

chapter **10** town centre management

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### KEY OBJECTIVE 7:

To provide a clean, safe, friendly, well managed and well maintained town centre in the daytime and at night

10.1 Kingston has an attractive and distinctive character overall, but parts of the town centre have a poor quality environment and there are issues associated with the adverse effects of the vibrant night-time economy.

10.2 In early engagement on this AAP with the community and stakeholders, the poor street environment was identified as a weakness and improvements to the quality of the streetscene ranked highly as an aspiration. The Issues consultation (2004) identified dislikes about the town centre as follows: unsafe at night (34%); litter/dirty (23%); anti-social behaviour (22%); the evening economy caters for teenagers/binge drinkers (16%); too many nightclubs/theme pubs (12% responses); run down/lack of ambience (9% responses). A cleaner/tidier environment (38% responses) ranked first as an improvement that people would like to see to the quality of the environment. Local concerns about the evening and night-time economy have featured consistently throughout the preparation of this AAP.



POLICY CONTEXT FOR POLICY K21	MANAGING THE TOWN CENTRE
London Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3D.1 Supporting town centres</li> <li>• 6A.2 Working in Partnership</li> <li>• 6A.3 Promoting Development</li> <li>• 6A.9 Working with Stakeholders</li> </ul>
Community Plan	Vision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The safest borough in Greater London</li> <li>• An environmentally conscious community and a sustainable borough</li> </ul>
Other Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to Manage Town Centres ODPM Guidance 2005</li> <li>• Good Practice Guide to the Evening and Late Night Economy ODPM 2004</li> <li>• Consultation Draft Managing the Night Time Economy Mayor of London 2006</li> </ul>

## POLICY K21: MANAGING THE TOWN CENTRE

The Council will work with partners:

- Kingston First/Kingston Town Centre Management (KTCM) and private land and property owners to provide a clean, safe, friendly, attractive and well maintained town centre
- KTCM, the Police, businesses and the community to prepare, adopt and implement an After Dark Strategy to better manage the evening and night-time economy so that the town centre is a safe and welcoming place to visit at night

10.3 Following concerns about falling visitor numbers, research showed that current services in terms of cleanliness and the appearance of the streetscape were not meeting the expectations of visitors and businesses. A clean, safe, friendly and well-maintained town centre, which balances the needs of its users, is a basic civic requirement and will make the town centre more attractive to residents, visitors and investors. It is a key supporting activity for the achievement of other spatial objectives, which seek to boost the economy, enhance the range of attractions and improve the quality of the environment.



10.4 The town centre was designated as a Business Improvement District in January 2005. Within the BID area, the Council provide baseline services and KTCM provide additional services to provide a safer, cleaner environment with added security. These include: improved on street cleansing; gum removal; planting; street furniture and lighting. Three streetscape schemes (Memorial Square, Skerne Walk and Castle Street) were completed in 2006 through partnership working and funding to improve the town centre environment.

10.5 Initiatives to provide 'Safer' streets and help overcome fear of crime are important and include: the provision of uniformed and trained community rangers, co-ordinated with CCTV, police and community support officers to manage anti-social behaviour; installing help points; upgrading street lighting in areas of need; assisting all town centre car parks to achieve the 'Park Mark' award and the implementation of a scheme for improved mini-cab facilities in 2006.



10.6 Kingston is a significant attraction as a hub of evening entertainment serving southwest London and northeast Surrey. The After Dark Strategy will help to guide and improve the management of the town centre at night to reduce associated adverse impacts. It is linked to this Area Action Plan and to the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy and complements other borough strategies that deal with crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and visitor management. It aims to promote the night-time economy whilst balancing the need to protect the amenities and quality of life of residents living in and around the town centre. It addresses issues related to licensing, planning, management, maintenance, policing, crime and anti-social behaviour and late night transport in a holistic manner and sets out a series of key actions. The After Dark Strategy was adopted in October 2007.

