

THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION



BARBICAN CENTRE, LONDON

AIM HIGHER FEEDBACK REPORT

1st December 2022

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Main strengths of the venue

Opened in 1982 The Barbican Centre is owned, funded, and managed by the City of London Corporation and is easily accessible by rail, road and underground.

Predominantly the Barbican Centre is a performing arts venue, hosting classical and contemporary music concerts, theatre performances, film screenings and art exhibitions. It also houses a library, three restaurants, and a conservatory.

The site has a range of auditoria, rooms and spaces that can be hired for a variety of events, conferences, AGMs, photoshoots and product launches to meetings, receptions and weddings.

The Barbican has several foyer areas also available for event hire, working around the residential arts programs, and meeting spaces including the Barbican Theatre, Barbican Hall, 3 Cinemas, 2 Auditoriums, Frobisher Boardroom, 6 flexible meeting rooms that can be made into 2 large meeting spaces and The Conservatory and Conservatory Terrace and Garden Room.

Searcy's Contract Catering have delivered all the Food and Beverage provision across the site for 20 years, and their operations team are based in the events sale's office ensuring good communication with the sales team.

Throughout the venue sustainability is practiced wherever possible in line with City of London Policies, several sustainability awards have been gained and retained for their sustainable activities and approaches. The venue aims to be Net Zero on scope 1 & 2 by 2027 and on Scope 3 by 2035. A decarbonization scheme costing £3m and lighting efficiencies is being rolled out across the venue.

Over lockdown no one was furloughed, a swift transition to working from home enabled the team to work on updating materials, SOP's, risk assessments for the whole site and working across teams. This has created greater cohesion and understanding of each department's workings.

Since the last assessment many projects were completed, the covid lockdown time enabled areas requiring work to be carried out when there was no public access, this worked in the venues favor in that there was no requirement to close areas as such to the public. The work included a new access control system throughout the venue, Cinema 1 had upgrades to its lighting, wall coverings, carpets, chair upholstery. Carpeting and lighting on the lower ground floor is scheduled to take place, along with the goods lift for the concert hall is being worked on at the end of December 2022, the catering lift A will be worked on December 22/23. The Garden room window glass will be replaced on the lakeside for acoustic and aesthetic purposes in February 2023. The Garden room floor was re-furbished in November 2022.

The Auditorium one project costing @£500k includes a new seating rig, improved accessibility, new carpeting, full wi-fi upgrade, heating improvements.

The Fire Safety project costing @£3.5m will cover the whole site, covering fire door replacement, door springs, gapping and strips. Alarms were upgraded during the previous period.

Post Covid growth target was £3.32M, Actual £3.3m with contract on the books looking at £3.5m to March 2023 showing strong performance across M&E.

The Barbican renewal project has a £2.5m budget for ideas across spaces to bring the building up to standard for the next 40 years. This will become an 8/10 year project with £50/150m being spent to achieve what is required.

Business Events Awards since previous visit:

Bronze – Best Event Venue – Over 750 Attendees	London Venue Awards	2022
Bronze - The Sustainability Award (venue & catering)	London Venue Awards	2022
Bronze - Sustainable Venue Award	Conference & Events Award	2022
Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Award	London Tourism Awards 2022	2022
Best CSR or Sustainability Initiative	London Venue Awards	2021

Commonly agreed weaknesses of the venue

Structural repairs to the glass stairwells could potentially cause some disruption to the flow of visitors in those areas, and the up grading of facilities will need to be carefully managed to reduce the impact on M&E as well as Barbican residents.

Weaknesses

Main areas of discrepancies between the venues self-assessment and assessors report

No discrepancies were found.



Further evidence required within 3 months

All required evidence seen.

Evidence

Recommendations for Development / Improvement

Continue to seek ideas for improvements to the venue environment from all users, including residents, performing arts stakeholders and M&E users to ensure the new "vision" is fit for purpose.

Notes

Staff and management have clear and transparent reporting and feedback procedures highlighting trends and continuous improvements in quality and profits. This should be continued as it was evident this information enabled the sales team to identify areas for growth and operations where to improve standards.

Clear evidence was shown to support a continuous training and review culture within the M&E department and good chains of communication between departments are established which ensure the best outcome for the clients.

All staff information and forms are available on Artifacts, the City of London on-line Portal – DP, Fire, Holiday, Risk assessments, Policies and procedures, and training through 'City Learning'

Staff were approachable and clearly happy in their roles with a clear understanding of the customer needs and where necessary how to suggest changes with facilities the offer available to clients. A strong loyalty was evident amongst the team to the purpose and values of the Barbican.

The venue is outstanding as it continues to improve the quality of its provision to clients, with substantial investment to all areas of maintenance and upgrading being made. This has given the opportunity to make the whole venue embrace the changes required to ensure it is sustainable and has longevity.

Scoring

Minimum Scoring					
	Silver Deployment		Gold Results		Notes
Meetings Code	All 10 MIA Code requirements must be adhered to	✓	All 10 MIA Code requirements must be adhered to	✓	
Legal Requirements	All 10 legal requirements must be complied with by law	/10	All 10 legal requirements must be complied with by law	10 /10	
Criteria Met	Three out of five in every section is ticked 'Yes' for Criteria Met	/10 sections / 50 criteria	Three out of five in every section is ticked 'Yes' for Criteria Met	10 /10 sections 50 /50 criteria	
Deployment	Three out of five criteria in each section must score at least Grade 2	/10 sections / 50 criteria	Three out of five criteria in each section must score at least Grade 3	10 /10 sections 50 /50 criteria	
	80% score overall i.e. minimum score of 120 out of 150	/150	80% score overall i.e. minimum score of 120 out of 150	143/150	95%
Results	n/a		Three out of five criteria in each section must score at least Grade 3	10 /10 sections 45 /50 criteria	
			80% score overall i.e. minimum score of 120/150 (180 out of 225 on old requirements)	145/150	96%
Venue Facilities	A minimum of 60% facilities grading must be achieved	/100		90 /100	
Accreditation Level Recommended					GOLD

Business Name: Barbican Centre Eloise Freeman Event Manager- Business Events	
Assessor name: Suzanne Weekes	Assessor signature: <i>Suzanne Weekes</i>
Date of assessment: 1st December 2022	Report date: 20th December 2023



meetings industry association

Portland House, 1 Coventry Road
Market Harborough, Leics. LE16 9BX

T : 0345 230 5508

F : 0845 230 5508

www.mia-uk.org

Jackie Boughton
Head of Sales Business Events
Barbican Centre
Corporate Sales
Silk Street
LONDON
EC2Y 8DS

10 January 2023

Dear Jackie

mia AIM Higher-Gold Accreditation

I am delighted to inform you that your venue has achieved AIM accreditation at Gold level, may I offer you my congratulations. AIM Gold accreditation is the mia's highest accolade and achievement of this level sends a positive signal to potential clients that superior service levels have been achieved.

I have the greatest of pleasure in enclosing your AIM Gold certificate which I hope you will display in a public area with pride to promote your achievement in gaining AIM Gold accreditation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'K MacNeil'.

Chief Executive

