

Committees: Public Relations & Economic Development Sub (Policy & Resources) – for decision Culture Heritage & Libraries – For information	Date: 6 July 2017
Subject: Permitting filming & photography for advertising purposes on Tower Bridge	Public
Report of: Director of Communications	For Decision
Report author: Joanna Burnaby-Atkins, Film Liaison Manager Chris Earlie, Head of Tower Bridge	

Summary

Tower Bridge currently permits advertising shoots inside the Bridge, mainly within the Walkways, and only if they will help to promote Tower Bridge's successful commercial tourism business. However since the run up to the 2012 Olympics, apart from exceptional cases, the organisation has not facilitated brand promotional shoots on the exterior of the Bridge. We believe some commercial advertising shoots on the bridge, such as some luxury or British brands, could actually be good for the image of the bridge, raise its profile and could increase income.

Recommendation

This report recommends to Members that requests to film on the Bridge at pavement level should be assessed on a case by case basis and if the brand or product is suitable and the fee is attractive permission should be granted.

Main Report

Background

1. Before 2009 selective advertising was permitted on the exterior of the bridge. These included Johnnie Walker whisky; Storm Watches, Dunhill Perfume and Total Oil. However in 2009, in the run up, during and post the 2012 Olympics there was a huge increase in demand from many types of brands wishing to promote themselves to an international market using the Bridge as a backdrop. There was also a big increase in the number of charities wishing to film PR stunts on the bridge. As well as becoming unfeasible to facilitate these numerous requests there was a clear need to protect the image of the bridge, its status as a national landmark and any resulting potential reputational implication for the City of London Corporation.

Current Position

2. Tower Bridge currently facilitates two forms of third party filming activity. Firstly filming which takes place inside the Bridge (mainly the interior walkways) and does not feature the external structure of the Bridge, with there being no potential for reputational association with the City. These are dealt with on a case by case basis as business decisions, judged and negotiated on the potential for disruption to the tourism business balanced with the potential for high levels of promotion for the business at Tower Bridge. For example filming for the new Paddington movie was facilitated within the Walkways as it has the significant potential to showcase the visitor attraction on a substantial international level. It is not proposed that current arrangements are altered in this regard as this generates income and publicity for the Bridge as a tourist attraction and is facilitated at a manageable level.
3. The second type of activity facilitated currently is for requests to film at Bridge level but only for television shows, movies, or news stories where there is little room for the organisation to be associated with a commercial brand or product. This report solely looks to address this type of filming, which takes place on or from the Bridge in relation to activity taking place on Corporation property, and looks to open this up to paid filming for the purposes of promoting a particular brand or product at road or pavement level only. To apply a few examples, this could take the form of a car advertisement as it drives over the Bridge or an advertisement for a camera being used by a pedestrian on the Bridge's pavement.
4. Since 2009 the only advertising or brand promotion that has been permitted on the exterior of the bridge has been those with the over-riding factor that they primarily promote London as a whole, these are usually endorsed by London & Partners and are usually shoots promoting a large London event or film release.
5. Requests that have been refused over the last five years include Jaguar, Burberry, Links jewellery and TM Lewin menswear.
6. Commercial brands wishing to feature Tower Bridge as their backdrop have always been able to do so by filming on many areas of the Southbank, in particular on Potters Field, a privately owned location, where it is possible to have Tower Bridge framed majestically in the backdrop. Prominent brands that have filmed or photographed commercials here include Coca Cola, Hilton Hotels, Skoda Cars, H&M and BT. It should be noted that there is no potential for the organisation to benefit from this type of filming, where the bridge is used solely as a backdrop and no filming takes place on the corporation asset itself, as this is precluded by Freedom of Panorama copyright and the fact that the image of a structure cannot be trademarked.

Proposals

7. It is proposed that in view of the fact advertising takes place beyond our control on the Southbank that we would not be harming the reputation of the bridge by permitting some advertising shoots on or from the bridge itself (where the activity

physically takes place on City property) where the brand is not contentious and the fee is beneficial. There is the potential to raise up to £10,000 extra revenue for the bridge per year

8. This proposal is in relation to paid filming activity utilising the Bridge at road or pavement level in a 'business as usual' circumstance and does not include publicity stunts or public events for commercial or charitable purposes which may involve zip lines, climbing, abseiling, lighting the Bridge (current guidelines are in place for allowing lighting to be altered in cases of national and international significance), vehicles/stuntmen jumping from the Bridge into the river, or any exceptional or highly unusual activity, which is normally politely declined as this would set an otherwise unmanageable precedent and has wider implications in terms of reputational association with the City.

Implications

9. By permitting some advertising shoots on the bridge there is the potential to raise up to £10,000 extra revenue for the bridge per year. Using the expertise of the Tower Bridge's Marketing Team to assess each request on a case by case basis and selecting only quality brands/shoots there is the further potential to raise the profile of the bridge.
10. If demand greatly increased this could have an impact on staff resources in the Tower Bridge Marketing Team which may need to be reviewed in the future.

Conclusion

11. We propose Members agree we allow advertising shoots on Tower Bridge.