

# ***London Borough of Bexley***

## ***News Release***

**For Immediate Release**

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### **WILTON ROAD SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENTS**

Work to refresh and improve the shop fronts in Wilton Road, Abbey Wood, is now complete and shop owners have expressed their satisfaction with the changes.

The Wilton Road Improvement Programme has supported 13 independent businesses to modernise their business methods and physical appeal. The programme included shop front improvements, redecoration and support with brand identity, food hygiene, business presentation and marketing. An online business directory was created and a newly formed business association delivered.

The owner of Occasions, Tariq Rachid, has been running his business from Wilton Road for 20 years and was delighted to benefit from a new shop front, internal redecoration and support with marketing and visual display, 'I realised that the smart new Crossrail station would bring a lot of new potential customers and I had to update my business to attract them. I worked with the project team and our smart new fascia has already attracted positive comment. People who have been walking past my business for years have suddenly realised that I am here! '

Nim Bhadare, who runs 'Abbey Wood Station Minicabs Ltd' and is Chair of the Traders Association added, "I am excited about the future opportunities for businesses in our area. Wilton Road has a strong and diverse retail offer and this is more obvious to all now that the shop front improvements have been made."

The improvements were influenced by feedback given during a community consultation held in the summer of 2015. New and existing residents wanted to see a more contemporary retail offer, an improved sense of place and more attractive public realm.

Cllr Linda Bailey, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth at London Borough of Bexley, said: "I am delighted that the work on the shop fronts is complete and I am confident that the support programme that we have provided, will mean businesses are better placed to take advantage of the opportunities that the new Elizabeth line station, being built as part of the Crossrail programme, will bring."

'We want to make sure that the community benefits as much as possible from the regeneration taking place in the area and help traders to become more resilient

during this difficult period of transition.”

Councillor Denise Hyland, Leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich and Ward Councillor for Abbey Wood, said, “Abbey Wood is undergoing some fantastic improvements at the moment and with the coming of the Elizabeth line station right at the heart of this small but vibrant town centre it is vital that our local small businesses look welcoming and appealing to residents and commuters. I know many of these businesses very well and am delighted to see the transformation taking place. I have every confidence that these shop front changes will help boost trade for these valued businesses in our community.”

Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, Jules Pipe, said: “High streets are a vital part of local economies across the capital, providing jobs and opportunities for small businesses in a range of different sectors. I’m delighted that the Mayor’s High Streets Fund is supporting this regeneration of Wilton Road and I look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have in the area.”

The area around Wilton Road High Street is known locally as ‘Abbey Wood Village’ and future plans include using this name on signage more widely as well as a range of further street and public space improvements which will start in January 2017. More information on these can be found at [www.yourabbeywood.co.uk](http://www.yourabbeywood.co.uk)

Ends

- Attachment one – Abbey Wood Dry Cleaners after the work
- Attachment two - Occasions Shop A after the work
- Attachment three – AW Food Hall A – after the work
- Attachment four - Abbey Wood Dry cleaners before the work
- Attachment five - AW Food Hall before the work
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich and London Borough of Bexley successfully secured £300,000 at the end of 2015, via the Greater London Authority (GLA) for a retail improvement scheme on Wilton Road through the High Street Fund.
- The purpose of the High Street Fund and public space improvement projects is to secure a more resilient and profitable high street presence that allows traders to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the arrival of Crossrail in 2018, and the completion of new residential and retail developments in the area, providing a more welcoming and thoughtfully designed public space environment.
- The Wilton Road street improvements are being delivered by the Royal Borough of Greenwich’s Highway Improvement Local Labour project. Funding for the work is being met directly by the Royal Borough of Greenwich and the London Borough of Bexley.
- The Highways Improvement Local Labour scheme (HILL) is a two-and-a-half-year programme which trains local unemployed people to work on improving 100 of the borough’s roads most in need of attention, over and above the usual rolling road maintenance programme.
- Advice on shop front improvements and additional business support has been delivered on behalf of both Councils by the specialist company ‘Retail Revival Ltd’

Attachments

- Abbey Wood Dry cleaners after work [Abbey Wood Dry cleaners after work](#)
- AW Food Hall After work [AW Food Hall After work](#)
- Occasions Shop after work [Occasions Shop after work](#)
- Abbey Wood Dry Cleaners before work [Abbey Wood Dry Cleaners before work](#)
- AW Food Hall before work [AW Food Hall before work](#)



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