Southwark high streets: **Herne Hill**

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1. Introduction

This report provides the analysis of the retail audit, footfall observations and interviews conducted on Tuesday 10th and Saturday 14th February 2015 in Herne Hill.

1.1 Summary of Findings

The Retail Mix: The Herne Hill shopping area is criticised for offering little variety and choice and has fewer stores than the average Southwark high street. Half of the respondents named just two large comparison goods retail centres (the West End and Brixton) as their first alternative shopping destination, and Herne Hill is competing directly here on the basis of comparison goods and foodservice.

The People on Herne Hill: The available consumers are relatively young, very local and relatively affluent compared with the Southwark average. They are more likely to own a home, have a university education, and a managerial or professional occupation. They typically arrive on the high street by foot or on a bicycle, and they spend less time and money than the overall average on convenience goods and coffee. They also visit rather less frequently than expected.

Footfall Densities: The footfalls on Herne Hill are among the lowest observed in this study and on average they reach 500 people per hour. Saturday is about 1.5 times busier than Tuesday and both days show some peaks, but are largely stable across the day..

Attitude & Usage: The main motivation for being on the high street is convenience: few visit to patronise a specific business, and the main comment is that the choice of shops and food service outlets is limited. This creates a useful context to market any specific existing business since expectations are low, and therefore an investment in becoming distinctive would surely pay off. For the area as a whole there is some community feeling identified, but given the highly local nature of the visitors this could be developed to the benefit of overall footfall levels.

Marketing interventions to date have had some effect. There is awareness of local advertising and some local events, but it is not pronounced. Awareness is split between commercial and community messages, and the main channels through which the population can be reached remain traditional local press. There is some awareness and usage of online bulletin boards.

The uptake of marketing promotions, especially digital marketing tools, is extremely low to non-existent. No respondents said they would even be using a coupon on the day.

2. The Retail mix

The mix of different types of retail outlet on any high street characterises the nature of the shopping experience and is believed to affect footfall densities in regard to the diversity of the offer (the number of different categories of offer available), the quality or attractiveness of those offers, and their concentration. In addition, certain categories of retail draw in trade because they are strongly branded or because, like some multiple grocery retail with high street parking, they can become a destination store.

Whereas the mix of store types in a shopping mall is usually defined by one owner, on the high street the retail mix is rather harder to control and to adjust, although of course some classes of business require planning permission or licencing. As a result, high street footfalls may decrease as a result of an evolving sub-optimal retail mix.

An ad hoc audit was taken of the retail stores on the high streets identified in the study, and organised into 26 pre-defined categories. In the analysis these categories were further reduced into the seven identified in Table 2, but at the granular level, the diversity of offer observed can be summarised as the ratio of those represented out of the total of 26 categories define

Table 1: Retail mix comparison; Herne Hill

	Herne Hill	Average %
Number of Stores:	**47**	**80**
Foodservice *Restaurants, Cafes, Coffee Shops*	37	25
Financial Services *Banks, Building Societies, Post Office, Loan Shops*	2	11
Mixed Non-Food Retail *Clothing, Shoes Accessories, DIY, Toys*	26	25
Personal Care *Hairdressing, Beauty/Tanning shops, Doctors*	11	13
Technology *Phone Shops, PC repairs, Electricals*	0	4
Entertainment *Betting Shops, Libraries*	2	4
Grocery *Multiple & specialist independent retail*	22	17
	100	100

Table 1 compares the number and types of stores identified on Herne Hill with the distribution seen across all the high streets in the study. In total 47 different businesses were counted in this section of Herne Hill's retail centre. This is below the average of the eight centres studied. Of the 26 categories in the analysis 18 were represented in Herne Hill, giving a diversity index of 0.69.

Missing or under-represented categories on this stretch of high street include:

- Banks & Post Office
- Garage
- Entertainment/leisure including betting shops or a Library

The retail mix on Herne Hill is skewed strongly towards foodservice with restaurants, takeaways and coffee shops well represented. Grocery stores and convenience stores also feature prominently, and a number of comparison goods outlets were also counted, including a toy shop, and these categories reach the average level for the borough.

Herne Hill is transport interchange with a railway station and many bus routes passing through; part of the shopping area borders the recreational amenities of Brockwell Park.

3. Respondent Demographics

The students interviewed 57 respondents over two days, Tuesday and Saturday. The demographic make-up of the sample is described in this section, and compared with the Southwark population and with the overall survey results.

Table 2: Demographics

(n = 57)	Average %	Herne Hill %
18 – 24	18	14
25 – 34	30	35
35 - 44	23	16
45 – 54	15	18
55 – 64	7	7
65 – 74	5	9
75 or older	2	2
Male	47	44
Female	53	56

Slightly older than expected…

The population of Southwark is young with 42% aged between 20 and 39 (against 35% in London). Between 50 and 64 it is close to the London average (13% against 14%), and over 65's are under-represented (8% against 11%). It is evenly divided by gender.

Table 3 compares the population banding across the entire survey with the respondents on Herne Hill. In both cases, about half are under 34, although Herne Hill showed a slightly older profile within the banding. The sample here also contained a slightly higher than expected number of 45+ visitors, and particularly in the 65-74 band.

Table 3: Ethnicity Overview

(n = 57)	Average %	Southwark %	Herne Hill
White	61	54	84
Black	19	26	5
Asian	8	10	5
Mixed	9	6	5
Other	1	3	0

… and ethnicity is predominantly white.

In terms of ethnicity, Table 3 compares the respondents in Herne Hill with the survey averages and with Southwark population data. The visitors to Herne Hill were substantially more likely than average to fall into broadly white categories, and rather less likely to be of black, asian or mixed ethnicity. A pronounced bias was also seen In terms of education; the Herne Hilll sample was better educated than the average for the borough, with a skew towards a university degree.

Table 4: Education

(n = 57)	Average %	Herne Hill %
Compulsory Education at School	**14**	9
Vocational or College or 6th Form	**31**	32
University	**55**	60

Higher than average education attainment

Visitors to Herne Hill also demonstrated a skew in occupation types (Table 5) away from the borough averages with only 12% not currently working, and rather higher than average proportions of professional and managerial occupations present in the sample.

Table 5: Occupation

(n = 57)	Average %	Herne Hill %
Professional occupations	20	25
Managers, directors and senior officials	10	16
Sales and customer service occupations	17	16
Not currently working	23	12
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	10	11
Administrative and secretarial occupations	8	9
Elementary occupations	2	5
Associate professional and technical occupations	4	4
Skilled trades occupations	6	2
Process, plant and machine operatives	2	2

… and more likely to be in professional or managerial occupations

The typical visitor is slightly more likely to be married or in a relationship, although four out of ten still live in single occupancy homes. The proportion of children in the household is about average for the borough.(Table 6).

Table 6: Household Structure

(n = 57)	Average %	Herne Hill %
Single	41	40
Married	35	39
Civil Partnership	2	0
Living with partner	12	12
Divorced	4	5
Widowed	2	0
Separated	2	2
Number of Adults in the home:		
1	28	33
2	51	49
3	13	18
4 +	7	0
Number of 13-17s in the home:		
0	81	86
1	12	12
2 +	7	2
Children under 13:		
0	78	81
1	13	14
2	7	5
3 +	2	0

A little older than expected

Finally, Table 7 describes the ways in which the survey respondents occupy their homes. While 44% are in rented accommodation, the same number are home owners, which is considerably higher than the Southwark average. Passers-by on Herne Hill were therefore found to be more affluent than those seen in other parts of the borough.

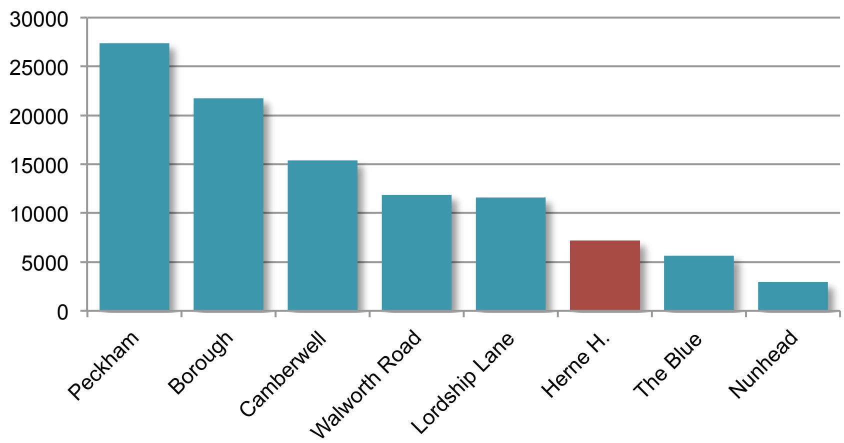
Table 7: Household Occupation

(n = 57)	Average %	Herne Hill %
Rent	52	44
Own it outright or with a mortgage	31	44
Shared ownership or Housing Association	6	7
Live there rent free	5	4
Other/ No response	7	2

4. Findings: Footfall Distributions

Herne Hill is among the quieter high streets observed. Over the course of two days over 7,000 pedestrians were counted passing on either side of the street. This amounts to an average footfall density of 500 people per hour, about half that seen on Denmark Hill and a third of the traffic in Peckham Rye. Figure 1 compares the footfall In Herne Hill with the eight high streets in the study.

Figure 1: Comparative total footfall over two days: February 2015



4.1 Weekend & Weekday Ratio

Table 8 highlights the density ratio between Saturday and Tuesday. On Herne Hill, unlike some other centres in Southwark, Saturday is about 1.5 times busier than Tuesday, making it an important trading day.

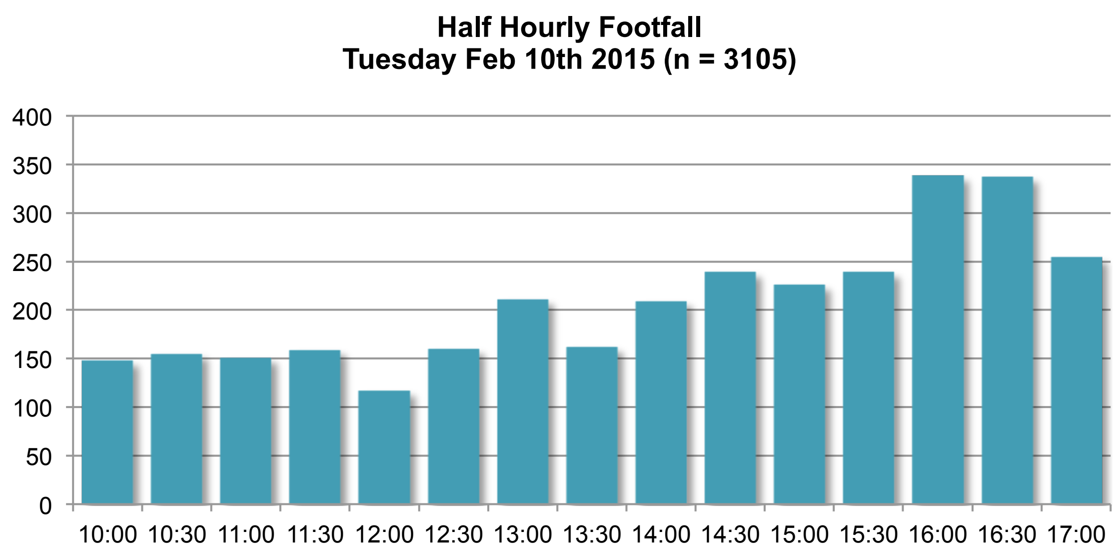
Table 8: Comparative footfall by day: February 2015

Observations recorded continuously from 10.00 to 17.00 on each day. Hourly data rounded

	Tuesday	Saturday	Total	Average Hour
Peckham (Rye Lane)	10778	16599	27377	1900
Borough High Street	11569	10204	21773	1600
Camberwell	**7759**	**7637**	**15396**	**1100**
Walworth Road	5527	6369	11896	850
Lordship Lane	2954	8645	11599	830
Herne Hill	2851	4330	7181	500
The Blue	2677	2945	5622	400
Nunhead Lane	1282	1648	2930	200
	45397	**58377**	**103774**	

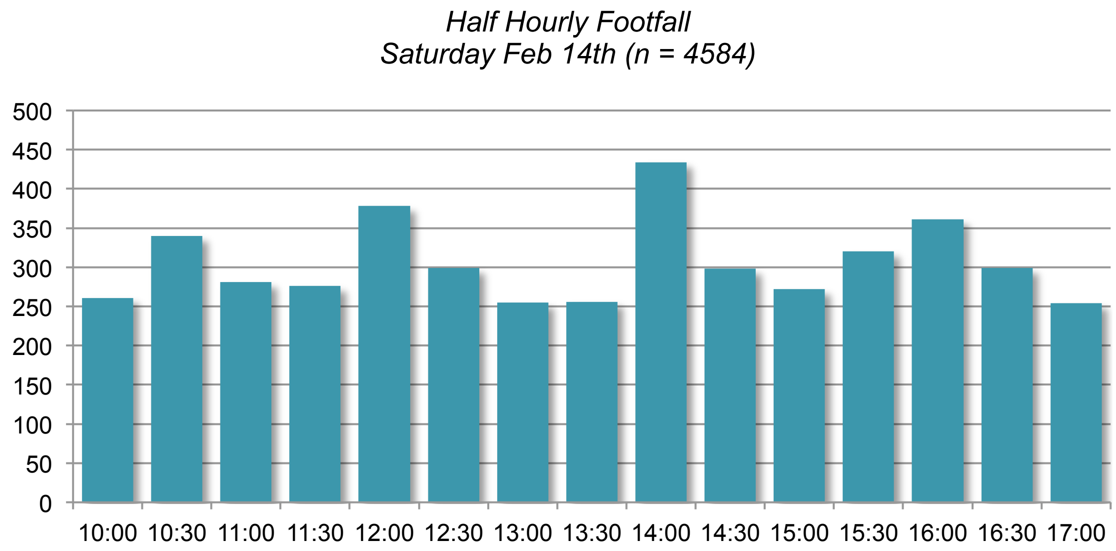
Observations recorded continuously from 10.00 to 17.00 on each day. Hourly data rounded

4.2 Footfall Count: Tuesday



Tuesday footfall on Herne Hill built slowly throughout the day to peak between 16.00 and 17.00. This may represent an early return home from work, or the school run.

4.3 Footfall Count: Saturday



Saturday footfalls show slight peaks at 12.00 14.00 and 16.00, but are otherwise slightly steadier from the outset. The pattern may indicate shoppers passing through on their way back to or from home before or after other activities and mealtimes.

The big picture is the opportunity from a substantial uplift in passing trade on Saturdays which appears to be relatively steady across the day.

5. High Street Catchment Area, Travel Time & Method

It is useful to know from how far afield the visitors to Herne Hill are being drawn. The interviewers collected data on home postcodes, travel time and mode of transport (Table 9)

Almost two thirds of the respondents (62%) lived in the local Herne Hill postcode, SE24. A further 10% lived just to the east in Dulwich SE21. The remainder lived in fourteen further postcodes, spread largely but not exclusively from around South London.

Respondents were largely happy to provide at least the first part of their postcode and response rates to the question on this basis were on average over 90%. Rather fewer were willing to supply a full code; it is not possible to drill further into the catchment area with any confidence.

Table 9: Catchment Area

(n = 57)	Herne Hill
	%
SE24	62
SE21	10
SW16	4
SW2	4
CR0	2
DE24	2
E17	2
N16	2
SE12	2
SE20	2
SW11	2
SW14	2
SW4	2
SW9	2

5.1 How local?

Being "local" is an important perception in relation to the most frequent choice of high street destination. In Table 10 the response to the question "Do you live or work locally" shows that 77% of the visitors interviewed considered themselves to be local to Herne Hill by virtue of where they lived or worked. The proportion claiming to live locally is nine points above the average for the total survey, and travel time ***for all*** was under an hour, with three quarters spending less than 30 minutes travelling to the high street.

Table 10: How Local?

Where have you travelled from? How long did it take you?

(n = 57)	Average %	Herne Hill %
Living Locally	52	61
Working Locally	14	2
Both	17	14
Those who travelled...		
Less than 30 minutes	74	75
Between half & one hour	22	25
1 to 2 hours	3	0
Over 2 hours	1	0

Visitors to Herne Hill are likely *to live nearby*.

5.2 How did they get here?

Table 11 helps to confirm the picture of the typical visitor as being local since almost two thirds had come to the high street on foot. Fewer than the survey average had travelled on a bus or by car, but rather more than expected had come by bike (11% against 6% on average). The picture is one of a local population using the centre because it is convenient and easy to access.

Table 11: Transport

What was your main form of travel to get here today?

	Average	Herne Hill
(n = 57)	%	%
Walk	48	**60**
Bus	22	**14**
Cycle	6	**11**
Car	11	**9**
Train	6	**7**
Tube	5	**0**
Taxi	1	**0**
Other	0	**0**

- almost two thirds arrive *on foot*

6. Consumer Behaviour

6.1 Frequency and Dwell Time

The survey established the frequency with which Herne Hill visitors came to the high street and how long they stayed. These values were compared with the total responses to identify some characteristic features of visitor behaviour at the location.

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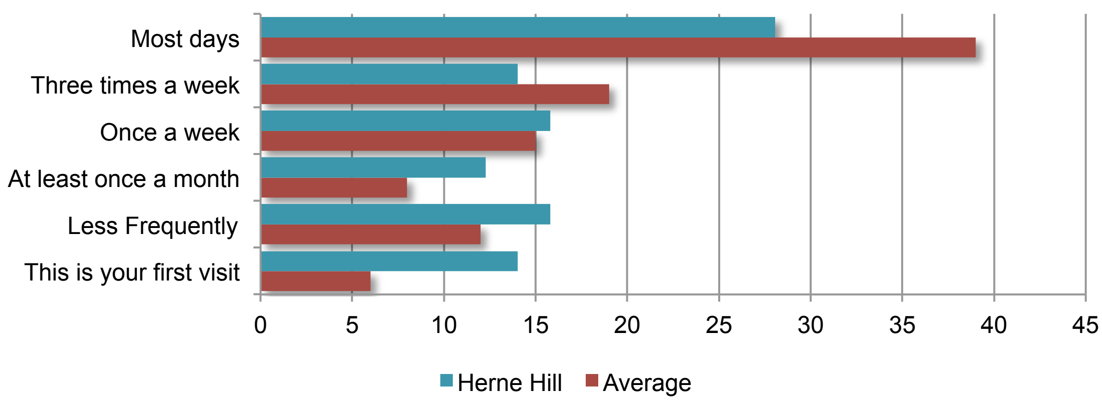
Figure 4: Frequency of Visit

"How often do you visit this high street?"



Frequent visitors are at about *two thirds expected levels*

Figure 4 reveals that frequency of visit is below average for Southwark, with only about two thirds of the expected level of heavy users. About half of the respondents stop here once a month or less despite the centre being so local. To make sense of these numbers it is also important to ascertain the duration of these visits.

Respondents were asked how long they intended to stay on the high street, and Table 13 indicates that visits to Herne Hill are most likely to be short. 63% of respondents intended to be there for half an hour or less indicating a short average dwell time even in comparison with other High Streets in the survey (48%).

Table 12: Dwell Time

"How long have you spent or do you intend to spend here today?"

(n = 57)	Average	Herne Hill
Up to 15 minutes	22	33
15 – 30 minutes	26	30
30 minutes – 1 hour	21	11
1 – 2 hours	17	19
2 – 3 hours	4	0
3 – 4 hours	2	4
More than 4 hours	8	4

Rather more visitors than average spend *half an hour or less.*

Fewer respondents than average (30% vs. 38%) intended to stay on the high street for between thirty minutes and two hours. These values contrast rather unfavourably with average dwell times recorded at Westfield White City, where visitors spend two hours thirty five minutes on an average trip[1], and with other Southwark high streets – Herne Hill has fewer visitors who visit a bit less often than expected.

6.2 Intended Purpose of visit

Respondents were asked what "the main purpose of their visit was today". Only 23% said they were shopping, 23% claimed to be passing through, 28% intended to eat, drink or meet friends, and 21% were doing "something else". This was by and large visiting the park for a run or walk.

Since most high street visits are unlikely to be for a single purpose we also then asked what else they would be doing: on that basis the combined scores in Table 13 probably give a more accurate representation of the intended purpose of the visit and the use of the services on offer.

[1] Data source: http://www.exterionmedia.com/uk/what-we-do/our-media/retail-advertising

Two thirds then said they would be shopping. Just under two thirds intended to visit a restaurant, café, pub or takeaway, or to meet friends, and 44% were passing through.

Table 13: Main & Secondary Intended Purpose.

What is the main purpose of your visit to this town centre today?

Apart from […..], what else will you be doing here today?

Purpose of Visit Main & Secondary	Average %	Herne Hill %
Shopping	45	23
	30	45
	75	***68***
Travelling through	23	23
	23	21
	46	***44***
Eating, Drinking, Leisure	18	28
	35	32
	53	***60***
Fitnesss, Health, Finance	6	5
	8	0
	14	***5***
Other	8	21
	4	3
	12	***24***

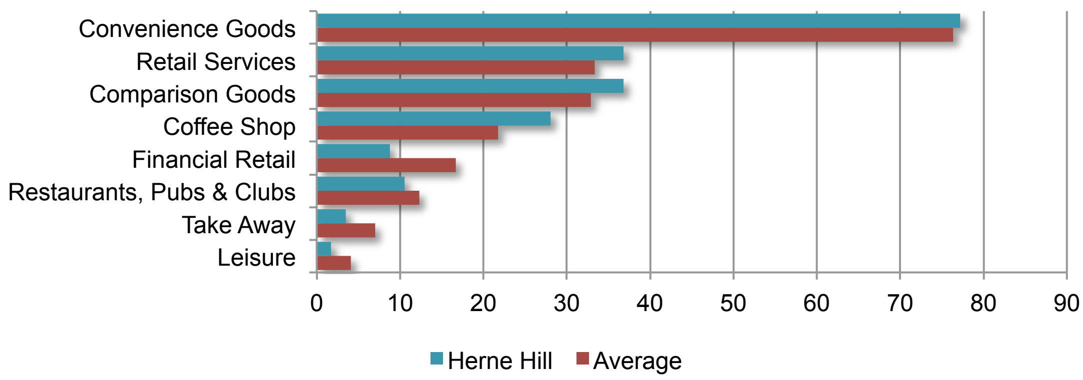
Shopping is an ancillary activity.

The area therefore draws more than average numbers of visitors for its cafes and restaurants, and rather fewer for its shopping. In addition it is clear from the responses that shopping is an ancillary activity since it scored rather higher on the second question than anticipated.

6.3 Which of these have you visited or shopped in today?

In addition to the intention questions reported in Table 13, respondents were asked to state where they had actually visited or spent money, and the responses are shown in Figure 5. The figure highlights some discrepancies between intention and behaviour to some extent since over 75% of the sample visited a convenience store, slightly above the Southwark average. Other retail services, comparison goods and coffee shops also received above average visits.

Figure 5: What have you visited or spent money on here today?



6.4 Claimed Average Spend

But the actual visitor numbers are not encouraging when compared with the average spend. Table 14 indicates that the average intended or claimed spend is low, with nearly half expecting to part with less than £10.00. In line with the Southwark average, about two thirds were intending to spend less than £20, and as noted this is skewed towards the lowest band.

Herne Hill is therefore suffering three times – from lower than average visitor numbers, lower than average visit frequency and a low average spend.

Table 14: Claimed Average Spend

By the time you leave this town centre today how much do you expect to spend?

(n = 57)	Average	Herne Hill
	%	%
Less than £10	32	43
£10 - £20	29	30
£20 - £30	16	7
£30 - £40	10	5
£40 - £50	7	7
£50 - £70	4	4
More than £70	3	4

Average Spend is low.

6.5 Where else do you go shopping?

Footfall density on any high street is a matter of competition, since consumers can choose from a wide variety of locations within and beyond the borough for a number of purposes. The study has identified that dwell times and spends are higher than average on a number of Southwark high streets but visit frequencies are lower, because they are destination locations, perhaps for a market or for a range of comparison goods retailers. Herne Hill however appears to draw most of its visitors for convenience goods shopping and foodservice despite having comparison goods stores.

Table 15: Duplication of High Streets

"In which other town centres do you shop regularly?"

(n = 57)	Count	%
West End	15	26
Brixton	12	21
Clapham	3	5
Bromley	3	5
Croydon	2	4
Penge	2	4
East Dulwich	2	4
Westfield Stratford	2	4
Bluewater	1	2
Borough	1	2
		75
20 alternatives		

Brixton and the West End draw nearly half of all shoppers on Herne Hill

Table 15 indicates the biggest high streets with which Herne Hilll is competing for footfall. The top two named locations draw nearly 50% of the Herne Hill shoppers – the West End and Brixton. Both offer far greater choice and variety of speciality foods and fashion and other retail offers. Following these two named competing locations, the number of respondents identifying any other particular destination declines rapidly. The total list of alternatives is long, reaching 20, yet almost half the switching is accounted for in just two choices. This is a familiar pattern in retail gravitation models where the busiest locations with the easiest access are the biggest competitors. Most Herne Hill shoppers can also be found in the West End and Brixton, Stratford Westfield and Blue Water – anywhere that offers variety and is easy to reach. It poses interesting questions about how Herne Hill retailers compete for a local and affluent market.

6.6 Consumer Behaviour: summary

The local community do not appear to be using their High Street as enthusiastically as might be. The visit infrequently, shop as a secondary activity, largely in convenience stores and spend less than the average shopper on Southwark's high streets. Why this should be is not entirely clear. A large part of the sample was on the high street for "other" reasons, heading for the park or passing through.

7. Attitudes to the High Street

Consumer behaviour may be shaped by attitudes and so the survey investigated how high street visitors judged the experience on Herne Hill.

Table 16: What's good….?

What most attracts you to this town centre?

(n = 57)	Average	Herne Hill
	%	%
Proximity or Convenience	47	60
Range of shops	21	7
Range of places to eat or drink	10	4
Attractive environment	7	9
A specific retailer or service	4	2
Ease of Parking	2	0
Other	10	19

… it's close by.

In Table 16 the attributes which most attract the visitors are identified. The table is ordered by the average Southwark results, and it can be seen that Herne Hill scores very strongly on convenience (60% against an average of 47%), which is obviously a key motivating factor. After that, while the people liked the environment (perhaps because of the park, and its amenities) the most notable result is the low scores given to the range of shops and the range of catering establishments – in short it appears that the local community visit because it is convenient more than for any particular attribute of the high street (like for example parking) or any single retailer.

Table 17: What's bad…..?

What if anything do you think is missing from this town centre?

(n = 57)	Count	%
Respondents	*57*	
A Wider Range of Stores	16	28%
Bank/ATM	7	12%
Variety of Restaurants	3	5%
Bars & Pubs	3	5%
Cafes	2	4%
Transportation & Public Realm	2	4%
Parking	2	4%
Leisure Activities	1	2%
Social & Community	1	2%
Cinema	0	0%
Parks & Green Space	0	0%
Gyms	0	0%
Police Station	0	0%

… but no cash machine available.

This might then indicate a way for individual retailers to compete for available footfall since visitors appear to be expressing a *"because it's there…"* view of the facilities. On this basis any retailer or café that stands out through exceptional quality or service might then draw more trade individually and to the high street.

When asked specifically what they thought might be improved or what they felt was missing, the biggest gripe, as reported in Table 17, was the lack of choice but a loud call was made for an ATM with 12% of the respondents noting that there isn't one.

8. Marketing Effectiveness

What can local businesses do to reach their target market either individually or as a community? In the final section of the shopper survey we asked respondents about their awareness of various advertising channels and messages, about their community engagement, and about their use of marketing promotions including coupons and digital mechanics.

Table 18: Local Media Reach

Where do you mainly get your local news from?

(n = 57)	Average %	Herne Hill %
TV	32	37
South London Press	7	18
Other (Traditional)	8	12
Word of Mouth	15	11
Other Online	15	9
Southwark News	7	4
S.E.1 Magazine	2	4
Southwark Business Today	0	4
Southwark Life Magazine	1	2
Radio	8	0
Southwark & Bermondsey News	2	0

44% still use local papers for local information

8.1 Media Reach

The survey asked respondents to name their main source of local news as an open-ended question in order to test unprompted media awareness. Table 18 is ordered by the responses in Herne Hill and compares these with the survey averages. The strong response for TV is probably unhelpful, apart from emphasising its reach for mainstream advertisers, but the table provides some useful insights.

The first is the continuing strength of local press: over 40% of respondents claim to use one or other of the main local papers for information. Online is fairly low reach at 9% and it is fragmented, covering various social media including twitter and Facebook as well as local community websites. By far the broadest reach is through the South London Press (18%).

Word of Mouth was named by fewer than expected respondents as an information source: it is possible that WoM or *e*-WoM are hardly considered as sources of information in a context in which Herne Hill is shopped "because it's there", but for which there are low expectations.

8.2 Advertising Recall

Unprompted recall of advertising for local events was then tested. Scores were reasonably high: about 30% could recall such advertising, and were then prompted to describe it. Table 19 lists the various responses, which are then individually low. The named events and their advertising may have been separated in time by a few months and memories decay, but the list still reflects a mix of some individual business activities and cultural and community driven events.

Table 19: Local Advertising Recall

"Have you seen any advertising for local events recently?" Which events?"

	Herne Hill
(n = 57)	%
Yes	30
When Prompted:	
Sunday Market	3
Lambeth Fair	3
Events in the park	2
Film Festival	2
Lambeth orchestra	2
Market	2
Cinema	1
Circus	1
Comedy shows	1
Concerts	1
Library activities	1
Play	1
Music, Comedy events	1

Fairly strong recall of advertising for local events

8.3 Community Engagement

When asked to recall any community or local events they had attended in the past year, the response was also fairly high: 36%.

The question prompted a similar list of events from respondents, with many having attended the Lambeth Show. The Sunday market also attracted a good response, and indicates engagement with both community and commercial activities and willingness to support local events.

Table 20: Community Engagement

"Which local events have you attended in the past year?"

	Herne Hill
(n = 57)	**(Count)**
Lambeth County Fair	11
Sunday Market	8
Fun Fair	4
Fireworks	4
Film Festival	2
Music events	2
Brixton events	1
Market	1
Clock opening	1
Herne Hill Forum	1
Lambeth orchestra concert	1
Total	36
(Non-response = 19%)	

Local events draw a good response

8.4 Promotional Reach

Finally Table 21 indicates an extremely low engagement with promotional marketing tools either online or traditional. We found no one who was using any of the communications and promotional mechanics listed. This is unlikely to be sample error even with a fairly low response rate.

Table 21: Promotional Reach

Have you used any of the following today?

(n = 57)	Average %	Herne Hill %
Coupons	7	0
Social media promotiom	7	0
EmailPromotion	6	0
Store Locator	4	0
Service Locator apps	4	0
Voucher apps	3	0
QR Codes	2	0
Total	32	0

9. Conclusion

The data presented here lead us to conclude the following:

- **Footfall density is comparatively low and infrequent.** On average *500 people per hour* pass up or down Herne Hill, which is low in relation to other Southwark high streets. Saturday represents the stronger trading opportunity being around 1.5 times busier than Tuesday and both days show only slight peaks in density, Tuesday at the end of the day and Saturday around lunchtime and teatime.

- **Local customers, shopping little and spending less.** The biggest advantage for businesses on Herne Hill is probably the convenience of the location for a large catchment of very local shoppers who walk there. However, the population is not strongly drawn to what is on offer and criticise the choice and variety of stores and catering provision. They use foodservice outlets (and particularly coffee shops) at above average rates, but higher than expected proportions of shoppers claim to be spending under £10 and less than 30 minutes per visit. Most will visit a convenience store.

- **Relationship building.** The nature of the customer base creates an opportunity for independent businesses to stand out by building personal relationships with frequent and regular shoppers. The relationships might be service-based, founded on the understanding that consumers are likely to be in a hurry; or product based matching the offer more closely to the needs and wants of the top-up shopper. Independent store-owners are in a powerful competitive position here and they can research their customer base quickly and react to its needs easily.

- **Be distinctive.** The idea is to become a stand-out, distinctive in meeting the need for convenience in every way – store layout, service provision, and offer. But some of the provision is in comparison goods, and here the location is competing with bigger and more varied centres such as the West End and Brixton. The struggle to be distinctive is even more critical here – Herne Hill businesses must become a draw in their own right in order to succeed.

- **Be local.** The customer base is predominantly local so there may be a competitive opportunity for independent retailers to be in and of the community. Supporting local business networks to drive quality and service and instigate local activities creates talking points to engage with local shoppers and encourages word of mouth. As a business group, this may encourage footfall through advertised events in the local press.