

NOW

www.walthamstownow.co.uk



New Opportunities for Walthamstow

Investing in people, communities and business

Seven Years of New Opportunities For Walthamstow



Since 1999, New Opportunities for Walthamstow (NOW) has helped people and businesses in Walthamstow create exactly that: new opportunities. This booklet profiles some of the projects that have contributed to this £56m regeneration, and describes the benefits NOW has delivered to the local community.

A belief in empowering local people lies at the heart of NOW's philosophy. Individual projects are managed by local people for the benefit of the wider community, and this grass-roots involvement, together with the support of the Council, has been crucial to NOW's success. We can all be proud of the results, having created more than a thousand jobs and helped start over a hundred businesses. In the following pages, you can read about some of the 35 NOW projects that have made, and are continuing to make, such a positive difference to the area where we live and work.

My thanks go to my fellow Board members, the project leaders and all the staff who have worked so hard to make NOW such a success. But particular thanks must go to the people of Walthamstow. The success of NOW is their success.

Guy Davis
Chair, NOW Board
March 2006

NOW funding has been fully distributed. For further information on NOW and the projects featured in this booklet, visit www.walthamstownow.co.uk. You can obtain a full report on the regeneration including detailed statistics on NOW's achievements from the London Borough of Waltham Forest on 0208 496 4125.

NOW's Vision

To bring radical change to Walthamstow and Leyton for the benefit of local people, community organisations and businesses. By empowering the local community, they will be able to participate more fully in decision-making and service provision; by forming closer working relationships with employers and training organisations, the number of local people in work will increase; and by attracting new investment from businesses, developers and funders, NOW's key commercial areas will be transformed.

Overview

NOW has directly provided real and lasting benefit to Walthamstow and surrounding areas by investing £56 million into the area for seven years from 1999 to 2006.

NOW was formed in 1999 and successfully bid for £14m from the Single Regeneration Budget. This money has been used to support 35 NOW projects and lever an additional £42m of public and private sector funding towards regeneration. Without NOW, this match funding would have been lost to the area. It was secured from many sources including the London Borough of Waltham Forest, the European Union, London Buses, Waltham Forest voluntary sector groups and private companies.

NOW funded 35 projects that sought to provide or increase:

- Access to employment
- Revitalisation through development
- Community empowerment

NOW's funding helped enable Walthamstow's Town Centre to be transformed, its High Street revitalised and a new transport hub provided. These award winning physical changes not only benefit Walthamstow but the borough as a whole. Within the community, local residents of all ages, business people and service providers have benefited from a range of NOW projects all seeking to help and empower the local population.

Key statistics include:

- 1,050 jobs created
- 926 jobs safeguarded
- 7,844 pupils whose educational attainment has been improved
- 4,433 young people benefited from personal and/or social development training
- 125 business start-ups
- 76,148 square metres of new business or commercial floor space
- 46,451 people benefited from community safety initiatives
- 4,213 people accessed new health facilities
- 1,131 people employed in voluntary work
- 12,552 new childcare places provided
- 73,589 weeks of construction employment provided
- 15,834 weeks of training provided
- 2,008 people obtaining qualifications as a result of training
- 888 residents helped to access employment
- 774 disadvantaged residents helped to access employment
- 278 dwellings of vulnerable residents provided with upgraded security
- 450 community groups supported

The NOW Board, consisting of elected members of the community, local businesses, service providers and local councillors developed and monitored the NOW programme. Minutes from NOW Board meetings can be downloaded www.walthamstownow.co.uk. NOW has been administered by the LDA.

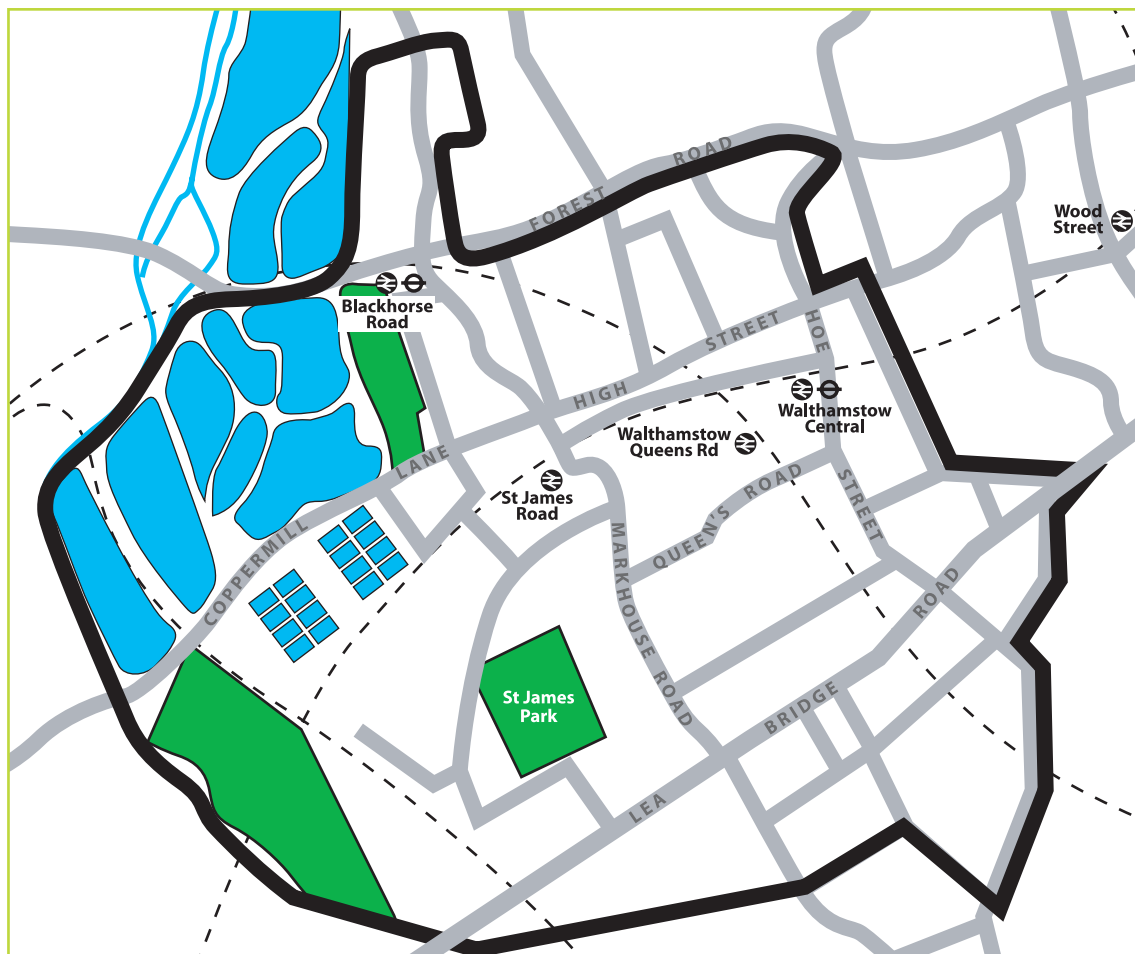
NOW Geographical Area

NOW projects operate within a defined geographical location, around Walthamstow and Leyton, known as the NOW Area. The NOW Area incorporates all or part of the following wards:

- Walthamstow High Street
- Markhouse (formerly St James Street)
- Lea Bridge
- Hoe Street (half)
- William Morris (part) (formerly Lloyd Park)
- Leyton (part)

The NOW area consists of:

- Physical and social deprivation and a poor urban environment.
- A vibrant ethnically diverse community, consisting of 21,825 households under a variety of tenures.
- Major industrial areas such as Argall Avenue and Blackhorse Lane
- Retail and commercial centres of Walthamstow Town Centre (85,344sq.m), Blackhorse Lane and Sutherland Road (184,000sq.m)



NOW Projects

NOW has funded 35 projects since 1999. These are listed below, and a cross section of NOW projects are highlighted in greater detail on the following pages.

Vocational Training Initiative Skills A pre-vocational project which provided skills training in demand-growth employment sectors. The project included a customised reskilling programme and incorporated activity to improve access to employment opportunities at Stansted Airport. VTI placed 80 local residents into jobs and provided 2,583 training weeks.

Job Bank A neighbourhood access point for an integrated package of vocational advice or guidance, job preparation, brokering and placing services particularly for the long-term unemployed. The Job Bank placed 577 local residents into jobs.

Outset Centre Providing a much needed centre for the development and support of 'cultural industries', and assisting the engagement of young people in the James Street Ward of Walthamstow. This project improved the attainment of over 130 pupils and benefited over 250 young people.

Paths to Progress Providing intensive support to parents and academic support to their children when entering education and transferring between schools. Special support is provided to refugees and homeless families.

IT for Parents in Schools Provided access for parents in the community to school computers to improve ICT skills in the adult population.

Hoppa Bus to Argall Avenue This project opened up employment opportunities on industrial estates lacking in public transport through the provision of an extended Hoppa Bus route. The route also links ill-served residential areas to Walthamstow Town Centre. 14,178 people used this service to access employment. This service is now run by London Buses.

STEP into Construction Addressing a shortage of skilled labour for the construction industry, as well as dealing with high levels of low-skilled employment.

Fashion Design and Exhibition Centre [FDEC] FDEC's aims were to provide quality human resource development and training in the fashion and design sectors. FDEC supported 39 new businesses and advised a further 48 local businesses.

Job Opportunities and Brokerage Service Offered specialist outreach information, advice, support and guidance services to help unemployed clients to identify a structured pathway into sustainable employment or training.

Community Health & Wellbeing A project to increase local people's access to health activities through outreach health sessions and the provision of targeted programme exercise at Kelmscott Leisure Centre.

The Limes Children's Centre Development of a specialist play centre with equipment for children with disabilities.

Leisure Facilities SRB funds provided floodlights to five tennis courts and two outdoor cricket nets, as well as covering five tennis courts with synthetic grass at Low Hall sports ground.

Credit Union Aims to improve access to financial services for disadvantaged groups within Walthamstow.

Community Banking Initiatives A micro-credit project that specialises in providing business support, training and start-up finance to unemployed women and women on low incomes in Waltham Forest who are trying to establish their own enterprises.

Changing Perspectives, Changing Power Provides professional management advice and small grants to voluntary organisations.

Queens Road Community Centre Provision of a community centre for residents around the Boundary Road estate.

Community Forum Established a forum to ensure full community participation in NOW. The project distributed NOW funds via small grants.

Refugee Advice The project provides advice, welfare benefits information and outreach work targeted at the refugee community in order to increase the stability of local communities and build the capacity of local ethnic minority groups.

Amends A mediation service using volunteers from the community to allow offenders to make reparation to victims of their crimes. Amends benefited 584 young people and 736 local people benefited from community safety initiatives.

Safe & Warm A project to improve the health, comfort and wellbeing of vulnerable residents by enabling them to keep their homes secure from burglary, warm and free from damp.

Walthamstow Town Centre Management Ensuring the active involvement of a broad range of Walthamstow Town Centre interests in the future success of the economic heart of the NOW Partnership area. A dedicated Town Centre Manager helps to provide the Town Centre with a competitive edge, improves the management of the public realm and helps to satisfy the aspirations of all Town Centre users. The Town Centre Manager has advised 128 local businesses to date.

Shopmobility The project improves access for physical and sensory disability shoppers to increase independence and improve the quality of life for local people with a disability.

CCTV Improving the community safety of Walthamstow and Bakers Arms by provision of CCTV in key locations. These cameras improved the safety of over 19,000 residents.

Rail Access and Refurbishment The main objective of this scheme was to make the St James Street and Queens Road stations more accessible and improve their general environment. Over 2,000 people benefited as a result of safety improvements at these stations.

Town Centre Renewal Programme NOW funding has been used to transform the Town Square and Gardens, provide a striking new bus station and enhance the High Street.

Support to Cultural Businesses Provided training sessions and support to start up business through a resource centre. This project improved 368 square metres of commercial floor space.

Flats Above Shops Refurbishment of flats and shops in partnership with Registered Social Landlords to bring back into use empty properties and improve the physical environment in the town centre.

Shopfront Improvements This project sought to offer financially attractive terms to business owners to improve the ground floor retail frontages of their premises and thus improve the visual attractiveness of the central shopping location. This project provided 178 person weeks of construction employment.

Strategic Street Property Refurbishments Facilitating the refurbishment of strategic residential and commercial properties and the development of new build properties on a mixed tenure basis in the St James Conservation Area.

Town Centre and Key Capital Projects Enhancement of key capital projects in the programme via intensive project support and development.

Industrial Area Improvements - Business Grants An umbrella project of site, premises and environmental improvements to key industrial areas of Blackhorse Lane and Argall Avenue.

Argall Avenue Renewal (Roxwell Studios) Facilitated the redevelopment and refurbishment of Roxwell House into Roxwell Studios, a modern, themed, workspace for starter businesses, focussing on media and cultural businesses. This project provided 355 person weeks of construction employment.

Quality Streets Greening and improving the streetscape of Hoe Street and Lea Bridge Road to compliment the major town centre developments.

South Access Road- Road Closure The project had three key aims: to remove industrial traffic from a residential area; improve road safety in an area with a new primary school; enable the SRB supported Hoppa Bus to provide easier access to job opportunities. This project provided 150 person weeks of construction employment.

Uplands House The project was designed to create a new high tech training and education centre for local residents and workers on the Lea Valley Business Park and Industrial estate to develop the competitiveness of under-performing enterprises.

Shopmobility

Shopmobility gives independence and provides assistance to local people with physical and sensory disabilities. It helps them make the most of Walthamstow's town centre to shop, socialise and contribute to the community and local economy.

Number of training weeks delivered	135
Number of people benefiting from safety initiatives	1,585
Number of women benefiting from safety initiatives	1,014

Shopmobility was started in 1999 and has received £242,000 funding from NOW over seven years, helping over 1,000 people who were either previously unable to access shops by themselves or were restricted in their activities.

Shopmobility provides electric mobility scooters and wheelchairs which are loaned to people to go shopping, use the town centre's facilities and enjoy the area. Costing as little as £1 per day, the scheme provides a low cost solution for all users.

Elderly and disabled shoppers can arrange for one of the 50 Shopmobility volunteers to help them with their shopping, accompany them on their trips and assist them around the area.

Weekly door-to-door Shopmobility shopping outings, enable normally housebound people to get into the town centre.

Weekly Shopmobility lunch outings enable housebound elderly and disabled people to visit local venues around the area, meet other people, socialise and enjoy Walthamstow.

Shopmobility also arranges special events for its users to get together and a Christmas shopping event is organised every year. In 2005, Shopmobility organised a variety show for its users to celebrate the New Year and enable elderly and disabled people to get together in style. Acts, ranging from comedians, banjo players and a soprano - all from Brick Lane Music Hall - performed to over 200 Shopmobility users.



Retired speedway star 89 year-old George Flower has adopted four wheels over two to get around Walthamstow town centre and go shopping. George became a speedway champion following the Second World War, after he got interested in motorbike racing during his time in Naples in 1945. George had previously served in Africa, Austria and Italy in the Royal Artillery and was awarded the African Star and Italian Star medals. On his return home, he took up competitive speed racing

winning numerous trophies around the UK. He took his last ride at the age of 80, but since then arthritis has made it difficult for him to walk. So, in 2003, he registered at Shopmobility and, after a bit of training, he was out on the road again on an electric mobility scooter. George says: "Shopmobility gave me a whole new lease of life and has enabled me to get about by myself and be independent, which is fantastic."



Town Centre Renewal

Walthamstow's vibrant High Street and town centre has been radically enhanced thanks to several major regeneration projects aimed at making the area an even better place to live and work.

£2.8m of NOW funding has been used to transform the Town Square and Gardens, provide a striking new bus station and enhance the High Street. This work took place from 1999 to 2004 and won the Mayor of London's 2004 Award for Planning Excellence. The three projects also won the only Commendation awarded in 2004 by the British Council of Shopping Centres for a town centre environment scheme.



The Town Square and Gardens connecting the bus station, High Street and shopping centre have been given a substantial makeover funded by the NOW programme and the European Regional Development Fund. The design by Building Design Partnership (BDP) includes a raised performance area, the borough's busiest under-fives' play area, and a sensory garden, with attractive planting and better lighting, to create a more useable

and enjoyable, secure environment. The work was completed in 2004.

Walthamstow High Street is the bustling hub of the area with high street shops, market traders and a diverse range of outlets giving Walthamstow a colourful and vibrant identity. NOW funding has been used to help make the High Street more accessible and easy to use by residents, retailers and stallholders. Works include:

- Improving the lighting along the whole High Street
- Market area refurbishment
- Resurfacing and replacement of worn road and pavement surfaces
- Raised speed tables and other traffic calming measures

Since the town centre revitalisation programme began in 1999, many exciting changes have taken place in Walthamstow and there is more to come.

Outside Walthamstow, things are also changing:

- London is hosting the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in the Lower Lea Valley.
- Stratford City is creating a major new town centre in East London with a large number of shops, three department stores, new offices, housing, schools and other facilities.
- Changes in central and London government policy toward town centres are placing an emphasis on a greater mix of uses with higher density residential development (including taller buildings) around key transport nodes.

The transformation of the town centre is a long, continual process of change; we need to think and plan ahead for Walthamstow's future so that it can:

- Provide a high quality environment in which you want to live, work, shop and relax;
- Provide more jobs and learning opportunities for everyone;
- Provide the services and facilities that you and your family need;
- Provide cultural and leisure opportunities for all sectors of the community to continue to thrive.



Number of jobs created	262
Number of jobs safeguarded	272
Number of construction jobs created	30,293
New business/commercial floor space	7,554 m ²
Number of people benefiting from safety initiatives	60,000