



# Co-operative Councils

## Innovation Network

## STRATEGY



## Mutual Ventures

### **Mutual Ventures working with Lewisham Council: The future of Lewisham Town Centre - an economic vision and plan to create a more vibrant and prosperous town**

Mutual Ventures supported Lewisham Council and its partners to develop a vision and plan for regenerating the economy of Lewisham town centre.

Lewisham is a borough on the outskirts of inner London. At its heart is Lewisham Town Centre, a retail and community space that is in poor condition and ‘punching below its weight’ in economic terms. At present, it has a limited range of economic activity, no significant night-time or evening economy, and overall footfall is declining.

Despite this, Lewisham town centre has significant scope for improvement. Its position as a transport hub, a proliferation of modern development around the town centre, and a proud, loyal local population mean that it has the potential to be a thriving town centre.

#### **Our support**

Lewisham Council appointed Mutual Ventures to support the economy team to develop a strategy for the town centre. Key questions included: What is the vision for Lewisham town

centre? How do we increase economic activity in Lewisham Town Centre? What do we want it to be 'famous' for? How can we link economic and civic activity?

Our role involved bringing together evidence on the performance and potential of Lewisham town centre, engaging with town centre stakeholders through interviews and workshops, and creating a vision and set of goals. The principle of cooperation was at the heart of this.

A key feature of the process was that is needed to involve a wide range of partners and listen to what local people say is important about the history, present and future of their town centre.

Stakeholders were clear that they wanted to see a vibrant but authentic town centre, celebrating the diversity of the local communities through enterprise, food, arts and culture. People supported the need for change but wanted that change to recognise and contribute to the town centre's heritage and identity.



Lewisham Market

## Outcome

Working together, Lewisham Council, Mutual Ventures and partners have set a clear direction for the future of the town centre. Alongside the vision and goals, partners agreed a series of short and long-term commitments and measures of success for delivering the strategy.

In the long-term the anticipated outcomes include an increase in overall economic output in the town centre, improvement in the perception by residents and their pride in place, and a change to the category of Lewisham with London to become a 'metropolitan' centre.

The strategy sits alongside Lewisham Council's successful bid to the Government's Levelling Up Fund, which will bring £24m new capital investment in the fabric of the town. Led by the

Council, a cooperative approach to future plans will help achieve real transformation for Lewisham residents, bringing all partners on the journey together and making the most of their individual strengths.

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