

MAYOR OF LONDON

# Night Surgery Hammersmith and Fulham

فراوردهای ایرانی مو

ERY

حلال گوشت

لحم حلال

HAL

محصولات ایرانی

020 7610 2626





THE DOVE



RESTAURANT  
THE DOVE  
CONVENESE HOUSE OF BREADS  
WINE & SPIRITS  
1820-1830

## Night Surgery: Hammersmith and Fulham

**London's Night Czar, Amy Lamé, reflects on her visit to Hammersmith and Fulham on 3 February 2022. The night walk and stakeholder roundtable were organised as part of her programme of night surgeries across London, to support boroughs in their strategic night time thinking.**

After almost two years of restrictions, lockdowns and ever-shifting regulations, I was absolutely delighted to get back to doing in-person night surgeries. It was wonderful to hear first-hand from people working at night and to see the challenges, opportunities and character of a range of places across Hammersmith and Fulham.

The borough has been leading the way in their approach to partnership working. The council launched their Night Time Economy Working Group in the Autumn of 2021. Chaired by the licensing team, the working group has been meeting with officers from across the council including economic development, environmental health, public realm and highways, as well as external partners from the police and local business improvement districts (BIDs) to regularly share information, update each other on ongoing work and identify issues that impact the borough at night.

Alongside this internal working group, the council has been hosting and convening an external group of businesses and has developed strong working relationships with a range of businesses in the borough. I was excited to see the early successes emerging from these working groups and see how this work could start to shape longer-term strategic night time thinking.

## The Prince, Lillie Road



Members of the local BID and management team at The Prince

From West Brompton Station, we made our way to The Prince, the borough's largest licensed venue.

As with other venues across London, staffing was highlighted as a key challenge. There is demand for a skilled staff in the hospitality sector, but the venue was facing increased costs in staff training following a loss of the core workforce over recent years. The loss of security staff to other sectors since the start of the pandemic has also been felt.

One of the key asks of City Hall and the council was to remove as many barriers to going out as possible. This included looking at increased transport options at night and also more communications to boost confidence in people to go out again.

## North End Road Market



Market stall holders on North End Road market

I was pleased to see the ongoing regeneration and public realm improvements along North End Road, including new dedicated electricity bollards for the market stalls and new lighting being installed. This can present opportunities for businesses to trade later and safely outdoors, including through the use of pavement licences.

Speaking to the market traders on North End Road Market put into sharp focus the trade-offs that small, family-run businesses need to consider when looking at their trading hours. Shopping habits are changing and the morning rush for traders has been replaced by steadier trading over the course of the day, with younger people shopping later into the evening. However, traders pointed out that family life and the work that goes into packing down market stalls can be a barrier to later trading and reduces their flexibility to adapt to these changing patterns.

## Hammersmith

Hammersmith is home to some of the borough's major night time venues, with the Eventim Apollo and Riverside Studios providing anchors in the town centre and at the riverside. The route between the two currently lacks animation and activity but could really lend itself to feature and artistic lighting to improve connectivity.

A discussion with the council and riverside businesses highlighted that recovery overall has been mixed. Some activities, such as cinema, were seeing a slow return to pre-pandemic level. The uncertainty was a stark reminder of the challenges still facing the hospitality sector.

Staffing was again a key issue. A shortage of skilled chefs was highlighted, with pubs and restaurants seeing huge competition for staff from hotels, catering companies and even chip shops, all of who offer higher wages.

The emergence of Omicron in December was cited as a challenge for all the businesses, with cancellations and a return to work from home guidance significantly disrupting their forecasted earnings. However, January and February had seen business pick up as cancellations were now rebooking.

There's an ecosystem of night time businesses on the riverside, with Riverside Studios bringing additional footfall that supports nearby pubs and restaurants. Businesses reflected however that footfall isn't as high in the winter months. There was widespread support for better signage and wayfinding to attract people to the riverside year-round. We discussed working with TfL to explore options for signage and marketing in and around the underground station, and how the council could support by making use of websites and newsletters to help reach a wider audience.

Safety concerns were raised for the area, with some staff anxious about leaving late at night through a quiet residential estate. I urged all the businesses to sign up to the Women's Night Safety Charter and make use of the new resources that will be made available as the toolkit is refreshed and increased resources are allocated by the Mayor of London.



Hammersmith Bridge



Roundtable attendees at Riverside Studios

## The Riverside



Hammersmith riverside looking east towards the Rutland Arms pub

The riverside hosts an interesting mix of characterful pubs, some that have been there since the early 1700s, alongside new housing developments.

The proximity of large residential developments, most notably at Fulham Reach, presents several challenges to licensed venues on the riverside, limiting the extent to which they can stay open later and make use of the flexibility afforded by temporary events notices.

Safety concerns were also raised. Some staff are anxious about leaving work late at night through a quiet residential estate. Coupled with an abundance of cyclists and runners passing by at speed on the low-lit river path, I was able to see first hand how the riverside could make people feel unsafe for a number of reasons.

We discussed how the lighting could be changed along the riverside to create waypoints in the distance that offer a sense of destination and could improve feelings of safety.



## King Street



The Salutation pub

Connecting Hammersmith town centre and neighbouring Chiswick, King Street has seen a lot of changes over the years. Extensive renovations of the town hall campus are well underway, but have meant a temporary removal of a core audience for the street.

The owner of The Salutation pub described the impact of being located between these two town centres, saying people would choose to go to one or the other, meaning those businesses in between often lose out on passing footfall. Despite this, issues of anti-social behaviour were also highlighted along the street.

We also stopped in Lyric Square, a large civic space outside the Lyric Theatre. The square hosts a daily food market that caters to the big employers in the area, such as L'Oréal.

## Uxbridge Road and Shepherd's Bush Green



Belushi's, Shepherd's Bush

Our final stop saw us walk along Uxbridge Road to Shepherd's Bush Green.

There were significant opportunities to improve lighting to shopfronts and businesses open at night and to avoid harsh contrasts between very dark and overly lit areas.

We ended the walk at Belushi's Shepherd's Bush. It was good to see the venue busy after the discussions earlier in the evening about increasing consumer confidence.





THE HOP POLES

17-19

[ the HOP POLES ]

FREE HOUSE

FREE HOUSE

THE HOP POLES HOTEL



## Final thoughts

It was wonderful to see partnership working in action throughout the evening. Market traders and business owners recognised local council officers and licensing and regulation teams were eager to proactively support their local businesses.

I look forward to continuing my work with the borough and develop holistic and partnership-led approaches to address the challenges we saw on the night and maximise the many opportunities we identified.

# MAYOR OF LONDON