

St. James's Occupier BID : Ballot

Statement of Consultation - Occupiers

Background

For 20 years, Heart of London Business Alliance (HOLBA) has been the catalyst for positive change in London's West End. HOLBA is focused on securing the long-term commercial and cultural well-being of the area. Through area promotion, business support and advocacy we champion our members' interests and ensure the West End remains truly world-class.

The HOLBA area currently embraces three districts and has an excellent track record of delivery since its establishment in 2005. It is highly visible and has an excellent business mandate. Business engagement is a key priority at the centre of Heart of London's entire work programme. Regular communication is undertaken with 100% of its members - keeping its membership updated as to the work of the organisation, events and activities, opportunities and threats. The organisation manages a successful and well-attended business networking programme.

The ballot for the proposed new St James's BID has been given the go ahead by the Heart of London Business Alliance (HOLBA) Board to take place in February/March 2025.

Stakeholder Engagement

- St. James's Neighbourhood Forum – HOLBA has been part of the steering group since 2020, working on and feeding into the Neighbourhood Plan. The Chair of Neighbourhood Forum is supportive towards the proposed St James's BID.
- St. James's Conservation Trust – HOLBA undertakes regular meetings with the Trust who are supportive of the proposed St James's BID. HOLBA assisted the organisation of the St. James's Garden Party in June 2023.
- St. James's Church – HOLBA have been engaged with the Church for over 10 years. Rev. Winkett has voiced her support of the proposed St James's BID.
- Mayfair and St. James's Ward Panel – HOLBA have attended the Ward Panel for over 10 years. Members are in support of the proposed St James's BID.

Business Engagement (September 2022 – January 2025)

An occupier consultation programme, which commenced in the Autumn of 2022, has helped understand whether there is a desire to establish a BID in St James's and identify priorities and themes moving forward; these appear in the St James's BID Proposal.

- Since 2022 all constituents have been given the opportunity to meet to discuss the BID proposal, a total of c200 businesses.

- In July 2023, 100% of occupiers were sent an introduction letter and have been offered a meeting to discuss the opportunity for a St James's BID.
- HOLBA has undertaken a total of 332 engagement meetings and 141 voter meetings with St. James's constituents.
- In addition HOLBA has engaged with constituents via phone calls and emails 1,167 times and attempted a further 1,023 interactions.
- An electronic version of the BID Proposal was sent to all occupiers who have provided contact details in October 2024.
- The BID Proposal and associated documentation has been available on the HOLBA website.
- Events - we invited 183 businesses to a St. James's BID Ballot Breakfast event on 2nd October 2024.
- As of 30th January 2025, all 195 occupier hereditaments have been contacted and asked to advise of their voter contacts.
- All businesses in the ballot asked to verify their decision maker in a Westminster City Council led voter verification process.
- The majority of occupiers that have been met with have demonstrated positivity towards establishing a BID in St James's.

Ballot (February 2025 to March 2025)

- Notice of Ballot sent to finalised voter list confirmed by Westminster City Council.
- Invitation to discuss business plan given to 100% of businesses taking part in ballot.
- Ballot papers sent to 100% of voters.

The St. James's Occupier BID, pending a successful ballot, would commence 1 April 2025.