

TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY & DELIVERY PLANS – 2016–2020

# LEYTONSTONE



# THE OPPORTUNITY

Grow and diversify Leytonstone's independent retail, food and drink offer, supported by new housing and small-scale business space on key development sites, as well as improvements to the public realm, reducing the impact of traffic congestion and improving connections to the west and north.

**Leytonstone is the borough's second largest retail centre, set on the edge of significant green space at Epping Forest and Wanstead Flats with established residential neighbourhoods. Leytonstone is increasingly home to small independent retailers, food and drink businesses and supports a number of artisan and boutique markets, as well as a growing arts scene. However, the town centre's retail offer is dominated by Tesco at the northern end which is a car-friendly, out-of-town facility, further reinforced by the proximity of the A12 via the Green Man roundabout. With direct access to the Central Line, Overground and the regional road network, it is open to competition from nearby Westfield and central London, but is likely to benefit from the night tube's introduction.**

There have been recent town centre improvements in Leytonstone including renovation of the Old Red Lion pub and use of St John's churchyard for markets and community events. The Council has invested in buildings, including

the library, and the public realm, most notably around the entrance to the underground station. A place-shaping plan for the town centre was developed in 2016 to help guide investment and development across the town centre; this builds on the Local Plan which outlines the potential for 500 homes to be built in the town centre. The Fred Wigg and John Walsh Towers (Montague Road Estate) have been identified as priorities for investment and improvement.

To the south of the town centre and Overground Station, the new Crossrail stations at Maryland and Forest Gate in 2019 could be a catalyst for further growth and change. However, one of the challenges is that the High Road stretching south from the town centre to the borough boundary with Newham has a dispersed and underperforming shopping and business offer, with the area also experiencing higher levels of deprivation than most parts of the borough. Part of the wider Leytonstone delivery plan will include investment in shopfronts, business support and

improvements to the appearance of the public realm around Cann Hall Road/Cathall Road and the entrance to Langthorne Park as a catalyst for further investment across the south of Leytonstone.

## WHAT LOCAL PEOPLE HAVE TOLD US ABOUT LEYTONSTONE

82% of Leytonstone residents said that they were happy with the regeneration that has taken place to date (*Shaping Growth research, January 2016*). Respondents said that what they most like about Leytonstone is that it is diverse, with many different cultures and that Westfield shopping centre is in close proximity; however, clearly this has an impact on Leytonstone's competitiveness as a town centre. Residents also have concerns about pressure on existing services, in particular access to hospitals and GPs.

## CASE STUDY

# HIGH ROAD LEYTONSTONE

A tribute to film-maker Alfred Hitchcock, who was born in the area, was installed along the High Road as part of works in 2013/14. Paying homage to his 1963 film The Birds, bespoke paving slabs are now decorated with bird silhouettes, and the building next to his former home (now a petrol station) was transformed with a mural showing a scene from the film.

The attractive Victorian terrace at the corner of High Road Leytonstone and West Street was restored, while businesses, including the Noted Eel & Pie House were improved. The

nearby Acacia Centre, which provides a wide range of business space was refurbished, including:

- 14 new shopfront facades plus a refurbished supermarket frontage along the high street
- New high quality granite paving, raised junction tables and carriageway resurfacing
- New footway parking, loading bay and cycle stands and improved signage and street furniture to create a more pleasant public space



## DELIVERY PLAN: LEYTONSTONE TOWN CENTRE AND HIGH ROAD

ACTIVITY	PURPOSE	TIMINGS	COUNCIL RESOURCE	PARTNERS
1 New food, drink, arts and crafts markets	To provide exciting events and markets into the town centre, e.g. in St John's Churchyard	2017 onwards	Events team, Regeneration	Local businesses, St John's Church
2 £500,000 improvements to open spaces, community and cultural facilities and streetscape	To improve the street scene, activate open spaces and lift the appearance and the business environment along South Leytonstone High Road	2016-2017	Regeneration, Parks, Business Support	Local businesses
3 Improvements to streets and shopfronts, including entrance to the underground	To improve the welcome to Leytonstone and encourage increased shoppers and visitors to support local businesses	2017-2020	Regeneration	Transport for London, St John's Church
4 Development on the Church Lane car park	To develop options for a mix of meanwhile uses ahead of longer-term development plans	2017-2020	Regeneration, Housing Property, Highways, Parking	Landowners, developers
5 Improved connection to housing estates undergoing regeneration	To improve links between housing estates, the High Road, station, open spaces and town centre	2017-2020	Regeneration, Housing	Local businesses, Developers, Housing Associations
6 Developing brief to utilise Council assets, specifically in South Leytonstone for new community/leisure facilities along Cathall Road	To create a mix of activity and facilities and support the growth along South Leytonstone High Road	2017-2020	Regeneration, Property/Asset Management	Developers, sports and leisure providers, community organisations
7 Proposals for Whipps Cross Hospital site and easier and safer connections between the hospital site and the town centre	To encourage better connections between the hospital and the town centre to increase use of the town centre by hospital employees and incorporation of longer-term proposals for the hospital	2017-2020	Highways, Regeneration, Planning Policy	NHS, Transport for London
8 Examine options for strategic transport interventions, such as improvements to one-way traffic system through the town centre and improve walking and cycling routes	To reduce congestion and pollution through the town centre and improve the overall walking, cycling experience, connections over the A12, to the station and Wanstead Flats	2018-2021	Highways, Regeneration, Planning Policy	Transport for London, Network Rail
9 Proposals and delivery plans for new housing, shopping and leisure uses on key sites, specifically Tesco, Matalan and Network Rail sites	To develop new housing and secure associated community benefits. To develop better integration between sites and the High Street, introducing a wider mix of uses	2017-2022	Regeneration, Housing, planning	Local businesses, Developers, Housing Associations