



Grand Union Business Improvement District

Business Improvement District Proposal

The Paddington area has undergone significant change over the past 25 years, with more than 20 major development schemes completed across 80 acres. This successful transformation has attracted many of the world's leading corporate occupiers to the district, making Paddington London's fastest-growing business area. Although there is still much development in the pipeline, many estates are now mature and focusing on long-term sustainability and placemaking.

The Grand Union BID represents an opportunity to create a permanent, sustainable forum to optimise Paddington's potential as both a leading business community and a destination for visitors.

What is a BID?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a statutory designation; a defined area where local businesses invest collectively to deliver a suite of projects, activities and services set out in a formal business plan.

BIDs are business-led organisations funded by a mandatory levy on all eligible businesses following a successful ballot. A levy is charged in addition to the business rates bill and is used to provide ringfenced funding for projects that benefit the local business community, its staff, customers, clients and guests.

BIDs develop and implement projects that provide additional or improved services, deliver new initiatives, and help businesses realise their full potential. These projects can range from public realm improvements and marketing campaigns to sustainability initiatives and ESG programmes. The aim is to create a better environment for businesses to operate, improving staff and tenant retention, attracting prospective occupiers, and enhancing employee wellbeing.

The BID Proposer

The Grand Union BID is proposed by The Paddington Partnership, a voluntary membership organisation already comprising some of the biggest landowners and companies in the UK. The Partnership has, for the last 25 years, delivered a range of projects and services to regenerate, promote and connect.

The success and growing demand for these programmes demonstrates the desire for expansion under a formal BID structure, which would provide the necessary resources and strategic planning to scale and enhance activity. The Paddington Partnership will essentially be replaced by the Grand Union BID.

Social value and volunteering opportunities have fostered a strong sense of community,

enhancing business reputations. Public realm interventions right across Paddington have tackled severance and kickstarted a wider placemaking approach. The waterspace has been activated with leisure boats. Over 80 acres of brownfield land has been turned into a thriving new business and residential community, opening up public access to the Grand Union Canal for the first time in its 200-year history.

Shifting to a BID-based model will enable businesses to benefit from a joined-up package of improvements to support employee satisfaction and retention, attract people back to the office and ensure Paddington remains a leading business destination, equipping the district to meet evolving tenant expectations and form a successful commercial ecosystem.

What will the initial priorities for the BID be? What can be achieved over the course of its term?

We want to hear from local businesses to understand your priorities for Paddington, and how you think these should be delivered under our four themes of regenerate, connect, promote and represent. This will inform our business plan for the Grand Union BID, which will be finalised at the end of the year.

How will Grand Union BID work with other BIDs?

Grand Union BID will work closely with neighbouring BIDs Marble Arch London (to the east) and PaddingtonNow (to the south) to combine efforts on shared priorities. There is already an informal association of Westminster's BIDs, and Grand Union BID will join these to ensure that your concerns can be amplified at a London-wide and national level.

The BID Area

The Grand Union BID will cover the northern part of the Paddington Opportunity Area, as defined in the Westminster City Plan and the Mayor's London Plan, and includes Paddington Station and the Grand Union Canal to Little Venice. The BID will be coterminous with PaddingtonNow BID (established by the Paddington Partnership back in 2005) which covers the older, southern section of Paddington.



Grand Union Business Improvement District

Key benefits



Regenerate

Paddington’s working environment is second to none, with a network of well-developed pedestrian canalside routes, stunning new public spaces and an idyllic waterside setting. There are however challenges outside the new estate resulting from the absence of a single area-wide masterplan, multiple landowners and severance caused by the railway, the canal and the Westway.

The BID will attract funding to support the delivery of a single integrated public realm vision for Paddington, promoting greater step-free movement, improved legibility and active travel – curating long-term placemaking for Paddington.



Creating attractive well-maintained spaces that encourage people to spend time in Paddington, for work and pleasure. Putting active travel and pedestrians front and centre, promoting cycling and walking for people who work and live here.



Addressing severance and multiple levels at Paddington Station, with improved signage and wayfinding. Improving connections to Paddington mainline and Elizabeth line stations, reducing confusion, promoting an accessible, navigable hub and cohesive environment.



Delivering public realm improvements to critical walking routes to and from the Grand Union BID area including the Bays corridor, between Paddington Square, Merchant Square, Paddington Central and Bishop’s Bridge.



Playing a central role in the development and implementation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Paddington, that lays the framework for future development. This will meet the needs of businesses, residents and visitors in shaping a comprehensive and inclusive vision for Paddington’s future.

Connect

The Partnership’s social value work is well-established, with a respected and successful corporate volunteering programme that has been operating for 20 years. Over 9,300 volunteering hours were given from 36 Paddington companies in 2023, supporting 38 charities, schools and community groups. Under the BID framework this activity will be stepped up and extended to making connections between businesses as well as between business and community. Increasingly staff want to work for companies with strong ESG, CSR and sustainability credentials. The BID will help deliver in these key areas for our members.

The ambition is to create meaningful partnerships which add real value to the local community, connecting with surrounding neighbourhoods to support communities with high levels of deprivation, isolation and low education outcomes.



Supporting existing volunteering programmes and introducing new initiatives to foster greater community engagement and social value. This will help businesses meet their Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) targets and strengthen community ties.



Running corporate volunteer programmes in schools to help young people access work and higher education. This will bridge the gap between education and employment, fostering skills among the next generation and raising local outcomes through themed clubs, CV workshops, mock interviews, careers talks, workplace visits and mentoring programmes – providing local young people with vital skills and insights.



Continuing to run our successful Maths and Readers groups of corporate volunteers in primary schools and launching themed clubs in secondary schools supported by sector specific volunteers around the life sciences, AI, digital and tech sectors.



Bringing together teams of volunteers to undertake improvement projects at local schools and community premises. Championing the working environment by protecting the valuable waterspace through our popular canal clean-ups.



Establishing a Community Fund to support school and charity partners via a small grants programme.



Fostering collaboration and creating new thematic networks between businesses, such as ESG and sustainability networks, to build stronger relationships across the various Paddington estates.



Developing a corporate wellbeing series, offering bespoke services to people who work in Paddington, promoting employee satisfaction and retention.

Promote

Multiple estates, bodies and schemes across Paddington make it challenging for people who visit, live and work in the area to see and access all that Paddington has to offer. The BID will create a simplified identity for the locality, promoting the area as a desirable destination for work, socialising and networking.



Working with estate teams to amplify events programmes across Paddington and beyond to the surrounding community.



Building dedicated channels for area news, offers and amenities across Paddington, enabling all people who live and work in the area to benefit from everything Paddington has to offer in a single location.



Celebrating Paddington’s strongest assets – including heritage, the waterspace and public art – by creating dedicated digital trails, and offering guided walks to members for staff, customers, guests and clients.



Creating a unified central digital asset library, including bespoke maps for staff, clients and visitors, for members to showcase their businesses and the location.



Positioning Paddington as one of London’s best connected and fastest growing commercial hubs.

Represent

The statutory designation that a BID area creates will enable Paddington’s business community to form a cohesive voice. As a formal vehicle representing business interests, the Grand Union BID can continue to deliver for London’s fastest-growing business community, securing ringfenced funding that will be re-invested in Paddington.



Ensuring businesses are formally represented in statutory consultations, gathering input from members to shape responses, and lobbying on issues of common concern. This unified approach will strengthen the community’s influence in decision-making processes, ensuring that the needs and concerns of businesses are effectively communicated and addressed.



Holding a wealth of knowledge, data and insights on issues important to our business community, such as air quality and sustainability, to help members grow and flourish in Paddington.



Speaking up for Paddington with Westminster Council, the Mayor of London and national government.



Joining forces with the wider local and national BID sector to lobby on business priorities and investment in Paddington.



Creating new formal partnerships with statutory/charity bodies like Network Rail, Transport for London, and the Canal & River Trust to enhance the working environment in Paddington.

What BIDs can achieve

Across London there are more than 70 BIDs, with over ten in Westminster already and five in the City of London. BIDs vary in size and scope, being able to deliver impressive change and representing thousands of businesses.

Some of the highest profile BID-led achievements in London include the pedestrianisation of Strand/Aldwych, the transformation of Hanover Square, the Camden Highline and the Bankside Lowline, the Bond Street facelift, London Bridge’s Net Zero Business District and of course the Oxford Street Christmas Lights.



Governance

The BID framework is democratic, allowing businesses to contribute to and benefit from its initiatives.

BID member businesses will be able to shape the work of the BID, its priorities and oversee the proposed Community Fund through a new Occupier Board drawn from all buildings and estates in Paddington.



The BID Levy and Cap

We expect the BID to raise in the region of £700,000 annually from the BID levy, with no business paying more than £35,000 in the first year, thereafter, rising with a small inflationary increase. Property owner contributions will continue to be made on top of this. Whereas business rates are 54.6p in the pound and are distributed nationally, the BID levy will be 1.2p (0.6p for hotels) in the pound and ring-fenced to Paddington.

BID status will enable the Grand Union BID to lever additional funding to Paddington, attracting resources The Paddington Partnership was previously ineligible for.



Timetable

The BID will commence mid-June 2025, subject to a successful ballot over May and June. If successful, the BID will continue before businesses are asked to vote again on a new proposal.

May/June 2025	Mid June 2025	June 2025 – March 2030
BID ballot	BID to commence, subject to a successful ballot	Duration of BID



Email at:
info@thisispaddington.com

For more information on the
Paddington Partnership, please visit
thisispaddington.com

Scan the **QR code** opposite to
find out more.



Grand Union BID
Shaping Paddington's Future Together