

A wooden sign with the text "I NEED THIS WILDERNESS FOR MY HEART TO BEAT" is mounted on two wooden posts. The sign is set against a background of a city street with buildings and trees. The text is cut out of the wood, allowing the background to show through.

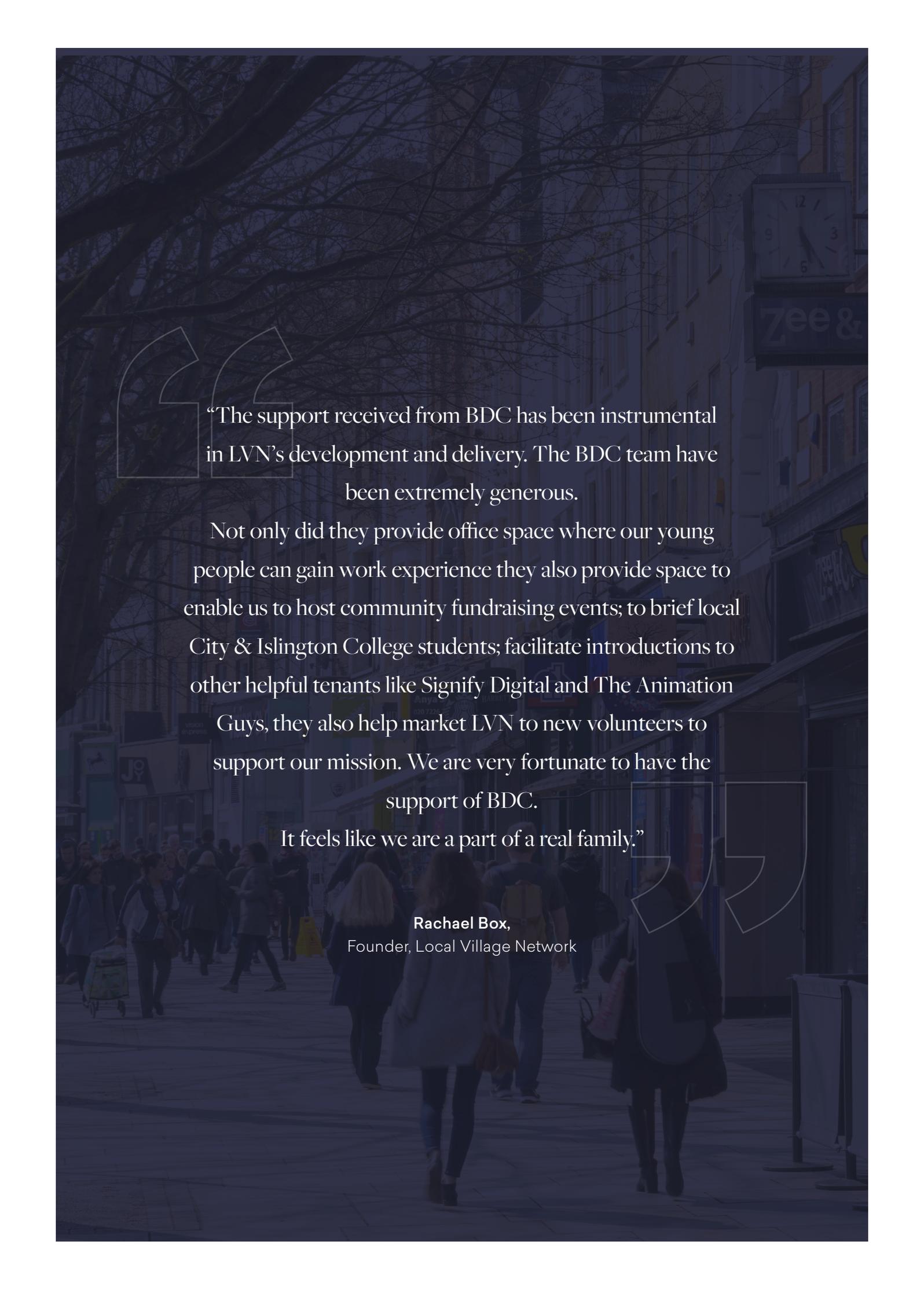
I NEED THIS WILDERNESS
FOR MY HEART TO BEAT

Being the Change.

Good business for a
better tomorrow.

businessdesigncentre.co.uk





“The support received from BDC has been instrumental in LVN’s development and delivery. The BDC team have been extremely generous.

Not only did they provide office space where our young people can gain work experience they also provide space to enable us to host community fundraising events; to brief local City & Islington College students; facilitate introductions to other helpful tenants like Signify Digital and The Animation Guys, they also help market LVN to new volunteers to support our mission. We are very fortunate to have the support of BDC.

It feels like we are a part of a real family.”

Rachael Box,
Founder, Local Village Network

Our Company

Our building, now known as the Business Design Centre, is celebrating 160 years since it was originally opened as the Royal Agricultural Hall. It's no mean feat to maintain and preserve a Grade 2 listed building, let alone bring it into the 21st century when it comes to its environmental impact, but there's more to being sustainable than just the bricks and mortar.

Through the initiatives which follow, we prioritise that which is most important; our people, our community – both locally and across the industry – and our planet. For over 35 years the Business Design Centre has created a culture, often described by others as an enviable one and we take immense pride in supporting our team to thrive, creating a place to work where they all feel at home. Since 1989 our charitable arm, the Morris Charitable Trust has been a driving force for change in the community, supporting charities and projects as well as being founders of Islington Giving, the first of its kind in London. Now with new members of the BDC team added to the existing trustees, this year has seen it go from strength to strength with much needed funding reaching a wider and more diverse range of projects. The BDC also directly supports several other partner charities that are close to its heart including The Brain Tumour Charity and Local Village Network.

Having recently celebrated 10 years as a Carbon Neutral venue, we now look to the future as we plan the journey to net zero. Our industry has an opportunity to impact an incredible number of people, welcoming them through our doors to events and so through collaboration and innovation, we need to continue to lead by example in doing what is vital and necessary to make the world a better place for future generations. We look forward to continuing this shared journey with our stakeholders and the wider industry, offering our experience and support as we come together in being the change we need to see.

Dominic Jones

Chief Executive, Business Design Centre

Our Environment

In 2020, the BDC completed ten years of commitment to remaining a Carbon Neutral venue. The vision, conceived over a decade ago, was to ensure that our businesses activities had a positive effect on the planet.

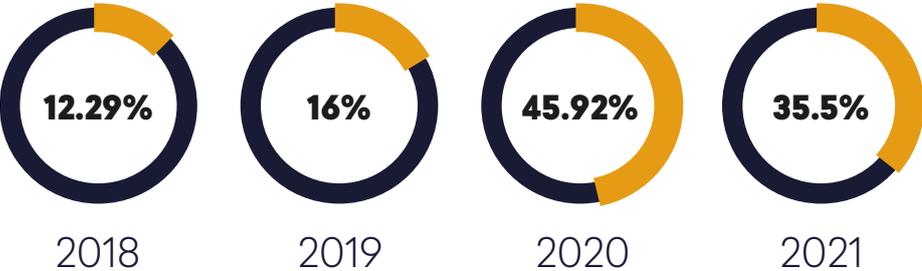
Through the Carbon Neutral Company, we were able to invest in projects around the world that both supported our offsetting needs and positively impacted the local communities. Measured against the UN's sustainable development goals, the different projects have, over the years gone on to help provide families with energy efficient cook stoves, communities with clean water and offered employment through many different jobs. This is on top of the key goals of some of these projects, which include reforestation, improving biodiversity and carbon reduction.

Since October 2019, the venue has been supplied by energy from 100% renewable resources, a key factor in directly reducing our carbon emissions as a building. This has followed many years of bringing a Grade 2 listed building up to date, with low energy lighting throughout, as well as fitting motion sensors in a key number of areas. Water waste and the removal of hand towels has been made possible through the installation of automatic Dyson Airblade taps and in 2020 all toilets were fitted with automatic flushes further improving the amount of water used.

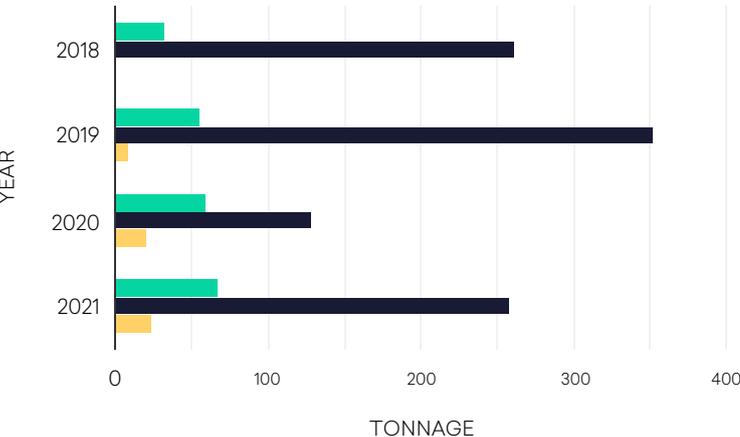
The venue is fully carpeted, meaning less waste carpet on events, and the carpet tiles that we do use are produced by Interface through their Net-Works® project. This is an innovative initiative designed to tackle the growing environmental problem of discarded fishing nets in some of the world's poorest coastal communities. Interface partnered with the Zoological Society of London to buy discarded fishing nets from some of the poorest communities in the world and the nets are then recycled into new yarn for carpet tiles by Aquafil.



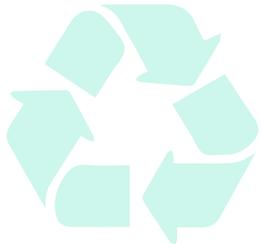
Overall Recycling Rate:



Waste generated at the venue does not end up in landfill. It is either recycled, sent to energy recovery or composted with food waste. Food and compostable waste is taken away and returned to the community by our local borough, as compost for their gardens and allotments.



■ = Rec Tonnage
■ = Waste Tonnage
■ = Food Rec Tonnage



Equivalent *days* of electricity consumption saved for one household:



We aim to reduce the amount of transport to the venue by supporting the local suppliers that are based on site. From signage, printing, stand fitting, electricians, catering, audio visual, designers, animators, digital marketing as well as a handful of event organisers, we make both an ideal base and can reduce the amount of travel required when it comes to organising events.

We also support our staff to make the best choices with brand new shower facilities for those who cycle and take advantage of the cycle scheme, and provide loans for those who wish to make a saving by buying an annual travel card for transport around London. For those who are driving, an increasing number have now switched to electric vehicles, and the Company has just invested in creating a large section of the car park dedicated to electric charging bays.

When it comes to catering, the team at The Good Eating Company are also a Carbon Neutral Company. They have changed all of their packaging to compostable products, which are processed with our food waste and they are committed to the removal of all single use plastics. No plastic bottles are sold on site, and they offer discounts to those who bring a refill cup. BDC refill cups and bottles are available on site and can be refilled at

the chilled water fountains around the venue, installed back in 2019.

From Meat Free Mondays to Fish Fridays we have many options throughout the week that support the reduction of red meat and increase the number of plant based options available. Food is sourced locally and from the surrounding counties where possible and the variety of this is reflected in our event catering offer.

Targets 2022 - 2023:

- Look into alternative ways to generate our own energy on site at the venue.
- Increase electric vehicle charging points in the car park and loading bay.
- Build relationships with environmentally focused businesses such as Isla and
- Event Cycle to support our events on their journey to net zero.
- Increase recycling and composting to reduce waste sent to recovery by 10%.
- Deliver our route to net zero by the end of 2023.

Our Community

Improving life for those in the area in which we are based has been a long standing goal of the business. For this reason, the Morris Family, who majority own the BDC, set up the Morris Charitable Trust (MCT) back in 1989. Over this time the Trust has supported community groups, charities and individuals across the borough to achieve some incredible work.



Morris Charitable Trust

The total value of voluntary and charitable support offered by the Company in cash and in kind from 2019 – 2021 was £860,265.00



From 2019 to 2021 our Company funded over eighty local projects through its charitable arm the Morris Charitable Trust, donating more than £440,000 to good causes.

Over the course of 2020 and 2021, the activities of the MCT have led to new Trustees members joining, from both within the family and from the BDC team itself. This injection of youth to the Board of Trustees has seen applications move online, a wider reach of new projects to support as well as being able to involve staff who have a passion for helping others.

A key receiver of support is Islington Giving, which was formed in 2010, when local people came together with local and national and charities to launch the organisation at the offices of The Guardian, on York Way. The Morris Charitable Trust was a founding member of Islington Giving, the first of its kind in London. Together, they wanted to act on the findings of the 'Invisible Islington' report, published by Cripplegate Foundation in 2008, that shone a light on the complex challenges facing many Islington residents. Islington Giving has had a member of the BDC Board on its own Board since its inception and was an initial driver in creating all wider London Giving Programmes, now in 20 boroughs. The annual support goes on to help a huge number of life changing charities in the London Borough of Islington and they also receive free advertising of their campaigns on our outdoor poster sites and social platforms.

From December 2020, the BDC was opened in partnership with UCLH as a vaccination training hub and mass vaccination centre for the local community during the pandemic. Running until August 2021, the centre trained thousands of staff to vaccinate both at the BDC and in other locations, and the initial programme vaccinated over 135,000 people returning later in 2021 to begin helping the booster programme. A particular highlight of the location of the BDC, was the ability to also run an outreach programme to those in the community who are homeless offering vaccinations and hot teas and coffee.

While they were with us, we sponsored musicians to come and play to those waiting for their vaccinations each week. The BDC ran a fundraising initiative called 'say thank you with meals', where BDC residents donated over £4,000.00 to offer nurses and volunteers meals and hot drinks



Targets 2022 - 2023:

- Deliver City and Islington College student events training in support of hosting Local Village Network's charity event in May.
- Run a collaborative charity fundraising initiative with BDC staff and tenants.
- Welcome back the food bank on a larger scale.
- Support Islington Giving and in particular feed in to their "Going Greener" funding campaign.

and pastries for almost 1,000 of their teams over several weeks with us. Our team also put together a special day for the nurses including free massages, cupcakes and snacks, free meals to take home at night from Del'Ugo, as well as music throughout the day. We celebrated vaccine milestones with cake and threw a closing ceremony at the end of their time with us, with drinks and food.

December 2021 also saw the BDC open its doors to a large scale food bank. The project was in collaboration with charity, Bankuet and the Soho House Group. Over a week our team volunteered their time to help organise and set up for the open days, which welcomed over 400 families to collect necessities ahead of the Christmas holidays.

We love to support local. In 2021 we sponsored the Islington Borough Ladies FC team, offered free space to exhibit art in the building to local artists, donated hundreds of litres of soup to feed homeless people through the Good Eating Company and BDC residents Go Dharmic, and ran a post-lockdown social media campaign to drive business back to the local businesses in collaboration with London and Partners.



Young people in Islington have always been a crucial part of our charitable work. We have a long history of mentoring and supporting schools in the area, but one of the charities we have been working with for over five years now, is Local Village Network. The pandemic put a halt to their annual event hosted by the BDC, which will return this year. The event collaborates with City and Islington College in helping BTEC Business students to run an event for the charity. Our team have been into the college (over zoom in 2021) to support their learning on events.

As a product of our philanthropic activities, we have great links across the community. Over the last few years, we have linked this with our environmental goals to divert usable items from waste. Whether it's furniture from office refits, items left from events that can be given a new life, or basic materials, these are all greatly received. An example in the last few months was a receiver of funding through the MCT, who are rebuilding Kings Cross Church, giving a great home to brand new leftover kitchen appliances and crockery donated from a show.

Our People

Many of our team are longstanding members of staff, making the feeling of being at the BDC like coming home. It's integral that we take the best care of those who work with us and this last few years has been no exception.



“The Business Design Centre really does make you feel as though you are part of a team and a family. They invest their time in making sure that us, as employees are understood, and that we are valued for what we do. Many of the staff members have been here for 10+ years and that is a telling sign that they put us first. The people and the place make me want to come in to work every day.”

Hayley Constable,
Deputy Head of Venue Services,
Business Design Centre

We pride ourselves on identifying learning and development opportunities for everyone, and also have numerous wellbeing initiatives which are available including flexible working and encouraging the team to take time out of their day to prioritise their health, family needs or to carry out fundraising and volunteering activities.

- Auto-Enrolment Pension Scheme
- Private Healthcare (BUPA)
- Healthcare Cash Plans (Healthshield)
- Travel Season Ticket Loans
- Childcare Vouchers
- Cyclescheme Loans
- Flu Vaccinations
- Free Eye Tests
- Subsidised Chair Massages
- Free Access to Calm or Headspace Apps

We make it a priority to communicate throughout the year so that the team are always aware of what's happening in the business and the impact that they are having. This is done in many ways, both formally and informally:

- Publish Yearly Corporate Objectives from the Chief Executive
- Business Financial Updates Throughout the Year
- Management Forum Bimonthly Meetings
- Middle Management Group
- Departmental Meetings
- Quarterly Company Breakfasts
- Regular 121's with Line Managers
- Team Goal Setting Days
- Appraisal System – Personal Business Objectives / Employee Reviews
- Training and Development Plans
- Incentive Scheme
- Induction and Buddy System for New Starters
- Annual Summer and Christmas Company Parties

Targets 2022 - 2023:

- Reassess with Investors in People, improving on our last assessment points.
- Deliver an updated flexible working policy for post pandemic life.
- Refresh Mental Health First Aider training and open up to more of the team.
- Roll out an internal comms campaign on company culture.



Recent awards include:

Exhibition News Awards 2020:
Best Company Culture

AEO Awards 2020:
Best Venue (under 20,000sqm)

ESSA Awards 2021:
Best Venue

We hold company gatherings for employee milestones, which are regular, those who celebrate 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 (and onwards) years enjoy long service awards – including, extra annual leave, travel voucher gifts, and lunches with CEO, Dominic Jones. Exceptional performance is awarded through Starburst Awards, including a monetary reward, usually presented at the Summer or Christmas parties.

Since 2019 we have also had members of the team as Wellbeing Ambassadors.

As a company we are committed to creating a safe and healthy workplace where the mental health and physical health of employees are valued equally. Over half the Company including the Directors and Middle Management team amongst others were trained as Mental Health First Aiders giving them the skills to look after their own and others' wellbeing, and contributing to our overall health and wellbeing strategy. This is being refreshed in February 2022.

The Senior Management Team operate an open door policy, where ideas, challenges and personal discussions can be shared and supported. This culture contributed to the last Investors in People Award being maintained to a higher level Gold Standard. Investors in People is due for reassessment in 2022, with annual meetings taking place with our assessor.

Each year we welcome between two and three, year three undergraduates into fully paid internships. Over the last ten years we have been able to welcome a few of the students back post graduating into fulltime positions. However one of the success stories in 2021 was being able to welcome back three previous interns to full time roles. Roles in which they are now thriving. Investing in future generations of events professionals is something that we are passionate about, and many of our events team have also taken opportunities to speak to groups of students who come to visit the venue about their roles and professional journeys.

Our Current Graduates



Samantha Corker
Event Coordinator



Elena Hornsby-Hallett
Event Coordinator



Jessica Shepherd
Venue Services Manager

Our Suppliers

We are lucky to have a number of fantastic suppliers who we have worked with for many years, and most of these work from offices right here inside in the Business Design Centre.



Onward Display
Large format signage



Granite Consulting
Internet and networking services



Aztec Events
Audio visual services



The Good Eating Company
Catering services



Full Circle
Stand fitting



GD Electrics
Electrical services



Teamex
Event Security services



Signify Digital
Digital Marketing services



The Animation Guys
Animation Design services

In working with our residents and onsite suppliers, there are many benefits as well as supporting those under our roof. On site stock of AV, print, electrical, stand fitting and other kit means less travel involved in the production of live events, reducing the carbon emissions of the events themselves. It also means that we have closer relationships with the teams based out of the building; they attend our weekly event meetings, and most participate in our conversations and strategy around sustainability, health and safety and improvements to the venue.

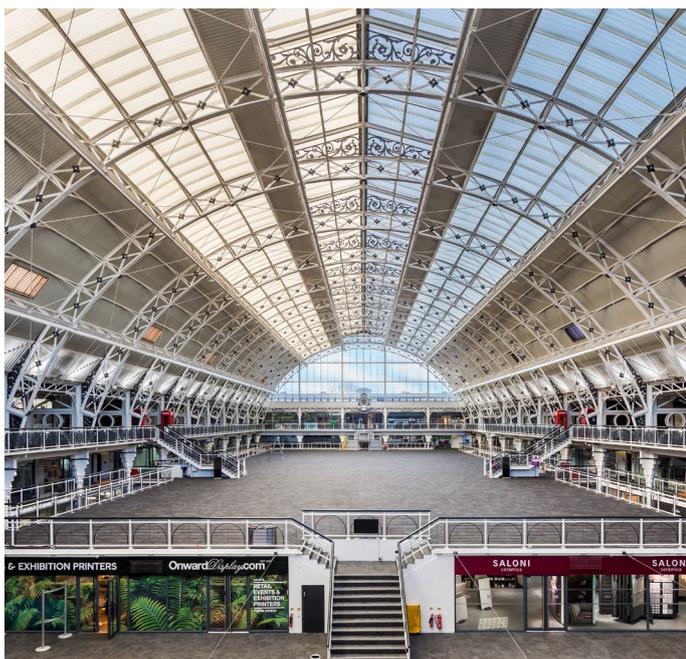
A stand out example of collaborative working has been through our close relationship with the Good Eating Company. Having banned single use plastic bottles they have now replaced all packaging where it is necessary or the client does not wish to use crockery and cutlery, with plant based compostable items. We have carried out several events on a large scale now where cups, salad boxes, sandwich packaging and cutlery all went into compostable waste streams.



The initial event we trialed the compostable products on at the BDC, saw 1,400 lunches and almost 2,000 cups of tea or coffee provided in compostable packaging and cups. This totals over 3,000 items of waste that previously, may have been contaminated so would not have been able to be recycled. These items were added to brand new bins with associated messaging, which separated the waste; this was then disposed of in our food waste stream, which is taken offsite and anaerobically digested into compost and returned to our local community, for use in their gardens and allotments.

We have supported our suppliers as much as possible through the pandemic and where possible some of the teams were brought in to help with maintenance of the building while the space was empty. Our close relationship also meant when the NHS needed support on the vaccination centre, we involved many of them in helping with the mass vaccination centre set up.

When it comes to local support, we are members of our local BID (Business Improvement District), with our CEO, Dominic Jones sitting on the Board for over 20 years. We work closely with them to provide briefings from the police, and terrorism training to staff as well as those who use the building. It is important to us that we participate in making Islington a safe place to be for all.



Targets 2022 - 2023:

- Support our suppliers on their own journeys to net zero.
- Work closely with suppliers on events to ensure that they have the flexibility needed in delivering new event calendar.
- Help teams to market and promote job vacancies needed to fill vital roles after the pandemic.

Our Industry

We work closely with our industry's associations, the Association of Event Venues, Association of Event Organisers and Event Supplier and Services Association. Our staff support these associations, particularly the AEV, passionately and have been involved in benchmarking and delivering best practice across the industry. It is through this collective voice that we feel change can be best implemented and in recent times, this has been more important than ever.

Over last two years Executive Director of Venue Sales, Max Bull has been the Chair of the AEV Board, Marketing & Communications Director, Kate Simpson has chaired both the AEV Marcomms Group and co-chaired the EIA's Cross Association Project Confidence Group, with other members of the team representing the BDC across other AEV working groups. In particular, the work of the AEV Board and Project Confidence has been key in the EIA's work in returning business to the industry and we were proud to hold the Government's pilot business event back in September 2020.



“BDC London is not only unique with its industrial style and central location in lively Angel, it has a unique professional team who live the hospitality ethos wholeheartedly. For us, it felt like coming home. It was like a fusion of event organizer and event location.”

Jana Hille,
Head of Events, droidcon HQ



We have supported industry campaigns including One Industry One Voice and Light It Red and we are proud to have been a sponsor and venue host to the ‘UK Event Professionals made Redundant Due to Coronavirus’ Awards over the last two years. As well as being keen fundraisers, many are also keen athletes and in Summer they were pleased to make it further than ever in support of the Lord Taverners at Sticky Wicket 2021. Returning to more familiar times, in November 2021 we were pleased to host the AEV Conference and are looking forward to working with the AEO on their upcoming Forums in February 2022.

We are passionate about our events and our industry and have made every effort to support both throughout the last two years. We are pleased that we have been able to accommodate and help as many in our calendar as possible and the result of this has seen so many remain in the diary for 2022 and beyond. It has been a truly tough time for us all, but we were honoured to receive the ESSA Best Venue Award at the end of 2021, nominated by the members for our efforts and we hope that as we come out of the other side we will continue to work collaboratively for the benefit of the industry’s future.



Targets 2022 - 2023:

- Continue our participation with the AEV across working groups, involving new members of the teams in these.
- Work transparently and supportively with the industry on the net zero carbon events pledge.
- Proactively support more event industry charity endeavours.



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