

Finsbury Park Accord

1 June 2012

Finsbury Park Accord

Introduction

Opportunities

Finsbury Park is a town centre with significant potential. It is a vibrant, dynamic and relatively affordable place to live or start a business. It is a busy, multi-cultural area with cafés and shops that reflect this diversity. The multicultural make up of the local community and the unique retail mix are just two of Finsbury Park's key assets that should be promoted and celebrated.

Another strength of the area is its excellent public transport accessibility, only a 15-minute train journey from the West End and the City. Each year, 2.5 million passengers interchange at Finsbury Park Station between its two Underground lines, several above ground rail services and 12 daytime bus services. The arrival of Thameslink in 2018 will strengthen the area's links with both Central London and the suburbs and Home Counties north and south of the Capital, making Finsbury Park even more attractive to live and work.

Whilst entirely invisible when leaving Finsbury Park Station, the area is home to one of the largest open spaces in the capital: Finsbury Park. This exceptional asset should be one of the drivers for regeneration in the area.

Challenges

However, Finsbury Park is also one of the most deprived areas in the country. A high crime rate and associated perception of crime are contributing factors to the reputation and experience of Finsbury Park.

Finsbury Park lacks an identity and sense of place. The area surrounding Finsbury Park Station is very confusing. The poor urban fabric is severely constrained by roads, railways and poor quality public spaces, resulting in a disjointed and unattractive area without a clearly defined town centre.

Furthermore, the town centre's location on the boundary of three local authorities creates significant administrative challenges in dealing with its problems as well as unlocking the area's potential.

Change taking place

Despite its significant challenges, Finsbury Park is already starting to change. Developers are investing in Finsbury Park with hundreds of new homes currently being built, including new affordable homes on the Six Acres Estate, and there are extant planning consents for hundreds more homes, a number of hotels and mixed-use developments.

A number of housing estates in the area such as Woodberry Down, Alexander National and Kings Crescent are undergoing major regeneration creating hundreds of new homes and delivering key community facilities including the new Skinners Academy and a new youth centre and health centre. More regeneration opportunities have been identified around Manor House to make the most of its location with links to Finsbury Park and to the east and west reservoirs.

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In Autumn 2012, a brand new theatre will open its doors to the Finsbury Park community and the wider area, increasing the local arts offer and strengthening the area's distinctiveness.

To support the local community, in particular young people, an integrated youth hub has recently opened its doors on Hornsey Road, providing local young people with a youth-led venue offering a range of creative activities and projects, volunteering and training opportunities and information, advice and guidance. The Junior Assistant programme on the Andover Estate is another initiative aimed at young people, providing them with a job opportunity at an early age, breaking the chain of worklessness.

Collaboration

Crime and the perception of crime and the high level of deprivation form real and difficult challenges. However, current investment in the area and a multitude of initiatives together with the area's assets in the form of a large open space (Finsbury Park), the excellent and further improving public transport connections, and in particular the dynamism of the multicultural community with a strong entrepreneurial spirit, make Finsbury Park a unique area with enormous untapped regeneration potential.

In the current economic climate with public finance under pressure, collaboration between the three local authorities is essential to deliver regeneration in Finsbury Park and to ensure that we make the area 'better with less', for example through joint decision making and sharing resources where we can.

This collaboration starts with shared priorities, which are reflected in the planning policies of the three local authorities. Hackney and Islington both identify Finsbury Park in their Core Strategies as a District Town Centre that they are committed to strengthening by promoting improvements to the public realm, crime prevention, and use of sustainable transport. Haringey identifies Finsbury Park in its emerging Core Strategy as an area that will require partnership working with neighbouring boroughs.

This Finsbury Park Accord between Hackney, Haringey and Islington Councils is the first step to cross-boundary working and jointly taking on the challenges that Finsbury Park is facing, building on the regeneration potential that the area and its communities offer. The Accord will help strengthen the cross-boundary town centre management function of the area, and will encourage cross-borough management relationships.

With this Accord, the three councils sign up to the 11 Priorities of Collaboration set out below, aimed at encouraging, supporting and delivering economic, social, cultural and environmental regeneration. As a second stage of the Accord, the three local authorities will sign up to a tri-borough action plan setting out the priority actions to improve the area in the short to medium term.

This Accord builds on the work led by the North London Strategic Alliance (NLSA) over the last three years. NLSA has brought together the three boroughs and other key partners to discuss coordination along the Seven Sisters Corridor, with Finsbury Park as an emerging priority.

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Priorities of Collaboration

1. Working Together

We recognise that the regeneration of Finsbury Park has been held back because it straddles three London boroughs. We therefore agree to establish **coordinated tri-borough governance arrangements** between the three boroughs to facilitate shared policy development in Finsbury Park. We agree to meet at least twice a year to take key decisions and action programmes, steer the transformation of the area and oversee progress on regeneration initiatives in the area.

2. Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

High levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in Finsbury Park have damaged the area's reputation and hold back the achievement of regeneration and the delivery of improvements to the town centre. We therefore pledge to lead the **coordination of service delivery aimed at reducing crime and anti-social behaviour**. We will work in partnership with the Police, Safer Neighbourhood Teams, British Transport Police and other service providers who can help to improve the safety and security of the area. We will also continue to seek funding for physical measures such as CCTV, better lighting, and measures to design out crime and help reduce the fear of crime.

3. Deprivation

Finsbury Park is one of the most deprived parts of London. Amongst other problems, there are high levels of worklessness and unacceptable levels of child poverty. We will work together to **reduce deprivation** by creating employment and training opportunities for local people and by assisting families living in poverty.

4. Town Centre Economy

Finsbury Park's diverse and dynamic business sector can help drive the regeneration of the area. A better organised and more visible business community will support the competitiveness of the town centre and strengthen the local economy. We therefore agree to look for ways to improve the town centre economy through **tri-borough town centre management arrangements**.

5. Finsbury Park Interchange and Surrounding Environment

Finsbury Park is a main transport hub and an entry point to surrounding neighbourhoods and to Arsenal Stadium. It currently suffers from the impact of rail and road infrastructure. Permeability, safety and attractiveness of the area for walking and cycling can be improved through a coordinated and collaborative approach that includes all stakeholders (e.g. Transport for London, Network Rail, First Capital Connect), and which optimises the benefits of ongoing infrastructure investment. There are also many other small sites in and around the town centre where public spaces could be improved by working proactively with residents and existing third sector initiatives and ideas. We will therefore work together to **improve stakeholder coordination and strategic use of available budgets, and facilitate locally-led initiatives**.

6. Development

A range of development sites could have significant positive impact on the future success of the town centre, improving its character, navigability and sense of place and generating opportunities for social and economic regeneration, providing new

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homes and re-providing workspace. This potential should be managed proactively through a coordinated approach based on the Local Development Frameworks of each Borough, facilitated by a **spatial strategy** in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) outlining shared ambitions for development in the medium and long term. We agree to work together to enable efficient coordination of the SPD process.

7. Shared Service Delivery

Addressing the entrenched issues and challenges faced in Finsbury Park is the focus for targeted work by a wide range of service providers, in addition to the day-to-day delivery of core services. This makes it difficult for local providers and residents to know what is going on, and can also lead to duplication of services. We will work together to ensure better co-ordination of services within the Finsbury Park area, and to explore options for **joint working or shared delivery through a 'community budget' approach**. As part of this, we will work together to explore the potential to align or pool resources and to agree joint spending priorities.

8. Voluntary and Community Sector

The third sector plays a key role in delivering change at Finsbury Park. Local organisations are well placed to reach local communities and to advocate change on their behalf, particularly disadvantaged groups, communities of interest, and people with faith-based traditions. These organisations make the area more cohesive by promoting communication and trust between different communities, and supporting volunteering to help local residents develop new skills and improve the quality of life in their communities. We will **actively engage with the voluntary and community sector** and encourage cross-borough working between third sector organisations.

9. Arts

Finsbury Park has a strong and emerging arts infrastructure including the new Park Theatre, John Jones, Rowan Arts and Platform Youth Arts hub. This arts infrastructure plays a critical role in community cohesion, skills development and pathways to employment for local residents. We will work with local organisations to **realise the potential of the arts sector** in Finsbury Park.

10. The Park

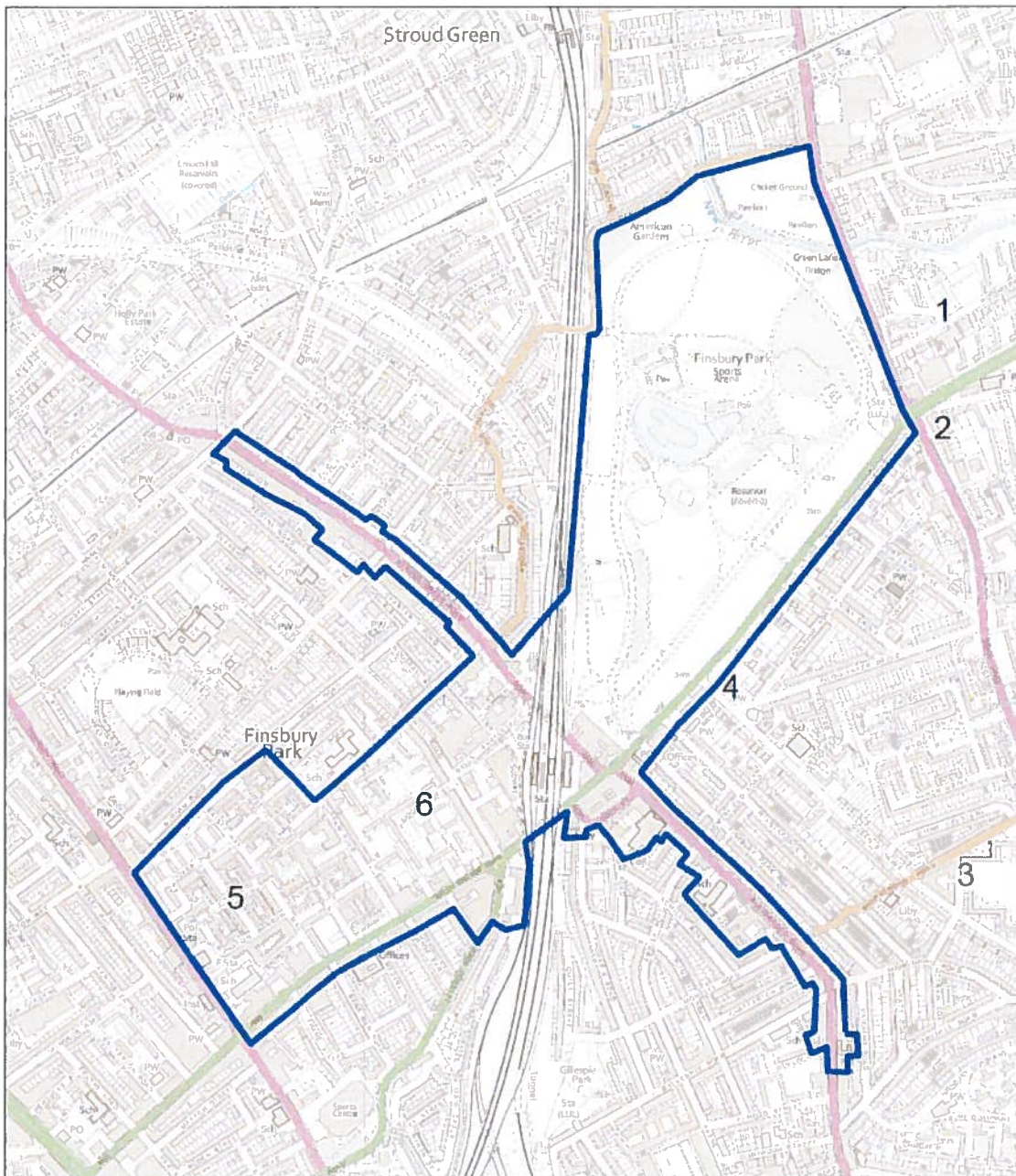
The park that gives the area its name is a crucial shared asset, the benefits of which go across Borough boundaries. We will continue to work with residents and third sector groups to **better coordinate investment in the park** and to unlock further funding capacity. We will continue work together to seek new ways to achieve this ambition.

11. Action Plan

We believe that a series of coordinated initiatives that bring together resources and expertise across organisational and, in some cases, borough boundaries, gives us the best opportunity to change Finsbury Park for the better. We therefore agree to produce a **tri-borough Action Plan** setting out the action that will be taken over the next three years to deliver real change. This action plan will incorporate activities from different areas of the three councils, as well as other service providers in the area, most notably the Police and Transport for London.

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Finsbury Park Accord Area Map



- 1) Woodberry Down Estate Regeneration
- 2) Manor House Area Action Plan
- 3) Kings Crescent Estate Renewal
- 4) Alexandra National House Estate Renewal
- 5) Andover Estate Regeneration
- 6) Six Acres Estate Regeneration

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The undersigned, through signing this Accord, agree to provide the leadership, commitment and resources to work towards the achievement of these ambitions for the Finsbury Park area.

Finsbury Park Accord Agreement - 1 June 2012



Jules Pipe

Mayor of Hackney

London Borough of Hackney



Councillor Claire Kober

Leader Haringey Council

London Borough of Haringey



Councillor Catherine West

Leader of Islington Council

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