



Retail

Southend's High Street is home to a broad range of national and international brands and has seen recent investment from H&M, Debenhams and Marks and Spencers, as well as the addition of names such as Patisserie Valerie and OhSoBoHo. In contrast Leigh is home to predominantly independent traders focused on clothing and homeware.

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Southend's pedestrianised High Street runs from the sea front to the recently improved Victoria Gateway at Southend Victoria train station. It is anchored at each end by an undercover shopping centre. The High Street offers a shopping experience in a dynamic environment, supplemented by a Thursday and Saturday market or events of a weekend.



The Victoria Shopping Centre has undergone a £25m makeover and now offers space in a cool, modern environment. The Royals Shopping Centre at the other end of the High Street is home to brands such as TK Maxx, Debenhams and Pandora.

The arrival of the education quarter in the town centre in 2005-2007 has had a significant impact on the retail offer in Southend with retailers and brands meeting the student market and the desires of the more affluent parents, lecturers and staff associated with the College and University. This is expanding with the addition of The Forum housing, the first joint municipal-academic library, additional teaching space for the College and University and public space drawing more consumers to the town centre.

The High Street is enhanced by the Town Centre Partnership, a board of key retailers and stakeholders which seeks to ensure that the High Street maximises its potential and footfall through improvements to the environment, street furniture and events attracting shoppers from across Southend and beyond. The Partnership is now progressing with formation of a BID company following a vote in favour in November 2012.

The Clifftown area of Southend's town centre has been identified for a niche retail offer and creative and cultural quarter.

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Still in on going developed, this area is planned to support a vibrant café culture alongside the retail and arts activities creating an environment which is distinct from that of the High Street though adjacent to it.

Leigh on Sea to the west of the town centre is known for its independent boutiques and restaurants which not only support this popular and affluent residential area but attract shoppers from further afield time and again.

Southend wants to see further investment and development in this sector recognising its role in the local, national and international economy. Choosing to locate your retail business here you could benefit from:

- An experienced and skilled workforce capable of the excellent customer service retail demands
- Training and development opportunities with local education providers such as South Essex College, Southend Adult Community College and the University of Essex
- International transport links via London Southend Airport
- National transport links via the road and rail network



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