



Balham Town Centre Business Plan 2009-2012





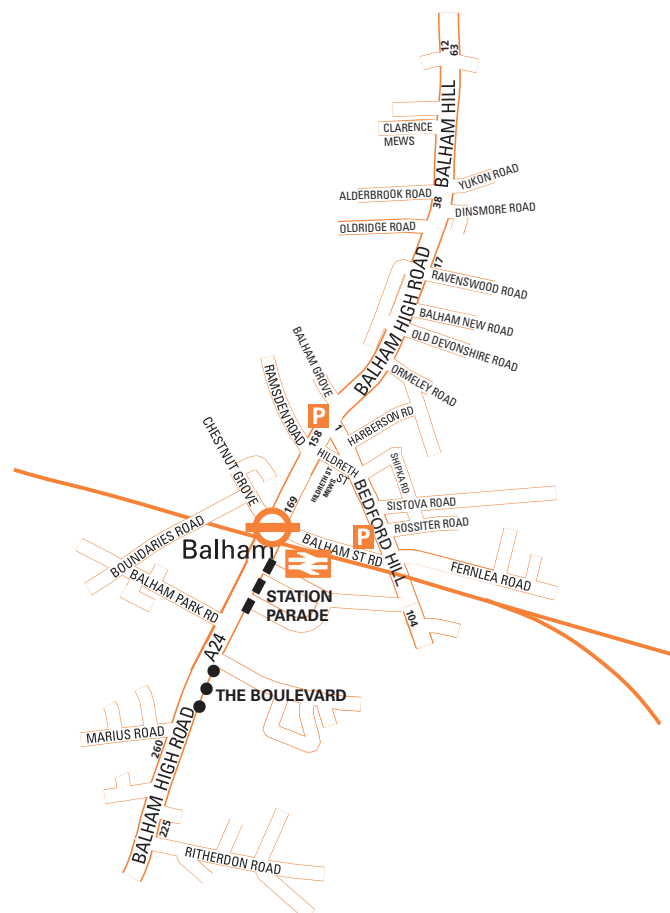
Introduction

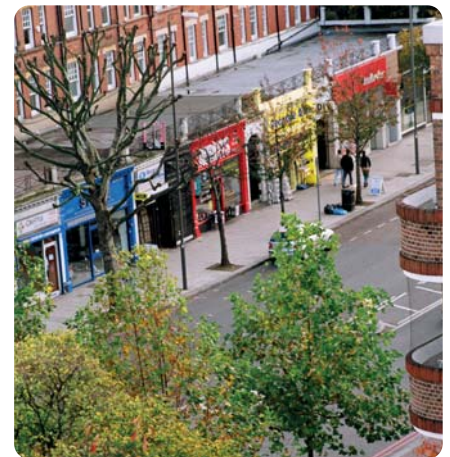
The Balham Town Centre Business Plan 2009-12 charts the way forward for Balham Town Centre.

The purpose of the business plan is to set out clearly the objectives that the Balham Town Centre Partnership wants to achieve over the next three years. It lists some of the key actions required in order to fulfil these objectives. However, please see our annual action plan for a more detailed breakdown of actions.

This business plan builds on the 2004-07 Balham Town Centre Business Plan and has been put together following research into the views of Balham residents, visitors and businesses and a business planning session with members of the Balham Town Centre Partnership. It has also taken a variety of secondary data into consideration, including the Retail Needs Assessment, Town Centre Surveys, Local Development Framework, South London Intensification Study, crime statistics, footfall statistics, street cleansing statistics, station usage reports and demographic data.

A full review of key performance indicators, inward investment, Balham Partnership actions and a Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats analysis is available from the Balham Town Centre Manager.





Balham Town Centre

Balham Town Centre is an accessible and intimate place in which to shop, relax, work or live. In recent years, Balham has witnessed significant change, which is reflected by an increasingly affluent residential population, but has retained its multicultural community and identity.

Balham Town Centre is well used by local residents and has started to become a destination within its own right.

Balham Town Centre is focused on three main roads, Balham Station Road, Balham High Road and Bedford Hill, which create a triangle with Hildreth Street at its heart.

Balham is well served by public transport with both the Northern Line tube and overground rail into Victoria via Clapham Junction. In 2006/07, 5.5 million tickets were sold at Balham Overground Station. Balham is served by at least four bus routes providing links to a wide range of destinations. In addition, there is one night bus route that runs through the town centre.

There are approximately 21,000 residents within half a mile of Balham Town Centre. Of these, a higher than average proportion are between the ages of 25 and 35 and a higher than average proportion are in managerial and professional roles.

Balham is the smallest of the town centres in the borough of Wandsworth with approximately 300

businesses, many of which are small independents. Balham is identified as a 'District Centre' in the London Plan.

Balham Town Centre received significant private sector investment during 2004-08. In this period over 60 businesses upgraded their premises or moved into Balham. Wandsworth Council's Town Centre Improvement Scheme alone generated £586,286 in private sector leverage between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2008, which was the highest out of the Borough's five town centres.

Balham Town Centre retains many of its older buildings though newer developments have brought large format convenience shopping floorspace to the town centre. The main supermarkets within the town centre are Sainsbury's on Balham High Road, which has a shoppers' car park to the rear, and Waitrose also located on Balham High Road, which has a smaller car park in front of the store. In addition Balham has a number of small independent food retailers.

Balham has a mixture of high street

names and independent businesses. Town centre names include, Boots, Caffè Nero, McDonalds, Nandos, Oliver Bonas, Pizza Express, Starbucks and WH Smith. The increasing variety of independent shops and boutiques is attracting customers from a wider area.

Balham provides a range of financial and professional services and a good number of high street national banks and building societies are represented. Balham is also home to a variety of health, hair and beauty establishments.

Balham Town Centre offers a vibrant evening economy with an enticing selection of restaurants, wine bars and pubs. Balham is home to The Bedford, one of south London's key entertainment venues. Over recent years there has been significant growth of food and drink related establishments.

Balham also has a selection of community facilities, including several places of worship, dental surgeries, a health centre and a leisure centre.



The Balham Town Centre Partnership

The Balham Town Centre Partnership was established in 1996. It is a private sector led partnership involving representatives from Balham businesses, the community, the Police, Wandsworth Council and other key stakeholders. The Balham Partnership plays a crucial role in ensuring the vitality of the town centre.

Key achievements from the 2004-07 business plan include:-

- Improvements to Bedford Hill pedestrian tunnels
- Rejuvenation of Hildreth Street and Hildreth Mews
- Themed events, such as 'Round the World in Balham' and 'Balham: Keep it Local'
- Various activities held in the community space, such as an ice rink and climbing wall
- Annual festive evenings held to mark the switching on of the Balham Christmas Lights
- Four annual Shopping and Entertainment Guides produced and distributed to Balham residents and businesses
- Balham Town Centre Map prepared
- CCTV link to Hildreth Street camera upgraded
- Balham Retail Radio scheme launched
- Production of 'Discover Balham' inward investment packs
- Numerous business support initiatives, such as mystery shopping exercises, seminars and networking events.

The Balham Partnership have identified 4 priorities for 2009-12:-

- Business Support and Development
- Marketing and Promotion
- Environment, Safety and Accessibility
- Partnership Development

The delivery of this business plan is the collective responsibility of the representatives who make up the Balham Town Centre Partnership. The Partnership is served by the Balham Town Centre Manager, who is employed by Wandsworth Council. The Town Centre Manager's role is to service the Partnership, help deliver this business plan and deal with day-to-day issues.

For further information contact
Balham Town Centre Manager
 (020) 8767 4082
balhamtcm@wandsworth.gov.uk



Business support and development

Over the next three years the Balham Partnership aims to:-

- Support existing retailers, especially small independents
- Support and further develop Hildreth Street Market
- Ensure that the retail offer remains attractive to the local residents
- Attract new retailers into vacant sites
- Monitor the economic climate.

In order to achieve these objectives the following actions are required:-

- Assist in the organisation of the Balham Wandsworth Business Forum, in conjunction with Wandsworth Council and Wandsworth Chamber of Commerce
- Offer support and advice to businesses and refer to relevant Council departments and external agencies
- Continue to produce an informative bi-monthly Town Centre Newsletter

for existing business and other interested parties

- Pursue business support initiatives and networking opportunities
- Support existing stallholders at Hildreth Street Market and attract new stallholders in conjunction with Wandsworth Council
- Advise and encourage new and existing businesses to take up financial assistance from Wandsworth Council's Town Centre Improvement Scheme
- Maintain and publicise the Balham Available Commercial Property List and continue to develop relationships with commercial property agents
- Identify and approach specific businesses that could thrive in and add value to Balham
- Continue to monitor and report on footfall information
- Seek sales trends from local businesses in order to monitor the economic climate.



Environment, safety and accessibility

Over the next 3 years the Balham Partnership aims to:-

- Improve first impressions of the town centre
- Enhance the physical realm
- Monitor and endeavour to influence development
- Develop spaces that can be used by the community
- Monitor and maintain cleanliness
- Reduce crime and the fear of crime
- Tackle graffiti
- Support crime reduction schemes and partnerships
- Support appropriate improvements to Balham Overground Station
- Support appropriate improvements to Northern Line and bus services
- Ensure that parking availability is managed effectively
- Encourage and enable visitors to access the town centre by walking, public transport and cycling.

In order to achieve these objectives the following actions are required:-

- Regular walking audits and meetings to be conducted by the Townscape sub group and identified actions followed up
- Explore possibilities to improve Balham Railway Bridge

- Work with Waitrose, Wandsworth Council and Chestnut Grove School on a public art project to improve the flank wall of 154 Balham High Road
- Support Wandsworth Council in making a better use of 28 Hildreth Street
- Continue to green the Balham Triangle area and install floral hanging baskets at appropriate locations
- Identify further opportunities for public art
- Review and comment on planning applications and proposals
- Support appropriate intensification of key sites in the town centre
- Work with Sainsbury's to maintain and improve the Community Space (at the rear of Sainsbury's) and encourage use of the space by community groups
- Work with Post Office Limited to further improve the main Post Office and forecourt area, which has the potential to become a small town square
- Monitor street cleansing and enforcement of commercial waste agreements
- Continue to work with the Police, Churches Together Network and other agencies to tackle the homeless issue in and around the town centre

- Promote the graffiti removal service and work with the Police, Wandsworth Council, Network Rail and key stakeholders on preventative measures
- Work with the Police, especially Safer Neighbourhood Teams, to tackle crime issues and ensure police visibility
- Support the Police and Wandsworth Council with crime reduction partnerships, such as Pubwatch
- Support Wandsworth Council and the Police with crime reduction initiatives, such as alley gating and lighting schemes
- Continue to develop relationships with the local transport providers
- Support appropriate improvements to Balham Station, particularly in relation to the ticket hall and platform extensions
- Support Wandsworth Council's aspiration for a Bus Route between Balham and Wandsworth
- Ensure that the Shoppers' Car Park (at the rear of Sainsbury's) is managed effectively for the benefit of the town centre
- Work with Wandsworth Council and Transport for London (TfL) to tackle illegal parking
- Support sustainable transport initiatives such as Bike Week and Cycle Corner.



Marketing and promotion

Over the next 3 years the Balham Partnership aims to:-

- Identify and develop a brand for Balham
- Promote Balham businesses to local residents
- Promote Balham as a destination to those living further afield
- Attract more people into Balham Town Centre.

In order to achieve these objectives the following actions are required:-

- Produce and implement annual marketing plans and manage the marketing sub group effectively
- Build on and develop relations with the local press as well as London-wide media

- Understand Balham's current position and continue to develop an aspirational brand for Balham Town Centre
- Ensure www.balham.com is kept up to date and improve the look and usability of the website
- Produce and support publications that promote Balham and its businesses and ensure that these publications are distributed to key target areas
- Organise and support events and speciality markets, which bring people into Balham Town Centre.



Partnership development

Over the next 3 years the Balham Partnership aims to:-

- Ensure the Partnership is business focussed, whilst also reflecting other sectors of the town centre community
- Improve the running of meetings
- Increase the involvement of the Partnership's members
- Improve planning and project management
- Reaffirm the identity and raise the profile of the Partnership
- Improve perception of the Partnership by businesses in Balham
- Maximise financial resources.

In order to achieve these objectives the following actions are required:-

- Adopt revised terms of reference and membership
- Continuously review membership and responding to changing needs
- Develop new and sustainable partnerships with businesses and

agencies likely to have a positive influence on the town centre

- Make meetings more action orientated
- Continue to develop sub groups in key project areas and manage these sub groups effectively
- Produce, implement and monitor delivery of annual action plans
- Review the Balham Partnership's logo, strap-line and mission statement and seek opportunities to raise the profile of the Balham Partnership
- Hold networking events so that Balham businesses can meet Partnership members and learn more about the Partnership
- Invite interested businesses to observe meetings and join the Partnership
- Maximise opportunities to tap into external funding.



Monitoring progress

In order to implement the actions and projects identified in this business plan an action plan will be produced for each financial year.

The yearly action plan should include SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound) objectives and key target dates for milestones in projects. At each Balham Town Centre Partnership meeting, the progress over the previous two months will be reviewed and priorities for the forthcoming two months will be agreed.

In order to monitor the health of the town centre a number of key performance indicators will be used including:-

- Numbers and proportions of vacant properties
- Diversity of use

- Average rental charges (£ per square metre)
- Yield information
- Footfall statistics
- Sales trends
- Crime figures
- Street cleansing complaints and satisfaction
- Website statistics.

This information will be collected and analysed on a regular basis.

Further information

For further information please contact:-

Balham Town Centre Manager
 balhamtcm@wandsworth.gov.uk
 (020) 8767 4082

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