



CITY BRIDGE  
FOUNDATION

**BRIDGING LONDON STRATEGY  
2020 – 2045**



## FOREWORD

We first published the *Bridging London* strategy in 2020, outlining the impact we aim to achieve as a charity over a 25-year period and providing a framework for all our activities.

In the past four years there has been a considerable amount of change, both for the charity itself, and for the world we all live in, prompting us to update this strategy ahead of schedule.

One change you will notice is our new brand – City Bridge Foundation – launched in September 2023. We have adopted a new working name ‘City Bridge Foundation’ across the whole of our activities. This brings together our dual roles - of maintaining and supporting five Thames bridges, and as London’s largest independent charitable funder – under one recognisable brand with a new look, feel and visual identity.

So, while some of the language may have changed, our goals remain the same. We have always existed, and continue to exist, for the benefit of London and Londoners.

Our *Bridging London* strategy sets a clear and ambitious vision for a connected capital, which we will deliver by maintaining and promoting world-class bridges, developing and delivering world-class charitable funding, and embedding and encouraging world-class responsible business practices. Our cross-cutting strategic ambitions of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Climate Action will be fundamental to everything we do.

We have also developed a new shared set of values for the charity. They will guide us in everything we do and inform how we work – both internally with each other and externally with our peers and wider networks. We commit to sharing transparently how we live up to these values and we encourage you to hold us accountable to them.

We know we can’t deliver the change we want to see alone. We hope that this strategy, and our commitment to making it a reality over the next 25 years, will inspire you to join us in aiming for London and Londoners to be truly connected. We look forward to working with you to deliver this vision, together.

**Giles Shilson**

Chair of the City Bridge Foundation Board (on behalf of the Board)

**David Farnsworth**

Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation

*Signed March 2024*

## **THE CITY BRIDGE FOUNDATION BOARD**

City Bridge Foundation's\* primary purpose is to maintain and support five Thames bridges; its secondary purpose, subject to meeting the needs of the bridges, is to apply surplus income for general charitable purposes for the benefit of the inhabitants of Greater London.

The City Bridge Foundation Board has day-to-day responsibility for administering City Bridge Foundation on behalf of the Trustee, the City of London Corporation. The City Corporation's principal decision-making body, the Court of Common Council, retains ultimate oversight of, and responsibility for, the City Bridge Foundation, with some aspects of the charity's governance and administration being reserved to the Court.

The City Bridge Foundation Board delegates some of its responsibilities to its two Committees – being the Investment Committee and the Funding Committee. The Investment Committee is responsible for the strategic oversight and monitoring of the performance of the charity's investment portfolio. The Funding Committee is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the funding policy, which includes grant-making and social investment activities.

### **Members of the City Bridge Foundation Board (as of March 2024)**

Giles Shilson (Chair of the Board)  
Paul Martinelli (Deputy Chair of the Board)  
Henry Colthurst  
Simon Duckworth  
Emma Edhem  
Alison Gowman  
John Griffiths  
Campbell Middleton  
Deborah Oliver  
Nighat Qureishi  
James Thomson  
Sue Threader

*\* City Bridge Foundation is the working name of 'Bridge House Estates', charity registration number 1035628.*

## WHO WE ARE

We are City Bridge Foundation.

Around 900 years ago, a group of progressive Londoners built the first stone bridge across the River Thames, London Bridge, and gave over property and funds to maintain and protect it. Since then, we've become responsible for five of London's most iconic Thames crossings (Tower, London, Southwark, Millennium and Blackfriars Bridges). Maintaining and supporting these five bridges is our primary purpose.

Today, we keep our bridges fit for purpose - connecting people, keeping the capital moving and bringing joy to those visiting the attraction at Tower Bridge.

We are always looking for ways to create a brighter future for London. The innovative thinking that catalysed the first stone river crossing drives our funding and other charitable activities. Each year we grant around £30m to local causes, alongside our partners - this being our secondary purpose. Since 1995, we have distributed over £760m of funding across Greater London.

This is all enabled by our endowment and investment strategy – ensuring we remain there for Londoners as long as needed.

The focus on London and Londoners has always been central to our work. Whilst much has changed over the centuries since we were established, we continue to reach out across the capital in many important and diverse ways, anchored in supporting the needs of London and its communities.

## INTRODUCTION

This strategy sets out our vision, intended outcomes and values - outlining our approach to achieving our ambitions over the next 25 years. We are pleased to take a long-term view with our strategy, showing our commitment to supporting London now and in the future.

We recognise the privilege of our position to act as a catalyst for positive change in London, both through exemplary delivery of our activities and through our convening and influencing role. We take this role seriously and commit to delivering our work and managing our assets in the most sustainable and responsible way possible. By placing learning and impact at the heart of all that we do, we will openly share and learn from our successes and challenges along the way.

Ultimately, this strategy outlines the positive and sustained role that we will fulfil in bridging and connecting London, for the benefit of Londoners today and for generations to come.

## OUR STRATEGY

Our vision		
For London and Londoners to be truly connected.		
Our outcomes		
We maintain and promote world-class bridges.	We develop and deliver world-class charitable funding.	We embed and encourage world-class responsible business practices.
Our cross-cutting strategic ambitions		
Our cross-cutting strategic ambitions of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Climate Action are fundamental to everything we do.		
Our values		
We stand for London and Londoners in everything we do <b>(Service)</b> We connect to learn and achieve more together <b>(Collaboration)</b> We work towards equity, diversity and inclusion for all <b>(Inclusion)</b> We embrace new ways to drive positive change <b>(Innovation)</b> We challenge ourselves to deliver the best for our communities <b>(Ambition)</b>		

### Our vision

***“For London and Londoners to be truly connected”.***

Our vision outlines the change we want to see and explains why we do what we do. We literally and metaphorically bridge London, connect its communities and invest in its future.

### Our Outcomes

Everything we do contributes towards the achievement of three outcomes:



## **Our Cross-Cutting Strategic Ambitions**

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and climate action are fundamental to everything we do whether in maintaining and supporting our bridges, in running an iconic visitor attraction, in distributing charitable funding, in managing our investments, and in our wider activities.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

Pursuing EDI harmoniously aligns with our charitable purposes – providing access to bridge crossings for everyone in London and combatting inequality and achieving social justice through our charitable funding. We believe it must be at the heart of our work.

As a public-facing charity we have a strong impetus to become a truly equitable, diverse and inclusive charity. We will invest time and resources to embed EDI within the design and delivery of all our activities. We know we will be more successful with a greater diversity of people, ideas and perspectives and we therefore need to become more reflective of our great city. Our leadership will take responsibility and accountability for our progress, but everyone at CBF has an important role to play.

We recognise that we have a way to go. As we progress, we will focus on learning and development; integrating lived and learned experience into our practices; ensuring we encourage greater diversity amongst our people and Board; holding ourselves accountable by collecting, tracking and publishing our EDI data; using our power and networks to advance EDI; and listening to and amplifying the voices of marginalised and underrepresented groups.

### **Climate Action**

We can play a pivotal role in the transition to net zero and building climate resilience, both by reducing the environmental impact of our activities and using our convening power to lead change across our sector and the capital.

We have adopted the Climate Action Strategy of our Trustee, the City of London Corporation, which commits us to net zero in our operations by 2027 and in



investments and supply chain by 2040. We are also signed up to the Funder Commitment on Climate Change, managed by the Association of Charitable Funders.

### Exploring other themes

We have identified EDI and Climate Action as cross-cutting strategic ambitions because they are fundamental to advancing our charitable purposes and are relevant to all areas of our work. In addition to these cross-cutting ambitions, we commit to exploring further themes that are relevant and important to our work, including Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM), suicide prevention, and mental health.

### Our Values

Everyone who works for the charity has an important role to play in delivering our strategy and shaping our culture. Our values set out what we expect from each other, at every level of the charity, every day. Our values demonstrate what our stakeholders can expect from us across all our work – whether they are encountering us through our bridges, our tourist attraction at Tower Bridge, our charitable funding or our investment portfolio. Our values are:

- We stand for London and Londoners in everything we do (**Service**)
- We connect to learn and achieve more together (**Collaboration**)
- We work towards equity, diversity and inclusion for all (**Inclusion**)
- We embrace new ways to drive positive change (**Innovation**)
- We challenge ourselves to deliver the best for our communities (**Ambition**)



## WHAT WE WILL DO

This section outlines the actions that we will take to achieve our outcomes. We commit to reviewing these actions on a regular basis to ensure they are bringing us closer to the impact we seek to achieve.

### **Outcome 1: We maintain and promote world-class bridges.**

*Our primary purpose is to maintain and support five of London's key bridges, ensuring they not only serve the capital now, but will continue to do so, for as long as they are needed. They form a critical part of London's transport infrastructure, help keep the capital moving and support its role as a global capital of business, culture and tourism. Maintaining and promoting world-class bridges extends beyond our duty to manage the bridges' physical infrastructure. It is also about our bridges serving as assets which can have a positive social and environmental impact for London and its communities.*

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Ensure our bridges are maintained to high industry standards by effectively managing their repair, refurbishment and replacement, as needed.
- Embed sustainability and environmental responsibility when undertaking any works on the bridges to enhance their resilience to adapt to future climate conditions.
- Promote cooperation, collaboration and shared learning with the network of national and international bridge owners and managers.
- Seek to protect the safety and security of bridge users in partnership with our stakeholders.
- Ensure that relevant teams are trained and supported in dealing with distressed persons and work with partners on developing and implementing effective measures to safeguard those who use and access our bridges.
- Develop an exemplar visitor attraction at Tower Bridge driven by social values, that excites, inspires, connects and educates everyone we reach and encounter.
- Promote, enhance and celebrate the heritage and cultural value of our bridges.

- Enable and encourage pathways into Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Maths (STEAM), especially for those from underrepresented or marginalised groups.
- Enhance the experience of people crossing our bridges, through improved inclusivity and accessibility.
- Use our bridges as a catalyst for engagement around the future of urbanism including the need for environmental responsibility and the provision of clean air and water.
- Embed a consistent approach to the use of our bridges by third parties for events, lighting and filming.
- Encourage our stakeholders to consider the impact of transport management on our bridges and the people who use them.

**Outcome 2: We develop and deliver world-class charitable funding.**

*As London's largest independent charitable funder, we want London to be a city where all individuals and communities can thrive, especially those experiencing disadvantage and marginalisation. Through our funding programmes and collaborations, we support London's civil society organisations and connect them with each other and the communities they serve.*

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Use our funding, expertise and leadership to help support the reduction of inequality in London and grow more cohesive communities for a London that serves everyone.
- Remain accountable by regularly reviewing and refining our funding offer, consulting widely with our stakeholders to ensure our funding priorities reflect the needs of London's communities.
- Recognise our power and privilege, adopting an equitable approach to our funding and integrating lived experiences into our practices.
- Identify opportunities for greater alignment between our role in maintaining and supporting the five bridges and in our funding priorities.

- Work more collaboratively with other funders, joining or leading funding initiatives that draw on our collective strengths and assets so that, together, we can tackle the issues facing London.
- Offer tailored support to our funded organisations, designed to enhance an organisation's capacity, resilience and long-term sustainability.
- Provide accessible, long-term, and flexible finance for social change through social investments, as well as providing opportunities for organisations to connect with others who can support their work.
- Create time and space to focus on impact and learning, so that we can deepen the impact of our funding and use the learning to evolve our practices.
- Build, sustain and leverage partnerships across different sectors to catalyse greater levels of giving across London.
- Contribute to contemporary debates within the charitable sector on the complex challenges facing Londoners and amplify the voices of London's communities in these discussions.
- Commit to continuous improvement, striving for greater transparency, equity and accountability in our funding practices and participate in initiatives that hold us to account.

**Outcome 3: We embed and encourage world-class responsible business practices.**

*We aim to create positive impact for and with our people, our customers, our suppliers, and our communities through our charitable activities. Through our work under this outcome area, we want to role model excellence ourselves and inspire others towards more socially and environmentally conscious practices.*

To achieve this outcome, we will:

- Align our approach with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular the four following goals which are relevant to our activities:
  - SDG 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.
  - SDG 10 – Reduce inequality within and among countries.

- SDG 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- SDG 13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact.
- Recognise our people as our most important assets to achieving our goals and strive to make City Bridge Foundation an even better place to work.
- Support and develop our people and create an equitable, diverse and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive.
- Leverage our expertise, networks, people, physical assets, and use our convening and influencing power, to achieve greater social value and impact across London.
- Responsibly manage our investment portfolio to deliver the required financial returns whilst also intentionally directing capital towards activity that is catalytic, sustainable and impact driven.
- Work with our suppliers to maximise social value, minimise environmental harm and strive to ensure the ethical treatment of people throughout our supply chains.
- Reduce our environmental harm and protect all our assets through better use of our resources and increase our positive impact through greening, advocacy and influencing.
- Keep the governance and powers of the charity under review to ensure that we operate effectively and efficiently, and in accordance with charity good governance best practice.
- Grow our learning culture across the charity and become more evidence-based and data-driven to deepen our understanding of what we are achieving, to improve our work and to transparently share our learning with others.

## CONCLUSION - DEFINING SUCCESS

We define success as furthering our charitable purposes effectively and achieving our vision *for London and Londoners to be truly connected*. We will do this by maintaining and promoting world-class bridges; developing and delivering world-class charitable funding; and embedding and encouraging world-class responsible business practices. We believe to do this well, we need to uphold and role-model our values of service, collaboration, inclusion, innovation and ambition; and pursue our cross-cutting strategic ambitions of EDI and climate action in everything we do.

We know that in an ever-changing society, we must remain responsive and relevant to the needs of London and Londoners at any given time. We will therefore keep our strategy under regular review and learn along the way. We cannot predict what the world will look like in five years, let alone in 2045, so we remain flexible to adapting our priorities as we progress through the strategy.

We will develop a detailed and clear impact framework to measure the combined impact of all our charitable activities. This will help us understand the difference we are making and learn from what's going well and what's not to take steps to better serve the people and causes we support.

Modelling our learning culture, we will share annual updates and publish more in-depth progress reviews at the end of each period. In the final year of the strategy, we will collate, reflect and publish all the learning we have gathered throughout the delivery of *Bridging London 2020 – 2045*.

We recognise that achieving our vision and outcomes will not happen overnight and will require deep collaboration with others. We look forward to sharing our progress with you as we continue to bridge and connect London.

*For further information on City Bridge Foundation, please visit [www.citybridgefoundation.org.uk](http://www.citybridgefoundation.org.uk)*