

Mayor names Walthamstow as first-ever Night Time Enterprise Zone

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has today announced that Walthamstow High Street will become the capital's first-ever Night Time Enterprise Zone.

Waltham Forest has been selected to trial innovative ideas to boost the town centre, support local businesses and improve access to shops and services after 6pm, as part of the Mayor's work to make London a leading 24-hour global city.

The pilot, which runs from October to January, will see Waltham Forest try out a range of proposals for the high street, including:

- Offering entrepreneurs low-cost and flexible business spaces to hire in the evenings
- Establishing a new fund to help business and community groups host events after 6pm
- Running a 'shop local late' campaign
- Hosting a 'reclaim your high street event' with activities for all ages
- Creating a step-by-step guide for night-time businesses to help them apply for planning and licensing approval
- Encouraging late shopping with a new evening map and events listings
- Encouraging local people and night-time workers to have their say on how to make Walthamstow work better for them after 6pm

The pilot zone, which will receive 75,000 funding from City Hall, has been created by the Mayor in response to a recommendation from his Night Time Commission. It follows research last year that showed 92 per cent of councils in England believe that the night-time economy can be key in preventing the decline of high street retail¹.

The results of the pilot will be used to help shape future plans across the city, as part of the Mayor's work to boost the capital between 6pm and 6am.

Sadiq has committed to ensuring that the capital meets the needs of all Londoners at night, and has pledged to plan for life at night in the same way the city does for the day. His work has included launching the Night Tube and Night Overground, teaming up with local authorities and developers to help safeguard night-time venues, setting up a Night Time Borough Champions Network and establishing the Women's Night Safety Charter.

By winning the competition, Waltham Forest will be able to build on the success of its year as the Mayor's inaugural London Borough of Culture.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "Our high streets are at the very heart of our communities, but in recent years we have seen them struggling under significant pressures. By working together to encourage longer opening hours and host innovative events after 6pm, this pilot in Walthamstow will be a real opportunity to develop the ideas that can boost our high streets and help realise our vision for a 24-hour city."

Night Czar, Amy Lam^{🇬🇧} said: "Our capital is thriving at night, with two-thirds of Londoners regularly active and 1.6m working between 6pm-6am. There is huge potential for our high streets if we can help them extend what's on offer. I'm excited by Waltham Forest's proposals as our first pilot Night Time Enterprise Zone and look forward to working together to create an attractive and open life at night for Londoners and our high streets."

Clare Coghill, Leader of Waltham Forest Council, said: "We are delighted to be chosen as the Mayor of London's first-ever Night Time Enterprise Zone as it will help us build on our existing work to encourage more people to use local businesses later in the day. This has ranged from working with The Mall shopping centre to extend its opening hours into the evening through to buying the EMD cinema to create the largest comedy venue outside central London and be one of the lasting legacies of our year as the first London Borough of Culture. We will be talking to our business community and residents to develop a programme which makes sure every pound for this pilot projects brings lasting benefits."

Kate Nicholls, Chair of the Night Time Commission, said: “I’m delighted that the Mayor has announced that Waltham Forest will host the first pilot Night Time Enterprise Zone. Our report identified a real opportunity to use London’s diverse and dynamic life at night to support London’s high streets. I look forward to seeing the impact that more culture offerings and activities after 6pm will have on Walthamstow High Street.”

Paul Human, from The Collab, 198 Hoe Street, Walthamstow, said: “There is a strong commitment from Waltham Forest Council to support local businesses and then night-time economy. When we were looking to expand our restaurant business, we wanted a town centre location, but the costs were too much for us on our own, so we joined forces with the award winning Signature Brewery to share premises. That was strongly backed by the council which helped find us a suitable unit as well as supporting us with business advice and guidance to help make us a popular choice for residents and visitors.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Waltham Forest will receive 75,000 to deliver the Night Time Enterprise Zone pilot, and is required to provide match funding

Seven boroughs bid for the funding and learnings will be shared with all throughout the pilot

The Night Time Commission’s report for the Mayor of London is available here:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ntc_report_online.pdf

¹A study by the LGiU and the Portman Group about the night-time economy received 111 responses, covering all English regions and 91 councils (5 Counties; 45 Districts; 18 Unitaries; 8 London Boroughs; 15 Metropolitan Unitaries). The report is available here:

<https://www.lgiu.org.uk/report/local-partnership-working-for-a-vibrant-night-time-economy/>

The pilot is the latest pioneering cultural zoning policy from the Mayor. Last year Sadiq announced the capital's first Creative Enterprise Zones as part of a groundbreaking initiative to support artists and creative businesses, and develop skills and jobs for Londoners

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-announces-first-creative-enterprise-zones>