

MAYOR OF LONDON

Night Surgery Enfield



THE GILPIN'S BELL



FREEHOUSE

20
ZONE

THE GILPIN'S BELL
MATCHDAY PARKING
£15.00

GILPIN'S BELL
ANNA'S NEW MENU



MONDAY	THURSDAY	11AM - 10PM	LAST ORDERS 9:45PM
TUESDAY	FRIDAY	11AM - 10PM	LAST ORDERS 9:45PM
WEDNESDAY	SATURDAY	11AM - 10PM	LAST ORDERS 9:45PM
SUNDAY	SUNDAY	11AM - 10PM	LAST ORDERS 9:45PM

EMONT
REET



Night Surgery: Enfield

London's Night Czar, Amy Lamé, reflects on her visit to Fore Street in Angel Edmonton, Enfield. The night surgery was an opportunity to hear about the community-led events, projects and plans underway to develop and diversify the high street's cultural, economic and social life at night, building upon projects supported by the Mayor's Good Growth and High Streets for All Challenge funds. She heard from a diverse range of local businesses and community groups about the challenges faced at night, and the opportunities to work together to activate the public realm with light and life after dark.

Fore Street has been selected as the borough's night time strategy pilot project, with the council and their partners seeking to capitalise on projects already underway to develop the town centre's night time economic and cultural vitality. Enfield Council aims to use Fore Street as a blueprint for developing night time strategies across the borough's other economic and social centres.

A range of new evening and night time initiatives have been piloted along Fore Street, including the Winter Lights Festival and a project to transform Fore Street Library into an 'urban living room', with the library's core services and opening hours extended to include community-led activities in the evenings.

The council launched Fore Street for All in December 2021, which it describes as 'a community first approach to creative enterprise and cultural programming to foster a night time economy on our high street.' The group includes local community group, REACT, who represent 3,000 households in Upper Edmonton, Artist Hive Studio, and architects and local residents Fisher Cheng. It was brilliant to see local residents, artists and designers working with their council to shape the economic, social and cultural life of their high street at night. The night surgery was a great way to start identifying next steps and opportunities for the high street.

Fore Street

Arriving at Silver Street Station, we crossed the North Circular to reach Fore Street. Our first stop was Boss Cuts, a barber shop that has recently redesigned its frontage, investing in new illuminated signage and a canopy decorated with festoon lights. Improvements to shopfront lighting is a great investment for high street businesses that helps attract and welcome customers while enlivening the high street and providing a sense of stewardship and natural surveillance at night. The owner spoke passionately about the responsibility he feels for helping to animate and lift the quality of experience along Fore Street after dark.

I loved how Boss Cuts provides a real moment of theatre, with its interior decorated with feature lighting, plants and even a mirrorball! It was wonderful to see a small business that had been hit hard by restrictions over two years investing in their premises and aspiring to become an informal community hub and beacon on the high street.

The business is one of the few along that part of the high street that remains open beyond 6pm. Like many across London and the country, this high street is characterised in parts by a cluster of 24-hour gambling establishments, located alongside pawnbrokers and cash machines. These uses, all within a few metres of each other, form a mini ecosystem of their own which has the potential to fuel poverty and addiction. I encourage local authorities to review clusters of complementary uses on their high streets at night – both positive and negative – and use planning and licensing levers to help shape the high street as a positive, inclusive, social and cultural space at night.

Further along Fore Street, we picked out opportunities for selected architectural lighting to create a series of landmarks along the high street after dark, including a beautiful new street art mural on the corner of College Gardens which depicts a long-standing local market trader.

Evening and night markets are being explored by many local authorities, so I was pleased to hear the council's ambitions for extending the operating hours of Leeds Street Market. Currently open between 8am and 3.30pm, the council is exploring options to support later trading. This could include installing permanent market stalls that make setting up and packing down faster and easier and would allow different traders to set up after daytime traders have left.



Fore Street looking south



The new mural 'Charlie' inspired by a Leeds Street Market trader on the corner of College Gardens and Fore Street

Joyce and Snell's Alleyway

The Joyce and Snell's Alleyway is the sole access route from the high street to the Joyce Avenue and Snell Park housing estates. The estates are two of several being comprehensively regenerated in the borough, with 2,000 additional homes planned for the site.

With few dwellings on the ground floor and many areas are not overlooked, there are limited opportunities for natural surveillance. Community safety officers and residents often report issues of anti-social behaviour in the alleyway, including drug dealing. Poor visibility, hidden corners and utilitarian, glary lighting create an uninviting route after dark, leaving the estate isolated as somewhat of a dead end.

With long-term regeneration plans being developed and seeking to address the estate's existing challenges, it was nonetheless encouraging to see immediate action being taken to improve the look and feel of the space for residents after dark.

I heard from local artist, Hanna Benihoud, and local architects, Fisher Cheng, about plans to create a more welcoming, warm, domestic ambience for the alleyway. Benihoud's beautiful William Morris-esque floral patterns already adorn architectural columns, but unfortunately can't be enjoyed after dark at the moment. The installation of sensitive lighting allows artworks such as this to brighten up dark corners at night, create positive views from the high street and reinforce a sense of place at night as well as by day.



The Joyce Avenue and Snell's Park Estate alleyway



The Joyce Avenue and Snell's Park Estate alleyway seen from Fore Street

Fore Street Library

The popularity and exponential growth of home food delivery services during the pandemic has had a real impact across London's town centres and high streets, which was evident on Fore Street. Delivery riders are some of London's most vulnerable night workers and many earn well below the London Living Wage. Late night amenities for riders are often lacking, meaning they have no other option but to congregate on the high street. This can appear threatening at night, lead to obstruction of footways and trigger noise complaints from residents. I heard that one local business on Fore Street had resorted to restricting access to their wifi in an attempt to discourage delivery riders from congregating, citing fear of crime and disorder.

I'm pleased that many councils are exploring ways to respond positively to this new demand. Local authorities should engage with food and drink businesses to understand the needs of night workers and explore opportunities to provide safe places where delivery riders can access amenities, while reducing the impacts on the high street.

Fore Street Library is the high street's only civic building and usually operates from 9am-5pm. In the weeks before my visit, the council had begun to implement their ambitious plans to refurbish the library's interior and develop an 'urban living room', which would host community-led activities in the evenings. I was very excited to see these plans to establish the library as a community-focused evening venue for the high street and look forward to its launch in July 2022.

Outside the library, I met local artists projecting artworks as part of Enfield's Winter Lights Festival. King Owusu's *Let There Be Light* uses 'light paintings' to document the local community of Upper Edmonton, with their images adorning the windows of the library.



The Enfield Winter Lights team outside the library



The unevenly lit underside of the canopy on Fore Street

High Street Businesses

Night surgeries are a great chance for me to speak directly to night time business owners and hear the challenges they are facing and I was pleased to meet a range of business owners as we continued down the high street.

Coal City is a Nigerian restaurant and one of the only independent restaurants that stays open late on Fore Street. It occupies a council-owned property and has access to a car park at the rear, which forms a dead end. I heard concerns from the owner about high levels of anti-social behaviour in the space, which is adjacent to housing blocks. During lockdown, the area was used by customers to collect takeaway food and wait for orders. This resulted in a notable decrease in anti-social behaviour, with customers providing "eyes on the street" and a deterrent. The business is now in talks with the council's licensing team to use the space for outdoor dining and socialising. This is a great example of how licensing authorities, the police and businesses can work together to improve safety while supporting evening and night time businesses.

Upper Edmonton Post Office is a great example of mixed uses, with the convenience store and post office recently expanding its business model to sell ice cream and waffles. Although the post office service closes at 5.30pm, food service continues until 8pm, with safety concerns cited as the biggest barrier to staying open later. The business owner was keen to put tables and chairs outside for customers, which is something I've seen many night time businesses across London take advantage of. Applying for a licence can be confusing for business owners, particularly those looking to diversify outside of their usual retail-led operations. Luckily the council's licensing officer was on hand to explain the licensing application process, but councils could look at creating simple 'how to' guides to help businesses navigate the licensing system.

LT's Bar is a small independent pub, one of a few on the high street. With only one staff member usually behind the bar, concerns over safety and fear of petty crime have led the owners to restrict entry to the venue to regulars only. I saw signs advertising a similar approach in other pubs along Fore Street. It was a stark reminder of how fear of crime can lead businesses to close their doors to the public, which in turn fuels perceptions of the area being closed and unsafe at night. High streets often require a critical mass of venues open at night to attract a diversity of people and start to shift perceptions of safety and inclusion.

My final stop was at Pages and Blendz café, where the owner is trialling a new menu to attract diners later in the evening. The café collaborates with other local businesses to host events and workshops. Situated in a converted law office, the café offers a glimpse into a future Fore Street, where ground floor units open later into the evening, multiple uses share the same space and businesses work in partnership to create a programme of activities and events after 6pm.



The car park behind Coal City



The Fore Street Post Office



The City

PALACE AMUSEMENTS

Western Union WU
Money transfer

PALACE AMUSEMENTS

OPEN

WESTERN UNION

Final thoughts

My visit to Fore Street illustrated the challenges facing many high streets that have few retail, leisure, cultural or community spaces open in the evening and night time. It was striking to hear the extent to which feeling unsafe is impacting businesses and discouraging them from opening their doors later, which in turn impacts perceptions of safety on the high street for visitors and residents at night.

It was brilliant to see the council adopting a culture-led approach to addressing these issues, using the assets that they own to create post-6pm civic and community spaces to help drive a more diverse evening and night time offer. They are also investing in street art and lighting to help change perceptions and create new places and landmarks along the high street.

I witnessed great partnership working between council departments, the local police and community groups and was heartened to hear ideas for a Fore Street Night Forum being discussed.

Fore Street for All provides a useful template for other areas of London, bringing together the council, residents, businesses, charitable and artist communities to co-create a vision for Fore Street 6pm-6am. This approach, through a 'night test' policy, will ensure evening and night time opportunities are integrated with existing and future projects.

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