



Notes from 'The Green'

19/06/18

In attendance - John Ryan, Maria Gerring, Emma Clark, PJ Jones, Mike Hawkes, Gohar Ghose, Hafiz Jafferji, Joe Gray.

The following agenda points were covered off at 'The Green' last week.

- **Training opportunities;** *what is available from LBTH for local business to access?*

In the meeting, we ran through the training opportunities that are available via the Enterprise Team and Town Centre Team at LBTH. These offers will be posted via the LoveBethnalGreen.com website.

Existing opportunities include;

1. *Grow Business Initiative*
2. *Third Sector & Social Enterprise Support*
3. *Growth Ready Training*
4. *Supply Ready Training*
5. *Retail Marketing Ready*

& coming soon

6. *Digital Training for Businesses*
7. *Specific support for food business operators*

- **Characteristics of Bethnal Green;** *what needs particular attention & what can be done to support?*

We shared detail on the characteristics in Bethnal Green that have been identified as 'opportunities for improvement', with a view to giving us something to gauge improvement on over the course of the next 9 months. We welcome discussion and suggestions across the following points both at meetings of The Green and outside of them.

Reported Crime	Moderate numbers in some Reported Crime categories with more categories shown as high. Reporting is reasonable but may be below actual situation.
Street Markets	The Street Market has 50-80% occupancy with good management and governance practices in place, with goods sold by traders meeting most customer needs but with a need to improve the curating of the offer to appeal to more customers.
Visitor Satisfaction; Retail Offer	Good level of satisfaction expressed by visitors with: the choice food & drink and goods etc and the standard of customer service, but highlighting improvements needed to retail and street market offer.
Visitor Satisfaction; Experience	Good level of satisfaction overall with some visitors highlighting weaknesses about the centre (ex retail) including how they found information about what's on, ease with finding their way around and the sense of atmosphere/character they experienced.
Crime & Safety Perception	Perception of safety in the town centre is good but businesses & visitors express concerns about some recurring issues that impact on their experience.
Retail Sales	50-60% of businesses in the town centre reported turnover had increased on previous years figures.
Partnership Working	A partnership structure in place with some representation from businesses, market traders and residents and limited joint working with the Council and others to support place promotion, marketing & promotion and management of the town centre.
Unhealthy Businesses	Under 8-15% of unhealthy businesses in the town centre including fast food takeaways, betting shops and amusement arcades.
Night Time Economy (NTE)	Most NTE businesses play an active role in supporting the effective management of the NTE with <50% with BBN or other pro-active business management practices in place to prevent issues arising on their premises.

The reason for sharing these areas, was to ensure that the work LBTH is delivering with Oxford House and Love Bethnal Green is going some way to moving towards that improvement that this consultation in 2016 identified.

- **Markets;** *Our ambitions to engage with traders and inspire new ones*

We outlined our renewed commitment to engage with Market Traders, which we will do via our #TalkToMe interview mechanic (quick-fire weekly interviews with local businesses highlighting their history, their present, their future & why they love Bethnal Green)

We will also be pro-actively supporting the council in their recruitment of new traders.

- **Promoting footfall;** *Profiling local businesses, getting pragmatic around Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's, and key events later in the year.*

There are a number of ways that we will be looking to increase footfall over the course of the next 9 months. We will be supporting a business every week, in order to showcase their great work and achievements in the area. This will be via a new interview mechanic called #TalkToMe - short & sweet & positive for the area.

See here for an example - <http://www.lovebethnalgreen.com/talk-to-me-oxford-house/>

The below activities will be built towards later in the year, and each of them will be looking to support SME and social enterprise locally.

Social Saturday - Saturday 13th October

Social Saturday is a chance for social enterprise to shout out loud about the fantastic work that they do here in the UK. The day encourages social enterprise to put on events, to open their doors, and invite their local politicians to find out more about their work and its impact locally.

This year we'll be celebrating who's doing great work in Bethnal Green, from the very established (Toynbee Hall / St. Margaret's / Oxford House) to the newer offerings (Second Shot, Bikeworks, Bethnal Green Ventures, The Common House, Thai Boxing School)

Social Saturday will also provide us with a chance to launch positive Halloween activity in the area, like using surplus pumpkin to cook up and feed vulnerable people in the area.

Small Business Saturday - Saturday 1st December

There are lots of ways we can look to celebrate Small Business Saturday. Firstly, there is an opportunity to apply for #SmallBiz100 (ends 30/06)

Then we will be working with 'The Green' to decide on the activities we will drive to promote the area on Saturday 1st December. This will be led by us, but will be a collaborative effort, in order that we can maximise impact of the day for as many #E2 based businesses as possible.

- **AOB**

There was a suggestion that we should have one of our three Councillors at each of our meetings moving forward.

Kevin / Gabriella / Tariq all sent their apologies this time but will be at the next meeting, on **Tuesday 14th August**.

Further points of interest for exploration;

- Business hours very variable on BGR, which gives a suggestion that the area isn't 'open for business'
- [COLU](#) are doing good work and would be worth inviting to our next meeting (good for Small Business Saturday)
- Is there an opportunity to have a business directory that is more public and physically public facing than a website - showing what the nature of the businesses are on the high street?
- Emma Clark and her business partner PJ are developing a project called Routine Misadventure, which works with existing communities showcasing devised theatre pieces. They are keen to work with a range of businesses in the Bethnal Green area, bringing new audience to those businesses whilst developing their own theatre practise.



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