



# The Blue Bermondsey BID



Proposal for a Business Improvement District

[www.thebluebermondsey.com](http://www.thebluebermondsey.com)



## The Business Survey

The business survey conducted in April 2013 illustrated that the majority of business owners in the area are frustrated because there are a number of issues affecting our businesses over which we have no control.

- 92% want a unified voice through a business association
- 58% want to see an overall co-ordinated strategy for the area
- 88% support the idea of a BID board
- 60% want to see a joined-up marketing approach
- 58% want better business networking
- 58% want better representations with the Council
- 54% wanted to see events to engage the community
- 57% want to see better provision of parking
- 55% wanted a stronger Police presence

**A BID is the ideal mechanism to address these points and many of the other issues identified in the survey.**

## The Blue Bermondsey BID

### The way forward and a new initiative for businesses in the area

In an attempt to address the challenges of the future the BBBA is aiming for the area to become a '**Business Improvement District**' (BID). In April 2013 we conducted a survey of businesses in the proposed BID area (see map p5) and were delighted with the strong show of support for our efforts to become a BID.

► It was clear from the survey that there is a strong sense of local businesses wanting to do something to see the area become a safer, cleaner and better place for employers, employees and the local community.

► The Survey demonstrated an intention to take control of crucial decisions that directly affect our businesses and the location in which we choose to do business.

► It was apparent that one of the main stumbling blocks to the furthering of the prosperity of the local business community is definitely the lack of a 'joined-up' strategy.

### **A BID WOULD BRING BUSINESSES TOGETHER TO UNITE IN A COMMON AND SHARED GOAL, TO IMPROVE THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT.**

The choice is simple: **Vote YES** for an exciting and dynamic initiative to establish a unified voice to raise the profile of the area and enable us to combat competition from other areas. A **YES vote** could bring new businesses, customers and prosperity to the area and shape a future, joined-up approach for local business and market 'The Blue Bermondsey' as a good place to come and do business.



**We urge you to read what we have to say and decide for yourself.**



## Our aims



To help tackle street crime and anti-social behaviour by engaging our own street wardens. The presence of wardens working closely with the police has significantly reduced street crime in other BID areas.



To offer access to free recycling services to local businesses, which will help reduce their annual costs on waste and also has environmental and economic benefits.



To engage the local community to report on areas of grime so we can respond quickly to make sure the streets stay clean and grot spots are attended to promptly.



To work with local business support organisations to try and get local people into local jobs.



To work with local schools to try and get young people involved in apprenticeships and work schemes with the priority to place them in local jobs and mentoring schemes.



To market the area through social media and local press with regular promotions and advertising.



To identify and attract further funding from other sources to enhance the contribution provided by the businesses levy payer.



To introduce a local Calendar of Events to promote the positive changes in the area and bring the businesses and the community closer together.



## Some facts about the BBBA

**The Blue Bermondsey Business Association (BBBA) was formed in April 2008 to act as a unified voice to represent and benefit local businesses.**

**We are totally independent and run on a voluntary basis by a small group of local business people. We have ceaselessly lobbied the council for a fairer deal for the area and have been successful in attracting investment into the area from the council on many projects – a major one being the regeneration of the market square.**

**We believe we are at a pivotal stage in the regeneration of the area and have achieved a significant shift in public and political perception of the area.**

**Our efforts have demonstrated that it is possible to have more control over the important decisions that affect our businesses and raise the profile of the Blue Bermondsey.**





## The benefits of a BID

The Blue Bermondsey BID would establish a corporate social responsibility programme to increase interaction between businesses and the local community.

**London currently has 27 BIDs with a 100% ballot success.**

Two of the most successful in London are based in Southwark, Better Bankside and Team London Bridge and these BIDs have prospered beyond all expectations.

In total, Southwark currently has three BIDs – Better Bankside, Team London Bridge and Waterloo Quarter.

In the event of a successful ballot, the Blue Bermondsey BID would have the prestige of linking up and being supported by the Better Bankside BID.

## The Blue Market

The Blue market is the heart of our community and therefore an integral part of the social and cultural fabric of our area. The revitalisation of the market is seen as a priority by local residents and the Blue Bermondsey BID would seek to work with the council to make this happen.

## Why do we want a BID?

Increasingly people are warming to the idea of doing business and shopping locally, especially with more awareness of environmental issues, the escalating cost of public transport and fuel prices.

With the massive increase in new housing in and around the Blue Bermondsey area, demand for goods and services will grow with the population. How much of that increased demand is captured by us – the local businesses – will depend largely on the extent to which we are geared up to embrace the opportunities of the future.

There is a growing body of evidence on what businesses can and must do to compete and it is clear that town centres such as the Blue Bermondsey that are well managed and have a co-ordinated strategy will do well and prosper.

The Blue Bermondsey BID would give businesses a chance to have more influence over the crucial decisions that affect us. It could deliver a comprehensive range of benefits to improve turnover, foot-fall and general perceptions of the area.

We can take positive action towards becoming our own 'Town Centre Managers' by voting YES and have a flagship organisation to protect and enhance our interests: **The Blue Bermondsey BID - owned and led by local business.**

## BID TIMELINE

- ▶ **MAY 2014:** You will receive formal notification of the forthcoming BID ballot.
- ▶ **EARLY JUNE 2014:** You will receive your voting pack. Your ballot paper will need to be returned in the reply-paid envelope.
- ▶ **3rd JULY 2014:** Last day of Ballot.
- ▶ **4th JULY 2014:** Ballot result published by Southwark Council.
- ▶ **1st OCTOBER 2014:** In the event of a successful ballot, The Blue Bermondsey will become a BID.





## What else could a BID do for us?

**The Blue Bermondsey BID is about building mutually beneficial, long-term relationships. When businesses know more about the local people, they are more likely to support them, creating a healthy, sustainable community.**

- ▶ Bring the Blue Bermondsey to the attention of new customers through social media and develop our website to give existing and potential customers easy access to vital information about the area.
- ▶ Institute a calendar of local events and a range of diverse activities geared at promoting the area and encouraging new visitors to the shops and businesses.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for local businesses to network and exchange valuable ideas.
- ▶ Produce a regular newsletter to promote local business and engage with the community.

**The area is changing fast and the management and transformation of the public realm is crucial to supporting positive transformation such as:**

- ▶ Working with the Workspace group on the opening of an arch from the new Biscuit Factory development into Bombay Street.
- ▶ The renovation of John Bull and St James Road arches, which are the gateways to the Blue.
- ▶ Creation of new and innovative design solutions for green and open spaces.
- ▶ Creation of a community kitchen in the heart of the Blue Bermondsey where local youngsters can receive expert training for a career in catering.
- ▶ Work with the council and local business to bring more traders and events onto the marketplace to make the market more vibrant.



**THE POSTAL BALLOT  
BEGINS ON THE 5TH JUNE  
2014. YOU HAVE 28 DAYS  
TO VOTE.**



## The benefits of a BID

**Businesses decide and direct what they want for the area**



**Businesses are represented and have a voice in issues affecting the area**



**Increased footfall**



**Increased staff retention**



**Cost reduction on recycling services**



**Area promotion**



**Networking opportunities with neighbouring businesses**



**Assistance in dealings with the Council, police and other public bodies**



**BID levy money is ring fenced for use only in the BID area**

**For further information on the Blue Bermondsey BID and to see the full proposal document 'BID FOR THE BLUE' visit our website:  
[www.thebluebermondsey.com](http://www.thebluebermondsey.com)**



## How would the BID be run?

The BID would be run by the Blue Bermondsey BID company. Its board would consist of representatives from businesses paying the BID levy. There could also be representation from key agencies.

In addition there would probably be 'theme groups' dealing with key issues such as Safety, Marketing, Look & Feel and Business Services.

The Board would manage a small number of staff, who would deliver the projects and services of the BID.

**We are looking for more local business owners and managers to get involved with the BID team.**

**Interested? Then please contact the BBBA on:**

**[info@thebluebermondsey.com](mailto:info@thebluebermondsey.com)**

## How is the BID levy collected?

The BID levy would be collected by Southwark Council in the same way as business rates and passed back to the BID company. It would be payable in one instalment and be a mandatory charge with collection enforceable in the same way as business rates.

## What is a BID?

**A BID** is an independent business-led and funded initiative which seeks to improve an area's commercial activity.

**A BID** can only be formed following consultation and a ballot in which eligible businesses vote on a BID Proposal.

**A BID** is funded through the BID levy, which is a small percentage of the ratable value of a business premises.

**A BID** will operate for a maximum of five years and must go through a renewal ballot to secure another BID term.

**A BID** ballot that is successful means the BID levy would be mandatory for all eligible businesses.

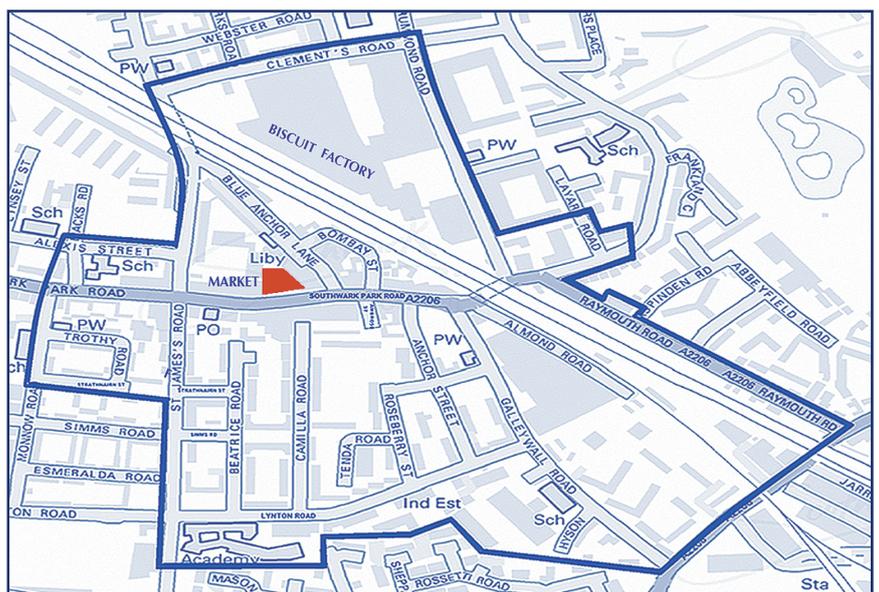
**A draft five-year business plan has been created based on the total levy which is estimated to be £115,000.00 p.a., to which we would add revenue that can be generated from further match-funding and voluntary contributions.**

### PROPOSED BID BUDGET - YEAR ONE

Estimated Bid Levy income: £115,000

1.	BID Loan Payment	13,000
2.	Levy Collection Costs	4,000
3.	Street Wardens	31,000
4.	Marketing	17,000
5.	Procurement of Recycling	10,000
6.	Streets and Greening	6,000
7.	Core Costs	29,000
8.	Contingency	5,000

TOTAL EXPENDITURE .....115,000



## How would the BID be established?

The BID ballot will be managed by Southwark Council's Electoral Services Department. It will be a postal ballot and will ask the simple question: **'Are you in favour of the Business Improvement District proposals for the Blue Bermondsey?'**

For a BID to exist, two majorities have to be secured:

### **A MAJORITY IN NUMBER OF THOSE THAT VOTED**

### **A MAJORITY BY RATEABLE VALUE OF THOSE THAT VOTED (EACH BUSINESS RATE BILL IS EQUIVALENT TO ONE VOTE)**

This ensures that the interests of large and small businesses are protected. There is no minimum turnout threshold.

#### **The following will not be eligible for the BID levy or entitled to vote in the BID Ballot**

- ▶ Business premises (hereditaments) with a rateable value (RV) below £6,000.
- ▶ 'Central List' properties that are not contained in the local rating list.
- ▶ Advertising rights, telephone masts, car parks, car parking places and kiosks.
- ▶ Residential estate offices.

#### **All other types of business that are eligible to vote in the BID ballot and to pay the BID levy**

- ▶ Where hereditaments are unoccupied at the time of the ballot, the owner will be entitled to vote in the BID ballot.
- ▶ The term 'owner' is defined in Section 65(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1998.
- ▶ No 'void' period will be given and those hereditaments which are exempt from empty property rates will not be exempt from the BID levy.
- ▶ Owner-occupiers will pay the BID levy.
- ▶ New businesses that move into eligible premises during the 5-year period will be eligible to pay the BID levy, providing the hereditaments remain eligible for BID membership.
- ▶ New business premises built during the BID term will be eligible for the levy payment if they have a rateable value of over £6,000.
- ▶ Businesses with a rateable value of lower than £6,000 may have the opportunity to opt in to The Blue Bermondsey BID by contributing on a voluntary basis at a rate to be agreed by the Board.



## What is the BID levy and how much would it cost me?

If the BID ballot is successful, then all eligible businesses would pay the BID levy.

The BID levy will be set at 1.5% of the 'rateable value' of a business property. (Typically this is equivalent to about 3–4% of an annual business's rates bill.)

#### **Indicative rateable value and Indicative BID levy**

£10,000	£150
£20,000	£300
£50,000	£750
£100,000	£1,500
£200,000	£3,000

## Shouldn't the Council be paying for this through my business rates?

Business rates are collected locally but passed back to Central Government to be distributed as they see fit. In contrast a BID generates revenue that is ring-fenced for the area in which it is collected, to be spent for the benefit of businesses that pay the BID levy.

**All services that a BID delivers will be in addition to those the council provides. The levy cannot be used to replace existing council services. This is carefully controlled through a legally-binding Baseline Services Agreement that sets out which services the Council is legally obliged to deliver. It can only be changed in consultation with the Board.**



## How can I get involved with running the BID ?

Do you own or manage a business in the proposed Blue Bermondsey BID area?

Would you like to take advantage of being involved in this unique opportunity to improve the area and your business and be part of the BID team?

If so, please contact the BBBA on:  
[info@thebluebermondsey.com](mailto:info@thebluebermondsey.com)



# BID for the Blue

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