

Better Bankside BID: Enhancing the Bankside attractiveness

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Better Bankside's office at the back of the Tate Modern.

Since the legislation for the BID (Business Improvement District) was approved by the UK's parliament in 2004, more than 30 BIDs have been operating in London. A BID is one of the area management systems which rely on the self-initiated area improvement system by the public. This time we interviewed Mr. Peter William, CEO of Better Bankside, about the BID project on the Bankside area in London. Apart from the Bankside, Mr. William is also managing five other BIDs in London and preparing for the establishment of four BIDs.

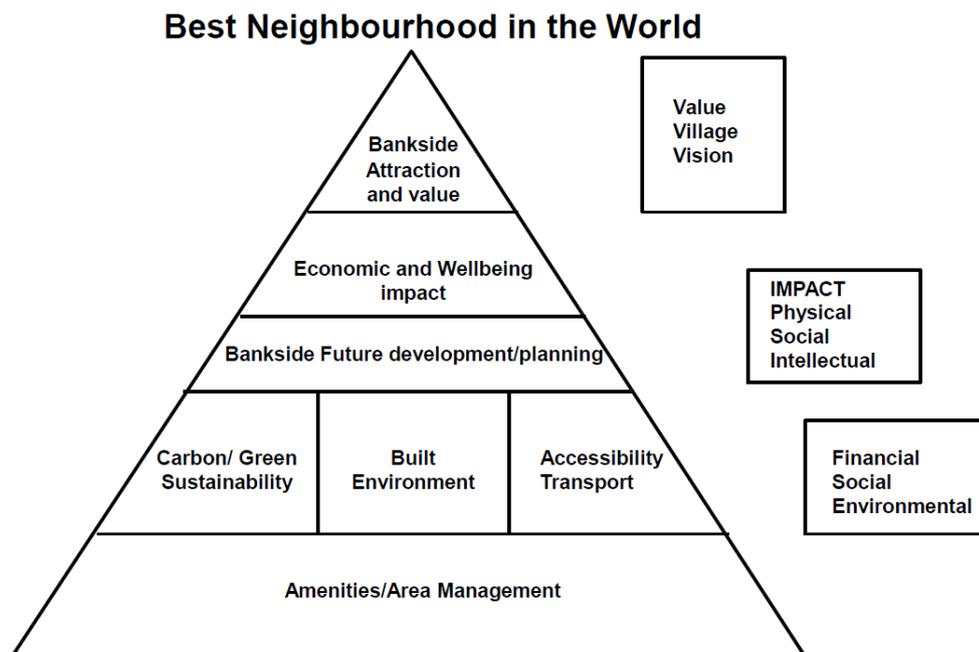
1. Summary

Better Bankside BID is a not-for-profit company aiming at improving the quality of an area and enhancing the competitiveness of its businesses. Main source of income of the company comes from the levy collected from the businesses operating within the BID area.

A BID term in the UK is 5 years at the longest, it must be approved via ballot to seek renewal. Better Bankside has started its new term since April 2015, as its first “Five Year Business Plan” was approved in November 2014.

2. Vision

Better Bankside’s targets being the “Best Neighbourhood in the World”. The structure of action plans for achieving this goal is shown in the graph below, starting from the bottom layer to the top. The most fundamental issue is “Amenities/ Area Management”, which aims to secure public safety and a clean environment in the area. The upper initiatives of this are “Carbon/ Green Sustainability”, “Built Environment” and “Accessibility Transport”, followed by “Bankside Future development/ planning”, “Economic and Well-being Impact” and “Bankside Attraction and value”.



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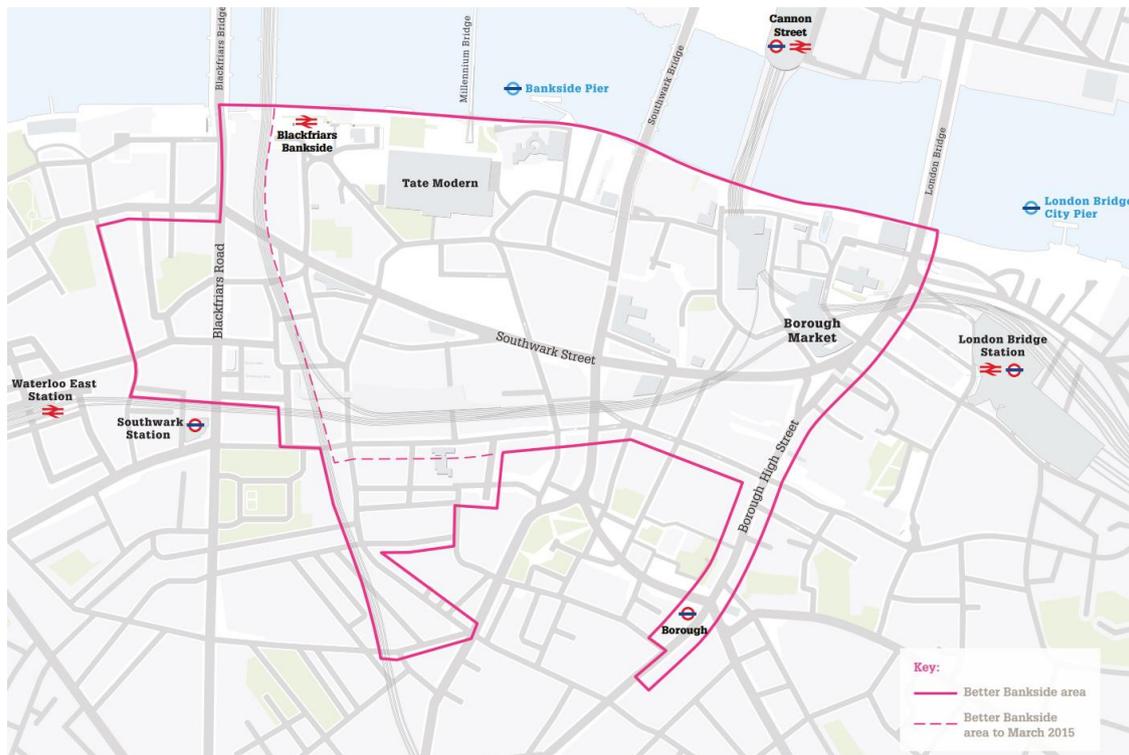
3. Location of the BID

The location of the Better Bankside BID is the south side of the River Thames (South Bank), where the Tate Modern, an art museum attracting 5 million visitors annually, Shakespeare’s Globe and Borough Market are located (see the map below). Historically the South Bank area is known for poor public safety and the level of rent is relatively low. However, the opening of the Tate Modern and the Millennium Bridge in 2000 gained

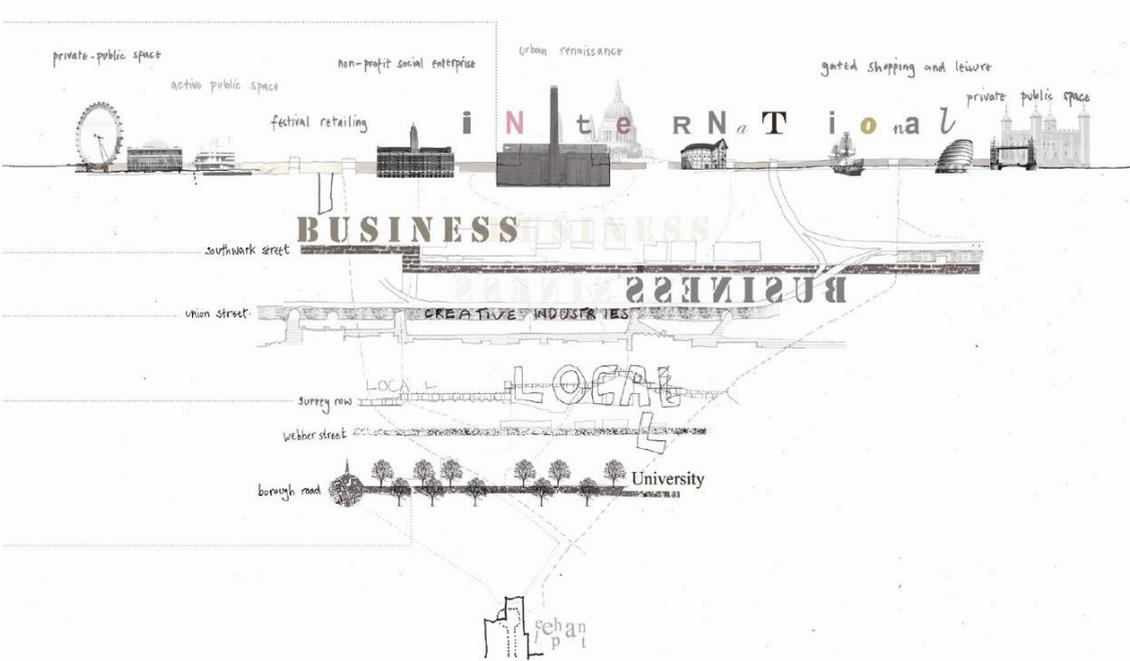
people’s attention for this area. Moreover, it is highly likely that people will pay even greater attention to this area after the extension of the Tate Modern by Herzog & de Meuron is completed in 2016. While there are a lot of icons between the London Eye (a Ferris wheel) and the Tower Bridge along the River Thames, which together have formed an internationally recognized area; the hinterland is still local (see the picture below).

During its 3rd term, Better Bankside has expanded its boundary. While expansion of the BID area leads to a larger amount of tax income, it becomes more challenging to control the area. Therefore Mr. William believes that the BID should not become too large. As of March 2015, there are 700 business members in the area which must pay the levy and approximately 70,000 employees in the area.

There is the London Bridge BID at the west of Better Bankside and the Waterloo BID at the east. These three BIDs are collaborating with each other, for instance, to provide a smartphone application “Riverside London App” to provide sightseeing information for the area.



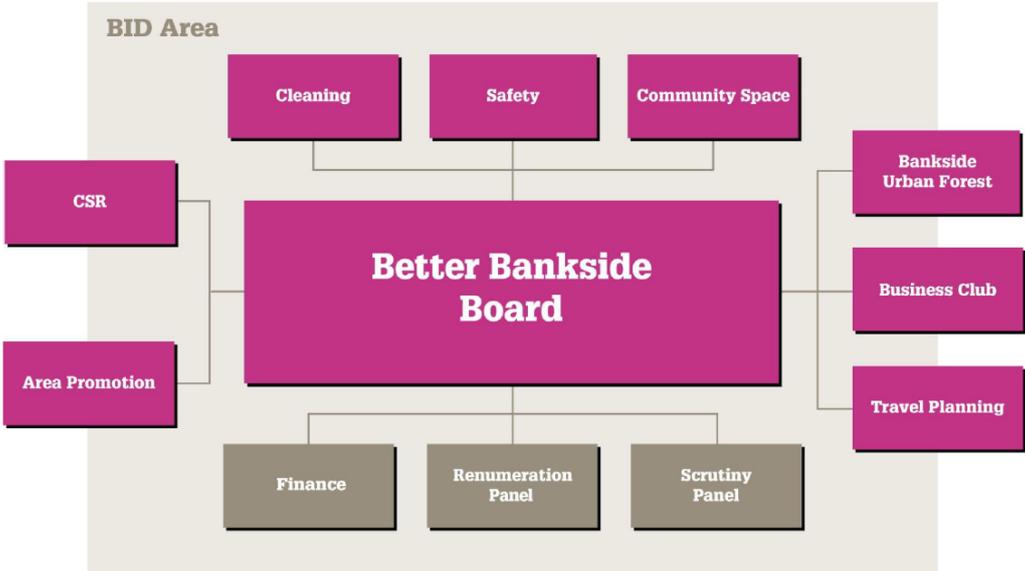
Source: Better Bankside official website.



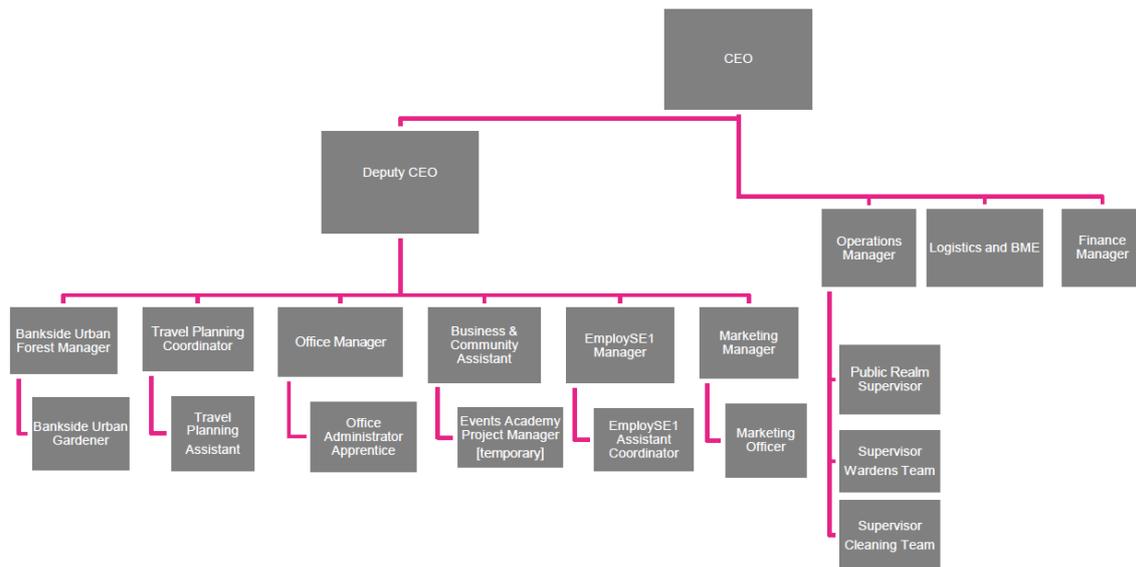
Source: Better Bankside's presentation material, 18 March 2015.

4. The Organization

The organizational chart of Better Bankside is shown below. There are around 30 staff in the organization in total. Among them, about 20 are office staff, the remaining are cleaners and street ambassadors etc., and almost all of the staff are full time employee. The activities of Better Bankside are divided into 8 categories, which are being operated by each team with their own budget. Apart from these staff, there is a board with 17 members.



Source: Better Bankside official website.



Source: Better Bankside's presentation material, 18 March 2015.

5. Major activities of the 5 years plan

Major activities of the 5 years plan of the Better Bankside, approved in November 2014 are listed as follow (including supplementary comments):

5-1. Safety

- Put in place services that address the needs for safety and security throughout the night time hours.
- Raise the awareness of the threats from terrorism and cyber-crime.
- Develop closer working relationships with neighboring BIDs and other agencies to reinforce the security of the South Bank area.

5-2. Environmental Maintenance and Performance

- Encourage and promote year round use of public and private places and spaces.
- Develop and implement a continuous improvement plan for street furniture and public assets.
- Increase the recycling of waste materials and reduce large vehicle movement.

5-3. Area Promotion

- Position Bankside as the premier visitor destination.
Currently Bankside is highlighted in the area promotion within London, while South Bank is highlighted overseas.
- Position Bankside as a premier destination for meetings, conferences and events in London.

5-4. Business Club

- Achieve better breadth and depth of member engagement.
- Support businesses by helping them to meet, learn and trade in Bankside, creating a “business village” feel in Bankside.

5-5. Corporate Responsibility

- Increase employment opportunities and aspirations for people.

5-6. Travel Planning

- Rebalance Bankside streets to provide for more walking and cycling.
Repair service: when people bring their bicycles to the Better Bankside’s office on Friday morning and have it repaired in the same afternoon.
- Increase foot traffic to the west and south of the area through targeted interventions along Great Suffolk Street.
- Emphasizing “Walk” with organizing events such as “Art Walk” or “Architectural Walk”.

5-7. Bankside Urban Forest

- Commissioning and delivering exemplary public realm projects that connect new developments with the existing urban fabric, encouraging foot traffic and dwell time in the streets and spaces away from the honey-pot sites along the riverside.
- Ensure that Bankside is as known locally, nationally and internationally for its commissioning of art in the public realm (see the picture below).

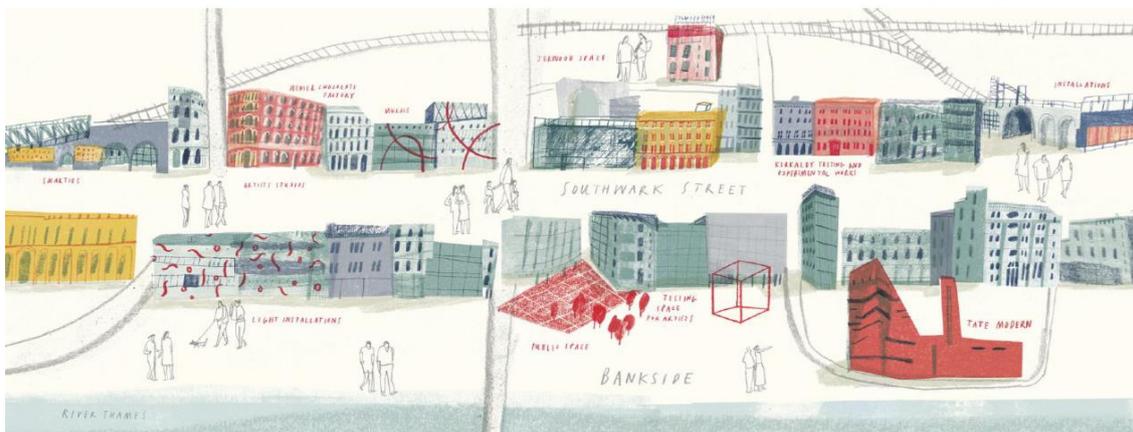
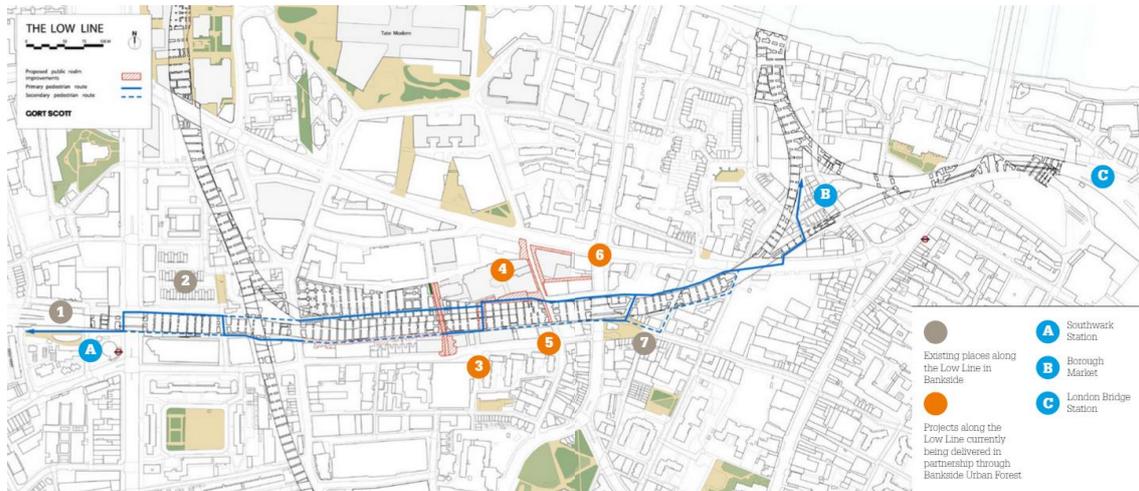


Image of Art Avenue

Source: Better Bankside’s presentation material, 18 March 2015.

- Develop the “Low Line (see the pictures below)” under partnership with the Network Rail, which is the owner and operator of most of the rail infrastructure in Great Britain.



Source: Better Bankside official website.

- Be the greenest business neighborhood in the world.
- Investment of 1 million pounds (approx. 170 million yen) matched by a further 3 million pounds (approx. 530 million yen) public and private sector investment (Exchange rate: GBP1=JPY177).
- Better Bankside invests in the greening and improvement of streets. As value of the properties increases with the improved environment, the tax income of BID also increases. It is possible to make use of money from Section 106* for environmental



neighboring BIDs and differentiate promotional strategies of South Bank and Bankside according to targets. It seems an interesting topic to conduct research on the other BIDs in London and those of New York next time.