



Branding Lab

design competition

Mary Porta's Review of British High Streets spells out the crisis point that Britain's town centres have reached and the urgency by which we have to act if this social and cultural asset is to be protected from irreparable decline. Whilst Portas report was being written, a new culture started to emerge in the shadows of Europe's largest indoor shopping centre. Waltham Forest commissioned a group of forward-thinking designers to revive the local high streets. 2 years on, the spiral of decline has been reversed. Here, amongst shopkeepers, pavement cafes and family-run businesses, Waltham Forest Council are investing to breath new life, pride and commitment into the heart of the local retail community. So far we have seen the installation of jolly new shopfronts, colourful facades, magic animated lighting and elegantly paved trottoirs as a backdrop to the lively bustle of the high street. Businesses have started to invest in their retail outlets again and locals have a renewed sense of civic pride. In a final push to prepare the neighbourhood for the London Olympics, we are now looking for some aspirational young designers to help us complete the task.

Objectives

There are three key objectives which underpin our ambitions for the High Road Leyton Shop Front pilot scheme. Firstly, the project seeks to celebrate Leyton Town Centre as a gateway to the Olympic Park. Secondly, the project seeks to use the Olympics as a catalyst for future economic growth. And thirdly it provides an exemplary model for town centre regeneration, which if successful, may be introduced to other retail centres

across the borough. The high street has recently been confirmed as an Olympic torch relay venue in July, BBC London have been broadcasting the progress of the works, and trader's associations from all over London are eagerly watching the progress hoping to adapt some of the innovative strategies for their own neighbourhoods.

The Project

Before the crowds descend on East London this summer, we now need to ensure that local shops present themselves from their best side. We have set aside funds to target a number of the local shops designated to receive this special treatment, and want to work with up to 10 designers (or design teams) to help with the quest.

This is your opportunity to utilise your creative talents to upgrade a barber's shop to become a hair salon, help a local grocer to celebrate the colour of their fruit and veg, define the character of a greasy spoon, or delicately upgrade a local restaurant into a stylish brasserie. Can you come up with some nifty ideas for fancy shop front lettering, outside seating, elegant signage, classy displays or tasteful floral deco? Or perhaps give advice on internal shop layouts, the presentation of goods for sale or some magic lighting? If you are a design student or graduate we want to hear from you.

Be prepared to get your hands dirty, because it will be your responsibility to work alongside our architects, consult our contractors, negotiate with specialist manufacturers and engage local shopkeepers to see your project realised on site. Could the branding lab be the launchpad for

your career in a completely new type of economy supporting local suppliers and celebrating the idiosyncratic identity of neighbourhoods?

Dates

Competition launch: 23. April 2012
Submission deadline for stage 1: 1. June 2012 (date of postmark)
winners announced & start of implementation phase: 3. June 2012
Official press launch of completed project on the high street: 16. July 2012
Stage 2 winners announced & prize giving.

Participants

The competition is open to recent graduates and students of architecture, design, design and communication or similar.

Competition Material

The competition material can be downloaded at www.brandinglab.co.uk

Prizes

Stage 1: £250 for each winning entry (max. 10)
Stage 2: £500 for final winner

Competition submissions will also feature on the competition website and we are in the process of organising an exhibition of all submissions during the London Open House week-end in September 2012.

Any questions?

You can email us at questions@brandinglab.co.uk. Questions and answers will be posted on the competition website.