



**NEWS RELEASE** SLB – PR0509 – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2005  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Local Businesses Asked to Take Part in Business Growth Plan for Crystal Palace Area**

South London Business (SLB) today called for local businesses to play a part in its City Growth strategy covering the fourteen square miles in and around Crystal Palace. Pioneered in the US, City Growth is all about businesses working together to generate jobs and wealth for themselves and the wider community. SLB has already mailed plans for regenerating the area to thousands of local businesses and will be consulting with the business community further over the next six weeks.

The City Growth strategy has been developed by the London Development Agency (LDA), the Mayor's agency for business and jobs, and SLB's City Growth Board, a group of local business people focussed on enhancing the prosperity of the area. It maintains that by 2015, Crystal Palace will again be an iconic London landmark and a driver of commerce for the region. And a key objective is to transform this landmark into a commercial hub from which numerous business opportunities will emanate to the surrounding areas.

In order to achieve this, City Growth aims to help local businesses exploit the under-served local market and has identified the area's key industrial strengths or business clusters as Retail & Food; Sport, Leisure & Events; Professional Services; Specialist Manufacturing; and Horticulture and Local Construction. The role of local business is to provide local insight and knowledge and advise on how the area's opportunities may be exploited.

This will help SLB develop a strategy and action plan which will seek to attract public and private sector funding and focus on creating a sound business infrastructure in terms of transport, premises and support services. This will be underpinned by a robust promotional strategy, which will define the area's key strengths both internally and nationally.

Chief executive David Main says "Businesses need to ensure that their needs are top priority on the regeneration agenda. By getting involved now, they can shape the future to grow their businesses and boost the local economy."

Local businessman and board member Drew Patterson of Skin Culture UK says "City Growth is a platform for us to influence the people who make the decisions that impact on our businesses. It's vital that businesspeople take this opportunity to make a difference."

Simon Turnage, South London Business manager for the Heart of South London City Growth City project says "City Growth will provide the funding to get things moving and the board will seek to influence the investment of public and private bodies at local regional and national level. We aim to get teams working on the active promotion and management of the business environment of the area."

Copies of the vision and details of the consultation events are available on-line at [www.citygrowth.co.uk](http://www.citygrowth.co.uk) or from South London Business on 020 8666-0221.

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**Notes to Editors:**

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**City Growth – The Heart of South London**

The Heart of South London encompasses Crystal Palace, Broad Green, Penge, Thornton Heath, Anerley, West Norwood, South Norwood and Streatham. Over 7,000 businesses and a quarter of a million people inhabit these 14 square miles, strategically located between the centre of London and the affluent South East.

The basis of the City Growth concept is that deprived city areas have distinct competitive advantages based on availability of workforce, strategic location, skills base and under-served markets. It builds on these strengths by getting businesses to work together to generate jobs and wealth both for themselves and the wider business community.

City Growth takes an innovative approach to regeneration as it is led by the private sector and has a strong focus on developing competitive advantages. These are reinforced through the development of groups of synergistic businesses or 'clusters' and supported through active campaigning towards providing a stable business environment and infrastructure.

The process has four key stages:

1. Gain a deep understanding of the area.
2. Develop a growth strategy based on identified competitive strengths.
3. Mobilise business and institutions to move things forward.
4. Leverage new and existing resources to achieve goals.

**South London Business** is the voice of business in South London – operating as both a strategic and operational body which:

- Lobbies pan-London bodies to represent and promote South London's business interests.
- Acts as the official 'landing net' for new investment in South London and in 2002 has worked with an estimated 500 companies to attract new investment into South London.
- Works with key South London businesses to ensure they remain here and prosper.
- Seeks to create a greater sense of cohesion, unity and identity in South London.

**London Development Agency: the Mayor's Agency for business and jobs**

The LDA prepares the Mayor's business plan for London and mobilises the support and resources of hundreds of partner organisations to help build a thriving economy for London's people, businesses and communities. The LDA is dedicated to improving sustainability, health and equality of opportunity for Londoners.

The LDA invests more than £300m a year to support the growth of new and existing businesses, the creation of new jobs, and the development of new communities. It works to promote and grow London's strengths as the world's leading financial centre, its most vibrant cultural centre, an outstanding centre for higher education and research, and the busiest global transport hub.