

St. James Street Big Local

The Plan

Executive Summary

March 2016

www.stjamesbiglocal.co.uk



LOTTERY FUNDED

Local Trust | Big Local

Our Mission

Let's Make St James Street the Best It Can Be

The St James Street area of Walthamstow is an amazing and unique place. We have a close-knit community, diverse shopping opportunities, beautiful buildings, excellent access to green spaces and wonderful transport connections. But together we can make it even better. Right now, too many people struggle to afford to live here or run a businesses in the area. People worry about the safety and wellbeing of themselves and their loved ones. Our local charities struggle to get by. The streets don't reflect the full potential the area has to offer. And our close-knit community doesn't come together to celebrate the area the way it should.

Now, we as local residents have been given a chance to make real and lasting change. The St James Street area was fortunate enough to receive £1 million in funding as part of the Big Local programme to spend over the next ten years, to enable residents and businesses to shape their community for the future. This plan represents the start of that journey – a rare opportunity for locals to directly improve the area in which they live.

What We've Done So Far

Over the last three years, the community has provided its thoughts on what should change. In a plan we've created based on resident wishes, those opinions, needs and desires are developed into four core themes – people, places, businesses and charities – on which the £1 million will be spent. Along the way, our neighbourhood will change for the better. We'll see our community become more able to identify local needs and take action; residents acquire confidence and skills; our collective priorities turned into real initiatives.

Some of the community's desires are ambitious. The plan describes how they will be put into motion over the coming years, allowing us to create a more cohesive community, renovated public space, thriving local businesses and successful charities. It will create a St James Street that we can continue to improve for years to come. Of course, now comes the hard part, because we all, as a community, have to do it. So if you're interested in helping out, get in touch – and together we'll ensure St James Street reaches its full potential and becomes a better place in which to live.

Olly Price

Chair, St James Street Big Local

Our Four Key Themes

People: Building Inclusivity for Residents

During the consultation, members of the community explained that they were interested in improving not just their own lives but also those of others – a welcome sign that community is important around St James Street. Our plan will: encourage healthy lifestyles amongst children; support the local community in contesting planning decisions; organise and support local events; promote citizenship amongst youths; combat crime in the area; and provide activities for older people in the area to enjoy.

Places: Transforming the Urban Realm

Residents of the St James Street area appreciate the importance of the built environment and the public realm in their lives. We plan to: supplement the Heritage Lottery Fund works in the area with seating, planting and artworks; green the local spaces with trees and planting; kick-start a community gardening initiative; restore the ghost signs in the area; build a micro-library for the community; and investigate the development of a new communal space in the area.

Business: Growing the Local Economy

Consultation with residents and businesses revealed a sense of despondency about the performance of businesses in the area: staff and managers said they are disappointed with the number of customers entering their shops, while residents said that they don't feel enticed by the offer of local businesses. We plan to work with local businesses to help make the tail-end of the High Street a vibrant shopping destination in its own right by providing a retail re-fit grant programme, as well as digital business skills and communication training.

Charities: Supporting Local Charitable Initiatives

During the consultation, many residents made wishes to support our local charities and volunteers. St James Street is home to a wide range of charitable endeavours that benefit people living in and around the area, so we'll be setting up two grant schemes to support both larger and smaller charities, as well as encouraging and engaging local volunteers so that they feel better connected to the community.

What Happens Next

Our plan lays out an ambitious series of events, initiatives and supporting schemes that it's hoped will make a huge difference to the local community in St James Street. If you want to read the full version of the plan, you can find it on our website at [stjamesbiglocal.co.uk](http://www.stjamesbiglocal.co.uk).

It's going to be a lot of work, and we're going to need all the help we can get to help shape our community. So if you have ideas about how we can all continue to transform the St James Street area, or simply want to lend a hand, you should get in touch, join us at a meeting, become a member of the Partnership, come to our events, volunteer on a project or even just follow us on Twitter. Here's how.

Visit our Website

<http://www.stjamesbiglocal.co.uk/>

Like us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/stjamesbiglocal/>

Follow us on Twitter

<https://twitter.com/stjamesbiglocal>

Send us a Note via Crest

St James Street Big Local c/o Crest Waltham Forest
Peterhouse Centre, 122 Forest Rise, Walthamstow, E17 3PW