

TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY & DELIVERY PLANS - 2016-2020

HIGHAMS PARK



HIGHAMS PARK TOWN CENTRE



THE OPPORTUNITY

Highams Park is a small centre based around the railway and in close proximity to the green spaces of Epping Forest. The new Tesco development dominates the centre, but it still manages to retain its character. The geography of the centre, with the railway line splitting it in half contributes to traffic congestion and affects how it works as a town centre. However, it has a strong sense of community, with new residents, a range of small retailers and a real asset in the form of the Regal Cinema which could develop into a small but important independent-led cultural centre.

Highams Park benefits from access to the London Overground and in recent years the development of a large Tesco store and car park in 2012, increases in housing developments and other town centre and community uses.

Although this has contributed to its growth, there have been impacts on

retailers elsewhere in the centre and some smaller units have remained vacant over several years.

Committed local groups are working on a Neighbourhood Forum Plan, which will help to shape the centre in the coming years, as well as proposals for the nearby park and wider engagement, particularly with young people in the area.

WHAT LOCAL PEOPLE HAVE TOLD US ABOUT HIGHAMS PARK

Residents in Highams Park use their high street less frequently than residents in other town centres. The People Shaping Places research (May 2016) indicated that people would like to see a greater variety of shops in the high street.

DELIVERY PLAN: HIGHAMS PARK

ACTIVITY	PURPOSE	TIMINGS	COUNCIL RESOURCE	PARTNERS
1 Improvement programme for town centre shopfronts using New Homes Bonus funding	To improve and invest in the business environment in key locations in the town centre	2016–2017	Regeneration	Local businesses, property owners
2 Bring vacant units in key sites back into use	Supporting the vitality of the town centre by bringing retail units into use that have been vacant for several years	2017 onwards	Regeneration, Business Team	Local businesses, property owners
3 Coordination with Neighbourhood Forum and Neighbourhood Plan	To build on and support development of existing local plans and aspirations	2016 onwards	Regeneration, Planning Policy	Neighbourhood Forum and residents
4 Bring the Regal Cinema back into use	To create a destination for an exciting cultural, creative and arts programme	2017–onwards	Regeneration, Planning Policy	Landowner, developer
5 Facilitate a café or similar community use in the railway signal box	To bring an interesting building in the heart of the town centre back into use	2017–2018	Regeneration, Planning Policy	Local groups, Network Rail
6 Support the expansion of the food, drink and evening economy offer	To improve the mix of businesses in the town centre and increase footfall beyond 5pm	2017–onwards	Regeneration, Planning Policy	Local businesses