



Creating a vibrant, well-used space for the benefit of the community

2 March 2010

LEEGATE – DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: Wednesday 24 March 7.30pm

Dear Supporter,

You will know that a campaign group has been formed to plan and organise what actions need to be taken to stop the run-down of Leegate Shopping Centre. It's called "Lee Green Lives" in recognition that the shopping centre itself cannot thrive without the cooperation and support of the residents and businesses in the surrounding area of Lee Green.

Leegate should be the heart and soul of the Lee Green area; yet more and more shop sites have become empty with nothing seemingly being done to stop the decline. That's why Lee Green Lives has been formed.

The first meeting of Lee Green Lives will be held on Wednesday 24 March 7.30pm at New Testament Church, Lee High Road. This will be the founding meeting of the group, so please try and be there!

If everyone joins together, we will prove to the Council and the owners (St Modwen's) that local people care and are determined that something not only gets done, but done in a way local residents want.

What's happened so far:

Local residents attending Lee Green Assembly (the body that has a say in what happens in our Ward) have set Leegate as one of their main priorities and put £7500 towards bringing it back to life. This start-up money comes from the Mayor of Lewisham's £50,000 allocated to each Ward.

Ideas of things we can do, many of them first proposed at Local Assembly meetings, include:

- ☺ Join Lee Green Lives and help in working to revive the area, or become a supporter and stay in touch with what's happening.
- ☺ Do a survey of the community, local shops and services to ensure local needs are met when St Modwen's, apply to the Council to develop their mixed retail-residential plan of Leegate.
- ☺ Help to improve the Leegate environment, by clean-ups, security, plants; artwork; and new seating for the square. Renovation of the car park.
- ☺ Organise and support open-air activities such as markets, fairs and arts/crafts exhibitions to bring people back to the centre.



¶ Suggested ideas for how best to fill some of the vacant units include facilities for a young people's, info/café centre with jobs-linked skills and computer training (the Government has recently relaxed rules on leasing and on community use of premises).

At the Assembly meeting of 19th January, several things were agreed to take the process forward. Leaflets with the latest news will be available over the next few weeks,

In addition, we have organised for a survey of people's views on how the area can be improved, both in the short-term and in any future redevelopment. Copies will be available from: F. C. Butchers; The Gallery Hair Salon; & Burnt Ash Florists, in the coming weeks or if you prefer to complete the survey online (www.tinyurl.com/leegate) you can do that now. The results of the survey will begin the process of establishing the local view of how we see the future of Leegate.

A draft constitution has been prepared so the group will be properly set up. ***Everyone who has signed up as supporters is warmly invited to the founding meeting on 24th March.***

Already, several encouraging things have happened:

- Lewisham Council has appointed a town centre manager, to support three smaller centres – one of these is Lee Green.
- St Modwen's has agreed to hand over one of its vacant sites rent-free for a year for the shared use as a Youth Club and Community Centre.
- Talks between the Council and St Modwen's on future plans have included members of our group, proving Lee Green Lives is already making a difference!

Can you help with any of the following:

- 1) Support activities – Filling envelopes, delivering leaflets, and petitions
- 2) Organise activities/ events such as: open-air markets, exhibits, etc
- 3) Help set up & run a community shop
- 4) Publicity, contacts with media

Something is at last happening on Leegate. Let's make it a better place and improve the wider Lee Green area for residents, shoppers and local businesses – in the words of our overall aim, "create a vibrant, well-used space for the benefit of the Community".

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