



Working with you to improve Wandsworth

Economic Development Programme 2007-2009



Introduction

The Economic Development Office (EDO) is responsible for leading the implementation of the council's corporate objective of building a prosperous and vibrant community in Wandsworth. This involves ensuring there are a growing number of successful businesses, ensuring all residents have access to employment opportunities no matter where they live co-ordinating efforts to tackle deprivation in the borough's more needy neighbourhoods, helping the voluntary sector to provide better services and making sure our town centres are thriving. Residents also want to enjoy a range of cultural and leisure activities. The council's economic development policies are key to building an attractive, safe and healthy environment. The EDO works in partnership with the private sector, voluntary sector and other public agencies to improve Wandsworth's economy.

The role of the EDO

- Be a voice for business within the council, within and outside the borough.
- Provide a strategic framework for many other council and government services.
- Work with all council departments to improve services for Wandsworth businesses, both large and small.
- Ensure value for money through effective procurement and contract monitoring.
- Lead many of the council's bids for Government and other grant funding.
- Provide input to the community strategy to meet our duty to promote economic, social and environmental well-being within the borough.



Mike Brook
Economic Development Officer

Our aims and objectives

- Encourage a viable and prosperous economy in Wandsworth, particularly for small enterprises and young entrepreneurs.
- Deliver co-ordinated regeneration initiatives in the priority neighbourhoods of East Battersea, Roehampton and, to a lesser, extent Tooting.
- Maximise the potential of our five town centres for local businesses and residents.
- Develop the skills of Wandsworth's adult workforce.
- Stimulate a thriving community by encouraging a diverse and strong community and voluntary sector.

Customer research

In order to ensure that we continue to react to the changing need of our community, we carry out a variety of customer and partner research surveys each year. The results of this research are shared with key partners to agree on the provision of future services. Our events are also evaluated to ascertain if any changes are required to improve our practices.

“The EDO is dedicated to working with both businesses and residents to make Wandsworth a better place to live, work and play”

Councillor James Cousins

Key agencies

A number of different agencies make significant contributions to the local economy.

These include:

- Serco, who operate the Business Link service to help develop London’s small businesses.
- The London Development Agency, an executive agency of the Mayor for London, who support areas in need of renewal, improve access to skills and jobs, strengthen business competitiveness and present a powerful image of London as a vibrant place.
- Small and diverse, strong and independent voluntary sector which contributes to a strong community.
- Department for Work and Pension’s Jobcentre Plus, responsible for helping the unemployed to secure jobs and dealing with their benefits. They also provide a dedicated service to employers to assist in filling job vacancies quickly.
- Department for Education and Skill’s Learning and Skills council is responsible for post-16 education and skills development. Its aim is to raise participation and attainment through high quality education and training for both personal benefit and to contribute to the economy.
- Key agencies for the voluntary sector are London councils (formerly the Association of London Government), Legal Services Commission and various Lottery funds.

Outcomes

- Outputs and value for money which compare favourably with the best in London.
- Strong, diverse and sustainable economy based on a vibrant small business sector.
- Increased public and private investment in the borough creating thriving town centres and regenerating the borough’s most deprived areas.
- Stronger, effective local partnerships making a significant contribution to the Wandsworth Local Strategic Partnership.
- Continued delivery of quality services.
- Diverse strong and independent voluntary sector which contributes to a thriving community.



*Councillor James Cousins
Cabinet Member for Regeneration
and Community Safety*



Local challenges

- Ensuring that local businesses, especially small businesses, are able to start up and grow.
- Maintaining our commitment to provide responsive business and employment support in a changing economic climate.
- Keeping our five town centres vibrant and viable.
- Lessening deprivation in East Battersea, Roehampton and, to a lesser extent, Tooting where unemployment remains high compared to the rest of the borough.
- Encouraging the take-up of business and employment support services by all groups, especially the hard to reach groups such as black and minority ethnic residents, people with disabilities and the long-term unemployed.
- Challenging Government plans that could reduce the share of public resources available to Wandsworth.
- Dealing with the shortage of vacant commercial property which makes it difficult to attract inward investors and retain existing expanding businesses.

Partnerships

The EDO continues to view partnerships as essential for the delivery of appropriate, quality services. We lead some partnerships and support and contribute to many others. Our key partnerships include:

- Five town centre partnerships.
- Two regeneration partnerships in East Battersea, and Roehampton.
- The London Business Support Network Steering Group (chaired by the EDO), and its local equivalent, unites over 400 different business support agencies across London to develop and improve business support in our capital.
- The Central London Partnership and the South London Partnership, which promotes the regeneration and development of these sub-regions.
- London Development Agency's London South Central Strategic Priority Area including parts of Wandsworth, Lambeth and Southwark.
- Wandsworth's Lifelong Learning Partnership.
- Wandsworth Chamber of Commerce plays an essential role in most of the strategic partnerships and leads the council's business consultations through the Wandsworth Business Forum. The Chamber is the only representative (of business) organisation based in the Forum.



Priorities

Small business support

- Continue to lobby the London Development Agency to agree a new business start-up strategy for London and contribute local information on local business needs.
- Support proposals to create more employment space in the borough especially the creation of business incubator space in the most deprived parts of the borough (Roehampton and East Battersea).
- Ensure Wandsworth's businesses have access to quality cohesive business support services through the Business Support Network.
- Increase business formation and entrepreneurship in the neighbourhood renewal areas through the young enterprise project in Tooting; One London's business outreach project in Roehampton and the EQUAL funded project (£2.5m) to promote entrepreneurship in London South Central (including East Battersea).
- Implement the Small Business Concordat to make contracting with the council user-friendly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), through adding more information on contracts to the council's web site, preparing a buyers' guide and working with local businesses to help them win contracts.
- Deliver the annual Wandsworth Business Awards.

Employment support

- Work with local partners to secure funds for projects which help reduce the number and proportion of the borough's unemployed.
- Contribute to the Local Strategic Partnership study of young black male unemployment and helping to get more of this group back into work.
- Work with others, in particular Jobcentre Plus, to ensure their mainstream services support Wandsworth's adult workforce, particularly those who face barriers to securing and retaining employment.

Industrial estate improvements

- Continue to work with Riverside Management Company to improve access and the environment in the Riverside Road Industrial Estate in Tooting.
- Investigate ways of improving the environment and the access to and within the Stewarts Road industrial area.



Town centre initiatives

Balham

- Complete the refurbishment of Hildreth Street and Hildreth Mews, the Bedford Hill tunnel improvements and implement the retail radio scheme.

Clapham Junction

- Complete the townscape improvements at Falcon Road Bridge.
- Implement the revised Town Centre Business Plan.
- Ensure the continuance of the SW11 Literary Festival.
- Prepare plans to improve Northcote Road.

Putney

- Deliver the revised Town Centre Business Plan.
- Implement SCOOT, the intelligent traffic management scheme in Putney High Street and related junctions.
- Oversee the 'Putney Sculpture Trail' including a series of sculptures by a local sculptor.

Tooting

- Implement the Town Centre Business Plan.
- Hold an inward investment event.

Wandsworth

- Support the work of the Town Centre Partnership to consolidate the regeneration of Southside Shopping Centre.
- Provide support for the relocation of Young's Brewery and site redevelopment and other major site redevelopment opportunities in line with the Tym report on employment land.
- Prepare and deliver an inward investment strategy.

Town centres general

- Carry out a rolling programme of reviews of each town centre.
- Implement the revised Town Centre Improvement Scheme.
- Pilot an accreditation standard for town centre partnerships.



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Regeneration projects in priority areas

- Prepare and implement a forward strategy for the regeneration programme in Tooting.
- Implement the Power Station Opportunity Board's Business Plan, including the smooth running of the Job Shop with the owners of Battersea Power Station, Jobcentre Plus, Peabody Trust (outreach) and Bovis Lend Lease.
- Secure funds to extend the outreach work and also implement a 'meet the buyers' programme to help local small firms access contracts at the Power Station.
- Implement LDA funded Cluster Action Team project.
- Work with Covent Garden Market Authority to develop New Covent Garden as a composite market for central London.
- Implement the Regeneration Framework for Roehampton, looking to increase private and other investment, economic activity and improve the local environment and transport facilities.
- Prepare proposals to create a new and stronger centre for Roehampton.

Voluntary sector support

- Work with Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency to ensure they deliver quality services to Wandsworth's voluntary groups.
- Help voluntary organisations and community groups to access external funding through the Voluntary Sector Information Service.
- Prepare a directory of information about advice services to local residents in need.
- Investigate the feasibility of setting up a Wandsworth Community Fund.
- Revise and publish the Voluntary Sector Charter.
- Campaign for the retention of important local facilities e.g. post offices.
- Implement the revised specification for the Wandsworth Advice Service delivered by Wandsworth Citizens Advice Bureaux.
- Implement the revised specification for the Wandsworth Volunteering Service delivered by Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency.

Quality

- Secure Charter Mark and Customer First for a further term.
- Ensure that the EDO progresses to a higher level of the Equality Standard for Local Government.