

Under pressure and on the edge London's South Bank: A manifesto for action

Foreword by Kate Hoey MP and Simon Hughes MP

Over the past 20 years there have been major changes to London's South Bank. It is no longer 'on the wrong side of the River'. It has recently become London's most popular tourist destination.

20 years ago the South Bank meant a small area of riverside stretching from County Hall to the National Theatre. Now it runs from Lambeth Bridge to Blackfriars Bridge and south to St George's Circus. It is a vital part of central London and one of its most important neighbourhoods. It boasts two universities, the country's largest railway station, one of its great teaching hospitals, and one of its leading social enterprises. It is home to some of the world's most successful businesses, some of the nation's leading arts and media organisations, and a fast growing residential population.

But the South Bank is under pressure. Part of it has been designated in the London Plan as an 'Opportunity Area' where tall buildings and intensive development are expected. Land and property values are increasing and this creates specific difficulties for those responsible for providing public and community services. It also increases 'churn' as residents and businesses move out in search of cheaper accommodation and disruption as buildings are refurbished and redeveloped.

This may be an inevitable stage in the transformation of the area but it requires careful planning, co-ordinated and focused management, and proper resourcing. However the South Bank is on the edge of two Boroughs which suffer extensive deprivation and have found it difficult to resource the maintenance and management of the area's increasingly busy public realm, let alone the

proactive 'management of change' now required. Over the past ten years additional resources provided under various Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) programmes have been essential in facilitating change, but these programmes are now coming to an end.

During this time a unique partnership has developed between South Bank's major businesses, arts organisations, universities, health and other public agencies. Together with Lambeth and Southwark Councils, Transport for London, the London Development Agency, and local residents represented by their ward councillors and MPs, they form the South Bank Partnership which has been co-ordinating change and managing some of its inevitable tensions. Now with the publication of the draft Waterloo Development Framework, the ending of SRB, continuing pressure on local authority finances, and the increasing inadequacy of resources available for investment in maintenance and management of the public realm, we are publishing this manifesto for action.

We want to end uncertainties around the future of Waterloo Station and the Hungerford car park. We want to see proper investment in the public realm and co-ordination of neighbourhood management. We want training and brokerage programmes to ensure that people throughout Lambeth and Southwark can secure jobs created by new development and by cultural and tourist activity. We want to ensure the area gets the new community facilities it needs.

We are publishing this manifesto so that public, private and community organisations can see the actions which are required and can 'bend' their programmes accordingly.

The stakes are high. If we do not secure the community facilities and neighbourhood schools we require, the area will increasingly house a transient population and lose the families which have given it stability and strength during this period of change.

Similarly, if we fail to find mechanisms to fund proper management and maintenance of the public realm, the area will lose its attraction to tourists and businesses. We have already lost major employers such as J. Sainsbury and 3i and others have announced their intention to relocate. Without adequate demand the hoped-for private investment and job creation will not occur.

If we are creative and work together, and make use of the networks and partnerships which now exist, we will be able to harness the pressures of change to the benefit of the people, businesses and activities of the South Bank and of the wider community of which we are on the edge.

If we are successful we will not only secure the future of the South Bank and contribute significantly to the wider London and national economies but we will have demonstrated a new way of working together which will have relevance in cities across the country.

It will not be the first time that new ideas have been piloted on London's South Bank!



Kate Hoey MP
for Vauxhall

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kate Hoey".

Kate Hoey MP



Simon Hughes MP
for North
Southwark and
Bermondsey

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Simon Hughes".

Simon Hughes MP

Co-Chairmen of South Bank Partnership

The Action Plan

Our call to action is addressed to national government, the Mayor, the Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark, local businesses and community organisations.

This Action Plan aims to fulfil five fundamental objectives

- Economic growth, new developments and new jobs
- Improved schools and training, especially to benefit local people without work
- A safe, clean and accessible environment for all
- An efficient transport interchange and improved gateway to London
- Increased opportunities for culture, sport, recreation and shopping

We are seeking recognition of the South Bank as a unique area within central London. Part of what makes it unique is the collaborative spirit already at work in this complex business and residential neighbourhood.

The South Bank Partnership, which brings together major local stakeholders, elected representatives and statutory authorities, has an outstanding track record of working with a strong and diverse social enterprise and voluntary sector to deliver successful local initiatives. We have proved that there is another way of doing things: business working in partnership with the community to achieve mutual benefit.

We have the capacity to make an exceptional contribution to national, regional and local priorities and believe the South Bank could pioneer a new form of neighbourhood leadership and delivery.

Adopting our Action Plan will deliver real benefits for workers, commuters and visitors to the South Bank and for residents in and beyond the area.

The South Bank Partnership Neighbourhood has a population of around 12,000, in some 5800 households. 65% of the population is white, with Black Caribbean and Black African the largest non-white groups. Less than a quarter of homes are privately owned; nearly 60% are rented from the councils or registered social landlords. There are over 50,000 employees working in the area.

Source ONS Census Information

To achieve success we ask

National Government to recognise and respond to

- The unique character and importance of the neighbourhood and its capacity to contribute to the 'double devolution' agenda in a key business district
- Local willingness to pilot a delivery-oriented response to the forthcoming White Paper and Neighbourhood Charter and the need to support local organisations to deliver such a pilot
- The need for leadership, including strategic ministerial intervention, in key areas such as the redevelopment of Waterloo Station

The Mayor and his Agencies to reinforce their commitment to

- Ensuring the success of the area, which is so crucial to the Mayor's strategies for economic development, tourism, culture and transport, as well as to 2012
- Backing specific elements of this Plan with significant funding

Lambeth and Southwark to adopt a partnership approach which

- Maximises cross-borough collaboration
- Investigates all opportunities for partnership and commissioning with local business and community organisations to secure borough objectives including the constant pressure for cost savings and value for money
- Supports the participation of executive and ward councillors and senior officers in South Bank Partnership so that it can be effective and accountable in overseeing the implementation of this Plan
- Promotes engagement with South Bank Forum and other community networks and organisations
- Supports opportunities to improve community facilities and neighbourhood management
- Recognises the agenda of the private sector and of other public sector agencies in the area

The Private and Community Sector

- Prioritise better community facilities and neighbourhood management in Section 106 negotiations
- Actively support South Bank Partnership
- Actively seek opportunities to assist training and employment of Lambeth and Southwark residents
- Encourage staff involvement in improving community facilities and mentoring new businesses and young entrepreneurs

We ask that all levels of government, national, regional and local,

- Recognise and use the delivery capacity of neighbourhood business and community organisations
- Support the role of South Bank Partnership in coordinating and overseeing neighbourhood improvements
- Endorse and fund the Partnership's Action Plan on the following page

The Action Plan

The individual sections of this manifesto set out the context and spell out the potential for our neighbourhood. The necessary actions are summarised below:

Wealth creation

- Support and facilitate the development and new jobs envisaged by the Mayor's London Plan and the Lambeth and Southwark local plans.
- Establish and fund a strategic, employer-led programme of job brokerage and skills training to ensure that local people have every opportunity to secure the new jobs created by new development, cultural and tourist activity in the neighbourhood
- Invest in childcare, in education at all levels and in training
- Support the tourist economy in partnership with front-line tourist enterprises and the South Bank Marketing Group to increase the amount of time and money visitors spend in the area
- Fund improved signage, visitor information and public toilet facilities
- Support improved retail across the neighbourhood, including the niche businesses of Lower Marsh
- Support the growth and improvement of the neighbourhood's two universities, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, and of the cultural organisations in the area, bringing the South Bank Centre up to modern international standards and securing the future of BFI on the South Bank
- Establish local mechanisms to maximise the community benefit from development and coordinate the delivery of Section 106 funds in the area

Physical environment

- Recognise that the neighbourhood's Central London location and huge daytime population need levels of service and investment beyond the capacity of the boroughs and outside the normal local government funding process
- Recognise the need for specific additional funding to deal with maintenance backlogs
- Develop a joint investment plan between the neighbourhood, the boroughs and Transport for London to deliver improvements and remedy backlogs
- Establish a common standard and full coordination for the management of public space in the area, whether publicly or privately owned, and secure the funding to achieve a standard appropriate for a key central London business and tourist area
- Settle outstanding disputes on ownership and responsibility
- Resolve remaining eyesores - such as Hungerford Car Park, the IMAX roundabout and subways, and Waterloo Station environs
- Deliver key open space improvements and secure new open and public space where development permits.
- Fund and deliver improved CCTV coverage
- Support the continuing effective coordination between public and private CCTV systems
- Support full cross-borough coordination of police, wardens and crime prevention activity

Transport

- Support the redevelopment of Waterloo Station, and an improved transport interchange in Waterloo Road
- Use local knowledge and input to support the Department for Transport, Network Rail, Transport for London and neighbouring landowners in developing a joined-up approach to the future of Waterloo station
- Support Thameslink 2000, Airtrack and the Cross River Tram
- Improve key pedestrian routes

Quality of life

- Ensure local children have access to high quality early years, primary and secondary education in or close to the South Bank
- Provide development-financed affordable housing on site or locally – including family units – to maintain the residential mix
- Support funding for local estate improvements
- Support continued community and business initiatives which augment health, crime prevention and education priorities, both in the immediate neighbourhood and the wider area
- Support the Doon Street leisure complex, a new library and Joint Service Centre, playgrounds and community space
- Fund locally driven initiatives to reduce CO2 emissions and improve waste recycling
- Support current plans to strengthen and sustain community development in the area and reinforce community capacity and delivery by the transfer to the community of available local government assets

Decisions on all these matters need to be made urgently.

The South Bank Partnership will work with all relevant authorities to identify a programme for the improvements it hopes to see in the area, linked to the next local government term up to 2010, to the need to secure major improvements before the 2012 Olympics, and to the end date of the current Mayor's Plan in 2016.

Support the South Bank Partnership's manifesto and Action Plan for the contribution it will make towards London's economic success and for the advantages it will bring to deprived communities.

We must act now to secure the benefits.