

BLME VOTED BEST ISLAMIC BANK IN THE UK FOR THIRD YEAR RUNNING

- *Bank wins Islamic Finance News awards for Best Islamic Bank in the UK & real estate deal of 2011*

London, 6 January 2012 – Bank of London and The Middle East plc (BLME), the largest Islamic bank in Europe, has today announced that it has been awarded Best Islamic bank in the UK by the Islamic Finance News Annual Poll for 2011. This is the third year running BLME has won the award and is testament to the Bank's position as a pioneer in the global Islamic Finance industry.

BLME also won Best Real Estate Deal of the Year for its £14 million financing of The Brewery Square Development Company, a partnership between Resolution Property and Waterhouse to finance Phase 2 of Brewery Square, Dorchester; the largest town centre regeneration project in the South West.

Humphrey Percy, CEO of BLME, said: "2011 was another difficult year for the banking industry. Against the backdrop of a tough economic environment we have continued to expand our business by recruiting more staff, developing and launching new products and diversifying our offering and client base."

He added "I would like to thank all of our employees for their hard work, dedication and enthusiasm. To achieve the title of Best Islamic Bank in the UK for the third year in a row is outstanding. The Best Real Estate Deal gives recognition to BLME and the innovative Brewery Square project as a landmark deal for the industry and demonstrates the importance for Islamic banks and the UK economy of funding key domestic regeneration and development projects. This is a significant milestone for the Islamic finance industry and demonstrates that Islamic finance is a viable alternative to conventional financing."

Andrew Wadsworth of Waterhouse said: "In an otherwise difficult debt market, the BLME team's flexible and positive view of development funding was as refreshing as it was welcome."

The two awards will be formally presented to BLME at the Islamic Finance News Awards ceremony in February 2012. This award recognises BLME's achievements and successes in the fields of healthcare, energy, property and transportation, providing a high quality service, innovative product development and leading position in the UK market.

The Islamic Finance News Awards are widely recognised as the most transparent and comprehensive in the industry. Now in their 7th year, the Islamic Finance News Awards select the best providers of Islamic financial services across a number of markets worldwide, as well as specific sectors including Islamic finance issuers, investors, non-banking financial intermediaries and government bodies.