

A nighttime photograph of a street in Greenwich Town Centre. The central focus is the tall, ornate tower of St. Andrew's Church, illuminated against a dark blue twilight sky. The street is lined with buildings, some of which have festive Christmas lights, including stars and snowflakes. A red van is visible in the foreground on the left, and a white van with 'phs' branding is on the right. The overall atmosphere is festive and urban.

Making Our Heritage Shine: a night time strategy for Greenwich Town Centre

DRAFT

Royal Borough of Greenwich

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1 Foreword

To be provided from the Leader (TBC)

2 Introduction

Greenwich Town Centre is growing and changing. Awarded the designation of World Heritage Site in 1997, Maritime Greenwich has long been a destination for tourists. It is also known as a place for festivals, attracting thousands of visitors every year to special events in its extensive public realm and parklands. During daytime hours, visitors arrive in droves to see the bustling Greenwich Market.

For many of these established venues and events, visitors have historically been the focus of activity – people from somewhere else, whether domestic or international tourists, or day-trippers from outside London. At night, when visitors head back to their central London hotels, Greenwich Town Centre loses its sparkle. Residents often feel the town centre isn't for them, with the variety of shops and services geared towards tourists or closing at night when Greenwich Market closes.

The pandemic has made these pre-existing issues painfully obvious. With the disappearance of visitors, cultural venues, bars, restaurants, and shops have had to pivot their customer focus in a short period of time. And with more local residents spending time at home, there is a real desire to make Greenwich Town Centre once again a place welcoming to locals at night.

Initiatives are already happening. The recent successful *High Streets for All* bid and programme - which reimagines Greenwich Town Centre as a place for local gathering, performance, and supporting local and sustainable food - is already being implemented. Royal Museums Greenwich has plans to make its spaces more accessible and open to the local community, with additional evening programmes and events. Old Royal Naval College is thinking again about how its extensive grounds can be activated with pop-up food and hospitality. Plans for additional artistic and wayfinding lighting in the town centre can help with making the public realm feel safer and encourage visitors and locals alike to inhabit Greenwich Town Centre's many heritage spaces.

This strategy is built on a foundation of cultural and business partners and their shared interest in creating a shift in the night time experience of Greenwich Town Centre. Much of Greenwich Town Centre is dedicated to the experience of heritage – the built environment, maritime heritage, the heritage of markets and commerce. Greenwich adds to that heritage every day – through the makers displayed at Made in Greenwich, the hard work of University of Greenwich students and staff, and through the businesses and residents who give the place its unique personality and character. This should be celebrated.

[Bold/pull-out text – laid out alongside the above intro in colourful blocks]

London is moving towards a 24-hour city – 65% of Londoners are active at night.

Pre-pandemic, night time economy jobs were growing faster than the London average.

Alcohol-led night time uses in London are declining, while food-related activities are increasing.

Greenwich Town Centre has seen an increase in its outdoor economy and usage – at night and during the day - since the pandemic.

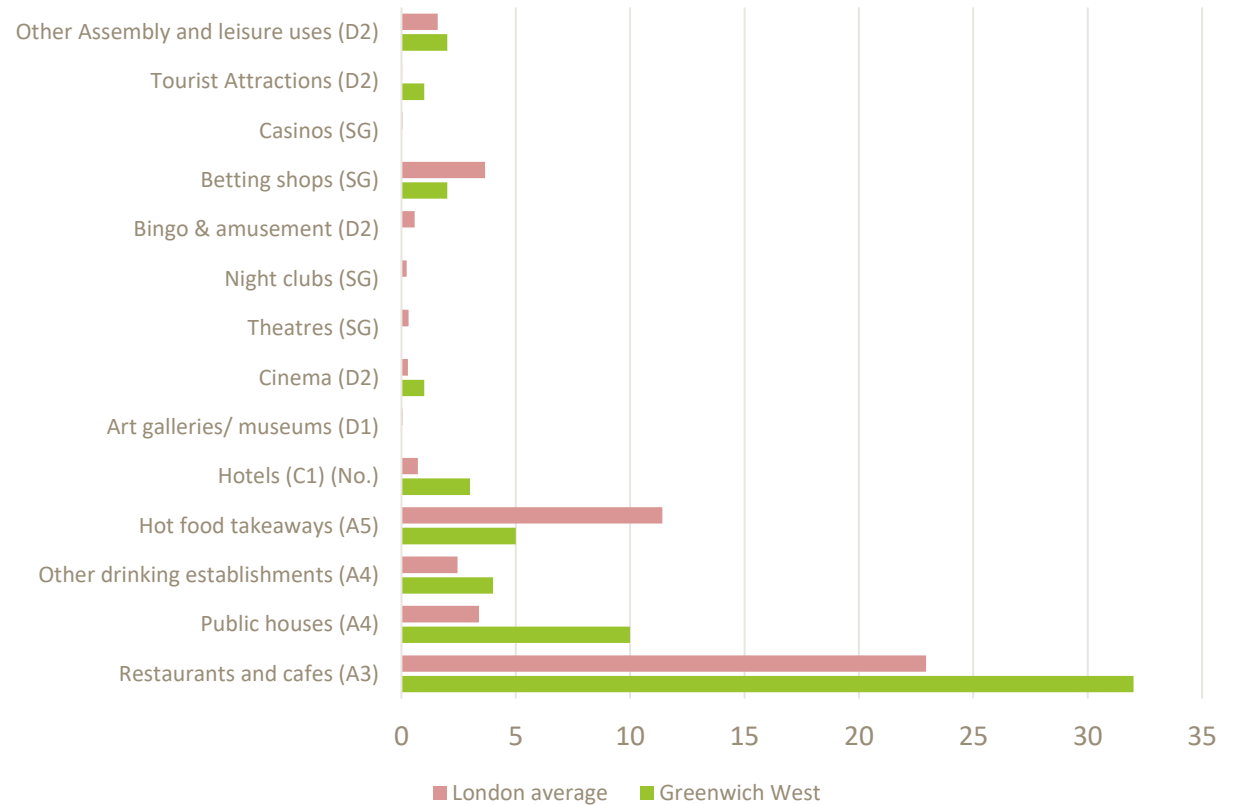
Greenwich Town Centre has a larger proportion of pubs, restaurants and food outlets compared to the London average – totalling 160 in the area.

3 The need for change

There is a strong layer of evidence of the need for a night time strategy in Greenwich Town Centre. The data, supported by qualitative evidence through stakeholder consultations, illustrate that few visitors stay in Greenwich Town Centre past 6pm, and reveal the potential for a thriving night time economy in GTC.

- While restaurants and pubs are more numerous in Greenwich Town Centre compared to the London average, they are more active during the day, showing untapped potential for increased night time trade
- Cutty Sark DLR entries and exits show what has been discussed widely in stakeholder consultations – that the highest number of visitors leaving Greenwich Town Centre happens at the close of Greenwich Market, which also coincides with the closing hours of other neighbouring businesses.
- There is a relatively low level of exits from Cutty Sark DLR into the evening, indicating that these exits would be primarily residents returning home rather than added visitors to evening businesses, events, and services.
- Culture and leisure night time workspaces in Greenwich Town Centre grew by 61% between 2001 and 2017
- The number of 24-hour health and social services workplaces more than doubled over the same period, pointing towards a shift in behaviour favouring 24-hour services
- Greenwich Heritage Visitor Survey 2017 showed that only 5% of visitors stayed past 6pm but that evening visitors increased their spend on average

Night time outlets in Greenwich West compared to London average



The SWOT analysis on the following page summarises feedback from extensive stakeholder engagement on the current and future potential for Greenwich Town Centre night time activity.

For a full detailed review of the research and analysis behind this strategy, please see the “Greenwich Town Centre Night Time Strategy: Evidence Base” report, prepared by Fourth Street in February 2022.

Table 1: SWOT analysis of Greenwich Town Center at night

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>Active, established cultural partners within the World Heritage Site</p> <p>Architecture and heritage assets</p> <p>Previous successful lighting events</p> <p>Greenwich town centre established as an event destination for GDIF, Greenwich Comedy Festival and Greenwich Music Time</p> <p>Creatives and microbusinesses supported by Greenwich Market or Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency</p> <p>Natural assets – parks, river, sky – which create a distinctive outer London atmosphere</p>	<p>Night time activity isn't well coordinated</p> <p>The area doesn't feel welcoming for new night time activity</p> <p>Over-reliance on tourist and student markets</p> <p>Food and hospitality offer doesn't interest local residents</p> <p>Lack of affordable space for creatives</p> <p>Public spaces don't feel safe in the evening, some pockets of poorly lit public space</p> <p>Pedestrians not prioritised in the town centre</p> <p>Not much activity/no hub for young people</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>HSFA funding to increase activity and cultural programming when markets close</p> <p>Create a new standard for public performance with proactive programming</p> <p>Evening events trialled through HSFA can pilot greater collaboration around "lates" programmes</p> <p>Spaces can adapt for cultural and evening use: Greenwich Market, Cutty Sark and Gardens, shops, and shop fronts</p> <p>Make more of natural assets – river, parks, night and urban sky</p> <p>Pavement widening to be more welcoming to pedestrians and outdoor hospitality</p> <p>New artistic lighting for attractiveness and safety</p> <p>Embed sustainability within night time activities</p>	<p>Disappearance of tourism economy – possibility of future shocks to travel and tourism</p> <p>Significant lead time to transition local area to serve a more local audience</p> <p>Increased complaints of noise and nuisance from local residents – GTC part of a Cumulative Impact Zone</p> <p>Lack of coordination or resource to take night time strategy forwards</p> <p>Lack of additional resources/capacity within the Council in areas such as enforcement and regulation</p>

3.1 The night time in North Greenwich

Just further along the river from Greenwich Town Centre is North Greenwich, where there already is a thriving night time economy. Lessons can be learnt from the activities and management of North Greenwich's night time.

The O2 arena is the anchor of the Peninsula, and most of the night time economy revolves around it. The night time is also animated by nightclub Studio 338, event venues Indigo and Magazine, Icon Outlet with retailers and food and beverage, games, and competitive socialising, as well as the Cineworld Cinema. The new design district aims to be a hub for the creative industries offering work and studio spaces, and events.

Although the pandemic had a devastating impact on the entertainments industry, the entertainment business in Greenwich Peninsula is expected to bounce back due to pent up demand from artists as well as visitors. Recently, the peninsula has seen growth in the local economy, partly driven by the pandemic, and by new developments such as the Tide. Nonetheless, the level of local trade is very small, and the area remains largely event driven.

The success of Greenwich Peninsula is largely due to the strength of its active establishments creating an expectation that there's always "something happening." This is enhanced by strong coordinating and management protocols between stakeholders and Royal Borough of Greenwich Council, facilitated through the following:

- **Engagement forum:** the O2 (owned by AEG) coordinates the different stakeholders and keeps them informed of upcoming events through a regular engagement forum. The group meets on monthly basis to enable all parties to plan ahead, staff accordingly, and provides a platform to discuss from past events and how to prevent or address them going forward. These meetings are a condition written into all licenses for the O2. The meetings are attended by the stakeholder representatives from the following organisations: the O2, Knight Dragon, Transport providers, Royal Borough Greenwich council officers, Police, London Fire Brigade and the London Ambulance Service, Ravensbourne University, and business representatives including The InterContinental Hotel and Magazine.
- **Safety Advisory Group meetings:** SAG meetings are held to review specific large event applications. The group is made up largely of the same stakeholders as the engagement forum.
- **O2 management:** The O2 represents a major anchor for North Greenwich with its mix of entertainment, shopping, leisure and hospitality. The venue recovering well from the pandemic due to a combination of a growing local residential market visiting for shopping and leisure while pulling in audiences from across the south east for headline shows. The external piazza is managed by O2 through an agreement with Knight Dragon, where they are responsible for maintenance, cleaning, and security. In addition to the O2's security team covering the Arena, the entertainment district, and Icon shopping, AEG fund and contract, on behalf of the venue, a full time and dedicated Metropolitan police team for the O2 and wider area. The O2 provides a dedicated 'safe space' to care for distressed individuals and ensure their safeguarding and wellbeing.

- **Knight Dragon management:** Knight Dragon (land owners outside The O2 tent and operators of some of the larger licensed venues), and their Security Team and Events personnel are responsible for putting on events within the wider area of the Peninsula. Knight Dragon organise some, albeit relatively minimal activation of the public realm, such as a Christmas fair on the piazza in front of O2. However, the piazza (the main area of public realm) is generally kept clear for crowd management purposes, due to the large crowds that regularly pass through to access the O2.

Figure 1: The Wave installation by Squid Soup, Design District, North Greenwich



3.2 Comparable night time strategies

Comparable night time strategies, such as the ones listed below, highlighted key interventions for consideration in Greenwich Town Centre.

- Walthamstow Night Time Enterprise Zone
- Newcastle After Dark 2018-2022
- Paramatta Night City Framework 2020-2024

Some of their key interventions include:

- Trialling extended trading hours for restaurants and small bars.
- Evening festivals and events for target audiences
- Night Time Enterprise Toolkit: outlining the key considerations for opening later, and the benefits of extended hours and development of special events.
- Later Opening for Council facilities
- Working with partners to establish a series of micro-activations at public transport nodes and public performance sites
- Developing a pop-up events approvals pathway for events meeting certain criteria
- Night Time Economy Activation Grants to deliver programs that boost the night time offer
- Investigate creative lighting opportunities and installations, such as digital projections
- Safe Space programmes for young people
- Street teams to manage bar/pub leavers and “night stations” to concentrate gatherings in appropriate areas

Several of these interventions have informed the thinking behind the action plan in Section 5 – Making it Happen.

4 Objectives

Growth and development of Greenwich Town Centre at night does not only include increasing footfall, spend, dwell time – although these are important indicators of more active and vibrant places. This strategy is also about growing the sense of community in the town centre, supporting people to be healthy and safe at night, and building sustainable night time businesses. To that end, the six following objectives guide the action plan and measures for the night time strategy, with objective six running as an embedded theme for all partners throughout the five:

1. Create a coordinated night time destination of complimentary services and activities in Greenwich Town Centre
2. Create a shift in evening public realm events and programming which is attractive to local residents
3. Support businesses and traders to meet demands of London-based visitors at night
4. Highlight the “local” aspect of Greenwich town centre at night through its people, history, and heritage
5. Ensure that access to Greenwich town centre at night is inclusive of local diverse communities and groups, strengthening community cohesion
6. Maintain a clean, green, safe and secure environment for local residents, businesses and visitors during the evening time
- 7.

There is significant opportunity for Good Growth inherent in these objectives, and the action plan that follows. Key to building Good Growth is strong engagement with local communities and users of the Town Centre at night – outlined in Section 5.3 of the action plan – to ensure that benefits of this strategy are tailored to local needs and bringing tangible benefits to local residents and businesses.

5 Making it happen

The action plan presented in the following sections follows a detailed investigation of priorities and strategies across council departments and their goals for night time management and activity. In addition, it incorporates relevant plans from the High Streets for All project and feedback and ideas from key stakeholders, including the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site and its partners, Visit Greenwich, and Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency.

In the below tables, timescale is given as short, medium, or long term. Short term actions refer to actions that are already being discussed or expected to happen imminently, medium term actions would be expected within 1-2 years, and long term actions should be furthered within five years.

5.1 Diversification of night time offer

The actions below relate strongly to objectives 2, 3, and 4. Combined, they aim to create a shift in night time activities and programming that integrates local talents and stories, while also helping local businesses to adapt their services, products, and operation for new, more local night time customers.

Action	Lead	Timescale
Programming		
Collaboratively develop "lates" programmes across GTC using HSFA as a blueprint	RBG Events/Visit Greenwich/WHS	Short term
Work with WHS partners and heritage assets to highlight unique destination of GTC	RBG Events/Visit Greenwich/WHS	Short term
Create a regular rhythm of evening programming to change perceptions of GTC	RBG Events/Visit Greenwich/WHS	Medium term
Develop evening activities making use of river, parks and urban sky	RBG Events/Visit Greenwich/WHS	Medium term
Explore links with North Greenwich via Thames Path/Olympic Way	RBG Events/Visit Greenwich/WHS	Long term
Food & Alcohol		
Promote and encourage more alcohol free options for socialising	Business, Employment and Skills (BES) (HSFA)/RBG Events/Visit Greenwich	Short term
Promote night time offers through Greenwich One Card	BES/Visit Greenwich	Short term
Promote street food options as a way in for newer, local food businesses	Public Health/GCDA	Medium term
Healthier food options: Majority of late opening outlets become GFIG / Healthy Catering Commitment scheme compliant	Public Health/GCDA	Long term

Promote sustainable aspect of night time experience through GFIG branding & Healthy Catering Commitment scheme	Public Health/GCDA	Long term
Space		
Explore use of public spaces for night time activity through HSFA events	DRES/RBG Events Team	Short term
Enable the transitioning of daytime spaces for night time use (i.e., shops and shopfronts)	DRES	Short term
Maintain café culture and outdoor dining approach	Street Trading	Short term
Trial late opening of council facilities (e.g., leisure centre, library)	Leisure, Libraries, Community Services	Short term
Develop database of available spaces that can accommodate new night time uses	Culture	Medium term

5.2 Working with partners

Strategies to increase collaboration and partnership working in Greenwich Town Centre primarily relate to objective 1, while strategies to work closer with businesses support objective 3. These actions aim to create a more joined-up approach with stakeholders, with a long-term view to decentralise night time development from the Council's control.

Action	Lead	Timescale
Night time businesses		
Encourage ongoing adoption/sign ups to Women's Night Safety Charter	Community Safety/Licensing	Short term
Support businesses to extend their opening hours	BES	Medium term
Encourage venues to undertake welfare (e.g. terrorism) and vulnerability training (e.g. Ask Angela)	Community Safety	Medium term
Adapt and make available best practice toolkits to support late openings and evening events	RBG Events/Visit Greenwich/Community Safety	Short/medium term
Improve relationships between Council and local businesses, pubs, and organisations	Community Safety/BES	Long term
Stakeholders		
Ensure event management plans are created for any special events	RBG Events	Short term
A night time champion identified in each stakeholder organisation	BES	Short term

Incorporate night time strategy into Visit Greenwich destination management plan	Visit Greenwich	Medium term
Ensure clear roles and responsibilities for the town centre and a shared action plan with WHS	BES/Visit Greenwich/WHS co-ordinator	Medium term
Business Improvement District		
Explore a BID for the area to address management and funding issues in relation to e.g. community safety	BES/Community Safety	Short term

5.3 Engaging with the night time community

Ongoing engagement with residents, workers and businesses helps to grow and develop the strategy throughout its life cycle. Pilot activities currently being trialled with the High Streets for All project will be able to kick-start this activity, surveying audiences and visitors during new programmes and events in the public realm. Feedback from this strand supports the furthering of all objectives 1-5.

Action	Lead	Timescale
Businesses & workers		
Engage with night workers on healthy working conditions (NHS, venues, transport, street services, Healthy Workplace Charter)	BES, Public Health	Short to medium term
Use stakeholders' communications channels to collect views (U of Greenwich, Comedy Festival)	BES	Medium term
Explore revival of traders forum to discuss night time issues	BES	Medium term
Residents		
Roll out improved Town Watch programme	Community Safety	Short term
Develop engagement plan for town centre and social housing residents, including young people	Communities, Environment & Central services	Short term
Engage with diverse/protected characteristic groups to support access to GTC at night	Communities, Environment & Central services	Short term

Gather suggestions from community and stakeholders on what they would like to see at night	Communities, Environment & Central services	Short term
Students		
Incorporate student views through collaborative working with U of Greenwich on High Streets for All	BES/GCDA/U of Greenwich	Short term

5.4 Wellbeing and safety at night

This section brings together a number of issues which experienced change during the pandemic, as well as being proactive about potential noise pollution as a result of new initiatives at night. With increased activity comes increased responsibility to minimise negative impacts while creating the most enjoyable and safe experience for those making use of the town centre. In addition, the government is set to introduce a new PROTECT Duty to establish legal requirements designed to improve protective security and preparedness at publicly accessible locations. Greenwich Town Centre is a recognised area of vulnerability due to footfall and tourism / heritage status. This section responds mainly to objective 5, while also supporting objective 3 through working with businesses to manage night time activity.

Action	Lead	Timescale
Noise pollution		
Concentrate new activity before 10:30pm in order to minimise any negative impacts on residents	Community safety/BES/Events/Visit Greenwich	Short term
Work collectively to prevent any excessive or anti-social noise during the evening hours, e.g using new street entertainment policy and proactive plans for public performance	Community safety/BES/Events/All partners	Short term
Alcohol		
Continue to apply drug and alcohol strategies to focus on crime preventing and reducing ASB	Public Health	Medium term
Safety and public realm		
Address poorly lit areas with innovative lighting - integrate with emerging WHS lighting strategy	DRES	Short term
Create an events management plan annually for GTC events	RBG Events/Visit Greenwich	Short term

Ensure safety and security for all residents using facilities in the area	Communities, Environment & Central services	Medium term
Encourage community involvement in public realm, such as guerrilla gardening	Communities, Environment & Central services	Medium term
Create risk assessment for extending night time street services	BES/Events Team	Short term
Explore measures to prioritise pedestrians including pavement widening	RBG Transport/TfL	Short term
Link to GTC Liveable neighbourhood scheme/increase accessibility of the centre at night	RBG Transport/TfL	Medium term
Focus group on public safety with Met Police (counter terrorism/increased pedestrianisation)	Community Safety/Met Police	Medium term

5.5 Managing the night

The implementation of this strategy will be led by Royal Borough of Greenwich – further detail needed to implement this action plan should be discussed and finalised in the short term. While the management structure is directly relevant to objective 1, these actions support all five objectives.

Action	Lead	Timescale
Implementation		
Finalise and embed a data collection strategy to monitor night time KPIs, establishing a baseline at the outset	BES	Short term
Designate a night time champion within the Council	RBG	Short term
Identify departmental leads for night time development/management	RBG	Short term
Convene a task & finish group with internal leads and external stakeholder representation	RBG	Short term
Engage with Purple Flag accreditation process	RBG	Medium term

6 Tracking benefits of the strategy

In order to evidence the benefits of this strategy, a plan to measure key performance indicators is needed. The table below shows possible measures set against the five objectives and key actions related to each. As mentioned previously, a baseline measure is needed in the short term in order to compare future data as night time activity changes and develops.

Objective	Actions	Measurement
1. Create a coordinated night time destination of complimentary services and activities in Greenwich Town Centre	Collaboratively develop regular evening programming in market spaces, park areas and Cutty Sark Gardens	Number of events Footfall and sales
	Ensure clear roles and responsibilities for new night time programming and coordination	Action plan agreed and tracked
2. Create a shift in evening public realm events and programming which is attractive to local residents	Develop diversity of street food options in night markets	Number of markets and stall holders Footfall and sales Survey feedback from residents
	Increase sign-ups to Good Food in Greenwich/ Healthy Catering Commitment scheme	Number of signups to GFIG/Healthy Catering Commitment scheme, targeting 100% of market traders
3. Support businesses and traders to meet demands of London-based visitors at night	Support businesses and understand barriers to pivot their spaces for night time use	Opening hours by type of business Number of evening events held in shops
4. Highlight the “local” aspect of Greenwich town centre at night through its people, history, and heritage	Seed collaborations between community groups/heritage organisations and night time programmers (RBG, WHS, and Greenwich Hospital)	Number of community collaborations on events
5. Ensure that access to Greenwich town centre at night is inclusive of local diverse communities and groups, strengthening community cohesion	Regular engagement with local residents to identify their needs and to promote opportunities for participation and co-creation of night time initiatives	Resident feedback on benefits experienced
	Increase number of alcohol-free options for socialising	Number of alcohol-free/family-friendly events and markets
	Increase adoption of Women’s Safety Charter among local venues	Number of local champions for the Women’s Safety Charter Number of venues/businesses signed up Bi-annual survey of women out at night linked to Met Police data on safety

7 Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the valuable input of council and Greater London Authority officers to the creation of this strategy, as well as the following external stakeholders:

- Charlton Athletic Community Trust
- Didobi
- Emergency Exit Arts
- GDIF
- Greenwich Comedy Festival
- Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency
- Greenwich Hospital
- Greenwich Society
- Greenwich Students Union
- Made in Greenwich
- Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site
- Metropolitan Police
- Old Royal Naval College
- Publica
- Royal Museums Greenwich
- Royal Parks
- University of Greenwich
- Visit Greenwich

