**Illuminate Bermondsey & Rotherhithe 2023**

**Lantern Parade from The Blue Market to Southwark Park**

Meet at 5pm Friday 24th November 2023 in Market Place, London SE16 3UQ

Music and food at Southwark Park Bandstand 6pm - 8pm

Buses: 1, 381, P12
Underground: Bermondsey
Train: South Bermondsey
Overground: Canada Water
Bicycles parking available.
Santander dock stations on Southwark Park Road and Clements Road

**Free Public Workshops**

2pm – 4pm Monday 23rd October 2023

Blue Anchor Library, Market Place, London SE16 3UQ

6pm – 8pm Thursday 9th November 2023

Setchell & Longfield TRA Hall, Alscot Way, London SE1 5XN

12noon – 3pm Saturday 11th November 2023

The Blue Market, Market Place, London SE16 3UQ

5pm – 7.30pm Friday 17th November

Wade Hall Dickens Estate TRA, Bardell House, London SE1 2DH

12noon – 3pm Saturday 18th November 2023

The Blue Market, Market Place, London SE16 3UQ

Please check our website for more workshop dates.
www.illuminaterotherhithe.co.uk

**Illuminate Bermondsey & Rotherhithe** is a free annual festival for local residents, inspired by the histories of the Thames, the docks, and migration. Local schools and community groups will create their own lanterns at artist-led workshops, and everyone is invited to gather with their illuminated artworks in Blue Bermondsey Market Place at 5 pm on Friday, November 24, 2023. The parade will depart as darkness falls at 5.30pm for Southwark Park Bandstand, which will be adorned with illuminations, food, and music when the parade arrives. Music will be provided by St. Micheal’s College band plus songs and poems by special guests.

We will be hosting a series of lantern-making workshops before the parade, where you can craft your lantern for the procession. We will offer activities suitable for various skill levels, ranging from small jam jar lanterns to large willow lanterns. Our artists will be there to assist everyone in designing and building their lanterns for the parade.

The overarching theme for all Illuminate events has been the local history of migration, from the Mayflower to the transient London population of today. This year's parade theme will be 'Food and The Blue'. Rotherhithe and Bermondsey has a celebrated history as a bustling dock, where food for the city would arrive by ship for storage and processing in the vast warehouses and factories, Bermondsey became known as London's Larder. The Lantern Parade will narrate the story of boats arriving by water in Bermondsey and Rotherhithe, bringing food from all corners of the globe, along with people and culture. Here was Britain's first Tin Can Factory, and the famous Peak Frean's Biscuit Factory employed thousands of local people. While the factories and warehouses are now homes and workspaces, people from all over the world still come here to sell and share their food in local shops, cafes, and marketplaces. In The Blue Market where our parade assembles you will find street food vendors selling everything from Jellied Eels to Jerk Chicken.

During our free lantern-making workshops, you can create boats journeying from overseas with flags representing different places, or you can make lanterns depicting the various types of food they brought here – biscuits, cans, coffee, fish, dumplings, cheeses, cakes, and an array of fruits and vegetables.

Do you have a favourite food? Have you travelled overseas? We all love to share our favourite foods and tales of travel, and we hope this theme will bring local people together to share their stories and experiences as they create their lanterns for the parade.

In addition to visiting local schools and community groups to make lanterns, our team of artists will be conducting free workshops open to the public in The Blue Market and at other local venues. Check our website for the latest details and booking information.

**BACKGROUND:** Illuminate Rotherhithe is a community lantern parade established by local residents in 2016 and has grown year by year, involving new participants each time in the creation of their lanterns in schools, libraries, TRA Halls, Care Centres, pubs, churches, youth clubs, community centres, gardens, and public spaces. In 2019, Illuminate Rotherhithe expanded into Bermondsey, with new schools and community groups joining in the celebrations throughout the streets of Southwark. The 2022 parade in Southwark Park drew hundreds of participants and volunteers with their hand-made lanterns, creating a spectacular display of community creativity. Illuminate Bermondsey and Rotherhithe has cultivated positive relationships with many schools and community groups, offering valuable outreach and engaging a diverse mix of local people with Southwark Park for this event. Illuminate Rotherhithe was part of the Mayflower celebration, which has concluded, but we have now partnered with Blue Bermondsey BID and the Blue Market Management Team at BLW to continue the parade, starting from the Blue Market Place.

This project carries on the legacy of the English Heritage Unheard Voices / Hidden Histories project, which explored the multicultural origins of the local working-class community. The parade's grand finale will once again be held at Southwark Park's Bandstand, featuring a display of lights, music, and refreshments. Besides being visually stunning, the park provides a safe space for families and is easily accessible to community members with mobility challenges, making the event inclusive for all. Our goal is to involve everyone in the illuminations!

Illuminate Bermondsey is supported by Southwark Present Cultural Celebration Fund, Rotherhithe Consolidates Charities, MIK, The Blue Market Place, Big Local Works, Blue Bermondsey BID and Collaborative Arts C.I.C.

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