

Proposal for a High Street Project

Including a brief study of retail history

Peter Cox, North London U3A, July 2020

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John Lewis Partnership

SPEDAN'S PARTNERSHIP

The Story of
John Lewis
and Waitrose

PETER COX



Published in 2010 – 100 years after Spedan's Big Idea

Trials in November 2018

- Looked at the present day, 1937 (online) & 2 dates between
- Walked East Finchley, Muswell Hill, North Finchley and Church End, helped by long-time residents in the U3A
- Visited Barnet & Haringey archives for 1960/70s street directories and photos
- Scoured other places for more photos
- Tabulated the results
- Worked up a presentation for national U3A hierarchy, suggesting a nationwide project in 2021
- Now waiting for the pandemic to relent...

Historical Influences on the High Street (1)

Early 1800s - Rapid growth of fixed-shop retailers, single unit, family-run

1850-1914 - The rise of the Victorian department store – and the Co-op

1880s on – Rapid growth of Multiples

Leaders in 1914 – **WH Smith**, Singer, Eastman, Jas Nelson, Home & Colonial, Maypole Dairy, Liptons, **Boots**, Freeman Hardy Willis

Retail market share	1900	1939
Co-ops	6%	11%
Department Stores	2%	5%
Multiples	4%	19%
Local singles	88%	65%

Historical Influences on the High Street (2)

1930-60 – Comparatively stable mix of dept stores, multiples and singles

1960 on – The rise of self-service – Tesco, Sainsburys, Asda, Safeway

1960s – In-town shopping precincts – Bullring, Arndale, Eldon Square etc

1976 on – Out-of-town shopping centres (16) – and supermarkets
- Long-term decline of Department Stores begins

2000 on – Internet shopping: 1% in 2000, 10% in 2010, 19% in 2019...2020?!
- Supermarket saturation so big names return to the High Street

2020- **PANDEMIC** - Massive conversion to Internet shopping (17m switch?!)
- Predicted substantial High Street closures

2021/2 – U3A Nationwide High Street Study?

How the High Street has changed since 1937 East Finchley High Road as a case study

War damage knocked out a row of shops including an 8-unit department store. A petrol station and tyre shop for 60 years, it's now a cluster of retirement homes.

A 12-unit dairy depot is now MacDonalds UK HQ and blocks of flats.

12 shop units furthest from the centre were replaced by flats.

In total **169** units have reduced to **128**, a drop of a **quarter**

So in effect homes (mostly) and offices have replaced 28 retail units and a dairy depot.

East Finchley High Road – changes of retail usage (169-128)

Grocery	1937 ten separate units, incl Sainsburys and Waitrose now ten units: Budgen (4), Iceland (4), Sainsburys (2) NB grocers then sold no fresh food
Greengrocers	1937 six now none – but six convenience stores sell fruit & veg
Cafes etc	1937 three now fifteen (most also take-away) + six take-aways
Hair & Beauty	1937 four hairdressers – three ladies', one barber now ten – four hair, three beauty, two both, one nails
News, Fags... & Sweets	1937 sixteen four news, four fags, eight sweets now two news, but nine conv & supermkts
Out: seedsman, corn merchant, coal merchant, harness maker, 2 banks, 3 butchers In: 3 charity shops, 2 betting shops, payday loans, dog grooming, bike shop, theatre... ... and four shops are empty – so far	

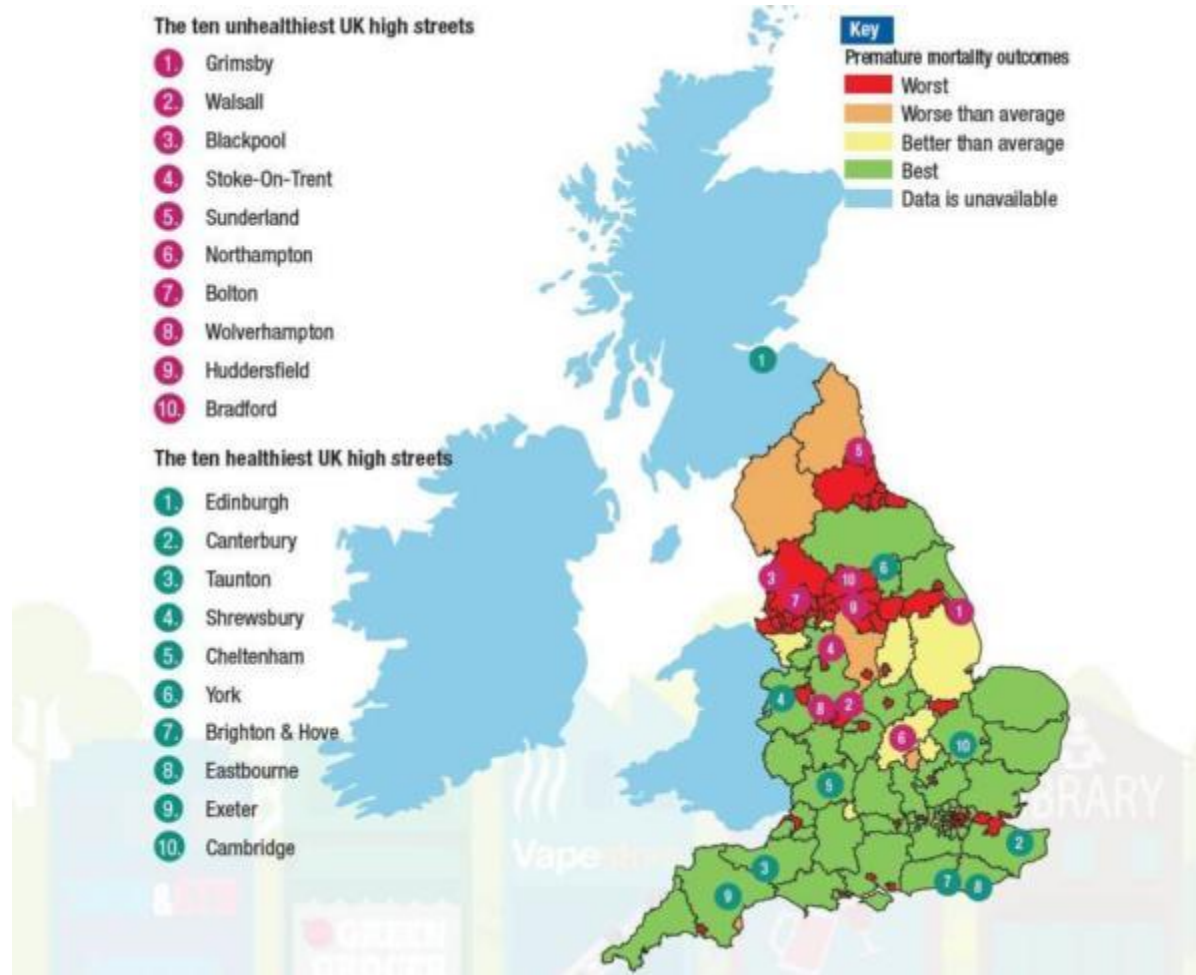
William Martyn, Muswell Hill grocer, window display c 1937



William Martyn, Muswell Hill grocer, interior today



RSPH national High Street rating, Autumn 2018



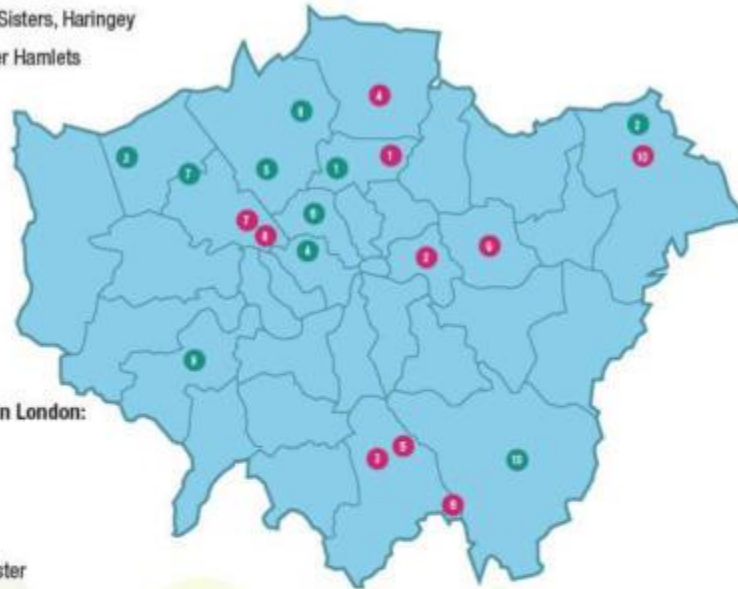
RSPH London High Street rating, Autumn 2018

10 least healthy high streets in London:

1. West Green Road/ Seven Sisters, Haringey
2. Roman Road (West), Tower Hamlets
3. Thornton Heath, Croydon
4. Angel Edmonton, Enfield
5. South Norwood, Croydon
6. New Addington, Croydon
7. Neasden, Brent
8. Harlesden, Brent
9. Canning Town, Newham
10. Rainham, Havering

10 most healthy high streets in London:

1. Muswell Hill, Haringey
2. Hornchurch, Havering
3. Pinner, Harrow
4. St John's Wood, Westminster
5. Temple Fortune, Barnet
6. Hampstead, Camden
7. Kingsbury, Brent/Harrow
8. Whetstone, Barnet
9. Teddington, Richmond upon Thames
10. Beckenham, Bromley



The least healthy high streets had more unhealthy outlets than the most healthy high streets, and were more likely to experience clustering of the unhealthy outlets. For example, while just one of the healthiest high streets had over 5% of fast food outlets, all of the unhealthiest high streets had over 5%.

RSPH – Royal Society for Public Health

- The **Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)** is an independent health education charity and the world's oldest public health body. Our vision is that every community, workplace and individual should have the opportunity to optimise their own health and wellbeing.
- Established in 1856, the **Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)** is an independent campaigning and educational charity dedicated to improving and protecting the health of people just like you – both in the United Kingdom and around the world.

Our **Membership** includes thousands of healthcare professionals, food safety specialists, environmental health experts, policy makers, academics, students and many other people from all walks of life, who share one thing in common - we care passionately about protecting the public's health.

We educate through our **Qualifications, Training** them in their workplaces or schools, publishing our respected peer-reviewed journals

- (**Public Health and Perspectives in Public Health**) or by providing **Accreditation** for third-party health campaigns and training programmes.

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RSPH Scoring

- +7 Leisure centres
- +6 Health Services (dentists, opticians, GPs)
- +5 Pharmacies & Health Clubs
- +4 Libraries
- +3 Museums & Galleries and... Vape shops
- +2 Pubs & bars, cafes & coffee shops
- 0 Convenience stores *[but what about fresh food??]*
- -1 Tanning shops & empty shops
- -2 Off-licences, betting shops & fast food outlets
- -4 High cost credit outlets

My Scoring

- **Good**

- **Bad**

- **Fresh Food outlet, Florist**
- Healthcare provider
- Library, museum,
- Bookshop
- Education centre, club
- Theatre, cinema
- **Fishmonger**
- **Bank**
- Sports, leisure centres
- Music shop

- Tobacconist
- Confectioner
- Betting shop
- Take-away
- Off licence
- Tanning shop
- High cost credit outlet

Remainder are neutral - final rating is the GOOD minus BAD total

RSPH Recommendations

- HM Treasury to review online business taxes
- Discounted online adverts for healthy local outlets
- Local authorities to make shop vacancies visible
- Vape shops to have info on stop-smoking advice
- Councils give 'healthy' businesses rates discounts
- Business rates relief for improving public health
- All businesses selling food to reduce calories
- Local authorities to restrict betting shops etc
- A5 [food take-away] planning restrictions near schools

North London Pilots – November 2018

East Finchley High Rd East side, showing the cinema, far left



East Finchley High Rd E side, from 1937 directory

76 Gould Kenneth Geo.	30 Dorff Alec
78 Walker Edwd	32 Debenham E. H.
80 Davidson Geo	café
82 Haffenden Chas. G.	34 Myers Mrs. Anne,
84 Pearce Jn. Thos	draper
86 Adams Miss C.	36 Verrinder H. J., newsagt
88 Cohen Sydney	East Finchley Coliseum
90 Brooks Cecil T. E. C.	Cinema
—Strathmore gdns.	—Fairlawn avenue
Hervey Court,	40 & 42 Townsend's Stores,
<i>see Hervey Close.</i>	domestic stores
HIGH ROAD,	42 White Mrs.
East Finchley (N.2).	44 Brown E. J. leather
MAP H 3A, G 3A, G 4A.	goods
<i>Continuation of Great</i>	46 Harris Miss Phyllis,
<i>North rd. from Rail-</i>	florist
<i>way crossing to Straw-</i>	48a Cole G. Haward, tailor
<i>berry vale.</i>	48 Tee J. & Co. Ltd.,
	wireless engns
EAST SIDE.	50 (flat 1) Derebecque
—Brompton grove	Josph. Alfd
Adam Rt. Ewing B.A.,	52 Champlin Z. lingerie
B.M., B.Ch., M.R.C.S.,	54 & 54a The East Finchley
L.R.C.P. physcn. &	Boot Repairing Co.
surgn. (Park ho)	56 Yates & Sons Limited,
Young & Adam,	dyers & cleaners
physcns. & surgns.	56a Firsch Saml. hairdrsr
(Park ho)	58 Parker Wm. J., confr.
Young John Benson	60 Jenkins A., baker
M.B., F.R.C.S. Edin.	62 Ten Per Cent. Wine
physician & surgeon	Co. Ltd. (The)
(Park house). Tel.	64 Sainsbury John Ltd.
Speedwell 4322	provision merchants
4 Corner Geo., solctr. &	66 Barclays Bank Ltd.;
commissnr. for oaths	H. H. Girling, mngr.
6 Siebenmann Paul, baker	66a Randall Cox & Baker,
8 Lacy Albert William,	estate agts.
sporting goods dealer	—Fortis green rd.
10 Seymour & Son, grocers.	68 Williams Brothers
12 Bennetts, boot & shoe	Direct Supply Stores
agents	Limited, grocers
12 Pullinger Albt. Jn	70 Salmon J. & Son Ltd.
14 Ratcliff Mrs. Florence,	household storekprs.
confectioner	72 Barry W. A., hosier
16 Walker Jn	74 Dodd James, fishmongr.
16 Thorn Hill Laundry	76 Colebrook Edgar, news-
(The); receiving office	agent
18 Andrew Chas. W. Ph.C.	78 Archer Walter W., confr.
chemist, & post office	80 Pulham S. & Sons Ltd.,
	butchers
	82 Pearks Dairies Limited,

Smartphone Data Listing for the Cinema southwards

- ***Fairlawn Ave***

52 **Phoenix cinema**

50 Barber Shed

48 Animal Aid & Advice charity

46 N2 food centre off lic & groc

44 Subway

42 New local cafe

40 Prime Locations est age

38 Everything Electric

36 Polish deli Bulkszmaslem

34 Crazy Corner off lic & groc

-

- ***Baronsmere Rd***

32 **CW Andrew pharm**

Sample Codes for Recording 1/4 –June 19

- **Clothing**
- **CLWM** clothing for all **CLC** children's clothing
- **CLW** women's clothing **CLM** men's clothing
- **CLWC** clothing for women & children **SHOE** shoe shop and/or repairs
- **Eating out/in**
- **REST** restaurant **TAKE** take away
- **CAFÉ** café without take away **CAFT** café with take away
- **PUB** pub **BAR** bar **WINE** wine bar
- **Beauty**
- **HAIR** hairdresser for all genders **HAIW** women's hairdresser
- **BARB** men's hairdresser **HAIC** children's hairdresser
- **HAIB** hair and beauty **BEAU** beauty parlour
- **NAIL** nail bar **MASS** massage parlour **SKIN** skincare

Sample Codes for Recording 2/4 –June 19

- **Food shops**
- **SUP** supermarket **FRV** greengrocer **GROC** grocer
- **CHEE** cheese shop **FISH** fishmonger **BUTC** butcher
- **CONV** convenience store **CON+** ditto with fresh FRV
- **BAK** bakery **BAKI** bakery with eat-in **PAT** patisserie
- **DELI** delicatessen **OFFL** off licence
- **CONF** confectioner **CONT** confectioner & tobacconist
- **Technology**
- **Elec** electrical **PHON** phone sales/repairs **PHOT** photo shop
- **PRIN** printers **COMP** computer sales/repairs
- **REC** record shop **MUS** music shop **TVR** TV & radio
- **Health**
- **OPT** optician **OPT+** optician/audiology **DENT** dentist
- **PHAR** pharmacy **HF** health foods **PHYS** physio
- **A&E** hospital with A&E **HOSP** Hospital without **SURG** surgery

East Finchley High Rd E side, showing the cinema



Extract from complete East Finchley High Rd table

1937-2019

Yellow indicates the same usage from 1937-2019

Green indicates the same usage from 1965-2019

Blue indicates the same usage from 1990-2019

		1937			1965				C 1990				2019		
54-54a		Shoe Repair	Finchley	72		Shoe Repair	EF Boot Repair	72		Shoe repair	Kokos	72-74		Shoe Repair	Kokos
				70		Café	Manhattan	70		Café	Manhattan	70	B	Take Away	Pizza Hut
52		Lingerie	Champlin	66-68		EstAge	Eckart	66-68		EstAge	Eckart	66-68		EstAge	Gerrard
48		Radio	Tee	64		Radio Service	Tudor 4000								
46	G	Florist	Harris	60	G	Florist	Josephine	60	G	Florist	Josephine	60	G	Florist	Josephine
44		Leather	Brown	58		Leather	Lloyds	58		Florist	Josephine	58			Empty
42-40		Dom Store	Townsend	56	G	Optician	Shopland	56	G	Optician	Andrews	56		Ladieswear	Aliyaj
				54	G	Fruiterer	Kens	54	G	Fruiterer	Mistry	54		Phones	Exchange
			Fairlawn Ave				Fairlawn Ave								Fairlawn Ave
38-36	G	Cinema	Coliseum		G	Cinema	Rex		G	Cinema	Phoenix		G	Cinema	Phoenix

East Finchley High Rd E side, North of the cinema, 1968



My Scoring

- **Good**

- **Bad**

- **Fresh Food outlet, Florist**
- Healthcare provider
- Library, museum,
- Bookshop
- Education centre, club
- Theatre, cinema
- **Fishmonger**
- **Bank**
- Sports, leisure centres
- Music shop

- Tobacconist
- Confectioner
- Betting shop
- Take-away
- Off licence
- Tanning shop
- High cost credit outlet

Remainder are neutral - final rating is the GOOD minus BAD total

East Finchley High Rd - Progression

Analysis – Good minus Bad

1937

1965

1990

2019

28-17 = 11

26-15 = 11

19-9 = 10

18-10 = 8

Outcome – very little deterioration from Good

Muswell Hill - Progression

Analysis – Good minus Bad

1937

1965

1990

2019

40-19 = 21

44-18 = 26

30-11 = 19

26-10 = 16

Outcome – still good, but decline from high point of 1965

Church End - Progression

Analysis – Good minus Bad

1937

1965

1990

2019

34-18 = 16

26-13 = 13

no score

20-21 = -1

Outcome – severe decline since 1965 from good to average

(Availability of street directories in Archives varies)

How suitable is it for the elderly?

- **Rate the following as Good, average, poor:**
- Access by public transport, rail or bus: proximity & frequency
- Car parking facilities
- Traffic calming measures (humps, 20mph limits etc)
- Safe road crossings
- Safety of streets (lighting, width, paving)
- Facilities the elderly need such as toilets
- Pollution levels at street level

Suggested High Street Project Outline

An nationwide SLP without an overseeing academic institution...

- Form an overseeing group, with a single overall coordinator
- Engage the High Street rep on the local council
- Discuss available records with the local Archivist
- Decide scope – start small & expand later
- Start a table from local & Internet records
- Walk the streets & record name & type (smartphone & email)
- Add a rating for each outlet
- Examine its suitability for the elderly
- Present to an audience of long-term locals
- Present to & discuss with local Historical societies
- *Make representations to the local Council*

And the High Street after the Pandemic?

- **Your guess is as good as mine, so let's have them.**
- **After the presentation I'll incorporate your predictions in here, and add any other observations you might have. I'll send you the presentation if you request it.**
- **I'll also make available a set of links to useful websites.**
- **So over to you...**