

# Adult Social Care: How are we doing?

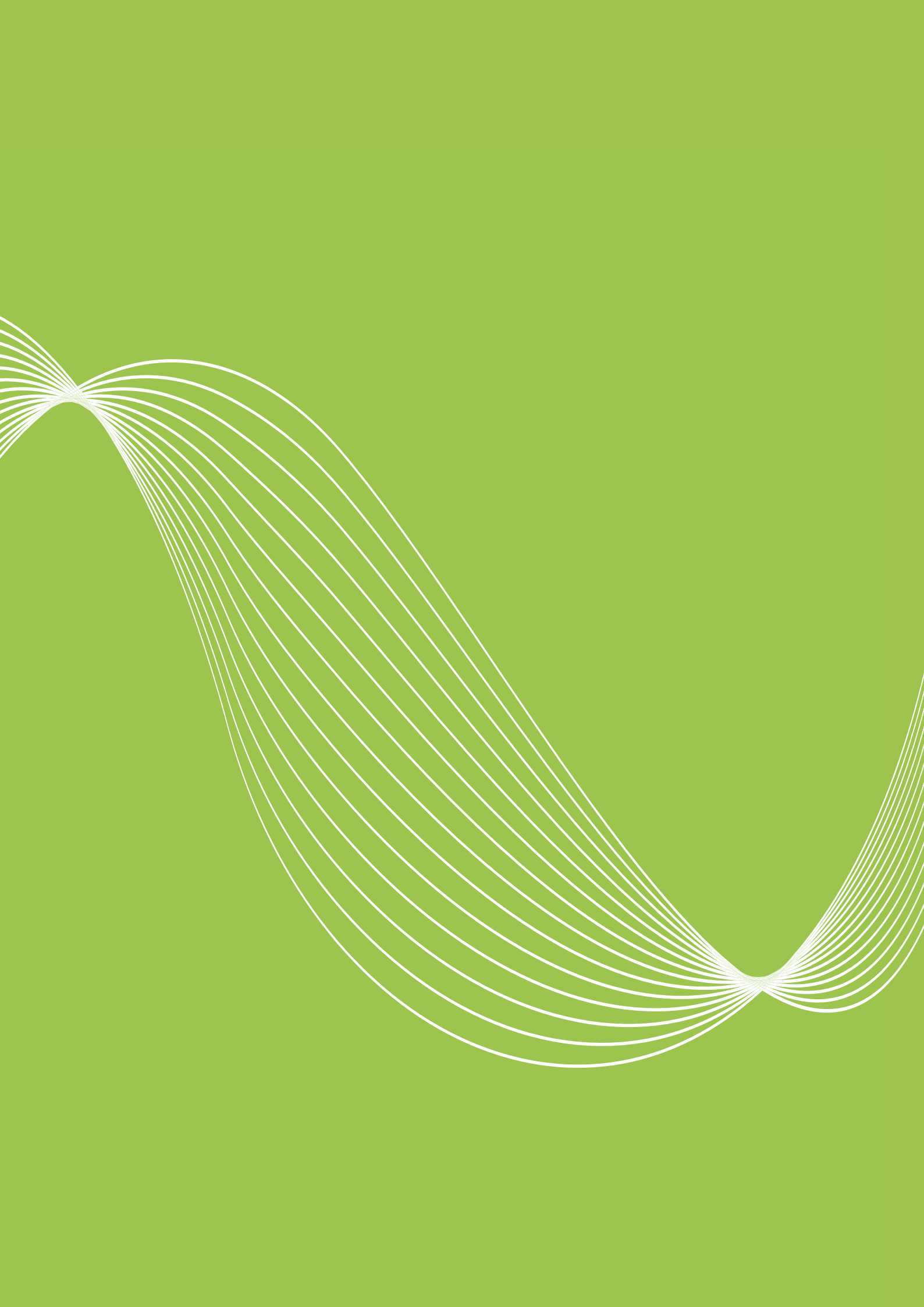
The “Local Account”  
of Adult Social Care  
in Tower Hamlets  
SPRING 2017



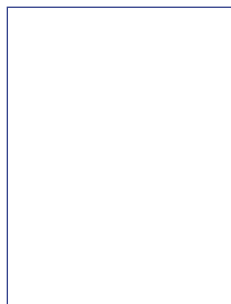
Adult social care in Tower Hamlets helps and supports people who are disabled, ill, frail, elderly or vulnerable for another reason. This report tells you about adult social care over the last year and our plans for the future.

Adult Social Care Services  
**live life your way**





## Forewords from Lead Member



Welcome to the sixth edition of our “local account” magazine for adult social care. In this issue, you can learn more about what we have been up to over the last year and our plans for the future.

We want to make sure that everybody who receives adult social care in Tower Hamlets is as happy as possible with the services they receive. One of the things we are most proud of is the consistently high satisfaction levels of people who use care and support in Tower Hamlets: Last year, 64 per cent of adult social care users said they were extremely or very satisfied with their care and support services - up three percentage points from the previous year, and higher than the average satisfaction level across London. This is a great achievement; in the future we would like to improve satisfaction rates even further.

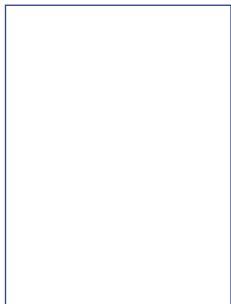
Our main challenge continues to be how to maintain the quality of care and support in a climate of less money. We try to meet this challenge by helping people to be as well as possible, and by working closely with the NHS.

This magazine sets out our recent activity and future plans in more detail, to give you a fuller picture of how we are doing and what we intend to do next. Many of these plans are long-term, and will take time to put into place. We look forward to working with you to do this.

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## Foreword from Healthwatch Tower Hamlets



Healthwatch Tower Hamlets (Di Barham to provide)

**healthwatch**  
Tower Hamlets

## Introduction

Adult social care supports adults who are disabled, ill, frail, elderly or vulnerable for another reason. Our aim is to help people to remain living independently in their own homes and to live the life they want. We also support the friends and family of those who care for them.

Being able to get good advice and information that is easy to access is important in care and support services. Preventative services are as important as long-term support services. We are committed to reducing the need for long-term care and one way of doing this is to support people to be as independent as possible for as long as possible. Many residents in the borough use services funded by adult social care. These include:



- Information and advice



- Activities such as Lunch Clubs and LinkAge Plus Centres



- Help to find work



- Equipment to help with day-to-day tasks

Around 3,500 adults in Tower Hamlets get support from social care at any one time



- **18%** purchase their own care and support services using a “direct payment”, paid to them by the Council.



- Around **81%** of people who receive support from us are living at home



- Around **51%** get help at home from a care worker, known as “home care”



- Around **19%** live in a care home

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<sup>1</sup> 3563 adults received support as of 24.8.16



## What we spent last year

- The budget for adult social care was £93 million in 2015-16. The table below shows how we spent this budget.
- Around 95 per cent of care and support from the Council is provided by other organisations on our behalf.
- Care homes are the biggest area of spend at £28 million. We think this is too high and are aiming to reduce it by providing even more community alternatives to help people live independently where possible

	<b>Care homes</b>	£28m
	<b>Home care services (also known as “home help”)</b>	£19m
	<b>Staff to carry out social care assessments</b>	£15m
	<b>Direct payments for people to purchase their own support</b>	£9m
	<b>Day care (such as day centres)</b>	£7m
	<b>“Preventative” services to help keep people well</b>	£3m
	<b>Sheltered or supported housing</b>	£2m
	<b>Reablement (short-term support to help people get back on their feet)</b>	£3m
	<b>Occupational therapy and equipment costs</b>	£2m
	<b>Transport (e.g. to take people to a day centre)</b>	£3m
	<b>Extra care sheltered housing</b>	£2m
	<b>Management and other staffing costs</b>	£1m

## Changing Social Care Assessments

Adult social care staff carry out assessments to figure out if and how people might need to be supported.

A law introduced in 2014 (the “Care Act”) means that assessments now have to be carried out in a different way. Carers who appear to need help themselves now have a legal right to an assessment. People need to meet a new “threshold” set by the government in order to be legally eligible for support from us.

We have changed how we work in line with this, and have also put an emphasis on:

- Treating each person as an individual
- Supporting people to take action now, in order to prevent any issues getting worse in future
- Helping people to help themselves as much as possible, with support from their friends, families and communities.

Mr B cares for his partner who has recently been diagnosed with early on-set dementia. Mr B was worried about his partner getting lost when out and about, and was concerned that his partner didn't have anything meaningful to do with his time.

Support staff advised Mr B on the technology and services he could use to help his partner avoid getting lost. They let him know about a range of activities in his local area that his partner could get involved in.

### Facts and Figures

1,300 vulnerable adults had an assessment in 2015-16.

180 carers had an assessment.

5 people made a complaint about their assessment. This equates to 14% of all complaints made.

- Self-assessments to give you the opportunity to assess your own care needs or enable someone to support you in doing the assessment. Self-assessment gives you the opportunity to carry out an assessment of your needs from the comfort of your own home as we believe that you and the people closest to you can best assess your care needs. We will use the information you give us to work out whether we are able to offer you services.

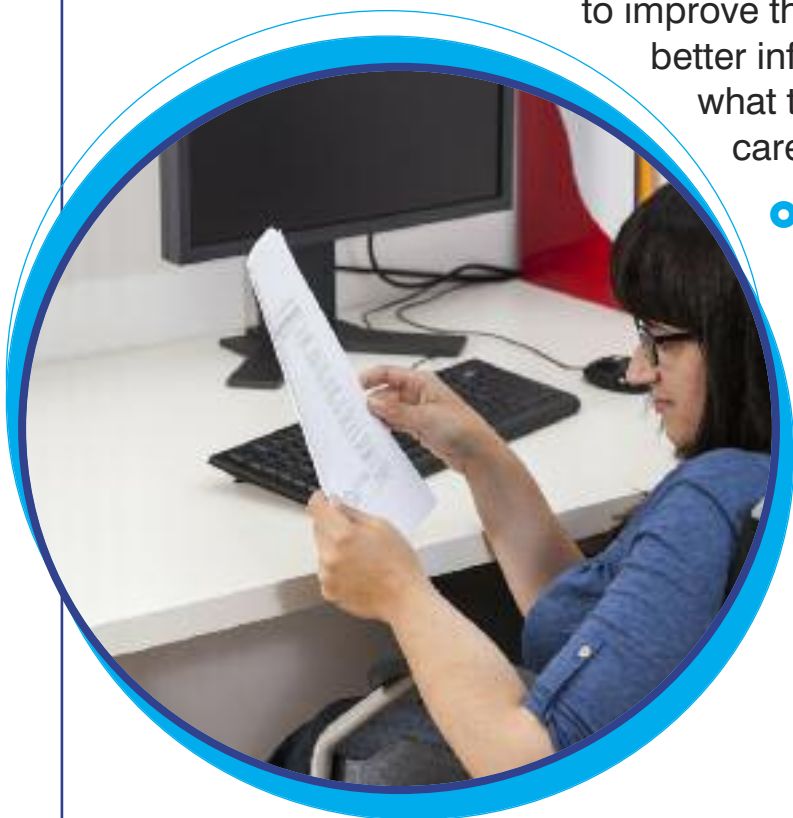
Our staff have been trained in these new ways of working, and we are pleased that in a recent survey, 82% of service users said they felt treated with respect by the people who assessed their needs for social care - up from 78% the year before. However, we also know there is still room for improvement:

- **Help from friends and family:**

Less than half (48%) of service users say that social care staff help them think about how friends and family could help them.

- **Inconsistencies:** Adult social care users have also told us that there can be inconsistencies in how staff carry out assessments, and that it can sometimes feel like a fight to

get support. We will provide more training to staff to improve this. We will also give people better information from the start on what to expect from adult social care.



### Our future plans:

- We will further develop how assessments are carried out in adult social care
- We will give staff more training on this issue
- We will give people better information on what they can expect from adult social care
- We will review more people's care and support packages to make sure they are getting the support they need

- **Reviews:** If someone is getting ongoing care and support funded by the Council, they can typically expect to have this reviewed once a year. However, last year this only happened in 35 per cent of cases. We know we need to do better at this, and will make it a priority over the coming year.

<sup>2</sup> 2015-16 figures. 1093 reviews were carried out. 3065 were due to be carried out.



## Working more closely with the NHS

“Tower Hamlets Together” is a group made up of ourselves and local NHS services. The group is working to transform and improve health and social care services for local residents. This has been one of our main areas of work over the last year.

So far as a result of this work, Social Workers are now available in hospitals at weekends. This means people who need support from social care to leave hospital and return home no longer have to wait. Our Community Equipment Service is also now open on weekends, so people can get the equipment (e.g. equipment to help with bathing or getting dressed) without having to wait over the weekend.

When residents come to the end of their lives, they are supported by staff across health and social care so that this journey is as comfortable as possible. In one recent case, a resident living in a care home was supported by a range of services, including staff in the care home and an end-of-life care team. A nutritionist worked to change the food the resident ate, as he had lost some of his sense of taste. Staff also supported the resident to continue to attend the Mosque every Friday, in line with his wishes.

### Facts and Figures

- We have a budget of £21 million (the “Better Care Fund”) that we share with the NHS to enable us to work better together.
- For every 100,000 of the Tower Hamlets population, 3.5 people experienced a delayed transfer of care from hospital due to adult social care. This is better than the England average of 5.

### Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board is another place where senior health and social care professionals come together to try and improve the health and wellbeing of local residents.

Over the last year, the Health and Wellbeing Board have:

- Agreed how the Council and the NHS will jointly spend a budget of £21 million (known as the “Better Care Fund”)
- Raised concerns about air pollution levels in Tower Hamlets and the effect it has on people’s health

- Challenged health and social care services on how well they are doing. They have checked the progress of Barts Health NHS Trust (who run the Royal London Hospital) following a negative report from inspectors in 2015.

## Over the next year, this work will continue.

The Health and Wellbeing Board have also been looking at what their priorities should be over the coming years. They have agreed to focus on the following five areas:

<b>1</b>	Communities driving change	This means empowering people to take action on health issues in their local area
<b>2</b>	Creating a healthier place	This means making housing and where we live a healthier place to be
<b>3</b>	Employment and health	This means helping more people into work in a healthy environment
<b>4</b>	Children's weight and nutrition	This means tackling childhood obesity and tooth decay
<b>5</b>	Developing an integrated system	This means health and social care working closely together

## Our future plans:

- We will have a "single point of access" for people to go to with health and social care needs, as we know the health and social care system can be confusing
- We will have more health and social care services that are located in the same building
- Health and social care services will put more of their money together into a joint pot, and use this to jointly fund and run services

## Doing more to prevent ill health

Working in partnership with the NHS, we are committed to helping people to stay as well as possible, for as long as possible. Over the last year, this has continued to be one of our main goals.

- **Improving information and advice:** Getting the right advice at an early stage can help people stay well. Over the last year, we have revamped our website and we have directed people to Local Link and the Carer Centre for any questions they have about social care (their contact details are on the back page of this magazine). We are pleased that in a recent survey, 74% of adult social care users said they found it easy to find information and advice - our best result yet. However, we know we have more work to do: Adult social care users have told us that our information is still not always easy to understand. We also know that many social care users do not use the internet, so we can't rely on this as a way of getting information out to people.
- **Linking people up to activities in their communities:** Both the Council and the NHS have been trying to link people up more with activities in their communities, knowing that this can improve their health and that people often don't know about the activities and services in their local area.

<sup>3</sup> 2015-16 Adult Social Care Service User Survey. This figure is based on the number of survey respondents who looked for information and advice over the last year.

<sup>4</sup> The Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group have been piloting "social prescribing" with this in mind.

### Facts and Figures

- 3% of older people received short-term support to get back on their feet after a stay in hospital, similar to the England average.
- 70% of people who received short-term support went on to receive less or no ongoing support – lower than the England average of 76%.
- Men in Tower Hamlets have the lowest healthy life expectancy in the country at 54 years, compared to 63 nationally.
- Women are expected to have 57 years of good health compared with 64 nationally.

**[Care Worker view on a volunteer coming to visit someone in a care home:]**

*"He is chatting with other people. He's developing relationships with other residents... Previously, after lunch he looked tired and went to sleep. But since you guys started three months ago, he has been active... There is no cure for dementia but there are therapies and the kind of work that you do, that slows it down or gives them the opportunity to enjoy life. They can still have fun with familiar faces."*

**[Volunteer view]**

*"I was told not to be upset because he would not remember me. And he does remember me...he asked me two weeks ago, 'you came to see me the other day'. I knew it wasn't something he just said, because he leaned forward, he looked at me, and it was almost like 'you did come to see me last week'.... You see in front of your own eyes the difference you're making to somebody's life and you feel like you're almost putting the minimum in but you're getting the maximum out"*

We launched our online "community catalogue" this year, which along with the online Idea Store directory, sets out a lot of different services and activities that are available to people. In addition, two GP surgeries (the Bromley-by-Bow Centre and Mission Practice) have recently put a real focus on giving patients more information on community activities: Feedback has been positive, and other GP surgeries are now looking to do the same.

- **Combatting loneliness and social isolation:** In a recent survey, 26 per cent of adult social care users in Tower Hamlets said they did not have enough social contact, compared to an England average of 22 per cent. Over the last year, we have continued work to combat loneliness and social isolation. We have started to support more volunteers to visit people in care homes, and have organised a number of events to bring people together.
- **Improving health:** Over the last year, the Council and the NHS have invested in support to help people live healthier lives. This has ranged from support to give up smoking to support to take up exercise.

**Our future plans:**

- We will continue to help people to stay as well as possible, for as long as possible. This is one of the main aims of health and social care services.

## Helping people be as independent as possible

Helping people to be independent continues to be one of our main aims, as it has real benefits for people. We were pleased that in a recent survey, 78 per cent of adult social care users said that care and support helps them be as independent as possible – but we think we can do better. Some of the things we have been working on include:

**Using technology:** More people are using technology to help them stay safe and be independent (for example, personal alarms or sensors that react if someone falls at home). We have been offering a bigger range of technology to more people, and want to continue to do this in the year ahead.

**Helping people to live at home:** We have supported more people to live independently at home, rather than live in a care home, over the last year. We know we still have room for improvement in this area. For example, over the next year, we will continue with plans to support people with a learning disability who are willing and able to move from care homes outside the borough, back into the community.

**Helping people have more control over their care and support:** Over 20 per cent of adult social care users now receive a direct payment from the Council to purchase their own care and support, up three percentage points from the year before. Likewise, a number of carers receive this. We know that direct payments have the power to give people more choice and control over their care. In a recent survey, 91 per cent of people with a direct payment said they were satisfied with

### Facts and Figures

- 93% of adults with a mental health issue who get social care live independently (i.e. not a care home), as do 69% of people with a learning disability. The England averages are 57% and 75% respectively.
- 4% of adults with a mental health issue and social care needs are in in work, as are 5% of adults with a learning disability. The England averages are 7% and 6% respectively.
- 21% of adult social care users received a direct payment. This is below the England average of 28%.
- 69% of adult social care users say they have control over their daily lives. This is below the England average of 76%.



their care and support – slightly higher than the average result of 90 per cent. We want to continue to encourage more people to take up the offer of direct payments. A number of people have also said they want to know more about direct payments, so we will provide more information on it in the coming year.

**Helping carers:** The help social care users get from friends and family (“carers”) is invaluable. This year, carers have told us that they are interested in getting training on things related to their role.

Many carers have highlighted that they need support to have a life outside caring. Carers who want to work have said there is not always the right support in place for them to do so. We also know that a large number of carers may not see themselves as such, so work is needed to identify and support them. We are going to address these issues over the next three years through a “Carer Strategy” we are writing.

Mr S has a learning disability and lives with his mother. When Mr S first started receiving care, he was interested in being more independent. Care workers helped Mr S to go to activities in his local area - particularly going to the library to use a computer, and going to the cinema. Staff supported Mr S to cross busy roads and communicate with library and cinema staff, with a view to Mr S eventually doing this without support. Mr S is now enjoying his increased independence.

### Our future plans:

- We will help more people with a learning disability or mental health issue to find work
- We will support more people with a learning disability who live in care homes outside Tower Hamlets to move back in to the borough
- We will provide better information to people about direct payments
- We will offer a bigger range of technology to people to help them stay safe and well

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<sup>5</sup> Extremely, very or quite satisfied.

## Using our resources in the best possible way

Resources for social care are an issue across the country, as the amount of money we have to spend as a council is going down whilst the demand for adult social care is likely to go up. Inevitably this leaves both the Council – in partnership with residents - with some tough decisions to make as to how we save money.

We have tried and will continue to try to save money in adult social care by:

- Helping people to be as well and independent as possible so that the demand for social care is not as high
- Working closely with the NHS so that our resources are put to the best possible use.

Much of what we have done to date in these areas is set out in this magazine.

In a climate of restricted resources, we have also had to look at whether to start charging people for social care. All but one other local authority in England charges people for home care and other social care services in the community using a means test. In 2016, we made the tough decision to do the same.

When we looked at how to charge people for social care, one of the ideas we committed to is making sure that people pay only what they can afford. We then asked for your views on what this meant in practice, and in summer 2016, received almost 700 responses on the issue. People on very low incomes will not need to pay anything towards the cost of care.

### Facts and Figures

- Since the cuts started in 2010, the council has saved £138 million. We need to save another £58 million by 2020.
- The number of managers has gone down by 33% and the number of staff by 25% over the last five years.
- The budget for adult social care was £93 million in 2015-16. This was 3 per cent less than the year before as a result of government funding cuts.
- In autumn 2015, 150 residents gave their views on adult social care savings proposals for 2015-16.



We are due to start asking those who can afford it, to pay towards the cost of their care from Spring 2017 onwards. If you are receiving care funded by the council, a member of staff will contact you to discuss this in more detail.

They will explain what the charges mean to you, and will explain what (if anything) you will be asked to pay towards the cost of care.

For more information in the meantime, please contact 020 7364 5005 or [adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

### Our future plans:

- We plan to start charging people for adult social care services in the community from Spring 2017
- We will continue to try and save money by helping people to be as well and independent as possible, and by working closely with the NHS
- We will continue to consult with adult social care users, carers and residents before we make any significant changes to adult social care services

## Protecting and improving the quality of care and support

Most social care users tell us they receive care that has a real and positive impact on their lives. Equally, we know that poor quality care can have devastating consequences. We are always looking to protect and improve the quality of adult social care. Here are some of the issues we have looked at over the last year:

**Home care:** While most people have a great experience of care workers, some people have reported problems in this area.

*Mr G started to receive support from care workers at a time when he was dependent on alcohol, not taking his medication and not eating well. Staff devised a care plan with Mr G, and agreed it was essential that he had consistent care workers with whom he could build a good rapport. Staff reminded Mr G to take his medication, and put a “food and drink chart” in place to encourage Mr G to plan ahead and eat a healthier diet. As a result, Mr G now needs less support from staff and his quality of life has improved.*

### Facts and Figures

- 94% of social care users say care and support improves their quality of life
- 67% of social care users say that having help makes them feel better about themselves
- We received 35 complaints about adult social care last year. 12 of these were about service delays or failures
- As of November 2016, the Care Quality Commission had rated 12 social care services in Tower Hamlets as “good”, 12 as “requiring improvement” and 2 as “inadequate”. Improvements are now being put into place

People want consistent care workers who are flexible and are not rushed or late to appointments. We are committed to people getting a good quality service, so we are investing more money in home care and have recently signed up to Unison’s “Ethnical Care Charter”. This means that care workers can expect a decent wage and get the training and support they need to do a good job. We also regularly



check on people's experience of home care so that we can address any problems that arise. We are pleased that in a recent survey, 90 per cent of people getting home care said they were satisfied with the service they received.

**Experience of other social care services:** When we spoke to older people in October 2016 to get their views on adult social care, some people said they thought care and support in Tower Hamlets was excellent, whilst others raised concerns with the quality of nursing care homes and supported housing in the borough. We will work to improve people's experience over the coming year. We are also encouraging more and more organisations to sign up to the "Older People's Dignity Code", which sets out how older people should be treated. You can find a copy of the Code on the Age UK website.

**Waiting times:** We are currently meeting all urgent needs for care and support however in some areas, people are telling us that they have to wait for social care. For example, some people have been waiting over a month to access Reablement (a short-term programme of support designed to help people get back on their feet) due to a long waiting list. Next year, our aim is to do better so that unnecessary delays are avoided.

*"Most of the time I find my caring role very stressful... Very much since joining the drop-in group, it has been changing how I feel enormously. It's the place where I find people understand what I have been through"*

### Our future plans:

- We will work on waiting times so that there are no unnecessary delays to getting care and support
- We will continue to monitor people's experience of homecare and other services, taking action where needed

<sup>7</sup> 2015-16 Adult Social Care Service User Survey. 90% of respondents in receipt of home care were extremely, very or quite satisfied with their care and support services.

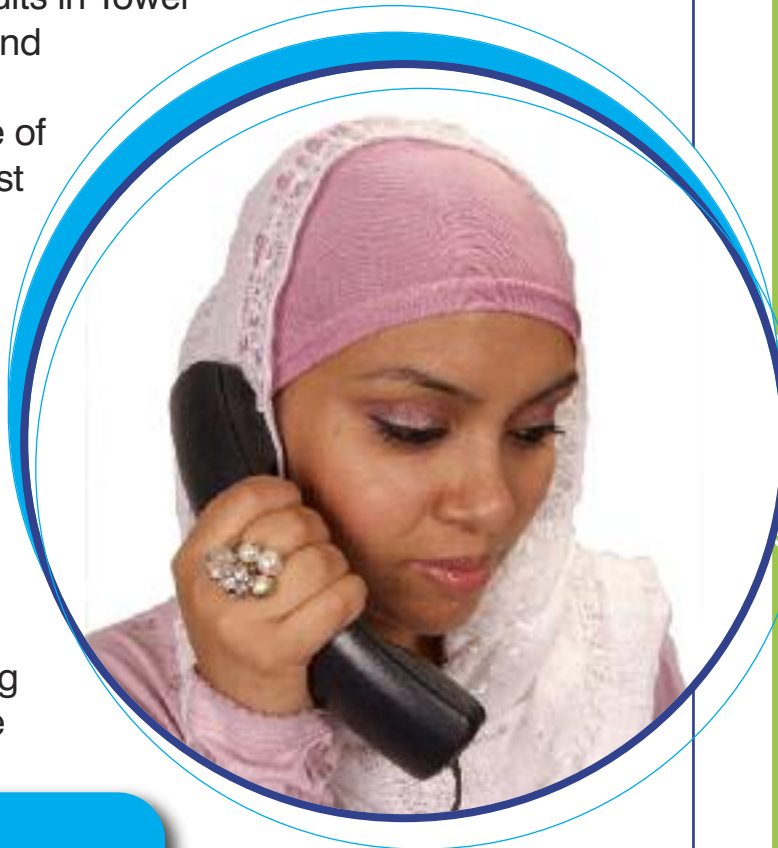
<sup>8</sup> Meeting with the Tower Hamlets Older People's Reference Group on 31st October 2016



## Protecting vulnerable adults from abuse

We are committed to keeping adults in Tower Hamlets safe from harm, abuse and neglect. Working with other local services and organisations, some of our key achievements over the last year include:

- An independent review<sup>9</sup> into how we deal with adult abuse found evidence of good working practice. A number of recommendations were also made, which are now being worked through.
- A huge number of staff and residents have received training and guidance on how to tackle



### Facts and Figures

- 521 investigations into adult abuse were carried out in 2015-16 – slightly less than the year before
- 38% of investigations were about neglect, making this the largest single type of abuse - similar to the picture in England
- 16% of investigations were about abuse in a care home. Across England, the figure is higher

adult abuse. This has included training on new or emerging issues, such as radicalisation and hoarding.

- The “Safeguarding Adults Board” is made up of local organisations working together to combat adult abuse. The Board has set out new plans on how to combat adult abuse and has recruited a new independent Chair.

<sup>9</sup> ADASS Peer Review into adult social care practice in relation to safeguarding – November 2015

We are pleased that adult social care users have told us we are on the right track: 63 per cent of adult social care users said in a recent survey that they feel “as safe as they want”, up three percentage points on the year before. 86 per cent said care and support helps them to feel safe, higher than both London and England averages. We are also pleased that the vast majority (90 per cent) of those going through a safeguarding investigation said they were satisfied with the process and outcome.



However, we know there is still work to do. Over the last year, we investigated the tragic deaths of two vulnerable adults where neglect or self-neglect played a part<sup>10</sup>. We carried out investigations to see if organisations should have done anything differently, and found a number of lessons to be learned. We are now working through these.

Concerns around adult abuse are proportionately more likely to be raised for “White British” residents compared to others, and are less likely to be raised in care homes compared to the national average. We have carried out some initial research to try to understand the reasons behind this and are now working through these.

*Mr K, a man in his sixties, tragically died in late 2014 after suffering serious burns in a fire in his home. He had lived alone in sheltered accommodation since 2008, having previously been homeless. Before he died, Mr K appears to have experienced difficulties in managing his domestic affairs, and his health deteriorated rapidly. Mr K had no family and often refused attempts to help and support him. A range of health and social care services were in touch with Mr K before he died, and an investigation looked into whether M K’s death could have been avoided. The lessons learned from this investigation have been put into an action plan which is now being carried out.*

### Our future plans:

- We will continue to raise awareness of abuse
- We will improve training on adult abuse for those in voluntary or community groups
- We will improve how we involve those going through an abuse investigation
- We will prevent more adults with a learning disability from going into assessment and treatment units
- We will get a better understanding of abuse patterns by gathering better information

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<sup>10</sup> Safeguarding Adults Reviews 2015-16

### Adult social care contact details:

- For general queries relating to adult social care: contact Local Link on **020 7001 2175** or visit **[www.local-link.org.uk](http://www.local-link.org.uk)**
- If someone needs help from social care urgently: contact the Council on **020 7364 5005** or email us on **[adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk)**
- If you care for someone else and need support: contact the Carer Centre on **020 7790 1765** or visit **[www.carerscentretowerhamlets.org.uk](http://www.carerscentretowerhamlets.org.uk)**
- If you have a complaint about a social care council service: contact the council on **0800 374 176** or email us on **[complaints@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@towerhamlets.gov.uk)**



Want to learn more about what activities are in your local area?

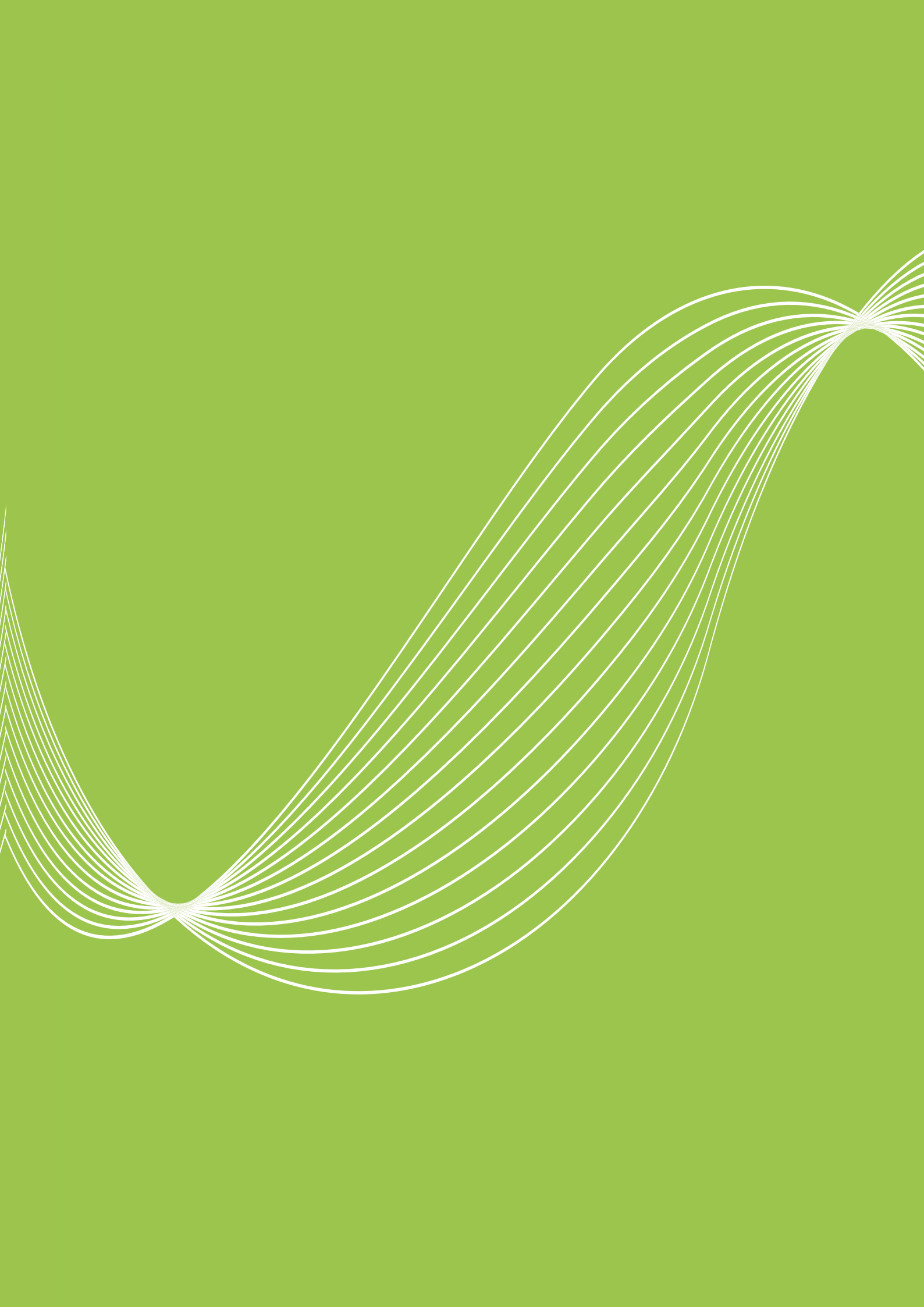
For details of social care services, visit  
**[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/  
communitycatalogue](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/communitycatalogue)**

For details of other local activities, visit  
**[www.ideastoreonlinedirectory.  
org.uk](http://www.ideastoreonlinedirectory.org.uk)**

This magazine has been produced in partnership with people who use adult social care services. We would like to thank the following groups for their help in putting this together: Healthwatch Tower Hamlets, the Older People's Reference Group, the Carer Forum at the Carer Centre and Local Voices. We would also like to thank the organisations we work with who contributed to this magazine.

We welcome any comments or suggestions on this magazine. Please email us on **[ppci@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:ppci@towerhamlets.gov.uk)** with any feedback, or to request any further information on the issues raised.









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