



# Elephant and Castle and Walworth Town Centre **Action Plan**



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## Action Plan

The Elephant and Castle and Walworth Town Centre Action Plan sets out key areas that local people, businesses, community groups and other local organisations want to see improved in the town centre.

Town centres across Southwark are unique and essential pillars of our community and their appearance is central to the way people feel about where they live. As part of our five-year borough plan, Southwark 2030, town centres play a crucial role. They are essential to delivering our goal of a strong and fair economy where everyone benefits from the borough's economic strength and growth.

High streets and town centres face considerable challenges including the cost-of-living crisis and the rise of online shopping which threaten small and independent businesses. This action plan outlines how we will make our town centres cleaner, safer and more vibrant places for people to visit and shop, and where businesses can rely on consistent and sufficient footfall to be successful.

**Councillor John Batteson**, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business

## What do we know about Elephant and Castle and Walworth?

Elephant and Castle is an important and historic town centre with a wide range of large offices, small businesses, shops and cultural and community facilities. It is an attractive destination for visitors with a strong daytime and night-time economy. A new town centre is under construction which will deliver modern retail, affordable workspaces and high-quality public realm. It will provide a range of cultural and entertainment spaces, alongside a lively and diverse retail environment for residents, particularly for the area's Latin American community. Elephant and Castle is also home to

Southwark's university quarter, providing excellent opportunities for learning and innovation. Around 41,800 people live in the area.

Venturing south along Walworth Road, a more residential part of central London, you'll find a diverse range of independent shops and services, including the vibrant East Street Market. The area hosts a Georgian high street that's value has been recognised with its designation as a Conservation Area, as well as listed buildings such as the Walworth Town Hall and the Grade I listed St Peter's Church.

The town centre also faces significant challenges. Crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) can affect how safe people feel, besides creating challenges for local businesses. Walworth Road is a hotspot for graffiti, flyposting and litter which impacts on people's enjoyment and experience of the town centre. A major transport hub, the area also struggles with congestion and road safety. The council is working closely with the police, Transport for London (TfL) and other partners and organisations to address these issues in order to ensure that the town centre thrives and serves its local community.

## What is the vision for the town centres?

Development of Elephant and Castle aims to attract global business, shopping, research and cultural activities. Ensuring that there are opportunities for existing small businesses and traders, particularly those from minority ethnic groups, to continue trading is a top priority. Maintaining the area's rich Latin American culture and identity is also key. By harnessing the expertise and infrastructure from the universities there is the potential for the development of a strong, dynamic and specialised local economy that will attract new services and research.

It is important that the economic benefits from the development are felt along the Walworth Road, benefiting local residents and businesses. Reducing congestion, improving road safety and encouraging cycling and walking are priorities, with the aim of improving accessibility and encouraging footfall. Development in Walworth aims to maintain the heritage of the area, while also improving the retail and service offer for Walworth Road including East Street Market.

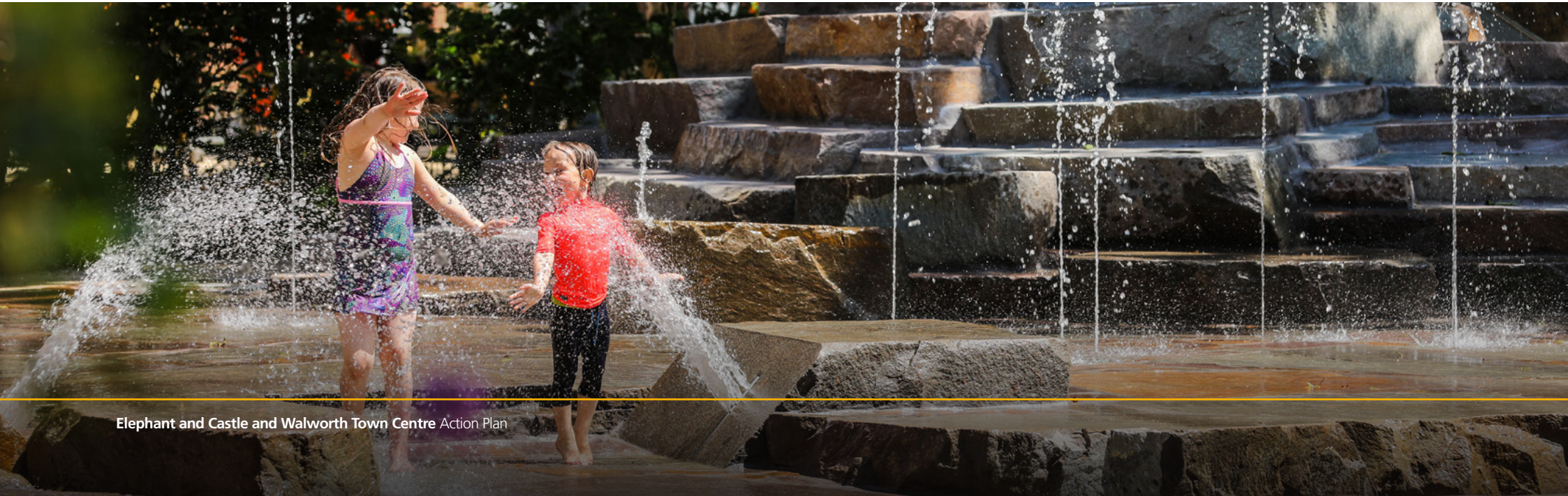
Across Elephant and Castle and Walworth, a top priority for the council, the police and other partners and organisations is tackling the challenges of crime and ASB and ensuring that people and business-owners feel safe. Improving safety and people's perception of the area is vital to attracting visitors and sustaining the local economy. Likewise, graffiti, flyposting and litter create an unwelcoming, unclean environment, so tackling these issues is also essential. This town centre action plan sets out how we are working to create a safer, cleaner town centre.





Town centre actions

Action	Description	Delivery Team	Timeframe
Short-term			
Walworth Town Hall	Walworth Town Hall has been refurbished and now includes a new community space for use by groups in the local area. There is a 50% concessionary rate for charities, CICs and a reduced rate for businesses in the area.	Southwark Council, delivered by General People	Complete
Bookable Loading Bays	There are now 5 bookable loading bays in Walworth to manage freight, and deliveries. This aims to reduce congestion, improve safety through reducing delivery times and reduce carbon emissions. The bays have been successful, and we are exploring expanding the scheme to other areas.	Southwark Council, delivered by Grid Smarter Cities	Complete
Improving accessibility to Elephant and Castle	In the short-term, TfL are consulting on a new “Bakerloop” express bus that will connect Elephant & Castle to Lewisham, replicating the proposed route of the Bakerloo Line Extension. This will support economic growth now but also help make the case for investment in the Bakerloo extension.	Southwark Council and TfL	To be completed by 2026.



Action	Description	Delivery Team	Timeframe
Medium-term			
Community Safety	<p>The council works in partnership with the police, probation service, fire service, developers and health partners to reduce crime and ASB and make the borough safer. The partnership shares information and takes a joined-up approach to reducing violence, including serious youth violence, knife crime and violence against women and girls, robbery, street drug dealing, and retail theft. This includes crime prevention initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wardens that regularly patrol Elephant and Castle and Walworth town centre, along with the police, to offer a visible and reassuring presence and to keep people safe.</li><li>• <a href="#">Southwark Young Advisors</a> who are specially trained to work with young people at risk of crime and can signpost them to specialist services.</li><li>• Tackling rough sleeping and working with key partners such as health providers to resolve concerns for welfare and safeguarding.</li><li>• Monitoring CCTV 24/7, including East Street which is monitored by 11 cameras</li><li>• Working with businesses to deliver training to help prevent violence against women and girls and promote the <a href="#">Women’s Night Safety Charter</a></li></ul> <p>It is important for everyone, including businesses, to report crime so that we allocate resources to the places that need it the most.</p> <p>In emergencies such as violent incidents, for example the recent incident in East Street Market the council follows a critical incident process to support affected people and ensure ongoing safety in the area by working in partnership with the police and other key partners. In this case, we have increased town centre warden patrols as well as provided pop up and outreach trauma support.</p>	Community Safety Partnership: Southwark Council, police, probation service, fire service and health partners	Ongoing



Action	Description	Delivery Team	Timeframe
<b>Town centre cleanliness: waste, fly-tipping, flyposting, litter and graffiti</b>	<p>The council is piloting a new approach to improve the cleanliness of town centres, targeting fly-tipping, graffiti, fly posting and litter issues. The pilot aims to work collaboratively with businesses and residents to trial new measures that deter and prevent incidents from reoccurring. Focusing on awareness raising, education and enforcement, the council aims to drive the required long-term behaviour changes to effectively address these issues. Carter Place and East Street are two of the trial locations for tackling local waste management issues such as fly-tipping.</p> <p>In the meantime, the council has introduced a formal timed waste collection scheme on Walworth Road. To support ongoing compliance, regular enforcement patrols are now being undertaken.</p>	<b>Southwark Council</b>	<p>Initial pilot work to be completed summer 2025. Approach and key learning expected to be rolled out following the initial pilots.</p> <p>Walworth Road timed waste collection and regular street cleaning and graffiti removal ongoing.</p>
<b>Chatelain House</b>	Chatelain House is being redeveloped as a mixed-use development. A proposal from a private developer has been received which the council is reviewing. The proposal includes new affordable, energy efficient homes and a dedicated space for the local community, incorporating a community kitchen, retail space, and a new pedestrian route, improving access to the high street.	<b>Fabrix</b>	To be completed by Spring 2026
<b>Manor Place Baths</b>	Manor Place Baths, a Grade-II listed building, has undergone a range of planning activity over the years. The baths will now become home to Palace, a skateboarding and clothing company, offering activities for young people in the town centre.	<b>Palace, Newmark Properties and Whitepaper.</b>	Timeframe to be confirmed
<b>Latin American Cultural Hub</b>	The council is working with the Latin American Network to establish a Latin American Cultural Hub in Elephant and Castle. This aims to support the area's thriving Latin American community.	<b>Southwark Council</b>	To open by Spring 2026
<b>Elephant and Castle BID</b>	Elephant and Castle Business Forum exists to support Elephant and Castle and Walworth businesses. It is currently exploring the feasibility of a Business Improvement District (BID). If a BID were to be established this could enhance services in the local area chosen by local businesses such as additional street cleaning, safety or environmental services.	<b>Elephant and Castle Business Forum</b>	Feasibility study outcome expected by Spring 2026.

Action	Description	Delivery Team	Timeframe
<b>Long-term</b>			
<b>Active Travel</b>	Our <a href="#">Streets for People strategy</a> sets out a bold vision and a firm commitment to improve our residents' quality of life, by changing how we all travel and use streets. We aim to improve the environment for walking and cycling and reduce through-traffic and use of side roads.	<b>Southwark Council</b>	Ongoing
<b>Improving bus journey times</b>	The council is exploring options to make highways improvements along Walworth Road to improve bus journey times. As part of this, the council has applied for funding through Transport for London (TFL).	<b>Southwark Council</b>	Funding decision by summer 2025. Works to be completed by 2030
<b>Elephant and Castle Town Centre and wider redevelopment of the area</b>	Elephant and Castle town centre is being developed which will be a mixed used development including retail space, hospitality and community spaces as well as a new London of College of Communications building. The town centre is expected to generate significant economic growth and improve the local area. This is part of a wider redevelopment of the area which has already seen a wide-ranging retail offer as part of Elephant Park. Plans include opening up the arches to provide a cut through from Elephant Park to the retail space and delivering a new state of the art health centre for residents.	<b>GetLiving and Lendlease</b>	To be completed by 2026
<b>Transport improvements</b>	To improve the transportation in Elephant and Castle, there is new infrastructure being built for the northern line. This infrastructure includes a new entrance and ticket hall with tunnelling work which accommodates the future extension of the Bakerloo Line. This is expected to improve congestion, particularly around peak times, as well as improving accessibility. The council is also working with Network Rail on improvements to Elephant and Castle overground railway station to make it fully accessible and connected to the new town centre.	Southwark Council and GetLiving	To be completed by Autumn 2026

# How we’re listening to your feedback

You Told Us	What we are doing
<b>Maintaining the cultural heritage:</b> you want to preserve and maintain the rich cultural heritage of the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In partnership with Historic England, the council developed the Walworth Heritage Action Zone, a programme which invested in historic buildings to value and preserve their heritage. Kennedy’s, 305 Walworth Road and 83 Camberwell Road benefited from repairs, conservation works and new traditional shop fronts.</li><li>• The programme has also established heritage trails and heritage training programs in schools, including the establishment of a new Young Archaeologists Club.</li><li>• The investment was able to support the Walworth Society in developing a book which documents the heritage and history of Walworth which will be published later this year.</li></ul>
<b>Making Southwark safer:</b> Crime and anti-social behaviour make the town centre feel unsafe and unwelcoming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In 2021 Southwark Council conducted a Women’s Safety Consultation. The survey, alongside police data, identified Elephant and Castle as disproportionately impacted by violence against women and girls. As a result, environmental visual audits were conducted to identify and deliver measures to help reduce crime and improve women’s safety. The work so far has focused on:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Removing graffiti and detritus from footpaths and roads.</li><li>- Reviewing current street lighting to ensure it is operational.</li><li>- Closure of Elephant and Castle train station at night in response to concerns about ASB and crime.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Street clutter and congestion:</b> you want the pathways to be free from clutter with sufficient space for people to walk easily, particularly around the bus stop outside Boots on Walworth Road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sections of the pavements have been widened where possible. The council has also requested to remove one of the telephone boxes along Walworth Road, however, the decision is subject to the provider who needs to meet their legal obligations.</li><li>• The aim of the wider traffic improvements, being discussed with TFL, also aim to result in the added benefit of easing congestion on the pavements.</li></ul>
<b>Pavement repairs:</b> you want the pavements to be replaced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The council’s approach to repairing pavements means that we do not carry out repair of pavements unless they are unsafe, not structurally sound, or have reached the end of their life. This is to minimise carbon intensive practices.</li><li>• Currently the pavements along the Walworth Road do not meet our criteria. However, if you are concerned, you can report a pavement issue using <a href="#">Fix My Streets</a>.</li></ul>

You Told Us	What we are doing
<b>Arts and Culture:</b> you want Walworth and Elephant and Castle to be an arts and culture destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The council works with the community to encourage cultural events to attract visitors to the town centre. For example, the Urban Elephant Festival, delivered by the Elephant and Castle Business Forum, attracted 4,000 visitors to Castle Square to enjoy arts, culture, and food.</li><li>• The <a href="#">Una Marson Library</a> has recently opened and was named after Una Marson, a poet, playwright, and the BBC’s first black radio producer through consultation with the local community. The library offers activities such as a crochet and knitting club and a voices of Latin America book club.</li></ul>
<b>Support for businesses:</b> you want support for businesses and traders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• London College of Communication was awarded a Thriving High Streets Grant from the council which provided local businesses with access to no-cost expert digital support.</li><li>• East Street CIC received a grant to revitalise the market and provide training for traders. In addition, the council is installing Wi-Fi and investing in gazebos and street lighting to support the market.</li></ul>
<b>Relocation of traders:</b> you want traders from the old shopping centre to be relocated and to be provided with affordable retail space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All previous traders based at the old Elephant and Castle Shopping centre received financial support with over 50 relocated to alternative premises. 10% of retail space in the new centre will be set aside on affordable rents for these former tenants.</li><li>• The exact criteria for return are being considered by the Council and the Developer, and those traders who wish to set up in the new centre will be considered for the space with a fair system.</li></ul>
<b>Staying well:</b> You want to make healthy choices for yourself and those you care for.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Alexandra Rose Charity received a grant from the council to offer families from low-income households vouchers to buy healthy food such as fresh fruit and veg. Vouchers can be used on stalls trading on East Street Market.</li><li>• The Southwark Health Outreach Programme has a regular Southwark Hub for Health site at Latin Hub (Elephant Arcade) and in Castle Square, offering free advice and health checks to residents over 18. You can get advice on stopping smoking, preventing long-term health conditions and how to access local screening for different types of cancer. Other health roadshows take place across the borough. More information can be found at <a href="#">Health and wellbeing roadshows   Southwark Council</a></li></ul>

# Useful Contacts and Information

The Elephant and Castle and Walworth Town Centre Action Plan is updated every six months. We want to hear your ideas and feedback, such as services you'd like in your town centre, or issues the town centre action plan should prioritise. [Share your views](#).

## Safety

- Report a crime
  - If someone is in immediate danger call 999
  - If it's in the past [report online](#)
- Report ASB and noise nuisance
  - Call Southwark Council 020 7525 5777
- Sign up to the council's [community safety newsletter](#) or email [CommunitySafety@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:CommunitySafety@southwark.gov.uk)

## Town Centre and Environment

- [Report a problem in the town centre](#) (like graffiti, fly tipping, broken paving slabs, or street lighting)
- A free [graffiti removal service](#) is available for private residents and businesses.

## Support for Businesses

- [Find out about support and advice for businesses](#)
- [Apply for a street furniture or pavement license](#) (for shop displays, advertising boards or tables outside your premises)
- Sign up to the council's [business newsletter](#)

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