row, the imminent completion of Three Snowhill and The Grand Hotel and, of course, the Commonwealth Games, it is more important than ever to ensure that businesses are able to influence and be involved in the future of the city.

But we're not just focusing on the big ticket items; we're continuing to deliver on the ground as well. Our Security Service has increased, we're refreshing one of our pieces of street art and we continue, through our events programme, to support SIFA Fireside in their work to tackle homelessness.

Whilst we continue to do the work you have come to expect from us, we are, for our third term, starting to hone in on new, exciting and ambitious projects, some of which you will read about in this report. The work, delivered by Michele Wilby and her team, is supported by a fantastic set of Directors from across the business community and I look forward to working with them to deliver on our objectives over the next five years.

I hope that you find this report to be an informative summary of our first year of BID 3.

Nicola Fleet-Milne



BUSINESS MATTERS



The Business Matters Working Group contributed to the review of the HS2 project

PROVIDING A VOICE FOR OUR BUSINESSES

The Business Matters Working Group is primarily focused on the good governance of the organisation. It also acts as a voice for business within the city.

As we entered our third term, it was felt that the time was right to review our internal governance arrangements to ensure that they are fit for purpose. We were pleased that, following an independent external review, the minor changes we were intending to make mirrored the recommendations made to us. Furthermore, the exercise gave reassurance that our arrangements were in good general order.

As the city continues to change and develop, Colmore BID has, through its Business Matters Group, revitalised the City Centre Strategic Board which brings together senior Officers and Politicians from Birmingham City Council, key representatives from West Midlands Police and West Midlands Fire Service and the five city centre BIDs. The aim of the group is to bring a strategic approach to place making across the city centre.

The group has also contributed to the review of the HS2 project, writing a submission inviting central government to be bold and to honour its commitments to the Midlands and the North.

SAFE & SOUND

A highly-visible presence on the streets of the District

SECURITY SERVICE INCREASES HOURS OF OPERATION

As the challenge of keeping a city safe has increased, Colmore BID has upped the ante in the first year of its new term in order to help keep the District safe and secure.

The BID continues to run its personal safety workshops every month; a free to attend, two-hour session with an internationally renowned martial artist and personal safety expert. We also continue to work closely with West Midlands Police; a commitment embodied by our attached PCSOs. Our Ambassador service continues to help keep businesses up to date with the latest activity in the area, whether that's news on events or potential business disruption. The service also helps to tackle all of the little things that can have an impact on your experience in the District, whether that's broken paving slabs, dirty streets or abandoned street furniture.

The most visible change, however, has been the expansion of our on-street Security Service. The team has been expanded from two members of staff to five and the hours of operation have extended from 8.30am – 4.30pm to 7.00am – 8.00pm. It has been an aspiration of the BID to extend the hours to provide a service which covers rush hour peaks as well as the handover into the evening; a larger team allows us to do this. And the need for a greater presence is demonstrated by the data collected; in the last calendar year, the team reported almost 3,500 separate incidents in the District, covering activity from rough sleeping and anti-social behaviour, right through to armed robbery. Read our interview with John-Jo Von Johnson, our Street Operations Manager, to find out about how the team approaches their work.

In 2019, Paul Street joined the team. As an ex-police officer, he has brought with him a wealth of knowledge and experience in



3,500 incidents reported

7am-8pm support



partnership working to improve community safety. Paul has revitalised the Colmore Security Network, bringing a range of important safety-related topics to a bigger audience. As well as continuing to deliver on regular topics such as counter-terrorism, Paul has sourced more specialist expert advice for local businesses.

As Colmore Business District's night-time offer continues to diversify, our Pubwatch scheme has been expanded into the Colmore Licensing Network, bringing together a broader range of businesses, including coffee shops and hotels. Similar to the Security Network a new wide range of speakers are talking to businesses, such as the Bank of England (who spoke on the introduction of the new £20 note), and bold new topics are being discussed. As a result of this, the group is leading the city-wide conversation on how to tackle modern-day slavery; a topic relevant for a range of industries.

Over the next 12 months, work will continue to develop the policy side of this workstream further, as well as further expanding the size of the team. We will also continue to work in partnership with public sector partners and local businesses to prevent, tackle and reduce homelessness.





'We're having a positive impact but there's still more to do'

Due to the nature of what we do in the Security Service, people often want to talk to me about homelessness; what are the causes? What can we do to help? What is the role of Colmore BID?

I'm really proud of the approach that we are taking to tackling homelessness. It's easy to take the view that if you simply move a rough sleeper the problem is solved, but we all know that, just because you can't see the problem, doesn't mean it's not there. We take the time to get to know the people in our area, and we also get to know the services that are there to support them. We always offer support, whether that's with housing, benefits or harm reduction measures such as rehab services. We regularly patrol with outreach workers so that people know that, first and foremost, we are here to help.

Sometimes, a person doesn't want help at the time that we see them. It can be difficult to strike the balance between providing help and support and providing the response that businesses often need from us, however, even when working with partners like the Police, we also support people to find a way out of the circumstances they find themselves in.

We link in with partners such as Birmingham City Council, West Midlands Police, support services and other BIDs to provide a co-ordinated response to anti-social behaviour in the city centre. Tackling this can be a lengthy process, but it's worth doing properly. We're having a positive impact, especially at hot-spots like Old Square, but there's still plenty more to do!

John-Jo Von Johnson,
Street Operations Manager



PR and magazines to take care of the BID brand

PLUS SUPPORT FOR HIGH-PROFILE CULTURAL EVENTS

➤ Caring for the brand of Colmore Business District is the guiding principle of the Place Marketing Working Group. Starting with our BID 3 Business Plan, we have slowly been updating our internal branding to be a bold, visible presence in the District. We are also increasing our brand visibility in very practical ways by making branded items available to guests who attend events.

Our successful Colmore Life magazine continues to be written and distributed to businesses three times a year, and we have continued to grow the brand identity of Colmore Business District in local media, who have picked up a number of stories online and in print, especially around schemes such as the Livery Street Artwork project.

The BID also ran a successful Christmas campaign to support our increasing hospitality sector which not only focused on driving interest into January, but also highlighted the work that SIFA Fireside

does for those that are homeless and raised awareness of Change into Action; an alternative giving scheme which people can donate to which helps move people away from living on the street.

This year, Colmore BID sponsored the internationally acclaimed Home of Metal exhibition as it returned to BMAG. The exhibition focused on Black Sabbath, one of the most influential bands in the world and one of the city's biggest musical exports.

As well as sponsoring the exhibition, Colmore BID ran a series of metal-themed film showings, culminating with the modern classic, Bohemian Rhapsody, at the Banqueting Suite of the Council House. We also commissioned a series of themed floral features to celebrate the exhibition.

This year we have continued to bring history out of museums and into the District, commissioning a successful series of heritage tours. These tours, run by BID consultants Mike Mounfield and Philip Singleton, and

Leading the debate about city's freight challenges

The management of freight has been a focus of our activity for a couple of years as we painstakingly built partnerships between two large logistics firms and Birmingham City Council. Despite good progress being made, both firms are at more advanced points in their negotiations with the public sector in other areas and have chosen to pilot these projects in those areas.

We will continue to maintain an open

KEEPING YOU MOVING ON FOOT AND BY ROAD

dialogue with partners on this topic should any future opportunities present themselves.

The Interconnect way-finding project was a big success story of our first eight years with the map totems becoming

ACCESSIBLE & CONNECTED



COMMUNITY BUILDING

@ColmoreBID in ColmoreBID



local history enthusiast Richard Trengrouse have again proved to be popular.

We have also taken the opportunity to celebrate! The Birmingham International Jazz and Blues Festival returned to the District, with performances hosted in Church Street Square and the Cathedral grounds.

We partnered with Flatpack for their Christmas showing of White Christmas in Birmingham Cathedral, as part of their Not So Silent Night programme. We also saw in the Year of the Rat, working with the Chinese Festival Committee to host our biggest set of lion dances so far!

Over the course of the next 12 months, we will continue to develop and grow the brand of Colmore Business District. We will do this by continuing to deliver engaging events, and exploring innovative new partnerships, as well as developing good local PR networks to help us tell the story of #Colmorelife

WELLBEING AND CHARITABLE THINKING

Community Building offers businesses the opportunity to access a range of events with the aim of connecting our networks, improving employee wellbeing and creating fun ways to raise money for our nominated charity or to support charities within the District.

Community Building splits its work into three areas. These are:

WELLBEING

With over 50 free wellbeing events 2020 has seen the first Colmore BID Wellbeing Fortnight. We had a variety of fitness workshops and seminars from Boxersize and Hypnotism to Nutrition at work and tips for better sleep.

COMMUNITY AND NETWORKING

We have recently launched a new initiative, Open your Doors to the District. This gives businesses in the area the opportunity to open up an event they are putting on or



put on an event to showcase their services and invite the rest of the District to attend. We hosted our ever popular Community Games in Victoria Square where nearly 60 people came to compete in sporting activities to be named District champions!

CHARITY

We have continued to put on events to raise money for our nominated charity, SIFA Fireside. We will continue to support SIFA throughout 2020 but we are developing ways that we can support the charities within the Colmore BID.

'It's a great way to meet contacts'

I'm really excited to be involved in launching Open your Doors to the District. We have a fantastic business community that is well networked but it can still be difficult sometimes to meet people in other industries, or even our own! The beauty of this project is its simplicity. Many of us already do events, whether that's wellbeing for our staff or Industry specific / thought leadership events. We want, through this project, to encourage our neighbours to invite others to join them. It's a great way to meet new contacts and show your business at its best.

Hays have taken the first step – opening out the launch of their National Salary Review to anyone who wants to attend, whether you're an HR or recruitment professional, or just have an interest.

If you think you have an event that you want to open out to the District, contact the BID office by email: info@colmorebid.co.uk

**Richard Guy, Simkiss Guy,
Chair of the Community
Building Working Group**

a familiar sight across the city centre. Our funding ignited the project and our enthusiasm and support drove it forward, however, there has been a question mark over the ongoing maintenance. Colmore BID has led the push to sort out mechanisms for map updates, totem maintenance and new totems. This should make it easier for Birmingham to maintain its world-class way-finding system that Colmore BID helped to bring about in the first place.

High-speed broadband is no longer a luxury for modern businesses, but in a District like ours with a lot of older commercial spaces it can be challenging to get the speeds needed. Colmore BID has tried hard to increase the threshold

speed of business broadband by exploring a range of potential funding options with Openreach. For full-fibre we did this by trying to get businesses interested in the Government's 'Gigabit' voucher scheme. When that failed to get much response we looked at the BID meeting the 'gap cost' itself. This option was less expensive but still left nearly half of commercial premises without any improvement. Colmore BID's Board concluded neither option offered good value for money. We will now consider upgrading specific cabinets to get optimum 'bang for our buck' during this BID term.

Clean air continues to be a hot topic



New cycle schemes



Clean air projects

across society, locally, nationally and globally. The BID joined forces with a range of partners for its Clean Air Day event, with stalls set up from 11am to 3pm in the public square at Birmingham Cathedral.

Colmore BID is supportive of active travel modes generally, including cycling. Cycling Works for Birmingham is a group of organisations calling for sustained cycling infrastructure investment across Birmingham. These organisations also actively encourage and support cycling as a sustainable means of transport.

Colmore BID is supporting Cycling Works and would encourage businesses to join.

Spaces and squares to create a Business District of the future

BID DELIVERING NEW PUBLIC REALM AND ART INSTALLATIONS

➤ Colmore BID stands out from most BIDs in the UK in that we try to improve the public realm by working with partners, and sometimes alone, to deliver better spaces for people to work in, walk through and dwell. Snow Hill public realm programme has been a long journey through BID 2 and is finally reaching fruition in this BID term. The project to improve the publicly-owned area outside Snow Hill Station begins in April and should last until February 2021. The radical improvement to Cornwall Street (between Newhall Street and New Market Street) should begin in August with completion a year later. Plans to create a new square at the top of Steelhouse Lane proceed apace.

Colmore Square was a public realm project we did alone and we've worked continually to add a public art element to round off the work. This has developed into a digital screen art installation that we propose to locate at the western end of Colmore Square. This piece will mean that we don't have to spend lots of money on the temporary infrastructure for our ever-popular outdoor photography exhibitions, with the added bonus that we will be able to have more exhibitions and work with guest curators and arts organisations to produce exciting photography and videography shows.

The mural on Livery Street wall that artist George Benson produced in 2013 is showing its age and we recently held a competition to choose its replacement.



New art to brighten Livery St



'Green masterplan' project



Photography and video exhibitions



Luke Thrush and Anna Davies were chosen to complete the new artwork on Livery Street

Work on the new piece, with the theme of 'Green in the City' should start in late March, weather permitting.

The role of greening in cities has been foregrounded in recent times; just because urban areas have lots of concrete, steel and brick doesn't mean they can't have green lungs and associated biodiversity. To that end we are working with an intern from the University of Birmingham to produce the research base for a 'green masterplan'.

The greening agenda is our motivation for trying to make it much easier to get 'parklets' installed in appropriate locations across the District. These mini-oases of greenery offer a respite from the monochrome of the city and we are working with Birmingham City Council (BCC) to create some in Colmore BID.

From the macro to the micro: Waterloo

Passage will be unknown to many people, but if your business backs on to it from Colmore Row or Waterloo Street you'd be aware of the appalling state that it got into in recent years. Colmore BID worked with business owners and cleansing services to make a drastic difference in dealing with this hard-to-solve problem.

We like to think our Snow Hill Public Realm programme inspired BCC to develop a programme of their own, timed so that much of the work would be done in time for the Commonwealth Games in 2022. We are broadly supportive of the aims to improve the physical environment and replace the ugly anti-terrorism barriers with something that will protect, but also beautify, our city. Along with Retail BID we are working with BCC to represent the views and needs of businesses affected by the proposals.

LEISURE & HOSPITALITY

 @ColmoreBID
  ColmoreBID


Food, glorious food for 30,000 festival visitors

POPULAR EVENT TO CELEBRATE ITS 10TH YEAR

Leisure and Hospitality is the newest Working Group at Colmore BID. This group focuses on projects that make the most of a sector that consists of around 70 venues, ranging from Michelin-starred restaurants to coffee shops to hotels to our retail offering to hair salons.

The group's aim is to promote and showcase these venues. This can be with marketing campaigns and events.

Leisure and Hospitality is responsible for Colmore BID's flagship event, Colmore Food Festival. Last year's festival, sponsored by DWF, saw the event mark its 9th year. The festival attracts over 30,000 visitors every year. Trading is limited exclusively to venues within Colmore Businesses District,

which means that the businesses are all a matter of minutes from the festival, all year round. The event remains one of the biggest, free-to-attend food festivals in the UK, and our ethos of capping prices at £4 per plate means you can really eat your way around the District! Last year, we continued to work with First Mile to reduce the environmental impact of the festival, recycling the bulk of the waste created and cutting down on the use of single use plastics.

This year's festival is taking place on Friday 3 and Saturday 4 July. Due to the refurbishment of Victoria Square, the festival will be relocating to Centenary Square. We're looking forward to making some changes to the festival to make our 10th year a really special one!

'A festival that is a real celebration'

This year will be the second Colmore Food Festival that I have delivered and I'm already excited! Ten years is a major milestone for the event, so I'm looking forward to making it a festival that is a real celebration!

There's a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes to make sure you have a fantastic experience on the day, whether that's the marketing, the logistics, working with our traders or sourcing the entertainment, and that challenge will be tougher this year as we move to an all new location. However, I've got a few ideas up my sleeve that I think will make the two-day event really special.

As ever, we'll have our mix of regulars and new businesses; it's a great way to try that place you haven't had a chance to get to yet. I'm going to try and order in the weather as well – no promises!

We know that Friday is a great opportunity for people to relax and network with colleagues from across the District. Put the afternoon of Friday 3 July in your diaries to do some team building! And be sure to bring the family back in on Saturday to enjoy our more family focused festival – I'll see you there.

Katy Paddock,
Events Manager

COLMORE
Food Festival





TEN FOR 2020

1

In BID 1, we took an unloved part of the wall adjoining Snow Hill Station, and commissioned a piece of street art to enliven the space. That artwork is now starting to show its age and will be replaced by a brand new piece of art with the theme of 'Green in the City'.

2

Work is set to begin on our ambitious Snow Hill Public Realm project. The public space outside Snow Hill Station will receive a facelift to improve the experience of arriving in the District at this key entrance point.

3

This year will see the return of the internationally acclaimed Flatpack Film Festival to the District. We're working with the team behind the festival to put together a thought provoking programme of films for people to enjoy.

4

Colmore BID will be sponsoring a float for 2020's Pride March. If you work in a business and want to march with us, keep an eye on our social channels on how you can get involved.

5

Colmore Food Festival celebrates its 10th birthday! Join us on 3 and 4 July 2020 in the newly launched Centenary Square. We're planning a few special things to mark this milestone of an event that has become a key part of the city's food diary.



6

We will be working with businesses, the WMCA and partners to encourage businesses to tackle, reduce and prevent homelessness using the Designing Out Homelessness Toolkit.

7

Our security team has already made its presence felt in the District, increasing perception of safety and working to reduce the impact of homelessness. We recognise the importance of this service and will be bolstering this even further in 2020.

8

Do you know the story of the area's two great historical families? We'll be working with Stan's Cafe to bring an innovative and immersive theatre experience which will help you explore the scandalous past of the District during Heritage Week!

9

As issues develop and emerge that have an impact on business resilience, we will continue to be bold in supporting business to tackle these concerns and leading the city to make it safer for business to operate in.

10

Colmore Business District is the heart of professional services in the city. We will be creating a greening strategy to help the District become the lungs of the city as well, with an aim to improve the air quality for those who work and visit.

BUDGET

Financial report from
01/04/2019-31/12/2019

Income

Bid Levy
Other

Total Income**£'000**

832
1

833**Expenditure**

Outstanding places	128
Accessible & Connected Place Marketing	10 41
Safe & Sound	144
Business Matters	52
Leisure & Hospitality	106
Community Building	41
Support Services	162

Total Expenditure**684**

Brought Forward	856
Reserves Carried Forward	1,138

For a copy of our last set of audited accounts, please contact the BID Office.





The BID's Alex Tross, Nicola Fleet-Milne, Michele Wilby, John-Jo Von Johnson and Paul Fielding



2nd Floor, 37a Waterloo Street, Birmingham B2 5TJ
Email: info@colmorebid.co.uk
Tel: 0121 212 1410

