



BlueBermondsey
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

VISION AND STRATEGY PLAN





VISION AND STRATEGY PLAN

BIDS THE VOICE FOR LOCAL BUSINESS

In July 2014 the Blue Bermondsey BID steering Group received a mandate from eligible businesses for Blue Bermondsey to begin its five year term in October 2014, joining a host of locations where a representative organisation has been elected as a unified voice by local business for local business.

Most recently the 2016 Nationwide BID Survey reported there are now more than 240 established Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in the UK and increasing year on year. BIDs vary in type, scale and budget and are now an essential part of the infrastructure of many different localities across the country and in all cases are funded by and accountable to member businesses and property owners.

The shifting economic landscape alongside the localisation agenda is creating both opportunities and challenges, with local authority budget reductions and policy changes meaning that the services, activities and management of BIDs are having to adapt and evolve to best benefit its members.

BLUE BERMONDSEY

Blue Bermondsey BIDs operations to date have reflected this nationwide trend and we want to be clear about the role, position and capabilities of the BID and refocus to consider how our funds, strategic positioning and engagement can be best used to provide services and support to our member businesses over the remainder of the BID term. Our long term aim is to have an organisation that effectively represents and benefits member businesses and additionally helps to meet the increasing challenges that we face from such elements as neighbouring areas and the increasing growth of internet by raising the profile and improving the location in which we operate.

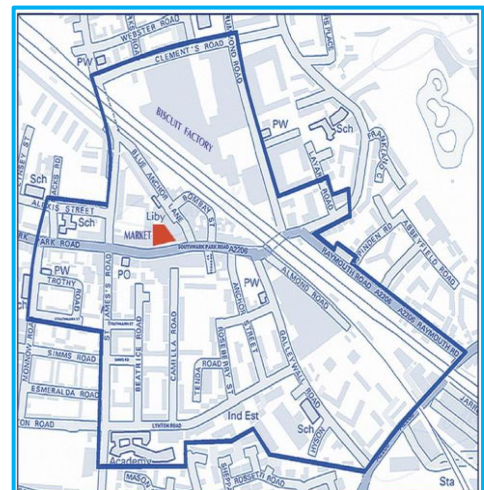
This Plan has been devised to recognise the priorities set out in the 2014-19 BID Proposal and the aims and objectives outlined therein. Additionally we have drawn on our experiences to date and gathered data from Commonplace, an online survey set up in 2015 to enable local stakeholders to tell us how they feel about the area and what they would like to see happening in the future.

2017-2018 - There are currently 283 businesses
Contributing projected Levy Income of £103,000

We propose to centre our priorities on four sectors:

- Local Business Marketing and Identity
- Security and Public Spaces
- Partnerships and Events
- Economy

These strategic sectors have been identified as key for 2017/18 whilst also providing strategic building blocks for achieving our long term aims and objectives.





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LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING AND IDENTITY

LOCAL PRESS

We will continue to advertise in local press **when there are events or occasions which need to be communicated** or relevant opportunities to promote our activities and maximise marketing arise.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We will continue to develop our highly active and well supported social media presence. Our Twitter and Facebook accounts are crucial in passing on timely messages, profiling local businesses, BID projects, news, events, activities and anything that is relevant to the area.

WEBSITE

www.bluebermondsey.co.uk website contains info for business, relevant news and events and interactive business directory which gives businesses the opportunity to network, promote goods and services. We will concentrate our efforts to develop the site **to build user and repeat visit numbers and to promote our activities, with content** that supports our place identity and vision.

PROMOTIONAL BOOKLET

Our bi-annual promotion booklet 'Down the Blue' is circulated to 10,000 addresses in the local area and distributed at all local community events. We will aim to expand on content and features and develop the booklet throughout BID term to encourage people to do business locally.

BLUE BERMONDSEY APP

To complement our existing digital presence, we are exploring the creation of an app to meet the increasing growth of Smartphone use. A third (33%) of us now uses a smartphone to browse the internet, access social media and shop online. This marks an 11% increase since 2014 with 55-64 year olds now joining the revolution, with ownership in this age group more than doubling.

BUSINESS LIAISON AND ENGAGEMENT

Building and maintaining good relationships with BID businesses is central to improving the services and our AGM serves as a platform for members to feed into the BID's operations and catalyse discussions. We want to ensure the services are being fully utilised and businesses are fully aware of how their BID levy is spent. We aim to hold a series of networking events **to offer opportunities for members to be more involved in key issues and emerging topics.**

THEME GROUPS

Blue Bermondsey is home to a vast range of diverse and innovative businesses and we want to utilise the experience and input from our businesses members to help us build on existing projects. Theme groups are the ideal vehicle to catalyse our vision and have the ability to identify, cost and propose future initiatives to the BID board for consideration. External funding streams can be identified and sought for larger scale projects or initiatives.



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SECURITY AND PUBLIC SPACES

SAFER LONDON - SOUTHWARK SAFE BCRP

The Safer London - Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) was introduced by the BID in 2016. By working in close partnership with our local Police team, we identified twenty businesses as being the highest priority and equipped them with their own Radio and Intranet system, connecting them directly with Police and CCTV networks. This has enabled instant information sharing and has been hailed as being highly effective in tackling crime, ASB and many other current issues, bringing businesses together by looking out for each other and fostering a stronger community spirit. Additionally we are an active voice on the Safer London Steering Group and South Bermondsey Police Ward panel, helping to identify Policing priorities for our area. We aim to build on these partnerships to make our area an even safer and more secure place to do business, work and live.

GREENING

We want to help improve the quality of Blue Bermondsey's public realm by looking at ways of enhancing and increasing green space in the area. Greening initiatives could bring many environmental benefits and serve to provide an ecological framework for the environmental health of the overall community, proving nature can be used to provide important services by helping to improve air quality and creating more biodiversity awareness. We will aim to create a local Green Network to bring together existing and established local projects to identify new greening initiatives with achievable goals such as the creation of Fresh Air Squares and Pocket Parks.

PUBLIC SPACE

The cleanliness of the Blue Bermondsey area is integral to business and investor confidence and crucial to the well-being and perception of BID members businesses, their staff, the local community and visitors. Our goal is to start a 'keep it clean' campaign to create awareness and vigilance to ensure all stakeholders are doing our best to keep Blue Bermondsey clean and tidy, to help make it an even better place to be. We have identified many 'grot spots' and aim to compile a detailed report with additional information gathered from commonplace survey to produce an action plan and get them cleaned up and will aim to gain external match funding to supplement our input.

HERITAGE

Throughout the lifetime of Blue Bermondsey BID we will remain dedicated to promoting the rich heritage of the area. External funding from Southwark Council has enabled us to renovate the iconic Bermondsey Lion Sculpture and initiate the 'Larder of London' an ongoing project, which forms the basis of our long term cultural and heritage strategy for the area. The first phase saw recipes collected at ten workshops held at local businesses, shops and events realised into Murals that have invigorated six locations around the area. Phase two of the project has seen the creation of distinctive 'Made in Bermondsey' graphics. Working with local historians we have transformed grotty garage shutters located in the public car park, into inspiring and informative works of art.



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PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS

RECYCLING

We will continue providing free cardboard recycling and discounted waste services through our partnership with leading waste recycling specialist First Mile. Each business member is entitled to receive collections in relation to BID levy contribution with compliance documentation available to businesses. We want to make every effort to ensure that eligible businesses are using the service.

JOINT PROCUREMENT

Huge savings can be made for BID businesses on essentials such as utilities, telecoms and other key services through joint procurement. Meercat Associates are specialist advisors to BID businesses who have brought together 10,000 UK BID members to gain combined savings of over £2,000,000 in the last two years and we aim to utilise this buying power to save our member businesses money.

BIG LOCAL WORKS

Working with a consortium of local stakeholders we have been instrumental in the foundational of Big Local Works, a new training and enterprise hub located at 4 Market Place. Amongst a host of proposed activities the hub will offer training and employment opportunities, hold business advice surgeries and assist prospective entrepreneurs to try out their business ideas on the Blue market.

BERMONDSEY COMMUNITY KITCHEN

We will continue to offer ongoing guidance to Bermondsey Community Kitchen to expand and offer a wider variety of courses and services to the local community in addition to providing existing free City and Guilds Professional Cookery qualifications for long term unemployed 16 to 24 year olds, to help get them into work and aspire to a career in the catering industry.

FREE CYCLE MAINTENANCE COURSES

Cycling is becoming the most practical way to travel and we have partnered with Cycle Training UK, a not-for-profit collective – who have been located and operating in the area since 1998 - to offer free cycle maintenance courses and Dr Bike sessions for BID businesses, to begin in July 2017.

BID NETWORKING

We will continue to develop our relationships with our long established neighbouring Southwark BIDs, Southwark business networks, Southwark Council, and relevant business related forums to share information and better understand the collective challenges faced by the business community in Southwark and create awareness of Blue Bermondsey BID and its activities.

EVENTS

We have staged over 50 diverse events since operations began in October 2014, many in partnerships with a myriad of local associates. The Summer Fete/Bermondsey Folk Festival and Blue Christmas events have been highly successful in attracting thousands of new visitors to the area. We plan to grow these two major events to attract a wider audience and more footfall to the area and also provide smaller events when appropriate opportunities arise.



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ECONOMY

RETAIL RESEARCH, DATA PROSPECTUS

The demand for a far greater retail offer has long been voiced for the area and as an independent organisation with no commercial interest, the BID is in a perfect position to champion a retail vision and bring stakeholders together to achieve it. We will aim to work with landlords, especially Southwark Council and potential tenants to progress the area's retail offer, working towards an appropriate retail mix that serves the areas demographic, whilst maintaining and promoting the unique character and identity of Blue Bermondsey. An area marketing and development plan in the form of a retail research data prospectus will articulate the collective retail and area vision and highlight the opportunities that exist for prospective incoming tenants. The BID would be responsible for sourcing and providing information to local (within the BID area) landlords and their agents that would assist in securing suitable retail and business tenants. This data would be supplemented by details of available units and a listing of all retail tenants and the sector they operate in, which can be gained from existing BID research and the Local Data Company's licensed database. Demographic information and footfall counts could also be included. A development programme will also help by working with the council to embed this vision in Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy planning policy to secure funding for more ambitious future projects.

BLUE MARKET

The BID in partnership with Bermondsey Community Kitchen (BCK) have secured £40,000 in grant funding from Southwark Council's High St Challenge fund to implement and develop a strategy for the Blue market that would be instrumental in building footfall, with the aim of increasing spend and dwell time in the high street. This will be achieved through working alongside Southwark Council markets team, who fully support our project and the combined support network of the BCK and BID to reach out to BID businesses, traders from surrounding markets and aspiring local entrepreneurs to encourage them to operate at the Blue market to attract a wider range of stalls and products.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

We will endeavour to seek additional external funding to supplement the delivery of our vision and strategic ambitions. To date we have been highly successful in this, principally from Southwark Council, local businesses and charities but have not utilised funding resources available from Section 106, Community Infrastructure Levy, Government and Strategic agencies. With a stronger more collaborative BID we will be capable of drawing in funds to fully realise our longer term ambitions and deliver our vision to advance the Blue Bermondsey as a unique pioneering local centre.

OPERATIONAL COSTS

The many functions of Blue Bermondsey requires dedicated and passionate individuals and the board and our small operations team of three work together on a variety of tasks to support the delivery of BID projects and objectives with our administration costs kept to the absolute minimum. In July 2017 we will relocate our office to the new Big Local Works training and enterprise hub at no cost, saving money and giving the BID a visible and accessible presence to members and facilitating the progress of our business related activities within the hub.



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BUDGET

	2017-18	2016-17
LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING AND IDENTITY		
LOCAL PRESS	£2,000	
SOCIAL MEDIA	£3,000	£1,000*
WEBSITE	£2,000	£2,000*
PROMOTIONAL BOOKLET	£4,000	
BLUE BERMONDSEY APP	£0.00	£6,000*
BUSINESS LIAISON & ENGAGEMENT	£4,000	£1,000*
THEME GROUPS	£3,000	£1,000*
TOTAL	£18,000	
SECURITY AND PUBLIC SPACES		
SAFER LONDON - SOUTHWARK SAFE BCRP	£10,500	
GREENING	£3,000	£3,000*
PUBLIC SPACE	£3,000	£7,800*
HERITAGE	£2,000	£1,000*
TOTAL	£18,500	
PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS		
RECYCLING	£7,500	
JOINT PROCUREMENT	£2,500	£2,500
BIG LOCAL WORKS	0.00	
BERMONDSEY COMMUNITY KITCHEN	0.00	
FREE CYCLE MAINTENANCE COURSES	£6,500	
BID NETWORKING	0.00	
EVENTS	£18,000	
TOTAL	£34,500	
ECONOMY		
RETAIL RESEARCH, DATA PROSPECTUS	£2,000	
BLUE MARKET	0.00	
ADDITIONAL FUNDING	0.00	£2,500*
TOTAL	£2,000	
OPERATIONAL COSTS		
MANAGEMENT / ADMIN	£25,000	
TOTAL	£98,000	£27,800



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BUDGET SUMMARY

LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING AND IDENTITY	£18,000
SECURITY AND PUBLIC SPACES	£18,500
PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS	£34,500
ECONOMY	£2,000
CORE COSTS	£25,000
TOTAL	£98,000
CONTINGENCY	£5,000
TOTAL	£103,000

*Allocated for projects in the pipeline not yet delivered from 2016-2017 budget

Over the past two years the Blue Bermondsey BID team, working with the shared objective, have progressed the initiatives outlined in the original business plan, building relationships with private sector business, local community, public sector and other key organisations within the borough and beyond and is now well established as an important stakeholder, using its influence to bring about positive perceptions and improvements and we believe the objectives identified are realistic and achievable given the capacity of Blue Bermondsey and our current connections.

Your levy contribution and how it is spent is of the paramount priority to the BID board because like you, we are local business owners who care passionately about local business and treasure the distinctive community spirit that is prevalent in the local community. Nevertheless this does not qualify us to get things right and we are reliant on the approval of our contributing businesses and wholeheartedly respect and welcome your input on this document.

Blue Bermondsey is home to some of the most diverse and fascinating small businesses in Southwark and we want to promote this fact and bring more business to you by communicating this to prospective customers and investors. The pending developments in Canada Water and Old Kent Road will present incomparable challenges to us and we want our area to be ready to compete and attract new customers and visitors. As many of you may be aware, a large portion of the Biscuit factory site will be developed into housing with thousands of new residents coming to the area we want to be geared up to attract these new residents to shop and do business locally and envisage these unprecedented future developments as an amazing opportunity for local business to prosper.