

Cabinet



Wednesday, 16 October 2024 at 5.30 p.m.

Council Chamber - Town Hall, Whitechapel

Agenda

Mayor Lutfur Rahman

Cabinet Members

Councillor Maium Talukdar	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor))
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding)
Councillor Musthak Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Jobs, Enterprise, Skills and Growth)
Councillor Saied Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living)
Councillor Shafi Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Emergency)
Councillor Kamrul Hussain	(Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation)
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury	(Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care)
Councillor Abu Chowdhury	(Cabinet Member for Safer Communities)
Councillor Abdul Wahid	(Cabinet Member for Customer Service, Equalities and Social Inclusion)

[The quorum for Cabinet is 3 Members]

Further Information

Reports for consideration, meeting contact details, public participation and more information on Cabinet decision-making is available on the following pages.



Public Information

Viewing or Participating in Cabinet Meetings

The public are welcome to attend meetings of the Cabinet. Procedures relating to Public Engagement are set out in the 'Guide to Cabinet' attached to this agenda. Except where any exempt/restricted documents are being discussed, the public are welcome to view this meeting through the Council's webcast system.

Physical Attendance at the Town Hall is also welcome, however, seating is limited and offered on a first come, first served basis. **Please note** that you may be filmed in the background as part of the Council's filming of the meeting.

Meeting Webcast

The meeting is being webcast for viewing through the Council's webcast system.

<http://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Contact for further enquiries:

Joel West, Democratic Services,
Town Hall, 160 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1BJ
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A Guide to CABINET

Decision Making at Tower Hamlets

As Tower Hamlets operates the Directly Elected Mayor system, **Mayor Lutfur Rahman** holds Executive powers and takes decisions at Cabinet or through Individual Mayoral Decisions. The Mayor has appointed nine Councillors to advise and support him and they, with him, form the Cabinet. Their details are set out on the front of the agenda.

Which decisions are taken by Cabinet?

Executive decisions are all decisions that aren't specifically reserved for other bodies (such as Development or Licensing Committees). In particular, Executive Key Decisions are taken by the Mayor either at Cabinet or as Individual Mayoral Decisions.

The constitution describes Key Decisions as an executive decision which is likely

- a) to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, above £1million; or
- b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the borough.

Upcoming Key Decisions are published on the website on the 'Forthcoming Decisions' page through www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee

Published Decisions and Call-Ins

Once the meeting decisions have been published, any 5 Councillors may submit a Call-In to the Service Head, Democratic Services requesting that a decision be reviewed. This halts the decision until it has been reconsidered.

- The decisions will be published on: **Friday, 18 October 2024**
- The deadline for call-ins is: **Friday, 25 October 2024**

Any Call-Ins will be considered at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee can reject the call-in or they can agree it and refer the decision back to the Mayor, with their recommendations, for his final consideration.

Public Engagement at Cabinet

The main focus of Cabinet is as a decision-making body. However there is an opportunity for the public to contribute through making submissions that specifically relate to the reports set out on the agenda.

Members of the public may make written submissions in any form (for example; Petitions, letters, written questions) to the Clerk to Cabinet (details on the previous page) by 5 pm the day before the meeting.

Cabinet

Wednesday, 16 October 2024

5.30 p.m.

Pages

PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There will be an opportunity (up to 15 minutes) for members of the public to put questions to the Mayor and Cabinet Members before the Cabinet commences its consideration of the substantive business set out in the agenda.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

11 - 12

Members are reminded to consider the categories of interest, identified in the Code of Conduct for Members to determine; whether they have an interest in any agenda item and any action they should take. For further details, see the attached note from the Monitoring Officer.

Members are also reminded to declare the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity and the agenda item it relates to. Please note that ultimately it is the Members' responsibility to identify any interests and also update their register of interests form as required by the Code.

If in doubt as to the nature of an interest, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting by contacting the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

13 - 26

The unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 11 September 2024 are presented for approval.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to report on any issues raised by the OSC in relation to unrestricted business to be considered.

5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

(Under provisions of Section 30, Rule 59 of the Constitution).

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1	Annual Resident Survey (ARS) 2024 results and analysis	27 - 76
	<p>Report Summary: This report sets out the findings of the Annual Resident Survey 2024 conducted by MEL research. The reporting primarily focuses on change since the previous edition of the ARS in 2023, with some further data where appropriate.</p> <p>Wards: All Wards Lead Member: Mayor Lutfur Rahman, (Executive Mayor) Corporate Priority: All Priorities</p>	
6.2	Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan – Position Statement and Organisational Impact	77 - 114
	<p>Report Summary: The London Borough of Tower Hamlets has made significant strides in addressing the recommendations of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC), demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement and a proactive approach to change. The council is on track to reach 84% completion of actions aligned to the CPC recommendations by September 2024.</p> <p>The council welcomes a progress review from the LGA to further validate the progress made and to identify any additional areas for improvement. We are urging the LGA to conduct this review as soon as possible to provide valuable feedback and support for our ongoing efforts</p> <p>Wards: All Wards Lead Member: Mayor Corporate Priority: All Priorities</p>	
6.3	Tower Hamlets Council's Target Operating Model	115 - 142



Report Summary:

The new Target Operating Model (TOM) has been developed to better align to the organisation’s priorities and ensures that the community is front-and-centre of decisions that matter to them. The vision of the new TOM is to:

“Create a more efficient, effective, and responsive public sector organisation that is better able to meet the needs of its communities.”

This update will present the council’s new and updated TOM, that takes account of a comprehensive series of engagement sessions held since October 2023

Wards: All Wards
Lead Member: Mayor
Corporate Priority: All Priorities

6 .4 Strategic Delivery and Performance Report Year 3 Quarter 1 143 - 232

Report Summary:

This report will set out performance for Q1 showing progress on the Strategic Plan for all of the reportable strategic measures.

Wards: All Wards
Lead Member: Mayor
Corporate Priority: All Priorities

6 .5 Tower Hamlets Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion Strategy 2024 to 2029. 233 - 286

Report Summary:

This partnership strategy will set out the shared outcomes that leaders will work collectively to achieve for all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Tower Hamlets. It will describe how different services will collaborate to achieve these outcomes.

Wards: All Wards
Lead Member: Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor)
Corporate Priority: Accelerate Education

6 .6 Review of the Licensing Act Cumulative Impact Assessments 287 - 392

Report Summary:

A review of the consultation on the cumulative impact assessment for licensed premises within Brick Lane and Bethnal Green.

Wards: Bethnal Green West; Spitalfields & Banglatown; Weavers; Whitechapel
Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Emergency
Corporate Priority:

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 Tower Hamlets Town Hall
 160 Whitechapel Road
 London E1 1BJ

6 .7 Supported Living Pathway	393 - 398
<p>Report Summary: To review contracts relating to the supported living pathway for young people.</p> <p>Wards: All wards Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Corporate Priority: A council that works for you and listens to you</p>	
6 .8 Harriott, Apsley & Pattison (HAP) Houses Regeneration Scheme - Resolution to make a Compulsory Purchase Order	399 - 542
<p>Report Summary: Approve a resolution for a single Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in relation to the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison (HAP) Houses regeneration scheme.</p> <p>Wards: Stepney Green Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding Corporate Priority: A council that works for you and listens to you</p>	
6 .9 Harriott, Apsley & Pattison (HAP) Houses Regeneration Scheme - Two Stage Tender Negotiation	543 - 562
<p>Report Summary: The paper will seek Cabinet approval to award the build contract for the redevelopment of Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses, known as HAP, for the delivery of 400 plus new mixed tenure homes and the re-provision of the existing community space.</p> <p>The scheme will provide high quality replacement homes for existing residents, new council homes for families in housing need and new homes for sale to help fund the scheme.</p> <p>Wards: Stepney Green Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding Corporate Priority: A council that works for you and listens to you</p>	
6 .10 VAWG and Women's Safety Strategy	563 - 804
<p>Report Summary: The Council's VAWG and Women's Safety Strategy 2024-29, produced through extensive engagement with residents, partners and stakeholders through the VAWG Needs Assessment and strategy workshops.</p> <p>Wards: All Wards Lead Member: Corporate Priority: Empower Communities and Fight Crime</p>	

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160 Whitechapel Road
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7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Should the Mayor in Cabinet consider it necessary, it is recommended that the following motion be adopted to allow consideration of any exempt/restricted documents.

“That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985, the Press and Public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contains information defined as Exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government, Act 1972”.

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL SECTION (PINK)

The Exempt / Confidential (Pink) Committee papers in the Agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.

9. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil items.

10. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions in Relation to Exempt / Confidential Business

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to report on any issues raised by the OSC in relation to exempt/confidential business to be considered.

10.2 Any Exempt / Confidential Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

(Under provisions of Section 30, Rule 59 of the Constitution).

11. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

12. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT



Next Meeting of Cabinet:

Wednesday, 27 November 2024 at 5.30 p.m. in Council Chamber - Town Hall,
Whitechapel



The best of London in one borough

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Tower Hamlets Town Hall
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Agenda Item 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AT MEETINGS– NOTE FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER

This note is for guidance only. For further details please consult the Code of Conduct for Members at Part C, Section 31 of the Council's Constitution

(i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)

You have a DPI in any item of business on the agenda where it relates to the categories listed in **Appendix A** to this guidance. Please note that a DPI includes: (i) Your own relevant interests; (ii) Those of your spouse or civil partner; (iii) A person with whom the Member is living as husband/wife/civil partners. Other individuals, e.g. Children, siblings and flatmates do not need to be considered. Failure to disclose or register a DPI (within 28 days) is a criminal offence.

Members with a DPI, (unless granted a dispensation) must not seek to improperly influence the decision, must declare the nature of the interest and leave the meeting room (including the public gallery) during the consideration and decision on the item – unless exercising their right to address the Committee.

DPI Dispensations and Sensitive Interests. In certain circumstances, Members may make a request to the Monitoring Officer for a dispensation or for an interest to be treated as sensitive.

(ii) Non - DPI Interests that the Council has decided should be registered – (Non - DPIs)

You will have 'Non DPI Interest' in any item on the agenda, where it relates to (i) the offer of gifts or hospitality, (with an estimated value of at least £25) (ii) Council Appointments or nominations to bodies (iii) Membership of any body exercising a function of a public nature, a charitable purpose or aimed at influencing public opinion.

Members must declare the nature of the interest, but may stay in the meeting room and participate in the consideration of the matter and vote on it **unless:**

- A reasonable person would think that your interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair your judgement of the public interest. **If so, you must withdraw and take no part in the consideration or discussion of the matter.**

(iii) Declarations of Interests not included in the Register of Members' Interest.

Occasions may arise where a matter under consideration would, or would be likely to, **affect the wellbeing of you, your family, or close associate(s) more than it would anyone else living in the local area** but which is not required to be included in the Register of Members' Interests. In such matters, Members must consider the information set out in paragraph (ii) above regarding Non DPI - interests and apply the test, set out in this paragraph.

Guidance on Predetermination and Bias

Member's attention is drawn to the guidance on predetermination and bias, particularly the need to consider the merits of the case with an open mind, as set out in the Planning and Licensing Codes of Conduct, (Part C, Section 34 and 35 of the Constitution). For further advice on the possibility of bias or predetermination, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting.

Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 - Declarations which restrict Members in Council Tax arrears, for at least a two months from voting

In such circumstances the member may not vote on any reports and motions with respect to the matter.

APPENDIX A: Definition of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

(Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, Reg 2 and Schedule)

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vacation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by the Member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of the Member. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority— (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where— (a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

HELD AT 5.40 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2024

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present in Person:

Mayor Lutfur Rahman	
Councillor Maium Talukdar	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor))
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding)
Councillor Musthak Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Jobs, Enterprise, Skills and Growth)
Councillor Saied Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living)
Councillor Shafi Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Emergency)
Councillor Kamrul Hussain	(Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation)
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury	(Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care)
Councillor Abu Chowdhury	(Cabinet Member for Safer Communities)
Councillor Abdul Wahid	(Cabinet Member for Customer Service, Equalities and Social Inclusion)

Other Councillors Present in Person:

Councillor Jahed Choudhury	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny
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Officers Present in Person:

Stephen Halsey	(Chief Executive)
Dr Somen Banerjee	(Director of Public Health)
Simon Baxter	(Corporate Director Communities)
Jill Bayley	(Head of Legal Safeguarding)
Noorjahan Begum	Senior Commissioning Manager - Integrated Comm & Strat, Policy & Improv
Georgia Chimbani	(Corporate Director, Health and Adult Social Care)
Ann Corbett	(Director, Community Safety)
Andy Grant	(Interim Programme Director of Procurement)
Simon Jones	(Head of Leisure Operations)
Abdulrazak Kassim	(Director Finance, Procurement and Audit)
Keith Stanger	(Head of Safer Neighbourhood Operations)
Ahsan Khan	(Chief Accountant)
Julie Lorraine	(Corporate Director Resources)
Marc Acton-Filion	(Planning Officer (Plan Making Team))
Naveed Mohammed	(Head of Strategy, Policy & Improvement)
Paul Patterson	(Interim Corporate Director Housing And

Steve Reddy	Regeneration) (Corporate Director, Children's Services)
Sripriya Sudhakar	Director of Planning and Building Control
Karen Swift	(Divisional Director, Housing and Regeneration)
Richard Williams	Business Manager Operational PR
Ashraf Ali	(Director of Public Realm)
Joel West	(Democratic Services Team Leader (Committee))

Officers In Attendance Virtually:

John Harrison (Director of Corporate Efficiency)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

None.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES**RESOLVED:**

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 24 July be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record of proceedings.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor gave a short statement on his decision from July 2024 on Approval of the council's revised Homelessness Accommodation Placement Policy. He announced that since the proposed amendments to the policy were recommended, two significant changes had occurred: a change in government and new data showing a reduction in number of families waiting for accommodation in hotels. Following reconsideration of the policy in light of these developments, he announced he was suspending the implementation of the proposed change to the Homelessness Placement Policy, to allow more time to properly review and assess its implications. As things stand, the 90-minute limit on relocation remained in place. Finally, the Mayor advised he would update Cabinet, Members and the wider public all on the outcome of our review in due course.

The Mayor welcomed Georgia Chimbani, Corporate Director Health and Adult Social Care to her first Cabinet meeting.

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

The Mayor welcomed the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Jahed Choudhury, to the Cabinet meeting.

Councillor Jahed Choudhury informed the Mayor and Cabinet of the recent work undertaken by the Committee. The Committee had:

- Discussed a call-in on the revised Homelessness Accommodation Placement Policy. The Committee reaffirmed the Cabinet's decision and we had submitted a report with several recommendations and requested a written response by 4th October 2024.
- Considered Q1 Budget Monitoring report for 2024/25, noting the forecasted overspend on the general fund including areas such as homelessness, temporary accommodation, adult social care and special education needs.
- Held a spotlight on business rates risks, comments from the Committee focused on how business rates risks factored into budgetary planning; understanding the criteria for appeals and how they might be mitigated; and plans on empty office space, how they might be used and potential risks.
- Considered the council's Transport Strategy Refresh. Comments focused on electric vehicle charging; cycling and walking safety issues; dockless bikes, scooters, approaches to engaging marginalised groups; pollution, air quality and traffic.
- Heard on the response to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman final decision on issues such as complaints and reasonable adjustment policy.
- Agreed the scrutiny work programme for this year.

5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

None.

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Free Swimming Programme

Councillor Kamrul Hussain, Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation, introduced the report that provided an updated position in respect of the proposed free-swimming programme as part of the Be Well leisure service, which came in-house on 1st May 2024.

Cabinet members welcomed the report. They indicated the free swimming initiative would bring wider benefits to residents. They also noted the funding for free swimming would be part of the Council's base budget going forwards.

The Mayor welcomed the report, but noted concerns at the proposed operational hours of Tiller Leisure Centre. He asked that these be reviewed to ensure the Centre could accommodate all who wished to take advantage of the offer. He also asked officers to ensure all facilities were clean and safe.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Note the rationale for introducing a targeted free-swimming programme for women and girls over 16 and men over 55 as detailed in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.8 of the report.
2. Note and endorse the proposed approach and phasing for a new free-swimming programme detailed in paragraphs 3.9 to 3.17 of the report.
3. Agree to the development of further detailed proposals for developing creche facilities.
4. Agree to officers monitoring the usage of the free-swimming programme and authorise the Head of Leisure Operations to make minor amendments to the programme, following consultation with the Lead Member.

6.2 Be Well Leisure In-sourcing Capital Programme Update

Councillor Kamrul Hussain, Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation, introduced the report that identified the capital funding required to carry out priority short-term improvements to Mile End Leisure Centre 3G outdoor sports pitches and York Hall Spa. Councillor Hussain also explained how options were being developed for future investment in leisure facilities and explained progress to date on developing and delivering a Tower Hamlets Place Based Partnership and PlayZones.

The Mayor and Cabinet welcomed the update which they felt would address and reverse the depletion of valuable community assets. The Mayor requested a further update report to November Cabinet in respect of the options appraisals and feasibility studies.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Noted the requirement to invest in York Hall Spa and Mile End outdoor sports pitches in 2024/25.
2. Noted the budgeted income for York Hall Spa and Mile End Leisure Centre outdoor sports pitches is £0.851 million in 2024/25
3. Approved an addition £1.166 million capital funding for 2024/25 for the refurbishment of York Hall Spa to Mile End Leisure Centre outdoor sports pitches.

4. Noted the level of approved investment of £3.665 in Leisure Assets Investment Programme as shown in paragraph 3.19 of the report.
5. Supported the development of options appraisals and feasibility studies for further investment to improve leisure facilities as shown in Table 6 at paragraph 3.22 of the report. Options appraisals and feasibility studies should be submitted to the November meeting of cabinet for consideration.
6. Noted the progress to developing and delivering a Tower Hamlets Place Based Partnership and PlayZones as shown in paragraphs 3.24 to 3.31 of the report.

6.3 Time Banded Collections (Waste Services)

The Mayor noted the pre-decision scrutiny question and response.

Councillor Shafi Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Emergency, introduced the report that set out proposals to introduce time-banded collections of waste and recycling on selected high streets, town centres, and main commercial areas in the borough. Councillor Ahmed explained this would require businesses and residents to present their waste for collection within specified time periods and was intended to have several benefits to keep roads and town centres free from bagged waste, to reduce the amount of illegally dumped waste, and de-clutter the main roads and town centres of bins; and to maintain a cleaner, safer environment for people living, working and shopping in our main roads and town centre areas.

Officers provided further detail including the implementation plan highlights and timescales and how information on changes would be available and publicised.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Approved the introduction of Tower Hamlets Waste Regulations 2024 under section 20 and 22 of the London Local Authorities Act 2007. These are Household Waste Regulations 2024 (Appendix A to the report) and Commercial Waste Regulations 2024 (Appendix B to the report).
2. Approved the introduction of time bands for the collection of domestic and commercial waste on selected high streets, town centres, and main commercial areas in the borough. The list of streets are listed in Appendix C to the report and the proposed time bands are detailed in the Household and Commercial Waste Regulations 2024.
3. Set Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) amounts for the enforcement of non-compliance with time bands by residents by issuance of FPN under s.46A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, amended by s.58 of the Deregulation Act 2015. Proposed full amount of £80 payable within 28 days with a discounted rate of £50 if paid within 14 days of issue.

4. Delegated powers to the Corporate Director of Communities (or equivalent) to make any amendments to the Tower Hamlets Waste Regulations 2024 in consultation with the Mayor. Including the authority to revoke, expand and adjust the timing of the time bands and the streets to which the Regulations apply. Any amendments, revocation etc will be in line with any of the requirements in section 20 and 22 of the London Local Authorities Act 2007.

6.4 Whitechapel Market Stalls – Production and Installation Contract

Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding, introduced the report that sought to authorise the procurement process to fabricate and install new market stalls on Whitechapel Road following the successful trial of prototype structures. Councillor Ahmed explained how the work formed part of the Whitechapel Road Improvement Programme (WRIP), which invested in the public spaces around Whitechapel, its market, and associated infrastructure, to create the best possible environment for local communities.

The Mayor welcomed the report. He explained his vision of Whitechapel as a mini city and how the market was a lifeline to residents, traders and visitors. He hoped the works would modernise and support the stallholders and shopholders.

Cabinet members welcomed the proposals which they noted would come at no cost to users and stall holders.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Authorised the Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with the Mayor, to award a contract following a compliant procurement process as referred to in the report.
2. Authorised the Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration to require the execution of any agreements and associated documentation to give effect to resolution 1 above.

6.5 Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy

Councillor Abu Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, introduced the report that presented the Partnership's Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy which had been formulated using the evidence base and findings from the Public Health serious violence needs assessment, the recommendations and engagement with professionals and wider consultation with our residents (including children, young people and young adults). Councillor Chowdhury explained the key strategic themes and how consultation with the public, third sector agencies and professionals had informed the development.

Officers provided further detail, setting out the key findings from survey and how they reflected resident perceptions.

Cabinet members welcomed the report and asked the Lead Member to explore how the Council could empower mothers of young people to identify support to educate their children.

The Mayor welcomed the report which he explained was just one of the many ways his administration had helped to improve and invest in the community to reduce crime.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Approved the Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy (Appendix 1 to the report) which is being brought to Cabinet for adoption by the Council as a “duty holder” and a member of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP).
2. Advised the Community Safety Partnership that robust governance arrangements for the new strategy are put in place to oversee delivery and to ensure there is accountability for all the “duty holders”, involved.
3. Advised the Community Safety Partnership that an effective data set is developed to assess performance and will enable constructive challenge across the system.
4. Noted the existing Violence and Vulnerability Reduction Action Plan (Appendix 2 to the report). This plan encompasses the broad spectrum of partnership work and operational delivery that will form the local response to serious violence and exploitation. This will be further developed as part of this range of work.
5. Noted the governance arrangements for the Strategy will be through the statutory Community Safety Partnership Board. However, there are a number of other statutory boards that have responsibility and play a critical role in the delivery of this strategy across the wider system e.g. the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership.

6.6 Budget monitoring report 2024-25 – Quarter 1

Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living, introduced the report that reported performance against the Council’s 2024/25 budgets at quarter 1, including the General Fund, HRA, Dedicated Schools Grant and capital budgets. Councillor Ahmed highlighted some of the key achievements, pressures, challenges and risks. Councillor Ahmed explained that all Council’s faced significant financial pressures but the Council was performing comparatively well.

Julie Lorraine, Corporate Director Resources, explained how, despite significant financial challenges caused by nationally recognised pressures,

officers were taking necessary actions to deliver downward movement in overspends by end of the year. Identification of overspend at this early stage allowed opportunity to identify and implement mitigations.

Stephen Halsey, Chief Executive explained how officers would be exploring new opportunities to address pressures, including those potentially offered by the new national government.

The Mayor welcomed the report and expressed confidence in his Cabinet and officers to take robust action to mitigate the extraordinary pressures faced. He indicated that, despite its inner-city location, very high population needs and significant national and governmental challenges, the Council's financial performance continued to impress.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Note the council's quarter 1 forecast outturn position as at 30th June 2024, against the approved General Fund budget (£13.3m overspend), Housing Revenue Account budget (£3.9m overspend), and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget (£2.6m overspend). This is a relatively early forecast in the 2024/25 financial year, affording us an opportunity to implement mitigating actions for forecast overspends which will be reported as part of the quarter 2 budget monitor.
2. Note the council's quarter 1 forecast outturn position as at 30th June 2024, against General Fund and Housing Revenue Account capital programme revised budgets for 2024/25.
3. Approve £6.1m of capital growth and £1.6m capital reductions, as detailed in paragraph 7.18 of the report and Appendix 7 to the report, as previously reported to Capital Strategy Board.
4. Note the progress made against the 2024/25 savings targets, based at 30th June 2024.
5. Note that there are no equalities implications directly resulting from this report, as set out in Section 10 of the report.

6.7 Spitalfields & Banglatown masterplan SPD

Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding introduced the report that proposed a Spitalfields and Banglatown Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to ensure that new development in the area meets the needs of the local community, including by supporting the development of new affordable housing as well as improvements to the public realm and green spaces. Councillor Kabir Ahmed explained that the plan highlighted locations in the area where residential development can support the core objectives of the Council, which are to provide housing and community services and infrastructure, specifically, delivering affordable homes, boosting culture,

business, jobs and leisure and working towards a clean and green future. The SPD would be a material planning consideration for the determining of applications within the area. It would provide certainty for landowners and developers, as well as Registered Affordable Housing Providers, public sector organisations and the local community regarding what type of development is likely to be acceptable.

Sripriya Sudhakar, Director of Planning & Building Control, explained the 7 key principles outlined in the master plan and how they would impact development in the area.

The Mayor welcomed the report which he indicated would protect the heritage and legacy of the area, which had been threatened in recent years.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Adopt the Spitalfields and Banglatown SPD (appended at Appendix 1 to the report).

6.8 Contracts Forward Plan – Q1 – FY 2024-2025 Addendum

Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living introduced the report that set out a forward plan of supply and service contracts over £1m in value, or capital works contracts over £5m. This provides Cabinet with the visibility of all high value contracting activity, and the opportunity to request further information regarding any of the contracts identified. This report provides information relating to quarter One of the 2024-2025 financial year. Only contracts which have not previously been reported are included in this report.

The Mayor welcomed the report.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Authorised the appropriate Corporate Director in consultation with the Mayor to award those contracts set out in Appendix 1 following an appropriate procurement exercise.
2. Authorised the Director Legal Services (Monitoring Officer), to execute all necessary contract documents in respect of the awards of contracts.

6.9 Council Housing Acquisitions Programme (CHAP) and Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF R3)

Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding, introduced the report that sought approval for the inclusion of two capital schemes, with external grant funding into the Council's housing capital programme to comply with grant allocation conditions. Councillor Kabir Ahmed explained how external funding had been made available by the GLA for Council housing acquisition.

The Mayor welcomed the report and noted the expiry time limit. Accordingly, he asked the Lead Member and officers to ensure all homes delivered under this programme do so before 31 December 2024. He also requested an update to the next Cabinet meeting to report progress on this critically important milestone.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Apply £40M GLA and £8.3 MHCLG grant funding, and the associated Council match funding into the Council's capital programme.
2. Requested a report on progress of the acquisition programme to the next Cabinet meeting.
3. Noted the March 2026 deadline, and asks officers to work to a deadline of 31 December 2024 for completion of the acquisition programme.

6.10 Nominations to Outside Bodies

The Mayor introduced the report that proposed changes to nominees to outside bodies.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Replaced Councillor Iqbal Hossain with Councillor Kamrul Hussain as the Council's nominee to Greenwich+Docklands Festivals.
2. Replaced Councillor Abdul Wahid, with Councillor Shafi Ahmed as the Council's nominee to Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

7.1 Fire Safety & Capital Investment Works Latham House

The Mayor noted and agreed the reasons for urgency as set out in the report.

Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding, introduced the report that sought to ensure fully compliant and commercial advantageous route to market which will ensure vigorous contract management procedures are adopted in a new contract for fire safety works at Latham House, which had been identified as a high risk.

The Mayor welcomed the report and his inclusion in the a special project team.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Authorised the contracting approach and procurement strategy for Latham House fire safety works and capital investment.
2. Authorised the Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration to enter into all contracts and associated agreements and documentation, in consultation with the Mayor and Lead Member, to the winners of the various competitive exercises in accordance with this report
3. Authorised the Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration to authorise the execution of the contract and any and all associated documentation
4. Authorised that a special project team is created to include feedback and inclusion of the Mayor and Lead Member for Housing to ensure effective qualitative criteria and evaluation of most advantages submissions is in place with support from Senior Executive officers, external legal, financial and commercial experts within the Council.

7.2 Procurement Route of HRA Capital Investment Contracts

The Mayor noted and agreed the reasons for urgency as set out in the report.

Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding, introduced the report that sought authorisation to commence the procurement exercise leading to a fully compliant and commercial advantageous route to market for the HRA capital investment programme to ensure best value in future provision and provide for vigorous contract management procedures. Councillor Ahmed explained the existing contracting landscape that delivers the Housing Management Capital Investment programme. He explained that a special project group would be set up to test assumptions, including, the current route to market considering the new regulations coming into force on 28th October, the market appetite for such deals, again in light of the advent of the Building Safety Act, the scoring methodology with specific attention being paid to the split between quality and price. It would also ensure the tender documents include the defined requirements for Social Value and the inclusion of Local Supply chain arrangements in the new contractual arrangements.

Officers provided further detail, explaining how the proposal represented a route to market that was efficient and effective and engagement elected members in the process.

The Mayor welcomed the report, his inclusion in the special project group, and asked that a suitable communication campaign be developed to explain the benefits of this important investment to the wider community.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Approved the contracting approach and procurement strategy for the Major Works contracts and Professional Technical Consultancy

Services contracts that will deliver the Capital Investment Programme for Housing Management.

2. Authorised the Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration to enter into all contracts and associated agreements and documentation, in consultation with the Mayor and Lead Member, to the winners of the various competitive exercises in accordance with this report
3. Authorised that a special project team (Led by Procurement) is created to include feedback and inclusion of the Mayor and Lead Member for Housing to ensure effective qualitative criteria and evaluation of most advantages submissions is in place with support from Senior Executive officers, external legal, financial and commercial experts within the Council.

7.3 Domiciliary Care Service Contract award

The Mayor noted and agreed the reasons for urgency as set out in the report.

Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Car, introduced the report that summarised the procurement of a contract for domiciliary care for adults. He explained how the process would ensure high quality domiciliary care services that people value and that support people to live well at home and in their communities. Councillor Choudhury further explained how the proposal represented reinvesting in the community. Awards were proposed to be made to smaller providers, all of whom were committed to paying London Living Wage. He expressed hope the proposal would provide the best possible care for residents whilst affording respect, dignity and fair pay for carers.

The Mayor welcomed the report. He asked the Cabinet to note the procurement process as reported was an officer-led one in which he nor other elected Members had direct roles in. He explained how the value caps would ensure a fairer description of funding and work amongst the range of providers.

He stressed that excellent care was a key aspiration of his administration. He asked officers to take care to monitor performance of all providers to ensure no safeguarding issues might arise. He indicated particular regard for how the contracts would offer protection to care workers. Tackling zero hour contracts and offering valuable protections. He stressed the need for LBTH officers to ensure agencies are not dissuading care workers from getting a contract and to ensure they receive their full LLW entitlement.

RESOLVED that the Mayor in Cabinet:

1. Authorise the award of contracts to the providers for lots 1 and 2 as detailed in the restricted appendices to the report.

2. Authorise in consultation with the Mayor the Corporate Director Health and Adult Social Care to instruct the sealing of all contracts and associated documents necessary to give effect to resolution 1.

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

A motion to exclude press and public was not required.

9. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Nil items.

10. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions in Relation to Exempt / Confidential Business

Nil items.

10.2 Any Exempt / Confidential Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Nil items.

11. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Nil items.


12. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 7.57 p.m.

Chair, Mayor Lutfur Rahman
Cabinet

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Cabinet 16th October 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Steve Halsey, Chief Executive	Classification: Unrestricted
Annual Resident Survey 2024	

Lead Member	Mayor Lutfur Rahman
Originating Officer(s)	Martin Rogers, Senior Research Officer
Wards affected	All
Key Decision?	No
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	ALL – particularly priority 8: A council that works for and listens to you.

Executive Summary

- This report summarises the key findings from the 2024 Annual Resident Survey.
- The Annual Resident Survey has been running since 1998 using a trusted methodology allowing comparisons over time.
- The survey is a reliable indicator of trends over time in resident perceptions and includes relevant national benchmark questions to enable comparison.
- Appendix 1 to this report summarises the main results, Appendix 2 covers other councils’ residents surveys, and Appendix 3 explores council actions that may have influenced perception.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the findings of the latest Annual Resident Survey.
2. Comment on the report and discuss how the results will be shared and used to contribute to service improvement.
3. Comment on priorities for further research.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 We are seeking CMT's approval for our proposed approach to wider dissemination of the survey results.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 As an organisation we could choose not to share the survey results more widely. However, this would not comply with the council's commitment to transparency.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 Context

- 3.2 Tower Hamlets Annual Resident Survey (ARS) has been running since 1998. Using a proven methodology and a statistically representative sample of residents, it is a vital way of finding out how the residents of Tower Hamlets feel about their council and where they live. The survey is delivered by an external provider using the same methodology as previous editions.

- 3.3 In 2024 the ARS was based on a sample of 1,133 residents aged 18 and over, resident in the borough for at least six months. The sample was constructed to be representative of the characteristics of the overall population including ethnicity, age, and sex. Fieldwork took place from the 23rd March to the 28th May 2024.

- 3.4 This report highlights some of the findings of the ARS 2024. The summary report shows comparisons with 2023 where possible, and with relevant benchmarks such as LGA data.

3.5 Key findings

- 3.6 The 2024 results highlight many positives. Tower Hamlets continues to be an exemplar of community cohesion with 90% of residents saying that people from different backgrounds get on well, up from 87% in 2019. Tower Hamlets is a place that people want to live and work in – 84% of residents are satisfied with the local area, up six percentage points from 2023 and above the national benchmark (74%). Satisfaction with council run services amongst service users has generally improved across the board.

- 3.7 Despite a challenging period for the public sector in the last few years, overall satisfaction with the council is statistically unchanged from 2023 to 2024. This is a considerable achievement against the backdrop of recovery from the pandemic and the ongoing cost of living challenge.

- 3.8 Likewise, almost all of our results are above the national benchmark data provided by the LGA.

- 3.9 However, many people living in Tower Hamlets face enormous challenges that have been exacerbated during the cost of living crisis. In 2023 the cost of living was the number one personal concern for residents, displacing crime for only the second time. In 2024 it is tied with crime in first place, while three of the top four concerns relate to the cost of living.
- 3.10 For a more detailed summary of the results see Appendix 1 – Annual Resident Survey 2024 summary briefing (PowerPoint presentation). For a summary of benchmarking against comparator local authorities identified by the mayor and Chief Executive see Appendix 2. For detail presenting services results alongside council actions see Appendix 3.
- 3.11 **Next Steps and timeframe**
- 3.12 The results will be published after the report has been to Cabinet in Autumn 2024.
- 3.13 The survey results are scheduled for discussion at MAB on 9th October. An Overview and Scrutiny session on the survey findings is scheduled for Monday 21st October. The results will be disseminated to Service Managers at DLTs to inform service improvement. Staff will be further engaged via a POD session on the ARS results and internal communications.
- 3.14 The Chief Executive has agreed a budget for further research. He asked that options for further research be presented to him and the mayor after CMT, before MAB. The Chief Executive and mayor outlined that their priority for further work is around services, especially returns on investment, specifically:
- Investigating poor performance,
 - (especially) where ARS data seems at odds with any other data we have,
 - Where the findings can inform decision-making,
 - A long-term investigation on social cohesion.
- 3.15 Comment on priorities for further research would be welcomed.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The contractor was selected on a number of criteria relating to diversity and equality including its ability to engage diverse communities and to provide interviewers who speak community languages. Our survey sample was large enough to provide statistically relevant results and balanced to be representative of the local demographic characteristics including ethnicity, age and sex. This provides a statistically reliable base upon which to extrapolate results to the wider collective community. Interrogation of smaller subsets of the main sample based upon equalities criteria provide less statistically reliable results due to their smaller size.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There is no longer a statutory duty for local authorities to conduct an annual residents survey to a prescribed methodology.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 N/A –no requirement for finance comments

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 N/A –no requirement for legal comments

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Annual Resident Survey 2024 summary briefing (See separate PowerPoint document)
- Appendix 2 – Benchmarking against comparator local authorities
- Appendix 3 – Explaining the results.
-

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

Previous editions of the Annual Resident Survey are available online [at the website](#).

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

Appendix 2

Benchmarking against comparator local authorities identified by the mayor and Chief Executive

London boroughs take various approaches to resident perception. Of the 33 boroughs, Bexley, Bromley, and Kensington and Chelsea have confirmed they do not run resident perception surveys at all. Tower Hamlets is one of seven that runs resident perception surveys annually. Four other boroughs (Ealing, Harrow, Richmond upon Thames, and Westminster) run the surveys annually using face-to-face methodology. Barking and Dagenham and Lambeth run them annually with different methodology.

Surveys of this kind are sensitive to differences in methodology, so comparisons should be treated with a great deal of caution. They are better suited to tracking change over time rather than comparing different authorities. The surveys, because they are measures of perception, will be sensitive to external influences such as the pandemic or the cost of living challenge.

Of the comparators identified:

Hackney

Hackney last ran a resident survey in June and July 2022 using the same method as Tower Hamlets but with residents aged 16 and over, not 18 and over as in Tower Hamlets. Hackney's survey was published on their [Policy, evidence and statistics](#) web page.

	Tower Hamlets 2024	Hackney 2022
To what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together? Summary Agree	90%	
Your local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together. Summary Agree		75%
This is a neighbourhood where people from different socio-economic or class backgrounds get on well together. Summary Agree		70%
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? Summary Satisfied	84%	85%
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way [Tower Hamlets/Hackney] Council runs things? Summary Satisfied	61%	65%
To what extent do you agree or disagree that [Hackney/Tower Hamlets] Council provides value for money? Summary Agree	51%	51%
How much do you trust [Tower Hamlets/Hackney] Council? Summary: A great deal / A fair amount	66%	67%
Overall, how well informed do you think [Tower Hamlets/Hackney] Council keeps residents about the	65%	57%

services and benefits it provides? Summary: Very well informed / Fairly well informed		
To what extent do you think [Tower Hamlets/Hackney] acts on the concerns of residents? Summary: A great deal / A fair amount	59%	50%
People using or dealing drugs (problem)	58%	38%
People being drunk and rowdy (problem)	30%	31%
Noisy neighbours (problem)	22%	24%
Vandalism and graffiti (problem)	36%	23%

Islington

Islington most recently ran a Resident Survey in 2021. They ran a resident survey in 2023 focused on wellbeing that did, however, include some of the same questions as Tower Hamlets ARS. That 2021 edition used phone methodology, so different to Tower Hamlets. The results of 2021 were not published, 2023 results are expected to be published in Autumn 2024.

Newham

Newham most recently ran a Resident Survey in 2023. Newham use a different methodology (called push to online) so any comparisons would not be like with like. The results are not yet publicly available.

Camden

Camden last ran a resident survey in 2018. They have contacted us to learn from in the hope of running theirs again soon.

Appendix 3

This document meets the Chief Executive's request for a cover report setting ARS findings against council actions that may impact the results. Because the ARS is a perception measure, caution must be exercised in examining how actions might impact resident views. The impact of the actions on perception cannot be proved, and further research is required to explore the issues in more depth.

The measure chosen for this report is the views of all residents because in the ARS the views of service users are based on smaller samples (numbers of people). The figures are therefore less reliable statistically and may be unrepresentative. The ARS is a survey of all residents, some of whom are service users, not a survey of service users. For that reason, services such as pest control and housing benefit are excluded from this analysis. The experiences of those services will be important to users, but they are few in number in a survey of all residents.

The information on council actions in this document has been taken from 2023/2024 Q4 Strategic Delivery and Performance Report (the most recent edition at time of writing).

Sport and leisure services and Idea Stores/libraries are excluded because they saw no statistically significant change on 2023. Those included are ordered by percentage point change year-on-year 2023 to 2024.

Policing (up 16 points)

Policing	2016	2017	2018	2019	2023	2024
Sum: Good	59%	64%	48%	41%	36%	52%

- The council has 45 Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers with 12 more due to start in November 2024 and an additional 7 to be recruited.
- We have recruited a Senior Commissioning Manager and adopted the new Target Operating Model.
- Additionally, the programme to upgrade CCTV cameras is complete. The community safety team deliver regular community engagement events through the year and in Q1 delivered 18 community events.

Parks and green spaces (up 14)

Parks and green spaces	2016	2017	2018	2019	2023	2024
Sum: Good	69%	71%	64%	66%	67%	81%

- Victoria Park has seen many events, and the council delivered 139 arts events last year across the borough.
- The tree-planting programme has overshot its target of 400 with 930 trees planted last year.
- There are 16 Outdoor Gyms in the borough available to residents.

Recycling services and Waste collection (up 11 and 5 respectively)

Waste collection	2016	2017	2018	2019	2023	2024
Sum: Good	70%	72%	72%	63%	63%	69%

Recycling	2016	2017	2018	2019	2023	2024
Sum: Good	66%	66%	61%	53%	62%	73%

- The improvement in public perception is a surprising result. Perception has improved despite other data showing a deterioration.
- The main projects that the service was working on to try to increase the recycling rate included the Flats Recycling Package project, improving recycling infrastructure, signage and communications at blocks of flats and estates.

Council and Social Housing (up 9 and 10 respectively)

Council housing	2016	2017	2018	2019	2023	2024
Sum: Good	29%	42%	34%	36%	27%	36%

Social housing	2023	2024
Sum: Good	26%	36%

- All staff and services transferred back to the council from Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) on 1st November 2023 though we cannot say for sure what impact this has had on resident perception.
- Resident engagement via the Tenants' Voice and Tenant & Leaseholder Engagement Strategy may have impacted residents' views.
- Advice and guidance was provided to residents on how best to minimise damp and mould.
- The Regulation 18 Local Plan Review Consultation engaged residents and stakeholders on our draft Local Plan.
- The delivery plan for HSF outlining the package of support was agreed by the mayor on 2nd June and subsequently submitted to DWP. The HSF funds Government allocation for Tower Hamlet for the financial year 2023/24 is £5,992,559.

Street cleaning (up 9)

Street cleaning	2016	2017	2018	2019	2023	2024
Sum: Good	70%	72%	62%	58%	54%	63%

- The council committed to a review of all businesses to ensure they have contract in place.
- The council has increased enforcement fines for enviro-crime such as fly tipping, graffiti and littering. New monitoring mechanisms have been put in place to assess the impact of this action.
- The service conducts enforcement actions through the year. These consist of investigations, warning letters, statutory notices, fixed penalty notices, duty of care inspections and prosecutions. Fly-tipping incidents are comprised by customer/public reported fly-tips and those reported by, and pro-actively cleared by, our own and contractor's crews.
- Compared to Q4 2022/23 the percentage of enforcement actions to fly-tip incidents have gone up from 168% to 347% in Q4 2023/24.

Tower Hamlets Annual Resident Survey 2024

Summary briefing

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Introduction



- Tower Hamlets Council have run an Annual Residents' Survey since the 1990s, other than during the pandemic.
- This 2024 edition is the second since resuming after coronavirus pandemic lockdowns.

Page 36 • Fieldwork took place in April and May 2024.

- Due to the restrictions imposed by lockdowns, the 2023 edition was the first Annual Residents' Survey since 2019 with a comparable, face-to-face, methodology.
- A telephone survey took place in 2021, but the different methodology means the surveys are not comparable.

Content



The survey covers four broad areas and this document mirrors those with

1. [Residents' views of the council](#)
2. [Residents' views of services](#)
- Page 37. [Residents' views of the borough as a place to live](#)
4. [Residents' personal situation and personal concerns.](#)

There are additional sections on

- [Analysis](#)
- [Methodology](#)
- [Who we spoke to \(sample profile\)](#)

About surveys and sampling



- All surveys, even the census, are **estimates**. They are also **snapshots** at that time, and things can change.
- The ARS uses sampling. Surveys using **sampling** are estimates of the results that we would get if we asked the same questions to every Tower Hamlets resident.

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The concept of **statistical reliability** is based on how confident we are that the sample of individuals we interviewed is representative of the general population.

- Statistical significance and interpretation of survey data. All figures presented in the ARS are **estimates**, not precise measures. As such, they have a degree of sampling variability attached to them. The concept of 'statistical significance' is used here to highlight those differences that are likely to reflect real differences (or changes over time), as opposed to those which may be simply reflecting the sampling variability which comes with estimates.

How the findings are presented



- For simplicity, results throughout this document are presented as summary figures. More detail will be available in subsequent publications.
- For example, the question 'Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Tower Hamlets runs things?' is presented as Summary: Satisfied 61%. The figure of 61% combines the 4% who are 'very satisfied' with the 57% who are 'fairly satisfied'.

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The full results in response to that question are

- Very satisfied 4%
- Fairly satisfied 57%
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 22%
- Fairly dissatisfied 13%
- Very dissatisfied 3%
- Don't know 1%
- **Figures may not sum due to rounding** e.g. satisfaction with Waste services was 63.4% in 2023, and 68.5% in 2024, a difference of 5. it appears to be 6 due to rounding 68.5% up to 69%.

Summary



- The results of the Tower Hamlets Annual Resident Survey (ARS) 2024 were positive for the council.
- Almost all perception ratings saw statistically significant increases compared to 2023.

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This improvement in perception has occurred alongside a reduction in the proportion of residents answering 'Don't Know' to certain questions.

- In 2023, for example, 20% of residents answered Don't Know when asked to agree or disagree with the statement 'My council is doing a better job now than one year ago. The Don't Know figure for 2024 was 8%, higher than 2019 (5%) but lower than 2016 (14%), 2017 (12%), and 2018 (11%).
- Residents continue to view Tower Hamlets as a place to live in a positive light: 84% are satisfied with the borough as a place to live, 90% believe people of different backgrounds get on well together.

Findings – benchmarking against LGA



Topic area	Measure	Tower Hamlets	LGA
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?	Very or fairly satisfied	84%	74%
How much do you trust Tower Hamlets Council?	Great deal/Fair amount	66%	55%
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Tower Hamlets runs things?	Very or fairly satisfied	61%	53%
Overall, how well informed do you think Tower Hamlets Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?	A great deal/To some extent	65%	54%
How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?	Safe	67%	70%
How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day?	Safe	95%	92%
To what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?	Agree	90%	77%*
To what extent do you agree or disagree that Tower Hamlets Council provides value for money?	Strongly or tend to agree	51%	40%
To what extent do you think Tower Hamlets Council acts on the concerns of local residents?	A great deal / A fair amount	59%	49%

Tower Hamlets performs **above or at the national average for all but one key benchmarks**. The LGA runs a quarterly survey of the whole country. The LGA figures are taken from the [February 2024](#) edition **other than** 'people from different backgrounds get on well together' which was most recently reported in [February 2023](#).

Findings - change over time



To what extent do you think these statements apply to your Borough?	Measure	2023	2024	2023-2024	Statistically Significant?
To what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?	Agree	87%	90%	3	Yes
Thinking about your local area/neighbourhood, how satisfied are you with the area as a place to live?	Satisfied	78%	84%	6	Yes
How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?	Safe	66%	67%	1	No
How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day?	Safe	94%	95%	1	No

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- The benchmarked areas set out above show significant improvements in residents' perceptions of the borough in the two most recent editions (2023 and 2024).
- Residents in Tower Hamlets believe the borough is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, up 3 percentage points from the 2023 edition of the ARS.
- Residents are more satisfied with their local area as a place to live compared to 2023, up by 6 percentage points.
- Residents feel as safe as they did in 2023 with neither after dark or during the day measure seeing any statistically significant change.

Anti-social behaviour over time



Thinking about this local area (within 15/20 minutes walking distance), how much of a problem do you think are...?	Measure	2023	2024	2023-2024	Statistically Significant?
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	Problem	18%	22%	4	Yes
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	Problem	29%	30%	1	No
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	Problem	29%	36%	7	Yes
People using or dealing drugs	Problem	49%	58%	9	Yes

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Perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour have increased in three of the four measures, reversing some of the improvements seen from 2019 to 2023, but remaining lower than the equivalent levels in 2019.

Views of the council



The survey covers four broad areas

- 1. Residents' views of the council**
2. Residents' views of services
3. Residents' views of the borough as a place to live
4. Residents' personal situation and personal.

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There are additional sections on

- [Analysis](#)
- [Methodology](#)
- [Who we spoke to \(sample profile\)](#)

Residents views of the council 2024



Resident perception	Measure	2023	2024	2023 – 2024	Statistically Significant?
My council involves residents when making decisions	Summary: Agree	42%	49%	8	Yes
Overall, how well informed do you think Tower Hamlets Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?	Very well informed / Fairly well informed	57%	65%	8	Yes
My council is doing a good job	Summary: Agree	56%	58%	2	No
My council is efficient and well run	Summary: Agree	53%	54%	1	No
To what extent do you think Tower Hamlets Council acts on the concerns of local residents?	Summary: A great deal / A fair amount	48%	59%	11	Yes
My council responds quickly when asked for help	Summary: Agree	40%	49%	9	Yes
My council has staff who are friendly and polite	Summary: Agree	59%	64%	5	Yes
My council doesn't do enough for people like me	Summary: Agree	42%	46%	4	No
To what extent do you agree or disagree that Tower Hamlets Council provides value for money?	Summary: Agree	45%	51%	6	Yes
My council is doing a better job now than one year ago	Summary: Agree	38%	47%	9	Yes
My council is making the local area a better place for people to live	Summary: Agree	56%	61%	5	Yes
To what extent do you agree or disagree that Tower Hamlets Council is open and transparent about its activities?	Summary: Agree	45%	53%	8	Yes
How much do you trust Tower Hamlets Council?	Summary: A great deal / A fair amount	65%	66%	1	No
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Tower Hamlets runs things?	Summary: Satisfied	63%	61%	-2%	No

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Almost all (9) of these measures have resulted in a statistically significant improvement on the 2023 results. The rise in Don't Know responses seen in 2023 has been largely reversed. The 20% Don't Know figure for the question on whether 'My council is doing a better job now than one year ago' fell to 8% in 2024.

Services



1. The survey covers four broad areas
2. Residents' views of the council
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There are additional sections on

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Service use



Which of these services provided locally do you or members of your household use nowadays?	2023	2024	2023-2024	Statistically Significant?
Parks and green spaces	74%	80%	6	Yes
Recycling Services	76%	65%	-12	Yes
Libraries/idea stores	35%	26%	-9	Yes
Parking services	32%	29%	-3	No
Leisure and sports facilities	35%	20%	-15	Yes
Housing benefit service	24%	24%	0	No
Primary Education (5-11's) provided by Tower Hamlets Council	15%	19%	4	Yes
Secondary Education (11-18's) provided by Tower Hamlets Council	14%	18%	4	Yes
Nursery education (under 5's) provided by Tower Hamlets Council	6%	8%	2	No
Children's centres	5%	5%	0	No
Services for people with disabilities	3%	3%	0	No
Adult Social Care	4%	2%	-2	Yes
Adult education/ evening classes provided by Tower Hamlets Council	4%	5%	1	No
Social services for vulnerable children and families	2%	1%	-1	Yes
Services and support for older people		2%	n/a	n/a
Local health services		68%	n/a	n/a
Social housing		12%	n/a	n/a
Council housing		17%	n/a	n/a
Youth services	2%	4%	2	Yes
Pest control	4%	6%	2	No
None of these	2%	0%	-2	Yes

Service use is broadly unchanged. Fewer residents report using leisure and sports facilities, recycling services, Idea Stores, and social care. It may be too soon for the insourcing of leisure to impact use. More residents report using parks and open spaces.

All residents' views of services in 2024



This table presents the views of all residents. A later slide presents the views of service-users only.

How satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with...?	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know
Waste collection	69%	13%	18%	0%
Street cleaning	63%	14%	23%	0%
Street lighting	79%	10%	12%	0%
Road maintenance	67%	15%	17%	1%
Pavement maintenance	64%	17%	18%	1%
Parks and green spaces	81%	10%	7%	2%
Sport and leisure services	50%	13%	10%	26%
Idea Stores/libraries	57%	13%	5%	24%
Council Housing	36%	19%	7%	38%
Social Housing	36%	20%	7%	37%
Recycling services	73%	11%	14%	2%
Policing	52%	19%	25%	4%
My Council Tax account	69%	17%	7%	7%
Parking services	47%	15%	19%	20%
Local health services	62%	17%	16%	5%
Housing benefit service	42%	17%	4%	36%
Pest control	46%	15%	11%	29%
Services and support for older people	35%	16%	7%	42%

All residents' views of services in 2024 (continued)



This table presents the views of all residents. A later slide presents the views of service-users only.

How satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with...?	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know
Children's centres	32%	18%	3%	47%
Nursery education (under 5's)	34%	17%	2%	47%
Primary education (5 - 11 yrs)	36%	18%	2%	44%
Secondary education (11 - 18 yrs)	36%	17%	3%	44%
General Services and support for children and young people	32%	18%	7%	44%
Youth Services	31%	16%	9%	44%

Residents views of services 2023 to 2024



How satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with...?	2023	2024	2023-2024	Statistically Significant?
Waste collection	63%	69%	5	Yes
Street cleaning	54%	63%	9	Yes
Street lighting	69%	79%	10	Yes
Parks and green spaces	67%	81%	14	Yes
Sport and leisure services	47%	50%	3	No
Idea Stores/libraries	54%	57%	3	No
Council Housing	27%	36%	9	Yes
Social Housing	26%	36%	10	Yes
Recycling services	62%	73%	11	Yes
Policing	36%	52%	16	Yes
My Council Tax account	48%	69%	21	Yes
Parking services	35%	47%	12	Yes
Local health services	50%	62%	12	Yes
Housing benefit service	55%	42%	-13	Yes
Pest control	59%	46%	-13	Yes

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Almost all services have seen improvements in residents' views of them. Only housing benefits and pest control have seen deterioration. Note: this slide relates to **all residents**, not users.

Users views of services in 2024



How satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with...?	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know
Waste collection	69%	11%	19%	0%
Parks and green spaces	85%	9%	6%	0%
Sport and leisure services	79%	7%	9%	5%
Idea Stores/libraries	81%	10%	4%	5%
Council Housing	71%	12%	11%	6%
Social Housing	42%	23%	20%	15%
Recycling services	70%	14%	15%	1%
Parking services	55%	14%	30%	2%
Local health services	64%	17%	18%	1%
Housing benefit service	81%	11%	6%	2%
Pest control	63%	7%	27%	3%
Services and support for older people	29%	41%	24%	6%
Children's centres	75%	16%	2%	7%
Nursery education	79%	9%	5%	8%
Primary education	82%	7%	6%	4%
Secondary education	76%	10%	9%	4%
Youth services	44%	8%	20%	28%

Users views of services from 2023 to 2024



How satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with...?	2023 Satisfied	2024 Satisfied	2023-2024	Statistically significant?
Parks and green spaces	73%	85%	12	Yes
Sport and leisure services	67%	79%	12	Yes
Idea Stores/libraries	78%	81%	4	No
Recycling services	65%	70%	5	Yes
Parking services	52%	55%	3	No
Housing benefit service	55%	81%	26	Yes
Pest control	59%	63%	4	No
Children's centres	69%	75%	6	No
Nursery education	73%	79%	6	No
Primary education	79%	82%	4	No
Secondary education	70%	76%	6	No
Youth services	47%	44%	-3	No

Parks, sports, and housing benefit saw increases among users. The views of residents who report they are users of the housing benefit service improved by 26 points. **Note:** The apparent discrepancy in Idea Stores/libraries is due to rounding. **Also note:** as these are only the views of the users of each service the sample sizes are much smaller.

A place to live



The survey covers four broad areas

1. Residents' views of the council
2. Residents' views of services
- 3. Residents' views of the borough as a place to live**
4. Residents' personal situation and personal concerns.

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There are additional sections on

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Crime and anti-social behaviour



Thinking about this local area (within 15/20 minutes walking distance), how much of a problem do you think are...? Summary: A very big problem / A fairly big problem	2023	2024	2023-2024	Significant?
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	18%	22%	4	Yes
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	29%	30%	1	No
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	29%	36%	7	Yes
People using or dealing drugs	49%	58%	9	Yes

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How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area .. Summary: Very safe and fairly safe	2023	2024	2023-2024	Significant?
After Dark?	66%	67%	0	No
During the day?	94%	95%	1	No

How much would you agree or disagree that the police and other local public services are successfully dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour in your local area?	2023	2024	2023-2024	Significant?
Agree	47%	48%	1	No

Across all these measures the picture is mixed. These findings indicate residents feel as safe as they did in 2023, that their perception of some kinds of anti-social behaviour has risen, but their view of how well crime is being dealt with is unchanged.

Social cohesion



To what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?	2023	2024	2023-2024	Significant?
Summary Agree	87%	90%	3	Yes

Thinking about your local area/neighbourhood, how satisfied are you with the area as a place to live?	2023	2024	2023-2024	Significant?
Summary Satisfied	78%	84%	6	Yes

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Residents' perception of social cohesion continues to improve. There have been slight increases in the percentage of residents who report that their local area is one where people get on well together. Residents are also more likely to report that they are satisfied with their area as a place to live.

Personal situation



The survey covers four broad areas

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Residents' personal concerns in 2024



Crime and the cost of living remain the top concerns by a distance.

Crime returns to top place in 2024 (42%). Otherwise, the cost of living remains a dominant concern as three of the top five concerns relate to that with

- Rising prices and interest rates (40%),
- Level of council tax (26%),
- Lack of affordable housing (22%).

Concerns about health services follows on 21%.

Which three of these are you PERSONALLY most concerned about?	Total
Crime and anti-social behaviour	42%
Rising prices and interest rates	40%
Level of council tax	26%
Lack of affordable housing	22%
Quality of health services	21%
Street cleanliness	18%
Quality of housing	15%
Homelessness	15%
Availability of employment	12%
Traffic congestion	11%
Other	8%
Level of air pollution	7%
Availability of recreational facilities	5%
Services for older people	5%
Overcrowded homes	5%
The environment or climate	5%
Standard of education	4%
Quality of public transport	4%
None of these	4%
Don't know	23 1%

Personal concerns change



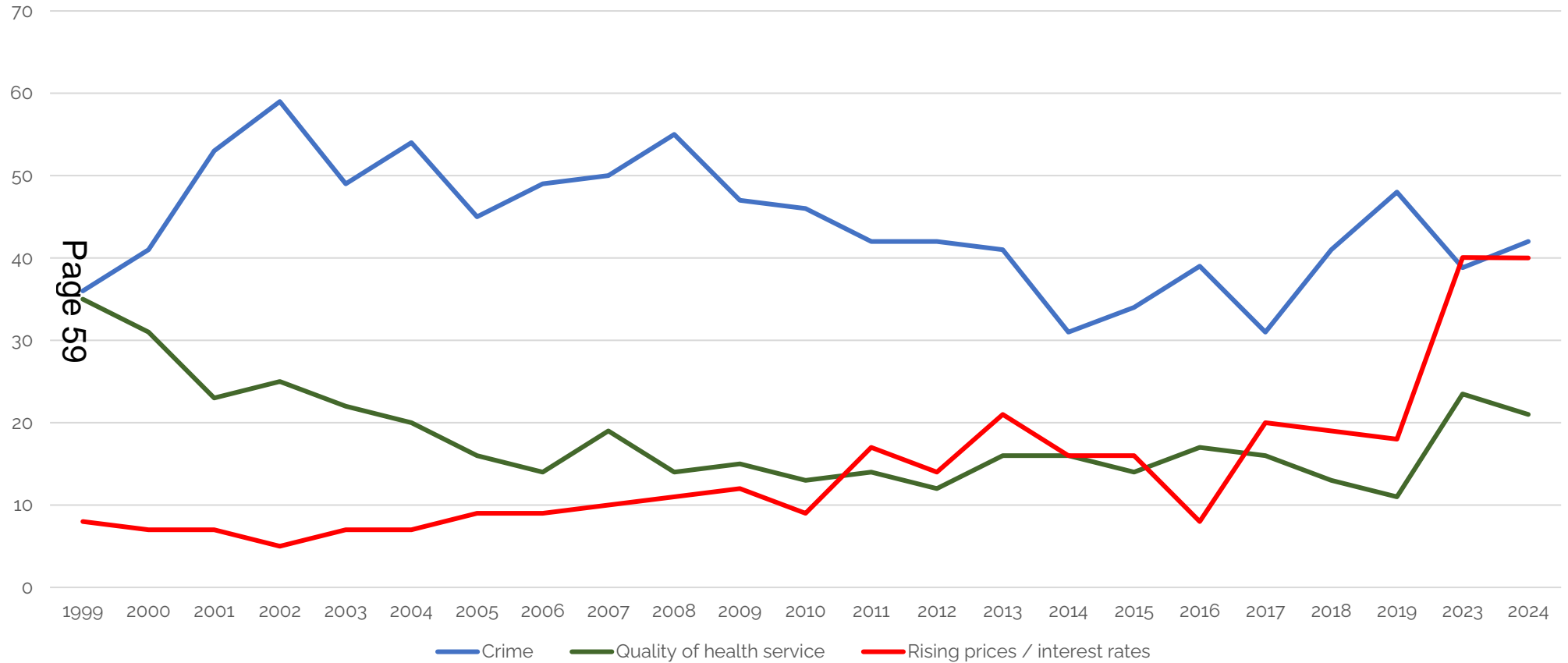
Which three of these are you personally most concerned about?	2023	2024	2023-2024	Significant?
Crime and anti-social behaviour	39%	42%	3	No
Rising prices/interest rates	40%	40%	0	No
Level of council tax	24%	26%	2	No
Lack of affordable housing	x	22%	x	n/a
Quality of health service	23%	21%	-2	No
Street cleanliness	30%	18%	-13	Yes
Quality of Housing	18%	15%	-3	Yes
Homelessness	17%	15%	-2	No
Quality of housing	18%	15%	-3	Yes
Availability of employment	9%	12%	4	Yes
Traffic congestion	12%	11%	-2	No
Other	7%	8%	2	No
Level of air pollution	11%	7%	-4	Yes
Services for older people	7%	5%	-2	Yes
The environment or climate	5%	5%	0	No
Availability of recreational facilities	7%	5%	-2	Yes
Overcrowded homes	x	5%	x	n/a
Standards of education	5%	4%	-1	No
Quality of public transport	3%	4%	1	No
None of these	5%	4%	-1	No
Don't know	1%	1%	0	No

Few personal concerns saw statistically significant changes from 2023 to 2024. Of those with meaningful change, only Availability of Employment increased (3 points). Street cleanliness saw the biggest fall at 12 points.

Findings: Personal concerns – cost of living



Which three of these are you personally most concerned about?



Residents remain concerned about the cost of living. In 2024, as in 2023, 40% of residents listed rising prices / interest rates in their top 3 concerns. As the figure remains at 40%, it continues to be 22 percentage points above the level in 2019 and double its previous highest level (21% in 2013).

Personal finances



Taking everything together, which of these phrases best describes how you and your household manage financially these days?		2023	2024	2023-2024	Significant?
	Manages very well	10%	5%	-6	Yes
	Manages quite well	36%	32%	-3	No
	Get by alright	36%	48%	12	Yes
	Don't manage very well	8%	7%	-1	No
	Have some financial difficulties	5%	4%	-1	No
	Are in some deep financial trouble	1%	0%	-1	Yes
	Don't know	1%	1%	0	No
	Prefer not to say	3%	3%	0	No
	Manage well	82%	85%	3	No
	Manage poorly	14%	11%	-3	Yes
	Net: Well	68%	74%	6	Yes

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There has been a slight (statistically significant) improvement in the self-reported financial position of residents of the borough. The findings imply the deterioration in 2023 has been reversed and is now back to being in line with 2019 levels.

Costs residents are concerned about



Thinking about your finances, which, if any, of the following are you most concerned about at the moment	2023	2024	2023-2024	Significant
Paying other bills or costs	30%	31%	2	No
Paying the rent / mortgage	29%	29%	0	No
Paying council tax	27%	28%	1	No
Paying utility bills (eg gas, electricity)	50%	38%	-12	Yes
Paying for food / grocery bills	32%	30%	-2	No
Paying credit card bills	8%	10%	2	No
Paying loans	4%	5%	2	No
I am not concerned about any of these issues	32%	38%	6	Yes
Prefer not to say	6%	4%	-2	Yes
Don't know	2%	2%	1	No

There are reasons to be cautiously optimistic that residents' financial positions are improving. The proportion of residents concerned about paying utility bills is down 12 points, and those saying they are not concerned about any of these is up 6. While the position remains concerning by historical standards, these findings imply things may be improving.

Analysis



The survey covers four broad areas

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Analysis - summary



- Many key indicators continue to improve compared to 2023.
- The council (as in 2023) is performing well against national benchmarked data.
- Residents continue to be concerned about the cost of living, but there are signs the greatest challenges may be beginning to recede.
- In 2024, residents reporting financial difficulties are more likely to report dissatisfaction with how the council runs things overall (24% dissatisfied compared to 16% for all residents).
- The percentage of residents reporting that they were **not** concerned about paying bills etc. rose from 32% in 2023 to 38% in 2024. These figures demonstrate the apparent correlation between how well-off residents feel and their perception of the council: as one rises so does the other.

Context



- The external context within which the Annual Residents Survey took place was unusually tumultuous in 2023 and 2024.
- The ARS 2024 fieldwork was undertaken around the time of the 2024 London mayoral and Assembly elections, the 2024 United Kingdom general election, and the ongoing Israel– Hamas war in Gaza.
- The London mayoral, London assembly, and UK general elections are likely to have increased the salience of the questions in the survey.
- Page 64 is possible the lower level of Don't Know responses compared to 2023 is due to residents' greater engagement with political questions due to the effects of the election campaigns.
- In addition to the elections, several stories have featured in the press which may impact residents' views, perhaps raising the salience of the council and the borough, making residents think about things they might not otherwise.
- The context includes: a London MP talking of ["no-go" areas](#) and press reporting of ['a sense of alienation and broken trust' in Tower Hamlets](#).
- The [cost of living situation](#) remains challenging. Tower Hamlets residents are [highly exposed](#) to increased rents.
- Public perception of public services has declined significantly, with 3 in 5 Britons [believing public services have worsened in the last five years](#). And more than 8 in 10 [blame councils](#) for services getting worse.
- Public trust in [political institutions](#) has fallen over recent years (since 2018), including trust in [councils and councillors](#). Trust in [politicians](#), and [in the police](#) are at historic lows.
- Despite these challenges, residents remain positive about the area as a place to live, and the community cohesion in the borough, while trust in the council has in fact increased.

Analysis - demographics



- Overall satisfaction with the council shows some differences between residents.
- Men are slightly more likely to be 'very satisfied', women slightly less so (5% versus 3%).
- White residents are more likely to report being dissatisfied (20%) compared to ethnic minority residents (14%).
- Asian residents are more satisfied overall (65% compared to 61%).
- Residents who speak English at home are less satisfied (56%) compared to residents overall (61%). Residents who speak Bengali at home show no statistically significant difference to residents overall.
- Residents aged 55+ are less likely to be satisfied than residents overall (54% compared to 61%).
- There are no differences on this question by health problem/disability, being a parent, or by being a carer.
- There are some differences by tenancy type – private renters are more positive (66%), mortgage-holders less so (54%) compared to 61% overall.

Analysis – exploring linkages



- Residents who are more positive about the council are also more positive about the police and vice versa. Though the council and the police are separate, residents' views of one appear to influence their view of the other.
- When asked whether they are satisfied with the council overall, those who believe police / local services are dealing well with crime / antisocial behaviour are more likely to be satisfied (74% compared to 61% overall).
- Residents who are dissatisfied overall are also more likely to disagree that police / local services are dealing well with crime / antisocial behaviour.
- These figures imply that perceptions around crime correlate with, and may drive, satisfaction with the council.

Methodology



The survey covers four broad areas

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Methodology 1



- The 2024 Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey (ARS) was conducted by an external contractor called MEL Research. Analysis within this document is a combination of their work and our own.
- MEL Research interviewed a stratified random sample of 1,133 residents of Tower Hamlets. So far as possible, all elements of the survey are the same as in 2023. The methodology is the same to ensure comparability.

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The ARS uses stratified random sampling to make sure we ask a representative sample of residents. Stratified sampling means drawing up quotas of people with different characteristics in line with their relative size in the “population” (all residents) e.g. males, females etc.

- Surveys were conducted at over 100 locations.
- MEL interviewed 1,133 Tower Hamlets residents – our “sample”. With a sample of this size, at a 95% level of confidence, and on a 50% agreement score, the confidence intervals attached to the % ratings is $\pm 3.0\%$. This means that there is a 95% chance that the “true” value will (if we had interviewed all residents) fall within 47% and 53%. The confidence intervals depend as well on the result itself: the closer to 50% the wider the confidence interval; the further away from 50% (i.e., closer to 0% or 100%) the narrower the confidence interval.

Methodology 2



- In each ward, Census Output Areas (COAs) were ranked by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). COAs were then selected at random as sampling points. The number of sampling points selected was proportional to the interviewing target for each ward. All addresses for each COA sampling point were made available to interviewers, with a target of 10 interviews set per sampling point.
- For this survey, ward-level quotas were set by age and gender to ensure that the sample reflected the characteristics of the borough's population. Quotas were set using Census 2021 data.
- Quotas were set by gender, age, work status and ethnicity at the ward and local authority level to ensure a representative spread by demographic profile.
- The survey included a screening question to ensure only residents who have lived in the Borough for at least 6 months were interviewed.
- The contractor had interviewers who spoke languages other than English in order to reach members of the diverse communities in Tower Hamlets.
- Figures throughout may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Methodology 3



- In total 1,133 interviews were completed. While the application of quotas at ward level ensured a diverse mix of residents were interviewed, the final dataset was weighted. This weighting eliminated the effect of differential response rates by geography and between demographic groups so that the resulting data is fully representative of the borough. The final data was weighted by ward, age and gender, using 2021 Census population data.

Page 70 The sample size of 1,133 means that this dataset has a maximum confidence level of +/-2.9 percentage points at the borough level (at a 95% level of confidence). This means that we can say with 95% confidence that the responses reported will be no more than 2.9 percentage-points different than if all residents of the borough were interviewed.

- Sub-group analysis i.e., comparing responses from particular resident groups or from specific locations within the borough will have higher confidence intervals.

Sample profile



The survey covers four broad areas

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Who we spoke to: Sample profile 1 of 2



Age	Count	%
18 to 24	164	14%
25 to 34	342	30%
35 to 44	214	19%
45 to 54	185	16%
55 to 64	102	9%
65 to 74	80	7%
75+	46	4%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

Sex	Count	%
Male	570	50%
Female	561	50%
Prefer not to say	1	0%
Prefer to self-describe	1	0%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

Gender	Count	%
Male	571	50%
Female	561	50%
Other	1	0%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

Ethnicity	Count	%
Bangladeshi	384	34%
White British	362	32%
Any other White background	112	10%
Indian	51	5%
Caribbean	46	4%
African	32	3%
Chinese	19	2%
Any other background	18	2%
Any other Asian background	18	2%
Prefer not to say	16	1%
Irish	11	1%
Somali	11	1%
Pakistani	10	1%
White and Asian	9	1%
White and Black Caribbean	9	1%
Any other Mixed background	8	1%
Arab	5	0%
White and Black African	5	0%
Vietnamese	3	0%
Gypsy / Roma	3	0%
Any other Black / African / Caribbean background	1	0%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

What is your religion or belief?	Count	%
Muslim	441	39%
No religion or belief	329	29%
Christian	267	24%
Hindu	30	3%
Prefer not to say	28	2%
Agnostic	15	1%
Buddhist	11	1%
Sikh	7	1%
Jewish	2	0%
Prefer to self-describe	1	0%
Don't know	1	0%
Humanist	1	0%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

What is the main language spoken in the home?	Count	%
English	685	60%
Bengali (Shuddo / Shyleti / Other)	326	29%
Other	110	10%
Somali	12	1%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

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Sample profile 2 of 2



Working status	Count	%
Working full-time	611	54%
Retired	144	13%
Working part-time	109	10%
Not working and not seeking work	94	8%
Not working and seeking work	87	8%
Full-time education	71	6%
Prefer not to say	17	2%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

Grouped ward	Count	%
North	315	28%
East	273	24%
South	273	24%
West	272	24%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

Housing status	Count	%
Rent from private landlord	364	32%
Rent from Housing Association / Trust	244	22%
Rent from Local Authority	228	20%
Own home with mortgage or loan	150	13%
Own home outright with no mortgage or loan	82	7%
Other	30	3%
Prefer not to say	27	2%
Part-own and part-rent (shared ownership)	8	1%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

Which best describes your current marital, civil partnership or cohabitation status?	Count	%
Single (never married or never registered a civil partnership)	523	46%
Married	505	45%
Cohabiting with a partner	43	4%
Prefer not to say	21	2%
Divorced	18	2%
Widowed	17	2%
Separated, but still legally married	3	0%
Separated, but still in a registered civil partnership	2	0%
In a registered civil partnership	1	0%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

Do you have parenting responsibilities?	Count	%
No	774	68%
Yes	355	31%
Prefer not to say	4	0%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

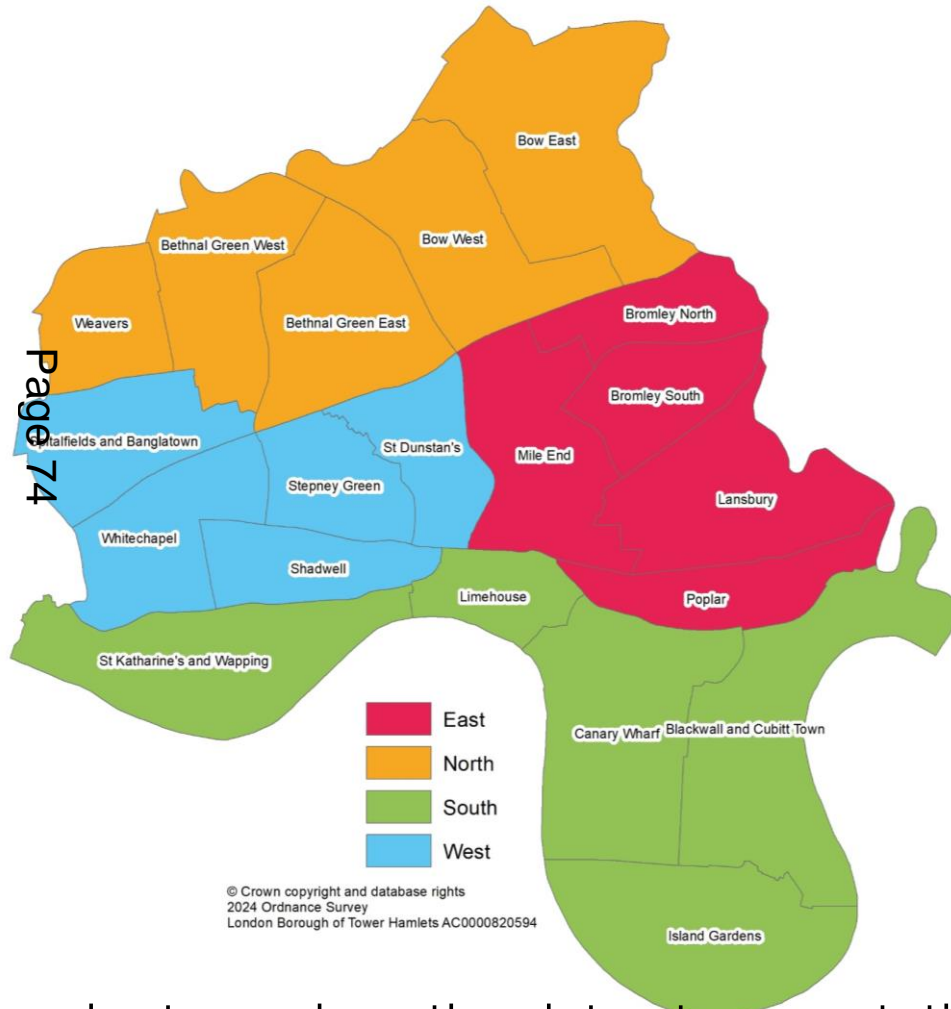
Day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability	Count	%
No	1018	90%
Yes	102	9%
Prefer not to say	13	1%
Grand Total	1,133	100%

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Geography – special analysis



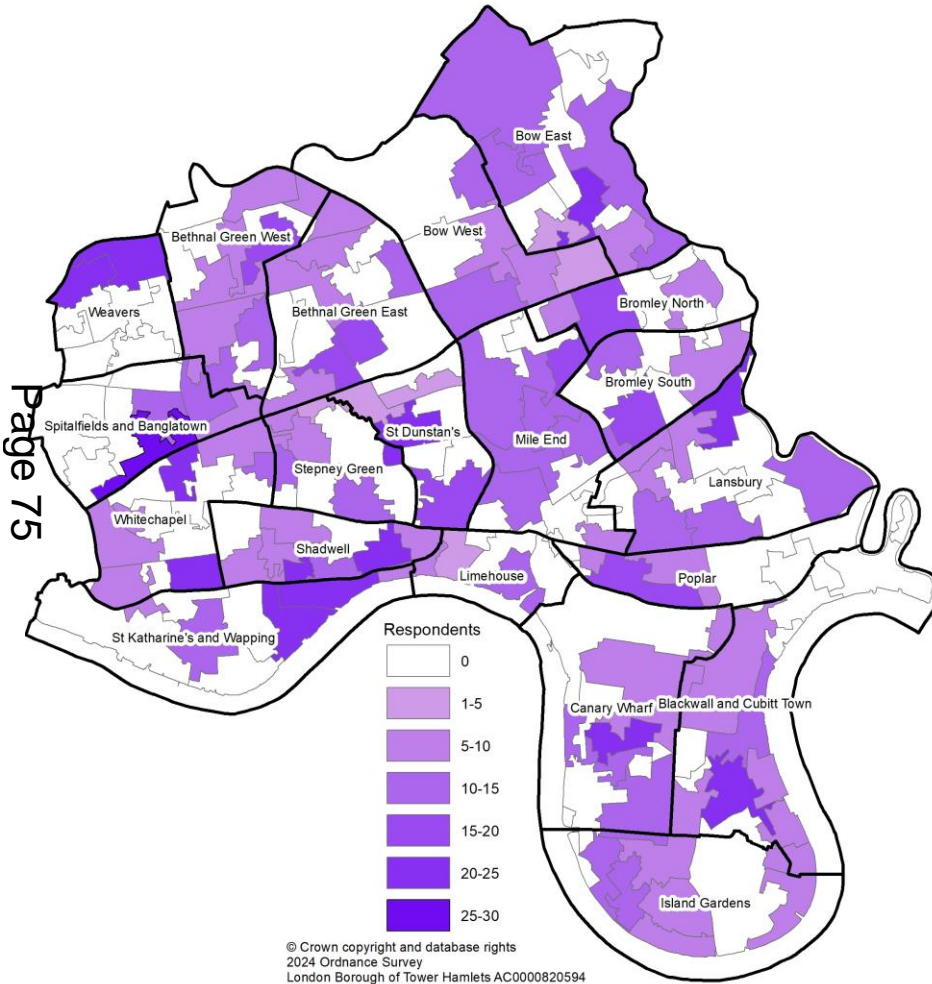
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Ward Name	Completes	N/S/E/W
Bethnal Green East (Bethnal Green)	76	North
Bethnal Green West (St Peter's)	70	North
Blackwall & Cubitt Town	81	South
Bow East	71	North
Bow West	50	North
Bromley North	40	East
Bromley South	54	East
Canary Wharf	66	South
Island Gardens	55	South
Lansbury	83	East
Limehouse	25	South
Mile End	70	East
Poplar	26	East
Shadwell	52	West
Spitalfields & Banglatown	52	West
St Dunstan's	54	West
St Katharine's & Wapping	46	South
Stepney Green	42	West
Weavers	48	North
Whitechapel	72	West

In order to analyse the data at more statistically robust geographies, wards have been grouped into four localities (North, South, East and West) as per the map.

Geography – special analysis



Ward Name	Completes	N/S/E/W
Bethnal Green East (Bethnal Green)	76	North
Bethnal Green West (St Peter's)	70	North
Blackwall & Cubitt Town	81	South
Bow East	71	North
Bow West	50	North
Bromley North	40	East
Bromley South	54	East
Canary Wharf	66	South
Island Gardens	55	South
Lansbury	83	East
Limehouse	25	South
Mile End	70	East
Poplar	26	East
Shadwell	52	West
Spitalfields & Banglatown	52	West
St Dunstan's	54	West
St Katharine's & Wapping	46	South
Stepney Green	42	West
Weavers	48	North
Whitechapel	72	West

This shows respondents by their LSOA

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Cabinet 16 October 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Steve Halsey, Chief Executive Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – position update	

Lead Member	Mayor Lutfur Rahman
Originating Officer(s)	Ayesha Hakim Rahman, Acting Deputy Director Strategy, Improvement, Transformation Salome Chukhua, Transformation Programme Manager
Wards affected	All
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria
Forward Plan Notice Published	N/A
Exempt information	None
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	All

Executive Summary

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets has made significant strides in addressing the recommendations of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC), demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement and a proactive approach to change. The council has completed 84% of actions and is on track to reach 91% completion of actions aligned to the CPC recommendations by November 2024.

Key progress with recommendations that have enabled immediate organisational impact include financial sustainability, governance and efficiency, and diversity and inclusion. These achievements demonstrate the council's commitment to improving its organisational performance and creating a more inclusive and equitable environment.

The council welcomes a progress review from the LGA to further validate the progress made and to identify any additional areas for improvement. We are urging the LGA to conduct this review as soon as possible to provide valuable feedback

and support for our ongoing efforts. We believe that as 12 months has passed it would be appropriate for a full LGA CPC to be repeated.

It should be noted that whilst some actions are clearly defined with a start and finish, others represent actions that support improvement over time and are part of wider on-going action over a longer period or possibly continuously to ensure the Councils performance is as good as it can be. In such cases completion of the action does not infer that the problem it is addressing has been rectified but rather that a supporting action to improve the position has been completed.

Going forward, as the actions recommended by the LGA CPC are completed, progress against the 18 core recommendations will be evaluated and the supporting actions renewed. Councillors and their political groups have been, are and will continue to be free at any time to bring forward suggestions for inclusion in the Plan. It may also be appropriate to consider the plan framework to accommodate specific improvement actions that emerge from the findings of the Best Value Report.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the council's progress against the LGA CPC Action Plan
2. Suggest key areas of attention in advance of the upcoming LGA progress review.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This report provides a comprehensive overview of the progress made by the council in addressing the recommendations of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge. Noting this report is important due to:
- Ensuring the council is well-prepared for the upcoming LGA progress review or a renewed review
 - Noting that the report demonstrates the council's commitment to transparency and accountability
 - Highlighting areas where focused attention might be required

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The council could choose not to consider the update report. It is important for Members and the Executive to be kept informed of progress and have the opportunity to comment and make suggestions.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

LGA CPC Overview

- 3.1 The Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) offers councils robust, strategic, and credible challenge and support through peer-to-peer engagement. Underpinned by the principles of Sector-Led Improvement (SLI), CPC facilitate continuous improvement and assurance across the local government sector.
- 3.2 The London Borough of Tower Hamlets underwent an LGA CPC in September 2023, resulting in a comprehensive report outlining key findings. The CPC report acknowledged the council's many positive attributes and identified 18 core recommendations to address gaps and ensure continuous development, with 70 specific suggestions for improvement or review. These suggestions were consolidated into the council's LGA CPC Action Plan, a live document that is regularly updated. In alignment with the principles of openness and transparency, the council promptly published both the report and accompanying action plan to address the recommendations.
- 3.3 Approximately ten months following the initial CPC, the LGA conduct a progress review to assess the council's implementation of recommendations. This review involves reporting to the peer team, discussing early impact and learning, and receiving feedback on the action plan. The findings from this review are subsequently shared publicly.
- 3.4 While the council was initially anticipating an LGA progress review in August 2024, the LGA has recently informed the council of a delay, as some members for the review team were not available. The council has expressed its disappointment and has requested alternative dates for the review, emphasising the importance of conducting it promptly. 12 months have passed since the review was completed and a new review may now be appropriate.
- 3.5 In anticipation of the upcoming progress review, or a new review, this report provides a comprehensive update on the council's impact, position and progress against each recommendation, 12 months after the original LGA CPC took place.

Progress to Date

- 3.6 Significant progress has been made in addressing the 18 LGA CPC recommendations. As of August 2024, **84% of all identified actions across recommendations have been completed**, with an anticipated **91% by the end of November** assuming no changes to the current outstanding actions.
- 3.7 Since July 2024, there has been substantial improvement in completion rates, with a total increase of 40 percentage points. This reflects the council's ongoing commitment to addressing the CPC recommendations.
- 3.8 In preparation of the upcoming LGA progress review, the council's CPC progress can be summarised as follows:

- **No significant risks or issues:** The council's progress is currently on track, with no major obstacles identified.
- **Quality assurance:** All CPC recommendations and associated action updates have been reviewed, approved, and signed off by the relevant Corporate Director.
- **Dependencies:** Three actions (1.2, 2.2 and 4.1) are contingent on the Council's long-term strategic vision, which is scheduled for launch in February 2025 (tbc). If this timeline is met, the risks to the timeline for delivery associated with these dependencies are considered manageable.

3.9 Overall, the council is making steady progress towards completing all 18 CPC recommendations by March 2025, which represents 15 months from publication of the CPC Report and Action Plan. However, during this period the impact of those actions on the areas identified by the recommendations will be evaluated and where appropriate new actions will be added as part of the Council's commitment to continuous improvement. This report is the start of that process and brings forward some additional actions that may form part of the next iteration of the plan for discussion at Cabinet.

Positive Organisational Impact

3.10 The progress made in addressing the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) recommendations has yielded immediate positive organisational benefits. This underscores the value of the LGA CPC as an effective improvement and assurance tool and reflects the dedication of Members and officers in actively embracing and implementing the recommendations. This section highlights three key examples of positive organisational impact.

Financial Sustainability

3.11 In 2023 the Council inherited a deficit of £38.7 million and incomplete financial accounts since 2016 – 17. To alleviate this burden, the Council was forced to rely heavily on £13m reserves in the immediate term. However, in line with Recommendation 2 of the LGA CPC, the Council developed a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) that ensures financial stability and aligns with the Council's long-term strategic vision. This work was already well advanced at the point that the LGA's recommendation was made, but it endorsed the Council's approach to moving from an annual financial plan to three-year plan.

3.12 Through effective leadership, the Council successfully developed a comprehensive MTFS, encompassing both the general fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This plan, approved by Full Council on 28 February 2024, established a balanced position for the next three years and identified £43m in savings. Based on the 2023 Q4 report, the Council's general fund reserve exceeded the minimum recommended level of £20m, and the planned reliance on reserves at budget setting was not required in full, due to stronger

financial grip and improved financial reporting. By reducing reliance on reserves, and not utilising the planned drawdown, the MTFS, and in-year budget management, has laid the groundwork for a more sustainable financial position over the medium term, with greater capacity and resilience moving forward.

- 3.13 A key achievement was the development of single, clear and consistent narrative for the MTFS, for audiences including Members, staff and the Transformation Advisory Board. This marked a significant milestone in financial discipline, resolving historical financial management challenges. At the same time, the Council undertook a major financial exercise to address historic failures in producing auditable accounts. This enabled outstanding end of year accounts to be reviewed and signed-off by external auditors.
- 3.14 This improved financial planning has allowed for increased investment in frontline services, Council systems, and community support programmes for young people and vulnerable residents. To ensure continued fiscal discipline, the Council's new Target Operating Model (TOM) has embedded a design principle that focuses on the Council being value-driven. This, along with improved corporate arrangements for financial monitoring and accountability, has placed financial management and financial prudence at heart of the Council decision making.

Internal governance

- 3.15 In Recommendation 6, the LGA CPC advised the Council to conduct a comprehensive review of its internal governance arrangements to streamline decision-making processes and enhance accountability. The Council has now achieved unprecedented stability in the senior leadership team. Tower Hamlets is one of a select number of Councils across the country with a permanent corporate leadership team in place. This provides the Council with stability, experience and the continuity necessary for sustained success. The Council has also leveraged new technologies, such as the use of Power BI, to analyse real-time financial data, enabling managers to make informed decisions pertaining to matters with financial implications.
- 3.16 The Council's Internal Audit department undertook an in-depth review of the Council's internal governance arrangements against the Corporate Governance Improvement Plan. As part of the review the Transformation Boards were examined. To ensure continuous alignment with the corporate ambitions, the decision was made to merge Efficiency Board with the Budget Board, and the People Resourcing Board was merged with the Reorganisation Board. The Council's People First transformation programme is now led by three core boards.
- 3.17 As part of further efforts to reduce the number of boards, there is a focus to improve the existing governance processes in place. The CEO has reviewed his own delegated authority and where appropriate, devolved decision-making authority to senior leadership. This has been supported by the new TOM, which

has been developed to empower directorates to make decisions without the need for bureaucratic processes.

- 3.18 To expedite decision-making processes, the CEO has implemented a process at the Corporate Management Team (CMT) level to identify and address outstanding input from the Mayor's Office, thereby facilitating timely decision-making. Corporate Directors report that this has reduced the number of instances of delay when interfacing with the Mayor's Office.
- 3.19 The Council's Corporate Boards Rationalisation Programme reviewed all officer-led boards (chaired by a corporate director, director, or head of service), reducing the number of boards from an initial baseline of over 250, to now only 47 live boards. Ongoing rationalisation efforts aim to further streamline governance and ensure effective decision-making.

Diversity and Inclusion

- 3.20 Recommendation 13 of the LGA CPC highlighted the need for the Council to consider how the voices of women and individuals from diverse backgrounds are influencing policy. In response, the Council has taken significant steps to promote diversity and inclusion.
- 3.21 The Tower Hamlets Women's Commission has been established to amplify the voices of women within the community. This commission plays a crucial role in examining how women from different backgrounds can contribute to policy development. The Commission's first cornerstone focus area is addressing improving 'pathways to employment' for women in the Borough.
- 3.22 The Council's 'Be a Councillor' campaign, aligned with the LGA principles, aims to increase the representation of women and underrepresented groups in local government. This campaign links to and promotes the LGA campaign to increase the number of women choosing to become Councillors. The 'Be a Councillor Campaign' has now been launched and will be supported by a wider campaign strategy for promoting women in public life.
- 3.23 By proactively reviewing and adjusting committee composition, the Council have made tangible progress in ensuring that underrepresented groups, including women and individuals from diverse backgrounds, have a stronger voice in our decision-making processes.
- 3.24 The Council recognises that improving diversity is an ongoing commitment and has implemented continuous improvement plans to support this goal. For instance, the Council is planning in-person events in November and during Black History Month celebration in October to engage with women and underrepresented groups. Additionally, the Council has launched a feedback collection mechanism that will enable speakers at Council meetings to feedback on any negative experiences they may encounter at those meetings, to enable learning and provide a baseline for understanding the extent and nature of any issues.

3.25 These initiatives demonstrate the Council’s dedication to creating a more inclusive and representative local government that reflects the diverse needs and perspectives of its community and staff. To support this commitment, the Council has completed a review and implemented a framework to enable staff-led group chairs to dedicate time away from their substantive duties to develop staff equalities networks. This further ensures these networks are less likely to disband due to time-commitment conflicts.

Progress by Recommendation

3.26 The following progress update is as of 31 August 2024. It is important to note that a recommendation is considered complete only when all associated actions have been confirmed as completed by their respective owners.

3.27 Recommendation 1: Strategic Vision

“Develop a more comprehensive long-term strategic vision for the borough and the Council which is co-produced with the community.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 57% Complete



Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Determine the borough’s future by putting data-driven decisions at the heart.
- Embed regular community engagement throughout implementation of the strategic vision.
- Ensure the long-term strategic vision addresses key council challenges, such as Housing, with a focus on improving housing conditions and supply in the borough

The Council will leverage the council’s Partnership Plan (2023 – 2028) as the foundation for a comprehensive, long-term 2035 strategic vision for the borough in collaboration with the community. This utilisation of the Partnership Plan will streamline the strategy development process, while ensuring alignment with the community’s priorities and aspirations.

A dedicated Task and Finish Group, comprising key partners and council officers, will continue to meet monthly, until the long-term vision is agreed and launched in February 2025.

Comprehensive engagement will commence in November, comprising residents, partners, Members, the youth council, faith groups, targeted groups and equality networks. In fostering a co-productive approach, a thematic Partnership Congress, bringing together representatives from the council

including partner organisations, businesses, community groups, and young people, is scheduled for December 2024, with a focus on developing a long-term strategic vision for the borough.

3.28 Recommendation 2: Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

“Develop a MTFS, including the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which can demonstrate the future financial sustainability of the Council, and which is aligned to the long-term strategic vision of the Council.”

Overall Completion: 
Status: 100% Complete

Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Embed community wealth-building into the council’s long-term financial strategy.
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with the private sector to secure additional funds.

The Council successfully implemented the MTFS, including the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), in February 2024. The HRA strategy was presented to Cabinet on 31 January, with an updated HRA budget incorporating input from Savills. This implementation has led to a sustainable position and an increase in the acquisition of homes.

The MTFS is the financial plan that underpins the effective resourcing of the delivery of the strategic plan, ensuring the needs of the community are met. The financial modelling reflects a four-year period and is updated annually. As such, it will always align to the most up to date long-term strategic vision for the borough.

3.29 Recommendation 3: Performance Management

“To assist with the focus on delivery of the council’s priorities, measures should be taken to enhance the existing performance framework, making better use of data to inform decision making and policy development. Consideration should be given to how the impact of decisions and priority areas is captured.”

Overall Completion: 
Status: 67% Complete

Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Enhance the Council’s performance management capability to ensure a holistic approach.
- Embed performance-based budgeting for the Council through Power BI.

- Implement the use of AI for comprehensive data analysis to enable informed decision-making and improved efficiency

To enhance focus on delivering its priorities, the council has made substantial progress in improving the existing performance management framework. The development of the Annual Delivery Plan, which has been approved by Cabinet, has embedded improvements in measures, benchmarking, and accountability.

A Power BI platform linking spend and performance is being implemented across directorates to facilitate a more effective performance management. This tool provides managers with an in-depth, real-time analysis of spend data. A review of the Council’s current strategy and policy landscape to identify opportunities for simplification is currently underway and the completion is projected for December 2024.

3.30 Recommendation 4: Workforce Strategy

“Develop a refreshed workforce strategy to address recruitment and retention challenges. This is particularly important given the current vacancies in key senior management positions and the Mayor’s stated priority of the workforce representing the community.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee should be given responsibility for overseeing performance against the council’s aim to ensure that its workforce and service provision reflects the diversity of the borough.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 83% Complete



- Council’s Extension of Recommendation**
- Commission market research to determine average pay for senior management positions and adjust accordingly.
 - Provide a range of learning and development opportunities that are designed to support staff to progress their career as well as seek promotion to internal senior roles.
 - Continue to support and, where possible, expand the range of apprenticeship qualifications to upskill the workforce.

The Council has initiated a significant amount of work to develop a refreshed workforce strategy that addresses recruitment and retention challenges. A new HR capacity team was established and trained in June to reduce the backlog related to recruitment, retention and workforce matters. As part of the action to develop a coordinated workforce strategy (4.1), a new Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy is now complete, and an independent review is planned to provide assurance. This will be linked to the Council’s long term strategic vision.

A review of the Council's pay policy for hard-to-recruit and senior positions resulted in the development of a new pay policy, which was approved by the HR Committee and Full Council in March 2024. This new policy has facilitated progress in the recruitment programme for Corporate Directors and Directors. Interviews for Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer positions were conducted on 9 July 2024, resulting in an offer being made and accepted. Interviews for the Corporate Director of Housing & Regeneration position took place on 23 July 2024, resulting in an offer being made. The permanent Director joined the council on 1st October.

These efforts have yielded positive outcomes for the Council, which has now achieved unprecedented stability in the senior leadership team, making it one of the few Councils across the country with a permanent corporate leadership team in place.

Furthermore, in optimising the equality, diversity, and inclusion agenda, the corporate equalities' function has transferred from the Strategy Improvement and Transformation (SIT) division to Resources, where it can leverage a stronger relationship with Human Resources.

It was agreed that in place of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, HR Committee is best placed to oversee performance against the Council's aim, to ensure that its workforce and service provision reflects the diversity of the borough.

3.31 Recommendation 5: Mayor's Office

“Review the roles, functions and deployment of officers within the Mayor's Office. This should be done to ensure streamlined decision making, removing barriers and duplication elsewhere in the council. The council should also ensure that colleagues remaining in the Mayor's Office are given training and development opportunities to ensure a wider understanding of the roles and requirements of different services areas.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 100% Complete



Council's Extension of Recommendation

- Implement council restructure, including review the roles and functions within the Mayor's Office with a view to mainstreaming it across the council.
- Develop a cross-training programme between Mayor's Office and Directorates to broaden the technical knowledge base within the downsized office and foster joint learning.

- Continue to support new systems and processes that streamline and speed up decision making.

The Council has fully completed this recommendation by conducting a comprehensive review of the roles, functions, and deployment of officers within the Mayor’s Office. The review was undertaken as part of the Phase 1 restructure.

To ensure streamlined decision-making and eliminate barriers and duplication, the council has taken steps to optimise the structure and operations of the Mayor’s Office. Additionally, the Council has provided targeted training and development opportunities to key members of the Mayor’s Office to enhance their understanding of the roles and requirements of different service areas and the broader operational environment. Structural changes are in the process of being implemented that will mainstream several Mayor’s Office posts into relevant directorates. Consequently, the Mayor’s office will reduce in size to that comparable with many other directly elected Mayoral Offices.

3.32 Recommendation 6: Internal Governance

“Conduct an urgent review of the internal governance arrangements including the board structures to ensure focus on the delivery of priorities, clarity of reporting and clear lines of accountability. This should seek to speed-up decision making, and delegate business-as-usual decisions to an appropriate level.”

Overall Completion:  **Status:** 100% Complete

- Council’s Extension of Recommendation**
- Develop a comprehensive decision-making control framework codifying decision pathways.
 - Introduce a monitoring system for time taken to make BAU decisions delegated to officers.
 - Create a performance dashboard that will serve as real-time insights to enable informed decisions.

The Council has made significant progress in streamlining its internal governance arrangements, including board structures. A rationalisation exercise of all officer-led boards resulted in a substantial reduction in the number of boards, from an initial return of approximately 250 to now 47. Additionally, the Transformation and Governance Board framework was streamlined from six to three boards to further enhance the governance processes.

To improve efficiency and expedite decision-making, the Chief Executive is continuing to implement new controls to address late reports submitted to the Mayor's Advisory Board (MAB) or Cabinet, ensuring more consistent reporting dates. These measures aim to streamline the planning process and facilitate timely decision-making. Work to improve this area of performance will be ongoing and progress incrementally. In part improvement will be driven by a culture change programme that focuses on corporate responsibility carried forward by the People First Campaign.

3.33 Recommendation 7: Working with Partners

“To ensure more effective partnership working, the council should consider reviewing current partnership governance arrangements.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 100% Complete



Council's Extension of Recommendation

- Establish a framework for regularly evaluating the partnerships and their effectiveness from both the partner and council perspective.
- Create a best practice forum for partners to share experiences and learning.
- Embed continuous review of the borough's landscape to ensure the membership of existing partnership networks are reflective.

Embed continuous review of the borough's landscape to ensure the membership of existing partnership networks are reflective.

The Council has fully implemented this recommendation by establishing a Partnership Task and Finish Group in October 2023 to conduct a strategic review of partnership arrangements.

The Growth and Economic Development (GED) Partnership has been reviewed using the King's Fund Reflective Learning Framework, as part of the Council's Partnership Plan 2023-28. The key findings of this review will be implemented by April 2025.

GED has successfully organised themed business breakfast events to engage local businesses, including SMEs, corporates and third-sector organisations. These events attracted over 270 SMEs and third-sector representatives, as well as 63 corporate representatives. Given the success of this programme, GED is seeking additional s106 funding to deliver a new series of events in 2024 – 2025, with themes based on feedback from local businesses.

The Housing & Regeneration directorate has made significant progress in partnerships by organising a Developers Forum. Several commitments to collaborate with developers and partners were made and incorporated into the Annual Delivery Plan (ADP), which was approved by Cabinet in May. Social Housing Partners continue to work with the Council through the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum Development sub-group to deliver more affordable homes.

Within the Health and Social Care directorate, a review of health partnerships within the Tower Hamlets Together Board was completed, leading to a vision for integrating the Health & Wellbeing Board.

3.34 Recommendation 8: Grant Allocation

“Build on the framework for the Mayor’s Community Grant scheme and introduce a robust process for the Small Grants Fund and the Emergency Grants Fund, demonstrating links to the corporate priorities, ensuring openness and transparency, and reset relationships with the VCS/third sector. Monitoring of the grants programmes should be undertaken in partnership with the VCS/third sector and overseen by Overview and Scrutiny.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 67% Complete



Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Develop a capacity building and external funding plan with partners, which supports the sustainability of the voluntary and community sector.
- Develop and implement a grants framework across the organisation which improves standards and transparency on grants management
- Develop an annual grants monitoring and impact report, which details the outcomes delivered by grants programmes

The Council has implemented a Corporate Grants Register to improve the grants data capture process and now provides quarterly performance reports to the Grants Determination Sub Committee. Additionally, introduction of a Member as the Finance and Resources Lead facilitates the integration of questions and comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to committee meetings.

The only outstanding action to complete this recommendation is the refresh of the VCS Strategy and Voluntary Sector Compact, which outlines the Council’s partnership with the voluntary sector. A draft vision and objectives have been agreed upon, and workshops were delivered with eight internal services to gather feedback on their ideas for the strategy. Furthermore, three consultation events are planned to take place in September. The final strategy is scheduled for presentation to Cabinet in March 2025.

3.35 Recommendation 9: Transfer of Property to Third Parties

“Record and formalise Mayoral/member involvement in decision making relating to the transfer of property to third parties; reflecting Mayoral/member oversight in the property and assets policy and procedures document (and

developing overarching strategy) Also report decisions in this area to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 75% Complete



Action 9.3 currently references land and property disposals up to £250k and the letting of property to VCS organisations. However, the standing policy position of this Council is not to dispose of land and property, making the purpose of much of the action redundant. The wording of the action is being reviewed in the light of this.

The Council has successfully implemented its new property and asset management strategy, which was approved by Cabinet. Additionally, property and asset management has been incorporated into the member induction and learning programme.

Mayoral oversight of decision-making pathways is being exercised through regular updates on key projects, which are recorded in a central tracking spreadsheet and shared with the Mayor’s Office.

3.36 Recommendation 10: Cabinet Member Responsibilities

“To speed up the pace of decision-making consideration should be given, as part of the constitutional review, to reviewing the delegated responsibilities from the Mayor to both Cabinet Members and officers.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 100% Complete



Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Implement a tiered decision-making model based on the significance, complexity and impact of decisions.
- Gather regular feedback from cabinet members and officers on revised decision-making framework and review accordingly.
- Introduce enhanced accountability mechanisms for delegated decisions to ensure transparency.

The Council has successfully implemented this recommendation. As part of the LBTH Constitution Review, the Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) was commissioned to review the constitutions of London Mayoral Authorities and other relevant authorities. ADSO’s report, submitted in January, provided minor recommendations for consideration by the Constitution Working Group (CWG). The Council’s approach was found to be consistent with other similar authorities.

To facilitate the sharing of best practices, the CEO is leading a new group of CEOs working in directly elected mayoral models across the UK. This group aims to identify and disseminate best practices among its members.

3.37 Recommendation 11: Membership of Committees

“The council should consider best practice in relation to the chairing, membership and cross party working in and of key committees such as Full Council, Overview and Scrutiny and Audit. External training for these committees should also be arranged.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 70% Complete



Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Develop a repository of best practice in relation to the chairing, membership and cross-party working in key committees.
- Develop a framework to review committee performance and evaluate its effectiveness.
- Rotate committee chairs to ensure diversity and shared responsibility among the members.

The Council is actively working to define best practices for chairing, membership, and cross-party working within key committees, such as Full Council, Overview and Scrutiny, and Audit. An initial review of Committee Terms of Reference compared to other authorities and the Scrutiny Improvement Plan is underway. The Constitution Working Group (CWG) has generally agreed with the approach outlined in the Terms of Reference report. The Council has received the Association of Democratic Officers (ADSO) recommendations report due to be reviewed at the next CWG meeting, which was rescheduled from September to November to accommodate wider priorities of the legal team, such as Best Value Inspection.

The Council provides training for almost all Council Committees, both during the Member Induction following elections and throughout the year. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny has been committed to deliver training for scrutiny chairs, including one-on-one sessions and group sessions. A skills audit of scrutiny members has also been conducted to inform the training plan.

3.38 Recommendation 12: Member Development

“The existing member training and development offer should be strengthened with support initially focussed on Cabinet members and committee chairs.”

Overall Completion:



Status: 100% Complete

Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Build tailored learning and development programmes for members and chairs focused on addressing individual’s needs.
- Implement an exchange programme for cabinet members and committee chairs to collaborate with colleagues across the country.
- Develop group training programmes focused on emerging trends that are relevant to the local authority.

The Council has strengthened its existing Member training and development offer, with an initial focus on Cabinet members and committee chairs. By leveraging the expertise of the Association of Democratic Service Officers (ADSO) and North West Employers, the Council has developed a mentoring programme tailored to senior members.

Individual member training budgets have been introduced to encourage members to actively engage in developing personal development plans and identifying suitable mentors. This initiative aims to enhance the skills and capabilities of council members.

3.39 Recommendation 13: Diversity

“Given the composition of the ruling administration, consideration should be given to how the voices of women and those from different backgrounds are directly influencing policy through their lived experience. It is recommended that the council actively promote the LGA’s ‘Be a Councillor Campaign’ to promote the opportunity for women and people from underrepresented groups across the borough.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 87% Complete



Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Develop youth outreach programmes focused on local government to encourage early engagement.
- Initiate an improvement programme based on findings and recommendations of the Women’s Commission.
- Annually promote the LGA’s Be a Councillor campaign

Set up an improvement programme based upon the findings and recommendations of the Women’s commission. Continue to promote the LGA’s be a councillor campaign annually

The Council has made great strides in improving diversity. Following the successful recruitment of commissioners for the Women’s Commission initiative, the council is actively working to amplify the voices of women and individuals from diverse backgrounds.

By proactively reviewing and adjusting committee composition and launching a feedback mechanism to capture unfair treatment during committee meetings, the Council has made tangible progress in ensuring that underrepresented groups, including women and individuals from diverse backgrounds, have a stronger voice in our decision-making processes.

The Council acknowledges the importance of ongoing efforts to enhance diversity and has implemented continuous improvement plans to support these goals. For example, the council is planning in-person events in November and during Black History Month celebration in October to engage with women and underrepresented groups.

The only outstanding action is the review of staff and member awareness programme which is linked to ‘Be a Councillor’ event, which was moved to November due to by-election.

3.40 Recommendation 14: Annual Governance Statement

“The Council will secure the necessary outstanding internal approvals and publish the outstanding Annual Governance Statements.”

Overall Completion: 
Status: 100% Complete

The Council successfully completed this recommendation by securing the necessary internal approvals and publishing the outstanding Annual Governance Statement on the Council Website on 19 October 2023. The statement was approved by the Audit Committee.

3.41 Recommendation 15: Outstanding Accounts

“Outstanding financial accounts going back to 2018/19 need to be resolved with the external auditors as a priority.”

Overall Completion: 
Status: 100% Complete

The Council has successfully resolved all outstanding financial accounts dating back to 2018/19, addressing a longstanding issue with external auditors.

3.42 Recommendation 16: Organisational Capacity

“Develop the corporate centre so that it is genuinely a strategic enabler and provides the appropriate accurate management data and information to support the transformation of the organisation.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 83% Complete



Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Build a research hub to develop new and deeper insights into our population, leveraging new technologies and methodologies.
- Audit and create catalogue of data assets to facilitate future linkage, data quality improvement and standardisation.
- Develop new technologies to visualise and share quantitative data and build foundations of qualitative data integration.

The Council is enhancing the role of corporate centre as a strategic enabler by providing accurate management data and information to support organisational transformation. The Council has commenced using Power BI platform to easily interrogate real time spend and financial performance and has developed a performance dashboard to keep an eye on the Council’s performance against 12 core indicators.

A strategic resource needs assessment has been completed for Human Resources, Procurement & Finance and IT, and will be presented at CELT for approval in October 2024. Proposals for Facilities and Communications & Marketing have been prepared.

The council is committed to transform the Procurement function into a model of best practice. A Procurement Transformation paper was approved by Cabinet on 10 July 2024, and work is progressing on all four workstreams with allocated resources to accelerate delivery. The Council has also commissioned a strategic review of the corporate centre that will be looking to align corporate enabling services to the Council’s new Target Operating Model.

There are significant developments in relationship with the Trade Unions who have now made requests for various considerations regarding current arrangements, e.g. dedicated schools facilities time, general facilities time, representation. In the light of this, a meeting is being planned to agree on above points and reset relationships with impact on employee relations and grievances reduction.

3.43 Recommendation 17: Responsiveness

“Review the council wide approach to handling member enquiries, complaints and freedom of information (FOI) requests to ensure less duplication, faster responses and greater efficiency.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 100% Complete



Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Create a centralised performance dashboard for all member enquiries, complaints and FOI requests.
- Develop a clear standards to govern response timelines and performance.
- Build a plan around the required FY 26/27 implementation of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman new Complaints Handling Code which will ensure more efficient council response times

The Council has successfully implemented a comprehensive plan to enhance its approach to handling member inquiries, complaints and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. This plan aims to reduce duplication, improve response times, and increase efficiency.

A review of the complaints process has been completed, resulting in a targeted improvement plan. The implementation of Power BI and the addition of performance metrics to the corporate dashboard will further support these efforts. The improvement plan also addresses the reduction of the existing backlog.

3.44 Recommendation 18: People First

“The Council will develop a clear, single narrative around transformation and improvement using the people first initiative to do so. The Council will develop a communications / wider culture change programme to promote a wider council staff identity and help break down silo’s and support senior staff visibility.”

Overall Completion:

Status: 100% Complete



Council’s Extension of Recommendation

Council’s Extension of Recommendation

- Embed People First Transformation success stories and milestones across all comms channels.
- Encourage employees to share feedback about each iteration of the People First Transformation.

- Embed the People First Transformation programme, including its stages, aims and values in the Council's corporate induction.

The Council has successfully implemented this recommendation by developing a clear, unified narrative around transformation and improvement through the People First initiative. This narrative, focused on culture change, was launched at the Staff Conference on 11 July 2024 and is being integrated throughout the organisation.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council's efforts to implement the CPC recommendations have resulted in several positive outcomes related to equality and diversity including increased representation, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and inclusive governance.
- 4.2 While progress is being made, the Council will continue to monitor and evaluate its progress in this area and take steps to address any remaining barriers to equality and diversity.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council's efforts to implement the CPC recommendations have resulted to several positive outcomes related to best value, including improved efficiency, enhanced performance management, financial sustainability and community engagement.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no financial implications of noting the progress against the Peer Review recommendations. Implementation of the recommendations is being carried out within existing resources, should additional resources be required these will need to be requested through the appropriate governance process.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 An early revisit from the LGA peer review team would assist the Council in meeting its Best Value obligations under the Local Government Act 1999 and hopefully provide objective endorsement that the Council has taken appropriate action to secure the overriding duty to secure continuous improvement

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Appendix A: LGA CPC Action Plan – progress table

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- None

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Appendix A: CPC Update Progress Table

Recommendation	No.	Action	Senior Responsible Officer	Target Date for Completion	Progress Update	RAG
Recommendation 1: Strategic Vision Develop a more comprehensive long-term strategic vision for the borough and the council which is co-produced with the community.	1.1	The Mayor will set out, agree and publish a long-term Strategic Vision developed with the input and engagement of the community. The Strategic Vision will inform a Strategic Plan refresh, the Workforce Strategy and the Council will revisit the MTFS to ensure alignment.	Acting Director SIT	Mar-25	<p>Previous Update: A Task and Finish Group is established with the Mayor's Office to develop a new strategic vision to 2035. An updated engagement plan comprising a two-phased approach is being finalised and will include visioning workshops with communities and stakeholders and a partnership congress in October 2024. The new vision document will be completed in October 2025.</p> <p>Latest Update: The council will leverage the council's Partnership Plan (2023 – 2028) as the foundation for a comprehensive, long-term 2035 strategic vision for the borough in collaboration with the community. This utilisation of the Partnership Plan will streamline the strategy development process, while ensuring alignment with the community's priorities and aspirations. Comprehensive engagement will commence in November, comprising residents, partners, Members, the youth council, faith groups, targeted groups and equality networks. In fostering a co-productive approach, a thematic Partnership Congress, bringing together representatives from the council including partner organisations, businesses, community groups, and young people, is scheduled for December 2024, with a focus on developing a long-term strategic vision for the borough.</p>	Green
	1.2	The Council will ensure that its strategic plan and subsequent delivery plans are aligned to the long term strategic vision building in regular monitoring and reporting arrangements, and reports that are available to the public	Acting Director SIT	Apr-25	<p>Previous Update: The alignment of the strategic plan to the long-term vision remains a dependent action on the work to produce that vision. See previous update. The presentation of performance reporting has been reviewed and improved.</p> <p>Latest Update: A new long-term strategic vision will not only reinforce the council's commitment to partnership working and community engagement, but will also play a crucial role in aligning our existing branding, underpinned by the Partnership Plan and the Strategic Plan. Subsequently, all strategic and delivery plans will be aligned, with a robust review and monitoring framework embedded.</p>	
Recommendation 2: Medium Term Financial Strategy Develop a MTFS, including the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which can demonstrate the future financial sustainability of the council, and which is aligned to the long-term strategic	2.1	The Council will complete the development of the new Medium Term Financial Strategy	Corporate Director Resources	Jan-24	Complete - On the 28 th of February the MTFS including the budget and HRA was agreed at Full Council. The plan provides for a sustainable position over the medium term removing previous levels of reliance on reserves to fund recurring costs.	Completed
	2.2	The Council will review its MTFS at the point that the long-term strategic vision statement for the Borough is completed to ensure that it is fully aligned to it.	Corporate Director Resources	Apr-25	<p>Previous Update: MTFS will be reviewed once the Strategic vision is developed to ensure alignment, any changes would need to happen through the budget setting process.</p> <p>The MTFS is directly linked to mayoral and corporate priorities and to adopt financial planning and modelling across a longer-term period would dilute the accuracy of and agility within the financial modelling. The longer the term of the forecast figures the less reliance can be placed on them. MTFS will be reviewed once the Strategic vision is developed to ensure alignment, any changes would need to happen through the budget setting process.</p> <p>Latest Update:</p>	Completed

vision of the council.					<p>The MTFS is the financial plan that underpins the effective resourcing of the delivery of the current corporate plan which in turn supports the delivery of Mayoral priorities and meeting wider Borough needs. The financial modelling reflect a 4 year period (years 0 - 3). The HRA plans across a 30-year period. Both are updated annually and will always align to the most current long term strategic vision for the Borough.</p> <p>This action is marked as complete for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) MTFS is reviewed annually so the document will always align to the latest long-term plan b) Currently RSG from government is only awarded annually so any long-term revenue planning is at risk given the short-term government funding cycle c) The HRA is already a 30-year plan that is reviewed by full council annually and will flex to accommodate changes to any long-term strategic vision d) The current MTFS is aligned with the latest strategic vision for the borough <p>Any long-term financial planning is likely to be restricted to capital investment as is the industry norm</p>	
	2.3	The Council shall revisit its scenario planning and modelling for business rate reform impacts to ensure that they are fit for purpose and up to date.	Corporate Director Resources	Mar-24	Analyse Local has been engaged to assist with forecasting the appeals provisions. LG Futures has provided updated modelling based on the final local government settlement and the Council's draft NNDR1 return. The Autumn Statement, 22nd November 2024, is now being considered in our updated MTFS	Completed
	2.4	The Council will develop a single narrative about the financial position of the Council which clearly explains to members, officers and partners the rationale for the savings requirement and investments required in services. This will communicate the imperative of delivery for the future financial sustainability of the council	Corporate Director Resources	Mar-24	Complete, there is a clear single narrative in place for the MTFS. Slide decks have been produced all aligning the same messages targeted to different audiences, For example Back Bench Councillors, All staff, Transformation Advisory Board.	Completed
	2.5	The Council will carry out a comprehensive assessment of the impact of insourcing on service capacity that will feed into the MTFS.	Corporate Director Resources	Mar-24	Growth for leisure insourcing has been included in the MTFS following work on costings.	Completed
	2.6	The Council will complete a HRA review which will explore all financial assumptions against the affordability constraints and will also consider the assumed HRA rent increase.	Corporate Director Resources	Mar-24	The HRA strategy has been to Cabinet on 31st January with an updated HRA budget following input from Savills. This has a sustainable position and an increase in the number of homes being acquired.	Completed

Recommendation 3: Performance Management To assist with the focus on delivery of the council's priorities, measures should be taken to enhance the existing performance framework, making better use of data to inform decision making and policy development. Consideration should be given to how the impact of decisions and priority areas is captured.	3.2	The Council shall complete a review of existing performance management arrangements in place at the Council to ensure clearer, more consistent processes, scrutiny at service level and by CMT and the development of a system which is understood and can be effectively challenged by members.	Acting Director SIT	May-24	<p>Previous Update: Improvements to presentation of performance data complete</p> <p>Processes and scrutiny strengthened, including additional scrutiny at MAB and Lead Member 121s (complete). Additional review of scrutiny member mentoring underway.</p> <p>EDITH, a place-based tool to understand distribution of health and health determinants, enabling comparisons within the borough will be deployed in July.</p> <p>Further improvements to measures, benchmarking, process and accountability planned through Annual Delivery Plan for 24/25 (Cabinet sign off May 24)</p> <p>Latest Update: The Annual Delivery Plan has now secured Cabinet approval incorporating measures that capture the impact of decisions on priority areas.</p> <p>A Scrutiny improvement plan has been noted and endorsed by Cabinet and suggested actions in it will be the subject of discussion with Overview and Scrutiny as part of their improvement review process.</p> <p>The Corporate Board arrangements have been rationalised.</p> <p>A Power BI platform linking spend and performance has been designed and is being rolled out to Directorates.</p>	Completed
	3.3	The Council will bring forward new project plans for the development of a data lake and will prioritise progress of data tools to enable easier interrogation of health and societal data bases by council staff.	Corporate Director Resources	Jun-24	<p>Latest Update: A corporate project has been set up to develop the Council's data platforms, data strategy and corporate approach to data analytics.</p> <p>A Power BI tool providing in-depth analysis of real time spend has been developed for managers and is in the process of being linked to performance data.</p> <p>Go-live for the finance dashboard is June 2024.</p>	Completed
	3.4	The Council will review the Council's current strategy and policy landscape to explore the opportunities to simplify it	Acting Director SIT	Dec-24	<p>Previous Update: A completion of this review has been delayed because of the best value inspection process. This will now be expected to be completed by Sept-24.</p> <p>Latest Update: The Council's current strategy and policy landscape to identify opportunities for simplification is currently underway and the completion is projected for December 2024</p>	
Recommendation 4: Workforce Strategy Develop a refreshed workforce strategy to address recruitment and retention challenges. This is particularly important given the current vacancies in	4.1	The Council will develop a coordinated workforce strategy with a clear plan for recruitment, retention and workforce development with a more consistent approach being adopted across the organisation and linked to the Council's long term strategic vision.	Corporate Director Resources	Apr-25	<p>Previous Update: The new members of the Recruitment Team are now fully trained and making strong progress in addressing the recruitment backlog and improving service levels for recruiting managers and candidates.</p> <p>A pay review process has been put in place to ensure that the borough remains competitive and can continue to attract excellent candidates and staff in fields where there is limited supply and strong competition from other authorities.</p> <p>Latest Update: The council has implemented a comprehensive senior pay review covering all posts across the top 3 tiers of the organisation. This has resulted in competitive market tested salary</p>	

<p>key senior management positions and the Mayor's stated priority of the workforce representing the community.</p> <p>The Overview & Scrutiny Committee should be given responsibility for overseeing performance against the council's aim to ensure that its workforce and service provision reflects the diversity of the borough.</p>					<p>packages and introduced more contemporary practice with the integration of the London weighting and the removal of outdated hierarchical allowances.</p> <p>The Chief Executive has reviewed the council's overview and scrutiny function and allocated additional senior resources as part of his restructure process. A dedicated resources lead has been allocated within the committee who meets regularly with the Corporate Director of Resources who is the operational lead for the workforce strategy to agree relevant work programmes and spotlight sessions to ensure the committee is sighted upon progress and areas of greatest risk.</p> <p>Across the wider organisation a new resourcing team has been established with dedicated senior expertise leading the review of all processes and the introduction of technology. The backlog in case work has been analysed and allocated to the newly resourced team.</p>	
	4.2	The Council will complete the recruitment programme for Corporate Directors and Directors	Corporate Director Resources	Aug-24	<p>Previous Update: Interviews for the post of Director of Legal and MO took place on 09.07.24. An offer was made to the successful candidate and was accepted. Interviews for the post of Corporate Director of Housing & Regeneration took place on 23.07.24 and an offer is pending.</p> <p>Latest Update: The council now has in place a fully resourced permanently appointed corporate leadership team .</p>	Completed
	4.3	The Council will continue to develop the new 'workforce to reflect the community' strategy and embed it into the refreshed workforce strategy	Corporate Director Resources	Aug-24	<p>Previous Update: The Strategy will now be launched in August. An independent external review of the draft strategy is being finalised.</p> <p>Latest Update: The Strategy is complete and awaiting 3rd party assurance via an independent external specialist review prior to the relevant member decision making processes for formal adoption by the council .</p>	Completed
	4.4	The Council will review the current governance arrangements for the councils Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda. As part of this exercise the Mayor will consider the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee specific to the delivery of this agenda.	Acting Director SIT	Sept-24	<p>Previous Update: Arrangements are being made for the corporate equalities function to transfer from SIT to Resources where its relationship with Human Resources can be fully exploited and its profile within the organisation further enhanced.</p> <p>Latest Update: The corporate equalities function has been transferred to Resources</p>	Completed
	4.5	Carry out a review of the Council's Pay Policy for hard to recruit and senior positions.	Corporate Director Resources	Mar-24	<p>The Pay Policy has been produced and was considered at HR Committee and was approved by Full Council in March.</p> <p>A salary review of senior roles in the organisation has been commissioned a draft report has been received. Consideration is now being given to the implications of the recommendations.</p>	Completed
	4.6	LOCD to complete a review of the Council's current talent management and associated support programme	Corporate Director Resources	Sept-24	<p>Previous Update: Review has been completed. Further report to be delivered to CMT in September.</p> <p>Latest Update:</p>	Completed

		and establish what more can be done to support staff development.			Review has been completed, recommendations arising will be presented to the relevant decision making processes in due course for formal adoption by the council	
Recommendation 5: Mayor's Office Review the roles, functions and deployment of officers within the Mayor's Office. This should be done to ensure streamlined decision making, removing barriers and duplication elsewhere in the council. The council should also ensure that colleagues remaining in the Mayor's Office are given training and development opportunities to ensure a wider understanding of the roles and requirements of different services areas.	5.1	The Council will undertake a review of the roles, functions and deployment of officers within the Mayor's Office with particular focus upon speeding up decision making and removing duplication of function where this is provided elsewhere in the Council.	CEO	Jan-24	A review has been undertaken and Phase 1 of the restructure complete, savings included in MTFS. Further rationalisation is planned as Phase 2. Additional training and development has been identified and provided to key members of the Mayor's Office specific to enabling a wider understanding the roles and requirements of different service areas and the operational environment more generally.	Completed
Recommendation 6: Internal Governance Conduct an urgent review of the internal governance arrangements including the board structures to ensure focus on the delivery of priorities, clarity of reporting and clear lines of accountability. This should seek to speed-up decision making, and	6.1	The Council will complete a review of the Council's internal governance arrangements, board structures and forward planning process to ensure focus on delivery of priorities, clarity of reporting, and clear lines of accountability.	Acting Director SIT	Sept-24	Previous Update: CMT have now considered the mapping exercise for the boards rationalisation and are in the process of exploring further board rationalisation opportunities. The internal forward planning processes have been reviewed. The guidance and training for this have been further refined (and circulated on TH Now). Latest Update: The Council has completed its review of internal governance arrangements and board structures. This rationalisation ensures a stronger focus on delivering priorities, improved clarity of reporting, and clear lines of accountability. The streamlined structure, with a reduced number of boards, supports more efficient decision-making and enhances governance.	Completed
	6.2	Review of Transformation Board structure to ensure Boards have	Deputy CEO	Feb-24	Complete – Transformation Boards have been rationalised from 6 boards to 3 to streamline the Council's governance.	Completed

delegate business-as-usual decisions to an appropriate level.		delegated authority to oversee and support directorates with budget and restructure delivery				
	6.3	Have in place arrangements to avoid delays in the short-term	CEO	Feb-24	Complete - The Chief Executive over recent months has introduced new controls on services attempting to bring late reports to MAB/Cabinet or changing reporting dates to ensure a smoother planning process. A process has been introduced at CMT to identify outstanding input from the Mayor's Office to speed up decision making.	Completed
	6.4	The Council will review and clarify the Council's processes for decision making. This will include the review and rationalisation of transaction processes for HR	Corporate Director Resources	Aug-24	<p>Previous Update: Three new interim HR experts are in place and are working on HR transformation and improvement programme.</p> <p>Latest Update: The council's new operating model drives a transformational change in the transactional processing of HR issues across the council. All operational service delivery area changes are now being finalised and these in turn will drive the final design and resourcing of the relevant transaction processes, much of which will be integrated into the council's new power BI dashboard.</p> <p>The proposals for the redesigned HR function aligned to the new target operating model will be considered by corporate directors on the 18th October 2024.</p> <p>Board rationalisation has already been completed The HR committee TOR have already been updated.</p> <p>The transactional processes for HR will be re designed to support the new structure described in paragraph above</p>	Completed
	6.5	Comprehensive review of financial regulations and delegations to inform a revised framework on internal controls	Corporate Director Resources	Aug-24	<p>Previous Update: Thresholds of the Procurements regulations have been reviewed, this will now go to CMT in August.</p> <p>Latest Update: Thresholds of the Procurements regulations have been reviewed in line with the new procurement act which was due to be implemented from October 2024. The government decision to delay implementation of the new procurement regulations will naturally have an impact on implementation timescales.</p>	Completed
	6.6	The Council will ensure that the new external auditors agree to regular meetings between the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer and the External Auditor.	Corporate Director Resources	Mar-24	Meeting between existing external auditors (Deloitte) S151 Officer, and CEO took place on 5th October 2023. New Auditor Ernst & Young currently in process of exchanging disclosures needed to then enable all regular (quarterly) meetings to be scheduled for the coming financial year	Completed
	6.7	The Council will ensure the Head of Audit attends meetings between the three statutory officers.	CEO	Dec-23	Head of Audit now meeting regularly with Chief Executive, S151 Officer, and Monitoring Officer	Completed

	6.8	The Council will report progress on the delivery of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan to the Transformation Advisory Board on a regular basis	Acting Director SIT	Ongoing	Regular engagement taking place with TAB	Completed
Recommendation 7: Working with Partners To ensure more effective partnership working, the council should consider reviewing current partnership governance arrangements.	7.1	Create a Partnership Task and Finish Group to review partnership arrangements to ensure a more strategic approach to partnership working, that streamlines governance arrangements and improves accountability. Ensure the Terms of Reference of the Partnership Task and Finish Group specifically develop actions to support these outcomes.	Acting Director SIT	Apr-24	A partnership Task and Finish Group has been established in October 2023 to take forward strategic review of partnership arrangements. Findings from the review have been presented back to the Partnership Executive Group Final report and recommendations coming to CMT by end of March.	Completed
	7.2	Continue to strengthen the Integrated Care partnership to deliver our core priorities and engage with the Integrated Care Board and wider North East London system on what responsibilities and resources can be further devolved to the local level.	Corporate Director Health and Social Care		Review underway for Tower Hamlets Together Board arrangements and look to integrate with Health & Wellbeing Board incorporating if possible the formal place-based Committee for the ICB Review of the Better Care Fund underway, will implement any changes for the 2025/26 financial year.	Completed
	7.3	The Council will further improve the opportunity for strategic conversations with business partnerships and will ensure that the Growth and Economic Development Partnership reviews existing opportunities with a view to enhancing them.	Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration	Review Complete, implementation on April	The GED Partnership has been reviewed using the King's Fund Reflective Learning Framework, as part of the Council's Partnership Plan 2023-28. The key findings of this review will be implemented by April 25. GED has delivered a series of 4 themed business breakfast events to engage local businesses, both SME's and Corporates. Through these events, we have engaged with over 270 SMEs and third sector organisations along with 63 corporate representatives. Due to the success of the programme, GED are seeking further s106 funds to deliver a new programme of events in 24/25, the themes of which will be based on feedback from local businesses.	Completed
	7.4	There are a number of commitments to work with developers and partners to deliver on housing supply ambitions in the ADP including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An operational fast track planning service using dedicated resources for Major housing schemes to accelerated housing delivery Go out to market on the second and third phase of Development Agreement sites in order to deliver new homes in priority locations Work with the GLA to complete first round of unit acquisitions to increase housing supply 	Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration	Jun- 24	Previous Update: Underway as part of ADP process. ADP sign off May Cabinet Latest Update: The principle of a Fast Track Premium Planning Service for specific proposals has been agreed and established with a pilot operational model put in place. Supporting this, recruitment to three principal and/or senior planning roles, to be funded from within P&BC resources, has begun. Initial pilot schemes for the fast track have been identified and one is now active at pre-app stage. All 3 tranches of the Developer Agreement sites (11 sites in all) have been released to the market and the Selection Questionnaire date for return is the 24th May 2024. Progress has also been made on the acquisitions programme. An indicative bid has been made to the GLA for the invited amount of 200 homes over two years. The confirmation of funding is expected in June.	Completed

	7.5	In addition to the above mechanisms continue to enhance work with developers and housing providers.	Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration	Aug- 24	<p>Previous Update:</p> <p>Planning A Developers Forum date has been identified for the 2 July 2024. Attendance is being confirmed but will include a range of development and housing industry representatives active or with ambitions to be active in the borough. The Mayor, the Lead Member and senior management team is also looking to attend.</p> <p>Affordable Housing The Affordable Housing team continues to speak to developers and RPs to enable the progression of stalled sites or those experiencing viability issues. This has enabled progress a number of sites across a range of challenges.</p> <p>THHF Social Housing Partners continue to work with the Council through THHF Development sub-group to deliver more affordable homes. Representatives from the Planning Team are regular attendees at quarterly sub-group meetings and have been liaising with the forum on the workings of the newly implemented fast track “in principle” pre app process. Consultations continue on the new Local Plan and possible challenges arising. Members have also been looking at how to improve the speed/cost of delivery incorporating sustainability options.</p> <p>Latest Update:</p> <p>Planning A Developers Forum date has been confirmed for the 2 July 2024.. Invites have been sent and confirmation received from at least 35 developers/agents/housing industry representatives active or with ambitions to be active in the borough. The Mayor, the Lead Member and senior management will be in attendance.</p> <p>Affordable Housing The Affordable Housing team continues to speak to developers and RPs to enable the progression of stalled sites or those experiencing viability issues. This is embedded into business-as-usual processes for the team.</p> <p>THHF The development sub-group continues to meet regarding avenues to continue the delivery of affordable housing. As housing partnerships are now in place regarding planning, affordable supply and through the THHF mechanism,</p> <p>Recommendation It is proposed that this recommendation is now closed, with the action falling into business-as-usual processes for the partnerships.</p>	Completed
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Recommendation 8: Grant Allocation Build on the framework for the Mayor's Community Grant scheme and introduce a robust process for the Small Grants Fund and the Emergency Grants Fund, demonstrating links to the corporate priorities, ensuring openness and transparency, and reset relationships with the VCS/third sector. Monitoring of the grants programmes should be undertaken in partnership with the VCS/third sector and overseen by Overview and Scrutiny.	8.1	The council will review all council administered grant regimes to ensure that they have robust frameworks in place and will introduce a central grants register.	Acting Director SIT	Apr-24	Previous Update: The Corporate Grants Register data capture process has been completed subject to verification from CD's. Assurance mechanisms are being checked. The register will go live by the end of April. Latest Update: The Corporate Grants Register has gone live.	Completed
	8.2	The Council will work with the VCS to refresh the VCS Strategy and Voluntary Sector Compact which sets out how the Council will work with the sector and will use these to build on and improve existing relationships with the sector.	Acting Director SIT	Mar-25	Previous Update: 2 consultation events took place with staff, 2 with members and 2 with VCS organisations. A further 3 more workshops have been scheduled to follow with VCS groups in September. The strategy remains on track to go to Cabinet in March 2025. Latest Update: In August 2024, workshops were delivered with 8 internal services to gather feedback on their ideas for the Strategy. In September 2024, 3 consultation events will be held with the VCS and partners. Information gathered from the consultation will inform the development of the Strategy.	
	8.3	Quarterly performance reports to Grants Determination Sub Committee and pre-decision scrutiny by OSC.	Acting Director SIT	Ongoing – Jul-24	Previous Update: The Executive has been invited to and has now considered current arrangements for pre-decision scrutiny. Latest Update: Quarterly performance reports are being provided to Grants Determination Sub Committee. Arrangements for pre decision scrutiny have been reviewed. The Council now has a Member Finance and Resources Lead who will feed in questions / comments from OSC in advance of Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan has been reviewed and updated and includes action to improve pre-decision scrutiny activity.	Completed
Recommendation 9: Transfer of Property to Third Parties Record and formalise Mayoral/member involvement in decision making relating to the transfer of property to third parties; reflecting Mayoral/member oversight in the property and assets policy and procedures	9.1	Complete the Council's new property and asset management strategy to bring together all of the different elements relating to policy and procedure into one document.	Corporate Director Housing & Regeneration	Jul-24	Previous Update: A date is being confirmed for when the Strategic Asset Management Plan will be taken to MAB. Latest Update: The Strategic Asset Management Plan went to Cabinet and was approved.	Completed
	9.2	Property and Asset Management will be added to the member induction and learning programme.	CEO	Jan-24	Property and Asset Management has been added to the member induction and learning programme	Completed
	9.3	The Mayor will review the need for existing levels of pre decision oversight of delegated decision-making authority to officers regarding decisions relating to land and property disposals (up to £250k) and the letting of property to VCS organisations.	Head of Mayor's Office/ Corporate Director Housing & Regen	TBC-24	Previous Update: Dialogue has commenced with the Mayor's Office and involving colleagues in governance in relation to the scheme of delegation as appropriate. Latest Update: The standing policy position of this Council is not to dispose of land and property, making the purpose of much of the action redundant. The wording of the action is being reviewed in the light of this.	

document (and developing overarching strategy) Also report decisions in this area to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	9.4	All mayoral oversight on decision making pathways will be formalised in the form of written process notes. All feedback by the Mayor to Officers will be recorded as part of these processes.	Corporate Director Housing & Regen	TBC-24	Latest Update: Updates on key projects are recorded in a central tracking spreadsheet which is shared with the Mayor's Office on a regular basis.	Completed
Recommendation 10: Cabinet Member Responsibilities To speed up the pace of decision-making consideration should be given, as part of the constitutional review, to reviewing the delegated responsibilities from the Mayor to both Cabinet Members and officers.	10.1	The Mayor will keep delegation of decision-making authority under constant review.	CEO/Monitoring Officer	Ongoing	As has been common in Elected Mayoral authorities, the Mayor has not delegated decision making to Cabinet Members. Cabinet Members though are involved in all relevant decisions and service challenges as they have regular service meetings and they have to be consulted on all relevant cabinet decision making reports. The Mayor will keep this under constant review. New processes are in place to reduce the incidence of delays in the Mayor's Office.	Completed
	10.2	The Council will undertake a review of Local Authorities with directly elected Mayors, with a view to establishing both common practice and best practice regarding delegation of authority.	CEO/Monitoring Officer	Apr-24	The Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) has been commissioned as part of the LBTH Constitution Review to review the constitutions of the other London Mayoral Authorities and a couple of other authorities of interest to see what they had which was different/useful. ADSO reported back at the end of January and made some minor recommendations for consideration that will be considered by the Constitution working group. The Council was not found to be an outlier in terms of its approach. In addition The CEO is leading a project to bring together CEO's working in a Directly elected mayoral models across the UK in a new group to better enable best practice to be identified and shared.	Completed
	10.3	The role and responsibilities of cabinet members under existing arrangements will be the subject of further staff communication bulletins and included more specifically in staff inductions.	CEO/Monitoring Officer	Jan-24	The staff induction programme has been reviewed and we have improved the information we provided around the roles and responsibilities of cabinet members.	Completed
Recommendation 11: Membership of Committees The council should consider best practice in relation to the charring, membership and cross party working in and of key committees such as Full Council, Overview and Scrutiny and Audit. External training for these committees should also be arranged.	11.1	The Council will define current best practice in relation to charring, membership, and cross party working in and of committees. It will conduct a review of current terms of reference for committees based on best practice including the appointment of women to lead senior political positions within the council. The Mayor will receive recommendations from that review and agree any necessary actions. The Mayor's conclusions will be published.	Head of Democratic Services	Nov-24	Previous Update: The CWG did consider the Terms of Reference report and were generally in agreement with how information was presented (no significant outliers). The next step is to work through the ADSO recommendations to ensure any identified issues are captured. The first review of the ADSO report section on Part B of the Constitution is due at the next CWG meeting in September Latest Update: The CWG meeting has been moved to 2 nd November 2024 due to other urgent priorities on the Best Value Inspection. Therefore, key members of the Legal team (such as the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer) have not been able to review the Constitution work over the last few weeks.	
	11.2	The Council will continue to deliver the current development programme for scrutiny members, and undertake skills audit in order to develop and deliver an improved development	CEO	Apr-24	Training is arranged in relation to almost all Council Committees, both during the Member Induction following the election and then either at the start of the year and/or through the year. The Council commissioned Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to provide training for scrutiny chairs. This has included three 1-2-1 sessions, two group sessions. A skills audit of scrutiny members has also has been undertaken which informs training plan.	Completed

		programme for scrutiny and for Cabinet members				
	11.3	Introduce a cross party working improvement programme in order to encourage cross party working.	Acting Director SIT	Jul-24	<p>Previous Update: The Scrutiny Improvement Plan was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and was accepted.</p> <p>Latest Update: The Scrutiny Improvement Plan was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and was accepted. This included improved arrangements for cross-party working.</p>	Complete
	11.4	The Constitution Working Group to consider a report on the workings of Cabinet decision making processes that will include the scrutiny process and present a briefing note to the Mayor in relation to their findings.	Head of Democratic Services	Nov-24	<p>Previous Update: Considered as part of ADSO review report. The constitution working group will be further considering this at the next meeting in September 24.</p> <p>Latest Update: The CWG meeting has been moved to 2nd November 2024 due to other urgent priorities on the Best Value Inspection. Therefore, key members of the Legal team (such as the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer) have not been able to review the Constitution work over the last few weeks.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 12: Member Development The existing member training and development offer should be strengthened with support initially focussed on Cabinet members and committee chairs.</p>	12.1	The existing member development programme for those in senior positions will be further developed to include opportunities of external mentoring.	Head of Democratic Services	Jun-24	<p>Previous Update: ASDO and North West Employers have confirmed their ability to support a mentoring programme.</p> <p>Latest Update: Individual member training budgets have now been launched and members are being encouraged to engage to develop a personal plan and identify a suitable mentor.</p>	Completed
<p>Recommendation 13: Diversity Given the composition of the ruling administration, consideration should be given to how the voices of women and those from different backgrounds are directly influencing policy through their lived experience. It is recommended that the council actively promote the LGA's 'Be a Councillor Campaign' to</p>	13.1	The Council will undertake a review of how the voices of women and those from different backgrounds are and are not directly influencing policy through their lived experiences and develop a plan for removing barriers to this happening.	Head of Mayor's Office	Sept-24	<p>Previous Update: Following the successful recruitment of commissioners for the Women's Commission initiative, it has become clear that the Commissioners needed additional time to come together as a cohesive group before embarking on this critical work.</p> <p>To facilitate this, a Commissioners' away day was held at Canary Wharf. This event provided an excellent opportunity for the Commissioners to bond, develop ideas, and strategize for the important tasks ahead. The day was facilitated by a representative from Action for Race Equality, who expertly guided the discussions and ensured our continued focus on improving access, opportunity and outcomes for women within the borough.</p> <p>The Commission had to reschedule its first planned evidence-gathering session with stakeholders due to many Commissioners and stakeholders being unable to attend during the school summer holidays. The Commission will now commence evidence gathering in the first week of September 2024. The initial focus area will be "pathways to employment" for women in our borough. We aim to understand the current situation, evaluate the services provided and identify any gaps that need addressed, in order to improve employment rate of women and girls in TH.</p> <p>Latest Update:</p>	Completed


<p>promote the opportunity for women and people from underrepresented groups across the borough.</p>					<p>The Women’s Commission is now established and meeting on a monthly basis. The Women’s Commission is a major priority program at The Council. This initiative is a direct action in empowering women and girls, while challenging the inequalities and barriers many women and girls face in multiple areas of their life.</p> <p>The purpose of this deep dive focus on women in Tower Hamlets is to work as a partnership to identify the key issues for women in the borough and to produce an agreed Women’s Strategy for Tower Hamlets, with a specific, time limited and practical action plan for its delivery which will ensure women feel empowered to fulfil their potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To develop a comprehensive understanding of how the lived experience and chances for female residents in Tower Hamlets differ significantly and detrimentally from those of their male counterparts. - To tackle barriers to equality faced by women and girls in every area of their lives, particularly in areas of health, community safety, community leadership and employment. - To progress the equal treatment of women and girls at a national and local level. - To work towards the balanced participation of women and men in decision making in Tower Hamlets - To empower women and girls across sectors, institutions, and organisations. <p>A work plan has been agreed and we are in discussions and widening the representation of the Commission even more. The work plan will cover the following priority areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pathway to Employment 2. Health and wellbeing 3. Leadership and Representation 4. Women’s Safety <p>The Commission is being invited to give feedback on current council projects, as well as other projects that could be beneficial for women and girls in the borough.</p>	
	<p>13.2</p>	<p>The Council will run a major promotion campaign targeting women in the community linked to the LGA’s ‘Be a Councillor’ Campaign. All political parties will be encouraged to run their own campaign within their parties to encourage women candidates.</p>	<p>Acting Director SIT</p>	<p>Apr-24</p>	<p>The ‘Be a Councillor Campaign’ has now been launched and will be supported by a wider campaign strategy for promoting women in public life.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
	<p>13.3</p>	<p>The Council shall review make up of the Council Committees.</p>	<p>Head of Democratic Services/ CEO</p>	<p>Apr-24</p>	<p>Previous Update: Additional guidance is being prepared that strengthens the need for gender representation to be considered when deciding upon Committee membership and roles.</p> <p>Latest Update: The council has reviewed the makeup of its committees. The result has been that a female councillor has been appointed to a scrutiny lead position. An LGBTQ+</p>	<p>Completed</p>

					member has been appointed to a key chair position. Five female councillors have taken positions on Overview & Scrutiny (joining a female co-optee).	
	13.4	It will consider the feasibility of introducing a Monitored Feedback system for speakers at Council meetings allowing feedback / comment on speaking time fairness and respect. If feasible the Council will introduce it.	Acting Director SIT	Sept-24	<p>Previous Update: The consultation period has ended. Queries from councillors have been addressed.</p> <p>Latest Update: The initiative launched on 28th August. The questionnaires continue to be available in paper-based and digital formats for members at every committee meeting. The launch was prefaced with consultations/information dissemination efforts, including publishing the note in the members' bulletin to raise awareness about the initiative and call on the members to actively engage with it.</p> <p>The next steps are to monitor the survey uptake monthly and analyse the results of submitted responses at the three-month mark to establish the baseline.</p>	Complete
	13.5	The Council will develop a policy setting out clearly how much time staff led group chairs can take from their substantive duties to develop staff equalities networks.	Corporate Director Resources	Dec-24	<p>Latest Update: Review has been completed. A framework is now in place which addresses how much time staff-led group chairs can take from their substantive duties.</p>	Completed
	13.6	<p>The Council will ensure all network groups have a senior management sponsor.</p> <p>Establish a regular programme of meetings with sponsors to discuss progress and relevant cross cutting issues.</p> <p>Establish a feedback system for Staff Chairs of networks to comment on the performance of the Senior Management Sponsor.</p>	Corporate Director Resources / Acting Director SIT	Dec-24	Complete – new network sponsors confirmed, meeting cycle established and feedback system in place.	Completed
	13.7	Review and rerun staff and member awareness programme.	Head of Democratic Services	Nov-24	<p>Previous Update: The planned 'Be a councillor' events in the summer will likely be pushed back as they now fall within the Pre-Election period for the upcoming by-election.</p> <p>Latest Update: The 'Be a Councillor' event linked to Black History Month is scheduled to take place on 12th October 2024. The event targeted at women is now likely to take place in November (after it was moved due to the by-election).</p>	
	13.8	To contribute to the LGA call for evidence for Supporting Women and girls to be active.	Corporate Director Communities	Apr-24	The LBTH submission has been completed.	Completed
Recommendation 14: Annual governance Statement	14.1	The Council will secure the necessary outstanding internal approvals and publish the outstanding Annual Governance Statements	Corporate Director Resources	Dec-23	Completed. Outstanding Annual Governance Statement approved by the Audit Committee on Thursday 19th October 2023. Published on the Council web site.	Completed

Prepare and publish the Annual Governance Statement.						
Recommendation 15: Outstanding Accounts Outstanding financial accounts going back to 2018/19 need to be resolved with the external auditors as a priority.	15.1	The Council will take action to resolve all of the historic outstanding financial accounts going back to 2018/19	Corporate Director Resources	Jan-24	Complete	Completed
Recommendation 16: Organisational Capacity Develop the corporate centre so that it is genuinely a strategic enabler and provides the appropriate accurate management data and information to support the transformation of the organisation.	16.1	The Council will complete a strategic resource needs assessment covering HR, Procurement, Facilities, Communications, IT addressing additional demand resulting from insourcing.	Corporate Director Resources	Oct-24	<p>Previous Update: The strategic resource needs assessment for HR and Procurement has been agreed, plan being developed for Facilities, Communications, and IT.</p> <p>Latest Update: HR, ICT, Procurement, and Finance will be presented at CELT for approval on 18th October 2024.</p> <p>Facilities: a proposal has been prepared by the team</p> <p>Comms: a proposal has been presented to the CEO and Deputy CEO, both will go forwards to a dedicated away day with the mayor regarding corporate restructure for CEO and Resources at the end of October 2024</p>	
	16.2	The Council will produce a revised set of Organisational Health reports/dashboards that will; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect performance against regulatory targets • Bring together performance across the Council that is aligned with up-to-date priorities and strategies • Report from line of business systems or automated reports that does not require substantial manual intervention • Allow CMT members to interrogate the dashboard outside of the meeting cycle 	Acting Director SIT	Jul-24	<p>Previous Update: Requirement gathering starting Feb, expect first presentation of data in July 24</p> <p>Latest Update: The Power BI platform has been developed by the Resources Directorate for senior managers to easily interrogate real time spend and financial performance. Work is underway to link this to key performance indicators.</p> <p>The delivery plan has been completed which includes the revision of KPIs to ensure alignment with priorities and strategies.</p> <p>A performance dashboard has been developed for the Transformation Advisory Board (TAB)</p>	Completed
	16.3	The Council will conduct a strategic review of the Procurement function to make it a model of best practice.	Corporate Director Resources	Jul-24	<p>Previous Update: Interim Programme director is working on the new processes. TOM agreed at HR Committee on 16th May 2024.</p> <p>Procurement Paper going to cabinet on 10th July.</p>	Completed

					<p>Latest Update: Procurement Transformation Paper was approved at Cabinet on 10th July 2024.</p> <p>Work is progressing on all 4 workstreams and resources are being allocated to accelerate delivery.</p>	
	16.4	The Procurement function of the Council will introduce a standard set of terms and conditions for contract awards.	Corporate Director Resources	Sept-24	<p>Previous Update: This work is progressing with an update scheduled for 10th July 2024.</p> <p>Latest Update: Procurement Transformation Paper was approved at Cabinet on 10th July 2024.</p> <p>Work is progressing on all 4 workstreams and resources are being allocated to accelerate delivery.</p> <p>A standard set of terms and conditions for contract awards have been developed</p>	Completed
	16.5	The Council will review and resolve the issue of the Councils Wi-Fi at the Town Hall	Corporate Director Resources	Jun-24	<p>Previous Update: A review of the Wi-fi in the building has been completed and no significant issues identified. However, problems with mobile phone connectivity has been confirmed. A programme of remedial action is now in hand.</p> <p>Latest Update: The Wi-Fi service is being regularly monitored and is reporting consistently good service.</p> <p>A project to remediate mobile signal issue has engaged a supplier to install signal booster to provide mobile coverage. Supplier is engaging with FM to conduct Heritage Building survey and plan implementation.</p>	Completed
	16.6	CEO and CMT to consider current relationship standing with the trade unions and agree actions that might further promote better working relationships.	Deputy CEO	Aug-24	<p>Previous Update: A Meeting is scheduled with the Deputy CEO and trade unions in August 2024. This specifically relates to issues around effective employee relations and engagement with trade union.</p> <p>Latest Update:</p> <p>CEO and CMT have agreed the priorities. Trade unions have now all made requests for various considerations regarding current arrangements, e.g. dedicated schools facilities time, general facilities time, representation on pension committee within the timescale. A meeting with all unions local and regional reps will take place to agree all, in the context of a reset of our relationship that has the specific objective of improving employee relations and reducing grievances</p>	Completed
Recommendation 17: Responsiveness Review the council wide approach to handling member enquiries, complaints and freedom of information (FOI) requests to ensure less duplication,	17.1	The Council will complete a resource review of the Councils FOI, Members Enquiries and Complaints functions. The Council will complete a process review for member enquiries, complaints and FOI requests with a view to improving speed and efficiency.	Deputy CEO	TBC	<p>Previous Update: Full improvement plan has been developed. Complaints process review is now completed.</p> <p>Latest Update: Review was completed, Improvement plan is in place, PBI to be rolled out and performance metrics added to corporate dashboard. Improvement plan in place to reduce backlogs.</p>	Completed

faster responses and greater efficiency.						
Recommendation 18: 'People First' Accelerate the 'People First' transformation programme and develop a clear narrative ensure a common understanding. (This should be entwined with the development of the strategic vision)	18.1	The Council will develop a clear, single narrative around transformation and improvement using the people first initiative to do so. The Council will develop a communications / wider culture change programme to promote a wider council staff identity and help break down silo's and support senior staff visibility.	Director of Communications	Apr-24	Previous Update: Communications are developing the People First Campaign linking to culture change. Complete by April 24 Latest Update: This action has now been completed. The Communications team has developed a clear, single narrative around transformation and improvement through the People First initiative and linking to culture change. This will be launched at the Staff Conference on 11 th July 2024 and embedded through the organisation (via Communications).	Completed

<p>Cabinet</p> <p>16 October 2024</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Steve Halsey, Chief Executive</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>LBTH Target Operating Model</p>	

Lead Member	Mayor Lutfur Rahman
Originating Officer(s)	<p>Ayesha Hakim Rahman, Acting Deputy Director Strategy, Improvement & Transformation</p> <p>Muhammed A. Uddin, Senior Transformation Business Analyst</p> <p>Onyeka Ajisafe, Acting Transformation Project Manager</p>
Wards affected	All
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Forward Plan Notice Published	N/A
Exempt information	None
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	All

Executive Summary

The council has finalised a new Target Operating Model (TOM), designed to align organisational priorities, enhance resident focus, and improve organisational efficiency. The TOM represents a significant departure from the previous model, which placed excessive emphasis on internal processes, with limited consideration of resident needs.

The new TOM was developed through extensive stakeholder engagement and is guided by six key design principles. A comprehensive launch campaign will highlight the TOM guidance notes and activity map. The implementation of the TOM represents a significant step forward for Tower Hamlets Council, positioning the organisation for a more efficient, effective, and responsive future. This roadmap for the council’s future operations will ensure that it is well-positioned to achieve strategic objectives and deliver enhanced services to the community.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Approve** the formal launch of the council's new Target Operating Model (TOM).
2. **Take note of** the TOM launch campaign (Section 3.8), which will commence on 1 November 2024. This campaign will highlight the TOM Guidance Notes and TOM People First Activity Map, as detailed in Appendices B and C, respectively.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The new Target Operating Model acts as the foundation for the council's future operations. It establishes clear standards for how the organisation works together to achieve our strategic priorities and, ultimately, better serve the community.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 **Retention of the previous Target Operating Model:** The existing model does not effectively align with the organisation's evolving priorities, placing excessive emphasis on structures and processes rather than resident needs and strategic priorities. This misalignment could potentially hinder the council's ability to meet community needs.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Tower Hamlets Council is implementing a new Target Operating Model (TOM), designed to enhance alignment with organisational priorities and ensure that residents are at the forefront of decision-making processes that directly impact their lives.
- 3.2 A Target Operating Model (TOM) serves as critical framework for any organisation. It outlines the desired future state of operations, defining how the organisation will function to achieve its strategic objectives. An effective TOM acts as a bridge between strategic intent and operational execution, ensuring alignment across all levels of the organisation.
- 3.3 Tower Hamlets has a long-standing commitment to prioritising residents. However, the previous TOM (2019 – 2022) deviated from this core principle. As illustrated in Diagram 1, the prior model primarily focused on internal processes, with limited consideration of resident need or external factors.

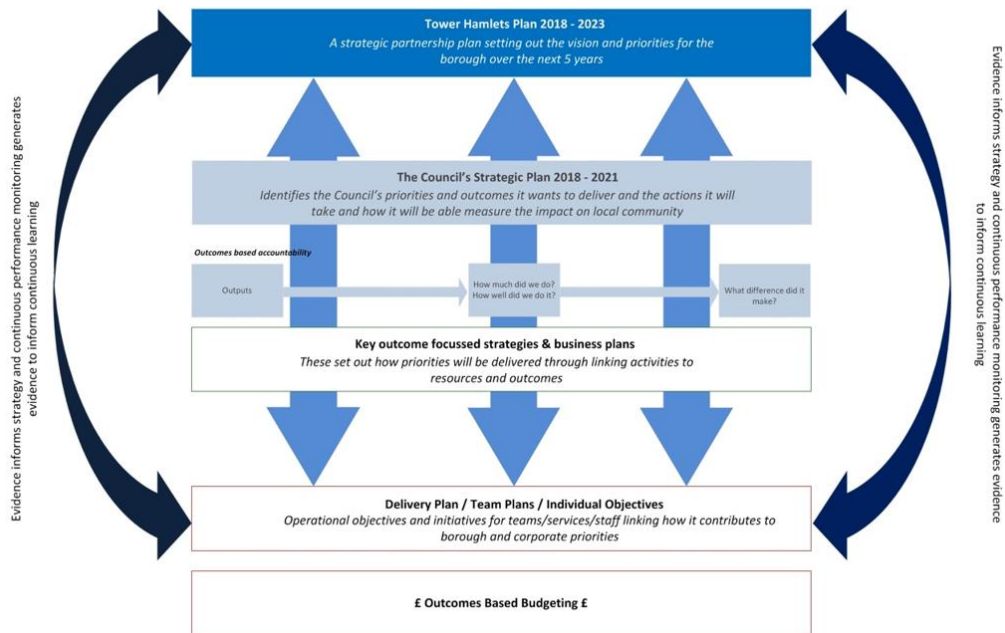


Diagram 1: Previous Target Operating Model (2019 – 2022)

3.4 Further reinforcing this internal focus at the expense of resident needs, outcomes and strategic goals, the accompanying blueprint (Diagram 2) heavily emphasised internal structures and processes using the McKinsey 7S model, neglecting the resident experience. Additionally, the decision to outsource the development of this blueprint limited staff engagement and understanding of the TOM's intended use and purpose.

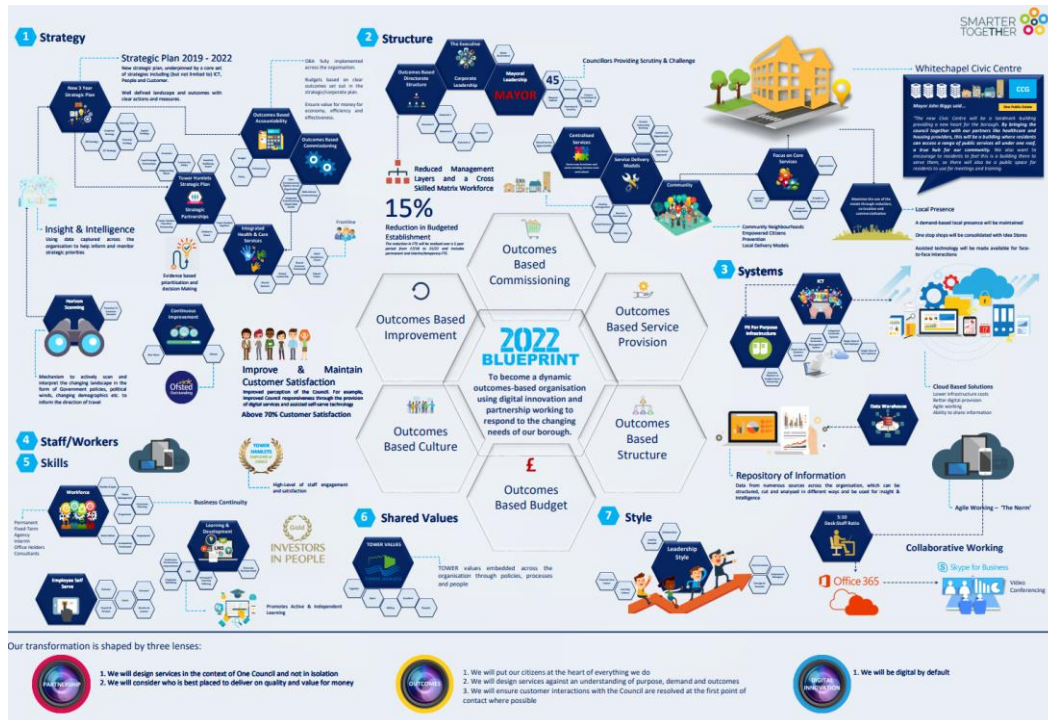


Diagram 2: Previous blueprint (2019 – 2022)

3.5 In contrast, the new TOM vision is to:

“Create a more efficient, effective, and responsive public sector organisation that is better able to meet the needs of its communities.”

3.6 Underpinned by the council’s 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan and commitment to partnership working, the new TOM (Diagram 3) was finalised following a year of comprehensive engagement with all stakeholders, including staff, council members, the youth council, community groups, and most importantly, the residents themselves. This approach represents a significant departure from the previous TOM, and feedback has confirmed that the TOM is well aligned to the values of Tower Hamlets.



Diagram 3: New Target Operating Model

3.7 The six design principles are a cornerstone of the new TOM, guiding all decision-making and shaping the council’s new approach to its work:

- **Value-Driven:** Improving processes to empower staff.
- **Community-Led:** Building trust by making services accessible and inclusive.
- **Collaborative:** Engaging with staff and partners for the best outcomes.
- **Enabling:** Developing and supporting staff to deliver excellent services.
- **Innovate:** Being brave to deliver cutting-edge services.
- **Accountable:** Championing a ‘one council’ culture for our residents.

3.8 In learning from previous experience, a TOM People First Activity Map (Diagram 4) replaces the previous Blueprint (Diagram 2) to ensure the TOM is relatable to the workforce. Instead of focusing on processes and structures, this map will showcase live examples of activities across the council that align to each of the six design principles.

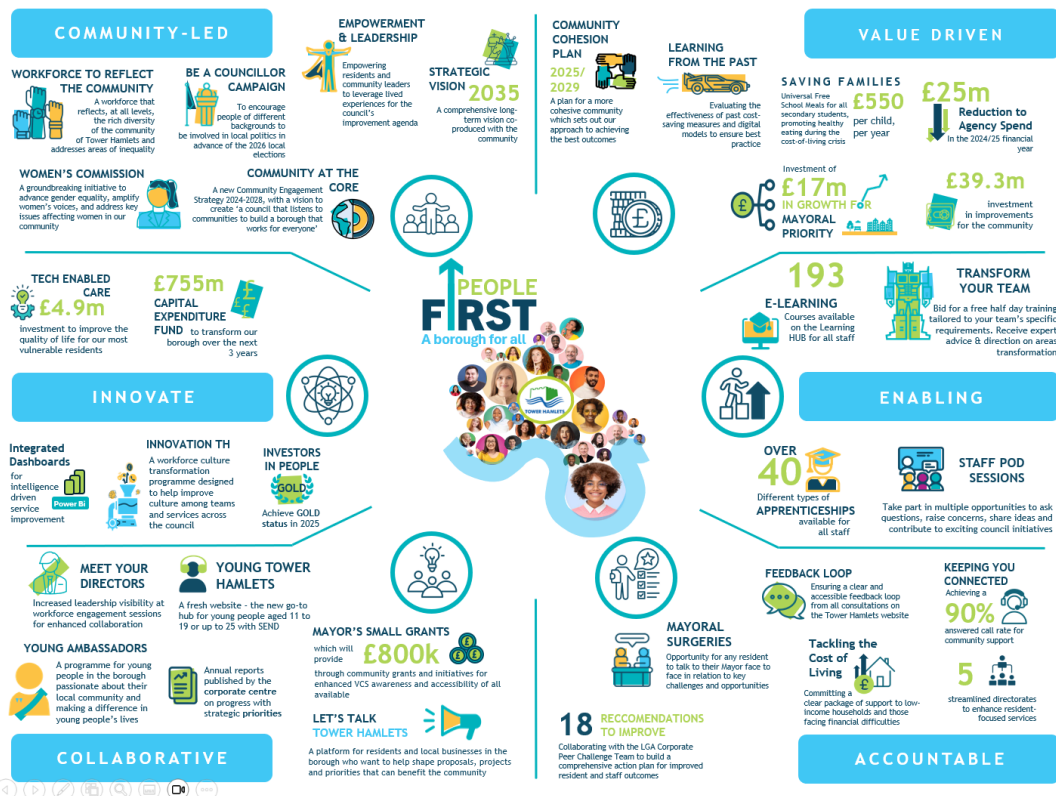


Diagram 4: People First Activity Map

3.9 The People First Activity Map will be reviewed and updated biannually to ensure the council continues to champion and embed real-world examples that align to the TOM as part of its People First Transformation journey. This commitment to transparency ensures all stakeholders have a voice in shaping the council's ongoing improvement journey whilst understanding its value and impact.

3.10 The council is now in a position to formally launch:

- **The final Target Operating Model** (Appendix A)
- **A People First Transformation TOM Activity Map** for staff and Members, highlighting examples of work that align with the TOM design principles (Appendix B)
- **TOM Guidance Notes** for staff, outlining a structured approach to applying the TOM design principles to proposed restructures, redesigns, or community engagement initiatives (Appendix C)

3.7 The new TOM ensures that the council's efforts are aligned with the values, needs, and aspirations of the community it serves. By embedding its principles into practice, the council can navigate restructuring, redesign, and community engagement initiatives with integrity, innovation, and a commitment to excellence. This approach will not only enhance organisational effectiveness but also strengthen relationships with the community, fostering trust, collaboration, and a shared vision for a better future.

3.8 Communications Plan

A comprehensive Communications Plan, outlining the People First narrative and Target Operating Model, is available at Appendix D.

Action	Channels / Events	By when?	Owner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch • People First Case Studies / competition • TOM background and journey • Promotion of Innovation Month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TH Now • TheBridge • AV Screens • Pull-up Banners • SLT Session • Learning Hub 	October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Comms • SIT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation Month TOM promotion • Promotion of TOM Activity Map • Embed TOM Guidance Notes as core values • People First Case Studies / Competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation Month • CE Roadshows • Staff Induction • TH Now • Plasma Takeover 	November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Comms • SIT • HR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase TOM guidance adopters • Share winning case studies • End of year People First TOM reminder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TH Now • TheBridge • SLT session 	December 2024	Internal Comms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People First Competition • TOM Activity Map animation • Review and design comms plan to March 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TH Now • POD Session • Leadership Conference 	February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Comms • SIT

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The council is firmly committed to the Public Sector Equality Duty and recognises the borough's rich diversity as a key strength. Equality underpins all council activities, from resource allocation and employment practices to service delivery.
- 4.2 The new Target Operating Model (TOM) reflects this commitment. Its design principles integrate the Strategic Plan's equality objectives, focusing on reducing inequalities, fostering community engagement and strengthening cohesion. By prioritising its service users, the TOM ensures we address community needs and desired outcomes.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The new TOM aligns with the council's statutory best value implications by ensuring that services are delivered efficiently, effectively, and economically. The TOM's focus on community-led approaches, collaboration, and transparency helps to improve service quality, enhance accountability, and optimise resource allocation. By prioritising user needs and fostering innovation, the TOM contributes to the council's goal of providing high-quality services that meet the needs of the community, while delivering value for money.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 Currently budgets include no increase for the new TOM. Should the cost of moving to the new TOM be more than existing budgets, offsetting savings will need to be identified or additional budgets approved through the appropriate governance process.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Tower Hamlets adoption of the Target Operating Model will assist the Council in meeting its Best Value, Value for Money and Equality obligations.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Appendix A: Final TOM + completed TOM Engagement Plan
- Appendix B: TOM Guidance Notes
- Appendix C: People First TOM Activity Map

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

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New Corporate Target Operating Model (TOM)

Draft proposal for a new TOM in Tower Hamlets

Corporate Strategy & Transformation



TOM Vision



Create a more efficient, effective, and responsive public sector organisation that is better able to meet the needs of its communities.

Aligning with the Executive Mayor's Vision

- Addressing specific priorities and goals
- Creating a legacy of community empowerment
- Reinforcing commitment to progressive leadership



TOM Design Principles



The new strategic target operating model should be designed to address the considerations set out in the Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2026 and to help the council achieve its strategic goals.

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Value-driven	Community-led	Collaborative
Improving processes to empower staff.	Building trust by making services accessible and inclusive.	Engaging with staff and partners for the best outcomes.
Enabling	Innovative	Accountable
Developing and supporting staff to deliver excellent services	Being brave to deliver cutting-edge services.	Championing a ' one council ' culture for our residents.



New TOM



- 1 Design principles.** The TOM requires a set of design principles to articulate its vision. These are value-driven; community-led; collaborative; enabling; innovative; and accountable
- 2 Empowered communities.** Currently there is a lack of focus on empowering communities. The core of the model is to genuinely empower communities, allowing for direct decision making against each strategic priority and the potential budget allocation to devolve associated decisions to residents.
- 3 Smaller but stronger corporate centre.** This smaller center allows for more power to directorates, encouraging more creativity and innovation with relaxed control to deliver the community priorities.
- 4 Strong leadership.** This represents a strong and focused leadership team that is committed to and aligned with the TOM vision.
- 5 More outward focus, engaging directly with partners.** New ways of working with businesses, inviting external people by being more outward facing and approachable and willing explore partnerships that go wider than the public sector, i.e., private sponsorship for free school meals



Engagement Plan



Engagement Plan



TOWER HAMLETS



COMMUNITY-LED

WORKFORCE TO REFLECT THE COMMUNITY



A workforce that reflects, at all levels, the rich diversity of the community of Tower Hamlets and addresses areas of inequality

BE A COUNCILLOR CAMPAIGN



To encourage people of different backgrounds to be involved in local politics in advance of the 2026 local elections

WOMEN'S COMMISSION

A groundbreaking initiative to advance gender equality, amplify women's voices, and address key issues affecting women in our community



COMMUNITY AT THE CORE

A new Community Engagement Strategy 2024-2028, with a vision to create 'a council that listens to communities to build a borough that works for everyone'



EMPOWERMENT & LEADERSHIP



Empowering residents and community leaders to leverage lived experiences for the council's improvement agenda

STRATEGIC VISION 2035

A comprehensive long-term vision co-produced with the community



COMMUNITY COHESION PLAN

2025/2029



A plan for a more cohesive community which sets out our approach to achieving the best outcomes

LEARNING FROM THE PAST



Evaluating the effectiveness of past cost-saving measures and digital models to ensure best practice

VALUE DRIVEN

SAVING FAMILIES

Universal Free School Meals for all secondary students, promoting healthy eating during the cost-of-living crisis

£550 per child, per year

£25m

Reduction to Agency Spend In the 2024/25 financial year

Investment of

£17m IN GROWTH FOR MAYORAL PRIORITY



£39.3m

investment in improvements for the community

PEOPLE FIRST

A borough for all



TECH ENABLED CARE

£4.9m

investment to improve the quality of life for our most vulnerable residents

£755m

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUND

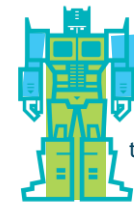
to transform our borough over the next 3 years



193

E-LEARNING

Courses available on the Learning HUB for all staff



TRANSFORM YOUR TEAM

Bid for a free half day training tailored to your team's specific requirements. Receive expert advice & direction on areas transformation

Page 129

INNOVATE

Integrated Dashboards

for intelligence driven service improvement



Power Bi



INNOVATION TH

A workforce culture transformation programme designed to help improve culture among teams and services across the council

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE



Achieve GOLD status in 2025

ENABLING

OVER 40

Different types of APPRENTICESHIPS available for all staff



STAFF POD SESSIONS

Take part in multiple opportunities to ask questions, raise concerns, share ideas and contribute to exciting council initiatives



MEET YOUR DIRECTORS

Increased leadership visibility at workforce engagement sessions for enhanced collaboration



YOUNG TOWER HAMLETS

A fresh website - the new go-to hub for young people aged 11 to 19 or up to 25 with SEND

YOUNG AMBASSADORS



A programme for young people in the borough passionate about their local community and making a difference in young people's lives



Annual reports published by the corporate centre on progress with strategic priorities

MAYOR'S SMALL GRANTS

which will provide £800k through community grants and initiatives for enhanced VCS awareness and accessibility of all available



LET'S TALK TOWER HAMLETS



A platform for residents and local businesses in the borough who want to help shape proposals, projects and priorities that can benefit the community



MAYORAL SURGERIES

Opportunity for any resident to talk to their Mayor face to face in relation to key challenges and opportunities



18 RECCOMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE

Collaborating with the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Team to build a comprehensive action plan for improved resident and staff outcomes

FEEDBACK LOOP

Ensuring a clear and accessible feedback loop from all consultations on the Tower Hamlets website



Tackling the Cost of Living

Committing a clear package of support to low-income households and those facing financial difficulties



KEEPING YOU CONNECTED

Achieving a 90% answered call rate for community support



5

streamlined directorates to enhance resident-focused services

COLLABORATIVE

ACCOUNTABLE

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Target Operating Model - Guidance Notes

October 2024

Purpose

These guidance notes outline a structured approach for applying the new Target Operating Model (TOM) design principles to:

- Team / service / departmental restructures
- Service redesigns
- Community engagement initiatives

The framework will ensure consistency, alignment with strategic objectives, and a deep understanding of community needs and values. In providing practical insights and key considerations, these guidance notes aim to support informed decision making, foster a culture of innovation and collaboration, and enhance organisational accountability. Managers and leaders are expected to use these notes as a reference and demonstrate their integration of TOM principles in their restructuring redesign, and engagement activities.

Background

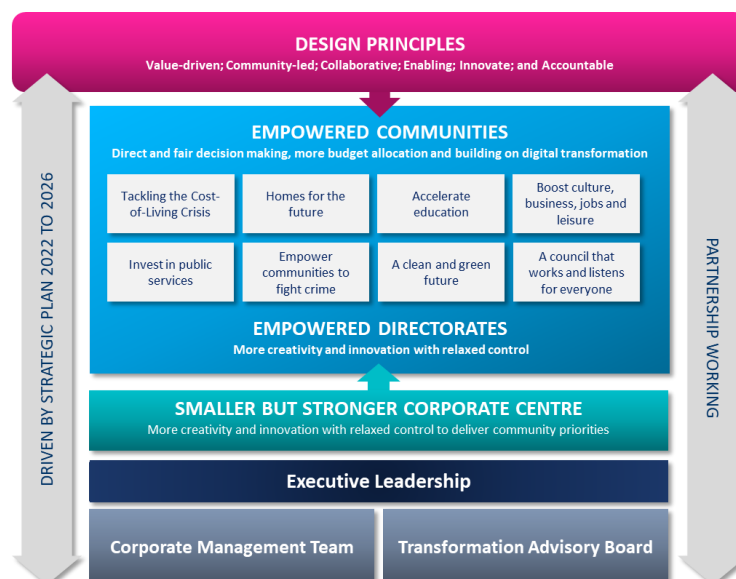
Tower Hamlets Council is implementing a new Target Operating Model (TOM), designed to better align to organisational priorities, and ensuring that the community is front-and-centre to decisions that matter to them. The previous TOM (2019 – 2022) focused primarily on internal processes and structures. In contrast, the new TOM vision is to:

“Create a more efficient, effective, and responsive public sector organisation that is better able to meet the needs of its residents.”

In developing the revised TOM, the council adopted a collaborative approach that comprised extensive engagement with staff, community members, targeted groups, and Members. By incorporating feedback from those directly impacted by council services, the council aimed to strengthen trust, collaboration and alignment with strategic objectives. This approach represents a significant departure from the previous TOM, reflecting a commitment to placing community needs at the forefront of organisational decision-making.

TOM

Underpinned by the council’s 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan and partnership working, the revised Target Operating Model is embedded across six core design principles to enable empowered communities, and a smaller but stronger corporate centre to enable empowered directorates:



The new TOM is founded on the following core principles:

<p>Value-driven</p> <p>Improving processes to empower staff.</p>	<p>Community-led</p> <p>Building trust by making services accessible and inclusive.</p>
<p>Enabling</p> <p>Developing and supporting staff to deliver excellent services.</p>	<p>Collaborative</p> <p>Engaging with staff and partners for the best outcomes.</p>
<p>Accountable</p> <p>Championing a ‘one council’ culture for our residents.</p>	<p>Innovative</p> <p>Being brave to deliver cutting-edge services.</p>

Guidance Notes

Value-Driven

As a local authority, ensuring a value-driven approach in restructuring, redesign, and community engagement initiatives is paramount. This involves aligning decisions with community needs and aspirations, while ensuring efficient resource utilisation. A value-driven approach focuses on delivering maximum benefits to residents, communities, and the council, by integrating community values with strategic objectives. Active engagement with residents, coupled with feedback incorporation, fosters transparency, trust, and decision-making aligned with community interests.

To achieve cost-effectiveness, we must optimise resource and avoid unnecessary expenditures while maintaining meaningful outcomes. This entails data-driven planning, streamlining operations, and eliminating inefficiencies. Community engagement also identifies cost-saving opportunities through collaborative problem-solving. Additionally, a value-driven approach involves improving processes to empower staff and enhance efficiency. By streamlining workflows, reducing bureaucracy, and providing staff with the necessary tools and training, we can create a more productive and engaged workforce. Balancing financial responsibility with value delivery ensures that changes and engagements result in sustainable, long-term benefits for the community.

Key considerations:

- **Resident Impact:** Enhances resident experience, access or outcomes.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Consistent with the council’s strategic objectives and priorities.
- **Staff Empowerment:** Improves processes to empower staff and enhance efficiency?

Enabling

Enabling is crucial for effective restructuring, redesign, and community engagement. It involves creating an environment that empowers staff and supports their professional development, leading to excellent service delivery.

To enable staff, it is key that an organisation invests in training and development, fosters a supportive work environment, and empowers staff to make decisions. Additionally, a focus on

growing our own talent by investing in internal development programs and creating career pathways can help retain top talent and ensure that we have the necessary skills and expertise to meet future challenges. Effective talent management is essential for ensuring that our workforce is aligned with our strategic goals and that we have the right people in the right places. By implementing a comprehensive talent management strategy, we can create a high-performing organisation that is capable of delivering excellent services to the community.

Key considerations:

- **Continuous Learning and Development:** Invest in ongoing training and development programs to ensure staff have the skills and knowledge needed to excel in their roles.
- **Career Progression and Development:** Create clear career pathways and opportunities for growth within the organization to retain top talent and motivate staff.
- **Employee Engagement and Well-being:** Foster a positive and supportive work environment that promotes employee engagement, well-being, and job satisfaction.

Accountable

Accountability is essential for building trust, effective governance, and a one council culture in restructuring, redesign, and community engagement initiatives. This begins with establishing clear lines of responsibility and ensuring effective oversight. Clearly defining roles and responsibilities at all levels of the organisation creates a structure where individuals understand their part in the process and are held accountable for their contributions. Regular reporting mechanisms can be used to track progress and address issues promptly.

Effective oversight is also crucial for maintaining accountability. This involves monitoring efforts, evaluating progress, providing feedback, and intervening as needed. A one council culture requires a shared sense of purpose and a commitment to working together towards common goals. Transparent communication with the public about responsibility, progress updates, and challenges fosters trust and keeps the community informed.

Key Considerations:

- **Clear Roles and Duties:** Ensure that roles and duties are clearly defined and that individuals understand their responsibilities.
- **One Council Culture:** Foster a shared sense of purpose and a commitment to working together towards common goals.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** Be prepared to explain and justify decisions and actions, and to address any issues that arise.

Community-Led

A community-led approach involves placing residents and stakeholders at the centre of decision-making processes, with co-production as a fundamental strategy. By partnering with the community in designing, implementing, and evaluating policies and services, we can ensure that residents are not merely consulted but actively shape outcomes. This approach fosters ownership, empowerment, and the integration of lived experiences and local knowledge into decision-making. Inclusive forums, workshops, and consultations create spaces for diverse voices to be heard, ensuring that restructuring or redesign genuinely reflects community needs and aspirations.

Building trust through accessible and inclusive services is a key component of a community-led approach. By ensuring that services are designed and delivered in a way that meets the needs of all residents, regardless of their background or circumstances, we can foster a sense of belonging and support. A community-led approach also requires responsiveness and adaptability to community feedback. Co-production allows for the co-creation of solutions rather than top-down directives. Working alongside residents to develop practical, relevant, and widely supported initiatives might involve establishing working groups or advisory panels composed of community members, local businesses, and organisations. These groups would actively participate in every stage of the restructuring process, ensuring that decisions are rooted in the community's vision and are sustainable.

Key considerations:

- **Active Engagement:** Engage residents actively in consultations and decision-making processes.
- **Empowerment:** Equip the community with the tools, knowledge and opportunities to influence decisions.
- **Accessibility and Inclusion:** Ensure that services are accessible and inclusive to all residents, regardless of their backgrounds or circumstances.

Collaborative

To foster collaboration in restructuring, redesign, and community engagement initiatives, we must actively encourage partnerships between stakeholders within and outside the organisation. This involves breaking down siloes, promoting cross-departmental communications, and integrating diverse perspectives into decision-making. Establishing interdisciplinary teams that include representatives from various departments, community organisations, local businesses, and residents can create a more holistic and innovative approach to problem solving. These teams can collaborate to identify challenges, share resources, and develop comprehensive solutions.

Engaging with external stakeholders, such as non-profits, academic institutions, and private sector partners, through joint ventures, public-private partnerships, and collaborative workshops can enhance the scope and impact of our initiatives. This collaboration leverages the strengths of diverse stakeholders, leading to innovative approaches, that benefit the entire community by pooling a range of skills, knowledge and resources. It is also essential to engage with staff and partners at all levels of the organisation to ensure everyone feels involved and valued.

Key considerations:

- **Cross-Departmental Collaboration:** Encourage teams across departments to work together to avoid duplication and enhance service delivery.
- **External Partnerships:** Build strong relationships with external stakeholders, including community organisations, SMEs and other public sector bodies.
- **Staff Engagement:** Create a culture of open communication, collaboration, and mutual respect to encourage staff involvement and engagement.

Innovative

To ensure that we are empowered to innovate during restructures, redesigns, or community engagement exercises, we need to foster a culture that encourages creativity, experimentation, and a

willingness to take calculated risks. This empowerment begins with leadership that is open to new ideas and supports initiatives that challenge the status quo. By providing staff with the autonomy to explore innovative solutions and the resources needed to implement them, we can create an environment where employees feel confident to propose and test new approaches. Encouraging cross-departmental collaboration and interdisciplinary teams allows for the blending of diverse perspectives and expertise, leading to more creative and effective solutions.

To be truly innovative, we must also be brave and willing to take risks, delivering cutting-edge services that set ourselves apart from other organisations. Innovation thrives in an environment where employees are not only allowed but encouraged to think outside the box and explore unconventional strategies. Establishing frameworks that support continuous learning and adaptation is also crucial. This includes mechanisms for reviewing and assessing the impact of new initiatives, learning from both successes and failures, and making iterative improvements. Engaging with the community as active partners in this innovation process can yield valuable insights and co-create solutions aligned with local needs.

Key Considerations:

- **Innovative culture:** Foster a culture where new ideas are welcomed and considered.
- **Resource Provision:** Provide resources and environment needed to test and refine innovative approaches.
- **Risk-Taking:** Be brave and willing to take calculated risks to deliver cutting-edge services.

Conclusion

The principles outlined in these guidance notes provide a robust foundation for our New Target Operating Model, ensuring that our efforts are aligned with the values, needs, and aspirations of the community we serve. By embedding these principles into our practices, we can navigate restructuring, redesign, and community engagement initiatives with integrity, innovation, and a commitment to excellence. This approach will not only enhance our organisational effectiveness but also strengthen our relationship with the community, fostering trust, collaboration, and a shared vision for a better future.

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People First – narrative and Target Operating Model

Developed by Internal Communications Team

Communications Plan - ROSIE (Research, Objectives, Strategy, Implementation, Evaluation)

Communication Leads: Andreas Christophorou, Director of Communications and Marketing, Asha Isaac, Head of Internal Communications and Culture Change and Sarah Francis, Internal Communications Officer, and

Strategy, Improvement and Transformation (SIT): Ayesha Hakim Rahman, Acting Deputy Director of Strategy, Improvement & Transformation, Muhammed A. Uddin, Transformation Business Analyst and Onyekachi Ajisafe, Transformation Project Manager

Last updated: Tuesday 24 September 2024

Please note, this is a working communications plan and will be updated monthly (every 2 weeks with SIT).

Introduction

People First is the council's transformation programme to deliver one of the most ambitious agendas in local government.

Tower Hamlets is a borough of contrasts with extreme wealth and poverty that inhibit social mobility. We have some of the highest pressures of any local authority, for example, we have the fastest growing population in the country, 48.7 per cent of children living in poverty and 22,000 people on the housing waiting list.

Our mission is to ensure that our services make the biggest improvements to people's lives guided by a data-led approach which realigns resources, empowers officers, and designs services with users

People First will support us in realigning our resources, taking a data-led approach, empowering officers, adopting a user perspective and ensuring we are resident focused.

- Staff First – Putting our staff first by giving you the tools to deliver excellent services.
- Residents First – Putting our residents first by working with them to deliver the best outcomes.

The Target Operating Model (TOM) showcases the blueprint for how an organisation will operate in the future, it defines the organisation's goals, objectives, and processes.

The vision is to create a more efficient, effective, and responsive public sector organisation that is better able to meet the needs of its communities.

Aligning with the Executive Mayor's Vision:

- Addressing specific priorities and goals
- Creating a legacy of community empowerment
- Reinforcing commitment to progressive leadership

The TOM has six design principles, which run parallel to the six behaviours detailed in the People First transformation narrative.

Staff First

- Value-driven: Improving processes to empower staff.
- Community-led: Building trust by making services accessible and inclusive.

- Enabling: Developing and supporting staff to deliver excellent services.

Residents First

- Collaborative: Engaging with staff and partners for the best outcomes.
- Accountable: Championing a 'one council' culture for our residents.
- Innovative: Being brave to deliver cutting-edge services.

Research

The TOM: From September 2023 to August 2024 the SIT team have engaged with members, residents, senior leaders and staff through various events and engagement, which include: Transformation Advisory Board, Innovation POD Session (staff), attendance at PAN London transformation network to understand what makes a successful TOM, targeted group sessions to engage with residents, a Partnership Executive Group meeting, a Consultation Report to understand how we ensure an excellent relationship with partners and residents in order to meet the needs of our communities.

People First narrative: The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge report September 2023 recognised that the 'developing transformation programme and associated governance will be integral for the approval and monitoring of the delivery of savings and addressing current overspends' and advised that we should 'develop a clear narrative (to) ensure a common understanding' of the People First transformation programme'. The Investors in People report 2023 also recommended that we 'flesh out and better articulate what People First means at Tower Hamlets. Consolidate the message and help people make the link to Service Plans and ultimately their individual objectives so that everything is aligned'.

Objectives (to be further developed, along with key messages)

- Ensure staff have a better understanding of People First through the new narrative and communication strategy
- Working closely with senior leaders to ensure all staff understand how the TOM supports and guides the work in their service area
- TOM and guidance actively used in strategy and planning work

Strategy

Audience

- All staff / frontline staff
- Managers
- SLT
- CMT
- Members

Corporate channels – managed by internal communications

- Internal newsletters: TH now, Managers' Briefing, SLT specials
- The Bridge – homepage and People First section
- Lift stickers
- Posters
- AV screens (including frontline sites)
- Viva Engage (peer to peer communications)
- Internal events – see implementation table

Supporting documents (to be designed by the Design Team in line with the People First brand)

- TOM activity document

- TOM guidance

Implementation (draft)

Date	Message	Channels/ Event	Leads
October			
w/c 14 October	LAUNCH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative and competition • TOM • Case study - example – look out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TH now - CE's message • The Bridge • AV screens 	Internal communications and SIT
w/c 14 October	People First Case studies – Town Hall – promotion in the building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TH now article • Post on Viva Engage 	Internal communications
w/c 14 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People First promotion 	SLT session	Internal Communications
w/c 14 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background TOM and journey • Learnings from last TOM • Highlight synergies People First comp / design principles • Promotion of Innovation Month 	Managers' Briefing	Internal Communications and SIT
w/c 14 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People First case studies competition • Examples of good work already taken place • Innovation Month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TH now special • News article front page • Button update 	Internal Communications
w/c 14 October	People First narrative key messages – placed in the Town Hall reception area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull up banners 	Internal Communications
w/c 21 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full TOM details (including activity map and guidance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bridge • TH now - CE's message 	Internal Communications

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal message from AHR (The Bridge only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AV screens (for full TOM message) 	
w/c 28 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition and narrative Innovation Month 	TH now article	Internal Communications
w/c 28 October	TOM, activity document and guidance	CE's message TH now	Internal Communications
Innovation POD room on floor 2, room 215 (ready ahead of Innovation Month with visuals highlighting the six behaviours)			
November			
November – all month	Promotion of People First and TOM	CE Roadshows	Internal Communications
November – all month	Promotion of TOM / People First + activity document	Innovation Month	Internal Communications
November	Promotion of People First and TOM	Staff Induction (20 November)	Internal Communications
w/c 4 November	Two articles under People First heading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background of TOM – what this means for how staff will work Competition 	TH now articles Plasma takeover with design principles / behaviours	Internal Communications
w/c 4 November	Case study more detail	Spotlight	Internal Communications
w/c 11 November	Focus on TOM and guidance document	TH now article	Internal Communications and SIT
w/c 18 November (depending on entries so far)	Competition and six design principles for TOM	TH now special	Internal Communications
w/c 25 November	Focus on one of the case studies / one of the items from the activity map	Spotlight	Internal Communications
December			
December <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles - update on success of staff / leaders taking on TOM guidance, share winning case studies with People First competition SLT Session 			
w/c 2 December	The End of Year reminder linking to People First narrative	TH now special	Internal Communications
January 2025			

- People First competition update – TH now article
- Mangers' Briefing foreword – member of the Transformation, Strategy and Improvement Team
- Highlighting content of People First in Leadership Conference
- POD Sessions (TBC January / February 2025)

February

Leadership Conference - 11 February 2025

July

Staff Conference – 3 July

Ideas TBC

- Article everyone month re TOM lenses (we have already committed to an article from transformation every other week – will this be in addition to that?) what about the articles which will focus on the areas in 'Why do we need a TOM?' are they included
- When building visuals ready – timelapse walk around the building (need to build in how we will manage non Town Hall offices)
- Viva Engage posts from staff involved in case studies / details of design principles (share Viva Engage visual for them to use)
- Drop in session on the progress of how staff are using the TOM to underpin their work? Do they need support?
- AHR and AC review with HR potential to embed behaviours / design principles part of workforce values
- SLT session – discuss whether this is in November or part of SLT session in December

Evaluation

- Investors in People feedback
- LGA Peer Review feedback
- Inclusion in service plans
- Staff feedback at Tea and Chat sessions

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<p>Cabinet</p> <p>16th October 2024</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Robin Beattie, Interim Director of Strategy. Improvement and Transformation</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Strategic Delivery and Performance Report Year Three Quarter 1</p>	

Lead Member	Lutfur Rahman – Mayor of Tower Hamlets
Originating Officer(s)	Doug Plumer, Data Analytics, Business Intelligence & Performance Lead
Wards affected	All
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Exempt information	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	<p>All 8 Strategic Priorities:</p> <p>Priority One: Tackling the Cost of Living</p> <p>Priority Two: Homes for the Future</p> <p>Priority Three: Accelerate Education</p> <p>Priority Four: Boost Culture, Business, Jobs and Leisure</p> <p>Priority Five: Invest in Public Services</p> <p>Priority Six: Empower Communities and Fight Crime</p> <p>Priority Seven: A Clean and Green Future</p> <p>Priority Eight: A Council that Listens and Works for Everyone</p>

Executive Summary

This report provides Cabinet with a Quarter 1 monitoring update of the Year 3 Annual Delivery Plan 2024-25 performance measures.

The delivery status of operations relevant to the council’s strategic objectives is reported with the intention to give a clear understanding of the council’s current performance.

This data is provided to inform any necessary decisions or actions arising from current operational delivery.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the strategic delivery and performance report for Q1 covering the period of 1st April 2024 to 30th June 2024.

2. Review the status of 56 performance measures in Q1 tracking the delivery of Year 3 of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026 (See Appendix A).
3. Consider whether there have been any major changes to the assumptions underpinning the targets set for the 2024/25 financial year since the target setting exercise.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The council's reporting cycle – the Performance Management & Accountability Framework 2023-24 is set up to provide quarterly update reports for the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026 including operational performance measures.
- 1.2 Targeted performance measurement is relevant to strategic policy as it helps services to be designed so that they can deliver strategic objectives.
- 1.3 By examining performance measures of operational activity, the council can make informed decisions about how to effectively steer resources towards the goals of the organisation.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet may decide not to review the performance information. This is not recommended as Lead Members have a key role to review and challenge under-performance and utilise performance information to inform resource allocation.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

Background

- 3.1 In 2022 the administration began work following the council and mayoral election of May 2022. The council has created a new strategic plan for the 2022-2026 period and started investing in a range of services to delivering strategic improvement in the way the council serves its residents. We are now in the third year of the mayoral administration. A new annual delivery plan for Year 3 was agreed at Cabinet setting ambitious targets with the focus on improvement and delivery.
- 3.2 The Strategic Plan 2022-26 adopted eight new corporate priorities that provide a framework for action to improve services and bring about strategic change for Tower Hamlets on 1st August 2022. This plan translates mayoral priorities into operational deliverables and eight strategic priorities. Through monitoring key deliverables published in the Strategic Plan, the council can support and implement strategic improvements for the borough.
- 3.3 11 new measures have been added to the suite of strategic performance measures for year three. 6 measures have been removed, taking the total number from 51 to 56 measures being monitored.

Resources

- KPI 052 - Council tax collection rate (in year)
- KPI 053 - Council tax collection rate (overall)

Housing & Regeneration

- KPI 054 - Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service
- KPI 055 - Percentage of tenants satisfied that their home is safe
- KPI 056 - Percentage of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard

Children's Social Care

- KPI 057 - Rate of children receiving a custodial sentence
- KPI 027 Rate of children subject to protection plan
- KPI 029 Rate of children looked after

Communities

- KPI 058 - Level of Public Realm Cleanliness
- KPI 034 - Percentage of waste collections on time

Health & Social Care

- KPI 035 - People in adult social care quality of life

3.4 Performance Summary

RAG Status	Y2Q1	Y2Q4	Y3Q1
Green	22	26	24
Amber	8	4	9
Red	7	10	9
No data currently	0	0	1
Data only	7	6	8
Reported annually	5	5	5
Total	51	51	56

3.5 At the end of Quarter 1 (April to June 2024), 56 performance indicators are reported in 6 categories as follows:

- 24 have met or exceeded their target (Green)
- 9 are between target and minimum (Amber)
- 9 are below target (Red)
- 1 missing data for Q1
- 8 are data only (contextual information)
- 5 are reported annually.

3.6 Correction to Strategic Delivery and Performance Report Year Two Q4

Following data validation, the Q3 and Q4 figures for KPI 003 - Percentage of homelessness cases prevented or relieved has been updated from 43% to 37% for Q3 and from 38% to 33% for Q4. The stretch target for this measure is 40% and the minimum target is 36%. As a result, the rag rating has also changed from green to amber for Q3 and from amber to red for Q4.

- 3.7 Homelessness statistics are submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) at the end of each quarter for validation. Provisional internal figures are used for corporate reporting at the end of each quarter and updated following validation by MHCLG within three to six months.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The council's Strategic Plan is focused on meeting the needs of the diverse communities living in Tower Hamlets and ensuring that everyone can play their part in a vibrant and cohesive community. Many of the strategic outcomes and supporting activities are designed to reduce inequalities and foster community cohesion.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

- 5.2 *Best Value (BV) Implication*

- 5.3 Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires the council as a best value authority to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". Monitoring of performance information and acting on the findings is an important way in which that obligation is being fulfilled.

- 5.4 *Sustainable action for greener environment*

- 5.5 Priority 7: A clean and green future. It focuses on key areas of sustainability, including air quality, waste and carbon emission. Key activities include work to drive up the borough's recycling rate, reducing CO2 emissions, and implementing a number of initiatives to improve air quality, including making Tower Hamlets one of the best boroughs for walking and cycling through our cycling training programmes.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications of this report, as it is reporting the status of performance measures. Where performance does impact on finances, these are addressed and reported through the council's existing financial framework.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 The council is under a general Duty of Best Value to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness."
- 7.2 Under the Duty of Best Value, therefore, the council should consider overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision.
- 7.3 The monitoring of performance objectives therefore assists in meeting the Best Value Duty placed upon the council.
-

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE.

Appendices

- Strategic Delivery and Performance Report Year Three, Quarter 1 (See Appendix A).

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

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Strategic Delivery and Performance Report

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Year Three Delivery Plan 2024-25 Q1 review





Successes

There are 24 **Green** measures

- 1 previously **Red** measure is now **Green**
- 1 previously **Amber** measure is now **Green**

Areas for attention

There are 9 **Red** measures

- 3 previously **Green** measures are now **Red**
- 2 previously **Amber** measures are now **Red**
- 3 previously **Red** measures remain **Red**
- 1 newly introduced measure is **Red**

There are 9 **Amber** measures

- 2 previously **Red** measures are now **Amber**
- 4 previously **Green** measures are now **Amber**
- 2 previously **Amber** measures remain **Amber**
- 1 newly introduced measure is **Amber**

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	This quarter last year	Last quarter	This quarter
RAG Status	Y2Q1	Y2Q4	Y3Q1
Green	22	26	24
Amber	8	4	9
Red	7	10	9
No data currently	0	0	1
Data only	7	6	8
Reported annually	5	5	5
Total	51	51	56

List of 24 **Green** measures

Our delivery and performance

List of 24 Green measures



Ref	Measure	Directorate	Previous Outturn	Previous Min Target	Previous Target	Previous RAG	Current Outturn	Current Min Target	Current Target	Current RAG
KPI 002	Number of university bursaries awarded (Annual)	Children's Services	400	360	400	Green	400	360	400	Green
KPI 005	Number of attendances to holiday activities and food programme during school holidays	Resources	89,222	63,000	70,000	Green	14,800	12,700	13,000	Green
KPI 011	Number of privately rented properties visited	Communities	976	438	438	Green	564	450	500	Green
KPI 015	% of secondary school pupils receiving council-funded FSM	Children's Services	73.6%	No target	No target	Data only	82.0%	69%	80%	Green
KPI 016	Number of young people who contacted and registered with the Council's and Council commissioned youth centres	Children's Services	6,076	5,220	5,800	Green	1,206	1,044	1,160	Green
KPI 017	Number of users who regularly attend the Council's and Council commissioned youth services	Children's Services	4,009	3,600	4,000	Green	904	720	800	Green
KPI 018	Number of young people engaged with the Council's and Council commissioned youth centres who achieve a recorded outcome	Children's Services	2,073	1,665	1,850	Green	438	367	408	Green
KPI 019	Number of young people engaged with the Council's and Council commissioned youth centres who achieve an accredited outcome	Children's Services	689	540	600	Green	151	131	146	Green
KPI 022	Percentage of Idea Store learners who pass a Skills for Life course	Resources	96%	86%	95%	Green	96%	90%	95%	Green
KPI 024	% of contacts into MAST that are reviewed and progressed within timescales	Children's Services	96%	90%	95%	Green	97.6%	90%	95%	Green
KPI 025	Rate of first time entrants to the Youth Justice system	Children's Services	154	185	155	Green	126	150	130	Green
KPI 033	Enterprises supported through the council's business programmes	Resources	1,150	585	650	Green	279	225	250	Green
KPI 034	Percentage of waste collections completed on time	Communities	99.6%	95.0%	98.0%	Green	99.6%	95%	97%	Green
KPI 036	% of people who are signposted to find appropriate advice & support in the wider community that helps them to maintain their independence	Health and Social Care	73%	60%	65%	Green	76%	65%	68%	Green
KPI 039	Number of smoking cessation 4 week quits	Health and Social Care	1,510	1,000	1,200	Green	364	250	300	Green
KPI 040	Number of smoking cessation 4 week quits (BAME)	Health and Social Care	743	400	450	Green	202	100	113	Green
KPI 042	Number of hours of uniformed patrols delivered by the Safer Neighbourhood Operations Service	Communities	11,495	3,500	3,750	Green	100%	90%	95%	Green
KPI 043	Victims of violence against women and girls who feel safer after engaging with commissioned provider	Communities	97%	75%	80%	Green	100%	90%	95%	Green

Our delivery and performance

List of 24 Green measures



Ref	Measure	Directorate	Previous Outturn	Previous Min Target	Previous Target	Previous RAG	Current Outturn	Current Min Target	Current Target	Current RAG
KPI 045	Number of trees planted	Communities	299	180	200	Green	0	0	0	Green
KPI 047	Percentage of enforcement actions to fly-tip incidents	Communities	347%	135%	150%	Green	269%	150%	200%	Green
KPI 048	Children engaged in school cycle schemes	Communities	893	990	1,100	Red	722	292	325	Green
KPI 049	Percentage of top 5% of earners from Black, Asian and multi-ethnic communities	Resources	33.35%	32%	35%	Amber	37.41%	32%	35%	Green
KPI 055	Percentage of tenants satisfied that their home is safe	Housing & Regeneration	New	New	New	New	71.8%	65.2%	68.5%	Green
KPI 057	Rate of children receiving a custodial sentence	Children's Services	New	New	New	New	0.25	0.9	0.5	Green

List of 9 **Amber** Measures



Ref	Measure	Directorate	Previous Outturn	Previous Min Target	Previous Target	Previous RAG	Current Outturn	Current Min Target	Current Target	Current RAG	Comments
KPI 001	Number of EMAs awarded (Annual)	Children's Services	803	750	1,250	Amber	752	750	1,250	Amber	Fewer applications with several applicants not meeting eligibility criteria this year. The eligibility criteria will be reviewed by the service and revised accordingly.
KPI 003	Percentage of homelessness cases prevented or relieved	Resources	33%	36%	40%	Red	37%	36%	40%	Amber	A comprehensive review and investment programme is underway to optimise productivity and generate capacity within the staff resource as a result of streamlined processes.
KPI 004	Number of homeless supported into sustainable accommodation	Resources	375	396	440	Red	96	90	110	Amber	New Homelessness Accommodation Placement Policy under review and 350 units in process to be secured.
KPI 013	% of primary school pupils in KS2 receiving council-funded FSM	Children's Services	95.3%	80%	85%	Green	87.1%	85%	90%	Amber	Work continues to encourage take up and ensure menus are popular and meet the diverse needs of the local community.
KPI 023	Number of children supported by the Early Help Children and Family Service	Children's Services	20,769	17,000	19,000	Green	6,852	6,300	7,000	Amber	We have launched the remainder of the family hubs which will increase attendance and engagement given that the launch of the four hubs was attended by over 4000 people.
KPI 028	% of Care Leavers aged 17-25 who are in education, employment or training (EET)	Children's Services	73.3%	65%	75%	Amber	72.8%	70%	75%	Amber	Every NEET care leaver is personally allocated an EET keyworker who offers support to get them into employment, education, or training for a minimum of 3 months.
KPI 038	% service users surveyed who agree with the statement "Overall I have a positive experience of the services I am receiving from the homecare agency"	Health and Social Care	86%	80%	85%	Green	82%	80%	85%	Amber	Performance concerns have been shared with providers and associated improvement plans have been agreed.
KPI 044	Adults with substance misuse treatment need who successfully engage in community-based structured treatment following release from prison	Communities	53.8%	45.0%	50.0%	Green	55%	50%	60%	Amber	We have already put in place three-way data matching process with the prisons and the treatment provider. The next step is to undertake a deep dive with OHID
KPI 058	Level of Public Realm Cleanliness	Communities	New	New	New	New	91%	90%	92%	Amber	The Mayors Waste Improvement project will enable increased focus on cleansing services within the borough.

List of 9 **Red** measures

Our delivery and performance

List of 9 Red measures



Ref	Measure	Directorate	Previous Outturn	Previous Min Target	Previous Target	Previous RAG	Current Outturn	Current Min Target	Current Target	Current RAG	Comments
KPI 006	Tonnes of food provided to food aid organisations	Housing & Regeneration	1,887	1,620	1,800	Green	93.8	202	225	Red	This measure has consistently hit its target for previous years but is below target for Q1 due to funding being paused for several months. This is projected to be on track again by Q2.
KPI 010	Lets to overcrowded households	Housing & Regeneration	49%	48%	53%	Amber	44%	48%	53%	Red	Demand for larger properties is far greater than the supply. Service is increasing supply of properties and making better use of the existing stock where possible.
KPI 021	% of education, health and care (EHC) assessments completed within 20 weeks	Children's Services	55%	59%	65%	Red	44%	49%	55%	Red	A review of systems and caseloads is being undertaken and a recovery plan for the assessment and review process is in place to improve performance.
KPI 026	% of young people that re-offend	Children's Services	35.8%	30%	20%	Red	33.3%	30%	20%	Red	We continue to work creatively with the children within the cohort to support them in addressing their needs.
KPI 030	Number of arts events delivered	Communities	14	8	10	Green	19	28	35	Red	There was lower take up than expected for some events, Earlier promotion of the Big Lunch / Great Get Together for 2025 will be co-ordinated in early January 2025.
KPI 031	% of leisure centre users that are female	Communities	48.9%	47.8%	49.2%	Amber	47.1%	47.8%	49.2%	Red	The launch of the free-swimming programme including women and girls over 16 will have a significant impact on performance. As of 23 August, there were 9,275 new free-swimming members of which 86% are female.
KPI 032	The number of new jobs, training and apprenticeship opportunities enabled for local people	Housing & Regeneration	2,782	2,250	2,500	Green	650	675	750	Red	We expect early engagement activity with developers and review of additional outturns that can be reported against this metric to lead to demonstrable and tangible increases in Q2.
KPI 046	Level of household recycling	Communities	15.3%	20.3%	22.0%	Red	15.8%	23.0%	23.0%	Red	The current measures will take some time to effect change. However, we anticipate that we will start to see positive results by mid-2024/25.
KPI 054	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service	Housing & Regeneration	New	New	New	New	57.7%	60.8%	65.0%	Red	An end-to-end review of the repair service is underway to improve performance.

List of 8 Data Only measures

Our delivery and performance

List of 8 Data Only measures



Ref	Measure	Directorate	Previous Outturn	Previous Min Target	Previous Target	Previous RAG	Current Outturn	Current Min Target	Current Target	Current RAG	Comments
KPI 007	Net additions to the housing stock	Housing & Regeneration	1,113	3,126	3,473	Red	370	No target	No target	Data only	Annual target set as delivery is not consistent in each quarter
KPI 009	Number of affordable homes delivered	Housing & Regeneration	459	900	1000	Red	200	No target	No target	Data only	Annual target set as delivery is not consistent in each quarter
KPI 012	Number of primary school pupils in KS2 receiving council-funded FSM	Children's Services	11,542	No target	No target	Data only	10,149	No target	No target	Data only	Contextual information in support of KPI 013
KPI 014	Number of secondary school pupils receiving council-funded FSM	Children's Services	11,040	No target	No target	Data only	9,152	No target	No target	Data only	Contextual information in support of KPI 015
KPI 020	Number of active education, health and care (EHC) plans	Children's Services	4,550	No target	No target	Data only	4,652	No target	No target	Data only	Contextual information about the SEN service
KPI 027	Rate of children subject to protection plans	Children's Services	47.8	New	New	New	45.1	No target	No target	Data only	Contextual information about children's services
KPI 029	Rate of children looked after	Children's Services	43.0	New	New	New	42.3	No target	No target	Data only	Contextual information about children's services
KPI 052	Council tax collection rate (in year)	Resources	91.2%	New	New	New	26.5%	No target	No target	Data only	Annual target set as delivery is not consistent in each quarter

1 No data currently measure

Our delivery and performance

1 No data currently measures



Ref	Measure	Directorate	Previous Outturn	Previous Min Target	Previous Target	Previous RAG	Current Outturn	Current Min Target	Current Target	Current RAG	Comments
KPI 053	Council tax collection rate (overall)	Resources	New	New	New	New		97.8%	97.8%	No data currently	The service is in the process of developing a methodology to calculate this measure.

Our delivery and performance

List of all measures by priority



Priority 1 Tackling the cost of living

[KPI 001](#)
[KPI 002](#)
[KPI 003](#)
[KPI 004](#)
[KPI 005](#)
[KPI 006](#)
[KPI 052](#)
[KPI 053](#)

Priority 2 Homes for the future

[KPI 007](#)
[KPI 009](#)
[KPI 010](#)
[KPI 011](#)
[KPI 054](#)
[KPI 055](#)
[KPI 056](#)

Priority 3 Accelerate Education

[KPI 012](#)
[KPI 013](#)
[KPI 014](#)
[KPI 015](#)
[KPI 016](#)
[KPI 017](#)
[KPI 018](#)
[KPI 019](#)
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[KPI 024](#)
[KPI 025](#)
[KPI 026](#)
[KPI 027](#)
[KPI 028](#)
[KPI 029](#)
[KPI 057](#)

Priority 4 Boost culture, business, jobs and leisure

[KPI 030](#)
[KPI 031](#)
[KPI 032](#)
[KPI 033](#)

Priority 5 Invest in public services

[KPI 035](#)
[KPI 036](#)
[KPI 037](#)
[KPI 038](#)
[KPI 039](#)
[KPI 040](#)

Priority 6 Empower Communities and Fight Crime

[KPI 042](#)
[KPI 043](#)
[KPI 044](#)

Priority 7 A Clean and Green Future

[KPI 045](#)
[KPI 034](#)
[KPI 046](#)
[KPI 047](#)
[KPI 048](#)
[KPI 058](#)

Priority 8 A council that listens and works for everyone

[KPI 049](#)
[KPI 050](#)
[KPI 051](#)

KPI 001

Number of EMAs awarded



Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Lisa Fraser Director of Education

23/24 RAG
Amber

23/24 Actual
752

Below target by
498

What the data shows

This measure is based on the academic year (September 2023 – July 2024) thus will not fit neatly into a single council financial year A total of 752 EMAs were awarded to successful applicants meeting the eligibility criteria.

Why is this below expected?

There were a lower number of applications received this reporting year and the attendance threshold also meant several applicants did not meet the eligibility criteria.

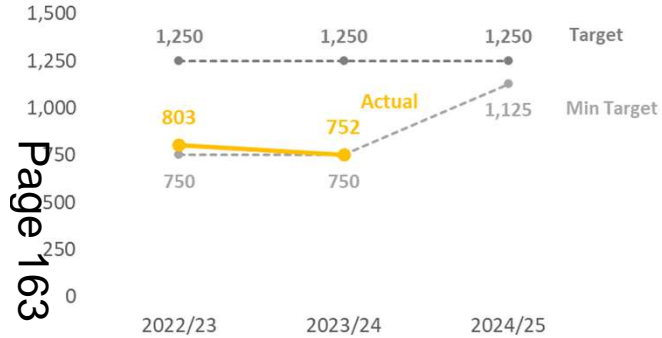
Mitigatory action

The eligibility criteria will be reviewed by the Service and revised accordingly to ensure receipt of the EMA funds are more accessible to applicants.

When will this be on track?

This is an annual measure and is expected to be on track next year.

Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 002

Number of university bursaries awarded

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Lisa Fraser Director of Education



23/24 RAG
Green

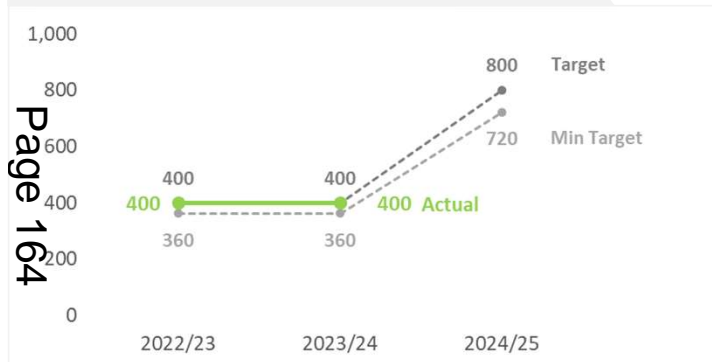
23/24 Actual
400

Above target by
0

What the data shows

This measure is based on the 2023/24 academic year (September 2023 – July 2024) thus will not fit neatly into a single council financial reporting year. This figure is provisional and likely to increase slightly following the appeals process.

Annual Performance Trend: Stable



KPI 003

Percentage of homelessness cases prevented or relieved

Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Mohamed Hussein Interim Director of Housing and Homelessness



Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
37%

Below target by
3 (8%)

What the data shows

As expected and planned for, the national drivers of the pressures in this area resulted in the Q1 outturn (37%) being slightly below the target level of 40% but above minimum threshold of 36%. The upward trend in successful prevention is holding from 32% in Q2, 37% in Q3 and 33% in Q4. The underlying trend is positive and additional resource made available by cabinet will enable a greater focus on prevention work in the coming periods.

Why is this below target

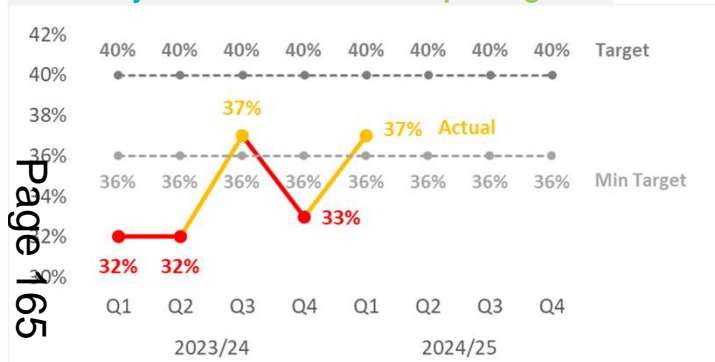
National economic drivers wholly underpin the rise in demand in this area. Evictions from family and friends remains the top reason for approaches (37%). Evictions from the private rented sector remain high. In Q1, (2021), there were 34 households who were owed a duty due to evictions from private rented homes, compared to 99 in Q1 of 2024/5. The ability to prevent homelessness where a landlord wants the property back is challenging at a national level and Tower Hamlets, whilst experiencing significant pressure is dealing with the issues comparatively well.

Mitigation action taken by the service

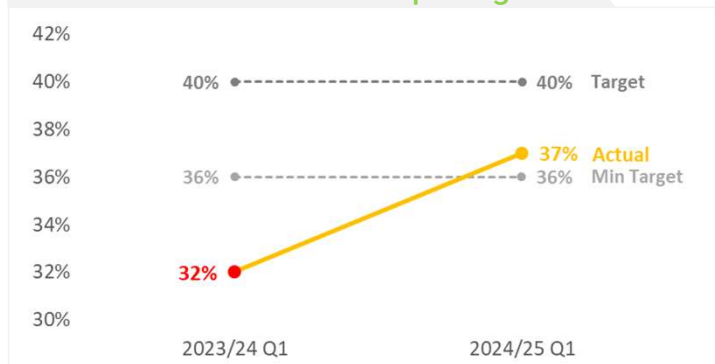
- A comprehensive review and investment programme is underway to optimise productivity and generate capacity within the staff resource as a result of streamlined processes, empowered staff decision making and investment in technology which will facilitate greater capacity to focus on prevention.
- Cabinet agreed Prevention grants (FYO PRS and Cost-of-living) which will provide financial incentives for families to retain household members and financial assistance for those who find their own PRS.

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Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 004

Number of homeless people supported into sustainable accommodation



Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Mohamed Hussein Interim Director of Housing and Homelessness

Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
96

Below target by
14 (13%)

What the data shows

The national housing crises driving unrivalled demand in temporary accommodation results in a similar demand pattern to secure more sustainable accommodation solutions. and at the end of Q1 96 homeless households were supported into sustainable accommodation. Whilst the performance is within the bandwidth of the target, this is a key priority area of focus for improvement by the team in the coming period.

Why is this below target

National housing crises driving pressures across the board and a natural outcome of increased demand in TA creates pressure throughout the housing chain. We saw an increase in demand of 8% in this first quarter period alone. Although the current quarter's target is below at 100 (29 less than previous quarter), it remains part of an overall upward trend. Over the past year, there was consistent quarter-on-quarter growth, with moves increasing from 71 in Q1 to 89 in Q2, 94 in Q3, and 129 in Q4. Despite the recent decline, the underlying trend remains positive.

Mitigation action taken by the service

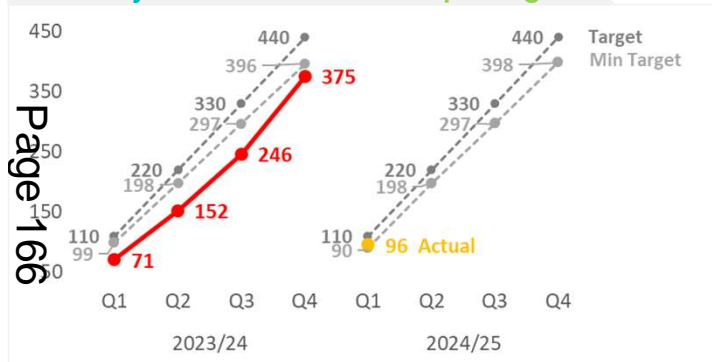
New Homelessness Accommodation Placement Policy currently under review will enable better and more affordable accommodation to be found for those needing to exit TA.

External validation underway of two long-term lease agreements which have the potential to secure a higher volume (350 units) of private sector homes for those exiting TA.

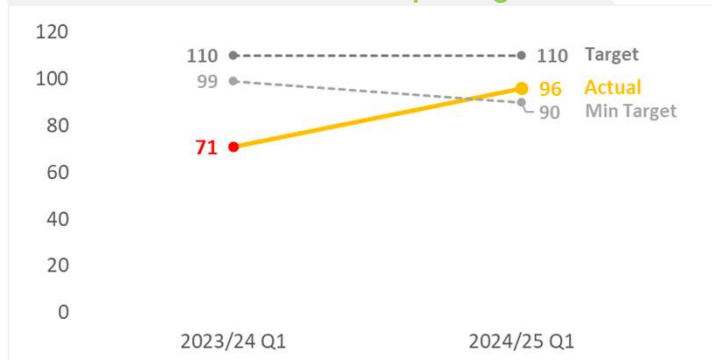
When this will be on track

We expect month on month improvements throughout the year giving a strong focus on self-contained accommodation for procurement activity.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



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KPI 005

Number of attendances to holiday activities & food programme during holidays



Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Leah Sykes Director of Customer Services

Q1 RAG
Green

Q1 Actual
14,800

Above target by
1,000 (8%)

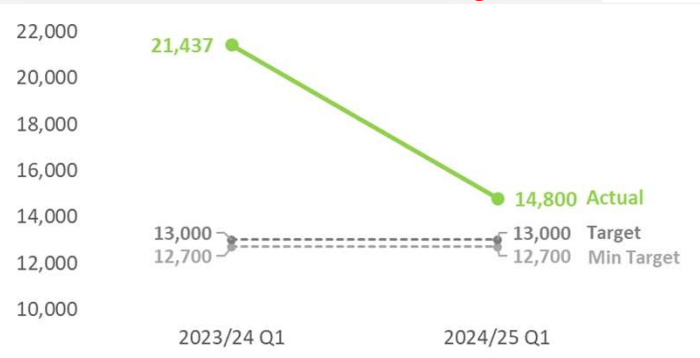
What the data shows

This data shows there were 14,800 attendances by children at HAF clubs for the Easter holiday, with each attendance providing a meal, outperforming the target of 13,000 for Q1. Summer holiday figures will be reported in Q2, and there will be no reporting in Q3.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



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KPI 006

Tonnes of food provided to food aid organisations

Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Leah Sykes Director of Customer Services



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
94

Below target by
131 (58%)

What the data shows

At the end of Q1 93.8tonnes of food were provided to food aid organisations below the minimum target set at 202 tonnes.

Why is this below target

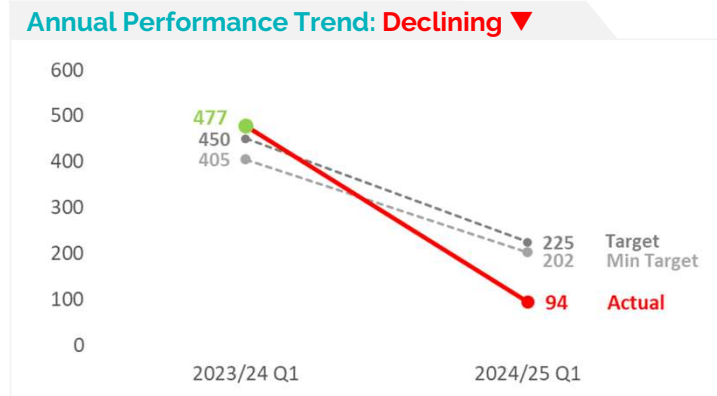
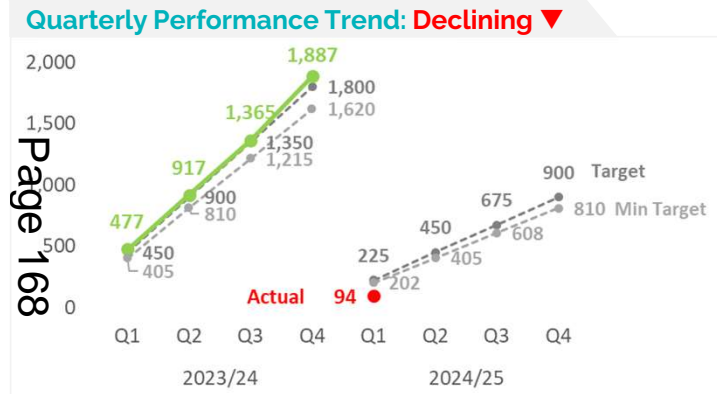
This measure has consistently hit its target for previous years but is below target for Q1 due to funding being paused for several months. This was following late notification of the extension of external funding, and the subsequent need to agree new expenditure and put in place new contracts.

Mitigation action taken by the service

We used existing contract headroom from last financial year to extend delivery as far as we could into Q1, and once this had expired, we then took deliveries of free food from Felix Project and allowed organisations to collect.

When this will be on track

Output for this measure will be on track again by the end of Q2.



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KPI 007

Net additions to the housing stock (1/4)

David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Sripriya Sudhakar Director of Planning & Building Control, Karen Swift Director of Housing



Q1 RAG
Data only

Q1 Actual
370

Increased by
370

What the data shows

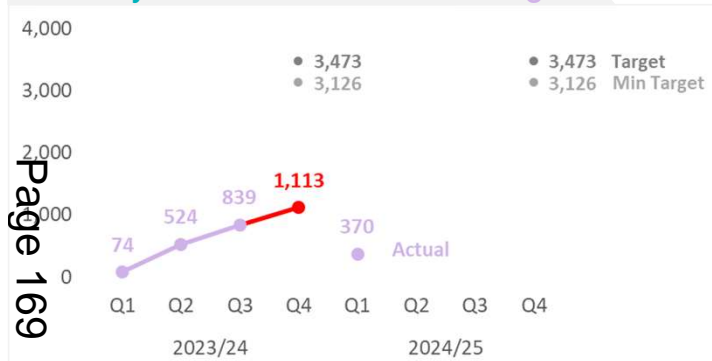
At the end of Q1 we have delivered 370 (net additional homes) across all tenures. Positively, this quarter's figure is the second highest level of delivery for Tower Hamlets in a quarter since Q1 2023. This figure is also above the average level of delivery from that previous year. Whilst this is particularly positive for current delivery, with average scheme build-out rates (consent to completion) between 2022-2024 taking around 4.5 years, this quarter's completions are likely to reflect development from a different economic cycle, and slightly less impacted by the national issues currently facing the development sector around delivery identified below.

Contextually, 2,629 units were approved within the Q1 reporting period, made up of 16 scheme approvals. Positively, this is a strong quarter for approvals, highlighting there is continued developer interest in investment within the Borough. Translating approvals to completions remains the primary challenge for housing delivery.

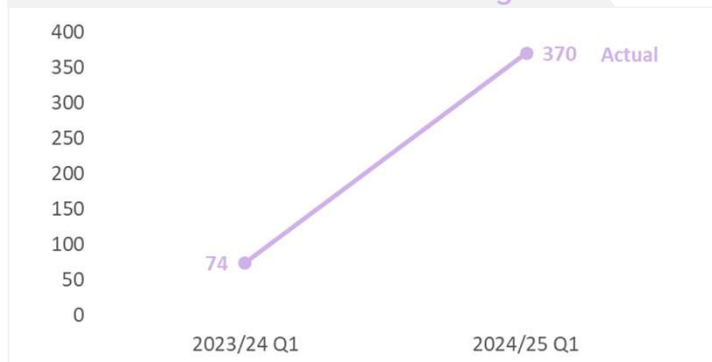
Why is this below target

Nationally, both housing starts and completions are falling in 2024, reflecting both a sluggish housing market and a currently challenging economic climate for development. The decline in completions is reflected in London, with completions currently running at their slowest rate in the 2020s, as a result of poor sales, contractors going into administration and limited work to replace completed projects, translating to a sluggish London housing market. These supply and demand issues are likely to be seen in major schemes across London and add to the challenges around developer confidence and housing delivery.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 007

Net additions to the housing stock (2/4)

David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Sripriya Sudhakar Director of Planning & Building Control, Karen Swift Director of Housing



Q1 RAG
Data only

Q1 Actual
370

Increased by
370

For boroughs like Tower Hamlets, despite the existing challenges of having the most complex multi tenure schemes in large high-rise blocks, delivery challenges are compounded by the wider economic challenges experienced in the development sector.

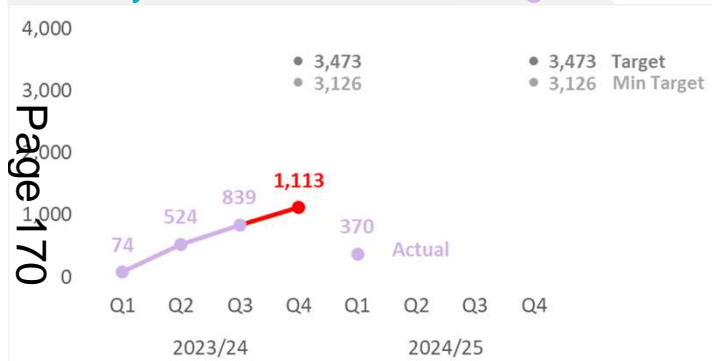
Issues such as inflation, interest rates, uncertainty with the job market, regulatory changes to legislation (fire safety & damp/mould), construction outputs contracting (due to labour and high material costs) these are all contributing to uncertainty and resulting in slow delivery and completions. These issues impacted many schemes on stalled sites across London. In Tower Hamlets 10 live schemes are identified as having construction stalled, compromising of 3,678 private homes and 936 affordable homes. Scheme analysis shows that 8 have started development and stopped; whilst 2 are cleared sites and have stopped. Notwithstanding any housing demand challenges, the above development challenges impact the supply of housing in boroughs like Tower Hamlets significantly. This is partly due to the scale of growth and the nature of major development often being complex, dense and multi-tenure.

Given the average build-out rates is around 4.5 years and major scale of schemes in Tower Hamlets, factors such as the size and complexity of schemes and scheme phasing, i.e., to enable market absorption can all impact the rate in which schemes are built out by developers.

Mitigation action taken by the service

Developer engagement sessions: The service held a developer forum in July with a focus on housing delivery. This formed part of the services commitment to continue to engage with developers to find out issues, concerns, opportunities to accelerate delivery and where the local authority can assist.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 007

Net additions to the housing stock (3/4)

David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Sripriya Sudhakar Director of Planning & Building Control, **Karen Swift** Director of Housing



Q1 RAG
Data only

Q1 Actual
370

Increased by
370

Responses from the industry highlighted support for paying for a fast-track pre-application service with quicker response time and certainty of outcome being key drivers for this. Also, speedier legal drafting and timeliness of Section 106 Agreements were also raised.

Developing a 'fast track' dedicated planning service for council and major private housing schemes committed to delivery, to bring more efficiency into the planning process and thus expedite delivery. A dedicated officer has been recruited for Council owned schemes and a dedicated s106 officer has been appointed to front load s106 discussions at early stages of planning to improve pace. This provides an opportunity to refund/reinvest 'fast track' pre-application fees where construction commences within the committed timescales.

Proactive engagement with developers and landowners with planning permissions to track progress on delivery and build a better picture of challenges to delivery and help respond through appropriate action through the planning process.

Work with developers on the identified stalled sites to ascertain how the Council can work in partnership to unlock delivery.

Proactively monitoring progress on construction activity across the Borough on major schemes to track progress on delivery.

In September the P&BC service formally responded to the public consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework, with a focus on any amendments to improve housing delivery.



KPI 007

Net additions to the housing stock (4/4)



David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Sripriya Sudhakar Director of Planning & Building Control, **Karen Swift** Director of Housing

Q1 RAG
Data only

Q1 Actual
370

Increased by
370

The Government's New Homes Accelerator Programme proposes to dedicate resources to unblock major housing schemes that have stalled or are delayed. A 'call for sites' is underway to submit larger sites to be considered as part of the programme. Through the ongoing work to better understand issues with stalled sites, continued engagement with developers will help the Council to better understand where these sites are and the issues that surround housing delivery.

Securing Development Agreements with partners for sites it cannot build out itself to increase housing delivery.

When this will be on track

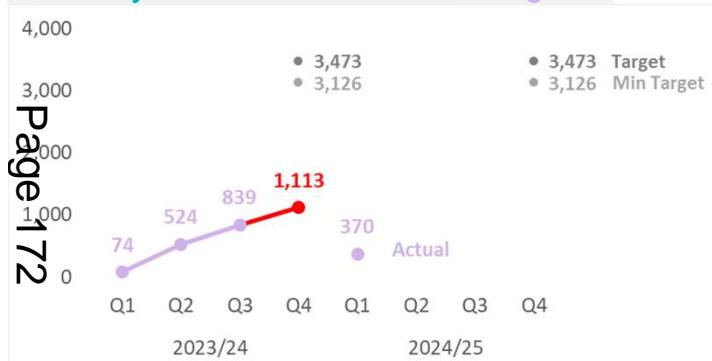
Any improvements to market conditions around build costs, borrowing and other development finance and planning stability will improve developer confidence and ability to deliver new homes at volume.

Forecasting suggests that new build sales volumes are likely to return to levels similar to that of 2023 in 2025 which will increase developer confidence (London Residential New Build Market, CBRE, May 2024).

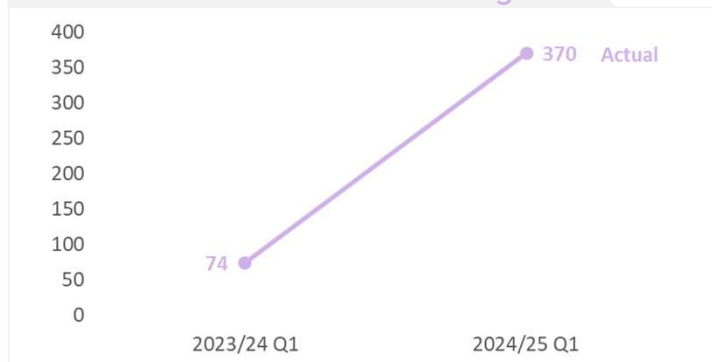
Under the new Government housing delivery is a key priority. With a new National Planning Policy Framework (due in early 2025), further planning reforms, i.e., 'fast track' brownfield developments, future commitments to the Affordable Housing Programme to be announced and initiatives such as the accelerator programme; these all provide the basis to assist with housing delivery, including tackling issues surrounding stalled sites and grant funding, which should in turn increase investor confidence within the Government's first term.



Quarterly Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 009

Number of affordable homes delivered (1/4)

David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Sripriya Sudhakar Director of Planning & Building Control, Karen Swift Director of Housing



Q1 RAG
Data only

Q1 Actual
200

Increased by
200

What the data shows

At the end of Q1 we have delivered 200 (net additional homes) across all tenures. Positively this is 54% of the total completions for this reporting period and the highest percentage of affordable delivered in any quarter since 2022. Contextually this quarters' delivery is significantly above the average from the previous year. Contextually, whilst this is it is still below the quarterly threshold of 250 units but shows a positive trend in terms of proportion of affordable delivered. Whilst housing delivery does fluctuate, the conditions for securing and delivering affordable housing remain particularly difficult. Tower Hamlets with its dense tall buildings delivering multi tenure development, delivery of affordable housing is linked to delivery of private sector housing delivery as part of s106 development. Previous analysis of build out rates highlight on average delivery take 4.5 years from the time planning permitted was granted to delivery.

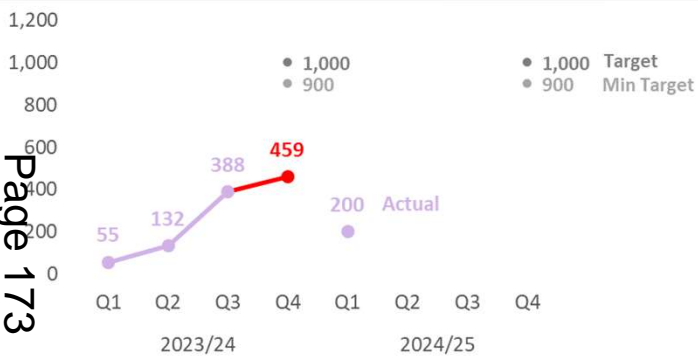
Contextually there were 842 affordable units approved from 4 schemes within Q1. So, whilst affordable approvals continue to add to a good pipeline, the key challenge is the factors affecting delivery nationally and regionally.

In Q1, the Council completed 40 homes via direct council delivery. It is expected in Q2 around 42 units will complete. There were no acquisitions in Q1.

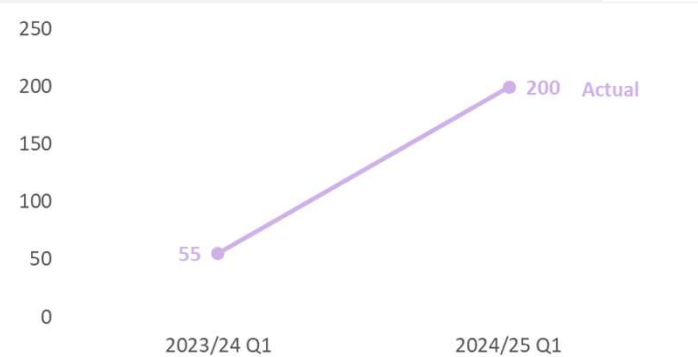
Why is this below target?

Many major affordable Housing providers are scaling back their requirements for new Section 106 housing, with the majority noting lack of financial capacity has impacted appetite for this, and likely to remain a challenge for the next 2-5 years. The cost of investment in new stock is also an issue for affordable providers.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 009

Number of affordable homes delivered (2/4)



David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Sripriya Sudhakar Director of Planning & Building Control, Karen Swift Director of Housing

Q1 RAG
Data only

Q1 Actual
200

Increased by
200

Affordable providers are also refocusing on grant funded commitments delivering just over half of affordable delivery going forward, whereas almost of a third of future housing supply compromises of nil or part grant funded delivery (Savills, Challenges of unlocking S106 delivery, 18th July 24).

Affordable Housing providers are also reducing their investment commitments in new stock as a result of economic uncertainty and regulatory compliance i.e. fire safety & damp/mold in existing stock.

Affordable completions as part of the [previous] Governments Affordable Housing Programme, is expected to miss its target of 180,000 new homes, as well as its (2022) revised downgraded target of 157,000 new homes. Cost inflation, labor and material supply issues all cited as key issues (English Housing Supply Update, Savills, May 2024).

As of July 2024, internal analysis of live residential data (Molior), 10 schemes in Tower Hamlets have construction stalled, which compromises of 936 affordable homes.

Furthermore, schemes with planning permissions are coming back to planning to reduce affordable housing numbers or change of tenure as RPs are not taking up s106 units.

The labour and cost of material construction issues and declining construction outputs are also linked to the delivery of affordable housing.

Mitigation action taken by the service

Actions across a number of service areas to address the scale of challenge

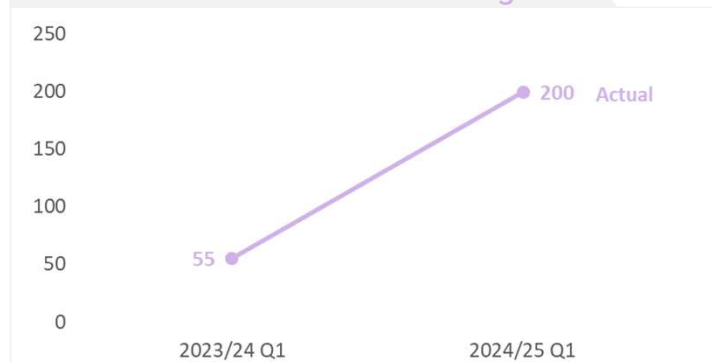
(a) Planning Service

Emerging Local Plan (housing) policies seek to increase the affordable housing policy requirement from 35% to 40%.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 009

Number of affordable homes delivered (3/4)



David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Sripriya Sudhakar Director of Planning & Building Control, **Karen Swift** Director of Housing

Q1 RAG
Data only

Q1 Actual
200

Increased by
200

The Local Plan is currently subject to a Regulation 19 public consultation in September-October, following approval by Cabinet in July 24.

Working with developers on the stalled sites to ascertain how the Council can work in partnership to unlock sites to deliver homes including affordable homes.

Proactive and continued engagement with Registered Providers to understand their regeneration and development ambitions, current challenges and to discuss their pipeline and how the council can assist.

Proactive engagement with developers and landowners with planning permissions to track progress on delivery and build a better picture of challenges to delivery and help respond through appropriate action.

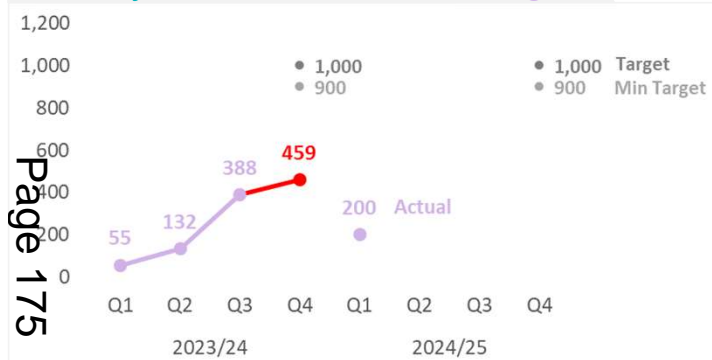
Holding developer engagement sessions to improve market intelligence around housing delivery, including accurate notification of tenure change proposals.

Exploring how the council could acquire s106 properties where lack of interest from RPs is impacting on housing delivery.

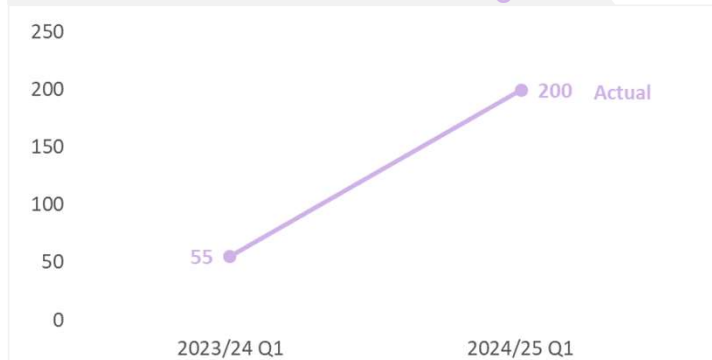
Planning service commissioning a research report to understand the scale of the total development pipeline at risk in Tower Hamlets from the current lack of demand for Section 106 affordable housing from Registered Providers and the scale of the impact on the development pipeline in Tower Hamlets.

And to identify potential solutions and policy levers the borough can implement to help bring forward stalled sites, to support the borough's development strategy.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 009

Number of affordable homes delivered (4/4)



David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Sripriya Sudhakar Director of Planning & Building Control, Karen Swift Director of Housing

Q1 RAG
Data only

Q1 Actual
200

Increased by
200

b) Housing

The GLA have confirmed funding for 200 homes over a two-year period (2024-25). Discussions are underway on sites and buy back purchases are under construction. The aspiration is for 600 homes and are looking at funding for this.

Securing development agreements with partners to increase delivery.

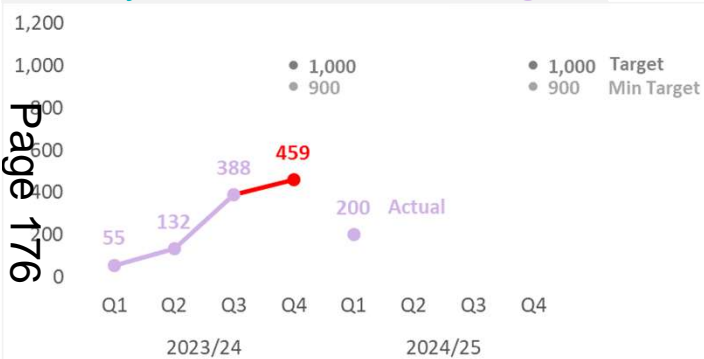
Delivering more council housing at pace through the council's capital programme

When this will be on track?

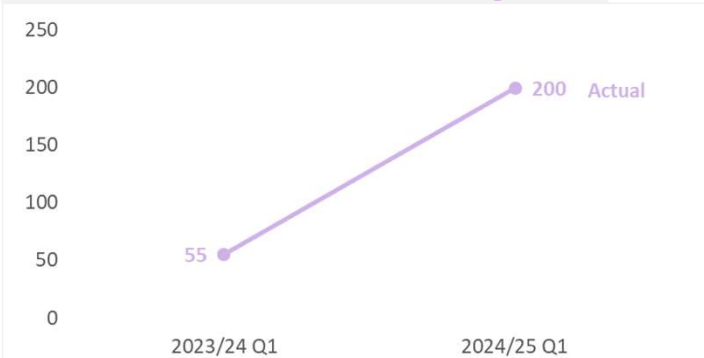
Any improvements to market conditions around build costs, borrowing and other development finance and planning stability will improve developer confidence and ability to deliver new homes at volume.

Forecasting suggests that new build sales volumes are likely to return to levels similar to that of 2023 in 2025. This anticipated increase developer confidence (London Residential New Build Market, CBRE, May 2024).

Quarterly Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



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KPI 010

Lets to overcrowded households (1/2)

Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Mohamed Hussein Interim Director of Housing and Homelessness



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
44%

Below target by
9 (17%)

What the data shows

In this Quarter, 125 overcrowded families were rehoused compared to 161 in Q4. This represents 44% of our lettings going to overcrowded families, which is lower than our target and remains consistent with the performance for the year so far.

Why is this below target?

Whilst our performance is below target, overcrowded families remain the highest priority and continue to secure the biggest proportion of social lettings.

Our Allocation Policy is based on choice through bidding for applicants, which is consistent with most similar authorities. This means that while we support applicants to bid for suitable properties and overcrowded applicants are awarded high priority, they decide on what properties they bid for. There is evidence of applicants who have enough priority but their bidding choices are preventing them from being accommodated sooner.

On the supply side, there continues to be a lack of larger properties. Of the 1222 lettings last year 956 were for 2 bed or smaller properties. At the same time demand for 4-bed and 5-bed properties is over 1600 families when; so far in this financial year there have been just 28x 4-bed and 3x 5-bed lets.

Mitigation action taken by the service

- We continue to explore all possibilities for best use of our stock such as, including under-occupation checks, tenancy checks, knock throughs, incentives to leave etc.
- There is to be a review of the Allocation Policy in this financial year to ensure it is aligned to Members priorities and the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 010

Lets to overcrowded households (2/2)

Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Mohamed Hussein Interim Director of Housing and Homelessness



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
44%

Below target by
9 (17%)

- We will work with our colleagues in Housing Management to explore ways to support overcrowded households to improve their bidding prospects.
- A review of all our social housing assets is scheduled to ensure the current housing stock is working efficiently.
- The council's Acquisition Programme of 200 permanent units targeting 3- and 4-bedroom properties supports this indicator. There are 171 private units in the pipeline and under negotiation, in addition, there are 70 plus buybacks.
- A review of all overcrowded or under-occupied cases via a dedicated officer support who will contact families to explain the options available to them and encouraging specific bidding strategies which will help the household to be rehoused into a property of an adequate size as soon as possible.

When this will be on track?

While strong progress is being made, it is anticipated that performance will remain between the upper (53%) and lower (48%) bandwidth target, the out turn remains heavily dependent on the bidding patterns of overcrowded households and the availability of suitable properties within their chosen areas. We expect the outturn in Quarter 4 to be on target.

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Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 011

Number of privately rented properties visited

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm



Q1 RAG
Green

Q1 Actual
564

Above target by
64 (13%)

What the data shows

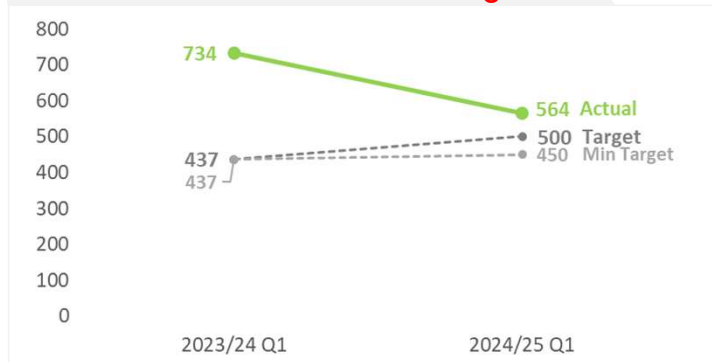
This measure looks at number of interventions undertaken for all three landlord licensing schemes being Selective, Additional HMO and Mandatory HMO. The Q1 outturn at 564 exceeds the set target of 500.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



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Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 012

Number of primary school pupils in KS2 receiving public-funded FSM

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Layla Richards Director of Commissioning



Q1 RAG
Data Only

Q1 Actual
10,149

Decreased by
1,393

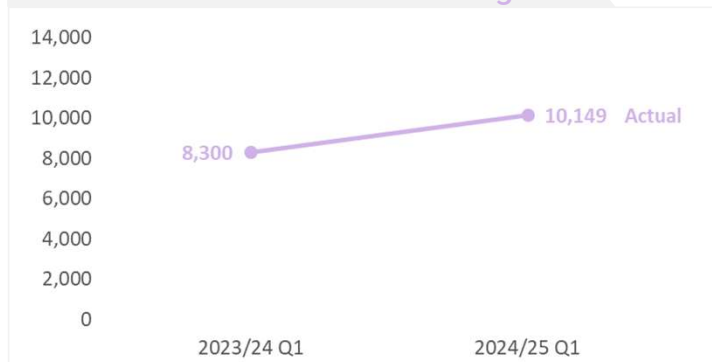
What the data shows

During the quarter, an average of 10,149 pupils in Key Stage 2 (Year 3 to Year 6) were in receipt of a school meal. This is based on the data collected by Finance to calculate the cost of the meals prepared and delivered for Q1 2024/25. The number of pupils in receipt is based on the number of meals provided over the period from the total trading days in the period.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Decreasing ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 013

Percentage of primary school pupils in KS2 receiving public-funded FSM (1/2)

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Layla Richards Director of Commissioning



Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
87.1%

Below target by
2.9 (3%)

What the data shows

For Q1 2024/25, an average of 87.1% of Key Stage 2 pupils were in receipt of a meal, lower than the 95.3% reported in Q4 2023/24, however this is in line with the figure reported in Q1 2023/24.

In this reporting period, 25% of schools completed financial returns for all three months, 51% completed two financial returns and 7.4% of schools made one financial return. 16% of Primary schools are however yet to make a financial return for this quarter.

Why is this below target?

75% of primary schools in LBTH are managed by the Contract Catering Services and although the school meal take-up was good at 90% for April and 87.7% for May, in general, take up tends to be lower in the summer term when compared with the winter months. This is due to several factors that include school trips and visits out and is further evidenced by the overall Q1 performance for all Primary Schools in 2024/25 being comparable with that of 2023/24.

In addition, attendance at primary schools is down approximately 2% to 92% when compared with 94% in 2023/24. This is a known issue in Tower Hamlets but has an immediate impact on take up of School meals.

Other factors affecting take up may be a drop in Mayors funded meals as the auto enrolment project identified 800 pupils being eligible for Government Funded FSMs in Oct 2023.



KPI 013

Percentage of primary school pupils in KS2 receiving public-funded FSM (2/2)



Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Layla Richards Director of Commissioning

Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
87.1%

Below target by
2.9 (3%)

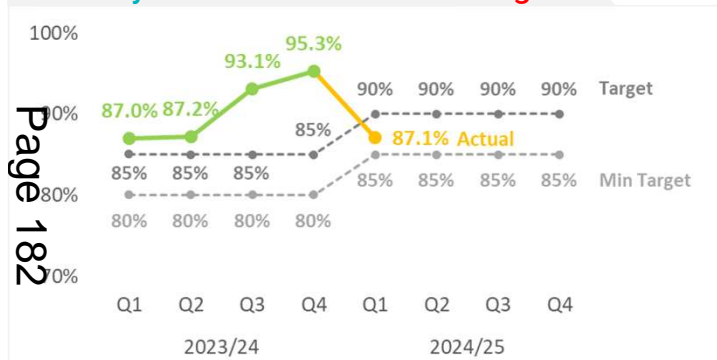
Mitigation action taken by the service

- Continuously work with schools to encourage take up of school meals and parents are discouraged from providing a packed lunch.
- Ensure menus are popular and meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- Ensure that all new pupils in Reception take up the Universal Free School Meal (UFSM) as the norm & offer parent/pupil taster sessions to this cohort so interest in healthy free food is generated at the start of the academic year.

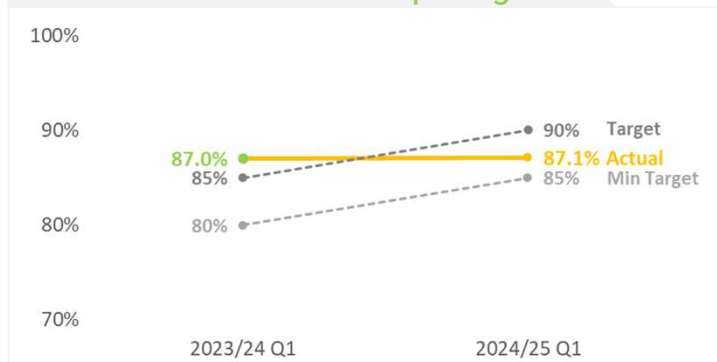
When this will be on track?

Autumn term 2024/25. The Autumn term is likely to see increased take up of UFSM which is in line with the winter months cycle when more pupils like a hot meal. However, if school attendance levels stay low or if there is a chronic outbreak of sickness take up figures will be lower than the expected target.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 014

Number of secondary school pupils receiving council-funded FSM

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Layla Richards Director of Commissioning



Q1 RAG
Data Only

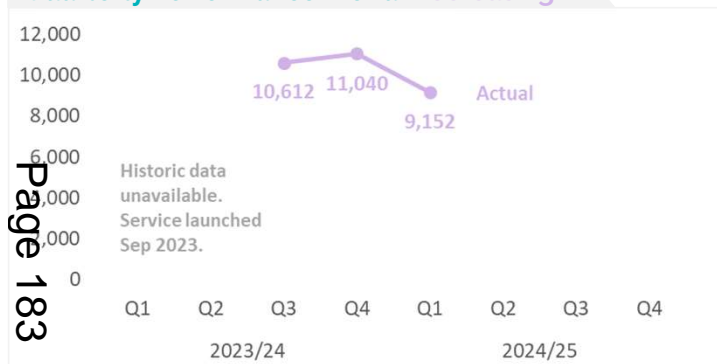
Q1 Actual
9,152

Decreased by
1,888

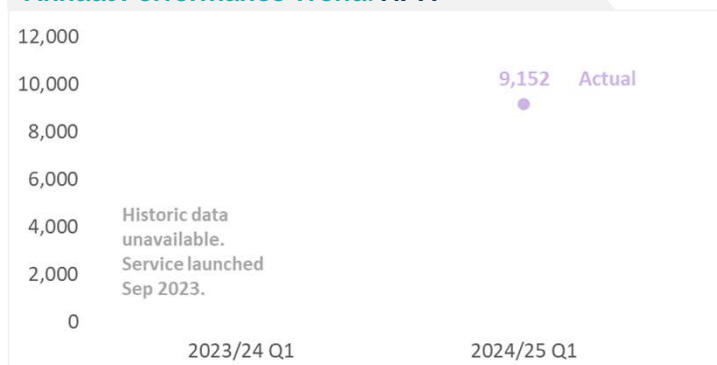
What the data shows

During the quarter, an average of 9,152 pupils in Secondary school (Year 7 to Year 11) were in receipt of a school meal. This is from the data collected by Finance to calculate the cost of the meals prepared and delivered over the 2023/24 academic year. The number of pupils in receipt is based on the number of meals provided over the reporting period from the total trading days in the period.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Decreasing ▼



Annual Performance Trend: N/A



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KPI 015

Percentage of secondary school pupils receiving council-funded FSM



Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Layla Richards Director of Commissioning

Q1 RAG
Green

Q1 Actual
82.0%

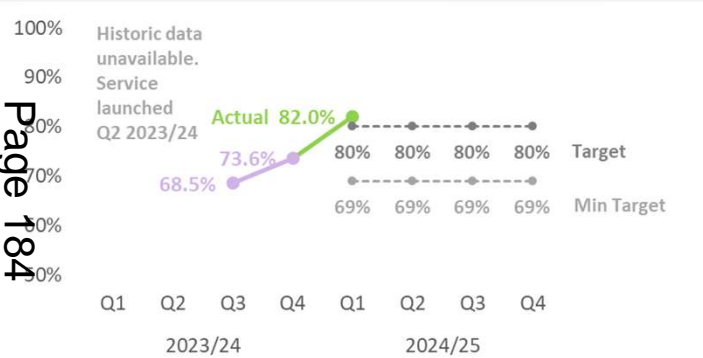
Above target by
2 (3%)

What the data shows

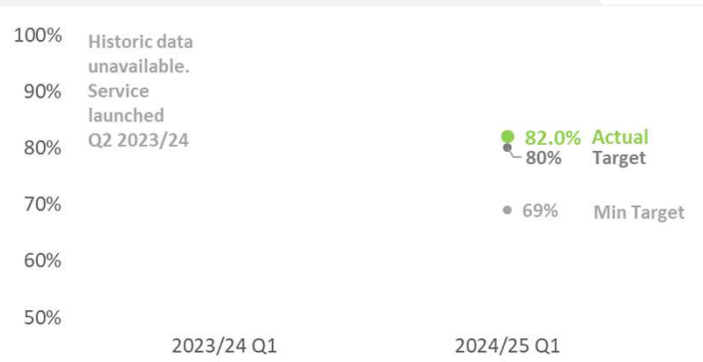
For Quarter 1 2024/25, an average of 82% of secondary pupils accepted a free school meal. This figure incorporates the average attendance of secondary pupils in the period (April, May and June) and the proportion of those in school accepting a school lunch. This figure is based on a new methodology which aligns to the Department for Education's 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' guidance. Due to these changes, the figure for Quarter 1 2024/25 is not comparable to the figures reported in the reporting year 2023/24.

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Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: N/A



KPI 016

Number of young people who are registered with the Council's youth centres



Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)

Q1 RAG
Green

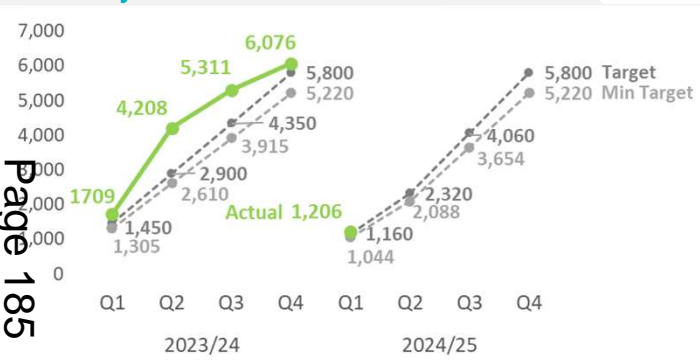
Q1 Actual
1,206

Above target by
162 (16%)

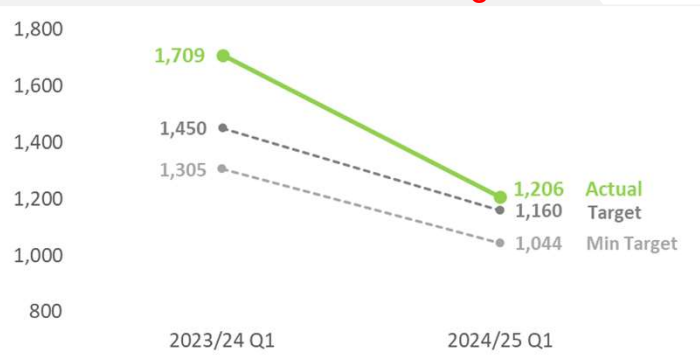
What the data shows

A total of 1,206 young people registered with the Council's and Council commissioned youth centres during period April 2024 - June 2024. This has exceeded the set target.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



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KPI 017

Number of users who regularly attend the Council's youth services



Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)

Q1 RAG
Green

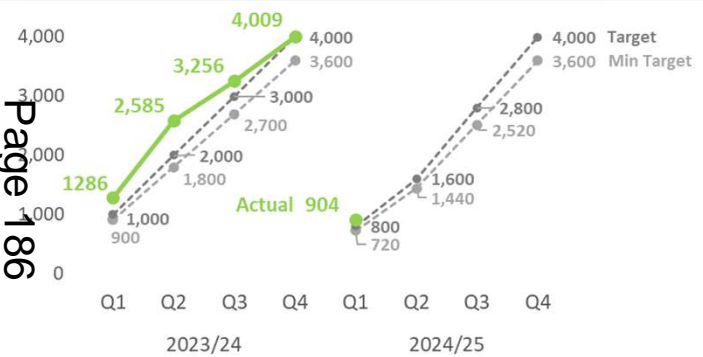
Q1 Actual
904

Above target by
104 (13%)

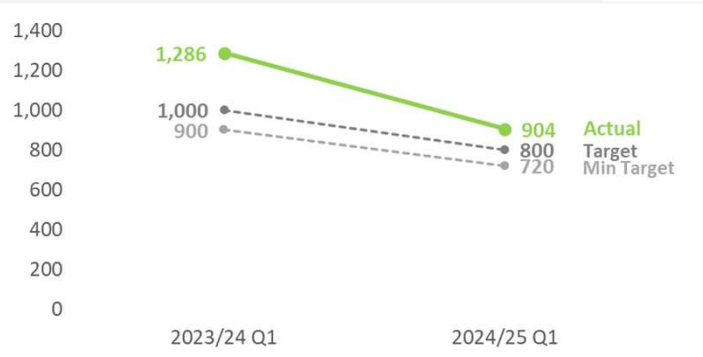
What the data shows

For the period April 2024 - June 2024, a total of 904 young people who were registered, regularly attended the youth centres. This total has exceeded the set target for Q1.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 018

Number of young people engaged with the Council's youth centres who achieve a recorded outcome

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
 Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)



Q1 RAG
Green

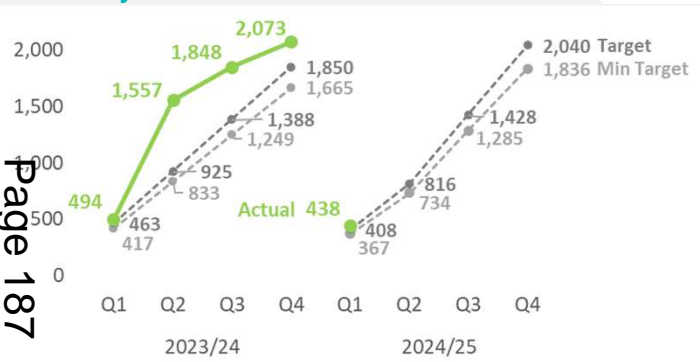
Q1 Actual
438

Above target by
30 (7%)

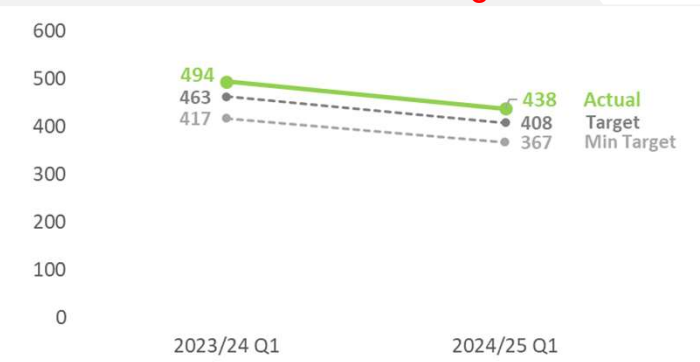
What the data shows

For the period April 2024 - June 2024, a total of 438 young people who were registered, engaged with the sessions at the youth centres to achieve a recorded outcome.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



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KPI 019

Number of young people engaged with the Council's youth centres who achieve an accredited outcome

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
 Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)



Q1 RAG
Green

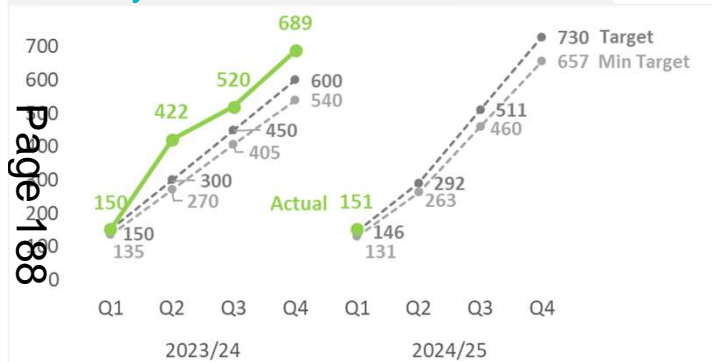
Q1 Actual
151

Above target by
5 (3%)

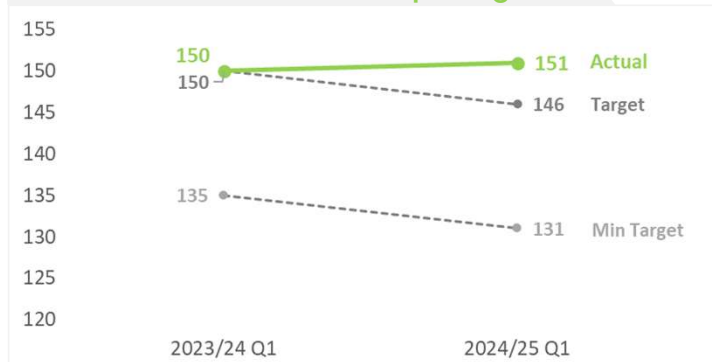
What the data shows

A total of 151 young people who were registered and actively engaged with the sessions at the youth centres, achieved an accreditation. This has exceeded the set target for the period April 2024 - June 2024.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 020

Number of active education, health and care (EHC) plans

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Lisa Fraser Director of Education



Q1 RAG
Data Only

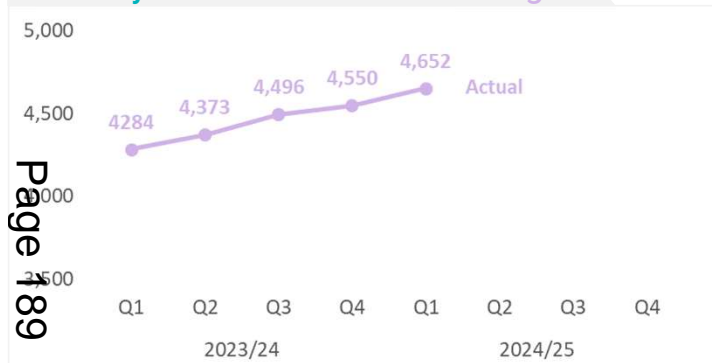
Q1 Actual
4,652

Increased by
102

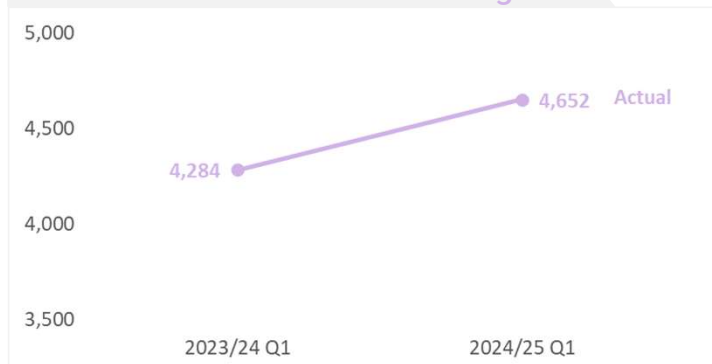
What the data shows

At the end of Quarter 1, a total of 4652 active education, health and care (EHC) plans were active. This has increased by a further 102 plans since Q4 2023/24.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 021

Percentage of education, health and care assessments completed in 20 weeks (1/2)

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Lisa Fraser Director of Education



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
44%

Below target by
11 (20%)

What the data shows?

EHCP timeliness has reduced to 44% in Quarter 1 from 55% in Quarter 4 2023/24. This is below the National average of 49% reported for 2023/24. However, requests for EHCP assessments continue to increase and the productivity for the months of May and June 2024 also increased.

Why is this below expected?

Staff absence and turnover in Q1 (including the departure of the SEN Service Manager, long term illness and early maternity leave) created a gap in leadership and expertise. Internal restructuring was implemented to manage workloads, but the absence of experienced staff in the assessment team inevitably affected efficiency and continuity.

Due to our focus on improving quality after having engaged with parents and the DfE, the SEN Assessment and Review (SENAR) team have introduced a more rigorous process, which in implementation was more time-consuming than expected. While necessary for better outcomes, this added pressure to timeliness during this initiation phase.

Mitigation action taken by the service

In response to staff changes, an interim SENAR Manager and additional caseworkers have been appointed to help stabilise the team and improve performance.

The service is conducting a thorough review of systems and caseload management practices. This is running alongside a recovery plan aimed at improving both the timeliness and quality of the EHCP process. In relation to the quality assurance process, caseworkers have been trained to conduct preliminary QA of the plans before submission, reducing the workload on the QA manager while maintaining high standards.



KPI 021

Percentage of education, health and care assessments completed in 20 weeks (2/2)

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
 Lisa Fraser Director of Education



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
44%

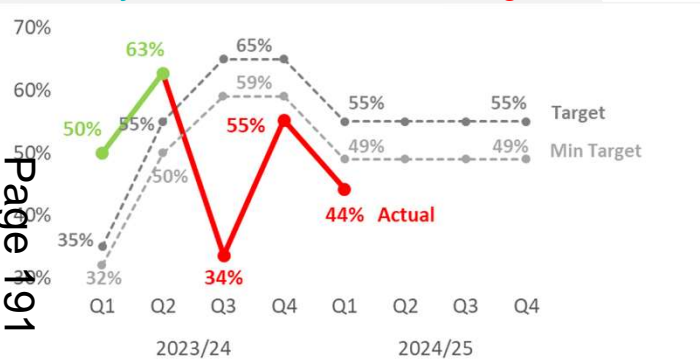
Below target by
11 (20%)

The SEND Improvement Board is closely monitoring these actions to ensure swift recovery and sustained progress in meeting increasing demand.

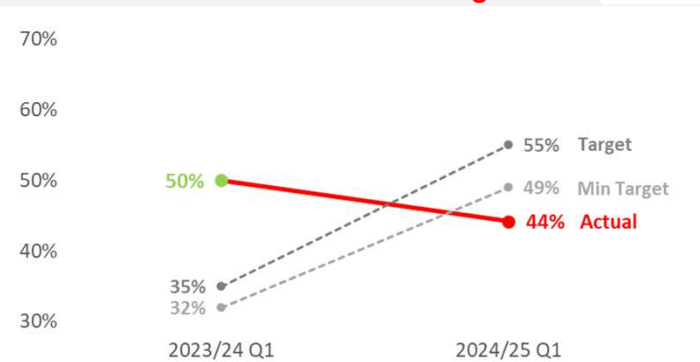
When will this be on track?

We expect to see improvements for Quarter 3 2024/25.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



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KPI 022

Percentage of Idea Store learners who pass a Skills for Life course

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Jahur Ali Director of Culture



Q1 RAG
Green

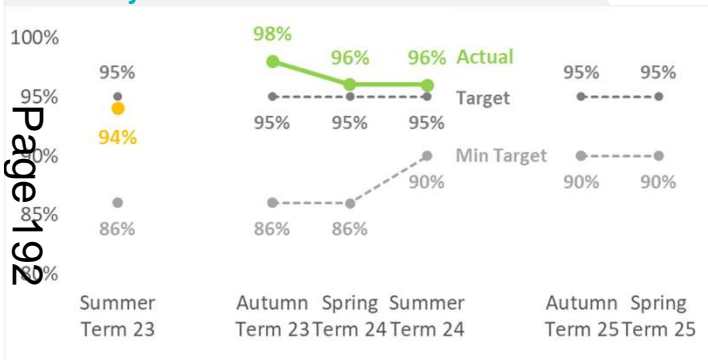
Q1 Actual
96%

Above target by
1 (1%)

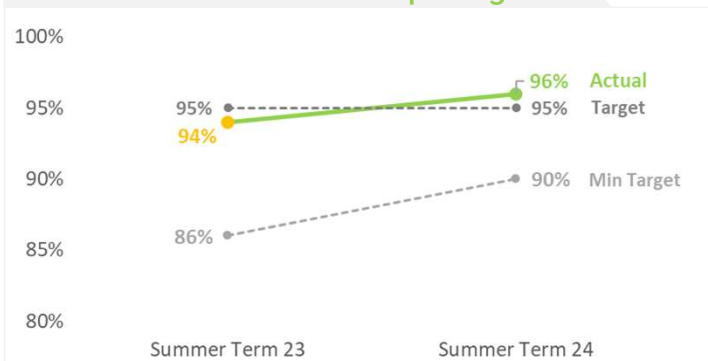
What the data shows

Overall, the service continues to perform extremely well. As we come to the end of the academic year 2023-2024, there is a palpable sense of achievement. The concerted efforts of our dedicated team, effective communication strategies, and the impactful marketing campaigns have yielded great results. Enrolments have increased by near 1,000 to almost 6,000 compared to just over 5,000 last academic year. Achievement rates remain high. We have just had the Idea Store Learning Staff and Learner Awards recognising the excellent work of our tutors & learners and the impact we are making on the lives of our learners

Quarterly Performance Trend: Stable



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 023

Number of children supported by the Early Help Children and Family Service



Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)

Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
6,852

Below target by
148 (2%)

What the data shows

For the period April – June 2024, a total of 6,852 children were supported by the Early Help children and Family service. This figure has met the minimum expectation but is a slight shortfall on the aspirational target of 7,000.

Why is this below expected?

The Q1 performance of 6,852 has met and exceeded the minimum expectation of 6,300 although slightly below our aspirational target of 7,000. There was a shortfall in the number of sessions offered and undertaken due to the closure of some of our Children and Family Centres during these periods.

Mitigation action taken by the service

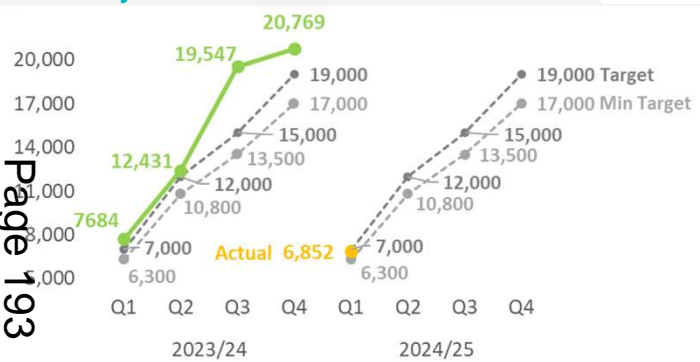
The target was missed in Q1 by 2% which represents 148 in total number. This was in part due to some centres being closed because of bank holidays, mandatory staff training and engagement as part of a restructure process which required face to face engagement with staff.

We have now launched the remainder of the family hubs which will increase attendance and engagement given that the launch of the four hubs was attended by over 4000 people.

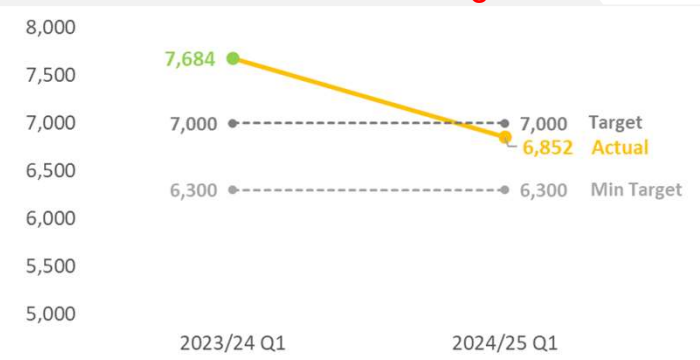
When will this be on track?

We are confident that we will meet our target for the next quarter as data is indicating we have already reached our target.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 024

Percentage of contacts into MAST reviewed and progressed within timescales



Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)

Q1 RAG
Green

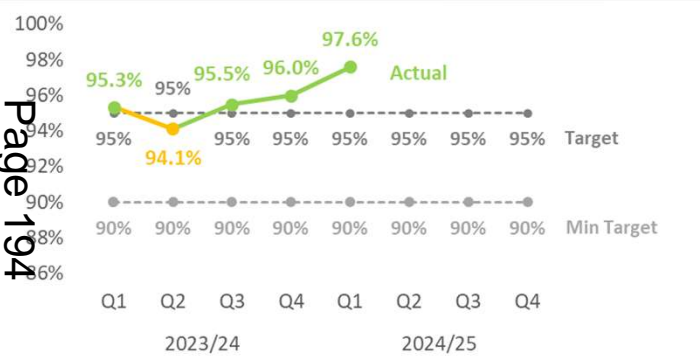
Q1 Actual
97.6%

Above target by
2.6 (3%)

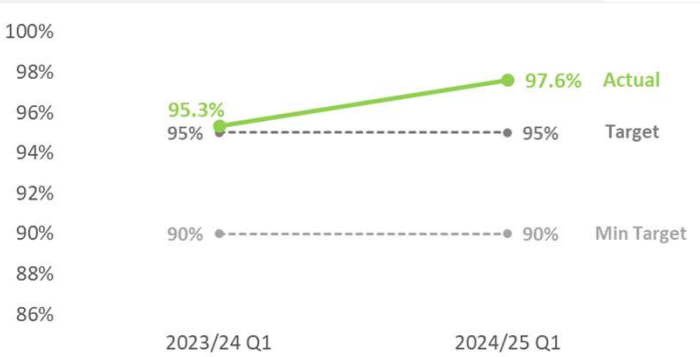
What the data shows

A total of 1,169 contacts were made to the Multi-agency Support Team (MAST), of which 1,141 were reviewed and progressed within 24 hours, for the reporting period April 2024 - June 2024.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 025

Rate of first-time entrants to the Youth Justice system

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)



Q1 RAG
Green

Q1 Actual
126

Below target by
4

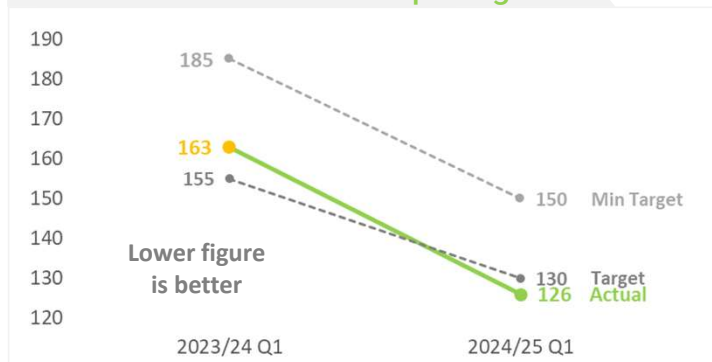
What the data shows

The data demonstrates the impact that our Out of Court Partnership has had upon reducing the number of children that receive criminal records. Our robust diversion offer and partnership working, particularly with the police has created this impact.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▼



KPI 026

Percentage of young people that re-offend

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
33.3%

Above target by
13.3%

What the data shows?

The data shows the latest 12-month cohorts of children by the binary rate (the percentage of children who committed further offences, compared to those who did not). This however does not show the scale (reoffences per offending child) or frequency of reoffending (reoffences per re-offending child).

Why is this below target?

The Q1 performance of 33.3% has seen an improvement from the Q4 2023/24 reported figure of 35.8%. Although this has not met target, it is comparable to the National average of 33.1% and London average of 32.1%. This measure is directly impacted by the success seen with the Rate of first-time entrants to the Youth Justice system (KPI025) as the reduced number of FTEs means the children within this cohort have significantly more complex lives which increases their chance of re-offending. In addition, lower FTE cohorts will result in lower numbers of those re-offending which will skew the data and create variation between quarters.

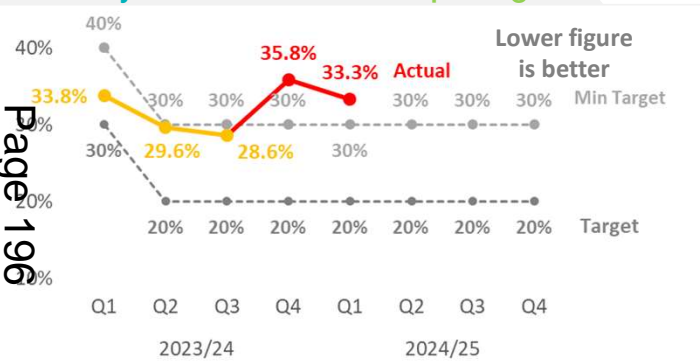
Mitigation action taken by the service

We continue to work creatively with the children within the cohort to support them in addressing their needs. We have introduced a monthly meeting looking specifically at those children who are not in education, employment or training as we understand that education, training and employment is a key intervention in reducing the likelihood of re-offending.

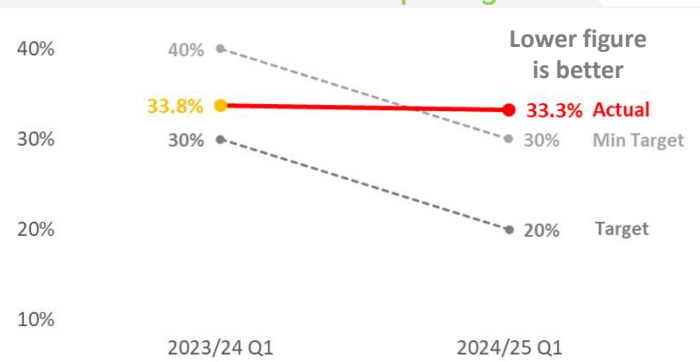
When will this be on track?

Performance has improved this quarter to nearly meet the minimum threshold and work will continue in the following quarters towards achieving the aspirational target. To note, lower FTE cohorts will result in lower numbers of reoffending and greater variation.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▼



KPI 027

Rate of children subject to protection plans

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)



Q1 RAG
Data Only

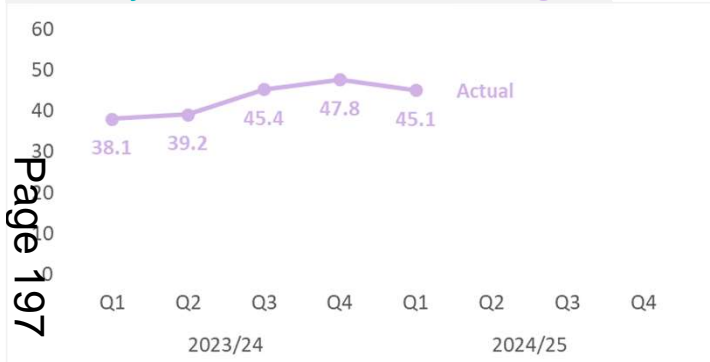
Q1 Actual
45.1

Decreased by
2.7

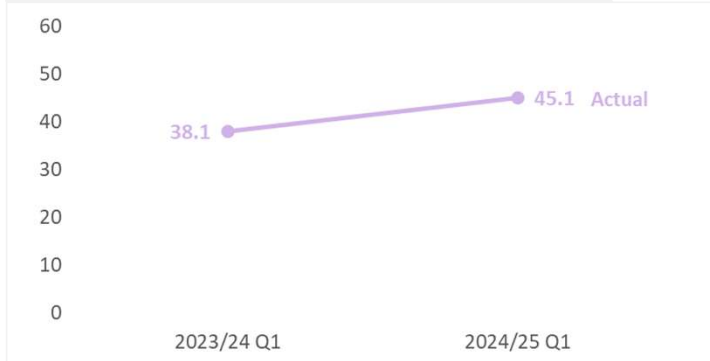
What the data shows

A total of 290 children were subject to child protection plans at the end of June 2024. This is a rate of 45.1 per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years and is higher than the London average of 40.0 and the national and statistical neighbour's averages of 43.0 and 39.0 respectively.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Decreasing ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 028

Percentage of Care Leavers aged 17-25 in education, employment or training (EET)



Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)

Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
72.8%

Below target by
2.2 (3%)

What the data shows?

At the end of Q1 2024/25, the percentage of care leavers aged 17 – 25 who were actively accessing education, employment, and/or training was 72.8%. Whilst this exceeds our minimum target of 70%, it does not yet reflect our aspirational target of 75%. For care experienced children and young people aged 17 – 21, for Q1 2024/25 we have achieved an outcome of 76.3% which continues to exceed the minimum target of 75% and is above the National and Statistical Neighbour's averages.

Why is this below target?

The output for this measure is based on the 'in touch' activity status of care experienced children and young people, recorded 3 months before and 1 month after their last birthday as per the requirement for the annual DfE Children Looked After statutory return. The service continues to manually track this figure alongside which will be more reflective of the live performance measure. Within Q1, this figure has dipped slightly due to new entrants into care who have not yet entered education, employment and/or training as well as those exiting EET.

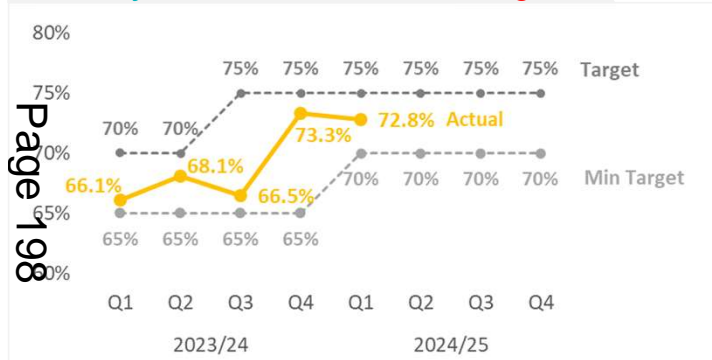
Mitigation action taken by the service

Every NEET care leaver is allocated an EET keyworker who works alongside and offers bespoke support to get them into active employment, education, or training for a minimum period of 3 months, and we track this data to ensure we capture those who move from NEET to EET outside the reporting timeframe are identified. 6 care leavers have been supported this quarter to submit applications to the Civil Service Internship Scheme, with a further 4 applications anticipated by the closing date of 30th September 2024. The service has additionally worked with colleges to secure 10 places for care leavers at college where there had been concerns over attendance previously. This is in addition to placements in council departments.

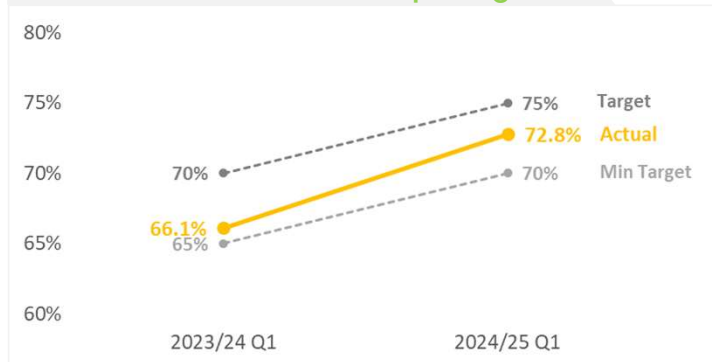
When will this be on track?

By Q3 2024/25

Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 029

Rate of children looked after

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)



Q1 RAG
Data Only

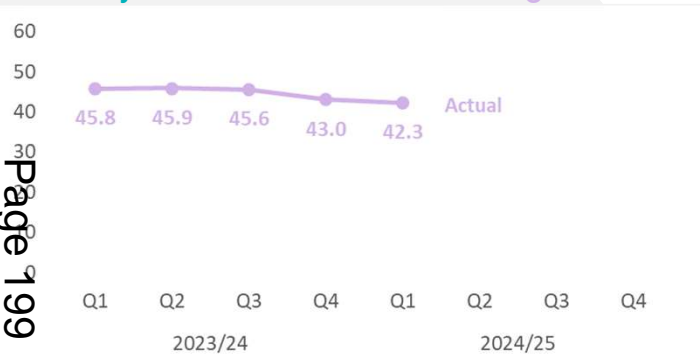
Q1 Actual
42.3

Decreased by
0.7

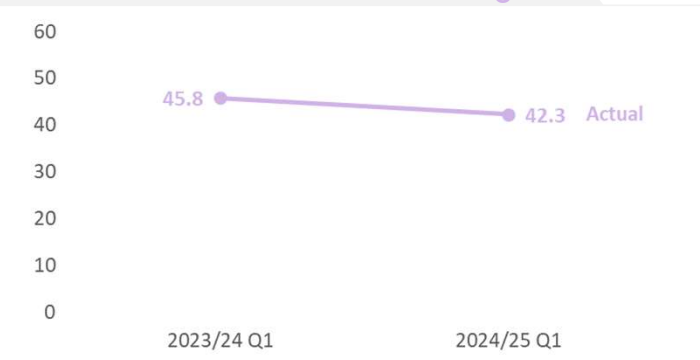
What the data shows

At the end of Quarter 1, a total of 272 were looked after, representing a rate of 42.3 per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years. This rate is lower than the London average of 51.0 and considerably so for the national and statistical neighbour's averages of 71.0 respectively.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Decreasing ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Decreasing ▼



KPI 030

Number of arts events delivered

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Jahur Ali Director for Culture



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
19

Below target by
16 (46%)

What the data shows

We supported a lower number of community events than expected. We did however have a higher number of corporate/private events than expected, but this is not captured within this data in line with the definition for this measure.

Why is this below target?

We have seen a greater uptake for events in the core summer months (quarter 2). Quarter 1's targets had been based on historical uptake for the Big Lunch and Great Get Together Street party initiatives (we supported 12 in 2023 for the Coronation). These programmes were promoted with Comms but unfortunately there was no uptake.

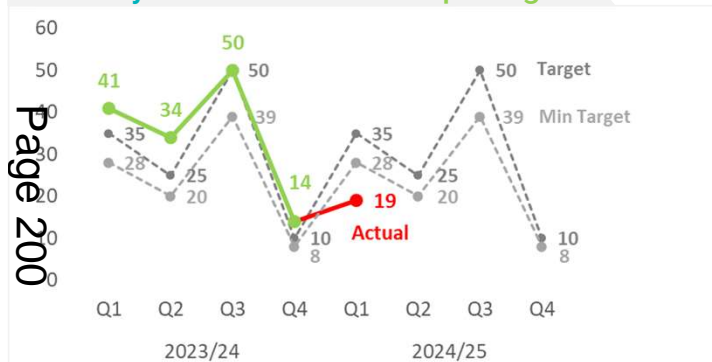
Mitigation action taken by the service

Earlier promotion of the Big Lunch / Great Get Together for 2025 which will be co-ordinated in early January 2025. As the core summer months (quarter 2) are more popular for community events (summer holidays), we could consider weighting the target more to quarter 2 next year.

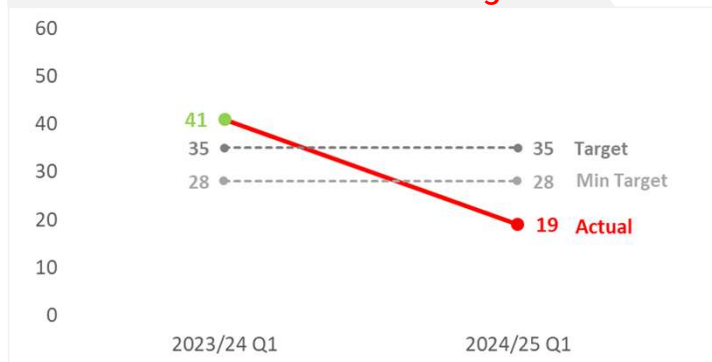
When will this be on track?

By Q4 2024/25

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 031

Percentage of leisure centre users that are female

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Jahur Ali Director for Culture



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
47.1%

Below target by
2.1 (4%)

What the data shows

This data shows the total Be Well leisure service membership (April under GLL and May/ June under Be Well).

The total membership numbers increased from 13,931 under GLL at the end of April 2024 to 17,179 under Be Well. Q1 performance is 0.7 percentage points under the minimum target. However new memberships for May 2024 showed that the percentage of female members was 51.85% which indicates a positive trend under Be Well.

The quality of data now the service is under council control has improved month-on-month. Q1 data excludes new female memberships as a result of the free-swimming programme launched on 15th July which will have a very positive impact on performance. This will be reflected in the Q2 performance which is anticipated to significantly exceed the target.

Why is this below target?

The service has carried out a significant data cleansing exercise and believes this is now a more accurate analysis of the data now that the service is under the council's control.

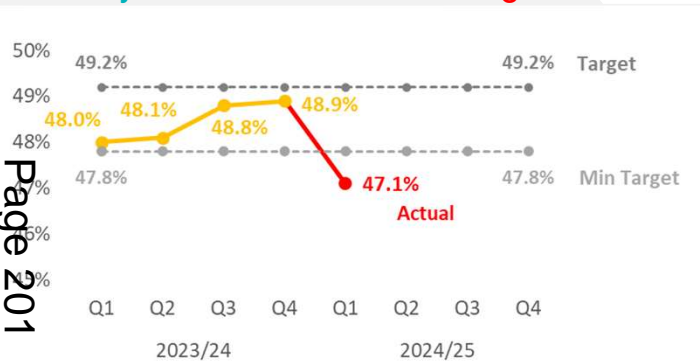
Mitigation action taken by the service

The launch of the free-swimming programme including women and girls over 16 will have a significant impact on performance. As of 23/08/24, there were 9,275 new free-swimming members of which 86% are female.

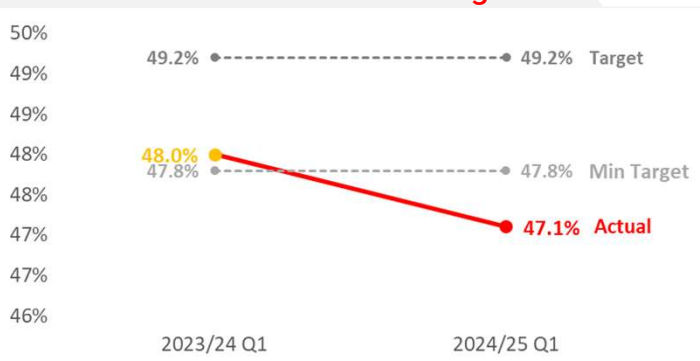
When this will be on track?

It is anticipated that performance will exceed target by the end of Q2 2024/25.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 032

Number of new jobs, training and apprenticeship opportunities enabled for local people (1/2)

Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Leah Sykes Director of Customer Services



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
667

Above target by
87 (12%)

What the data shows

The data currently shows that in Q1 our out-turn of 667 is only 12 jobs, skills and apprenticeship enabled short of the minimum profile of 675.

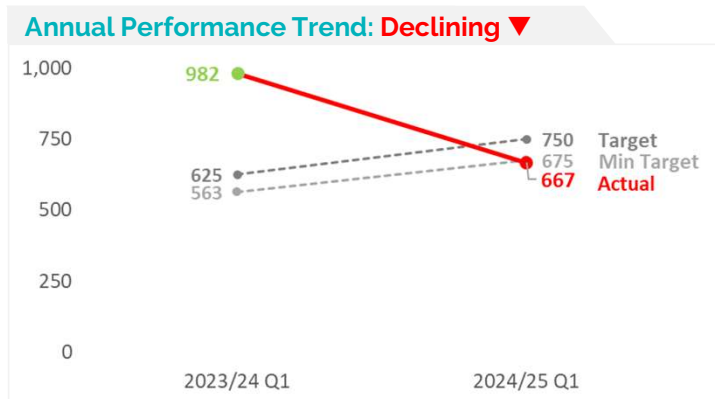
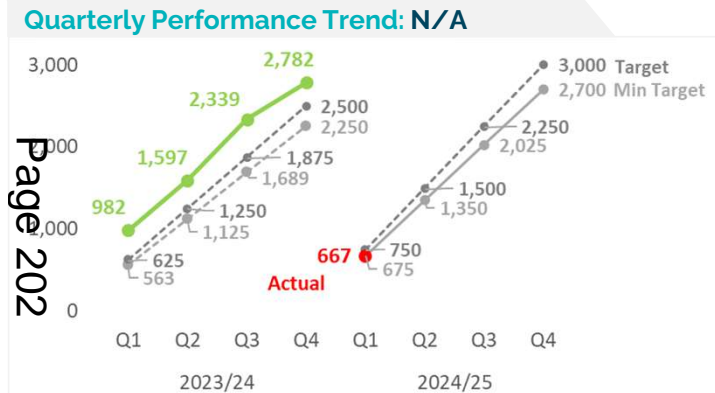
As expected, and planned for, the general election in July 2024 impacted overall market confidence with recruitment generally slowing down, whilst employers sought to understand economic policies and tax implications for their businesses. Mirroring national trends and market confidence our local outturn was slightly below the target level by 1.2%.

Why is this below target?

This performance metric is compiled using two data sources: Employment and Skills out-turns and S106 development related out-turns. Jobs, Skills and Apprenticeship opportunities enabled from development activity is a large contributor of this performance metric.

With the completion of four major development schemes in the borough, the number of jobs, skills and apprenticeship opportunities enabled from development activity reduced and with national market confidence being affected by the General Elections, the achievement of this metric was impacted.

In comparing Q1 performance from 23/24 we achieved: 982 outcomes compared to 667 in Q1 of 24/25, owing to a larger number of development schemes. However, with 6 new major schemes commencing in Q2 of 24/25, we expect to see an increase in outturns against this performance metric.



KPI 032

Number of new jobs, training and apprenticeship opportunities enabled for local people (1/2)

Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Leah Sykes Director of Customer Services



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
667

Above target by
87 (12%)

Mitigation action taken by the service

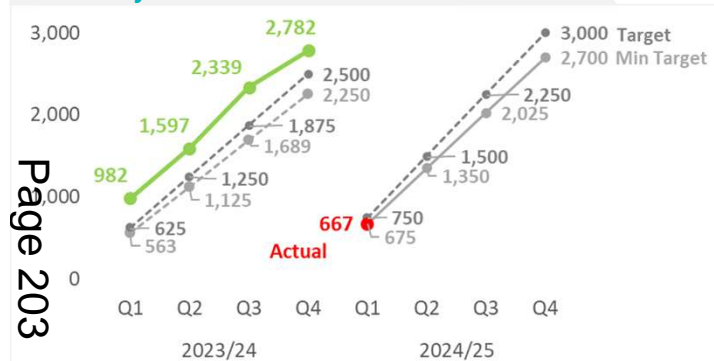
In Q2 there will be six new major development schemes starting. We have sought to engage with these developers early to explain the S106 requirements for this scheme. This approach of early engagement will mean that rather than wait for S106 trigger points for the commencement of schemes and create a delay in developing understanding of their local obligations for jobs, skills and enterprise - they are ready to send jobs, skills and apprenticeship opportunities for local take up sooner.

We are also reviewing our approach to capturing job/skills outcomes within the Growth Service and Employment and Skills Service in order to identify any additional outturns that can be captured for this performance metric.

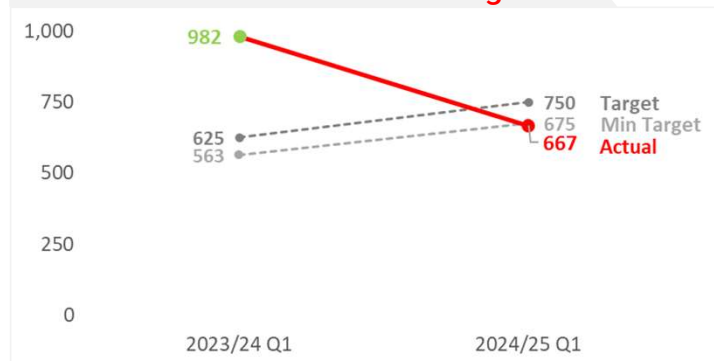
When this will be on track?

We expect our early engagement activity with developers and review of additional outturns that can be reported against this metric to lead to demonstrable and tangible increases in quarter two with a small shortfall against the expected Q2 minimum target profile. We fully expect this metric to be on track and achieving against the profiled targets by Q3.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 033

Enterprises supported through the council's business programmes



Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Leah Sykes Director of Customer Services

Q1 RAG
Green

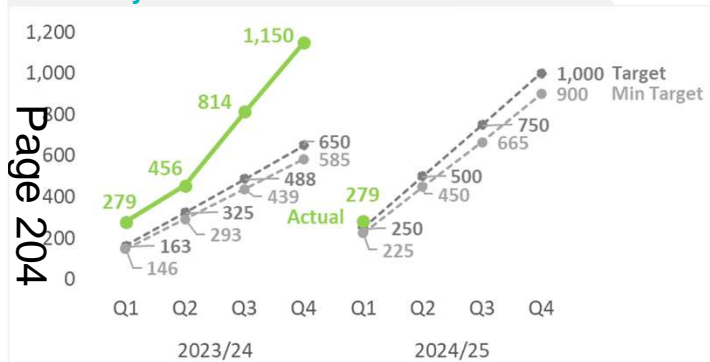
Q1 Actual
279

Above target by
29 (12%)

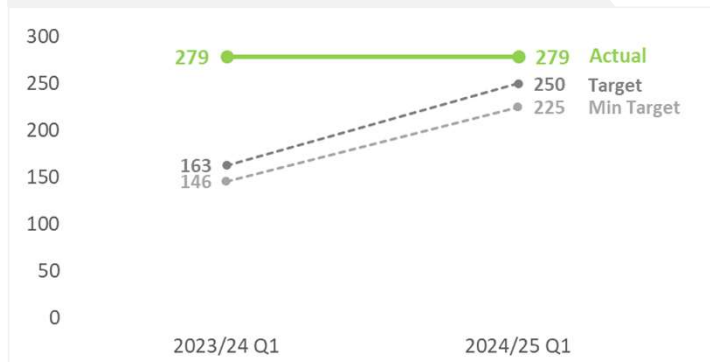
What the data shows

Following the end of Q1 for 24/25 we have supported 279 businesses through Growth Service activity – we remain on target to achieve our annual target.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: Stable



KPI 034

Percentage of waste collections completed on time



Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm

Q1 RAG
Green

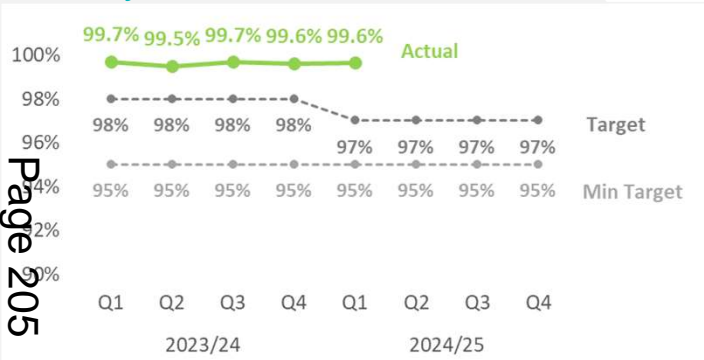
Q1 Actual
99.6%

Above target by
1.6

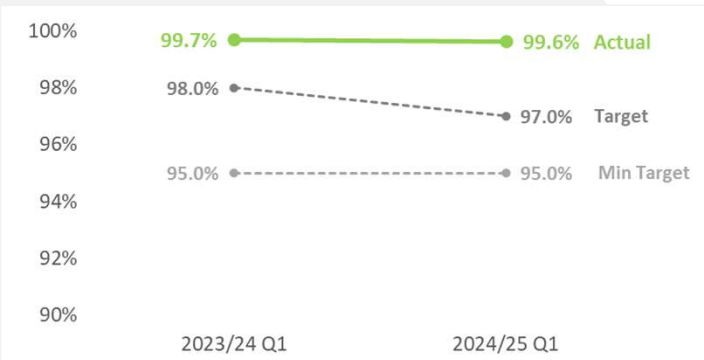
What the data shows

Methodology: Percentage of parent properties against reported missed collections on that parent property.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Stable



Annual Performance Trend: Stable



KPI 035

People in adult social care quality of life



Georgia Chimbani Corporate Director for Health and Social Care
Katie O'Driscoll Director of Adult Social Care

23/24 RAG
Annual

23/24 Actual
Annual

Above target by
Annual

What the data shows

Data available in Autumn of 2024 for FY 2023/24

Quarterly Performance Trend: Decreasing ▼



KPI 036

Percentage of people signposted to advice & support in the wider community that helps them to maintain their independence

Georgia Chimbani Corporate Director for Health and Social Care
Somen Banerjee Director of Director of Public Health



Q1 RAG
Green

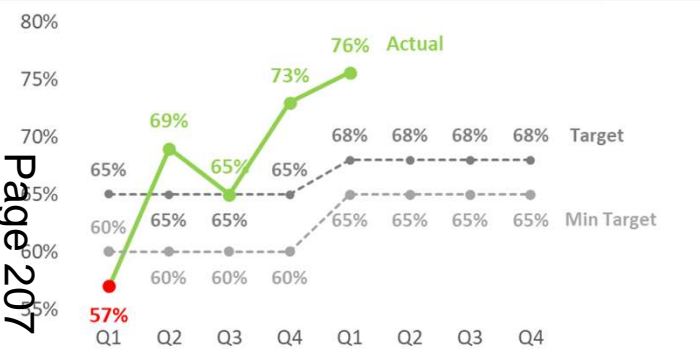
Q1 Actual
76%

Above target by
8

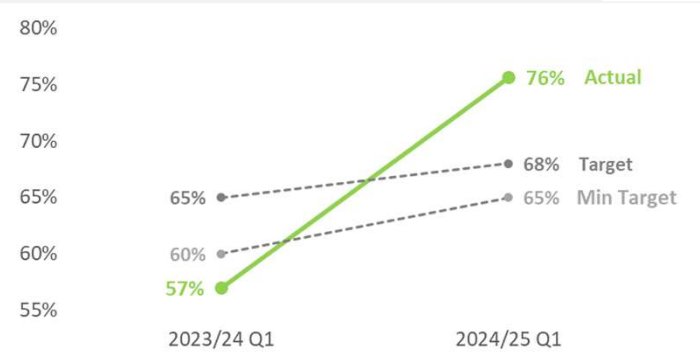
What the data shows

Q1 data has surpassed both minimum and stretch targets. The number of total referrals diverted from ASC = 2,884 (75.6%) from total of 3,815.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



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KPI 037

Overall satisfaction with care and support services received



Georgia Chimbani Corporate Director for Health and Social Care
Warwick Tomsett Joint Director of Integrated Commissioning

22/23 RAG
Annual

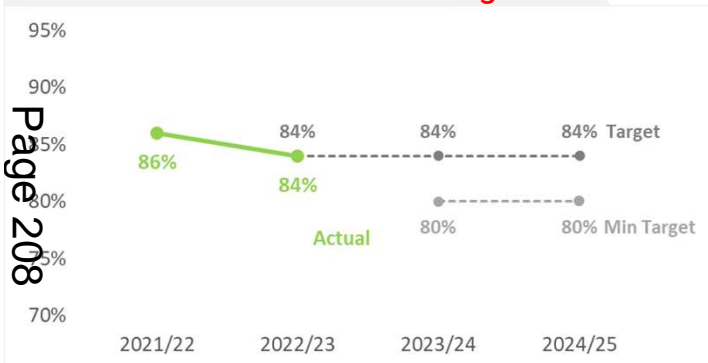
22/23 Actual
Annual

Above target by
Annual

What the data shows

Data available in Autumn of 2024 for FY 2023/24.

Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



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KPI 038

Percentage service users who agree "Overall I have a positive experience of the services I am receiving from the homecare agency"

Georgia Chimbani Corporate Director for Health and Social Care
Warwick Tomsett Joint Director of Integrated Commissioning



Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
82%

Below target by
3 (4%)

What the data shows

Satisfaction levels for Q1 were at 82%. This places us higher than the minimum target for this quarter (80%), but below the stretch target of 85%.

Why is this below target?

For this quarter - an analysis of the monitoring visit feedback shows that the dip in performance is largely accounted for through a combination of staffing issues, particularly high numbers of (different) carers attending and communication issues between the agency and the family..

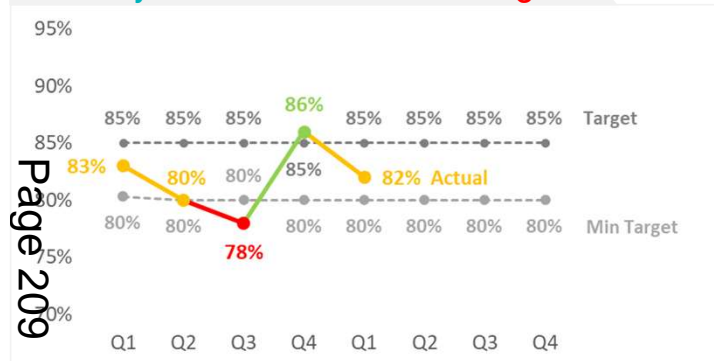
Mitigation action taken by the service

Performance concerns have been shared with providers and associated improvement plans have been agreed. There have also been improvements made in the sampling methods to ensure that feedback obtained is representative, robust and reliable.

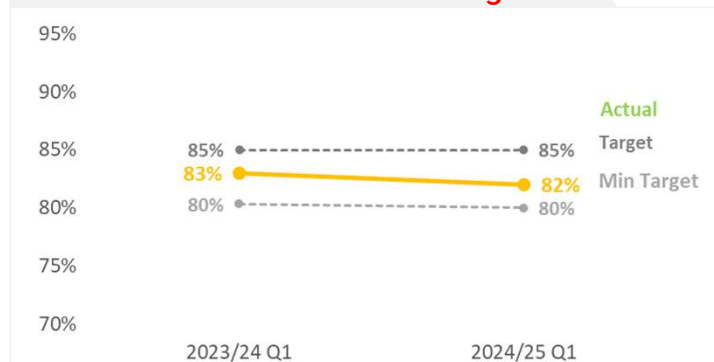
When this will be on track?

Much of the work detailed in the action plans is already in train and early indications for July and August suggest they are having a positive impact on performance. We anticipate that performance should improve and stabilise by Q3.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 039

Number of smoking cessation 4 week quits



Georgia Chimbani Corporate Director for Health and Social Care
Somen Banerjee Director of Public Health

Q1 RAG
Green

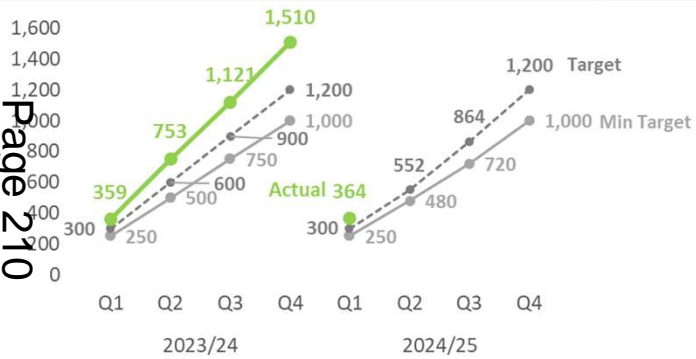
Q1 Actual
364

Above target by
64 (21%)

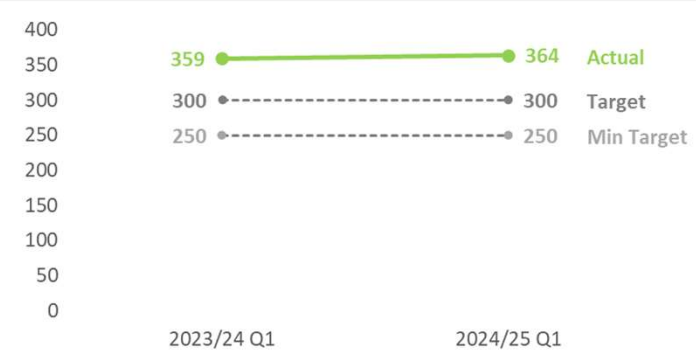
What the data shows

Q1 data has surpassed both minimum (46% above target) and stretch targets (21% above target).

Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



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KPI 040

Number of smoking cessation 4 week quits (BAME)

Georgia Chimbani Corporate Director for Health and Social Care
Somn Banerjee Director of Public Health



Q1 RAG
Green

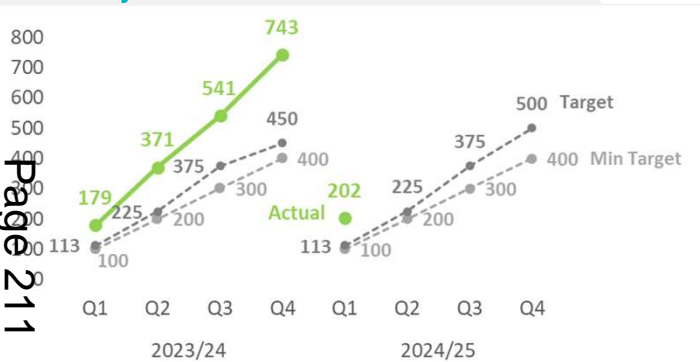
Q1 Actual
202

Above target by
89 (79%)

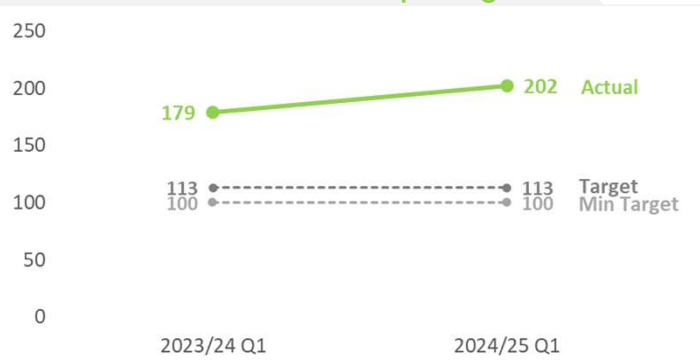
What the data shows

Q1 figure recorded has exceeded both minimum (102% above target) and stretch targets (79% above target).

Quarterly Performance Trend: Stable



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 042

Number of hours of uniformed patrols delivered by the Safer Neighbourhood Operations Service

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ann Corbett Director of Community Safety



Q1 RAG
Green

Q1 Actual
11,266

Above target by
3,266 (41%)

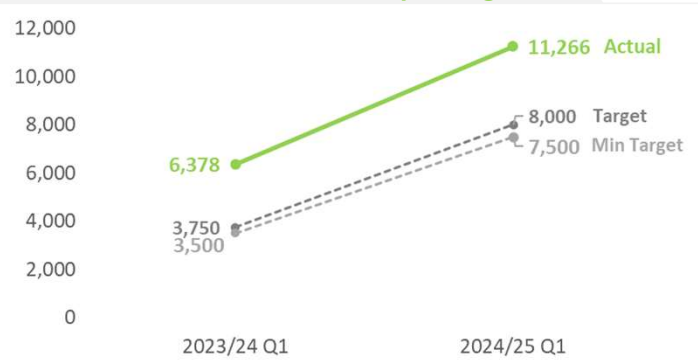
What the data shows

The figure recorded for Q1 has exceeded both stretch and minimum targets. A percentage increase of nearly 77% compared to Q1 2023/24.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Declining ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



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KPI 043

Victims of violence against women and girls who feel safer after engaging with commissioned provider

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ann Corbett Director of Community Safety



Q1 RAG
Green

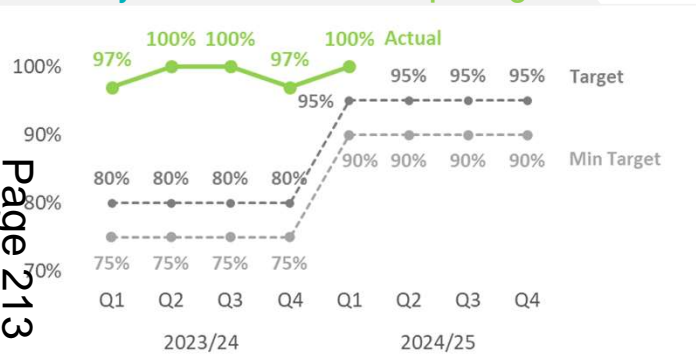
Q1 Actual
100%

Above target by
5 (5%)

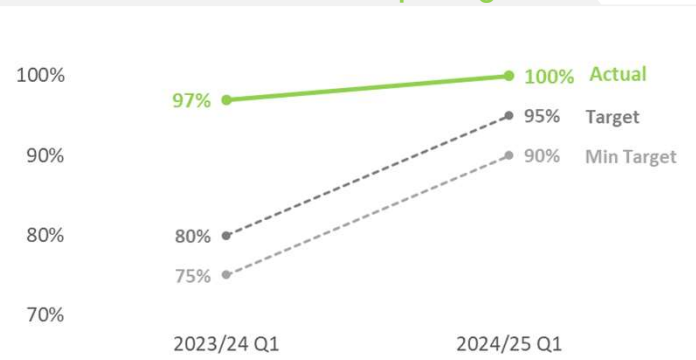
What the data shows

This figure is the sum of all "safer" response options to the survey question. The breakdown for Q1 is as follows: a lot safer 70% (16 out of 23), a little safer 30% (7 out of 23) & not safer 0% (0 out of 23).

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 044

Adults with substance misuse treatment need who successfully engage in community-based structured treatment following release from prison

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ann Corbett Director of Community Safety



Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
55.0%

Below target by
5 (8%)

What the data shows

Current performance as reported by OHID is at 55% (137 released, with 75 starting structured treatment) as of Q1. This places us at higher than the minimum target (50%) but below the stretch target of 60%. To put LBTH performance into context, we continue to outperform both the London and national average and peers with similar numbers of prisoner releases. Like previously, we have undertaken a local data matching exercise. Based on that performance stands at 64% (154 released, with 99 starting structured treatment), which would give us a RAG rating of Green.

Why is this below target?

Data quality issues, particularly around the matching of data means that local information is not congruent with national data. Following discussions, an agreement has been reached with OHID to use the prison that accounts for the largest number of Tower Hamlet's residents released, as a test case to understand the anomalies so these can be addressed. We are working with OHID to agree next steps.

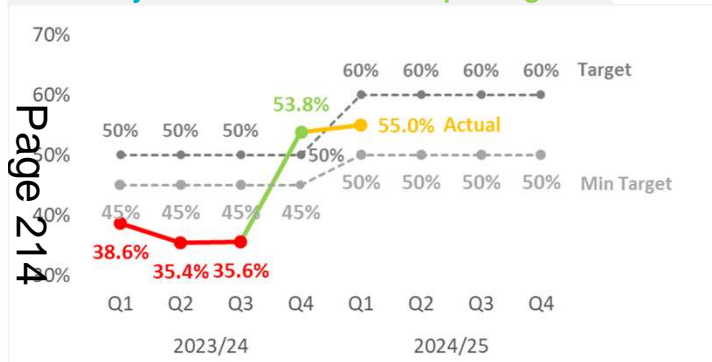
Mitigation action taken by the service

We have already put in place three-way data matching process with the prisons and the treatment provider. This hasn't yet resolved the issues around data matching. The next step is to undertake a deep dive with OHID, working with the aforementioned prison to understand this further.

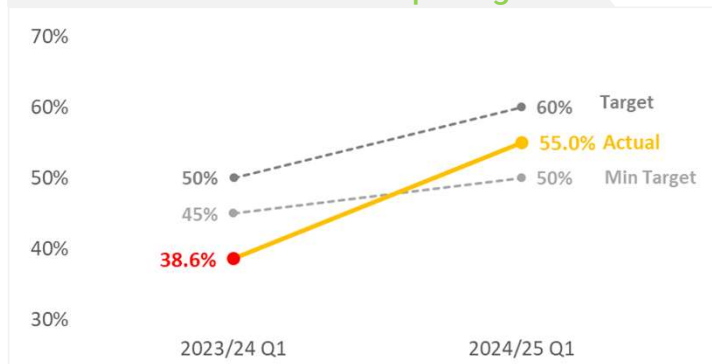
When this will be on track?

We have also been successful in the recent recruitment of the prison exit practitioner. This will enable us to increase the number of prisons we can visit and escorts provided. The post is fixed term till March 2025.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



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KPI 045

Number of trees planted

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm



Q1 RAG
Green

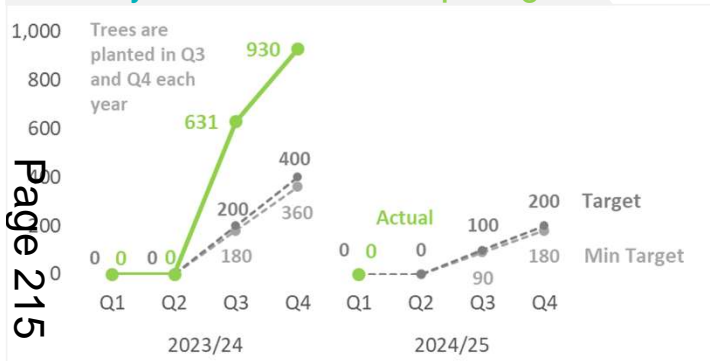
Q1 Actual
0

Above target by
0

What the data shows

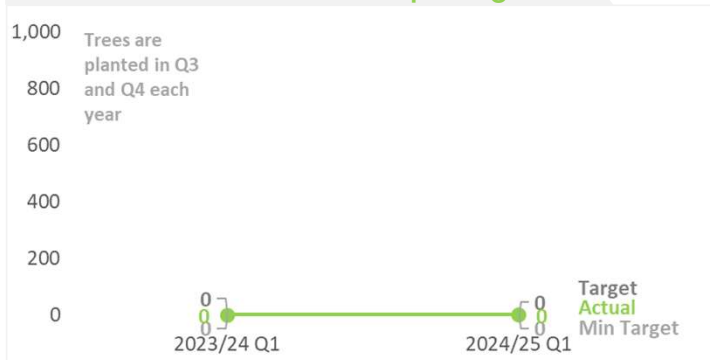
Q1 outturn reflects the fact that it is not a planting season for trees (Trees are being routinely planted during quarters 3 and 4). Batches of projected trees are currently reserved with the dedicated contractor for the upcoming planting season and the service continues to monitor and review these arrangements should plans alter throughout the year.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



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Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 046

Level of household recycling (1/2)

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
15.8%

Below target by
10.2 (44%)

What the data shows

The Quarter 1 outturn was below target level (15.8%) but the monthly recycling rate for July shows an uplift in performance at 17.43%. The average contamination rate for Quarter 1 is lower than the average contamination rate for 2023/24. While the performance is below target there are positive signs of improvement.

Why is this below target?

In Quarter 1 23,813 tonnes of household waste was collected, and 3,760 of this was recycled, reused, or composted. This shows a 1.09% increase in the total household waste collected.

The service is still suffering from high levels of contamination, although the average contamination level in our dry mixed recycling has reduced slightly. For Quarter 1 the contamination rate was 27.63% compared to the rate for 2023/24 at 30.03%.

Mitigation action taken by the service

Flats Recycling Package project – improving recycling infrastructure, signage, and communications at blocks of flats and estates.

We are re-promoting the food waste services in kerbside collections.

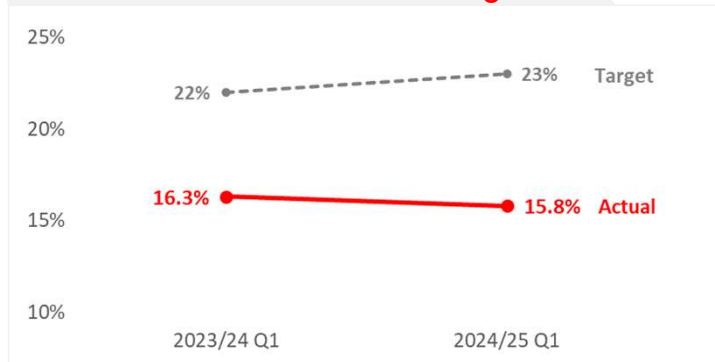
We are working with faith groups, religious institutions, and other community organisations to encourage people to recycle more of their waste and to understand what can and can't be recycled to reduce contamination in our dry mixed recycling. We are working with East London Mosque to develop an approach to partnership working on delivering messages about faith and the environment.

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Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 046

Level of household recycling (2/2)

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
15.8%

Below target by
10.2 (44%)

We are developing new waste collection service standards and policies.

We are implementing a recycling bag pilot specifically for flats, on one recycling round. The pilot is anticipated to encourage residents to recycle more regularly.

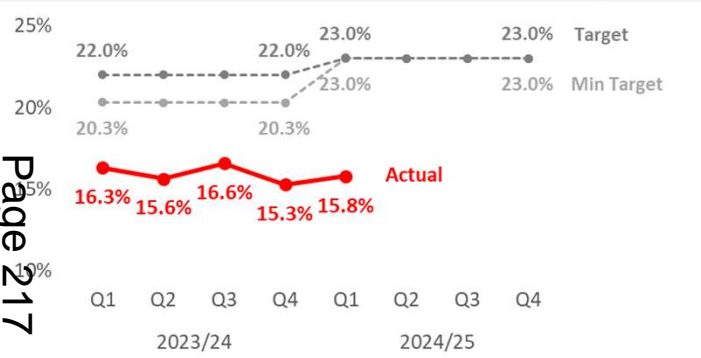
Work is underway to engage an agency to deliver a communications and engagement campaign to help support residents to recycle more, recycle properly, and change their behaviour towards reducing waste.

When this will be on track?

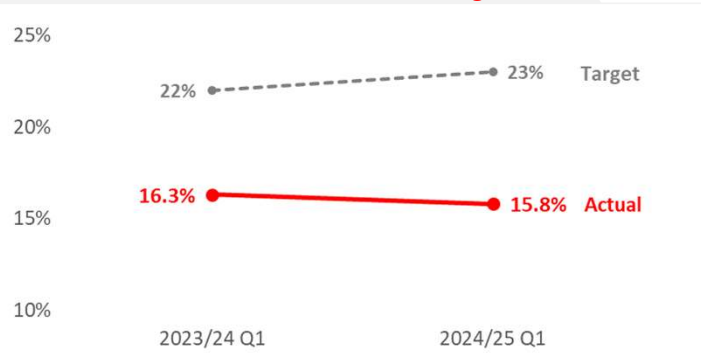
The current measures will take some time to effect change. However, we anticipate that we will start to see positive results by mid-2024/25.

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Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▼



KPI 047

Percentage of enforcement actions to fly-tip incidents

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm



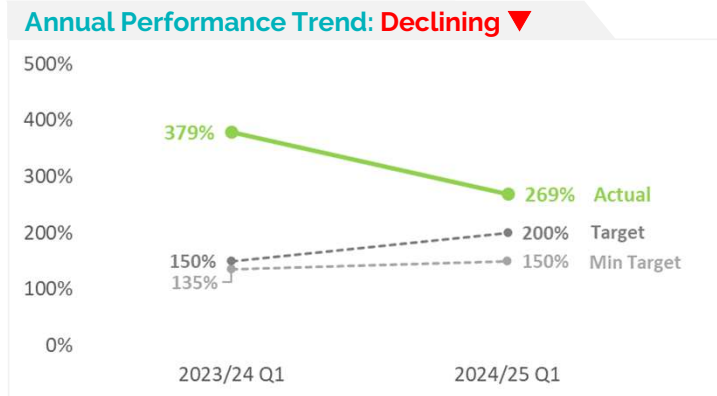
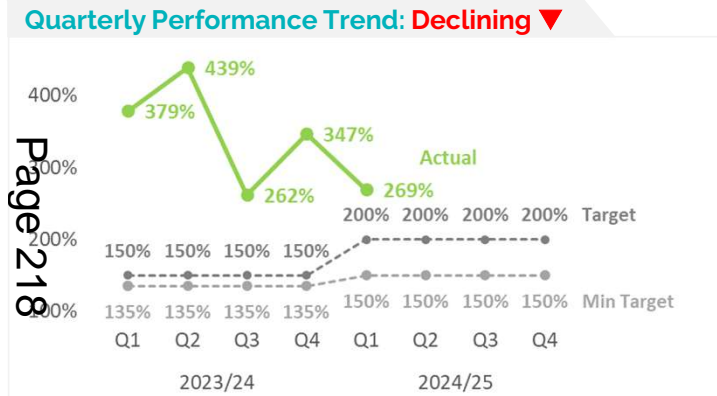
Q1 RAG
Green

Q1 Actual
269%

Above target by
69 (35%)

What the data shows

The service conducted 3,737 Enforcement Actions in Q1. These consist of Investigations, Warning letters, Statutory notices, Fixed Penalty Notices, Duty of care inspections and Prosecutions. The number of Fly-tipping incidents (1,390 in Q1) comprises customer/public reported fly-tips and those reported by, and pro-actively cleared by, our own and contractor's crews.



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KPI 048

Children engaged in school cycle schemes

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm



Q1 RAG
Green

Q1 Actual
722

Above target by
397 (122%)

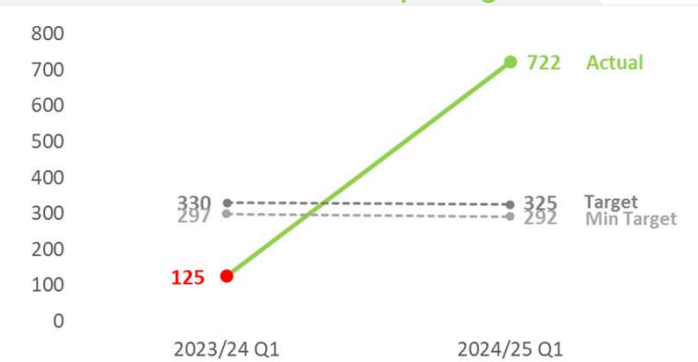
What the data shows

A total of 722 children have received Bikeability training in Quarter 1 2024-25. This is a drastic improvement compared to last year due to the supplier (Cycle Confident) being initially affected by instructor recruitment issues. Corrective actions taken by the supplier with additional instructors taken on and rate of delivery increasing through Q3 and Q4 in 2023-24 has resulted in improved performance.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



KPI 049

Percentage of top 5% of earners from Black, Asian and multi-ethnic communities



Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Pat Chen Director Workforce, OD and Business Support

Q1 RAG
Green

Q1 Actual
37.41%

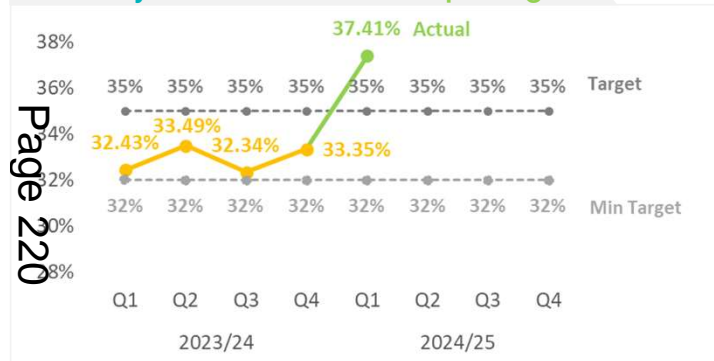
Above target by
2.41 (7%)

What the data shows

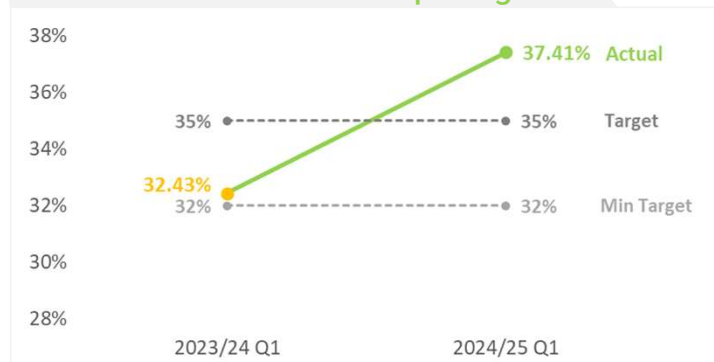
This measure looks at the top 5% earners from Black, Asian and multi-ethnic communities. The work set out in the Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy and corporate action plan to address representation at senior levels (including work to address the council's pay gaps, talent management, leadership and development, coaching and mentoring), as well as actions and targets set out in individual directorate action plans, are starting to have an impact. Delivery of the first year of the action plan has seen a general increase in Black, Asian and multi-ethnic representation in the workforce from 51.93% in May 2023 to 54.54% in August 2024. This has coincided with an increase from 36.93% to 40.24% for Black, Asian and multi-ethnic representation at £60k plus during the same period (please note a slightly different calculation method to top 5% earners).

It is worth noting that there have recently been significant changes in roles at deputy chief officer level and above, which will impact the figures for top 5% earners. There are relatively small numbers in the top 5% of earners, and so minimal change in terms of numbers can impact the percentage.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▲



Annual Performance Trend: Improving ▲



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KPI 050

Residents' perception of being involved in decision-making



Stephen Halsey Chief Executive's Office
Robin Beattie Director of Strategy, Improvement & Transformation

23/24 RAG
Annual

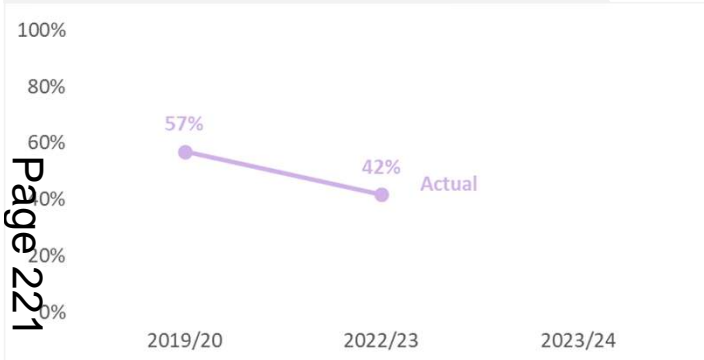
23/24 Actual
Annual

Decreased by
Annual

What the data shows

This measure is part of the Annual Residents Survey which is reported annually. Survey data for 2023/24 is not available yet.

Annual Performance Trend: N/A



KPI 051

Residents' perception of being kept informed by the Council



Stephen Halsey Chief Executive's Office
Robin Beattie Director of Strategy, Improvement & Transformation

23/24 RAG
Annual

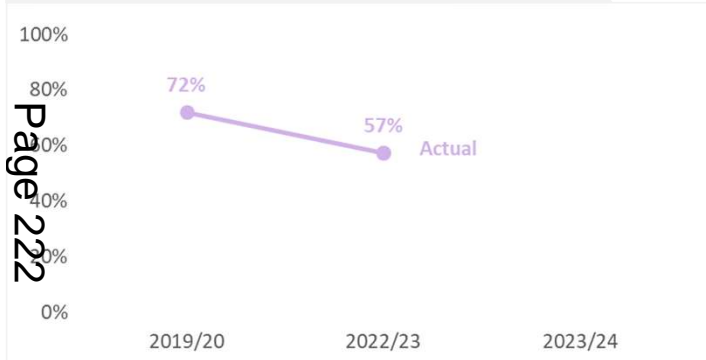
23/24 Actual
Annual

Decreased by
Annual

What the data shows

This measure is part of the Annual Residents Survey which is reported annually. Survey data for 2023/24 is not available yet.

Annual Performance Trend: N/A



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KPI 052

Council tax collection rate (in year)

Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Abdulrazak Kassim Director of Finance



Q1 RAG
Data only

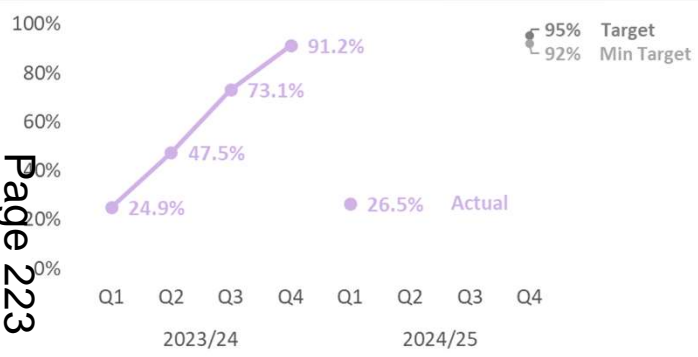
Q1 Actual
26.5%

Increased by
N/A

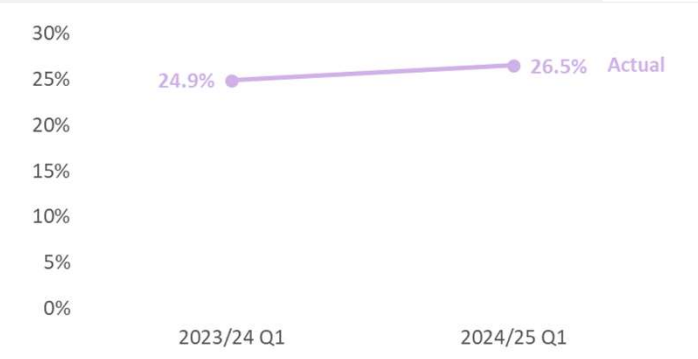
What the data shows

The collection to end of June 24 has reached 26.5% against 25.9% at the same point last year. The is closer to the pre-pandemic levels 2019/20 – 26.9% than it has been at any time since the pandemic.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: Increasing ▲



KPI 053

Council tax collection rate (overall)

Julie Lorraine Corporate Director for Resources
Abdulrazak Kassim Director of Finance



Q1 RAG
No data

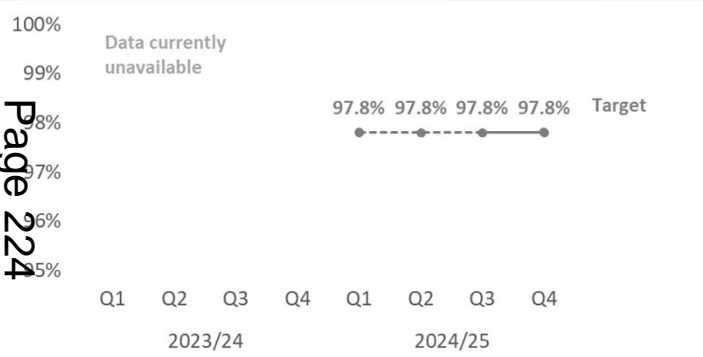
Q1 Actual
No data

Below target by
No data

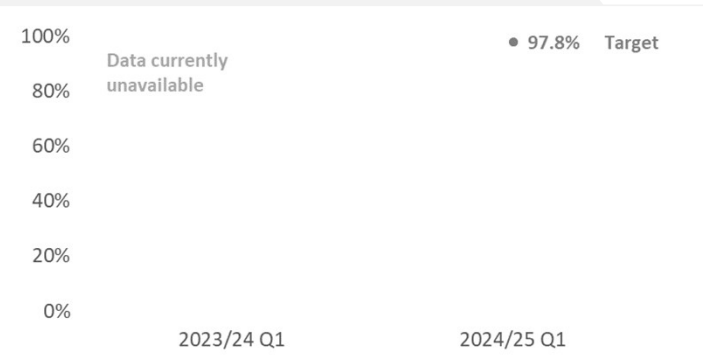
What the data shows

The service is in the process of developing a methodology to calculate this measure.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: N/A



KPI 054

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service

David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Darren Reynolds Interim Director of Housing Integration



Q1 RAG
Red

Q1 Actual
57.7%

Below target by
7.3 (11%)

What the data shows

Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) Overall Tenants Satisfied was 57.7% which is 7.3% below the year-end target of 65%.

Why is this below target?

The target has not been met because since in-sourcing we are on an improvement journey across Customer Services and Repairs. Some of these issues include IT connectivity with customers which is being worked on with Colleagues in IT. This improvement forms part of our compliance and putting the customer first implementation plan.

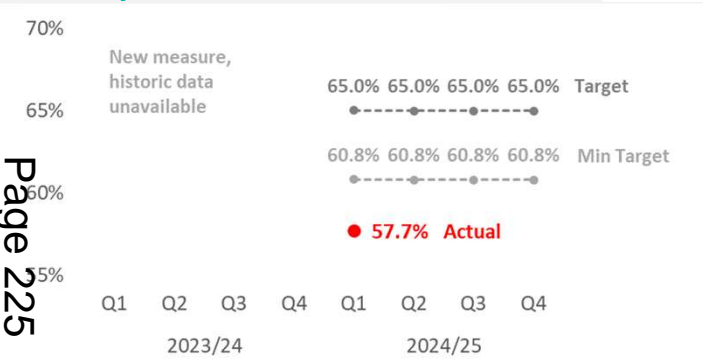
Mitigation action taken by the service

In order to address these issues, we are undertaking an end-to-end review of the repair service from 1st point of contact to completion of repair as well as strengthening our management of the repair contracts. And in the Customer Service Centre we are looking at where efficiencies and improvements can be made to address long waiting times. This has been built into our comprehensive improvement plan where actions are being progressed.

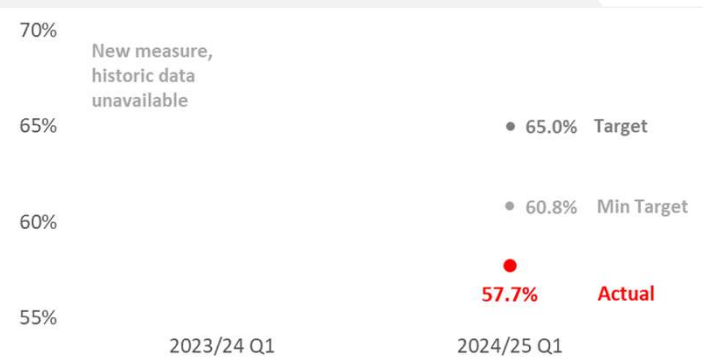
When this will be on track?

We believe that we can address the levels of performance to meet our KPIs in the Customer Service Centre through recruitment, resolution of the technology issues and through implementing "tactical" changes to the repairs process- namely training, additional monitoring of jobs raised and implementation of a Repair Diagnostics tool. We can implement these changes in the next 3 months and expect to see improvement in performance by Q3.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: N/A



KPI 055

Percentage of tenants satisfied that their home is safe

David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Darren Reynolds Interim Director of Housing Integration



Q1 RAG
Green

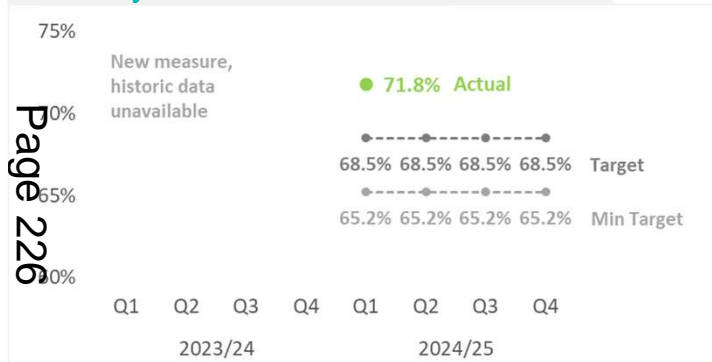
Q1 Actual
71.8%

Above target by
3.3 (5%)

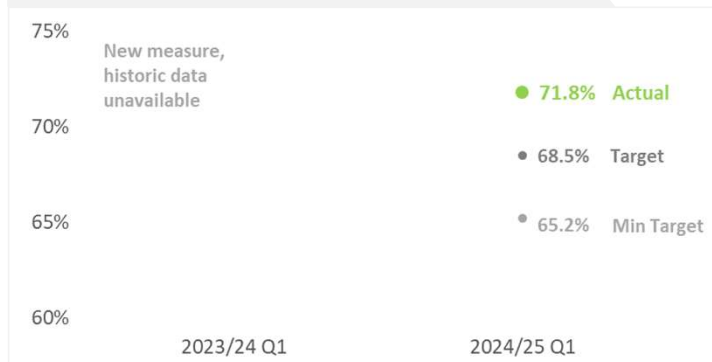
What the data shows

Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) that their home is safe was at 71.8% which is 3.3% above (better than) target. This reflects the positive progress made by the building safety and Asset Management teams and the mitigations we have in place across our high-risk blocks. We will continue to focus on fire safety and wider building safety measures to ensure our residents feel safe in their homes.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: N/A



KPI 056

Percentage of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard



David Joyce Corporate Director for Housing & Regeneration
Darren Reynolds Interim Director of Housing Integration

24/25 RAG
Annual

24/25 Actual
Annual

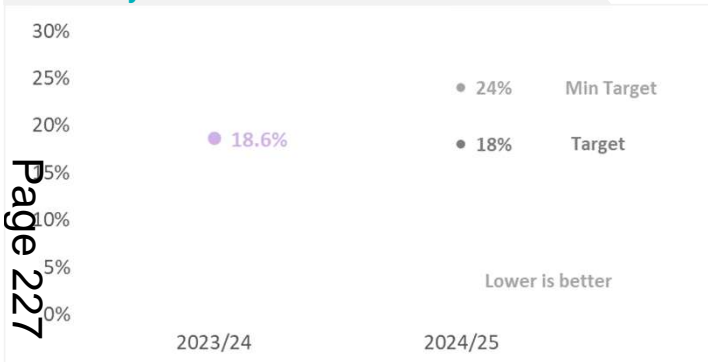
Above target by
N/A

What the data shows

In 2023/24, 18.6% of our stock are assessed as non-decent.

2024/25 will be an exceptional year with increase in non-decent stock as more properties are surveyed. If no action is taken the figure is estimated around 40%. A stretch target is agreed at 18% based on a programme of work for electrical testing, windows, doors, kitchen and bathrooms and radiator replacements with additional contributions required from finance. Output for 2024/25 will be reported in Q1 25/26 following statutory data submission to the Housing Regulator.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



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KPI 057

Rate of children receiving a custodial sentence

Steve Reddy Corporate Director for Children's Services
Susannah Beasley-Murray Director of Children's Social Care (Supporting Families)



Q1 RAG
Green

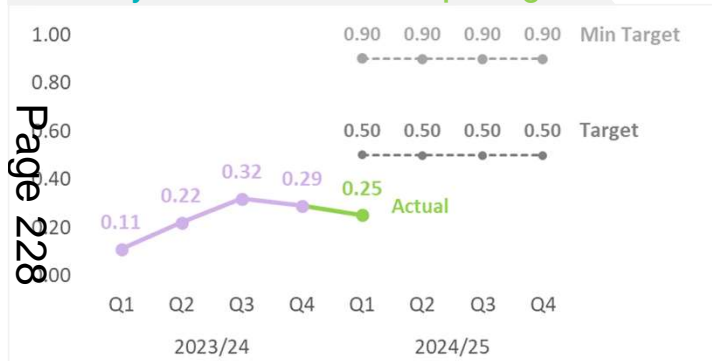
Q1 Actual
0.25

Below target by
0.25

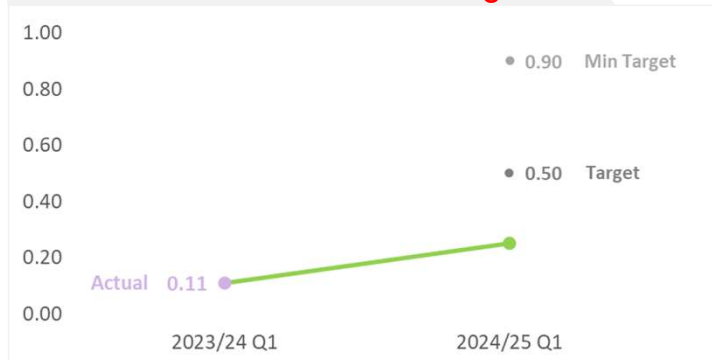
What the data shows

We have continued to meet the target for the number of children that are in custody by investing in the London Accommodation Project as well as having dedicated staff to work with children on the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) programme which is a direct alternative to custody.

Quarterly Performance Trend: Improving ▼



Annual Performance Trend: Declining ▲



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KPI 058

Level of Public Realm Cleanliness (1/3)

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm



Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
91%

Below target by
1 (1%)

What the data shows

The data shows the litter scores for the areas which were surveyed by the KBT inspectors according to the Code of practise for Litter and Refuse. The service expected the target to be slightly below the target level of 92% for quarter 1 as the existing street cleansing model was being evaluated and reviewed, the review led to changes being implemented during Q1 to improve the performance for Q2. The trend is positive and following on from the investment for dedicated cleaning services through the Mayors Waste Improvement project will enable an increased focus on cleansing services within the borough.

Why is this below target?

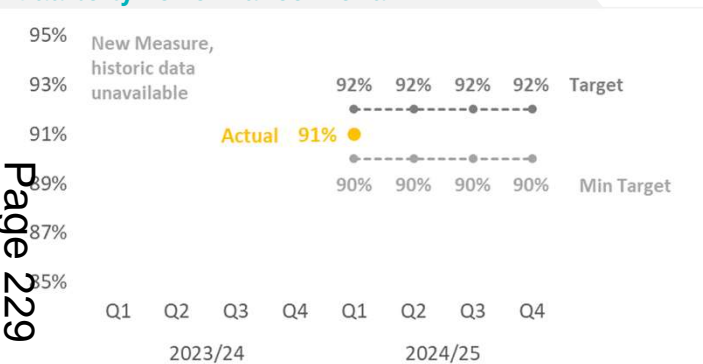
The Independent street cleansing grading was carried out by Keep Britain Tidy (KBT), a nationally recognised organisation to carry out street surveys. The surveys are based on 50m long transects on public highways in five wards per month. This gave a total of 250 transects. 9 streets out of 250 streets were graded unacceptable which resulted to the 91% achievement.

Operational scheduling is the primary factor which impacted the target, the street cleansing schedule was being reviewed during Q1 which led to some areas being cleaned less frequently than others whilst the rebalancing of the schedule was being implemented. The Q1 data from KBT has also been used as a benchmark exercise to identify areas of improvements and to rectify the issues immediately.

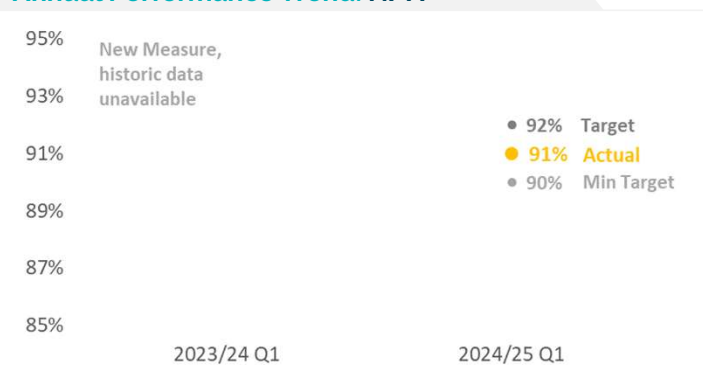
Mitigation action taken by the service

The Mayors Waste Improvement project will enable an increased focus on cleansing services within the borough. The following actions have been taken to ensure the service achieves and improves the performance of street cleansing target.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: N/A



KPI 058

Level of Public Realm Cleanliness (2/3)

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm



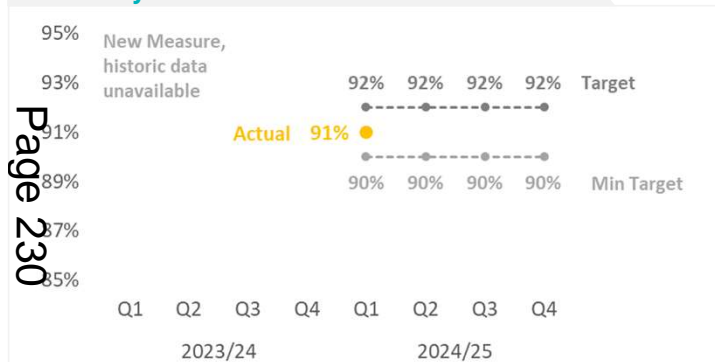
Q1 RAG
Amber

Q1 Actual
91%

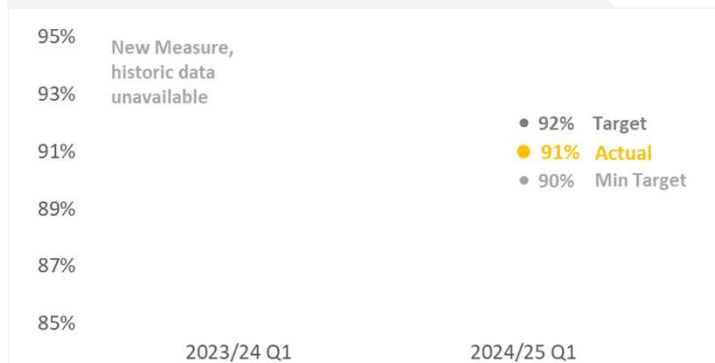
Below target by
1 (1%)

- In April, over 150 street sweepers attended the Town Hall for training on the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (COPLAR), provided by Keep Britain Tidy. Ongoing 'toolbox talks' training is being provided by the service using guidance from KBT.
- Additional staff: The service hired additional staff (sweepers) focusing on addressing and cleaning up specific areas that have higher levels of litter, debris, or other issues, also areas which were below target from KBT results.
- Rapid Response teams: These teams mainly focus on specifically mapped out areas prone to heavy footfall traffic that lead to increased waste accumulation. The aim of these teams is to maintain cleanliness such as picking up waste, emptying litter bins, litter picking, additional sweeping, weeding, clearing waste and any emergencies which may be raised. They are currently tasked to focus on the north and west side of the borough and heavy footfall areas.
- Loop service: Additional round implemented in the service, this teams primary focus is the mainlines, collecting all waste from flats above shops, commercial waste and any unregulated waste as part of a clear all service. This is a forerunner of time -banding which will be introduced later in the year.
- Routine Assessment: Regularly assess streets and carry out inspections for the streets/area which have not met the target.
- Fleet Hire: Hiring of additional specialised vehicles

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: N/A



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KPI 058

Level of Public Realm Cleanliness (3/3)

Simon Baxter Corporate Director for Communities
Ashraf Ali Director of Public Realm



Q1 RAG
Amber

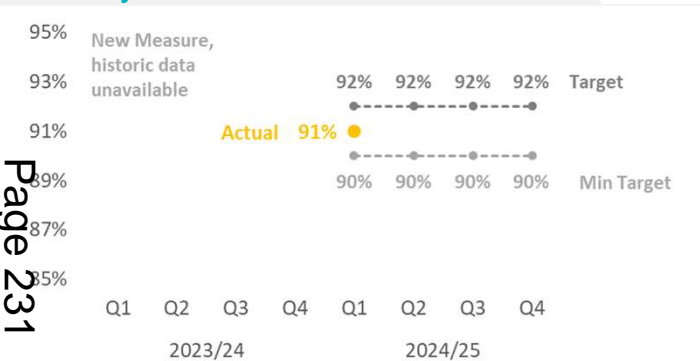
Q1 Actual
91%

Below target by
1 (1%)

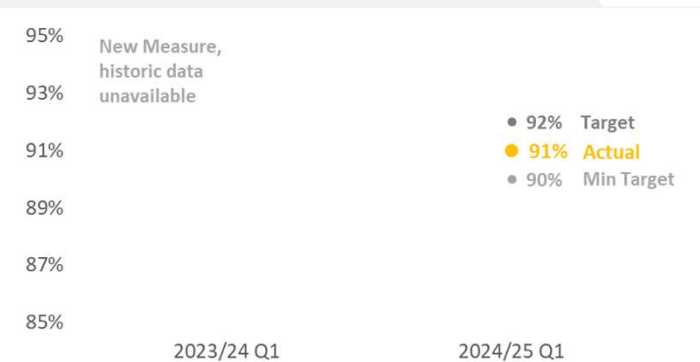
When will this be on track?

We expect an immediate improvement by Q2 and continuous improvements throughout the year, the funding from the mayor through the Mayors Waste Improvement Programme allowed additional resources and vehicles to enhance the current street cleansing service and flexibility to target areas which previously had limited resources. The additional resources alongside the KBT data from the first four months (April, May, June and July) will be used to focus on street cleansing not only as a benchmark exercise to identify areas of improvements but ensure an immediate focus on areas which have been highlighted as unacceptable.

Quarterly Performance Trend: N/A



Annual Performance Trend: N/A



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Cabinet 16 October 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Steve Reddy, Corporate Director of Children's Services	Classification: Unrestricted
Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion Strategy: 2024-2029	

Lead Member	Councillor Maium Talukdar, Statutory Deputy Mayor, Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning
Originating Officer(s)	Lisa Fraser, Director of Education
Wards affected	All
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Forward Plan Notice Published	4 June 2024
Exempt information	None.
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	Priority 3: Accelerate Education Priority 5: Investing in Public Services

Executive Summary

This partnership strategy sets out the shared outcomes that leaders will work collectively to achieve for all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Tower Hamlets. The Special Educational Needs, Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy 2024 – 2029 is a partnership strategy developed on behalf of the Tower Hamlets SEND Improvement Board: a partnership between the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, schools representatives, Barts Health NHS Trust, North East London Integrated Care Board, East London NHS Foundation Trust, the SEND Parents forum, and the Our Time Young People's Forum.

The strategy sets out how leaders will work collectively so we deliver the right support at the right time for children and young people with SEND and their families in Tower Hamlets.

The strategy was approved at Health and Wellbeing Board on 17 September 2024. Cabinet is asked to note and endorse the strategy priorities.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the partnership Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy.
2. To note the Equalities Impact Assessment as set out in Paragraph 4.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The current SEND Strategy (2020 – 2024) is set to expire shortly. A new strategy has been developed to ensure a clear vision and priorities for the partnership, aiming to deliver sustained improvements in support for children and young people with SEND and their families.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The current SEND Strategy (2020 – 2024) could be allowed to lapse. However, as part of the SEND area inspection anticipated in 2024, the partnership is expected to demonstrate shared outcomes that leaders will collectively work to achieve for all children and young people with SEND, as well as how partners will collaborate to attain these outcomes. An agreed-upon strategy is a crucial element in this process.
- 2.2 While the option of extending the current SEND Strategy (2020 – 2024) with a very light-touch refresh exists, it was initially considered at the beginning of the strategy development process and subsequently rejected. The prior strategy was formulated before several key developments: the Covid pandemic, the 2021 SEND Area Inspection, rapid increases in the number of children and young people with SEND, and the launch of the national government's SEND and Alternative Provision reform programme. Consequently, the decision was made that a new strategy is necessary.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The partnership's new Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion Strategy describes the steps we will take as a partnership to realise our vision of Tower Hamlets as a child-friendly borough, where children and young people of all abilities and from all backgrounds thrive, are listened to, achieve their best, and have opportunities. The strategy – to be delivered by the SEND Improvement Board – sets out six priorities that we believe will provide the appropriate support at the right time for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, as well as their families.
- 3.2 The strategy is a live document. Each year, we will agree a partnership-wide programme delivery plan. This will allow the partnership to focus on specific areas to ensure concrete progress can be made. Over the next five years, we

are likely to see shifts in the national policy environment, local evolution of the needs of children and young people with SEND, as well as the outcome of external inspections and reviews. The delivery plan will reflect this changing context.

Policy context

- 3.3 The duties of local authorities, health bodies, schools, and colleagues to provide for children and young people with special educational needs are set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 and described in greater detail in the 2015 Statutory Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years.
- 3.4 The Government's SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper was published in 2022 and echoed the widely held view that the 2014 reforms failed to achieve the goal of improving provision for children with SEND. In March 2023, the Government set out an improvement plan addressing national standards, preparation for adulthood, accountability, and financial sustainability. A clear timeframe for legislation has not been established yet. The incoming Labour government has pledged to improve inclusivity in mainstream schools and ensure schools co-operate with councils on SEND inclusion, but has not committed to implementing the Green paper reforms and has made no commitments on alternative provision.
- 3.5 This strategy sets out how the partnership will work at pace to deliver our statutory responsibilities. At the same time, we set out the ways that we will work together and with families to build confidence in the SEND system, to provide earlier support, to improve the sustainability of the SEND system, and to ensure wider opportunities in our borough are inclusive for children and young people with SEND.

Local context: children and young people with SEND in Tower Hamlets

- 3.6 In common with other areas, Tower Hamlets has seen an increase in children and young people with SEND needs since the Children and Families Act 2014.

There have been substantial increases in the number of children and young people with SEND needs receiving support.

- Between 2015/16 and 2023/24, the total number of children and young people aged 0 to 24 years resident in Tower Hamlets with EHC plans increased from 2066 to 4463. Some of this increase resulted from 20-25 year olds becoming eligible for EHC plans for the first time through the 2014 reforms. However, there were steady increases across all age groups with the exception of pre-school children. (Source: [Statements of special educational needs \(SEN\) and education, health and care \(EHC\) plans, gov.uk](#))
- Between 2015/16 and 2023/24, pupils in state-funded schools in Tower Hamlets, pupils with an EHC plan increased from 1850 to 3251 (from 4% to

6.8% of all pupils) and pupils with SEN support roughly stable – changing from 5870 to 5778 (12.6% to 12.4% of all pupils). (Source: [Special educational needs in England](#))

In the two years since the Covid pandemic, there has been a particularly steep growth in new requests for EHCP assessments. In the academic year 2023, there were 892 initial requests for an EHC plan, compared to 387 in 2021. Much of the increase has been for assessments for young children, for Autistic Spectrum Disorder, and for Speech and Language assessments, with assessment referrals for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder also growing.

- 3.7 The most common primary SEND needs amongst pupils in Tower Hamlets schools receiving SEN support are speech, language and communication needs and social, emotional and mental health needs. Amongst children with EHC plans in Tower Hamlets schools, Autistic Spectrum Disorder is the most common primary need, followed by Speech Language and Communications needs. Many children with SEND have multiple needs which are not reflected in the 'primary needs' data.
- 3.8 Projections developed as part of the borough's SEND Sufficiency Review (2023) point to a likely growth in the number of EHCPs up until 2030. The three main areas of need are likely to be Speech Language and Communication; Autism; and Social, Emotional and Mental Health. This increase in need, combined with a declining school-age population will mean that children with SEND will make up a growing proportion of the school-aged cohort.

Local context: the partnership's support for children and young people with SEND

- 3.9 Improving the timeliness and quality of the support that children and young people with SEND and their families receive is a priority for the partnership. The previous SEND Strategy (2020–24) had 5 priorities:
- Leading SEND
 - Early identification and assessment.
 - Commissioning effective services to respond to local needs
 - Good quality education provision for all children
 - Supporting successful transitions and promoting independence.
- 3.10 There are many strengths in education support for children and young people with SEND in Tower Hamlets. 96.7% of pupils attend schools rated Good or Outstanding, with 3 out of 5 Special Schools rated outstanding. Attainment for children with EHCPs or SEN support exceed the national average at Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and GCSE levels. Rates of absence, exclusions, and suspensions for children with SEND are also better than average. More than 9 in 10 children with SEND are educated in mainstream schools, and a lower percentage of them are in long term alternative provision in Tower Hamlets than nationally. Our recent SEND sufficiency review (2023) has identified priorities for expansion of specialist provision – now and in the future – to meet the educational needs of children with SEND in the borough.

- 3.11 In 2021, a SEND Local Area Inspection by Ofsted and the CQC found that leaders had a good understanding of what worked well and what does not. It noted improvements in SEND provision but identified significant weaknesses. These are the focus of the current SEND Improvement Plan, underpinned by a Written Statement of Action to address the quality and oversight of EHC plans and annual reviews; lengthy waiting times for ASD assessment and diagnosis; fragmented speech and language therapy; and weaknesses in communication between area leaders and parents. Progress has been supported with additional investment: an extra £1.1 million in council funding and £870,000 from the NHS. Further resources have been earmarked in the council's new Medium Term Financial Strategy for SEND Services, SEN Transport, and the Mayor has additionally agreed to invest an additional £900,000 in support and vocational education for 18 to 25 year-olds and young adults with SEND as they transition to adulthood.
- 3.12 In 2023, a Local Government Association SEND Peer Challenge assisted the partnership to take stock of progress. The challenge recognised the commitment across the partnership to drive better outcomes for children and young people with SEND. It highlighted the need to continue to improve the timeliness and quality of Education, Health and Care Plans and Annual Reviews, improve information sharing, and to develop a common and widely understood graduated response for children with different needs across the partnership, supported by a clear, concise strategy and strong governance through the SEND Improvement Board.
- 3.13 Alongside our commitment to improvement, the partnership has been exploring how to sustain high quality SEND support whilst the High Needs Block allocation (funding to support costs of pupils with additional education needs, across mainstream and special schools as well as the associated support costs) fails to keep up with growing levels of need. Through its participation in the Delivering Better Value Programme, Tower Hamlets will provide an improvement programme designed to meet children's needs earlier, bringing together multi-disciplinary teams to support children with SEND in mainstream education settings, and to rationalise financial top-up bandings and what support children should expect to receive at each level. The implementation of the SEND Sufficiency Review recommendations will also contribute to financial sustainability, by increasing the number of children who have their educational needs met in local state-funded schools, reducing the number of higher cost independent and out-of-borough placements.

SEND and Inclusion Strategy development process.

- 3.14 The starting point for the strategy is the Tower Hamlets Partnership Plan 'A Tower Hamlets for All', supported by the Accelerate! Children and Families Partnership Strategy (2024-2029) They include the partnership's ambition that Tower Hamlets should become:

A child-friendly borough where children and young people from all backgrounds thrive, are listened to, achieve their best, and have opportunities.

- 3.15 Young people, families and partners have requested a concise SEND strategy which clearly sets out the main things the partnership will do to support children and young people with SEND and their families. Although the strategy document itself is short, it is underpinned by engagement with stakeholders and residents, and survey and analytical work conducted for the SEND Sufficiency Review and Delivering Better Value Programme.
- 3.16 The strategy was initially developed in through consultation process with young people, families, and professionals, including:
- discussions with leaders from different partners at the SEND Improvement Board in November 2023 and February 2024
 - an in-person discussion with the Our Time all ability youth forum to find out about the issues that matter most to young people with SEND (November 2023)
 - online surveys with partner representatives and Special Educational Needs Coordinators in schools (November to December 2023)
 - an online workshop to map initial challenges and issues (November 2023)
 - an in-person workshop attended by 50 people to which partners, parents and young people, schools, health and voluntary and community sector professionals were invited, with a focus on developing practical strategy actions (January 2024)
 - analysis of recent consultation and engagement conducted as part of the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme – including survey responses from more than 100 parents and carers (2023 – 24)
 - Feedback from families attending Let’s Talk SEND events.
- 3.17 Annex 2 provides a detailed overview of the consultation process and issues arising. The strategy (including easy read versions) was available on the Let’s Talk platform for comment for six weeks between May and June 2024, and a survey was extensively publicised through social media, information channels for parents and carers of children with SEND, and community and faith networks. There were 42 survey responses, and discussions and engagement events were held with around 190 people present. Attention was given to ensuring that a diverse range of residents were able to take part, including parents and carers from British Bangladeshi and Somali backgrounds.
- 3.18 As a result of feedback, the strategy has been significantly strengthened in a number of ways to provide more clarity on :
- How the strategy will be delivered and the role of the SEND partnership, including clearer linkages with the early help partnership
 - Shared outcomes for children and young people with SEND
 - Specific commitments relating to alternative provision and to children and young people with SEND who are known to children’s social care, youth justice and probation
 - Performance measures: we have used measures where there is existing, reliable data – typically data in the public domain. Where possible we have added additional measures. This will be

complemented by the development of an annual survey of children and young people, and by operational monitoring of strategy delivery.

3.19 The strategy has six priorities:

- Priority 1 - Timely, effective, and well-coordinated support for children and young people with SEND - focuses on delivering continued improvements in the support provided for children and young people with SEND and their families in a context of increasing need for support.
- Priority 2 - User-friendly services for children and young people with SEND and their families - reflects feedback from families and professionals that services are hard to navigate, and not sufficiently designed with children and families' needs in mind.
- Priority 3 - Early identification and support for the under-fives - is part of our broader commitment to early identification and support. Providing early evidence-based support without delay can support children's development, avoid problems escalating and in some cases will mean that statutory assessment and plans are not required.
- Priority 4 - A great education and support for every school-age child with SEND – includes wide-ranging commitments to ensure that more children's needs can be met within mainstream schools, whilst expanding supply of local specialist placements within the state-funded sector for children who need them.
- Priority 5 - Opportunities and support for young adults with SEND – includes the development of more education, training, and employment opportunities for young adults.
- Priority 6 - A borough that welcomes and celebrates children and young people with SEND and supports them to thrive – responds to calls from children and young people with SEND to make Tower Hamlets a genuinely accessible and inclusive borough, with opportunities for friendship, enjoyment, and activity for young people of all abilities.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment is attached as Annex 3, and builds on the draft EqlA presented with the draft strategy. It finds that successful implementation will help to reduce inequalities (particularly those based on disability) and improve cohesion and inclusion.
- 4.2 The EqlA identifies possible barriers to identification of SEND and access to services for girls and minoritised communities. These will be explored in greater depth in the upcoming JSNA and will be addressed through the strategy's comprehensive approach to improve identification and assessment, access to services and information about services for children and young people with SEND and their families.
- 4.3 The EqlA makes three main recommendations which have been reflected in the strategy document:
- Complete a SEND JSNA and agree and implement recommendations
 - Ensure coproduction activities are representatives of different members of the community

- Improve minoritised communities' access to services: including implementing the agreed recommendations from the ASD in Somali children project, and reflecting detailed issues raised in the strategy consultation in the delivery plans.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 There are no further statutory implications to highlight in this section that are not covered within the main body of the report.

5.3 The main body of this report has identified the following statutory implications:

- A SEND local area inspection is expected, in which the partnership must demonstrate shared outcomes to work towards for all children and young people with SEND,
- Compliance with the duties outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014 and 2015 Statutory special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 The financial context for the SEND strategy is determined by funding provided by the government through the High Needs Block within the Dedicated School Grant (DSG). This is a ring-fenced grant provided by the DfE to fund all education provision. This report is a noting report and does not seek any approvals. If the strategy is to realise its aims, there may be financial implications. However, these must be managed within available resources and will be subject to consultation with Schools Forum.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 Section 27 of the Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities to keep under review the educational provision, training provision and social care provision made for children and young people for whom the local authority is responsible who have special educational needs or a disability.

- 7.2 Section 30 of the Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities to publish information about the local offer for children and young people in their area who have special educational needs or a disability.
- 7.3 Statutory guidance, SEND and disability code of practice 0-25 (2015) sets out the requirements on local authorities relating to children and young people with a disability.
- 7.4 The matters set out in this report demonstrate the Council's compliance with the above requirements.
-

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- SEND Sufficiency Review 2023, included as part of [Planning for School Places 2024/25 Review and Recommendations](#)

Appendices

- Appendix A: SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024 – 29
- Appendix B: Consultation Report
- Appendix C: SEND and Inclusion Strategy: Equality Impact Assessment

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

Tina Sode, Head of Special Educational Needs
Rebecca Williams, Strategy and Policy Officer

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Tower Hamlets Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion Strategy

2024–29



A message from the Tower Hamlets Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion partnership

Welcome to our partnership SEND and Inclusion strategy for Tower Hamlets. This strategy is all about making sure that our children and young adults with special educational needs, disabilities and additional needs are able to thrive and fulfil their potential. Over the past few months, we have listened to what parents, young people and professionals have to say about our SEND services in Tower Hamlets and worked with them to develop our six strategy priorities.

As leaders, we are determined to work together to deliver for children and young people with SEND and their families. There is a lot to celebrate in Tower Hamlets. The love and care of families and the dedication of our professionals is at the heart of our strategy. However, we must do better. Our priorities are ambitious, and we will translate them into action with annual delivery plans. There are many pressures on our SEND and alternative provision, and we acknowledge that the pace of implementation will need to reflect the available budget and the capacity of our workforce. We are committed to making progress and our SEND Improvement Board will report annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Signed:

Lutfur Rahman, Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets

Councillor Maium Talukdar, Deputy Mayor of Tower Hamlets,
Cabinet member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning

Steve Halsey, Chief Executive, LB Tower Hamlets

Steve Reddy, Corporate Director, Children's Services, LB Tower
Hamlets
and Chair of the SEND Improvement Board

Samantha Gager, Chair, Independent SEND Forum Tower
Hamlets

Sornnaly Hossain, Our Time All Ability Youth Forum

Zina Etheridge, Chief Executive, NHS North East London

Lorraine Sunduza OBE, Chief Executive Officer, East London Foundation Trust

Veronica Armson,
Executive Headteacher Phoenix School, Chair of Special Schools Consultative Group

Danny Lye, Chair of Secondary Heads Consultative

Shoshannah Thompson, Chair of Primary Heads Consultative

Gerry McDonald, Principal of Tower Hamlets College

Dr Neil Ashdown, Chief Executive of Royal London and Mile End, Bart's Health NHS Trust and Chair of Tower Hamlets Together

A message from Lutfur Rahman, Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets

We want Tower Hamlets to be a place where every child fulfils their potential.

I am privileged to be the Mayor for all residents in Tower Hamlets. We all want the best for our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. We are committed to working together as a partnership to deliver this strategy and the right support for our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and their families.

Lutfur Rahman, Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets



Tower Hamlets Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion Strategy: 2024–29

As a Children and Families Partnership we want Tower Hamlets to be:

A child-friendly borough where children and young people from all backgrounds thrive, are listened to, achieve their best, and have opportunities. (Accelerate! The Tower Hamlets Children and Families Partnership Strategy 2024-2029)

We are so proud of our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). As a partnership, we are committed to championing equality and co-production. We are determined that our vision of a child-friendly borough is inclusive, where the focus is on meeting children’s needs, and children of all abilities are welcome, and are nurtured to fulfil their potential.

As a partnership, we have agreed seven outcomes that we all want to see for children and young people with SEND in Tower Hamlets:



To achieve these outcomes, our SEND and Inclusion Strategy sets out six priorities for 2024 – 29 that we believe will deliver the right support at the right time for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their families. It applies to children and young people with SEND living in Tower Hamlets aged 0 to 25 years, including those who have an Education, Health and Care Plan and those receiving SEND support, and also to our children who are educated in alternative provision settings

These priorities were developed in discussion with young people, parents, carers and the professionals who make up our SEND Local Area workforce. They told us that there is lots to celebrate. We have great schools in Tower Hamlets and pupils with SEND achieve well. The young Our Time Ambassadors are passionate advocates for the rights of young people with SEND. Working together, we have made progress in meeting statutory requirements for assessments, Education, Health and Care Plans, and annual reviews. Families and professionals strive to do the best for children and young people, and there is a wealth of expertise and professionals who have worked in Tower Hamlets for many years.

But we don't always get things right for children and young people with SEND. Our overriding priority is delivering the right support at the right time, working closely with children and young people, and those that know them best – their families. We will focus on providing early support so that children can fulfil their potential. We have also listened to what young people have told us and included a focus on the things that make for a good childhood : fun with friends, and inclusive play, sport, leisure and youth services.

At the same time, this strategy looks to the future. As a partnership we need to make sure we have the right services, staff and funding for the next ten years. The number of children and young people needing SEND support has been rising in Tower Hamlets and beyond. Through early support and the right education placements in local schools and colleges, our strategy sets out how we intend to meet this growing need with high quality and financially sustainable services for our children and young people with SEND.

Support for SEND in Tower Hamlets is on a five year improvement journey. The pace and direction of change will need to respond to the availability of resources and national direction on SEND. However we are absolutely committed to the improvement journey for children and young people with SEND and will work with them, their families and professionals across Tower Hamlets as we collectively respond to change.

Inclusion is everyone's business. Our SEND Improvement Board brings together young people and family representatives in partnership with local decision makers from education, health and children's services. The Board is accountable to the Tower Hamlets' Health and Wellbeing Board. It will lead delivery of our SEND strategy and work with other organisations to make sure Tower Hamlets is an inclusive and child-friendly borough for every child and young person.

Children and young people with special educational needs, disabilities and additional needs in Tower Hamlets

There are 4,463 0–25 year-olds living in Tower Hamlets who have an Education, Health and Care Plan, up from 2,842 in 2019 – a rise of 57% over five years. Of these children and young people:

- **72%** are male and **28%** are female.
- **43%** are from an Asian background – including **40%** from a Bangladesh background; **8%** are from a Black background; **6%** from a Mixed ethnic background; **14%** from a White background; **2%** from another ethnic group; and **28%** from an unknown background.
- The most frequent primary needs are **speech, language and communications** (1550), **autistic spectrum disorder** (1172), **social emotional and mental health** (504), and **moderate learning difficulty** (447). However, it is widely recognised that many children and young people have a range of different needs.
- **54%** are being educated in a mainstream school; **21%** in a special school; **17%** are in further education; **1%** are in alternative provision; **4%** are not in education, employment or training; and the rest are in other settings, including apprenticeships, home education, and so on.

(January 2024 data. Source: [Education, health and care plans: England 2024](#))

In Tower Hamlets schools:

- Nearly **1 in 5 pupils** (19.2%) have SEND: **6.8% of pupils** have an Education, Health and Care Plan and a further **12.4% of pupils** are receiving SEND support.
- The number of pupils in Tower Hamlets schools with an EHCP grew by **around 75%** between 2015/16 and 2023/24: from **1850 to 3251** pupils.
- There are **262 pupils** on local authority funded alternative provision placements, **42 pupils** in school arranged alternative provision, and **96 pupils** in a state-funded alternative provision school (London East Alternative Provision).

(January 2024 data. Source: [Special educational needs in England, 2023/24](#))

Developing the strategy

The strategy development was led on behalf of the partnership by the Tower Hamlets SEND Improvement Board. It was informed by an extensive evidence base including a robust self-evaluation of the SEND partnership's strengths and challenges, the findings of our LGA SEND Peer Challenge in 2023, a SEND survey for parents as part of our Family Hubs development, and evidence gathered as part of the Delivering Better Value programme design including case review analysis and a survey of more than 100 parents.



Strategy priorities were developed in late 2023 and early 2024 through initial discussions with young people, online engagement sessions with professionals, and surveys with SENCOs and parents. These were followed by an in-person multi-stakeholder workshop to which more than 50 people were invited including parents/carers, young people health, education, local authority and voluntary and community sector representatives, where participants prioritised strategy objectives.

The strategy was further developed in response to consultation feedback in summer 2024 from residents, schools and health professionals, and the Children and Education Scrutiny sub-committee. Full details can be found in our consultation report.

Priority 1

Timely, effective and well-coordinated support for children and young people with SEND

What we want to see

1. Strong leadership and governance, positive relationships and clear communications which build confidence and drive improvements for children with SEND and their families.
2. A whole system approach to delivering the right care, in the right place at the right time for early years, school-age children and young people through graduated pathways which everyone understands.
3. A range of provision available which is available to meet children's and young people's needs as they emerge, including for children in care and children in the justice system.
4. High quality case management and comprehensive management reports that are used by all partners to improve performance and make strategic decisions.
5. Statutory timelines met for all children and young people who need assessments, EHC Plans and annual reviews, with improvements in quality and the voice of the child reflected as appropriate throughout.



What will we do together?

1. Reform the SEND Improvement Board to provide strategic and focused leadership.
2. Co-produce a shared understanding of a graduated response and inclusion across the local partnership. This will inform the universal offer, targeting of additional support, strategic commissioning and a consistent approach to growing needs.
3. Improve joint working between health, education and social care to achieve more strategic and efficient commissioning and a greater focus on prevention.
4. Develop and implement a proactive SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Communications plan to build parental confidence and ensure that families and professionals feel part of our improvement journey.
5. Through the new Designated Social Care Officer, deliver and implement high quality social care input into early intervention strategies, needs assessments and EHC plans.
6. Develop a rigorous SEN quality assurance framework to support high quality interventions and EHC plans.
7. Invest an added £400,000 to deliver high quality Education, Health and Care Plans for children who need them within statutory timeframes, with a co-production meeting as part of every EHC plan and amendments at each Key Stage and during education transitions.
8. Improve our case management system through a 'hosted' system and an online SEN module which can be accessed by the SEN Service, parents and carers, and selected professionals in the Local Area.
9. Improve the SEND Management Information Report to inform decision-making, with performance measures across the partnership, benchmarked to assess progress
10. Use data from health visitor reviews and section 23 notifications to develop an understanding of emerging need and plan for future service provision.
11. Conduct a SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and use insights together with management information data to identify, understand and address inequalities in identification and support.

Priority 2

User-friendly services for children and young people with SEND and their families

What we want to see

1. Everything from individual support to the strategic ambition for Tower Hamlets is shaped by the voices and views of children and young people with SEND and parents and carers.
2. Families and young people from all backgrounds can find out what they can expect from services and how the SEND system works, particularly at important moments for them.
3. Services and the professionals that work in them have a good understanding of the support on offer, the role of different organisations, frameworks and timelines.
4. The number of times families and young people have to repeat information to different professionals and services is reduced.

What will we do together?

1. Launch and roll-out our SEND Co-production Charter, and review annually with professionals, parents and young people to ensure that meaningful coproduction at strategic and individual level is happening and involves those from diverse backgrounds.
2. Introduce a new SEND 'front door' so that families can access information about available support for children .
3. Provide clear and consistent messages on SEND across all information platforms for families, developing our SEND Local Offer so that it is accessible and supported by increased engagement, use of new technologies, and regular 'Let's Talk SEND' events.
4. Increase the impact of the independent Tower Hamlets and City SEND Information, Advice and Support Service through work with Family Hubs to ensure staff working directly with families have information about SEND services.
5. Develop support for 16 – 25-year-olds as laid out within the Minimum Standards for Information Advice and Support Services
6. Learning from current initiatives, develop proposals for health passports for children and young people with SEND.
7. Gather annual feedback from children and young people with SEND about their lives, experiences and aspirations.

Priority 3

Early identification and support for the under-fives

What we want to see

1. Children's needs identified earlier and more consistently across different needs and characteristics.
2. Evidence-based support for young children so that needs do not escalate while they wait for an assessment
3. Parents and carers of babies and infants with SEN supported and empowered by a confident, skilled workforce and through peer support, including before birth.
4. Fewer families feel they need to undertake lengthy statutory assessment procedures to secure the support their child needs.

What will we do together?

1. Develop and sustain a SEND Early Intervention approach and front door model, building on Family Hubs and bringing together different services in multi-disciplinary teams to meet children's needs as early as possible, through a graduated approach and increased use of group based interventions.
2. Develop and roll-out early identification and support programmes for infants as part of our Start for Life programme including a universal 12 month review, and a programme of parent-led therapy to support social, communication and language development in infants displaying early signs of autism.
3. Collaborate across our Early Help partnership to identify and contact families of young children who may have additional needs but are not regularly accessing services for under-fives.
4. Adapt and extend the Inclusion Framework, self-assessment tool and training to early years education settings.
5. Co-produce and implement a programme of speech and language therapy for 2 to 5 year-olds.
6. Development of pathways, skills development and communication for parents and professionals for supporting children, to include children with social communication needs as well as other areas of development.

Priority 4

Effective education and support for school-age children with SEND and additional needs

What we want to see

1. Expanding Tower Hamlets' successful inclusion model so that as many children as with SEND as possible are educated in a local mainstream school.
2. Education in state-funded settings for children who need specialist placements and an extended local alternative provision offer.
3. Well planned and supported transitions when children start primary, secondary and post-secondary education.
4. Reductions in absences, suspensions and exclusions for pupils with SEND and additional needs
5. Reductions in the number of children with SEND and additional needs entering the criminal justice system.
6. Effective planning for the long term so that current and future needs for specialist placements can be met through high quality provision in state-funded schools and alternative provision





What will we do together?

1. Implement an Inclusion Framework and self-assessment tool to support inclusion for children with SEND in mainstream primary and secondary schools for whole class and SEN support levels, supported by technology where appropriate.
2. Introduce a more consistent and transparent approach to top-up funding and expected levels of support in mainstream schools and alternative provision.
3. Introduce and pilot specialist Additionally Resourced Provision attached to mainstream schools in key areas where there is a shortfall in specialist placements..
4. Continued work to develop and deliver a pipeline of appropriate support and placements for children and young people with more complex needs.
5. Support and learn from programmes such as the Phoenix Specialist Classrooms project where expertise in the borough is shared to benefit children and professionals.
6. Introduce an integrated therapies package for children in school, delivering a core offer with quality-assurance and monitoring.
7. Work together to deliver holistic and evidence-based interventions and advice to support attendance and reduce suspensions and exclusions for pupils with SEND, including delivery of effective outreach from special schools and alternative provisions.

Priority 5

Opportunities and support for young adults with SEND and additional needs



What we want to see

1. Planning for adulthood starting at age 14 for young people with SEND.
2. More local education places at young people aged 16 and over with SEND.
3. More options for vocational learning or part-time alternative provision for young people with SEND
4. Timely and well-planned transitions for our young people who will need support from adult social care and health services including our children in care and care leavers.
5. Support for life skills such as travel training, welfare entitlements and wellbeing for young adults.



What will we do together?

1. Increase in-borough places available to young people over the age of 16 years, especially in Autism, SEMH and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties.
2. Review the offer in sixth forms to ensure inclusivity for young people working below level 2.
3. Extend the Inclusion Framework and self-assessment tool to 16+ education and college settings.
4. Invest an additional £900,000 in support and vocational education for 18 to 25 year-olds and young adults with SEND as they transition to adulthood.
5. Implement the Transitions Protocol and pathways for young people with EHCPs who will transition from support from Children's Social Care to Adult Social Care and adult health services, with oversight by the Transitions Board, and learning from regular quality assurance audits.
6. Conduct and implement the recommendations from a Preparing for Adulthood Audit with key stakeholders.
7. Develop a wider range of support options for young people with EHCPs who do not receive support from Children's Social Care.
8. Develop and implement a three-year action plan for supported internships and apprenticeships to meet the demand from young people with SEND for pathways to employment.
9. Strengthen the offer for children with EHCPs who are within the youth justice or probation service so they receive the support, care and education they need, whether they are in a community or a secure setting.

Priority 6

Children and young people with SEND and neurodiversity are valued, celebrated and supported to thrive

What we want to see

1. Children and young people with SEND are visible and celebrated in Tower Hamlets
2. A SEND workforce that promotes inclusion and has appropriate skills to enable children and young people with SEND to meet their potential.
3. Children and young people with SEND and their families feel connected with friends, peers and the wider community.
4. Children and young people have fun and improve their wellbeing by taking part in play, youth, leisure, and holiday activities.
5. Children and young people with SEND feel safe and supported.



What will we do together?

1. Support for the Our Time SEND Ambassadors forum, Independent SEND Parent Carer Forum, and Parent SEND Ambassadors, and establish wider forums to hear the voices of all children and young people with additional needs to advocate for inclusion at a local, regional, and national level.
2. Recognise and celebrate our children and young people with SEND and additional needs.
3. Agree a coordinated workforce development plan to enhance appropriate skills and capacity for all professionals across the SEND partnership.
4. Consider how best to meet the needs of children and young people who may have undiagnosed SEND and use other local services.
5. Work with partners to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND as part of the borough's Child Healthy Weight Programme.
6. Co-produce and implement an inclusive play programme which covers infrastructure, play sessions and communications.
7. Ensure a minimum of 50% of new play equipment in park upgrades is accessible.
8. Co-design and deliver an inclusive Young Tower Hamlets service which is open to all abilities, offers dedicated sessions for young people with SEND and additional needs, supported by well-trained staff.
9. Improve accessibility through environmental improvements, workforce development and more inclusive and holistic offer for people with disabilities, as part of bringing leisure services under council management.
10. Increase the number and range of free and low cost holiday activities that are accessible for children and young people with SEND and additional needs.
11. Ensure the needs and experiences of children and young people with SEND and additional needs are addressed in the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership's work programme around keeping children safe.

How we will deliver the strategy together

All organisations in the partnership are determined to deliver improvements for families and children and young people with SEND and additional needs. There is much to do, and the pace of implementation will need to reflect the available budget and the capacity of our workforce.

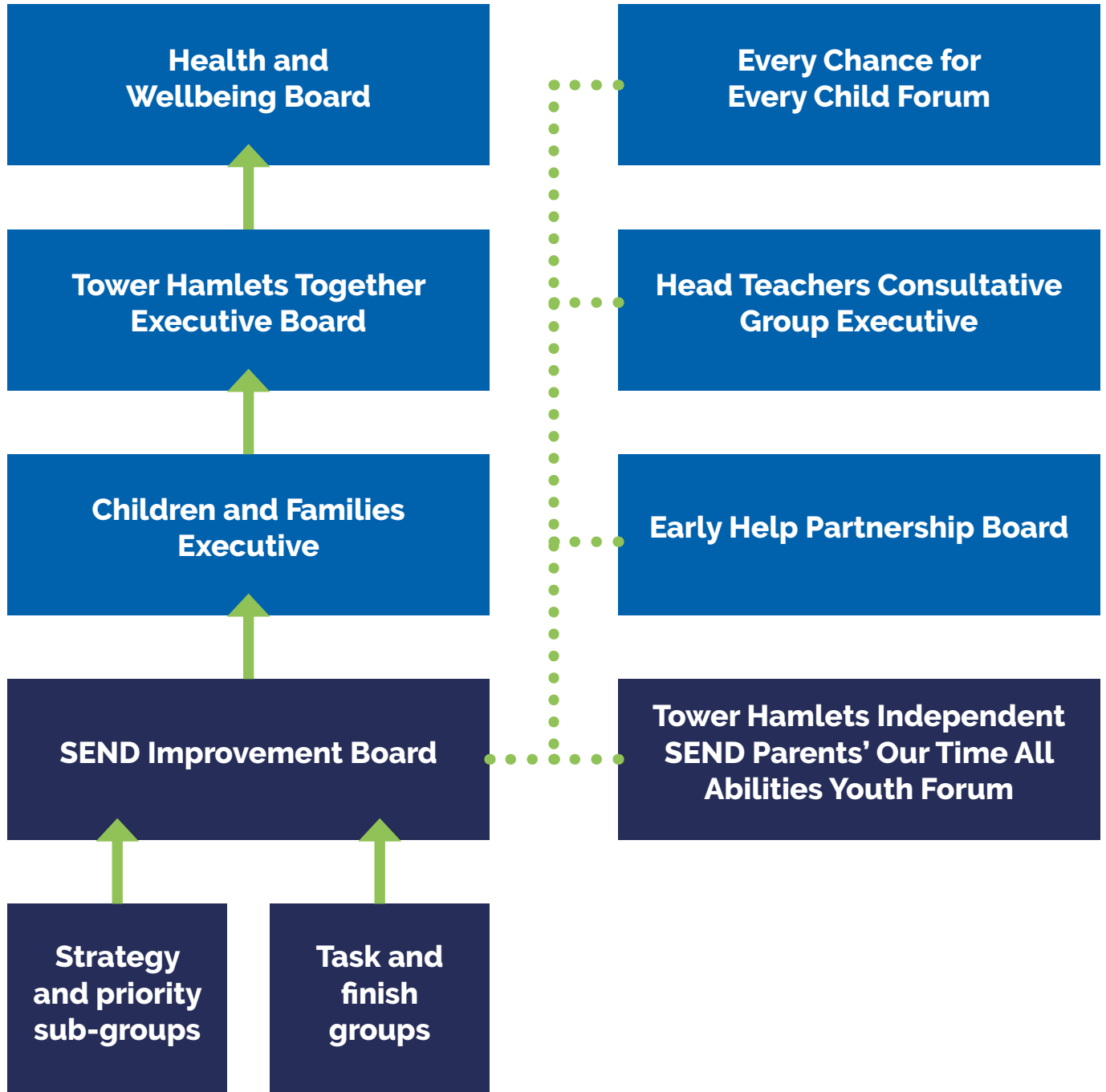
Each year, the partnership will agree a delivery plan with clear, timebound and achievable actions for different organisations. While multi-agency working is important across the SEND system, we will be mindful of the need for focused coordination in key development areas with the greatest potential for positive impact.

Each priority area will be taken forward by a sub-group of the SEND Improvement Board. Where needed, task and finish groups will be assigned to complete focused actions in a short time.

Our annual delivery planning process will allow the SEND Improvement Board to keep our priorities up to date. The partnership will need to adapt to meet emerging local needs, to reflect feedback from the strategy consultation and identified inequalities, to deliver new SEND and Alternative Provision policy requirements, to build on innovation and insight, and to implement recommendations from inspections and external reviews. We are a learning partnership that will adapt as change occurs and we will let our community know about these changes and consult with them as we go through change.

The annual report of the SEND Improvement Board will report on progress and the strategy performance measures.

The SEND Partnership



How we will measure change

We will measure progress on outcomes by working to develop a survey to understand how children and young people feel about their lives and to assess progress against our shared outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Performance measures for the strategy priorities have been selected because data is collected routinely. These will be supported by operational monitoring of delivery plans, and supplemented by feedback and surveys at regular Let's Talk SEND events and focused engagement to understand children and young people's experiences.



How we will measure change

	Priority	Measures
1	Timely, effective and well-coordinated support for children and young people with SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % EHC plans completed within 20 week timeframe (excluding exceptions) annually • Appeal rate to the SEND Tribunal • Number and time on waiting lists for ASD assessments. • Children and young people assessed by CAMHS within 5 weeks. • Therapy Referrals (all therapies excl. CAMHS): average waiting time after referral (weeks) • Number children on learning disability register that have received an annual health check. • Outcomes of quality assurance of EHC plans • Families and professionals' knowledge/feedback on outcomes achieved
2	Services that are user-friendly for children and young people with SEND and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings from annual feedback survey from children, young people and parents • Surveys conducted at Let's Talk SEND events • Percent young people and parents who rate the Local Offer as good or excellent.
3	Early identification and support for the under-fives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % children with SEN with good level of development at EYFS
4	A great education and support for every school-age child with SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of children and young people with EHCPs being educated in Tower Hamlets. • % children and young people on SEN support requiring alternative or specialist provision receiving education in Tower Hamlets • % of children and young people with SEN support and EHCPs who are excluded, subject to fixed term suspension or on a reduced timetable. • Absence and persistent absence rates for children and young people with SEN Support/EHCPs • Academic progress and attainment for children and young people with SEN support and EHCPs
5	Opportunities and support for young adults with SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit against Transitions protocol • % young adults with EHCPs receiving education in Tower Hamlets • % of 16 – 17 year olds with an EHCP and on SEND support who are not in education, training or employment • Transition for children with SEND into the probation service
6	A borough that welcomes and celebrates children and young people with SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Feedback from children and young people with SEND. • Number of children and young people with SEND accessing young Tower Hamlets services.

For more information or to get in touch:

Tower Hamlets and City SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com/pages/home/information-and-advice

Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parents Forum
www.thsendforum.co.uk

Our Time Youth Forum
www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/organisations/23749-our-time-youth-forum

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
www.elft.nhs.uk/camhs/where-we-work/camhs-tower-hamlets

Tower Hamlets Local Offer
www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/send



SEND and Inclusion Strategy consultation report

Introduction

This report describes the engagement and consultation undertaken and responses received on the draft Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029.

The draft strategy was developed on behalf of the Tower Hamlets SEND Improvement Board: a partnership between the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, schools representatives, Barts Health NHS Trust, North East London Integrated Care Board, East London NHS Foundation Trust, the SEND Parents forum, and the Our Time Young People's Forum.

The draft strategy was co-produced and informed by a range of consultation and feedback from children and young people, parents, front line staff and partners.

As a result of the feedback received during the consultation on the draft strategy, changes were made to the strategy, including :

- A section has been added on how the strategy will be delivered and the role of the SEND partnership, including clearer linkages with the early help partnership
- Shared outcomes for children and young people with SEND have been added to the strategy
- Specific commitments were added to the strategy relating to alternative provision and to children and young people with SEND who are known to children's social care, youth justice and probation
- More performance measures added: we have used measures where there is existing, reliable data – typically data in the public domain. Where possible we have added additional measures. This will be complemented by the development of an annual survey of children and young people, and by operational monitoring of strategy delivery
- Young people and parents' feedback, including on culturally sensitive SEND pathways and access the services for different communities, will be embedded in delivery planning of the strategy.

Early engagement in the strategy development

The six priorities within the draft strategy were shaped by a range of engagement activities and insight including :

- Discussion with partners at the SEND Improvement Board in November 2023 and February 2024
- an in-person discussion with the Our Time all ability youth forum to find out about the issues that matter most to young people with SEND (November 2023)
- online surveys with partner representatives and Special Educational Needs Coordinators in schools (November to December 2023)
- an online workshop with professionals to map initial challenges and issues (November 2023)
- an in-person workshop attended by 50 people to which partners, parents and young people were invited as well as education, health and voluntary sector professionals, with a focus on developing practical strategy actions (January 2024)

- analysis of recent consultation and engagement conducted as part of the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme – including survey responses from more than 100 parents and carers (2023 – 24)
- Feedback from families attending Let’s Talk SEND events.

Consultation

The draft strategy was published for public consultation on 1 May. The consultation period ran for six weeks, from 1 May to 12 June.

Our consultation approach used a digital survey and a series of engagement events to get a combination of qualitative and quantitative feedback and reach a wider audience. We also received a separate written response from Primary Schools Heads.

Furthermore, the Tower Hamlets’ Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee discussed the draft strategy at their meeting on 9 May. Elected members raised questions about the overrepresentation of boys, Asian, Bangladeshi and Black students, and the underrepresentation of girls on EHCPs. Members also questioned how harder-to-reach communities would be reached by the consultation.

Survey

We launched an online survey on Tower Hamlets Council’s engagement site Let’s Talk Tower Hamlets on 1 May. The survey includes a combination of Likert scale and open-text questions to get quantitative and qualitative feedback. There was no word limit to the open text responses, allowing respondents to provide lengthy feedback. The questions were designed to be accessible and suitable for both professionals and members of the community. An easy read and Widgit version of the strategy were made available online .

We promoted the survey very widely via a range of channels and forums to reach a wide audience, including to children and young people, parents, voluntary/community/faith groups, education professionals and healthcare professionals. The latter part of the survey fell within the pre-election period, meaning it was difficult to promote the survey to residents. Table 1 shows the list of channels that we promoted the survey through.

Table 1

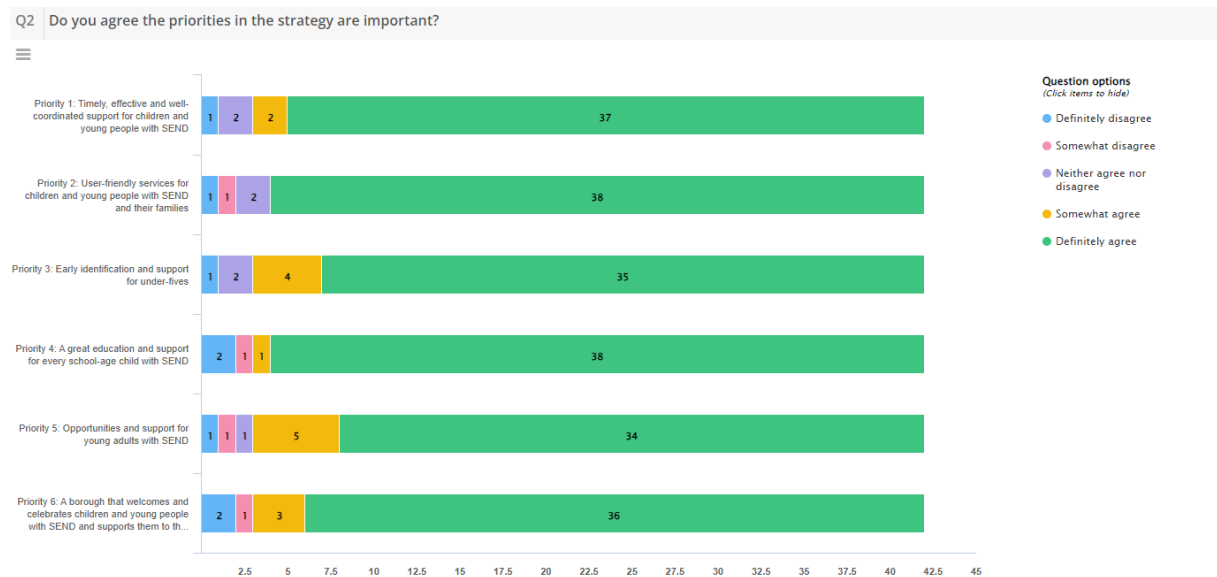
Channels	
Council social media	Children and young people’s community voluntary sector
Parent and Family Service newsletter	Community voluntary sector
Head Teachers’ Bulletin	Interfaith forum
Let’s Talk SEND supplement	Our Time Youth Forum mailing list and social media
Parents’ Forum website and Whatsapp group	Let’s Work young people’s event
On screens in children’s centres	Members’ bulletin
Tower Hamlets SEND Information, Advice and Support Service website and mailing list	Community equality networks
SEND Improvement Board mailing list	Whatsapp Somali Autism support group
SENCO mailing list	Children and young people’s community voluntary sector

We received 42 survey responses. 18 education professionals, 15 parents, 6 healthcare professionals, 2 voluntary/community/faith organisation, and 1 social care professional responded to the survey.

Respondents were invited to submit equalities monitoring data. In response to the question 'How would you best describe your ethnic group?' 13 selected White British, 3 Other White, 1 Mixed White and Asian, 2 Asian/Asian British Bangladeshi, and 1 selected 'Any other background'. In response to the question 'What best describes your gender' 17 selected 'Woman' and 3 selected 'Man'.

Survey responses

The vast majority of respondents definitely agreed with each of the six priorities in the draft strategy:



The survey also asked 3 open-text questions. To analyse the responses, we coded the answers under each question. Key themes under each question have been pulled out below.

Question 3: 'Please explain why you agree or disagree with the priorities'

Response themes:

- Respondents largely agreed with the priorities and the vision that the draft strategy was putting forward.
- Over a quarter of responses explicitly referenced early intervention as an important priority. For example, *'I agree with all the statements above especially early support for under 5's as the current system has a massive gap in which a child and their families has access to support'* (parent).
- Professionals highlighted instances of unclear language and jargon used in the draft strategy (see Table 3 for a list of language challenged throughout the consultation process).
- One comment noted that, *'Priority 5 as expressed includes nothing about amount or quality of opportunities and support, so in effect is already achieved – some opportunities and support exist now'* (healthcare professional)
- Parents highlighted the importance of developing inclusive environments for their children and agreed with the importance of 'user friendly services'. For example, *'It is important that we adapt and work around people with send rather than expecting them to fit in and adapt to what's called normal.'* (parent)
- One response commented that the strategy does not cater for multi-ethnic communities and another commented that the process of applying for EHCPs could be easier for families where English is not their first language. A full EqlA has been developed for the SEND Strategy. It will identify any impacts on the protected characteristics and mitigate any potential negative impacts.

- One comment from an educational professional asked why recent discussions about “Ordinarily Available Provision” were not reflected: this is because ordinarily available provision is an element of the Inclusion Framework, which is part of the strategy.

Question 4: ‘What impact do you think the strategy will have on you, your child, or children and young people you work with?’

Response themes:

- Some concerns were raised about the ambitious scope of the strategy and how it would be delivered. Issues raised include how the strategy will be funded, the capacity of schools, the availability of services, and the ability/capacity of the children’s workforce to deliver the strategy. For example, *‘I think the strategy’s aims are good but it is dependent on receiving sufficient funding for children with SEN in schools and provisions’* (educational professional).
- A range of professionals and parents thought that the strategy would have a positive impact on children and young people if the measures were better defined (see Appendix A for a list of comments raised on the measures throughout the consultation).
- Several parents felt that the strategy will have a positive impact on their children if more information is available about what support is available and how to get help. For example, one parent commented that the strategy *‘will open up more resources and guidance to what’s available’*.
- Some educational professionals commented that whilst early intervention is important, there are challenges around recruitment of Speech and Language Therapists and the capacity of the SEND workforce to implement the vision set out in the strategy.

Question 5: ‘Do you have any other comments on the strategy?’

Response themes:

- Parents agreed with the priority on providing opportunities for young adults with SEND, sharing concerns about the lack of support available for their children when they leave school.
- Professionals highlighted the importance of creating inclusive environments, particularly in early years settings. One respondent suggested that children are being categorised as SEND when what they need is day-to-day support.
- Several respondents highlighted the importance of working in partnership to deliver the strategy, for example *‘It is a good strategy and needs more support from mainstream partners and teams to be truly impactful.’* (social care professional)
- Respondents questioned the timescales for delivery and who will lead the work.
- One response highlighted the importance of, and the challenges of, truly listening to the experiences of children and young people: *‘Getting feedback from children and young people is admirable, but there is no detail about how this will be achieved in a way that ensures everyone has an equitable opportunity to be heard – including those with communication needs.’* (healthcare professional).
- One response from a healthcare professional asked if the strategy could include a reference to the increase in ADHD referrals and awareness.

Engagement events

We attended 13 events, both in-person and online, attended by over 190 people including educational professionals, health professionals, young people, parents, and community organisations. We organised events with parents, including events with Somali and Bangladeshi parents, and used translators where necessary.

Written responses from the primary school heads consultative and others are also reflected below.

Senior staff from Tower Hamlets' Education Directorate attended all the meetings and answered questions about the strategy and plans for delivery.

Table 2

Engagement events
School Organisation Strategy Group 30 April
SENCO conference 9 May
Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee 9 May
Every Chance for Every Child Forum 14 May
Special Heads Consultative 15 May
School Workforce Trade Union Forum 16 May
Our Time Forum 18 May
Primary Heads consultation 20 May with a written submission
Somali families community consultation 30 May
Health stakeholders consultation 12 June
Early Help Partnership Board 13 June
Women's Inclusive Team community consultation 13 June
Bangladeshi parent consultation 26 June
Shifa Health and Social Care discussion 1 July
Discussion with Partnership Care 3 July

Issues raised throughout engagement events:

Throughout the engagement events, some concerns were raised about how the strategy would be delivered. Some participants suggested prioritising one or two areas so all partners can work toward the same goals, and others suggested laying out a clear delivery plan with timescales so partners know what they are being expected to deliver. Some suggested that the strategy needed to be clearer on governance and accountability and how impact will be measured.

A second theme raised in discussions was the level of detail included in the draft measures. It was suggested that the strategy needed to include an outcome framework for children and young people with SEND, to support effective measurement. Educational professionals highlighted that there were not many measures for SENCOs and schools to work towards and that it was not clear what schools would be asked to deliver. Attendees also asked how the measures will be monitored over the five years. Appendix A provides a summary of specific comments received on the measures.

Educational professionals raised concerns about the capacity of schools to deliver the strategy, noting that *'welcoming and celebrating children and young people is challenging when EHCPs are inappropriate and/or out of date'* and referenced the challenges schools are facing in accessing services and the capacity of services. Educational professionals also noted that having locally based caseworkers available means that they have a better understanding of the needs of young people and the settings.

Specific gaps were identified by a wide range of professionals. Gaps identified include alternative provision, Ordinarily Available Provision, the workforce, children's social care, youth justice, and health. Furthermore, young people highlighted that they wanted to see emotional wellbeing and medication included in the strategy.

Professionals across the Tower Hamlets Partnership supported the importance of 'well-coordinated' support across the partnership. Some respondents felt that the introduction to the strategy should make our shared commitment to partnership clearer. Professionals raised concerns about how partnership working will be implemented in practice. Education professionals raised concerns about how work will be quality assured and held accountable. Healthcare professionals highlighted the importance of joint commissioning to lead well-coordinated work. Some education leaders asked about representation on strategic SEND groups.

Healthcare professionals raised a number of specific issues, including the need to address children with highly complex needs, and the importance of consistent messaging between services.

Healthcare professionals also suggested that the strategy should make specific reference to neurodiversity inclusion, supporting under 5s to access nursery placements, and include wording on 'empowering parents' to support their children. One healthcare professional noted their support for *'empowering parents to be able to have the resources themselves be able to support their children without feeling that it has to be a specialist or things have been done to them or for them rather than doing it themselves'*. Parent feedback reinforced this, expressing that they want to have access to information, training and resources to better support their children.

Young people highlighted the importance of co-production throughout the SEND service. Specific suggestions included recruiting young people with SEND as volunteers to help improve the Local Offer, holding termly Let's Talk SEND events to improve engagement, and co-producing leisure services with young people with SEND.

In engagement events with parents, parents highlighted that access to user-friendly services was a priority. Many parents did not know what the Local Offer was or had not heard of events targeted at parents such as Let's Talk SEND events. Access to information was particularly important to non-English speakers who highlighted that it was difficult to access information and services. For example, *'when my daughter was diagnosed in 2015, I had never heard that term [autism] before, it took a full year to understand this is a lifelong disability. So many parents are not integrated into the community, they don't know what's happening'* (parent at the Women's Inclusive Team event).

Community organisations further emphasised the importance of including culturally sensitive support under the priority of user-friendly services. Different organisations working with Bangladeshi and Somali communities highlighted the importance of independent advocates and parent liaison officers in building parents' confidence and understanding of the SEND system and supporting the relationships between parents and schools.

Parents agreed with the strategy's focus on timeliness. Parents also shared a range of experiences, emphasising the importance of the professionalism of staff and quality of services received across the SEND system.

Parents also highlighted the importance of Priority 5: Opportunities and support for young adults with SEND, noting that there is limited provision for over 18s. Educational professionals also noted concerns about the availability of provision for over 18s. Young

people also noted the importance of well-planned transitions into adulthood, including travel training, cooking, group therapy, and ongoing mental health treatment. For example, young people commented that it was important that they know their *'own rights and entitlements'* (Our Time Youth Forum).

Furthermore, parents shared feedback that they felt many children's centres and leisure and playpark facilities are not inclusive environments for their children. For example, one parent commented that *'the word inclusive is just being used'* (parent at the Women's Inclusive Team event). Somali parents also highlighted the importance of SEND inclusive environments that are also culturally inclusive, such as swimming sessions. Parents also highlighted that many youth activities provided by Tower Hamlets were only suitable for higher functioning children and young people with SEND. Specific issues highlighted included the need for fencing and gates in playground areas.

We also received feedback on the accuracy and clarity of wording in the draft strategy. Please see list of wording highlighted as unclear throughout the consultation in Table 3 below. In particular, education professionals provided conflicting opinions on the wording 'a great education'. 'An effective education' was suggested as alternative wording.

Table 3

Unclear wording/jargon highlighted in consultation
'Strong' leadership
'High quality case management'
'Proactive SEND Improvement Communications plan'
'Great education'
'Co-production meeting'
'Hosted system'
'Online SEN module'
'User friendly'
'Tower Hamlets Families Partnership'
'Children and Families Executive'


Appendix A – Comments received on the measures

Priority	Measure	Comments	
1	Timely, effective and well-coordinated support for children and young people with SEND	Children and young people assessed by CAMHS within 5 weeks	<i>Is a 5 week wait realistic? Insufficient measures of quality</i>
2	Services that are user-friendly for children and young people with SEND and their families	Percent young people and parents who rate the Local Offer as good or excellent.	<i>'It's too infrequent to reply on an annual survey to know if the Local Offer is well-thought of and user friendly, there needs to be a more proactive approach, e.g. mystery shopper or focus groups that can help to shape a useful service'</i>
3	Early identification and support for the under-fives		<i>Priority 3 lacks comprehensive measures.</i>
4	A great education and support for every school-age child with SEND	% of children and young people with EHCPs being educated in Tower Hamlets. % of children and young people with SEN support and EHCPs who are excluded, subject to fixed term exclusion or on a reduced timetable.	<i>Do we want the percentages to be high or low?</i>
5	Opportunities and support for young adults with SEND	% young adults with EHCPs receiving education in Tower Hamlets	<i>Add a measure for employment. Measures are too limited</i>
6	A borough that welcomes and celebrates children and young people with SEND	Children and young people with SEND at a healthy weight.	<i>Healthy weight should not be something to 'celebrate', it should be a baseline. Unless weight is added to Annual Reviews, how will this be measured?</i>

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Section 1: Introduction

Name of proposal
For the purpose of this document, 'proposal' refers to a policy, function, strategy or project
Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Inclusion Strategy 2024 – 29
Service area and Directorate responsible
SEND service, Children's Services Directorate
Name of completing officer
Rebecca Williams
Approved by (Corporate Director / Divisional Director/ Head of Service)
Tina Sode
Date of approval
08/07/2024

Conclusion	Current decision rating (see Appendix A)
<p>Successful implementation of the strategy will have a positive impact – helping to reduce inequalities (particularly those based on disability) and improve cohesion and inclusion.</p> <p>The EqIA identifies possible barriers to identification of SEND and access to services for girls and minoritised communities (ethnic and low-income). The priorities within the strategy lay out a comprehensive vision for how partners will work together to improve identification of SEND, access to services, and information about services. A key theme in this strategy is listening to the voices of and co-production with children, young people and parents. This will help ensure that services meet the needs of children and young people throughout the community.</p>	

The Equality Act 2010 places a ‘General Duty’ on all public bodies to have ‘due regard’ to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between those with ‘protected characteristics’ and those without them
- Foster good relations between those with ‘protected characteristics’ and those without them

This Equality Impact Analysis provides evidence for meeting the Council’s commitment to equality and the responsibilities outlined above. For more information about the Council’s commitment to equality, please visit the council’s [website](#).

Section 2: General information about the proposal

Describe the proposal including the relevance of proposal to the general equality duties and protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

The SEND and Inclusion Strategy is a partnership strategy for 2024 – 29, led by the SEND Improvement Board.

The strategy sets out the partnership plans to improve support for children and young people with SEND and their families, and how it will work to improve inclusion for children and young people with SEND in activities and opportunities in the borough and support them to thrive.

There are three areas where the strategy has the potential to advance equality:

1. Advancing equality of opportunity for disabled children and young people

As a significant proportion of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities will meet the definition of disabled under the Equality Act, the objectives of the strategy are relevant to the general equality duties. The strategy aims to advance equality of opportunity for children and young people with SEND and foster good relations between them and their peers.

2. Identifying and reducing inequalities in the identification of children and young people with different SEND needs.

Boys are generally more likely than girls to be identified as having SEND, and the ethnic background of children with different SEND needs can differ from that of the child population of Tower Hamlets as a whole. The strategy and following Joint Strategic Needs Assessment offer an opportunity to understand whether children with some protected characteristics are less likely to have their needs identified.

3. Identifying any barriers to effective support and positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND

The strategy offers an opportunity to understand how effective SEND support is in improving outcomes for children with different backgrounds and to address barriers to effective support.

Section 3: Evidence (consideration of data and information)

What evidence do we have which may help us think about the impacts or likely impacts on residents, service users and wider community?

Borough evidence:

- [Special educational needs in England: January 2024](#)
- [Education, health and care plans: England 2024](#)
- [Tower Hamlets Borough Equality Assessment 2024-2026](#)
- [Tower Hamlets Borough Profile 2024](#)
- ASD in Somali Children Research Project Report
- SEND and Inclusion Strategy public consultation (2024)
- [Census 2021](#)

National evidence:

- [Special educational needs and their links to poverty \(2016\)](#)

The Special educational needs in England data and Educational, health and care plans (EHCP) data provides quality evidence of SEND in Tower Hamlets across age, gender, ethnicity, and type of needs. The data allows us to benchmark Tower Hamlets against national trends. Note, the Special educational needs in England data is based on data collected in the Tower Hamlets School Census and includes children who are educated in Tower Hamlets but live outside of the borough. It captures pupils on SEN Support and EHCPs. The EHCP data only includes children and young people aged 0 – 25 years with an EHCP maintained by Tower Hamlets.

This Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA) considers a range of other data. It uses qualitative evidence from the SEND and Inclusion Strategy public consultation, including a public survey and series of engagement events. The experiences and views of a wide range of parents, community organisations and professionals have therefore been considered. The EqIA also considers findings within the ASD in Somali Children Research Project Report, based on consultation with Somali parents in Tower Hamlets.

Section 4: Assessing the impacts on different groups and service delivery

Groups	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Considering the above information and evidence, describe the impact this proposal will have on the following groups?									
Protected													
Age (All age groups) Page 278	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>The strategy applies to children and young people aged 0 – 25 years, reflecting the Children and Families Act 2014.</i></p> <p>The strategy addresses the needs of different age groups of children with SEND. The majority of our EHCP cohort are aged between 5 and 19. 29.2% of our EHCP cohort are aged between 11-15, which is below the national average of 36.4%. 12.4% are aged 20-25 which is twice the national figure.</p> <p>Three priorities within the strategy specifically address the needs of different age groups: focus on different age groups: under-fives, school-age children, and young adults with SEND. This strategy recognises the different needs of each age groups and tailors support and pathways to meet these needs.</p>									
Disability (Physical, learning difficulties, mental health and medical conditions)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>By improving the timeliness and effectiveness of support for children and young people with SEND, and supporting inclusion in local communities and activities, the strategy will support equality for young residents with SEND and neurodiversity.</i></p> <p>Tower Hamlets has 4,463 children with an EHCP (June 2024). The percentage of our school population with an EHCP is 6.8%, the highest in England. The national average is 4.8%. Pupils requiring SEN Support sits at 12.4%, below the national average of 13.6%.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Primary type of need</th> <th>Number of pupils with an EHCP</th> <th>% pupils on EHCP</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Speech, Language and Communications needs</td> <td>1550</td> <td>34.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autistic Spectrum Disorder</td> <td>1172</td> <td>26.3%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Primary type of need	Number of pupils with an EHCP	% pupils on EHCP	Speech, Language and Communications needs	1550	34.7%	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	1172	26.3%
Primary type of need	Number of pupils with an EHCP	% pupils on EHCP											
Speech, Language and Communications needs	1550	34.7%											
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	1172	26.3%											



Social, Emotional and Mental Health	504	11.3%
Moderate Learning Difficulty	447	10.0%
Hearing Impairment	153	3.4%
Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty	143	3.2%
Physical Disability	140	3.1%
Severe Learning Difficulty	90	2.0%
Specific Learning Difficulty	73	1.6%
Visual Impairment	47	1.1%
Other Difficulty/Disability	41	0.9%
Multi- Sensory Impairment	20	0.4%

(Education, health and care plans: England 2024)

For our EHCP cohort the most prevalent primary need groups are Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and Autism. These areas of need account for almost two-thirds of EHCPs in the Local Area. Providing specific support for Autism and SCLN are priorities within the strategy, including early identification and diagnosis, implementing a speech and language therapy programme for 2 – 5 year olds, and the development of pathways for parents to support children will social and communication needs.

Whilst SCLN and Autism make up for almost two-thirds of EHCPs in Tower Hamlets, the strategy aims to meet the wide range of needs of our children and young people with SEND. For example, we recognise that children with physical disabilities and sensory impairment might represent a small number of EHCPs, but that these conditions may have lifelong impacts and have significant resource need. The strategy makes a specific commitment to deliver more support and placements for children with more complex needs, and for Tower Hamlets to be a ‘neurodiversity friendly’ borough.

Furthermore, at the time of writing the strategy, the SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is underway. The JSNA will further explore support for ADHD.

Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>Boys and girls have different rates of SEND. Further analysis is required to understand gender inequalities in the identification of SEND.</i></p> <p>Boys are much more likely to be identified as having SEND than girls. Of those aged 0 - 25 on EHCPs, 72% are male and 28% are female. This is in line with the national trend. Of children and young</p>
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<p>Page 29</p>				<p>people with SEND (EHCPs and SEN support), 65% are male and 35% are female. This is in line with the national trend.</p> <p>Males are particularly overrepresented in EHCPs for Autism as the primary category of need. Of those with Autism as a primary need, 82% are male and 18% are female. The overrepresentation of males with Autism is even more pronounced in Tower Hamlets than nationally. Nationally, of those with Autism as a primary need, 77.9% are male and 22.1% are female. Underdiagnosis of Autism in girls has been widely documented as the expressions of symptoms may differ to boys and girls may be socialised to mask their challenges more so than boys.</p> <p>The underdiagnosis of Autism in girls is even more significant for certain ethnic groups. For example, 16.9% of Bangladeshi pupils with EHCPs for Autism are girls, and 11.1% of 'Any other black background' pupils are girls.</p> <p>The JSNA will examine potential inequalities linked to gender and ethnicity in the identification of SEND. The strategy commits to using the JSNA to understand and address inequalities in identification and support.</p>						
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Insufficient information to draw conclusions. However, the strategy has a strong focus on building the voice and wishes of children and young person into all plans and support.</p>						
<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Discrimination based on marriage and civil partnership status not relevant to this strategy.</p>						
<p>Religion or philosophical belief</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><i>The strategy's focus on inclusion and co-production will support the partnership to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND in a culturally inclusive way</i></p> <p>Information about religion or belief is not captured within the SEND data. Census data shows that the majority of 0 – 24 year olds in Tower Hamlets are Muslim:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Religion (10 categories)</th> <th>Number</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Muslim</td> <td>57696</td> <td>57.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Religion (10 categories)	Number	Percentage	Muslim	57696	57.5%
Religion (10 categories)	Number	Percentage								
Muslim	57696	57.5%								

No religion	18050	18.0%
Christian	15463	15.4%
Not answered	6575	6.6%
Hindu	1354	1.3%
Buddhist	428	0.4%
Other religion	324	0.3%
Sikh	245	0.2%
Jewish	224	0.2%
Does not apply	0	0.0%

(2021 ONS Census)

Throughout the SEND Strategy consultation parents raised the importance of environments that are not only inclusive for children and young people with SEND, but are also inclusive of different faiths and cultures. For example, Muslim mothers highlighted the challenges of not being able to attend mixed swimming lessons with their children with SEND.

The strategy has a clear focus on inclusion and supports links between the SEND service, Public Health and the insourced leisure service. The strategy commits to co-production and to improve inclusivity as part of bringing leisure services under council management which will ensure the needs of the community are met.

Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Different ethnic groups receive different rates of support for SEND and varying prevalence of different needs. The strategy's focus on understanding the needs of individual children and communities, and co-production of services, will ensure that the strategy addresses a wide range of needs.

Ethnicity	All pupils	EHCP	SEN Support	No SEN
Asian (%)	66.2	62.9	56.6	67.9
Black (%)	9.4	9.2	9.2	9.1
Mixed (%)	8.1	8.1	11.3	7.5
Other (%)	3	2.1	3	3.1
Unknown (%)	0.8	1	0.7	0.8

White (%)	12.5	14.1	19.1	11.5
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(Special educational needs in England: January 2024)

White British children are overrepresented in both the EHCP and SEN support cohorts. Whilst White British children make up 7.7% of all pupils in Tower Hamlets schools, they make up 10.7% of students on EHCPs and 14.3% students on SEN Support. Mixed children are overrepresented in SEN support cohorts, making up 8.1% of all pupils and 11.3% SEN support. The JSNA will further explore the overrepresentation of White British children with SEND.

Of our EHCP cohort, Somali pupils are overrepresented in receiving EHCPs for ASD. 33% of Somali pupils on an EHCP have ASD as their primary need, whereas 25% of all pupils on an EHCP have ASD as their primary need. The ASD in Somali Children Research Project has highlighted that Somali parents felt racism meant that their child's needs were being dismissed as behavioural issues.

Bangladeshi pupils are underrepresented in SEN support for ASD, representing 62.4% of the pupil population, and representing 48.7% of pupils receiving SEN support for ASD.

Consultation with parents, including Somali and Bangladeshi parents, highlighted specific barriers to accessing services including understanding of terminology, access to services, understanding within the community, and access to culturally sensitive pathways. The strategy's focus on user-friendly services and early identification will support all children and young people with SEND and their parents to access services. The strategy's focus on co-production and engagement will ensure that the delivery of the strategy is informed by the needs of the community.

Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Insufficient information to draw conclusions. However, the strategy has a strong focus on building the voice and wishes of children and young person into all plans and support.
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Discrimination based on pregnancy and maternity not relevant to this strategy.
People with Care Experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy includes commitments to strengthen joint working between social care and SEND services and to strengthen transition pathways for young people with EHCPs who will transition from Children's Social Care to Adult Social Care, which will enhance and coordinate support for children and young people who we look after or are care experienced.

Other																			
Socio-economic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>Using free school meals as an indicator, children with SEND are more likely to be from low-income families. The strategy prioritises early identification and user-friendly services which national research has recommended to improve access for children from low-income families to SEND support.</i></p> <p>Children and young people with SEND who attend Tower Hamlets schools are more likely to be eligible for free school meals. 53.2% of children with an EHCP are eligible for free school meals compared with 37.5% of children who do not have SEN support.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Eligibility for free school meals</th> <th>Total</th> <th>EHC plans</th> <th>SEN Support</th> <th>No SEN</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Eligible for free school meals (%)</td> <td>40.1</td> <td>53.2</td> <td>49.2</td> <td>37.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not eligible for free school meals (%)</td> <td>59.9</td> <td>46.8</td> <td>50.8</td> <td>62.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>(Special educational needs in England: January 2024)</i></p> <p>Research has documented the link between SEND and poverty, including the outcomes children gain as part of their education, their wellbeing as children, their access to support for their needs, and their chances of finding well-paid work as an adult. This research also highlights that pupils from low-income families are more likely to be identified as having SEND, but at the same time are less likely to receive support or effective interventions that might help to address their needs.</p> <p>Whilst the strategy aims to improve the outcomes of all children and young people with SEND, the focus on user-friendly services, early intervention and transitions supports research recommendations for improving access to SEND support for children from low-income families.</p>	Eligibility for free school meals	Total	EHC plans	SEN Support	No SEN	Eligible for free school meals (%)	40.1	53.2	49.2	37.5	Not eligible for free school meals (%)	59.9	46.8	50.8	62.5
Eligibility for free school meals	Total	EHC plans	SEN Support	No SEN															
Eligible for free school meals (%)	40.1	53.2	49.2	37.5															
Not eligible for free school meals (%)	59.9	46.8	50.8	62.5															
Parents/Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>The strategy has a focus on support for and continued engagement with parents.</i></p> <p>The strategy takes into account the views of parents of children and young people with SEND. In the public consultation, parents expressed that they would like more access to training and resources to better support their children, more accessible play and leisure facilities, and access to support such as Let's Talk SEND events. The strategy has a clear focus on user-friendly services, inclusion, empowering parents to support their children, support for parents, and ongoing co-production and engagement with parents.</p>															

People with different Gender Identities e.g. Gender fluid, Non-Binary etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Insufficient information to draw conclusions. However, strong focus on building the voice and wishes of children and young person into all plans and support.</p> <p>The JSNA might explore barriers that children and young people with SEND may face in understanding their gender and sexual identity, accessing support to understand their identity, and sexual health services.</p>
Any other groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

DRAFT

Section 5: Impact analysis and action plan

Recommendation	Key activity	Progress milestones including target dates for either completion or progress	Officer responsible	Update on progress
Do further analysis of the over and underrepresentation of girls and minoritised communities in SEND cohorts	Complete a SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and agree recommendations.	September 2024	Phoebe Kalungi	
Ensure engagement and co-production of services with young people and parents is representative of the community	Monitor equalities information for engagement and co-production activities.	Annually	Tina Sode	
Improve minoritised communities' access to services	Implement agreed recommendations from ASD in Somali Children Project.	Annually	Tina Sode	
Improve minoritised communities' access to services	Reflect parent feedback from the SEND Strategy public consultation in the delivery plans.	October 2024	Tina Sode	

Section 6: Monitoring





What monitoring processes have been put in place to check the delivery of the above action plan and impact on equality groups?

The action plan will be delivered through the strategy's annual delivery plan to ensure that equalities actions are embedded in strategy delivery.

The delivery plan will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

Appendix A

EIA decision rating

Decision	Action	Risk
<p>As a result of performing the EIA, it is evident that a disproportionately negative impact (direct, indirect, unintentional or otherwise) exists to one or more of the nine groups of people who share a Protected Characteristic under the Equality Act and appropriate mitigations cannot be put in place to mitigate against negative impact. It is recommended that this proposal be suspended until further work is undertaken.</p>	<p>Suspend – Further Work Required</p>	<p>Red</p> 
<p>As a result of performing the EIA, it is evident that there is a risk that a disproportionately negative impact (direct, indirect, unintentional or otherwise) exists to one or more of the nine groups of people who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is a genuine determining reason that could legitimise or justify the use of this policy.</p>	<p>Further (specialist) advice should be taken</p>	<p>Red Amber</p> 
<p>As a result of performing the EIA, it is evident that there is a risk that a disproportionately negatively impact (as described above) exists to one or more of the nine groups of people who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, this risk may be removed or reduced by implementing the actions detailed within the <i>Impact analysis and action plan</i> section of this document.</p>	<p>Proceed pending agreement of mitigating action</p>	<p>Amber</p> 
<p>As a result of performing this analysis, the policy or activity does not appear to have any adverse effects on people who share <i>Protected Characteristics</i> and no further actions are recommended at this stage.</p>	<p>Proceed</p>	<p>Green</p> 

<p>Cabinet</p> <p>16 October 2024</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Simon Baxter, Corporate Director Communities</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Cumulative Impact Assessment Policy 2024 - 2027</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	Tom Lewis, Service Manager, Regulatory Services (Commercial)
Wards affected	Spitalfields and Banglatown, Whitechapel, Weavers, and Bethnal Green West
Exempt information	None

Executive Summary

The Council as a Licensing Authority must review its Cumulative Impact Policies every 3 years. The Council has two Cumulative Impact Policies or Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIA) as they are now referred to in the legislation and government guidance. The Council’s first CIA in Brick Lane was introduced in November 2014, with the second CIA being introduced around Bethnal Green in November 2018.

The Cumulative Impact Assessment forms part of the Council’s Statement of Licensing Policy and therefore if the reviewed CIA Policy is adopted, then the Statement of Licensing Policy will be updated to reflect this change.

As part of the review of the Cumulative Impact Assessments a statutory consultation process took place between the 31st January and 25th April 2024. If the below recommendations are accepted, the reviewed Cumulative Impact Assessment, which forms part of the Statement of Licensing Policy, will ultimately go to full Council for adoption.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mayor and Cabinet is recommended to:-

1. Consider:
 - i. Retaining the Brick Lane CIA (Cumulative Impact Assessments), and expanding it to its southeastern edge,
 - ii. Removing the Bethnal Green CIA (Cumulative Impact Assessments)

2. Consider and agree the CIA Policy Statement, which has been reviewed in light of the consultation. The Policy Statement can be found in **Appendix One**.

The Cabinet should note paragraph 9.11 of the Policy, which states if there are no representations, the Council must grant the application in terms that are consistent with the operating schedule submitted, in line with the Council's delegated authority."

3. That the proposed Cumulative Impact Assessment, as part of the Statement of Licensing Policy will take effect from 20th November 2024 until 20th November 2027. The existing Cumulative Impact Policy, which is contained in Appendix 5 of the Statement of Licensing Policy will be rescinded on the 18th November 2024.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council is statutorily required to review its Cumulative Impact Assessments every 3 years. As part of the review a statutory consultation must take place.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet does have the option not to recommend the renewal of the CIAs. Cabinet further has the option of suggesting amendments to the scope of the CIAs. For the reasons set out in this report, neither option is recommended.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Council's current Cumulative Impact Assessments for Brick Lane and Bethnal Green were adopted by Full Council in November 2020.
- 3.2 Tower Hamlets Council is defined as a Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003. As a Licensing Authority we must review our Cumulative Impact Assessments every 3 years and publish the outcome of that review.
- 3.3 We must, as a minimum carry out the statutory consultation laid down in the Licensing Act 2003.
- 3.4 Following consultation, Cabinet must consider the revised Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIAs), which form part of the Statement of Licensing Policy. Full Council must make the final decision on whether to retain the reviewed Cumulative Impact Assessment Brick Lane and remove the CIA for Bethnal Green.
- 3.5 The Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIAs) seek to help reduce the number or types of licence applications granted in areas where there is evidence to show that the number or density of licensed premises is having a cumulative impact and leading to problems, which are undermining the licensing objectives:

- Prevention of crime and disorder,
- Public safety,
- Prevention of public nuisance,
- Protection of children from harm.

- 3.6 CIAs can relate to applications for new premises licences and club premises certificates and applications to vary existing premises licences and club premises certificates in a specified area.
- 3.7 The Statement of Licensing Policy is prescribed by central government in its guidance to Local Authorities. The policy produced must comply with guidance issued by central government. The current policy is compatible with this advice and guidance.
- 3.8 The review of the Brick Lane and Bethnal Green CIAs has taken account of the legislative changes that will affect the policy. The Policy has also been updated following the consultation.

Consultation

- 3.9 All statutory consultees were consulted:
- a) the chief officer of police for the licensing authority's area,
 - b) the fire and rescue authority for that area, i.e. the Fire Brigade
 - c) The Council's Director of Public Health,
 - d) such persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of holders of premises licences issued by that authority,
 - e) such persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of holders of club premises certificates issued by that authority,
 - f) such persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of holders of personal licences issued by that authority, and
 - g) such other persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of businesses and residents in its area.

As well as the above statutory consultees, and in connection with g) above, the main method of consultation was to direct residents and businesses to complete an online survey which was accessed via the Council's website (Let's Talk -). A printout of the page from website and online survey questions can be found in **Appendix Two**. The consultation ran from 31st January to 25th April 2024.

- 3.10 The full list of consultees is detailed in **Appendix Three**.
- 3.11 Online consultation received 318 visits, with 57 downloading the documents, and a total of 47 taking part in the survey. A Summary Report of the Online Survey Consultation can be found in **Appendix Four**.

The online survey asked 18 questions in relation to the review of the CIAs in Bethnal Green and Brick Lane. The tables below show the answers to the main important questions as a percentage for each CIA (Brick Lane and Bethnal Green).

Do you think that the Brick Lane Cumulative Impact Policy should be?					
	Retained and expanded as per the proposal detailed in the report	Retained in its current form (No change)	Retained and expanded further than detailed in the report	Retained but reduced	Removed
Brick Lane CIA (total responders = 47)	55.3%	23.4%	4.3%	6.4%	10.6%

Do you think that the Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact Policy should be??				
	Removed, as per the proposal detailed in the report	Retained in its current form	Retained and expanded	Retained but reduced
Bethnal Green CIA (total responders = 47)	40.4%	27.7%	27.7%	4.3%

- 3.12 The full Online Survey Responses Reports can be found in in **Appendix Five**. There were also fourteen (14) additional comments left by responders to the Online Survey. These additional comments can be read in their entirety in Appendix Five, however they have been tabulated in **Appendix Six**.
- 3.13 As well as the online responses, four (4) written responses were received via email. It should however be noted that one of these, which was from the Met Police Borough Commander was received after the closing date on the consultation on 3rd May 2024. This has been included in the responses as there is no clear reason not to include it given it was received very shortly after the close of consultation. It is clearly relevant to the issues and could be unfair if it were excluded.
- 3.14 The responses included one resident, one resident's association and two responsible authorities. All four of them were in support of CIAs, however only two of the responses specifically mentioned whether they were in support of removal of the Bethnal Green CIA and retention of expansion of the Brick Lane CIA. Furthermore, two of these mentioned having another CIA around Ezra Street and Columbia Road. These written responses can be found in **Appendix Seven**, which includes a table summarising them.
- 3.15 As part of the consultation process the review of the Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIAs) was presented the Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

meeting on 20th February 2024. CSP requested meetings to be held with Responsible Authorities. These meetings were held on 15th and 18th March 2024. Except for Public Health, no other responsible authorities invited attended these meetings.

Request for New/Extension of CIAs

Hackney Wick (New)

- 3.16 During the meeting with CSP on 20th February 2024 and at the meeting on 7th May 2024 Hackney Wick was raised in terms of whether a CIA could be introduced into this area. The Partnership group was advised that the current evidence does not support the introduction of the CIA within this area. **Appendix Eight** (Report: Review of the Cumulative Impact Policies (Licensing) in Brick Lane and Bethnal Green) contains hotspot maps produced from crime and 101 calls statics from the Metropolitan Police. These maps show the hotspots from crime and 101 calls in Brick Lane and Bethnal Green CIAs are far higher than Hackney Wick. Moreover, the saturation of Licence Premises is less than the level of Bethnal Green CIA (approximately 48 premises), which this report is recommending to removed.

Although a CIA is not justified in this area the Council including, Regulatory Services (Commercial), Community Safety, and Parking are working with the Met Police to consider measures to prevent crime and disorder becoming a problem in this area.

Columbia Road and Bethnal Green (Extensions)

- 3.17 During the Consultation some of responses requested or referred to introducing areas of Columbia Road and Ezra Street as a CIA.
- 3.18 The review of the CIAs in Brick Lane and Bethnal Green did not include any proposal to extend into the areas around Columbia Road/Ezra Street. Therefore, to add a CIA as suggested would require another statutory consultation, where the Council would need to consider if there is good evidence that, in this case, crime and disorder or nuisance is occurring within the area.

This matter was raised previously when the current CIAs for Brick Land and Bethnal Green were reviewed in 2021. During this review it was investigated whether there was sufficient evidence to support the introduction of a further CIA within this area. The evidence did not support an introduction of a CIA within this area.

- 3.19 Figures 1 to 8 in Appendix 1 of **Appendix Eight** contains hotspot maps for 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 (end June), which show crimes reported and calls to police linked to the licensed trade for the whole borough. These maps have been taken from the Police Crime Report Analysis and Police Calls Analysis Report. These maps show that that areas around areas around Columbia Road and Ezra Street (top left of the maps between Brick Lane and Bethnal Green CIA) do not show significant hotspot relating to crime reports or police calls (101 calls).

3.20 The Table below shows the number of Licence Applications granted in the Columbia Road and Bethnal Green extensions. Please note that there were no applications granted in 2022 and 2023 (end of June).

	2020	2021
Row Labels		
Bethnal Green extension CIZ	2	3
Hearing grant with variation	1	
Officer grant	1	3
Columbia Road extension CIZ	10	6
Hearing grant	2	2
Hearing grant with variation	3	
Officer grant	5	4
Grand Total	12	9

This table shows that in comparison with Brick Lane CIA and Bethnal Green CIA, less licences are being granted in the proposed extension areas. (see Report in Appendix Eight (Report: Review of the Cumulative Impact Policies (Licensing) in Brick Lane and Bethnal Green). Moreover, the number of Licence as a total in these areas is far less than in the current CIAs. See figures below:

- Columbia Road extension = 30
- Bethnal Green extension = 14
- Brick Lane CIA = 244
- Bethnal Green CIA = 59

Based on the above it does not appear that there is currently a saturation of licensed premises in the area.

3.21 The tables below show the complaints received by the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service in the Columbia Road and Bethnal Green extensions between 2020 and 2023 (end of June).

Licensing Complaints

	2020	2021	2022	2023	Grand Total
Row Labels					
Bethnal Green extension CIZ	2	2	1		5
Columbia Road extension CIZ	20	18	9	4	51
Grand Total	22	20	10	4	56

Noise Complaints

	2020	2021	2022	2023	Grand Total
Row Labels					
Bethnal Green extension CIZ	1	4	2	1	8
Columbia Road extension CIZ	3	5	3	3	14
Grand Total	4	9	5	4	22

Though there is a similarity in the Columbia Road extension, this is for Licensing Complaints only and only for Bethnal Green, which this report is proposing to remove. In general complaints received in the Brick Lane and Bethnal Green CIA are considerably more than can be seen here Appendix Eight (Report: Review of the Cumulative Impact Policies (Licensing) in Brick Lane and Bethnal Green).

- 3.22 In conclusion there is not saturation of licensed premises within these proposed extensions. Therefore, with this and complaints and crime and 101 calls hot spot maps there is not sufficient evidence to support the introduction of CIAs in these areas.

Conclusion

- 3.23 The Consultation Report of the Review of the Cumulative Impact Policies (Brick Lane and Bethnal Green), found in appendix Eight outlines the evidence in regard to the CIAs, and considers figures from the crimes reported and 101 call data for Bethnal Green CIA with those in Brick Lane CIA. This shows that within the Brick Lane CIA crime and calls to the police via 101 are significantly higher than those in Bethnal Green CIA. The difference is even more apparent when looking at the hotspot maps in Figures 1 to 8 in Appendix 1 of this Report. These show the hotspot maps of the whole borough for 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 (end June) crimes reported, and 101 Calls received linked to the licensed trade, which have been taken from Police Crime Report Analysis and Police Calls Analysis Report. The area around Brick Lane is significantly greater in terms of saturation of licensed premises and the hotspots of crimes and calls to police linked to the licence trade than other areas of the borough including the Bethnal Green CIA. Furthermore, the Hot Spot Maps within the above-mentioned report show evidence to increase the area of the Brick Lane CIA to its southeastern edge.
- 3.24 Considering the above and the consultation responses there is sufficient evidence to retain and expand the CIA in Brick Lane. Conversely, there is insufficient evidence to retain the CIA around Bethnal Green.
- 3.25 Finally, it should be noted that the Brick Lane CIA was expanded in 2018 on its northwestern edge in order to meet with the London Borough of Hackney's Shoreditch CIA.

4. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no adverse equalities implications.

4. **OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Best Value: recent legislation, such as the Localism Act 2010 has encouraged communities and the Local Authority to work in partnership. The Cumulative Impact Assessment in Brick Lane will assist in a reduction of enforcement and regulatory action, thus reducing costs for these Services.
- 4.2 Risk Management: there will be two days, 18th and 19th November 2024, where the Council will effectively not have a Cumulative Impact Policy. This means that there will be no rebuttable presumption that an application being heard by the Licensing Sub-Committee will be refused unless it can be shown that there will be no negative cumulative effect on the licensing objectives in the CIAs. However, residents and responsible authorities can still use the evidence supporting the CIA for Brick Lane within their objections to applications within this CIA zone.
- 4.3 Crime Reduction: One of the key licensing objectives this policy considers is the prevention of crime and disorder associated with Licensed Premises. The policy supports and assists with crime and disorder reduction by placing greater controls upon those licences that are granted in the CIA. This is achieved by licences having more stringent license conditions added by either the applicant or the Licensing Sub-Committee.
- 4.4 Safeguarding: The Statement of Licensing Policy which this Policy is an appendix of, takes into account the safeguarding of children and violence against women and children.

5. **COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- 5.1 There are no additional resource implications arising from this report. Resources required to fulfil Councils duties in respect of Licensing process and Cumulative Impact Assessments will be met from existing budgets.

6. **COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 6.1 Section 4(1) of the Licensing Act 2003 (“the Act”) requires licensing authorities to carry out their functions under the Act with a view to promoting the four licensing objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder; public safety; the prevention of public nuisance; the protection of children from harm.
- 6.2 Section 5 requires the authority to publish a statement of licensing policy every five years. The current policy came into force on 1st November 2023 and will last until 31st October 2028.
- 6.3 Section 5A of the Act permits an authority to publish a cumulative impact assessment stating that it considers the number of relevant authorisations (premises licences and club premises certificates) in respect of premises in one or more parts of its area as described in the assessment is such that it is likely that the grant of further relevant authorisations in respect of premises in

that part or those parts would be inconsistent with its duty under section 4(1). Section 5A(7) provides that where a licensing authority has published a cumulative impact assessment it must, within three years, consider whether it remains of the opinion stated in the assessment. Essentially, this means that it is the concentration of licensed premises in an area giving rise to an impact on one or more of the licensing objectives, rather than being capable of being attributed to any specific licensed premises. The effect of such a policy, if approved, is to reverse the presumption in favour of granting an application relating to a premises within the area. The applicant is required to demonstrate that the grant of their application will not adversely impact upon one or more of the licensing objectives. It should be noted that this does not negate the need for a relevant representation to be made in order to engage the policy. If no such representation is made, the application would fall to be granted under delegated powers.

- 6.4 Before deciding whether it remains of that opinion, the licensing authority is required to consult with the statutory consultees listed in s.5(3), which includes the chief officer of police for the area, the fire and rescue authority, those who the authority considers to be representative of holders of premises licences, personal licences and club premises certificates issued by the authority, and such other persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of businesses and residents in its area. The report evidences that the consultation requirements have been complied with.
- 6.5 With respect to the consultation the following principles must be applied:
- the consultation should take place when proposals are still at a formative stage;
 - the proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to allow for intelligent consideration and response;
 - adequate time must be given to both consider and respond to the proposal;
 - the product of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when the decision is made.
- These requirements have been met.
- 6.6 If the authority is no longer of the opinion that the assessment should remain in force, it must publish a statement to that effect. If the authority's opinion is not changed, it must revise the cumulative impact assessment so as to include a statement to that effect and set out the evidence why the authority remains of that opinion. The authority must publish any revision of a cumulative impact assessment. It is noted that the recommendations are to retain and expand the Brick Lane CIZ and to remove the Bethnal Green CIZ in its entirety.
- 6.7 Paragraphs 14.20 to 14.46 of the Secretary of State's guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 addresses issues of cumulative impact and the steps to be taken in both adopting an assessment and reviewing an existing assessment. Paragraphs 14.29 to 14.33 set out the need for a robust evidential basis for such an assessment. There is sufficient evidence upon which the Council can decide to extend the Brick Lane CIA and to remove the Bethnal Green CIA.

- 6.8 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities, when carrying out its functions, to have “due regard” to this duty. This requires the authority to have regard to the need:
- to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
 - to advance equality of opportunity between persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic (such as age, race, or disability) and those that do not;
 - to foster good relations between persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic and those that do not.
- 6.9 The duty does not require the authority to achieve a particular result. The duty must be considered at the time that the decision is made and must be conducted with rigour, with an open mind, and not considered to be merely a box-ticking exercise. It is noted that an Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and has not indicated any specific equality issues arising.
-

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- Lead Member 1-1 Environment and Climate Emergency - Cllr Kabir Hussain - 22 November 2023

Appendices

7. APPENDICES

Appendix One: Reviewed CIA Policy Statement
Appendix Two: Let’s Talk Consultation Webpage and Online Survey Questions
Appendix Three: List of Consultees
Appendix Four: Summary Online Consultation Report
Appendix Five: Full Online Consultation Reports
Appendix Six: Table of Online Survey Additional Comments
Appendix Seven: Written Consultation Responses and Summary
Appendix Eight: Consultation Report of the Review of the Cumulative Impact Policies (Brick Lane and Bethnal Green)
Appendix Nine: Equalities Impact Analysis Screening

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- Crime Report Analysis 2020 – 2023
- Police Calls Analysis 2020 - 2023

Officer contact details for documents:
N/A

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Appendix One – Reviewed Cumulative Impact Policy Statement

9 Special Cumulative Assessment Policy

- 9.1 The Licensing Authority has adopted a special policy relating to cumulative impact within the area of Brick Lane.

This special policy creates a rebuttable presumption that applications for the grant or variation of premises licences or club premises certificates, which are likely to add to the existing cumulative impact, will normally be refused following the receipt of representations unless the applicant can demonstrate in the operation schedule that there will be no negative cumulative impacts with one or more of the licensing objectives.

- 9.2 The Council reviewed the Special Cumulative Impact Policy in 2024 and, following consultation, decided to retain and expand the area of the Brick Lane CIA to its southeastern edge. This was because the Council was of opinion that the concentration of licensed premises within Brick Lane area in 9.14 (Figure One) below, was having a cumulative impact on the licensing objectives of crime and disorder and prevention of public nuisance.
- 9.3 The review further found that following consultation, the Council was no longer of the opinion that the grant of further relevant authorisations in respect of premises within the Bethnal Green area would be inconsistent with its duty under section 4(1) of the Licensing Act 2003.

Review of Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) - Supporting Evidence

- 9.4 In determining the Council's CIA for the area of Brick Lane (Figure One) the Council considered the following evidence:
- Police data gathered from Crime Reports and Calls to 101 Service linked to Licence trade in the borough for 2020 to 2023 (end of June).
 - London Ambulance Service (LAS) Call Out Data linked to alcohol for the borough for 2020 to 2023 (end of June).
 - Complaint data from Environmental Health and Trading Standards relating to Noise and Licensing for 2020 to 2023 (end of June).
 - Hot spot maps with following layers for data collected between 2020 and 2023 (end of June) linked to Licence trade/alcohol:
 - Licensed Premises locations,
 - Police Crime and 101 data,
 - LAS Call out data,
 - Environmental Health and Trading Standards complaint data.
 - Licence Application data for the defined areas for 2020 to 2023
 - Results of the Consultation, that included Survey data and comments and written responses.

This evidence is published on our website [\[add link to Council Hearing\]](#).

Brick Lane Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA)

- 9.5 The Licensing Authority is of the view that the number, type and density of premises selling/supplying alcohol for consumption on and off the premises and/or the provision of late night refreshment in the Brick Lane Area (highlighted in Figure One of para 9.14 below) is having a cumulative impact on the licensing objectives. Therefore, it is likely that granting new licences, and significant variations of existing licences, would be inconsistent with the authority's duty to promote the licensing objectives. Thus, it has declared a cumulative impact assessment within this area.
- 9.6 The Brick Lane CIA aims to manage the negative cumulative impact of the concentration of licensed premises in this area and the stresses that the saturation of licensed premises has had on the local amenity, environmental degradation and emergency and regulatory services in managing this impact.
- 9.7 The effect of this CIA will apply to the following types of applications:
- New Premises Licences applications,
 - New Club Premises Certificates applications
 - Provisional Statements,
 - Variation of Premises Licences and Club Premises Certificate applications (where the modifications are relevant to the issue of cumulative impact for example increases in hours or capacity).

However, it will only apply where the application seeks to permit the Licensable activities of:

- the sale or supply of alcohol for consumption on or off the premises, and/or,
 - the provision of late night refreshment.
- 9.8 **This Policy will be strictly applied and where relevant representations are received, the presumption of the Council is that the application will be refused. Applicants will need to demonstrate that there are exceptional circumstances and that granting their application will not negatively add to the cumulative effect on the Licensing Objectives within the Brick Lane CIA if they wish to rebut this presumption.**
- 9.9 The CIA creates a rebuttable presumption that where relevant representations against applications within the CIA zone are received by one or more of the responsible authorities, and/or other persons (e.g. Councillors, Members of the Public), the application will be refused.
- 9.10 Where representations have been received in respect to applications within the CIA zone the onus is on the applicant to adequately rebut the presumption.

9.11 It must be stressed that the presumption created by this CIA does not relieve responsible authorities or other persons of the need to make a representation. If there are no representations, the licensing authority must grant the application in terms that are consistent with the operating schedule submitted, in line with their delegated authority.

9.12 This special policy is not absolute, and the Licensing Authority recognises that it needs to balance the needs of businesses with local residents. The circumstances of each application will be considered on its merits and the Licensing Authority shall grant applications when representations are not received. The applicant should demonstrate that the operation of the premises will not add to the cumulative impact on one or more of the following licensing objectives:

- Prevention of Crime and Disorder;
- Prevention of Public Nuisance.

Therefore, applicants will be expected to comprehensively demonstrate why a new or varied licence will not add to the cumulative impact. They are strongly advised to give consideration to mitigating potential cumulative impact issues when setting out steps they will take to promote the licensing objectives in their operating schedule.

9.13 The Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) will not be used to revoke an existing licence or certificate and will not be applicable during the review of existing licences.

Possible exceptions to the Brick Lane Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA)

- Applications for licences for small premises with a capacity of fifty persons or less who only intend to operate within framework hours, and that;
 - Only have consumption of food (late night refreshment) and/or drink (alcohol) on the premises only,
 - and,
 - Have arrangements to prevent vertical drinking, for example fully seated venues,
 - Only provide Off sales of food (late night refreshment) and/or drink (alcohol) for delivery (i.e. not for take away),
- Applications for licences that are not alcohol led (e.g. Hairdressers wanting to provide alcohol to clients during their hair cut/treatments),
- Applications for licences where the applicant has recently surrendered a licence for another premises of a similar size and providing similar licensable activities in the CIA Area.

The Licensing Authority will **not** consider the following as possible exceptions:

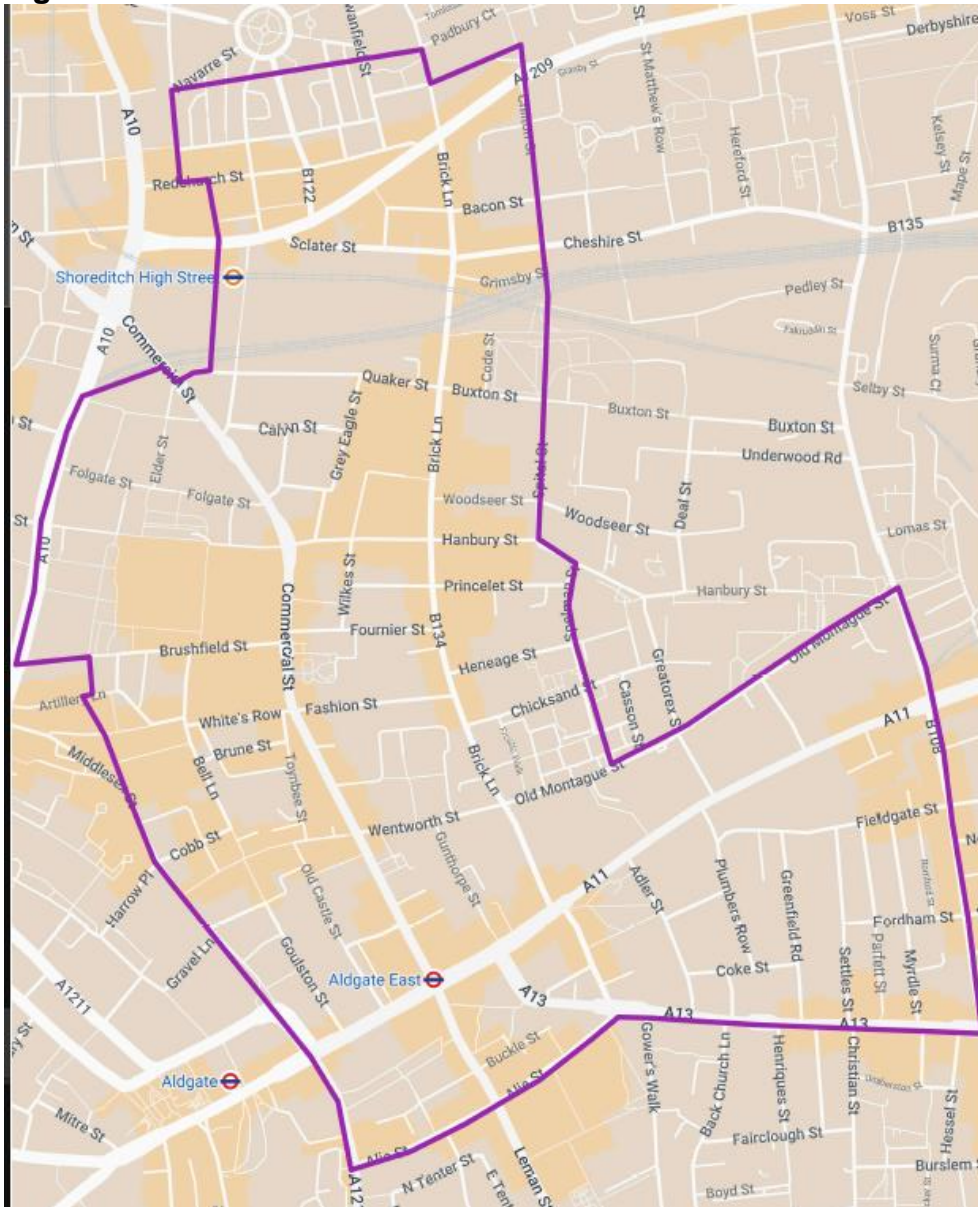
- that the premises will be well managed and run,

- that the premises will be constructed to a high standard,
- that the applicant operates similar premises elsewhere without complaint.

The Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) Area for the Brick Lane

9.14 The Cumulative Impact Assessment Areas are detailed in the maps below.

Figure One – Brick Lane CIZ



Appendix Three – List of Consultants

Reviewed Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA)

1. Metropolitan Police Borough Commander - Tower Hamlets
2. Director of Public Health, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
3. London Fire Brigade
4. All Licensees holding a Premises License or Club Premises Certificate
5. All Holders of Personal Licenses with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets
6. Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)
7. Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Trading Standards, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
8. Environmental Protection (Noise), Environmental Health and Trading Standards, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
9. Licensing and Safety Team, Environmental Health and Trading Standards, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
10. Child Protection, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
11. Development Control, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
12. Tidal River Thames Port of London Authority
13. Navigation Authority Canal & River Trust
14. Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
15. Maritime & Coastguard Agency
16. Home Office Immigration Enforcement
17. Ezra Street Residents Association
18. Spitalfield Residents Association (SPIRE)
19. St Georges Residents Association
20. Institute of Licensing (IoL)
21. Council of Mosques
22. Adult Care, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
23. UK Hospitality
24. Best Bar None (BBN)
25. Beer in the Evening
26. GLA and Night Tzar
27. Safer Neighbourhoods Board
28. London Borough's of Hackney, Newham, Southwark, Lewisham
29. Royal Borough of Greenwich
30. City of London
31. Licensing Committee Members
32. Arts Parks and Events, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
33. Community Safety, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
34. Growth & Economic Development, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
35. MASH (Child Safeguarding), London Borough of Tower Hamlets
36. Democratic Services, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
37. Legal Services, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
38. Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Team, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
39. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)
40. NHS Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group
41. Young Mayor, London Borough of Tower Hamlets#
42. Pub Watch Chairs (Brick Lane, Bethnal Green, Hackney Wick, Canary Wharf).

Other Media Channels:

43. Members Bulletin
44. Business Support New Letter

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Summary Report

26 February 2020 - 02 July 2024

Let's Talk Tower Hamlets

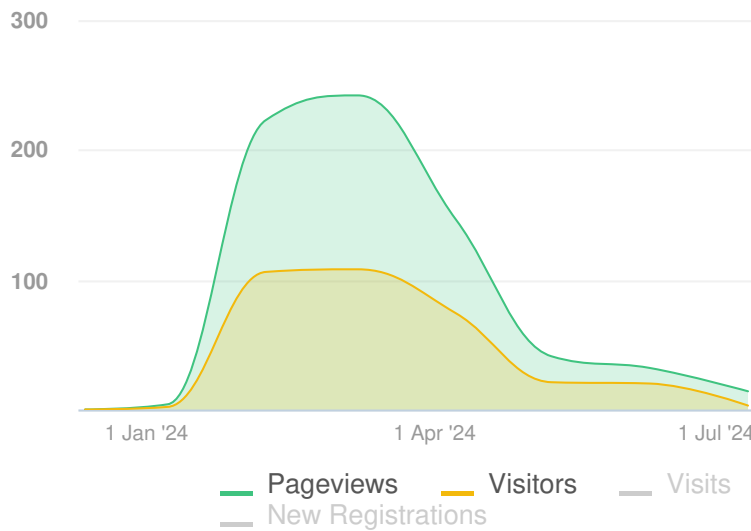
PROJECTS SELECTED: 1

Cumulative Impact Policy Review 2024

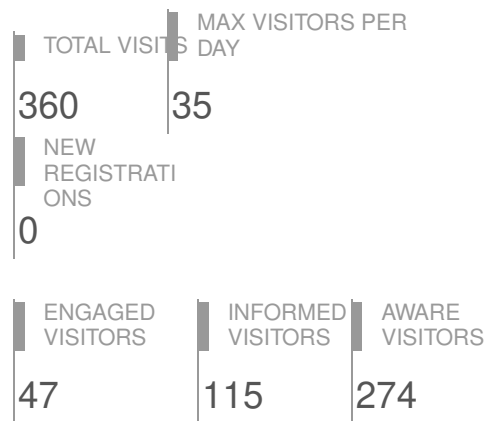
FULL LIST AT THE END OF THE REPORT



Visitors Summary



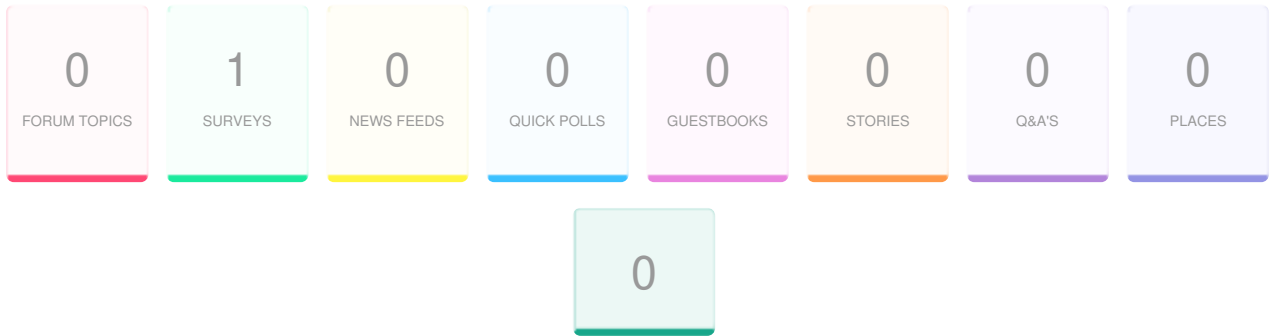
Highlights



PARTICIPANT SUMMARY

ENGAGED	47 ENGAGED PARTICIPANTS			(%)
	Registered	Unverified	Anonymous	
INFORMED	Contributed on Forums	0	0	0
	Participated in Surveys	1	0	46
	Contributed to Newsfeeds	0	0	0
	Participated in Quick Polls	0	0	0
AWARE	Posted on Guestbooks	0	0	0
	Contributed to Stories	0	0	0
	Asked Questions	0	0	0
	Placed Pins on Places	0	0	0
	Contributed to Ideas	0	0	0
	<i>* A single engaged participant can perform multiple actions</i>			Cumulative Impact Policy R... 47 (17.2%)
				<i>* Calculated as a percentage of total visits to the Project</i>
ENGAGED	115 INFORMED PARTICIPANTS			(%)
			Participants	
INFORMED	Viewed a video		0	
	Viewed a photo		0	
	Downloaded a document		52	
	Visited the Key Dates page		0	
AWARE	Visited an FAQ list Page		0	
	Visited Instagram Page		0	
	Visited Multiple Project Pages		68	
	Contributed to a tool (engaged)		47	
	<i>* A single informed participant can perform multiple actions</i>			Cumulative Impact Policy R... 115 (42.0%)
				<i>* Calculated as a percentage of total visits to the Project</i>
ENGAGED	274 AWARE PARTICIPANTS			
			Participants	
INFORMED	Visited at least one Page		274	
AWARE				
	<i>* Aware user could have also performed an Informed or Engaged Action</i>			Cumulative Impact Policy R... 274
				<i>* Total list of unique visitors to the project</i>

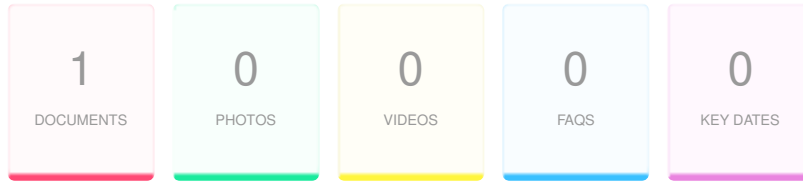
ENGAGEMENT TOOLS SUMMARY



SURVEYS SUMMARY	
1	Surveys
47	Contributors
47	Submissions

TOP 3 SURVEYS BASED ON CONTRIBUTORS
<p>47</p> <p>Contributors to</p> <p>Cumulative Impact Policy Review Survey</p>

INFORMATION WIDGET SUMMARY



DOCUMENTS	
1	Documents
52	Visitors
63	Downloads

TOP 3 DOCUMENTS BASED ON DOWNLOADS
63 Downloads CIA.Consultation.Report.23.v1.pdf

TRAFFIC SOURCES OVERVIEW

REFERRER URL	Visits
www.google.com	77
lnks.gd	30
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk	19
www.bing.com	14
android-app	1
content.govdelivery.com	1
duckduckgo.com	1
l.instagram.com	1
researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk	1
www.google.co.uk	1

SELECTED PROJECTS - FULL LIST

PROJECT TITLE	AWARE	INFORMED	ENGAGED
Cumulative Impact Policy Review 2024	274	115	47

Cumulative Impact Policy Review Survey

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

26 February 2020 - 01 May 2024

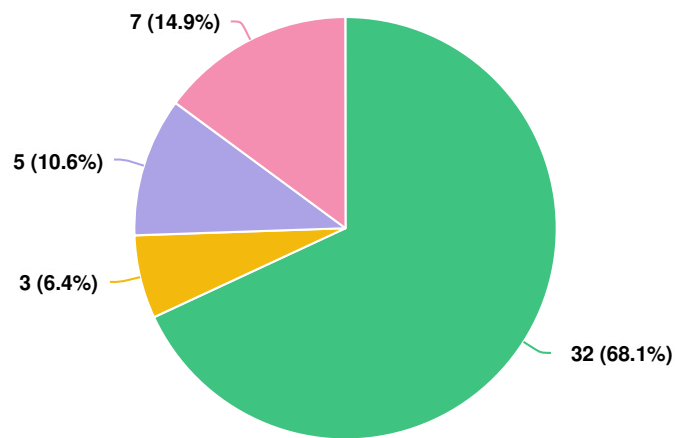
PROJECT NAME:

Cumulative Impact Policy Review 2024



SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1 | In general, what effect would you say the Cumulative Impact Policies have had on the areas?

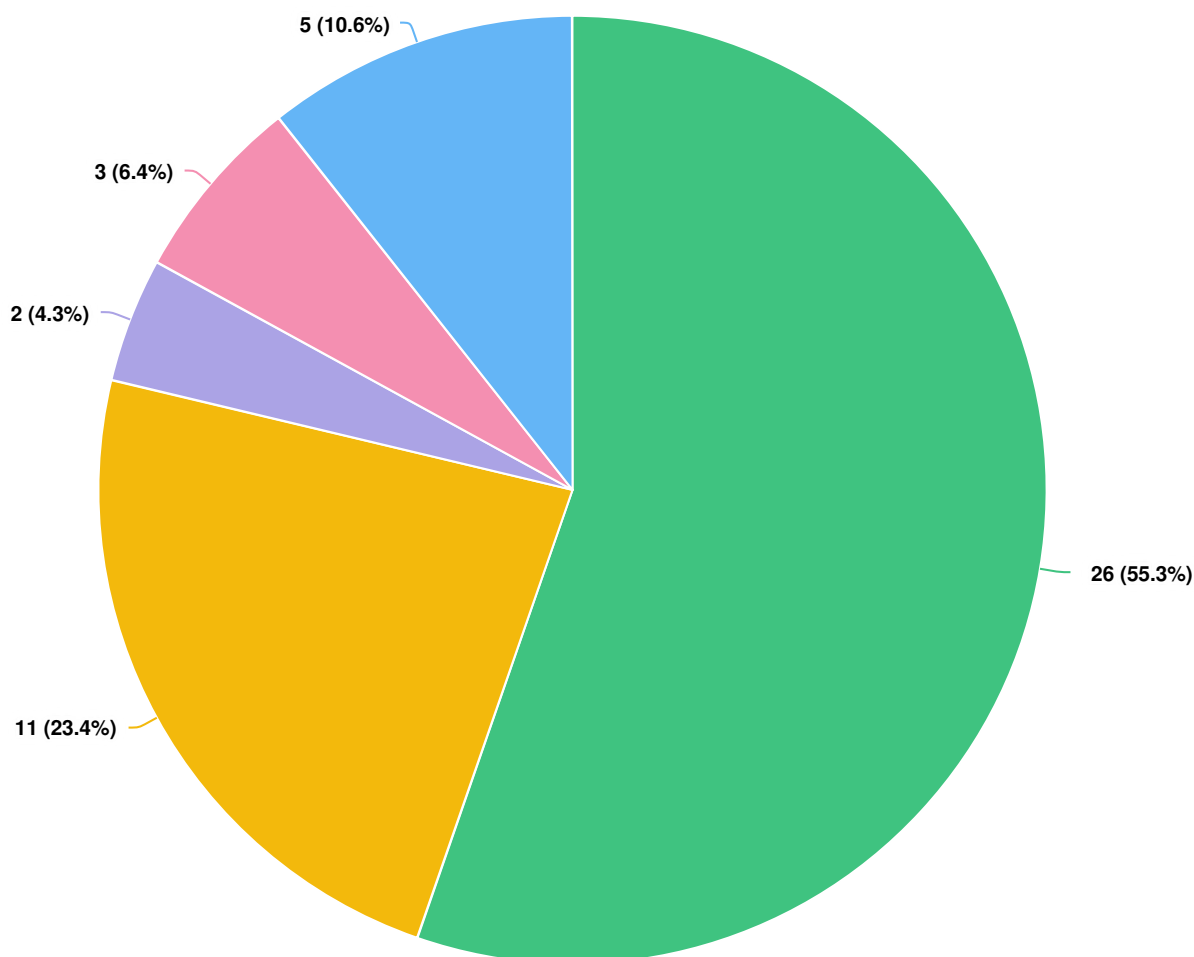


Question options

- Positive
- Negative
- None (no effect)
- Don't know

Mandatory Question (47 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q2 Do you think that the Brick Lane Cumulative Impact Policy should be?



Question options

- Retained and expanded as per the proposal detailed in the report
- Retained in its current form
- Retained and expanded further than detailed in the report
- Retained but reduced
- Removed

Mandatory Question (47 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q4 | If you think that the Brick Lane Cumulative Impact area/zone should be expanded, please detail the extent of the expansion

Anonymous

4/22/2024 09:46 AM

no bars serving after 11 p.m. - very stringent noise restrictions -
garbage must be picked up during normal hours and not left on the
streets - a consistent police Presence

Anonymous

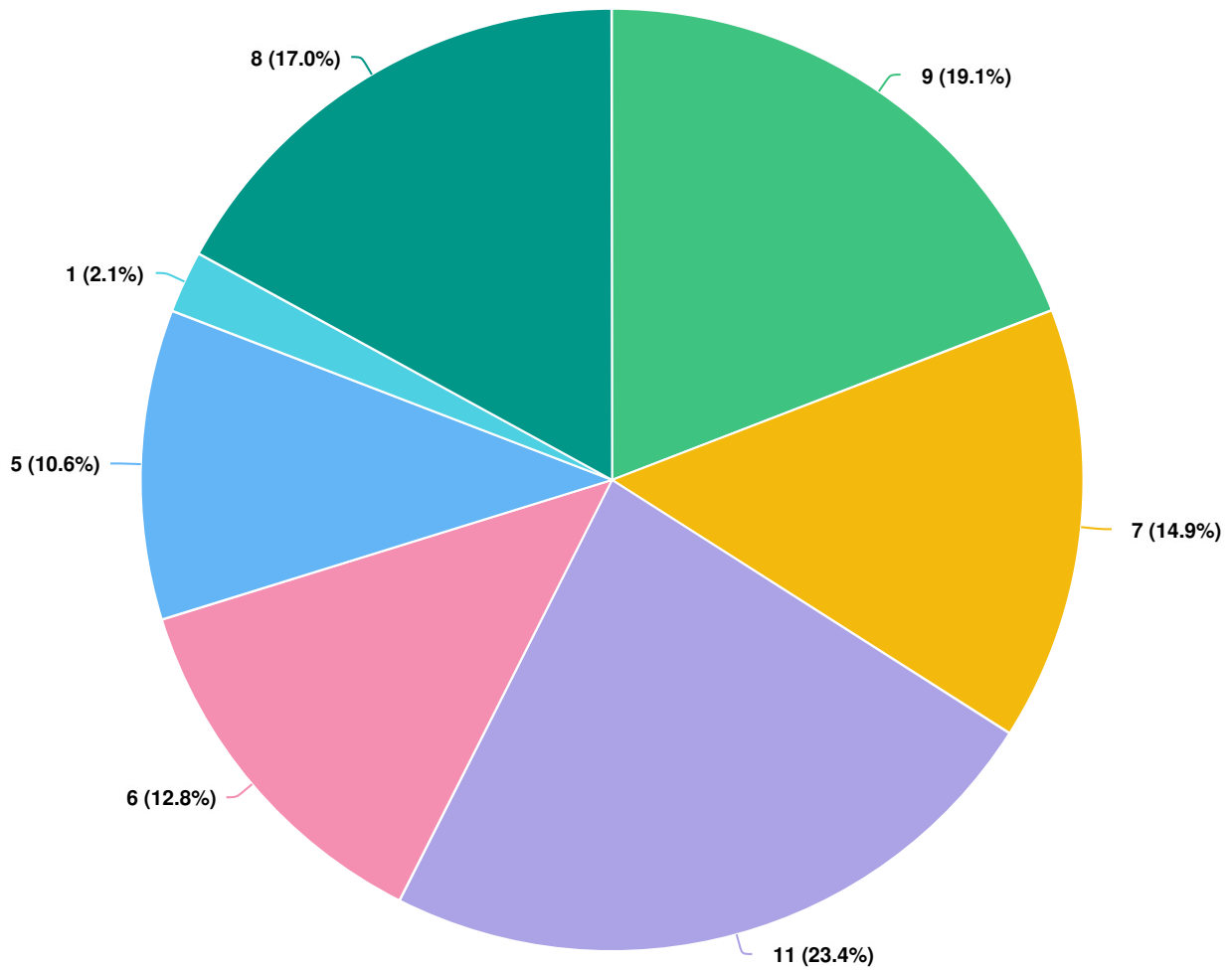
4/23/2024 10:04 PM

This should included new road and whitechapel road

Optional question (2 response(s), 45 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q5 How often do you visit licensed premises in Brick Lane Cumulative Impact area?

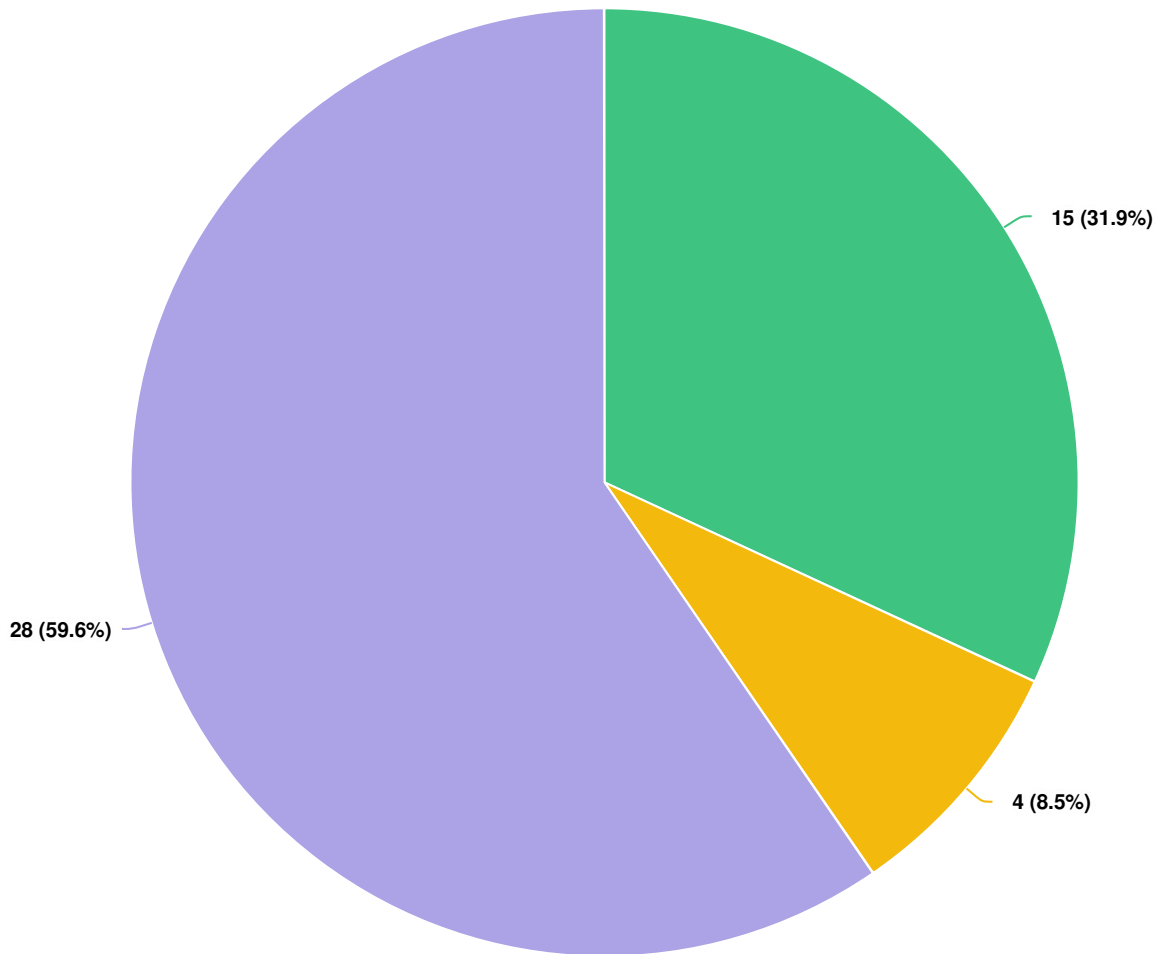


Question options

- At least once a week
- At least once every 2 weeks
- At least once a month
- Less than once a month
- Less than every 6 months
- Less than once a year
- Hardly ever

Mandatory Question (47 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q6 Which of the following best describes you in reference the the Brick Lane Cumulative Impact Area?

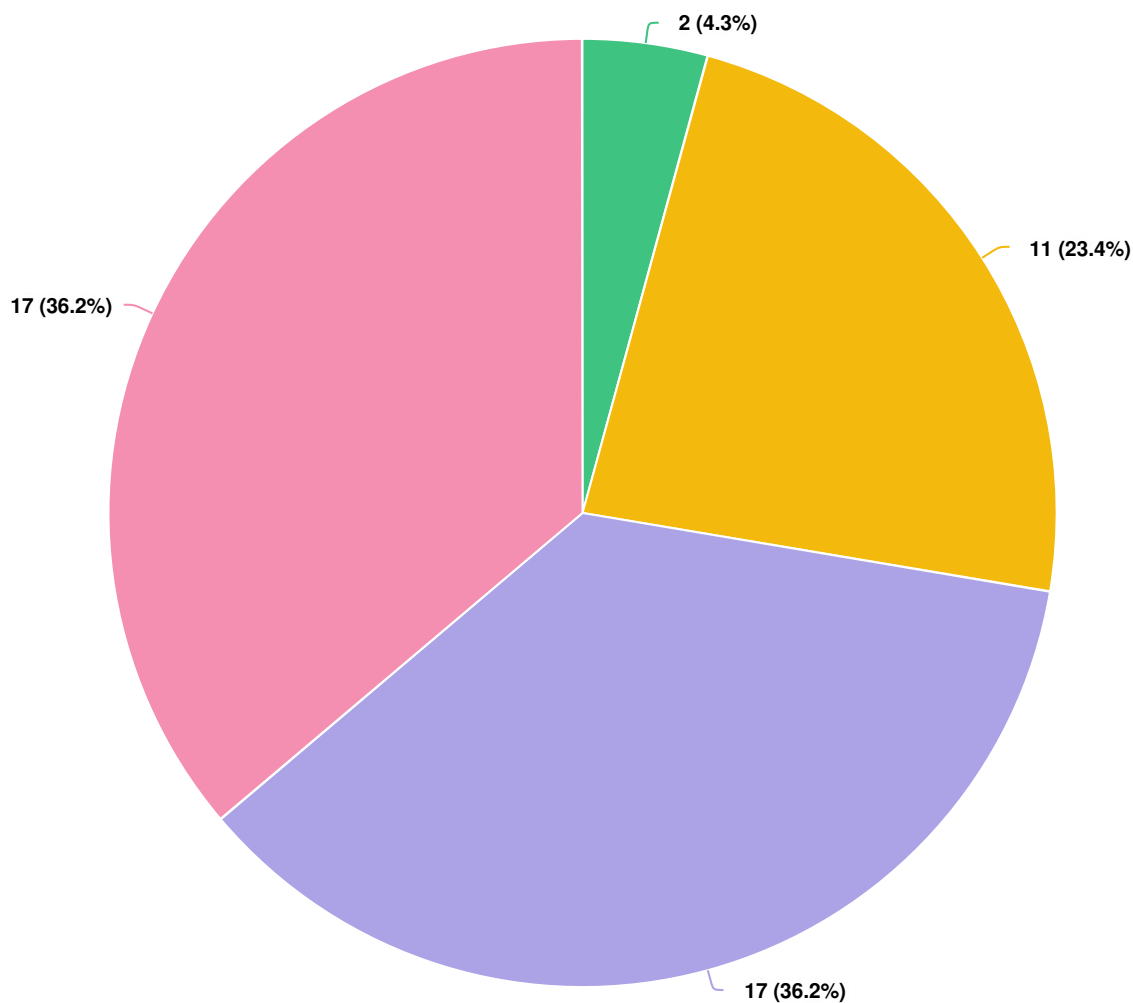


Question options

- Customer/visitor
- Worker
- Local Resident

Mandatory Question (47 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q7 | Have you experienced crime and disorder or noise nuisance that could be reasonably linked to premises licensed to sell alcohol within the Brick Lane Cumulative area?

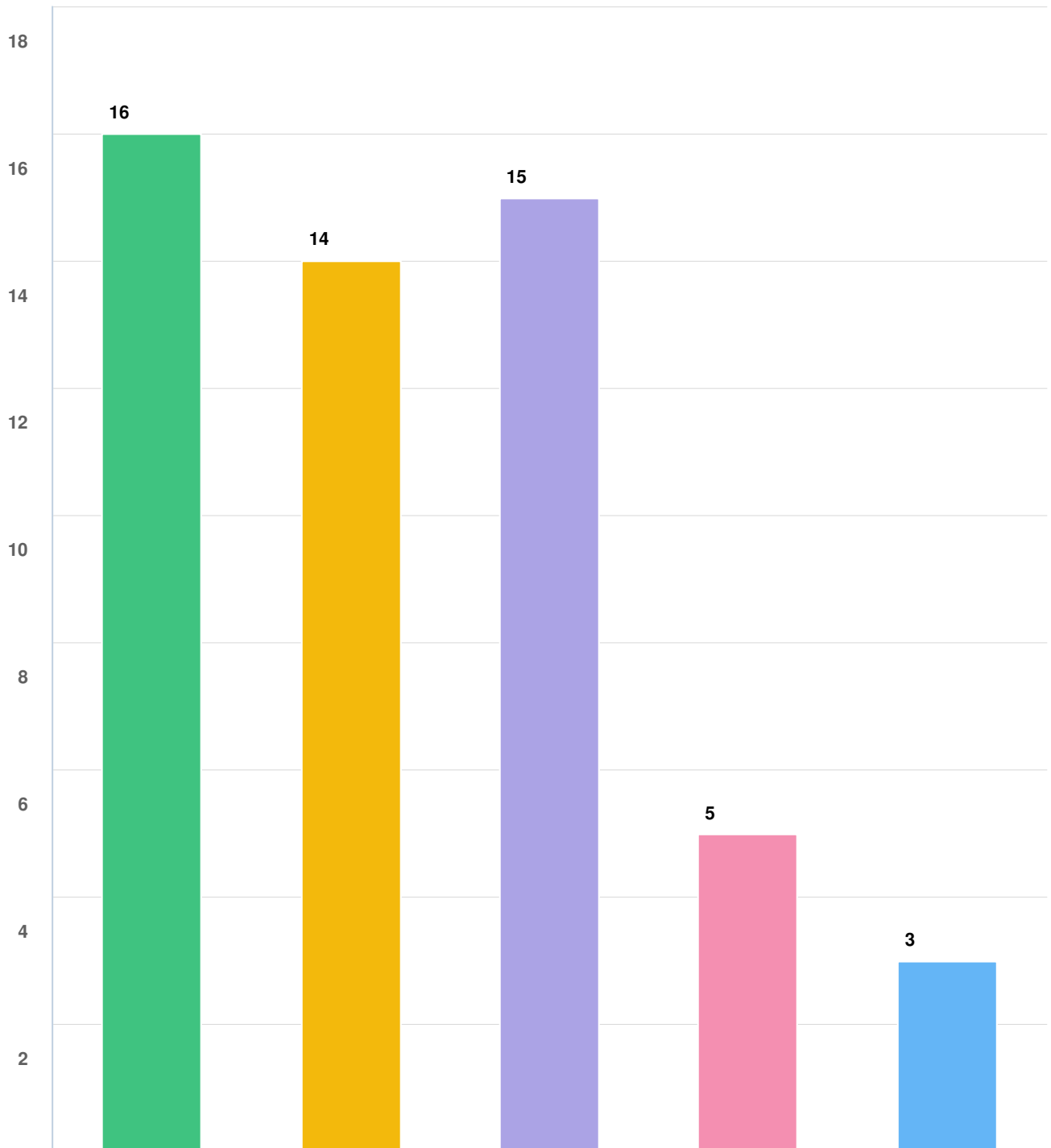


Question options

- Yes - Crime and disorder only
- Yes - Noise nuisance only
- Yes - Crime and disorder and noise nuisance
- Not experienced any crime and disorder or noise nuisance

Mandatory Question (47 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q8 What type of premises in the Brick Lane Cumulative Impact Area was the crime and disorder linked to? Please select all appropriate:

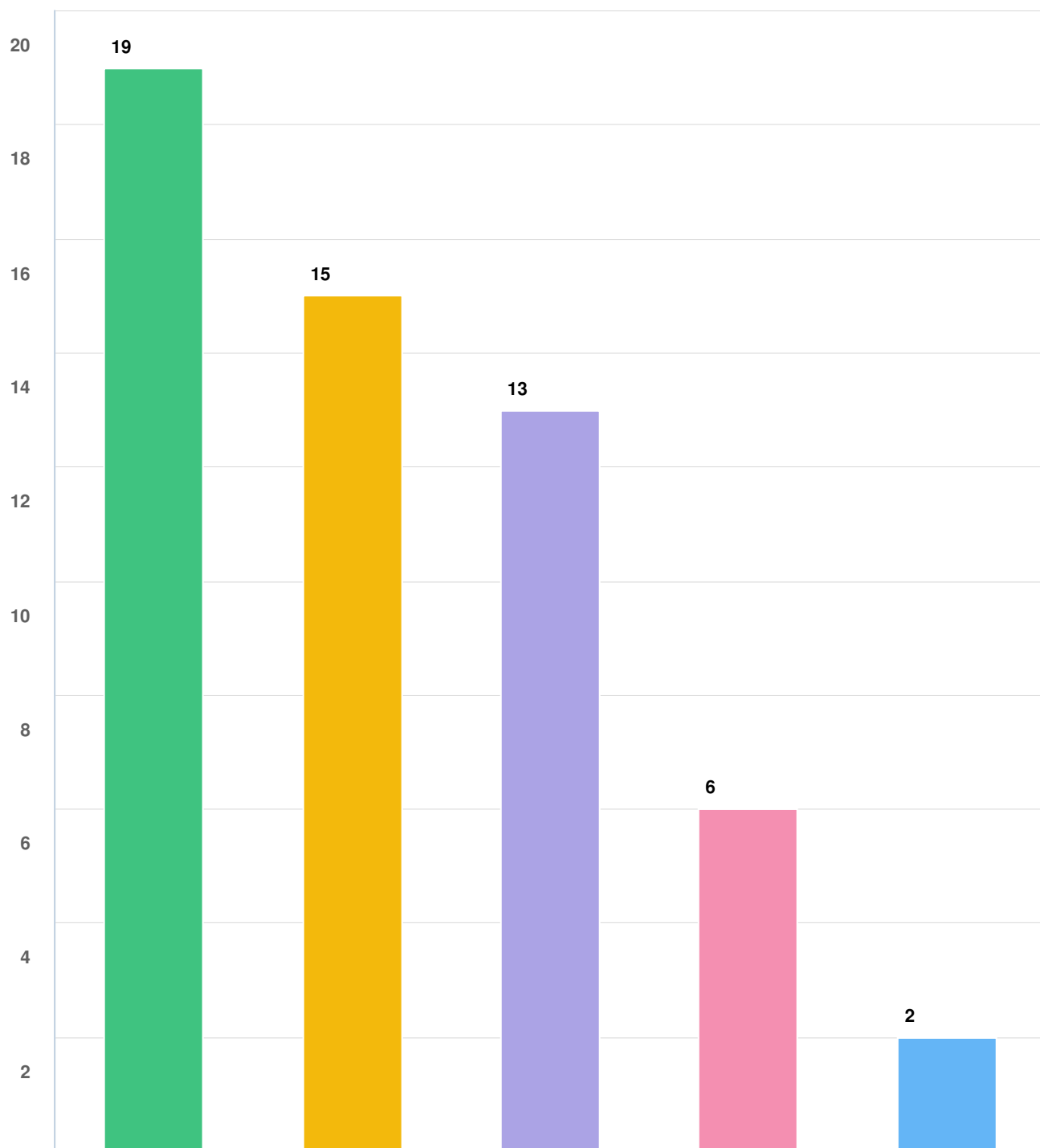


Question options

- Pub, Bar etc. - Alcohol to be drunk on the premises
- Off Licence - Alcohol to be drunk away from the premises
- Late Night (after 11pm) Hot Food Café/Restaurant or Take Away
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (29 response(s), 18 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q9 What type of premises in the Brick Lane Cumulative Impact Area was the noise nuisance linked to? Please select all appropriate:

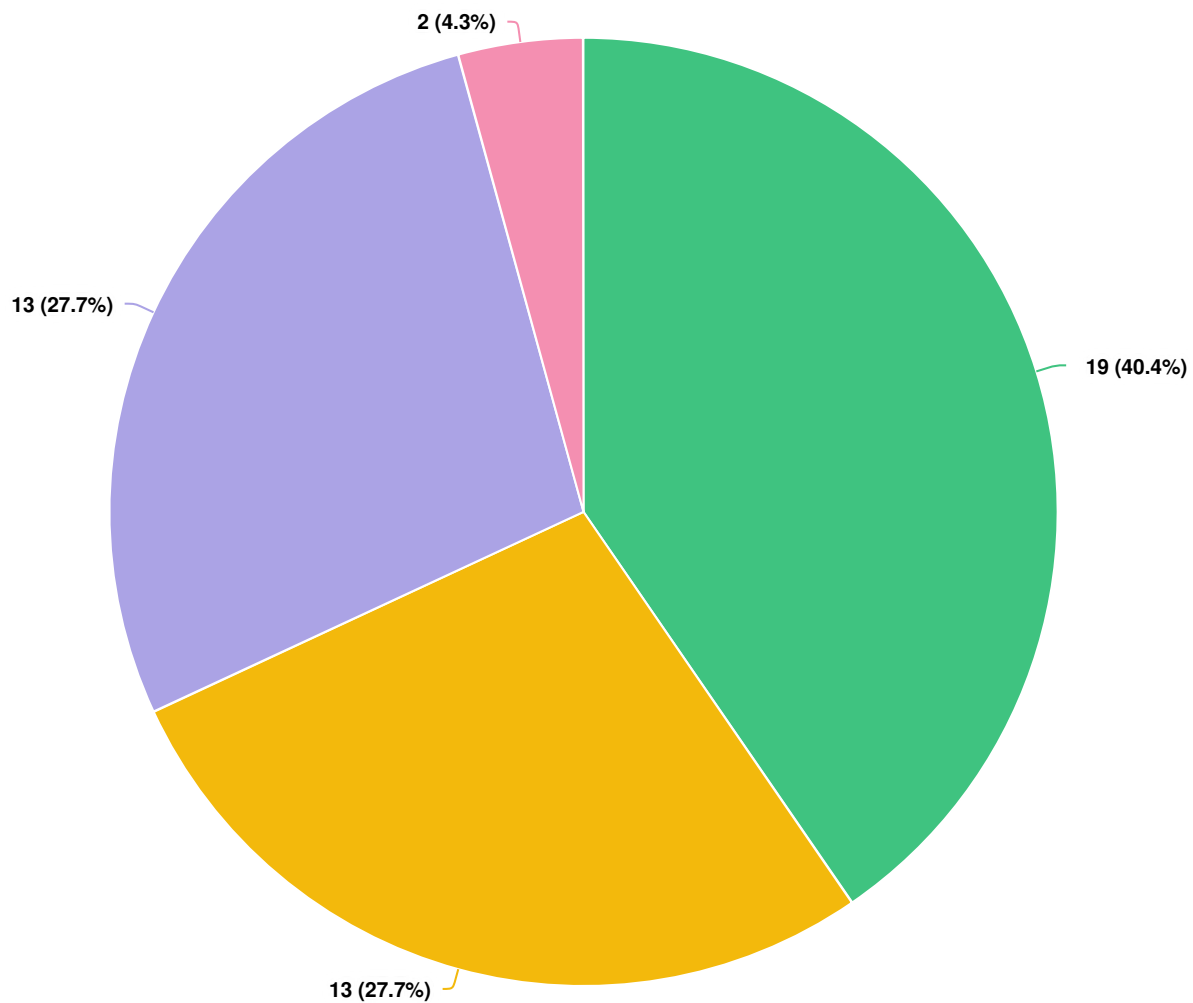


Question options

- Pub, Bar etc. - Alcohol to be drunk on the premises
- Off Licence - Alcohol to be drunk away from the premises
- Late Night (after 11pm) Hot Food Café/Restaurant or Take Away
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (30 response(s), 17 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q10 | Do you think that the Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact Policy should be?



Question options

- Removed, as per the proposal detailed in the report
- Retained in its current form
- Retained and expanded
- Retained but reduced

Mandatory Question (47 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q11 | If you think that the Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact zone/area should be retained and reduced, please detail reasons for retaining and reducing the zone, and the extent of the reduction.

Anonymous

Too much late night noise and people urinating in public

4/20/2024 04:21 PM

Optional question (1 response(s), 46 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q12 | If you think that the Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact area/zone should be retained and expanded, please detail the reasons for retaining and expanding the zone, and the details of the expansion.

Anonymous

Expanded to mile end

2/09/2024 06:47 PM

Anonymous

Oval space surroundings should be included

2/14/2024 10:32 PM

Anonymous

Bethnal Green has become a hotspot for ASB/crime late at night in particular. The area has a lot of visitors from out of the borough as well due to the night time economy and close border with Hackney. The expansion should act as a parallel action to the flourishing of the night time economy in the area-Due diligence and consideration should be given to any new applicants who would like to obtain new licenses.

2/19/2024 05:15 PM

Anonymous

To 'Ensure & Make safe" all members community

3/13/2024 11:30 PM

Anonymous

There are many residential areas in this area and it is having a detrimental effect on residents as crime and anti social behavior has risen at an alarming rate, during the day as well as night. Any potential new licensing premises will be an extra attraction for crime.

3/14/2024 10:08 PM

Anonymous

extend north to include the areas around CH station & Hackney Road/Mare Street. More development has taken place over the last few years (not just housing but new businesses) which if not monitored carefully could lead to a resurgence of ASB incidents.. No

3/15/2024 11:19 AM

more licenses are required - there is sufficient options already in place. Not a great look in Tower Hamlets (or anywhere for that matter) to see discarded bottles/glasses/food rubbish every morning left strewn around, not to mention the other unmentionable things left by 'people enjoying a night out but who cant use toilet facilities'. I wilfully don't frequent establishments in my area because I'm fearful of ASB - no more licenses please

Anonymous

3/15/2024 06:14 PM

We live in Weavers ward and had many problems in the past with licensed premises on Ezra Street/Columbia Road and surrounding areas as it encouraged street drinking and noise. There is still a major problem with drinking and noise in Ravenscroft Park. We would be against any increase in licensed premises or hours of opening and drinking outside premises. We are in a block of flats where residents range in age from 3 to 84 and we do not want any increase in people drinking in the streets or park.

Anonymous

3/28/2024 09:54 AM

People should be feeling safe while out with they friends or family. By keeping this policy live and expanding it to make even bigger impact on safety issues will do good for our communities.

Anonymous

4/19/2024 08:15 PM

To help reduce crime, disorder and nuisance in the area that can be attributed to the sale of alcohol.

Anonymous

4/20/2024 04:58 PM

Still late night noise and drunken street behaviour and drug dealing

Anonymous

4/21/2024 10:42 PM

The are seems to be becoming a destination area for large groups of young drinkers, especially from Thursday night Amd through the weekend.

Anonymous

4/23/2024 10:04 PM

Too many small business linked to rubbish everywhere -& drug usage

Optional question (12 response(s), 35 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q13 | If you think that the Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact area/zone should be retained in its current form, please details the reasons for retaining it.

Anonymous

3/13/2024 02:58 PM

Allot of people drunk in the night, making noise and fighting it's hard to sleep sometimes and it's quite scary at times as fights become quite violent due to people being drunk

Anonymous

3/14/2024 05:41 PM

Because it gives the Licensing Authority greater control over the maintenance of regulations

Anonymous

3/14/2024 10:59 PM

it is necessary to provide as much protection as possible to residents and visitors

Anonymous

3/15/2024 12:57 PM

It has made a difference to local residents, even if not perfect.

Anonymous

3/25/2024 07:41 AM

Because it gives a guidance for people to follow people need rules to follow and law.

Anonymous

4/20/2024 07:14 PM

It maintains control, removal could lead to increase in disruptive behaviour

Anonymous

4/22/2024 11:08 AM

Prevents ASB

Anonymous

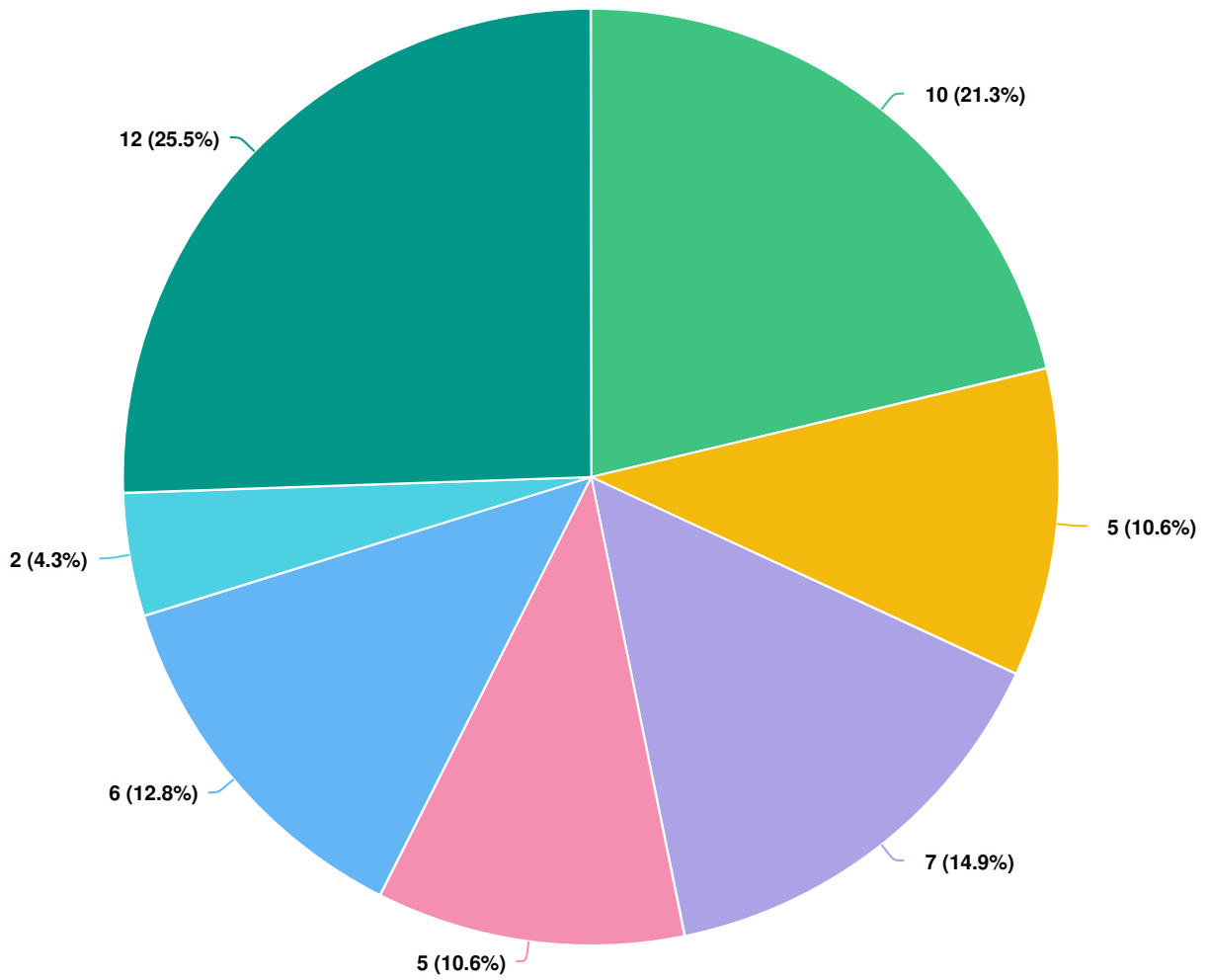
4/22/2024 07:41 PM

While precise data may not support maintaining it in its current form, I would propose that it is exactly this policy which keeps this otherwise vulnerable area in check.

Optional question (8 response(s), 39 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q14 | How often do you visit licensed premises in Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact area?

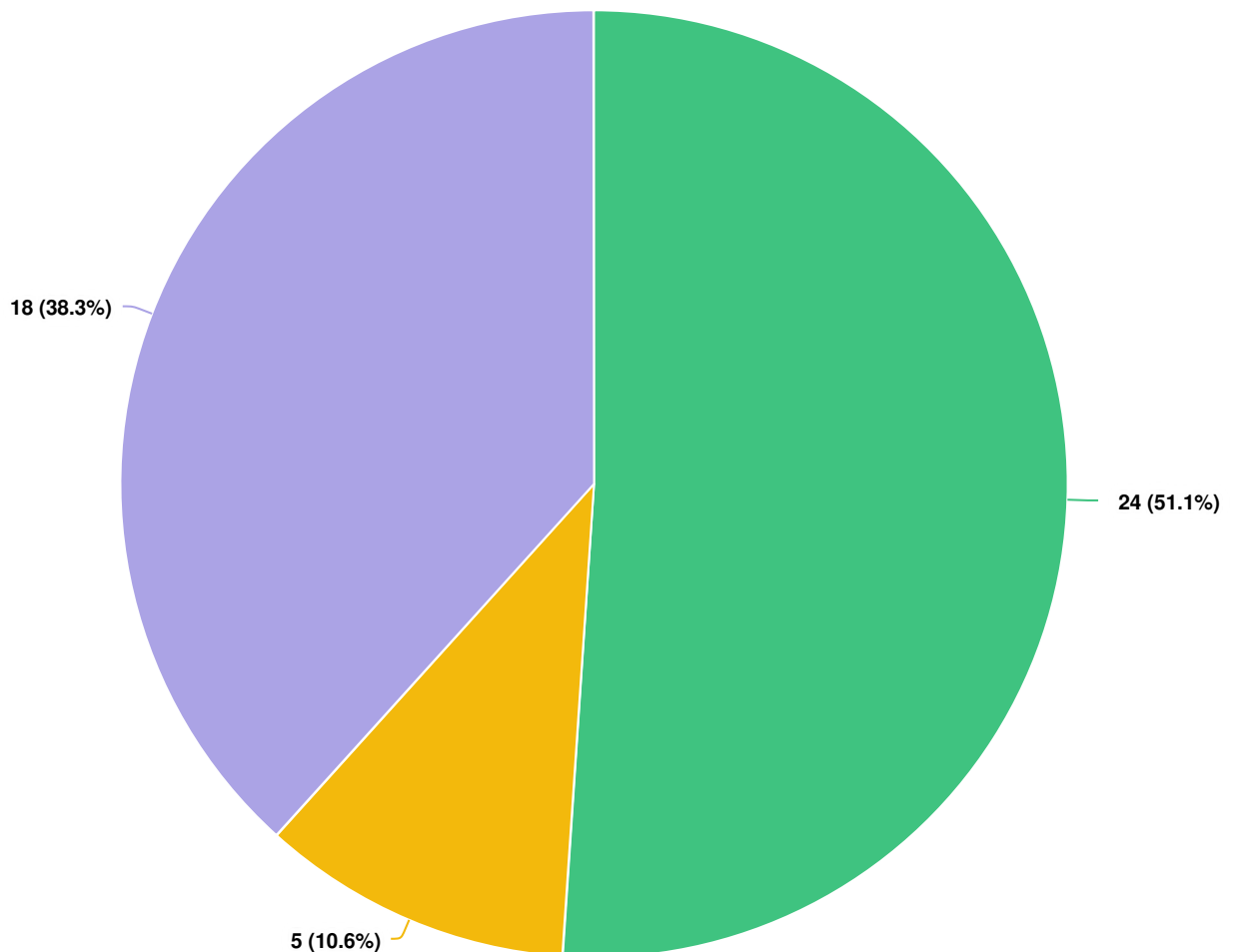


Question options

- At least once a week
- At least once every 2 weeks
- At least once a month
- Less than once a month
- Less than every 6 months
- Less than once a year
- Hardly ever

Mandatory Question (47 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q15 Which of the following best describes you in reference the the Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact Area?

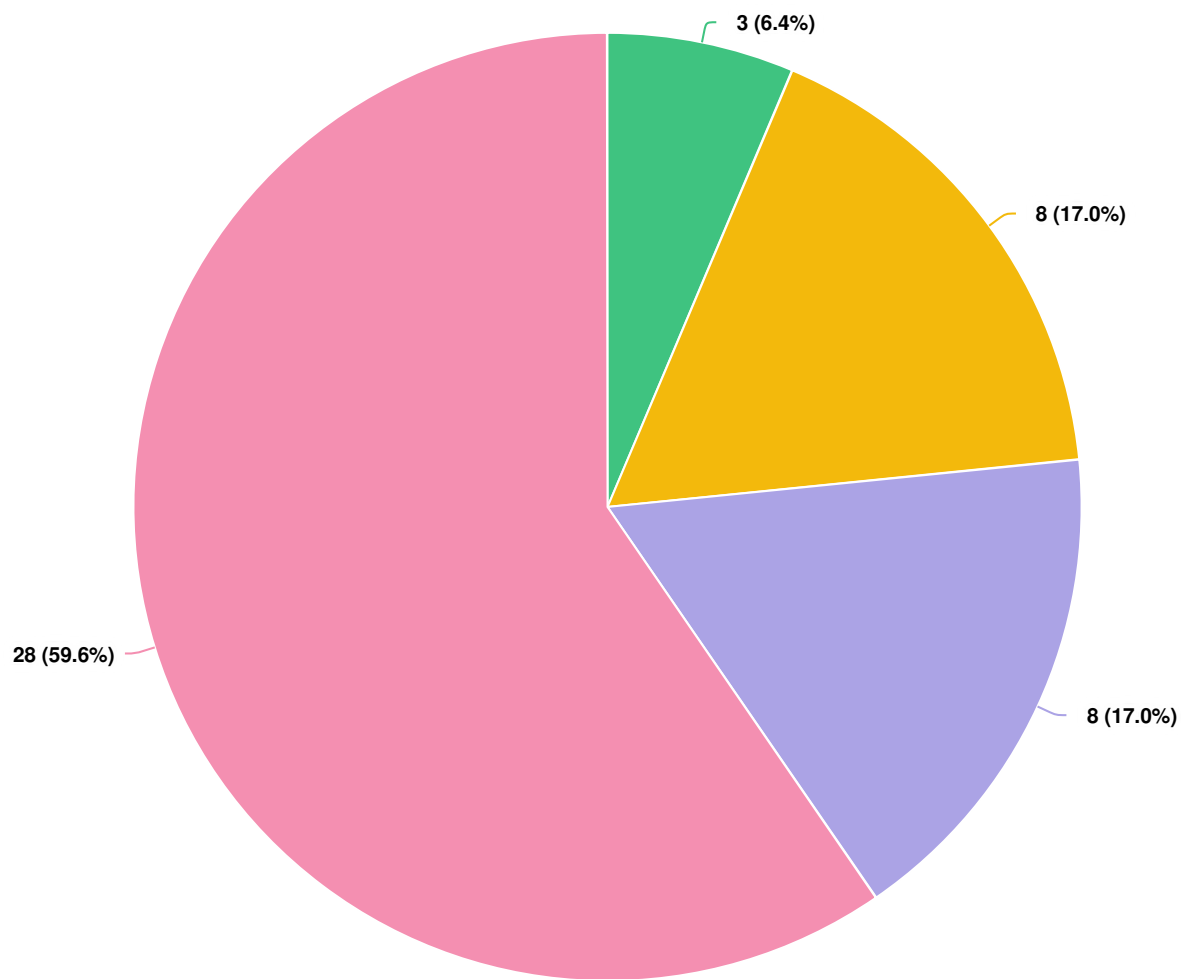


Question options

- Customer/visitor
- Worker
- Local Resident

Mandatory Question (47 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q16 | Have you experienced crime and disorder or noise nuisance that could be reasonably linked to premises licensed to sell alcohol within the Bethnal Green Cumulative area?

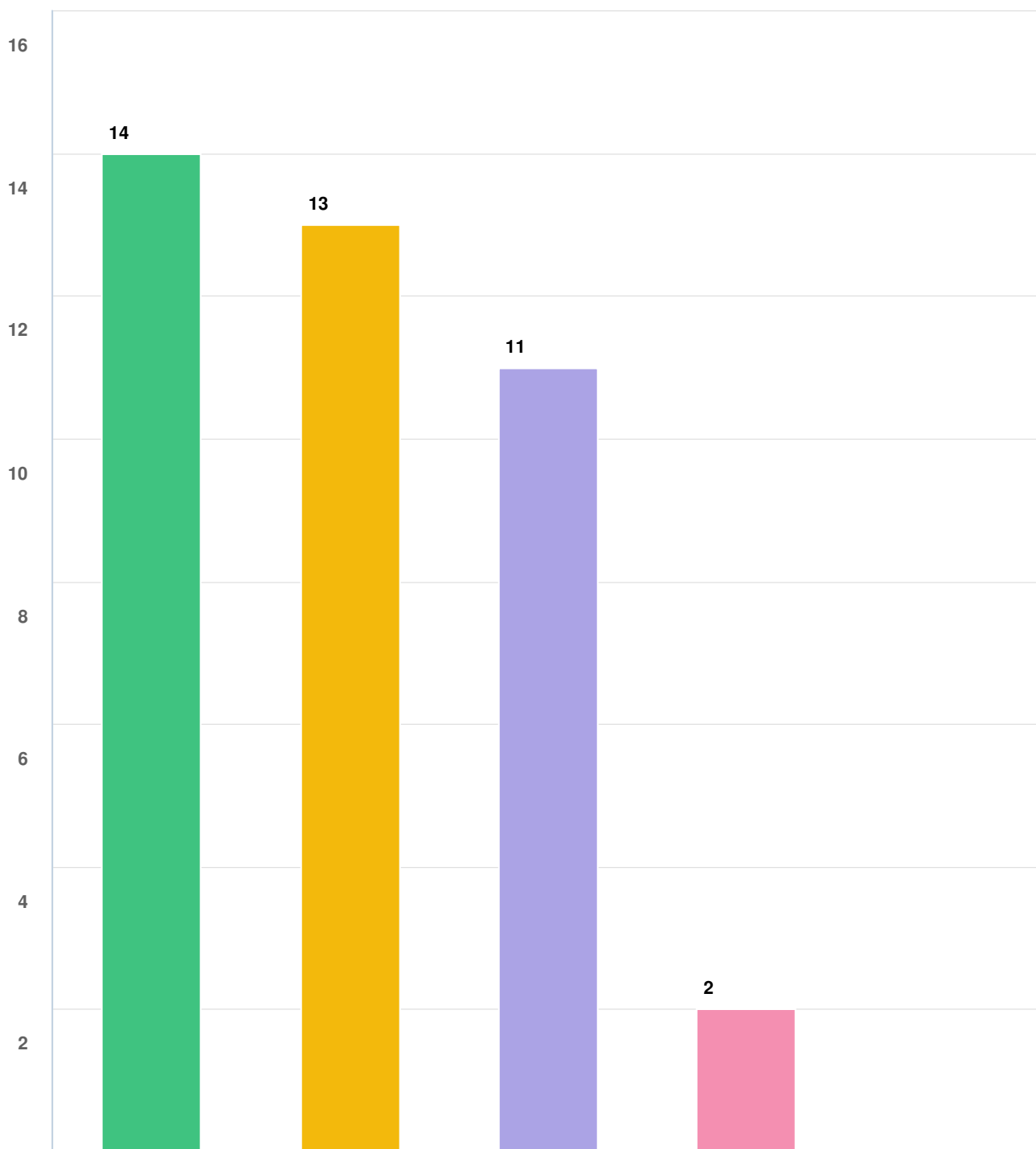


Question options

- Yes - Crime and disorder only
- Yes - Noise nuisance only
- Yes - Crime and disorder and noise nuisance
- Not experienced any crime and disorder or noise nuisance

Mandatory Question (47 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q17 | What type of premises in Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact area was this was the crime and disorder linked to? Please select all appropriate:

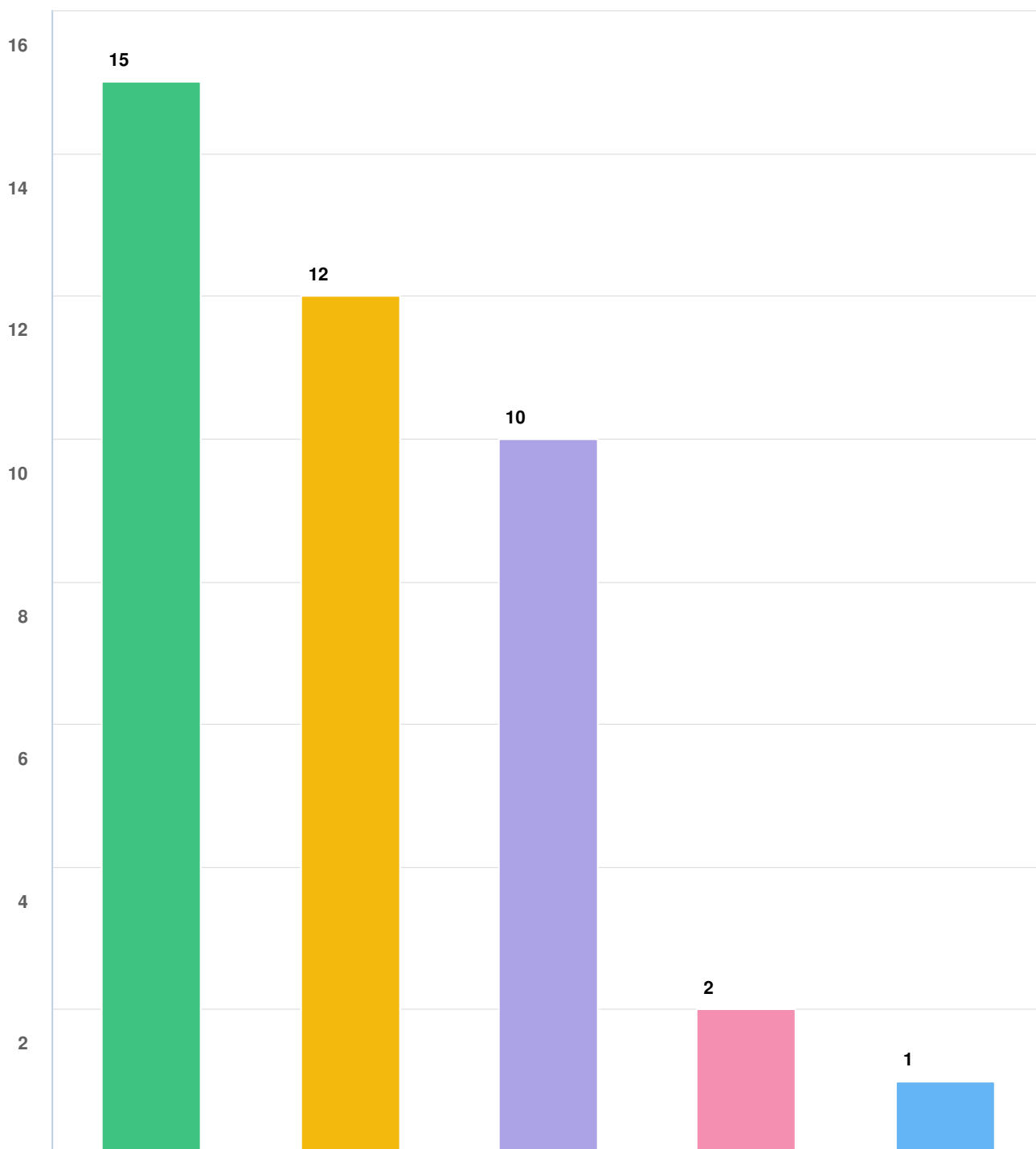


Question options

- Pub, Bar etc. - Alcohol to be drunk on the premises
- Off Licence - Alcohol to be drunk away from the premises
- Late Night (after 11pm) Hot Food Café/Restaurant or Take Away
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (19 response(s), 28 skipped)
 Question type: *Checkbox Question*

Q18 | What type of premises in the Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact Area was the noise nuisance linked to? Please select all appropriate:



Question options

- Pub, Bar etc. - Alcohol to be drunk on the premises
- Off Licence - Alcohol to be drunk away from the premises
- Late Night (after 11pm) Hot Food Café/Restaurant or Take Away
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (19 response(s), 28 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q19 | If wish to make further comments please detail them below or alternatively email the Licensing Team via Licensing@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

Anonymous

2/09/2024 06:06 PM

Licensing premises are far less than before.therefore the impact had been reduced

Anonymous

2/10/2024 12:48 AM

No

Anonymous

2/14/2024 10:32 PM

Please don't remove the CI for Bethnal Green and the oval space areas must be included. So much crime here

Anonymous

2/19/2024 02:48 PM

Cumulative impact policies are a blunt tool. They discourage applicants and new concepts from coming to the area and should be avoided in favour of making good, robust licensing decisions on the merits of particular applications.

Anonymous

3/13/2024 01:51 PM

The area has developed due to the varied and interesting nightlife. To place undue burdens on businesses will ensure that they move to another area (which is what is happening).. london needs a nighttime economy to ensure that it flourishes and provides much needed income and vibrancy which was lacking when this was a run down area. This is the goose that is laying golden eggs and we do not want to kill it. I understand there is noise and antisocial behaviour associated with the nighttime economy but this needs to be managed as part of an overall policy of crime reduction. We should not place undue burdens on business as we are entering a/escaping from a recession and escaped from the tail end of Covid. There is some undue nuisance prevalent when there are late night establishments, but this can be managed appropriately rather than having a sledgehammer approach to the issue.

Anonymous

3/14/2024 10:08 PM

It is disappointing to hear that any rules will be relaxed. It seems that residents are not a priority, only commercial opportunities which the residents have to suffer the consequences.

Anonymous

3/15/2024 06:14 PM

It would be good if regular visits could be made by council officials to Ravenscroft Park late at night to appreciate the level of noise emanating from there and spilling onto the streets around.

Anonymous

3/28/2024 09:54 AM

N/A

Anonymous

3/30/2024 11:14 AM

As a resident of the Brick Lane area for 27 years, I have seen a significant reduction in crime, disorder and night-time noise since the introduction of the LBTH Cumulative Impact Policy some years ago.. When I moved here in 1997 I could not sleep in the main bedroom at the front of the house because of loud drunken people in the street but it has changed hugely for the better following the introduction of the CIP and I am now able to sleep in peace and comfort. It is very important for local residents that the CIP be retained and if possible extended. PLEASE keep the policy going.

Anonymous

4/18/2024 10:48 AM

As a local resident in the Spitalfields area the CIA has made a real difference over the past years in reducing the number of issues especially from noise and ASB and given residents the means to ensure licence controls are attached to new licences. Please keep the CIA in place especially as more and more food and beverage places open, which is a good thing but it needs to have controls to ensure local residents aren't affected by noise and ASB

Anonymous

4/18/2024 01:07 PM

As tourism increases during the summer months in the Spitalfields/Brick Lane enclave - noise and ASB increases over weekends, evenings and early morning. I have been a resident of Spitalfields for over 20 years and the CIA contributes to a more controllable situation in these very popular and trendy neighbourhoods. With more large building projects planned in the Goods Yard and Brick Lane the CIA is and will become ever more necessary in refraining from turning these areas into only bar/restaurants venues all with alcohol licences

Anonymous

4/20/2024 07:16 PM

The present CIA is obviously working as there has a very minimum of problems. Keep it as it is

Anonymous

4/22/2024 07:41 PM

The existence and maintenance of the CIA's is a vital componet to balancing the commercial and residential needs of the stated areas. It has been instrumental for resident associations and SPIRE who tirelessly look to strike the right balance with a need for commerce and maintain an enjoyable and safe area to live.

Anonymous

4/23/2024 10:04 PM

We have small businesses littering all over Tower hamlets - they are not being accountable - the rat problem is out of control and the noise pollution is high - with reving cars and huge groups congregating

outside bubble tea houses late at night

Optional question (14 response(s), 33 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Appendix Six – CIA – Table of Online Survey Additional Comments

		Summary of Comment
1.	Anonymous	Licensing premises reduced and thus the impact has reduced.
2.	Anonymous	No.
3.	Anonymous	Bethnal Green CIA must be kept and expanded to include Oval Space.
4.	Anonymous	CIA are a blunt tool and discourage applicants and new concepts from coming to the area. CIA should be avoided in favour of robust licensing decisions based merits of particular applications.
5.	Anonymous	<p>London needs a nighttime economy, which provides income and vibrancy.</p> <p>CIA place undue burden, any noise/ASB associated with nighttime economy can be managed by via appropriate policies rather than CIAs. Particularly in view of the recession following the Covid Pandemic.</p>
6.	Anonymous	CIAs should be kept resident should be priority rather than commercial opportunities which causes consequences for residents.
7.	Anonymous	Regular visits should be made to Ravenscroft Park during late at night due to noise issues, which emanating onto the streets around.
8.	Anonymous	N/A
9.	Anonymous	Keep CIA in Brick Lane. It has a positive effect on the peaceful enjoyment of residents' homes. It is very important for residents that the CAI be retained and if possible extended.
10.	Anonymous	<p>CIA around Spitalfields has made a real difference over the past years in reducing noise and ASB. It gives residents the means to ensure licence controls are attached to new licences.</p> <p>Concern that CIA should stay especially as more and more food and beverage premises open, which is a good thing provided they are controlled to reduce any impact on residents in regard to noise and ASB.</p>
11.	Anonymous	Brick Lane CIA has contributed to more control over licence premises and should be kept. This assist in preventing noise and ASB especially during summer month when tourism increases.
12.	Anonymous	CIA is working because there are very minimum problems. Keep as it is.
13.	Anonymous	Maintenance of CIAs is vital to balancing the commercial and residential needs of the stated areas. It is instrumental in assisting Resident Associations to strike the right balance with a need for commerce and

		maintain an enjoyable and safe area to live.
14.	Anonymous	Some businesses are causing littering all over Tower hamlets who are not being accountable. The rat problem is out of control and the noise pollution is high, and revving cars and huge groups congregating outside bubble tea houses late at night.

Appendix Seven – CIA Consultation Written Responses and Summary Table

	Responder Description	Supports the Retention and Expansion of Brick Lane CIA (Y/N)	Support the Removal of Bethnal Green CIA (Y/N)	Comment	Page No.
1	Responsible Authority (Police)	Yes	Yes	<p>Bethnal Green CIA – agree with recommendations – data shows a decrease in crimes reported and call outs for Police/London Ambulance Service (LAS), which shows the positive effect the CIA's have had.</p> <p>Brick Lane CIA - Brick Lane continues to be a hot spot for crime/ASB, and the data show increasing call outs/crimes to the area where the proposed expansion lies. It therefore is proportionate to incorporate this area into the Brick Lane CIA.</p> <p>It is important that we continue to monitor areas like Hackney Wick and Canary Wharf. If demand on emergency services as well as crime trends continue an upward trajectory then measures like CIA's must be considered.</p>	3
2	Responsible Authority (Public Health)	Yes	Yes	<p>Data shows that there is a high density of licenced premises in the Brick Lane CIA, alongside licenced trade related police call outs/crime. This is not the case in the Bethnal Green CIA. Given that CIAs are implemented where adverse effects of alcohol availability can be demonstrated, it is reasonable to support the recommendation to remove the Bethnal Green CIA and extend the Brick Lane CIA.</p>	4-7

				Public Health supports the increased scrutiny of alcohol license requests that the cumulative impact policy allows, for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alcohol harms - Inequality - Cumulative Impact Zones: an opportunity for greater scrutiny of alcohol licences 	
3	Residents Association - ARESTA (Ezra Street Residents Association)	Yes	Yes	Support keeping CIAs and expanding them where needed. Area around Columbia Road, Ezra Street and Ravenscroft Park should be considered as an CIA. Expanded licensing in recent years has added to already high problems of public nuisance, crime and disorder. The are opposed to any more licenses being granted.	8
4	Resident	Yes, in keeping the CIA		Area round Ezra Street/Ravenscroft Street has had many problems in the past. I am against any increase of licensed premises or extension of licensed hours in the area. Noise and street drinking is an increasing problem in the summer months.	9

Full responses can be found below numbered as they appear in this table above.

1. Responsible Authority (Met. Police – Borough Commander) – Written Response

Having examined the data contained in the report we agree with the recommendations of Tower Hamlets Council to remove the Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact Area (CIA) and increase the size of the Brick Lane CIA. The data shows a welcome decrease in both crimes reported and reductions in call outs for both Police and LAS in both areas, which we believe shows the positive effect the CIA's have had.

We recognise that the night time economy is dynamic and changes quickly as new venues open up and cultural trends change. Therefore it is important that we continue to monitor areas like Hackney Wick and Canary Wharf where we are seeing new venues open up, increased footfall, and thousands of new residential properties being built. There is also an increasing number calls to Emergency services, and an increase in crimes in these areas, although from a low base. If demand on emergency services as well as crime trends continue an upward trajectory then measures like CIA's must be considered.

The Shoreditch area including Brick Lane continues to be a hot spot for crime and anti-social behaviour, and the data show increasing call outs and crimes to the area around Aldgate East and Whitechapel which is part of the increased Brick Lane CIA. It therefore is proportionate to incorporate this area into the existing Shoreditch / Brick Lane CIA.

The decrease in crimes and ASB linked to the CIA in Bethnal Green is welcome and we agree that it is no longer proportionate to main the CIA in that area, of course we will look at crimes in this area to see if there is any negative reaction to this.

We therefore agree with Tower Hamlets Councils recommendations regarding the Cumulative Impact Assessment review.

2. Responsible Authority (Director of Public Health) – Written Response

The Tower Hamlets Public Health team offers this response to the Cumulative Impact Policy Review 2024 consultation.

Cumulative Impact Zones (CIZ) are a useful tool to control the availability of alcohol in problem areas. However, the public health evidence suggests that this tool is often poorly utilised. Data provided by Tower Hamlets Council as part of this consultation shows that there is a high density of licenced premises in the Brick Lane CIZ, alongside licenced trade related police call outs and crime, this is not the case in the Bethnal Green CIZ. There have only been ten licences granted in the Bethnal Green zone over the past three years, in comparison to 56 in the Brick Lane CIZ. Given that CIZs are implemented where adverse effects of alcohol availability can be demonstrated, it is reasonable to support the Alcohol Licensing Team's recommendation to remove the Bethnal Green CIZ and extend the Brick Lane CIZ.

Aside from the data provided with the consultation, Public Health supports the increased scrutiny of alcohol license requests that the cumulative impact policy allows, for the following reasons:

- Alcohol harms
- Inequality
- Cumulative Impact Zones: an opportunity for greater scrutiny of alcohol licences
Public Health Tower Hamlets: Consultation Response

Alcohol harms

In England, among people aged 15 to 49 years, alcohol is the leading cause of ill-health, disability, and death^{1,2}. All major systems in the human body are affected by alcohol consumption. The effects vary according to several factors, including age, gender, body mass index (BMI), pattern and volume of alcohol consumption, and the length of time someone has been consuming alcohol. The health effects of alcohol can be acute, for example poisoning or injury, and chronic, for example liver cirrhosis, cardiovascular disease or female breast cancer². Alcohol is a major cause of hospital admission - as either a consequence of acute alcohol intoxication or of alcohol misuse over time. In 2021/22 there were 342,795 hospital admissions in England where a diagnosis was attributable to alcohol³. Since 2019, alcohol-related mortality in England has been increasing, from 36.5 per 100,000 in 2019 to 39.7 per 100,000 in 2022⁴. Tower Hamlets has higher alcohol related mortality than both London and England, with 48.2 per 100,000 people dying of alcohol-related conditions in 2022⁴. Alcohol misuse across the UK is a significant public health problem with major health and social ramifications and economic consequences estimated at between £21 and £52 billion a year². There is some evidence that increases in alcohol availability locally is associated with increases not only in consumption, but also in alcohol-related harm⁵. It is therefore in the interest of individuals and of society that careful consideration is given to alcohol licence requested in areas that already have a proliferation of licenced premises.

Binge drinking carries many risks, including short-term harms like accidents or injuries which increase between two to five times as a result of drinking between 5 and 7 units of alcohol in a single drinking session, compared with not drinking any alcohol at all⁶. There is evidence that binge drinking increases your risk of long-term health problems including becoming dependent on alcohol, alcohol-related cancer and heart disease⁷. Binge drinking can also affect memory and, in the longer term, can lead to serious mental health problems⁸, with some evidence showing it is linked to suicide⁹.

A recent drug and alcohol needs assessment by the Centre for Public Innovation found that there has been an increase in the percentage of Tower Hamlets adults binge drinking (drinking heavily over a short space of time) on their heaviest drinking day from 11.9% in 2011-14 to 19.5% in 2015-18, higher than London and national rates. Tower Hamlets residents who reported drinking more than the current Chief Medical Officer guidelines (14 or more 3 units/week) increased to 22% in 2015-18, whereas trends in drinking patterns in London and England have decreased¹⁰. Although data is not available post-2018, given the evidence that binge drinking comes with increased health risk, it is reasonable to more carefully scrutinise licence applications in areas where there is a saturation of alcohol serving premises, which the Cumulative Impact Policy allows Tower Hamlets Council to do.

Inequality

The impact of harmful drinking and alcohol dependence is much greater for those in the lowest income bracket and those experiencing the highest levels of deprivation¹¹.¹² Income is also associated with health, people in the bottom 40% of the income distribution are almost twice as likely to report poor health than those in the top 20%. This is particularly the case for poverty, and even more so for persistent poverty, both of which are associated with worse health outcomes¹³. This is particularly relevant for Tower Hamlets: in 2021/22, after housing costs, 47.5% of children in Tower Hamlets were living in poverty, equivalent to 14 children in a class of 30, the highest level of child poverty in the UK¹⁴. Furthermore, 44% of older people in Tower Hamlets live in low-income households, also the highest proportion in England¹⁵. The London Borough of Tower Hamlets has a duty of care to its residents and so must ensure the alcohol environment is as safe as possible, particularly given the levels of poverty and therefore existing health inequity.

Cumulative Impact Zones: an opportunity for greater scrutiny of alcohol licences

The night time economy (NTE) is a term that encompasses many different activities, for example, theatre, pubs, restaurants and clubs. NTEs are an important part of our towns and cities and are estimated to bring in over £60 billion to the UK economy every year¹⁶. In addition to the health harms associated with alcohol consumption, alcohol contributes to broader societal harms including crime, violence, anti-social behaviour and disorder¹⁷, many of which occur within the context of the NTE. As licensing authorities, councils play an important role in regulating the NTE and good alcohol licensing practice is an important part of how we can address alcohol misuse¹⁸.

As part of the 2003 Licensing Act¹⁹, the government introduced a cumulative impact assessment (CIA) as a tool for licensing authorities to limit the growth of licensed premises (both on and off-licences) in a problem area. Cumulative Impact Policies strengthen the powers of local authorities to reject licence applications for retail alcohol sales in cumulative impact zones (CIZs), where adverse effects of alcohol availability can be demonstrated. This provision provides Public Health with an opportunity to contribute their expertise.

A natural experiment, following the introduction of CIZs in the London Borough of Islington found that there were short-term decreases in rates of alcohol licences granted but these reductions were not sustained²⁰. Another study found a similar picture – using 10 years of licensing data from Southwark, changes in the issuing of licenses were examined the introduction of three CIZ, relative to control areas. The study found that there was no evidence that the establishment of CIZs resulted in a reduction of the number of successful licence applications, it also found that there was no discernible effect on the relative proportion of licence applications receiving objections in these areas²¹. A 2019 study, however, suggested that CIZs may play a more nuanced role in shaping local alcohol environments – with CIZ implementation associated with greater increases in number of eateries relative to the control area. They concluded that CIZs may be useful as policy levers to shape local alcohol environments to support the licensing goals of specific geographical areas and diversify the NTE²². This suggests that if implemented well, CIZ's could be an effective tool ensuring greater scrutiny of licence applications in these areas.

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3. ARESTA (Ezra Street Residents Association) – Written Response

Cumulative Impact Assessment Review 2024

I am writing in response to your consultation on the above. I SUPPORT keeping Cumulative Impact zones and expanding them where needed. The area around Columbia Road, Ezra Street and Ravenscroft Park should be considered as an CIZ.

I am a resident of Columbia Road and Ezra Street to which expanded licensing in recent years has added to already high problems of public nuisance, crime and disorder. My home is now surrounded by seven licensed premises as my immediate neighbours and I would be opposed to any more licenses being granted. We can experience disturbing levels of noise at night and also on Sunday as the market closes in the early evening - a vendor on Ezra Street plays music consistently at very high volume creating a street party atmosphere. This gets exaggerated in the summer when crowds are higher. The crowds of the market and amount of alcohol being sold for consumption on the streets makes a toxic mixture.

Please add this letter to your survey.

4. Resident – Written Response

Thank you for letting myself and the local neighbourhood know of the review of the Cumulative Impact Assessment survey and for inviting my comments about the consultation report.

As a local person who both lives and works in the neighbourhood I am very much in favour of keeping the Cumulative Impact Policy. As you may know the area round Ezra Street/Ravenscroft Street has had many problems in the past so I am against any extension of licensed premises in the area and any extension of licensing hours for any premises in the area. While social and environmental problems of noise and street drinking (particularly at night) are not so prevalent in the winter months they tend to increase alarmingly during the spring, summer and autumn months. These are the months when drinking and shouting in Ravenscroft Park can continue until the early hours of the morning. As my family and I live opposite Ravenscroft park we have been affected by this noise on frequent occasions and I would like to remind the social and environment authorities at Tower Hamlets about this ongoing problem.

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Equality Impact Analysis Screening Tool

Section 1: Introduction

Name of proposal For the purpose of this document, 'proposal' refers to a policy, function, strategy or project
Cumulative Impact Assessment Policy 2024 - 2027
Service area and Directorate responsible
Communities/Public Realm
Name of completing officer
Tom Lewis, Service Manager, Regulatory Services (Commercial)
Head of Service
Tom Lewis, Service Manager, Regulatory Services (Commercial)

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them
- Foster good relations between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them

This Equality Impact Analysis provides evidence for meeting the Council's commitment to equality and the responsibilities outlined above. For more information about the Council's commitment to equality, please visit the Council's [website](#).

Section 2: Summary of proposal being screened

Describe the proposal including the relevance of proposal to the general equality duties and protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

This is a Policy that the Council introduce under the Licensing Act 2003. The Council must review its Cumulative Impact Policies every 3 years.

The Council has two Cumulative Impact Policies or Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIA). The Council's first CIA in Brick Lane has been in place now for approximately 7 years and the second one, which is in Bethnal Green has been in place for 3 years.

The review of these CIAs considers:

- Retaining the Brick Lane CIA (Cumulative Impact Assessments), and expanding it to its south and southeastern edge,
- Removing the Bethnal Green CIA (Cumulative Impact Assessments)

The Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIAs) seek to help reduce the number or types of licence applications granted in areas where there is evidence to show that the number or density of licensed premises is having a cumulative impact and leading to problems, which are undermining the licensing objectives:

- Prevention of crime and disorder,
- Public safety,
- Prevention of public nuisance,
- Protection of children from harm.

In considering the policy in view of the Equality Act 2010, though there could be a view that there may be an effect on religious/belief the reason for the policy is statutory. The Policy sits alongside the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy 2022 – 2028, which includes Equality and Inclusion in Licensed Venues and discusses PSED and links the policy to the Council's Equality Policy, it does not appear that there are likely to be any adverse effects on people who share Protected Characteristics as defined by the 2010 Act.

Section 3: Equality Impact Analysis screening

<p>Is there a risk that the policy, proposal or activity being screened disproportionately adversely impacts (directly or indirectly) on any of the groups of people listed below?</p> <p>Please consider the impact on overall communities, residents, service users and Council employees.</p> <p>This should include people of different:</p>	Yes	No	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sex 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Age 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

▪ Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
▪ Religion or Philosophical belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
▪ Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
▪ Gender re-assignment status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
▪ People who have a Disability (physical, learning difficulties, mental health and medical conditions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
▪ Marriage and Civil Partnerships status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
▪ People who are Pregnant and on Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<p>You should also consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents and Carers ▪ Socio-economic status ▪ People with different Gender Identities e.g. Gender fluid, Non-binary etc. ▪ Other 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

If you have answered **Yes** to one or more of the groups of people listed above, **a full Equality Impact Analysis is required**. The only exception to this is if you can 'justify' the discrimination (Section 4).

Section 4: Justifying discrimination

Are all risks of inequalities identified capable of being justified because there is a:	
(i) <i>Genuine Reason</i> for implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) The activity represents a <i>Proportionate Means</i> of achieving a <i>Legitimate Council Aim</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) There is a <i>Genuine Occupational Requirement</i> for the council to implement this activity	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 5: Conclusion

Before answering the next question, please note that there are generally only two reasons a full Equality Impact Analysis is not required. These are:

- The policy, activity or proposal is likely to have **no or minimal impact** on the groups listed in section three of this document.
- Any discrimination or disadvantage identified is **capable of being justified** for one or more of the reasons detailed in the previous section of this document.

Conclusion details

Based on your screening does a full Equality Impact Analysis need to be performed?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If you have answered **YES** to this question, please complete a full Equality Impact Analysis for the proposal

If you have answered **NO** to this question, please detail your reasons in the 'Comments' box below

Comments

The decision-making body is recommended to consider:

- Retaining the Brick Lane CIA (Cumulative Impact Assessments), and expanding it to its south and southeastern edge,
- Removing the Bethnal Green CIA (Cumulative Impact Assessments)

This is a Policy that the Council introduce under the Licensing Act 2003. The Council must review its Cumulative Impact Policies every 3 years.

The Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIAs) seek to help reduce the number or types of licence applications granted in areas where there is evidence to show that the number or density of licensed premises is having a cumulative impact and leading to problems, which are undermining the licensing objectives:


- Prevention of crime and disorder,
- Public safety,
- Prevention of public nuisance,
- Protection of children from harm.

This policy creates a rebuttable presumption that applications for licences under the Licensing Act 2003 in areas covered by the policy, which are likely to add to the existing cumulative impact, will normally be refused following the receipt of representations unless the applicant can demonstrate in the operation schedule that there will be no negative cumulative impacts with one or more of the licensing objectives.

A statutory consultation process commenced on 31st January and 25th April 2024.

The policy will be agreed by the full Council.

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<p>Cabinet</p> <p>16 October 2024</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Steve Reddy, Corporate Director, Children’s Services</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Tower Hamlets Children and Young People’s Supported Housing Pathway</p>	

Lead Member	Councillor Talukdar, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor)
Originating Officer(s)	Layla Richards, Covering Director Commissioning and Youth
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No – this report has been assessed as not meeting the key decision criteria
Reason for Key Decision	No
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	<p>Strategy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homes for the future 2. Invest in Public Services 3. Empower Communities and Fight Crime 4. A council that works for you and listens to you <p>Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills 2. Good jobs and employment 3. Strong, resilient and safe communities 4. Better health and wellbeing

Executive Summary

The Tower Hamlets Children and Young People’s Supported Housing Pathway (“the Pathway”) provides accommodation and housing-related support services to vulnerable children and young people across the borough. This includes looked-after children, care leavers, homeless young people, young mothers and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, aged 16 to 25. The Pathway is currently delivered via a suite of 4 block contracts held by 3 providers who deliver in-borough accommodation and support: Riverside (One Housing Group), Look Ahead Care and Support and Providence Row Housing Association. 97 young people currently reside in accommodation provided via these contracts and an additional 7 are supported via floating support (that is not directly linked to accommodation

provided via the Pathway).¹ The current contracts come to an end on 31st November 2024.

A tender was released to the market in September 2023 to recommission the provision within the Pathway. However, that tender was unsuccessful, as the Council was unable to attract bids of sufficient quality to be able to award the contracts that form part of the Pathway. In light of this outcome, a decision was made by Cabinet in April 2024 to extend existing contracts by 6 months to enable a new tender process to take place. Following an in-depth review of the Pathway, the service structure and model were reconfigured, and a new tender was launched to the market on 1st August 2024. Unfortunately, the revised service structure and model have again failed to attract a high number of quality bids. As a result, the Council is currently in a position where only 1 of the 4 lots that went out to the market as part of the tender can be awarded. This means that urgent action is needed to ensure that essential services can continue to be delivered to children and young people beyond November.

Under Regulation 32 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, in the event of a failed tender, the Council may enter into a negotiated procedure (without prior publication) to award the provision that could not be secured via the tender, provided that the initial conditions set out in the tender are not substantially altered. In order to ensure continued service provision to some of the borough's most vulnerable residents, including avoiding unnecessary moves for children and young people currently accommodated within the Pathway, the Council has approached incumbents and is in the process of agreeing how those providers would be able to deliver the lots that could not be awarded during the tender.

Recognising that this was the second failed attempt of the Council to recommission the Pathway utilising its current block contracts model, the Council has now initiated work on exploring an alternative approach to engaging with the market and securing this type of provision going forward. Based on learning and feedback received from the market during this tender, the focus of these efforts is currently on testing a potential pre-approved supplier list model, in alignment with more innovative models seen across other London-based councils.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note that Lot 3 of the tender, which included low-to-medium support provision, has now been awarded to a provider (Salvation Army) who is not an incumbent and is also bringing provision in borough.
2. Note that Lots 1, 2 and 4 of the most recent tender could not be awarded due to not enough bids or not enough quality bids having been received. As a result, based on legal and procurement advice, the outcome of this tender now falls within the scope of Regulation 32 of the Public Contracts Regulation 2015. Under Regulation 32, in the event of a failed tender, the Council may enter into a negotiated procedure (without prior publication) to award the provision that could not be secured via the tender, provided that the initial conditions set out in the tender are not substantially altered.

¹ Please note, this is at the time at which this report was drafted. Numbers change regularly as a result of young people moving-on to different provision or securing permanent housing.

3. Note that, in order to ensure continued service provision to some of the borough's most vulnerable residents, including avoiding unnecessary moves for children and young people currently accommodated within the Pathway, the Council has approached incumbents and is in the process of agreeing how those providers would be able to deliver the lots that could not be awarded during the tender.
4. Note that the Council has commenced efforts on exploring a pre-approved suppliers list model, as an alternative to the current block contracts model, based on learning and feedback received from the market during this tender and based on learning from other innovative models seen across other London-based councils.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 No decision is requested from the Cabinet, but the Cabinet is asked to urgently note the outcomes of the recent tender for the Children and Young People's Supported Housing Pathway, as well as the actions taken by the Council to mitigate the high level of risks attached to these outcomes to some of its most vulnerable residents.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The tender that was released to the market in August sought between 82 (minimum) and 111 accommodation units across the 4 lots, as well as floating support for 25-29 young people. However, the Council was only able to secure 20 units via the tender, leading to a significant shortfall. In addition, there are currently 97 young people currently residing in accommodation provided via the current Pathway contracts and an additional 7 who are supported via floating support. As the current contracts come to an end on 30th November 2024, it is imperative that the Council identifies alternative options for accommodating and providing support to the young people currently referred in the Pathway, as well as ensuring availability of accommodation units over the next 12 months (subject to negotiation with the relevant providers), whilst the Council develops an alternative model.
- 2.2 The only alternative to enacting the negotiated procedure under Regulation 32 would be to move the young people currently in the Pathway before the end of November. This would be unsettling for most young people and would lead to them having to move before the holiday period, when access to support services may be more restricted. This is particularly problematic given the additional vulnerabilities that most young people on the Pathway present, including in relation to mental health and learning difficulties. In addition, a high number of the young people on the Pathway hold Assured Shorthold Tenancies, meaning that, should the Council not be able to offer alternative accommodation of a similar level, a young person may refuse to move, requiring costly and time-consuming evictions processes to be triggered, that would have a further negative impact on young people's wellbeing.
- 2.3 For children in care and care leavers, the only alternative accommodation options would be spot-purchased placements, which are overwhelmingly out of borough and more expensive. For homeless young people, including vulnerable young mothers with their babies, the only alternatives would be placements into temporary accommodation or adult supported accommodation provision. Moving young people into temporary accommodation would represent a setback in the Council's ongoing efforts to reduce the use of this type of provision, and any placements into supported accommodation with older adults would be accompanied by significant safeguarding risks (e.g. risks of grooming and exploitation).

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Young People's Supported Housing Pathway provides accommodation and support services to young people aged 16 to 25 who are in and on the edge of care. The Pathway jointly serves the Housing Options Support Team (HOST), the Children's Placements Team (CPT) and the Through Care Service (TCS). Young people are generally referred into the Pathway on placements ranging in length from 6 to 18 months. From the end of April to July 2024, the Commissioning Team worked closely with HOST, CPT, TCS and the Council's Procurement Team to carry out a comprehensive service review of the Pathway and launch a new tender, including carrying out engagement with the market via a small number of workshops and 2 surveys issued to support providers and landlords.
- 3.2 The activity described above led to a revised specification being developed and a tender was released to the market on 1st August 2024. The revised specification included 4 lots focused on: high to medium support provision for children and young people aged 16 to 19, high to medium-support provision for young people aged 18 to 25, low to medium-support provision for young people aged 18 to 25, and low support provision with visiting support for young people aged 18-25.
- 3.3 A very limited number of bids was received, despite a high number of providers initially expressing interest in the tender. As a result, the Council was able to award Lot 3 of the tender to the Salvation Army, which will be bringing 20 medium support units in-borough, but failed to award Lots 1, 2 and 4. This means that urgent action is needed to ensure that essential services can continue to be delivered to children and young people beyond November.
- 3.4 Under Regulation 32 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, in the event of a failed tender, the Council may enter into a negotiated procedure (without prior publication) to award the provision that could not be secured via the tender, provided that the initial conditions set out in the tender are not substantially altered. In order to ensure continued service provision to some of the borough's most vulnerable residents, including avoiding unnecessary moves for children and young people currently accommodated within the Pathway, the Council has approached incumbents and is in the process of agreeing how those providers would be able to deliver the lots that could not be awarded during the tender.
- 3.5 Recognising that this was the second failed attempt of the Council to recommission the Pathway utilising its current block contracts model, the Council has now initiated work on exploring an alternative approach to engaging with the market and securing this type of provision going forward. Based on learning and feedback received from the market during this tender, the focus of these efforts is currently on testing a potential pre-approved supplier list model, in alignment with more innovative models seen across other London-based councils.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out alongside progressing the next steps on the tender. The Equalities Impact Assessment has highlighted significant risks associated with the decommissioning of the Pathway, including for specific groups that are over-represented in the Pathway when compared to the wider population of the

borough. These groups include: young mothers, young people, women, Muslims, young people from Black African and Mixed backgrounds, care-experienced people, and young people on low incomes or from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Children and Young People's Supported Housing Pathway is pivotal to safeguarding the most vulnerable children and young people in Tower Hamlets. The Pathway provides children and young people with person-centred support, ensuring that their accommodation needs are being met and that they are supported to successfully transition to independent living. The services in the Pathway support the Council to its statutory responsibilities under the Childrens Act 1989 and 2008, The Housing Act 1996 and The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 5.2 Progressing the next steps outlined in this report will enable the Council to achieve best value by avoiding spot-purchasing accommodation at higher costs, and by enabling the Council to have continued access to in-borough provision for high demand services.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 In response to the notes stipulated in the recommendation, the total budget available is £1,643,320, with £209,995 allocated to the Salvation Army contract, leaving £1,433,325 for the remaining three lots.
- 6.2 There is a potential risk that providers may submit higher costs, which could exceed the available budget. If the bids for the remaining lots come in higher than anticipated, this could create revenue pressure, requiring alternative funding sources to be identified.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 The Council has the legal power to undertake the activities referred to in this report.
- 7.2 The negotiated procedure without prior publication as detailed in Regulation 32 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 is a mode of procurement which may be used where the Council has previously run a tender and failed to award due to having received no tenders or suitable tenders in a particular lot or lots. This is the case detailed in this report and therefore the Council has switched to this procurement procedure.
- 7.3 The use of the negotiated without prior publication is only allowable where the initial conditions of the tender are not substantially altered. Therefore, certain changes are allowable provided that the changes are not substantial to mean that the subsequent contract is a manifestly different opportunity than that which was recently tendered.
- 7.4 Notwithstanding the foregoing paragraph, in the event that any such finalised contracts does constitute a substantial change to the initial tender conditions then these awards would constitute a new award without competition. However, regulation 32 would still apply as it may also apply to new awards where for reasons of extreme urgency brought about by events unforeseeable by the contracting

authority, the time limits for the open or restricted procedures or competitive procedures with negotiation cannot be complied with. The failure of bids is not something which in the ordinary course of events is not foreseeable and at this point the Council does not have the time to tender for a third time.

- 7.5 The Council is also legally obliged to ensure the young people in its care receive that care and the current option stated in this report is the only realistic and pragmatic way of ensuring the continued compliance of the Council with this statutory duty.
- 7.6 The Council is required to ensure that it achieves statutory Best Value in the delivery of its legal functions in terms of economy efficiency and effectiveness. Ordinarily, the award of a contract following a tender which has been evaluated on a blend of quality and price would provide significant evidence of adherence to this legal obligation. However, in the absence of tendering information the Council will benchmark prices with similar services and extrapolate from previous prices for the same service to demonstrate the economic element of Best Value. The final awards will be supported by appropriate contract terms and officer monitoring to ensure quality and effectiveness.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- N/A


Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

Agenda Item 6.8

Cabinet 16 October 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: David Joyce – Director of Housing & Regeneration	Classification: Unrestricted
Harriott, Apsley & Pattison (HAP) Houses Regeneration Scheme - Resolution to make a Compulsory Purchase Order	

Lead Member	Councillor Kabir Ahmed
Originating Officer(s)	James Walsh – Housing Regeneration Manager Monju Ali – Housing Supply & CPO Co-ordinator
Wards affected	Stepney Green
Key Decision?	Yes
Forward Plan Notice Published	Yes
Reason for Key Decision	Financial threshold
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	1. People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities; 2. A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Report seeks authorisation for Officers to make, seek confirmation and give effect to a Compulsory Purchase Order (the **Order**) from the Secretary of State, which will empower the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (the **Council**) to acquire property interests within the land known as the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison Houses (**HAP Houses**) the boundaries of which are shown in red on the plan at Appendix 1 (the **Order Land**).
- 1.2 Approval of this Report's recommendations will help facilitate the Council's proposed regeneration of the Order Land and **Estate** (being the wider HAP Houses estate the extent of which is shown edged red on the plan at **Appendix 2**). The proposed development comprises a residential-led mixed-use development, comprising the delivery of more than 400 new homes and a new community centre on Council-owned land currently occupied by existing housing blocks and two community buildings (the **Scheme**).
- 1.3 The Scheme is being led by the Council and was approved by Cabinet on 15 December 2021 (the **2021 Cabinet**). The 2021 Cabinet approved the Scheme by way of making the following key resolutions:
- (a) Approval of a budget of £86,000,000 to fund the first three years of the delivery programme to include assembly costs and settlements, fees associated with design, procurement and legal activities and delivery of the first phase of development, subject to planning (which the Council's Development Committee has now resolved to grant);
 - (b) Agreement that a demolition notice be implemented across the Estate to allow land assembly;
 - (c) Noting the intention to bring a further report to Cabinet on the use of Compulsory Purchase powers to empower the Council to acquire all necessary property and land interests to facilitate the delivery of the Scheme;
 - (d) Agreement to the principle of relocating the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque; and
 - (e) Agreement to the procurement route to secure a development partner/build contractor to deliver the Scheme.
- 1.4 On 31 January 2024 Cabinet resolved that it was willing, in-principle, to use compulsory purchase powers across the Order Land, to secure the delivery of the Scheme. It was noted that a further report would be taken to Cabinet to recommend the formal making of a compulsory purchase order.
- 1.5 This Report also seeks acknowledgement that, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, the Council will seek to rely on powers of appropriation

contained in section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to allow interference with existing rights annexed to adjoining land which may adversely affect the Estate. This acknowledgement is sought following Cabinet's decision on 31 January 2024 which resolved that the Council may take all necessary steps to affect the appropriation of the Estate.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 In relation to the Order, the Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

2.1.1 **Agree** that there is a compelling case in the public interest to justify the making of the Order to include interests that must be acquired to facilitate the redevelopment of the Order Land for the reasons detailed in this Report;

2.1.2 **Agree** that the public interest in enabling the development of the Order Land to proceed outweighs the interference with relevant rights under the European Convention on Human Rights as discussed in this Report;

2.1.3 **Resolve**, further to the Cabinet report dated 31 January 2024, to make the Order to include all land interests within the red line boundaries shown on the plan at Appendix 1 and any other new rights or third-party rights necessary in order to facilitate the regeneration of the Order Land by the Council to provide new and improved housing, and community facility;

2.1.4 **Delegate** authority to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration and the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (in consultation with the Mayor) the power to effect the making, confirming and implementation of the Order;

2.1.5 **Delegate** authority to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration and the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (in consultation with the Mayor) to take all necessary steps to give effect to the Order, including, but not limited to, the following procedural steps:

- (a) Progressing and finalising the Statement of Reasons to properly reflect the Council's position regarding the Order so as to properly present the Council's case;
- (b) Making any reductions and/or amendments, if necessary, to the extent of the land included in the draft Order Map annexed at Appendix 1 or to effect the withdrawal of objections to the Order;
- (c) Preparing and making the Order and Schedule to the Order;
- (d) Power to remove from the Order any interest no longer required to be compulsorily acquired and to amend interests in the Schedule to the Order (if so advised) and to request that the Secretary of State makes any changes to the Order prior to confirmation as may be appropriate;

- (e) Publicising and serving any press, site and individual notices and other correspondence for such making of the Order;
- (f) Making any ancillary orders and the exercise of any of the Council's planning functions to give effect to the Order;
- (g) Paying all costs associated with making the Order, including the compensation payable to landowners;
- (h) Appointing external consultants to assess, agree and pay any compensation and claims arising from redevelopment of the Order Land pursuant to the Order;
- (i) Seeking confirmation of the Order by the Secretary of State, including the preparation and presentation of the Council's case to the Secretary of State / Inspectors as necessary or, if permitted by the Secretary of State pursuant to Section 14A of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 (the **1981 Act**), to confirm the Order;
- (j) Appointing a professional team, including legal professionals and experts, and assembling any witnesses necessary to assist the Council in the preparation and presentation of the Council's case at a Public Inquiry (if any);
- (k) Publicising and serving notices of confirmation of the Order and thereafter to execute and serve any General Vesting Declarations and/or notices to treat and notices of entry, and any other notices or correspondence to acquire those interests permitted by the Order; and
- (l) Acquiring title to and/or taking possession of the Order Land and this shall include the power to take all necessary statutory procedural steps required to facilitate such acquisition of title and possession of the Order Land;

2.1.6 **Delegate** authority to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration and the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (in consultation with the Mayor), to agree the terms of and enter into any documentation required to settle any property matters necessary to progress the Scheme, including, but not limited to:

- (a) negotiating and monitoring of agreements with landowners and/or statutory undertakers as applicable;

- (b) setting out the terms for withdrawal of any objections to the Order, including where appropriate seeking exclusion of land or new rights from the Order; and
- (c) referral and conduct of disputes relating to compensation payable pursuant to the Order at the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber);

2.2 In relation to the appropriation the Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

2.2.1 **Acknowledge** that further to Cabinet's decision on 31 January 2024 and subject to consent first being given by the Secretary of State in respect of the appropriation, the Council shall rely on powers of appropriation in section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to override existing rights over the Estate.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

3.1 The decisions sought in this Report are to enable the delivery of the Scheme allowing the provision of more than 400 new homes and a new community centre.

3.2 The redevelopment of HAP Houses will secure a number of public benefits, including:

- i) Increasing the supply of affordable housing, for which there is an acute need;
- ii) Providing local economic investment, including job and training opportunities;
- iii) Improving housing stock; and
- iv) Improving public realm.

3.3 It is therefore considered that the Scheme would contribute towards the promotion and improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the borough.

3.4 The regeneration of the Estate has been identified as a priority in the Council's capital programme for building new homes. The 2021 Cabinet made various resolutions to progress the delivery of the regeneration project at Stepney for the redevelopment of the Estate, including approving a budget to progress the delivery. Cabinet also authorised officers to enter into agreement with affected landowners necessary to facilitate the scheme (please see paragraph 1.3 and 1.4 for further details of the resolutions passed).

3.5 On 31 January 2024 Cabinet resolved to agree in principle to the Council using its compulsory purchase powers and to appropriate land for planning purposes to facilitate the regeneration of the Order Land to deliver the regeneration objectives.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The alternative options to making the Order are:

- (a) Refurbish and retrofit the existing buildings; or
- (b) Adopt a do-nothing approach.

4.2 Refurbishment:

4.2.1 Consideration was given to the potential to refurbish the existing buildings. However, the refurbishment option would only result in the improvement to housing already on the Estate and of that housing it was only the 36 socially rented homes and communal areas within the Council's control which could be refurbished, leaving the other 64 dwellings and the Community Centre and Mosque in their pre-existing state.

4.2.2 Further, refurbishing the pre-existing housing would not result in any uplift in the number of homes which could, if making proper use of the space on the Estate, be provided and would fail to provide housing of the right number of bedrooms and sizes to meet the current demands within the Estate and resolve concerns of overcrowding.

4.2.3 Consequently, refurbishment was considered an impractical and inefficient option to seek to repair and improve the Estate if the Scheme benefits as set out in Section 8 are to be realised and delivered.

4.3 Do nothing

4.3.1 The Council has sought to acquire the Order Land by negotiation. An overview of the efforts and negotiations that have taken place with a view to acquiring the required land and rights are set out at Section 9 of this Report. Despite the efforts and progress made to date, the Council has not been able to come to an agreement with all leaseholders. Whilst the Council will continue to negotiate with individual land interests, it is evident that the absence of the Order to support the Scheme could have negative impacts on the deliverability of the Scheme, including:

- (a) Risk to land assembly, jeopardising or delaying delivery of the Scheme. Any such delays may also lead to higher delivery costs which in turn may impact the viability of the Scheme;
- (b) Ability of just one or more individual leaseholder to delay or prevent the Scheme;
- (c) Uncertainty for leaseholders and their tenants as to whether the Scheme will progress; and

- (d) Unfairness to those leaseholders who have already sold their property to the Council in accordance with the Leaseholder Offer on the understanding that their property would otherwise be subject to the proposed Order.

5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5.1 Increasing the supply of affordable housing is a significant priority for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. There are currently more than 24,000 households on the Council's Housing Register (as of August 2024). 44% of households within the borough live in income poverty whilst the average cost of a property in the borough is more than 14 times (approximately £450,000) what a typical essential worker could earn in wages (£35,000). Consequently, a significant number of affordable homes are required in order to meet this need. As part of meeting the need for affordable homes several Council-owned sites across the borough have been identified for infill development. The Estate is one of those opportunity sites identified in the Stepney Green area.
- 5.2 London's current population of approximately 9 million people is expected to grow to over 10 million over the next two decades. In east and southeast London, an increase of 600,000 is forecast to reach a population of 2.9 million by 2031. Providing sufficient housing and employment to meet current and future demand is a strategic priority for London's Local Authorities, the Mayor of London, and the Government. At a local level, the population of Tower Hamlets is likely to increase by 26% by 2026. The Council's Local Plan (January 2020) identifies the need to accommodate 58,965 new homes and 125,000 new jobs by 2031 and these figures may be subject to further changes following the election of the new Labour Government on 4 July 2024.
- 5.3 Housing has an important role in shaping healthy places, preventing ill health, supporting residents into work and tackling child poverty. The Council's Strategic Plan sets a corporate objective of delivering 1,000 social homes every year.
- 5.4 The Order Land comprises residential flats, the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque. The Council is the freehold owner of the Order Land (including the buildings located upon it) but there are a number of resident and non-resident leaseholders holding interests in the Order Land.
- 5.5 The Order Land is situated in the Stepney Green ward. The Estate has an overall area of approximately 1.79 hectares and comprises three housing blocks and two community buildings. Built in 1954, the three mid to high rise housing blocks comprise 100 flats and maisonettes, of which 36 are social rented homes, 34 are owned and occupied by resident leaseholders and the remainder owned by non-resident (investor) leaseholders. The community provision includes the Redcoat Centre, a single storey building from which Adult Services were delivered and Redcoat Community Centre (Mosque), comprising 4 connected single-storey portacabin structures. In total, there are 58 car parking spaces on the Estate. There is also within the Estate an existing

substation and ancillary storage facilities utilised by residents of HAP Houses on a licence basis.

5.6 In July 2019, the Council started to talk to residents of HAP Houses, the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque and other stakeholders about the potential to regenerate the Estate. A Resident Ballot was subsequently held between 18th March and 9th April 2020. The majority of residents voted in favour of redevelopment. As part of a comprehensive consultation process, local residents and stakeholders have contributed to the vision for the future development and the emerging design proposals.

5.7 The Council's Landlord Offer (**Appendix 3**) was presented to residents prior to the opening of the ballot. The following promises were made to residents:

- We will keep the community together;
- More council homes for social rent;
- Reduced crime and anti-social behaviour through better design;
- New homes at social rents for all existing council tenants;
- Options to suit every resident leaseholder;
- Addressing overcrowding on the estate through the provision of new affordable homes;
- One move to a new home, wherever possible;
- Financial compensation and all reasonable moving costs paid;
- Current street parking permits guaranteed;
- Residents' Panel representing residents in decision making and shaping the future of their estate; and
- Door-to-door moving support for older and vulnerable residents.

5.8 Details of the Council's attempts to negotiate the voluntary acquisition of leaseholder interests are contained at section 9 of this Report.

5.9 Planning permission ref. PA/21/02703 was granted on 9 August 2023 in respect of the regeneration of the Estate (the **2023 Permission**). The Council submitted a further application on 1 March 2024 allocated reference PA/24/00368 to secure a new location within the Order Land for the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque so that it is located within a standalone building, rather than being located below residential flats as per the consented 2023 Permission (the **Planning Application**). On 12 June 2024, the Development Committee resolved to grant planning permission pursuant to the Planning Application (the **Planning Permission**). It is anticipated that the Planning Permission decision notice will be issued imminently once matters

pertaining to conditions and planning obligations have been finalised with the local planning authority.

- 5.10 The Planning Permission is for the redevelopment of the Estate comprising the demolition of existing buildings (including HAP Houses, the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque) to provide 407 residential units (Class C3) across buildings ranging in height from 4-8 storeys and community centre building of 1,167m² GIA (Class E (e-f), Class F1 (e-f), Class F.2 (b)), together with associated landscaped communal amenity space, accessible car parking, secure cycle parking spaces and refuse/recycling storage facilities the benefits of the proposed redevelopment of the Estate are explained in more detail below.
- 5.11 The Invitation To Tender (ITT) for a development partner was published in February 2024. Negotiations with bidders have commenced and it is anticipated that a final report will be issued to Cabinet in July 2025.
- 5.12 On 31 January 2024 Cabinet granted approval for the Council to take all necessary steps to affect the appropriation of the Estate for planning purposes in accordance with section 122(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. The consent of the Secretary of State is being sought pursuant to Section 19(2) of the Housing Act 1985 to confirm the Council may appropriate the Estate. Once consent of the Secretary of State is given, the Council will be entitled to appropriate the Estate and will be able to benefit from the powers contained in section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to allow interference with existing rights annexed to adjoining land that may adversely affect the Estate. Section 203 does not extinguish adjoining owners' rights but allows a specific development to proceed in accordance with the grant of a planning permission. The Council has sent letters to potentially affected parties to make them aware that section 203 may be relied upon in respect of the development.
- 5.13 This report seeks acknowledgement that the Council shall rely on section 203 powers. The statutory objective of section 203 is that, provided that the development is undertaken in accordance with a planning permission and subject to other criteria being satisfied, a local authority should be permitted to develop its land in the manner in which it, acting bona fide, considers will serve the public interest and to that end it is recognised that a local authority should be permitted to interfere with third party rights. Where a third party's rights are infringed or interfered with as a result of the local authority exercising its powers under section 203, such parties are entitled to compensation in accordance with section 204 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. The amount of compensation payable will be equivalent to the diminution in the value of the affected interest.

6. THE USE OF COMPULSORY PURCHASE POWERS

6.1 Statutory Powers

- 6.1.1 The Council is empowered by section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the **Act**) to compulsorily acquire land in order to facilitate

the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to land in its area.

6.1.2 Pursuant to section 226(1A) of the Act, the Council must not exercise the power under Section 226(1)(a), unless it thinks that the proposed development, redevelopment or improvement is likely to contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and/or environmental well-being of its area.

6.1.3 Cabinet is directed to Section 8 of this Report which sets out why the Council considers that the proposed Order will satisfy the provisions of Section 226 of the Act and will deliver the well-being objectives required by Section 226(1A). The Statement of Reasons to be submitted when the Order is made, will provide greater detail as to why the Council considers that the Order falls within these provisions.

6.2 **Relevant Considerations and Justification for a Compulsory Purchase Order**

6.2.1 The relevant considerations for the purposes of any resolution to use compulsory purchase powers are set out in this Report.

6.2.2 DLUHC's guidance on the compulsory purchase process and The Crichton Down Rules (2019) (the **Guidance**) also sets out the considerations to be applied when making a resolution to exercise such powers and the factors which will weigh with the Secretary of State when deciding whether to confirm a compulsory purchase order (**CPO**).

6.2.3 In assessing the Planning Application, the Council's Development Committee will have had regard to local and national planning policy. On 12 June 2024 the Development Committee resolved to grant the Planning Permission. The Council therefore considers that the proposals for the Scheme are supported by planning policy at national, regional, and local level and that there are no planning impediments to the Scheme coming forward.

6.2.4 The Scheme is consistent with policy objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the **NPPF**), the London Plan (2021) and the Council's Local Plan (adopted on 15 January 2020). The Scheme presents an opportunity for redevelopment to create a landmark development, creating a sense of identity, providing modern homes and community facilities. The various relevant policies, and the extent to which the Scheme complies with them, will be set out in greater detail in the Statement of Reasons.

6.2.5 The Council has consulted widely on the proposed regeneration of the Estate and has undertaken an extensive engagement exercise with existing residents of the Estate, as well as other stakeholders.

6.2.6 It is considered that the current housing results in an ineffective use of the Estate. The existing blocks are poorly organised on the Estate with a significant amount of green areas that have little practical value to residents (and the general locality). There is an opportunity to replace relatively low-

density, poor-quality housing with a higher density of high-quality homes and to deliver more homes for larger families. Significant improvements can also be made to the living environment for residents and to the public realm.

- 6.2.7 Capacity studies, the 2023 Permission and the Planning Permission have shown that regeneration of the Estate offers the opportunity to provide in the region of over 400 new homes, in place of the existing 100 homes. In comparison to other estates in the borough, the Estate has great potential for site optimisation and has the potential to deliver a significant net increase in the number of overall homes including the delivery of new affordable Council homes. Further details as to the current housing figures in the Council's borough can be found at Section 5 of this Report.
- 6.2.8 The current housing on the Estate is also outdated and inefficient and is consequently not suitable for modern day living. In particular, the housing suffers from:
- Poor thermal and acoustic insulation in comparison to current building regulation requirements resulting in a higher fuel costs;
 - Poor quality public realm including inadequate refuse disposal and collection facilities and poor-quality external amenity provision; and
 - Inadequate security to the area leaves individual homes vulnerable to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and low-level crimes.
- 6.2.9 The Council does not consider that these issues can be addressed through refurbishment of the Estate or by piecemeal regeneration.

7. THE SCHEME

7.1 The Scheme

7.2 The Scheme proposes the comprehensive redevelopment of the Estate.

7.2.1 The Council considers that the Scheme pursuant to the Planning Permission will deliver qualitative and quantitative improvements to the existing housing stock to meet local housing need, improve social facilities and environmental amenity, and is supported at all levels of current planning policy.

7.2.2 The proposed new homes are arranged within two perimeter blocks, with a new central green street between them. Each has its own secure private internal courtyard. The Scheme will provide an improved accessible, well-connected and sustainable network of open space and high-quality public realm.

7.2.3 Each building within the perimeter blocks will have its own secure entrance and the right-hand perimeter block will have podium parking for the wheelchair-accessible homes. All the buildings will have separation distances of at least 18m to maintain good levels of privacy and prevent any unreasonable overlooking.

- 7.2.4 The new homes are being designed to meet the planning policy requirements for sustainability, aiming to achieve an estimated site-wide CO2 emission reduction of at least 45% over the Target Emission Rate (TER) using the SAP 10 emission factors, through a combination of energy conservation measures, renewable heat, and electricity generation technologies, such as Photovoltaic solar panels (PV) and Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP).
- 7.2.5 This Scheme will be car-free, with the exception of the provision being made for accessible car parking on site. Existing tenants will be able to retain their rights to apply for a parking permit after transferring into one of the new homes in the proposed development, but this will be for general on-street parking only (CPZ permit). Provision will be made for cycle parking in accordance with planning policy requirements.
- 7.2.6 The tables below detail the new homes intended to be provided pursuant to the Planning Permission: -

Table 1 – Schedule of re-provided homes accommodation

Tenure Type	Tenure Mix - Units (%)	Unit Mix	
		Unit Size	Unit Count
Existing Resident Leaseholders	28	1 Bed	0
		2 Bed	4
		3 Bed	19
		4 Bed	5
Existing Secure Tenants	36	1 Bed	1
		2 Bed	9
		3 Bed	21
		4 Bed	5
TOTAL REPROVISION	64		

Table 2 – Schedule of accommodation pursuant to the Planning Permission

Tenure Type	Tenure Mix - Units (%)	Unit Mix	
		Unit Size	Unit Count
Affordable Rent	111 (32.6%)	1 Bed	28
		2 Bed	26
		3 Bed	39
		4 Bed	18
Private Sales	232 (67.4%)	1 Bed	82
		2 Bed	123
		3 Bed	27
		4 Bed	0
TOTAL ADDITIONALITY	343		

7.3 **Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque (RCCM)**

7.3.1 The new standalone facility is more desirable for the community group as it will make management significantly easier. The previous design comprised part of a housing complex which meant that there would need to be careful monitoring of noise and users around the building to avoid amenity concerns arising. The new facility will provide clear demarcation of services to the Estate and to the community building. The community group always had a desire for its own facility hence why it initially submitted its own planning application to develop on the existing land. This opportunity will allow the community group to be part of the wider regeneration scheme and also obtain a purpose-built facility whilst remaining within the Estate.

7.4 **Phasing**

7.4.1 The Scheme is currently anticipated to be delivered in two phases. The first phase would involve the demolition of the existing Redcoat office which is located in the corner of Stepney Way and Wellesley Street and the removal of the existing pram sheds next to Harriott House. Once those sites are clear, phase 1 construction would commence and it is anticipated that phase 1 construction would take approximately 2.5 years to complete.

7.4.2 Phase 2 would involve the demolition of HAP Houses and the remaining construction would commence. It is anticipated that Phase 2 construction would take a further 3 years to complete.

7.4.3 The Council anticipates that the Scheme's construction period will take approximately 5 to 6 years to complete. The construction programme for the Scheme aims to maintain the running of the Redcoat Community Centre while the construction period for phase 1 takes place. It is envisaged that the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque will move in a single decant in phase 1, to avoid severe disruptions and ensure a normal running of service.

7.4.4 The Council is however, currently in the process of procuring a development partner to bring forward the Scheme. Consequently, the above phasing may be subject to amendments following appointment of the development partner, having regard to the practicalities of construction. The Council will, however, move existing residents of HAP Houses in line with the Leaseholder Offer, which provided for a single decant where possible.

8. **THE SCHEME AND ITS PUBLIC BENEFITS**

8.1 A summary of the benefits of the Scheme is as follows. A Statement of Reasons will also be submitted following this Cabinet and will provide a more detailed analysis of the public benefits arising from the Scheme.

8.2 **Social benefits**

8.2.1 The residential proposals for the Estate comprise the re-provision of high-quality affordable housing to compensate for the loss of the existing poor quality housing stock which will help meet local housing needs, relieving pressures on the Council's housing list and delivering homes of the right size to better meet household needs. The proposals will also introduce new market

units to the area and expand the local community. The provision of a range of dwelling sizes will meet the needs of different occupiers and will assist in creating a strong and balanced community. The Scheme will also be an opportunity for qualifying adult children of existing residents who are on the housing register to be re-housed in the new development at the same time as their parents. This offer is open to all secure tenants and resident leaseholders and applicable to one member per household.

8.2.2 Drawing on the above, based on the Planning Permission, the headline social benefits are:

- (a) A total of 111 new affordable rented homes;
- (b) 36 replacement social rent homes for existing tenants and 111 additional GLA funded social rent homes which includes 22 homes to be provided for qualifying adult children of secure tenants and resident leaseholders;
- (c) Homes for shared equity sale to enable resident leaseholders to remain on the new development;
- (d) 63% of the homes within the affordable rented tenure will be family size;
- (e) 10% of additional homes are wheelchair accessible homes with 24 of these being provided within the affordable tenure;
- (f) A new and improved community centre/mosque;
- (g) 232 market homes to cross subsidise the affordable housing provision and provide diversity of tenure; and
- (h) All new homes will meet modern living standards.

8.2.3 Of the total 407 new homes being developed (as per the Planning Permission), 343 of these are additional homes, of which 232 (668 habitable rooms) are private and 111 (440 habitable rooms) affordable. Of the 343 additional homes being provided, by habitable room, 40% are being provided as affordable homes.

8.3 **Economic benefits**

8.3.1 The Scheme will also contribute to economic growth during the construction period.

8.3.2 Construction and new development opportunities create a range of employment opportunities within local and wider economy and has been acknowledged by the Government as a key driver for boosting housing delivery as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Construction of the Scheme will support jobs directly on the Estate during the

development phase as well as indirectly by supporting additional jobs in the supply chain.

- 8.3.3 The Scheme will also contribute to the economic role of sustainable development by delivering land to improve choice and competition in the residential marketplace. The Council will seek to secure employment and training opportunities targeted at local people to ensure residents of the borough have the chance to benefit from the employment the Scheme will deliver.

8.4 **Environmental benefits**

- 8.4.1 The redevelopment of the Estate will remove the existing poor-quality buildings, extensive hard surfacing and under-utilised land around the Order Land and will provide new buildings of high-quality design which are more sustainable than the existing buildings on the Estate.

- 8.4.2 The proposals include extensive improvements to the public realm, improving the local environment for residents. The proposals seek to introduce a variety of soft landscaping areas to the Estate comprising communal garden spaces located in the courtyard areas and a centrally located new square which will deliver ecological and environmental benefits to the Estate and surrounding area. There will be scope for play with new play equipment targeted to 0–5 year age range, as well as multigenerational spaces such as the allotments in the courtyards which could be allocated to households to allow them to grow their own fresh produce.

- 8.4.3 The new homes will be built to modern standards which will aim to promote biodiversity. For example, current proposals are for new buildings to have green roofs to encourage biodiversity.

- 8.4.4 The Scheme is assisting in delivering the Council's Local Plan targets for delivery of affordable homes, place making, decarbonising our housing stock, and providing homes that meet high sustainability standards.

9. **NEGOTIATIONS WITH LEASEHOLDERS**

- 9.1 The Council commenced the buyback programme in June 2023 and is in active negotiations with leaseholders who have a relevant land interest in the Estate. Acquisition or agreements in relation to property interests is necessary to progress with the development in accordance with the programme. The Statement of Reasons to be submitted when the Order is made will provide greater detail of the Council's engagement and negotiations with leaseholders. In summary:

- (a) All leaseholders in the Order Land have received or had access to the Homeowners Guidance brochure which is a guide detailing the compulsory purchase process and the options available to both resident and non-resident leaseholders on the Estate;

- (b) A letter was issued to all residential and non-residential leaseholders within HAP Houses providing an overview of the process of selling properties back to the Council and included comprehensive guides on compulsory purchase and a guide to compensation entitlements;
- (c) In June 2023 a letter was issued to leaseholders informing them that the Council was ready and able to purchase those properties which leaseholders wished to sell and invited leaseholders to seek a valuation of their properties if they so wished. This correspondence reiterated the shared equity scheme available to resident leaseholders should they wish to discuss this with the Council;
- (d) In November 2023 a further letter was issued to those leaseholders who had not yet engaged with the Council offering a further opportunity to discuss their situation with the Council and offering a further opportunity to book a valuation of their property;
- (e) In April 2024 two drop-in sessions were held on the Estate for all leaseholders and tenants to attend and discuss the Order and the Council's buyback programme. These sessions were advertised by the Council by way of letters, posters and door knocking exercise; and
- (f) In August 2024 a further letter was issued to those leaseholders who had not yet responded to earlier correspondence or with whom discussions had fallen silent. This letter informed these leaseholders that the Council was pursuing a compulsory purchase order and encouraging them to correspond with the Council.

9.1.1 The Council will continue with its attempts to voluntarily achieve negotiated settlements with all those who own property interests in accordance with the Council's Landlord Offer (**Appendix 3**), an approach consistent with the Guidance. To date, the Council has acquired 5 resident leaseholder's interest and 7 non-resident leaseholder's interests in the Order Land, leaving a total of 51 leasehold interests to be acquired (comprising 27 resident leaseholders and 24 non-resident leaseholders).

9.1.2 Notwithstanding that the Council shall continue to negotiate with all affected leaseholders, given the number of outstanding interests in the Order Land, the Council reasonably considers that it may be necessary to acquire all remaining interests by way of a compulsory purchase order.

- 9.1.3 The Guidance sets out the policy tests that the Government will expect acquiring authorities to satisfy when making a CPO. In accordance with the Guidance:
- (a) the Council should use compulsory purchase powers only where it is expedient to do so; and
 - (b) a compulsory purchase order should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest for doing so.
- 9.1.4 This report provides an overview as to why the Council considers that these tests have been met.
- 9.1.5 In preparation for a potential compulsory purchase order, the Council has instructed land referencers to help identify all interests in the Order Land and has instructed solicitors to advise on the making of any compulsory purchase order.

10. FUNDING AND DELIVERY THE SCHEME

- 10.1 As part of the Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026, the Council has an objective to deliver a minimum of 1,000 social homes for rent each year (referred to as the first 1,000 homes programme). In September 2020, the report to Cabinet on the capital programme, confirmed that the regeneration of the Estate was the next priority for funding and allocated to Council's first 1,000 homes programme and capacity within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the next phase was being assessed.
- 10.2 The total scheme costs for the entire redevelopment are estimated to be in the region of £217m. In July 2019, Cabinet approved a budget of £2.000m to deliver the design and consultation stage for this scheme. This was increased to £2.753m in November 2021. This has funded the pre-development stage from initial consultation to planning submission. A total of £5.4m has been spent bringing the scheme forward to date.
- 10.3 The 2021 Cabinet approved a budget of a further £86.000m for the first three years of the Scheme. This budget is sufficient to cover land assembly costs and land acquisition settlements, design and planning fees, and fees associated with procurement and legal activities. Cabinet also delegated powers to officers to enter into necessary agreements with affected landowners to deliver the Scheme.
- 10.4 Funding has also been secured from the GLA amounting to £4.772m and the Council is in ongoing discussions with the GLA as to further funding being provided.
- 10.5 As noted above, the Council is in the midst of the procurement process for its development partner to bring forward the Scheme. The issued tender attracted interest from a number of developers. The intention is for the balance of funding for the Scheme to be secured from the developer partner, once finally

procured. The Council therefore considers that the Scheme will be funded and will be deliverable.

11. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

11.1 The Council has a public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

11.2 As part of the proposed regeneration of the Estate, the Council has been working closely with residents to ensure they are consulted on all aspects of the new development. This has ensured that the Council better understands how the development will impact residents that their needs are understood.

11.3 As part of the Equalities Impact Assessment (the **EqIA**) that was brought to Cabinet in 2021, the Council carried out a survey with the residents from HAP Houses. A telephone and door knocking exercise was conducted and the survey responses formed part of the EqIA. The EqIA has since been updated and a desktop exercise was carried out to reflect some of changes to the Scheme. The updated EQIA report is appended at **Appendix 4**.

11.4 The appended EQIA report highlights how the regeneration programme has sought to deliver a range of positive impacts, while mitigating several negative impacts on certain protected characteristics during the transition phase. The report highlighted that the negative or neutral impacts of the Scheme were generally limited to short term construction and environmental focused impacts as follows:

- The disruption accompanying the construction phase is expected to have a negative impact, particularly for older people, disabled people and those with specific health conditions, pregnant mothers and post birth mothers with young babies;
- The short-term changes to play space provision are expected to have a negative impact specifically for younger people;
- In the short term, the changes to social infrastructure provision are expected to have a neutral impact, particularly for those who worship at the mosque which will be relocated before it is demolished; and

- In the short term, the changes to housing provision are expected to have a neutral impact, particularly as all moves to new properties will be arranged as a single move where possible. This will somewhat mitigate the negative impacts of decant for older and disabled residents, and those with health conditions.

11.5 A summary of the impacts, specifically in terms of equality is set out below:

- Housing needs that respond to a wide range of protected characteristics will be positively enhanced through the development of these new units providing opportunities for housing;
- There will be more homes designed to lifetime homes standards and with disability access;
- Improving the housing stock will provide more homes for more people, to higher standards and hence improve the quality of accommodation for residents currently on the Estate;
- The design of the Scheme will use sustainable forms of energy such as centralised heating and hot water and photovoltaics to generate electricity. Combined with high levels of thermal insulation, it is hoped this will enable lower running costs for residents (depending on their usage and temperature preferences);
- Application of Considerate Contractor requirements to minimise negative impact during construction period;
- There will be an expansion of the housing offer (additional units) for those on the waiting list and also hidden household members, many of whom may also have protected characteristics;
- The needs of older people and those with disabilities will be enhanced by the development of properties built to lifetime homes standards;
- Families will have units that are in much better condition than they are currently;
- There will be more 3 and 4 bed units which will address the overcrowding experienced by some of the existing residents of HAP Houses, both tenants and leaseholders. These units will also help meet the needs of those families across the borough in overcrowded conditions; and
- The new homes will be built to meet residents' specific housing needs such as the inclusion of aids and adaptations. As well as considering design features that ensure the safety of vulnerable children and adults with severe learning difficulties such as autism.

11.6 Working in close collaboration between Council departments, the Independent Tenant and Leaseholder Advisor and residents themselves will ensure we reduce or even eradicate negative impacts of the Scheme.

12. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 The Council has a range of statutory duties to facilitate development in the borough and provide affordable homes for local residents. Regeneration and development is a key factor to ensuring economic prosperity for the individual and for the community. The Council has to plan for the overall social infrastructure to meet the needs of the rising local population.
- 12.2 As the number of applicants joining the housing register for social housing increases, the supply does not meet demand. One of the ways to address this concern is to build more homes. The Scheme will assist the Council meet the objective of creating additional homes to address the need to house residents from the housing register.

13. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Council is required to consider the value for money implications of its decisions and to secure best value in the provision of all its services. The Scheme will be funded largely through a combination of GLA funding, Right to Buy receipts and capital funding. It is also envisaged that sales income from the private sales units will help cross subsidise some of the Scheme costs. The Scheme will also attract New Homes Bonus and additional Council Tax and Business Rates for the Council.
- 13.2 The disposal of a lease to RCCM will be conducted within Best Value considerations.

14. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 14.1 The housing stock on the Estate was built in or around 1954 and over the years the environmental performance standards of the built form have reduced. The Council has tried to maintain the efficiency of properties through the Decent Homes standard, but due to the age of the buildings, the impact can only go so far.
- 14.2 The Scheme will provide homes built to a far higher standard of environmental performance, meaning they should be more cost effective to run, thereby reducing the potential for fuel poverty for households that are expected to occupy the new homes within the Scheme. The Scheme will maximise reductions in carbon dioxide emissions through the implementation of energy efficiency measures.

15. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 A summary of the potential impediments to the regeneration of the Estate are set out below. Save as referred to below, the Council does not consider there to be any significant planning, resourcing (including financial), legal or other impediments.
- 15.2 **Securing vacant possession:** the implementation of the recommendations of this Cabinet Report are intended to remove impediments to acquiring all necessary land interests in the Order Land to progress the Scheme. Tenant

interests will be terminated via the normal Landlord Tenant Act 1985 route. The time frames for securing vacant possession of tenant interests are being factored into the wider programme for the regeneration of the Estate.

- 15.3 **Planning:** as set out in Section 5.9 of this Report, the Development Committee resolved to grant the Planning Permission for the Scheme on 12 June 2024. The Council does not envisage any impediments to discharging the conditions which will be attached to the Planning Permission or any planning obligations.
- 15.4 **Existing rights:** on 31 January 2024 Cabinet granted approval for the Council to effect the appropriation the Estate for planning purposes. Subject to receiving consent of the Secretary of State, this will allow the Council to interfere with existing rights which may be affected as a result of the Scheme thus permitting the development of the Scheme to proceed. The appropriation will assist with avoiding any delays which may have resulted through an injunction sought by someone with a right in or over the Estate.
- 15.5 **Stopping up orders:** other orders may be required in order to authorise the stopping up of highway. These orders will be progressed alongside the Order and the Council is not aware of any reason why such an order would not be forthcoming.
- 15.6 **Financial risks:** financial risks may arise if the project costs exceed those projected. This is more likely to occur where there are delays to the development programme. The approval of the recommendations contained within this Report will allow the Scheme to proceed without delay. As set out at Section 10 of this Report, Cabinet approved a budget of £2m to deliver the design and consultation stage in July 2019 and which was increased to £2.753m in November 2021. The 2021 Cabinet approved a budget of a further £86m for the first three years of the Scheme to include (but not limited to) costs related to land assembly, design and planning, procurement and legal activities.
- 15.7 The final budget for the entirety of the Scheme is scheduled to be approved in mid-2025, at the conclusion of the current 2 stage tender process. The Council does not consider there to be any reason that the budget will not be approved, and current forecasts are based on detailed cost estimates from the Council's external quantity surveyor, such that it is not envisaged that there will be any significant financial impediments to the Scheme progressing.

16. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 16.1 This report seeks the approval of the Mayor in Cabinet for the Council to initiate the Order proceedings and any resulting Order implemented in the event the Council is unable to acquire by negotiation all property interests required for the Scheme to proceed.
- 16.2 This decision has no direct financial implications in terms of expenditure triggered or additional budget requirements. Rather any decision to not approve the Order would add significant financial risks to the Scheme, by

removing the Council's ability to assemble the land in its entirety and enable construction to commence.

- 16.3 All costs associated with delivering the Order were budgeted for as part of the November 2021 Cabinet approved capital estimate. This Report makes no changes to that position and only seeks to progress the land assembly process.

17. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 17.1 This Report seeks the approval of recommendations required to facilitate the Scheme, including the making, confirmation and implementation of the Order.
- 17.2 The Council's power to make a compulsory purchase order pursuant to section 226(1)(a) of the Act is accurately set out at section 6.1 of this Report.
- 17.3 The 1981 Act governs the procedures which apply to such an acquisition, the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 (the **1965 Act**) governs post-confirmation procedures and the Land Compensation Act 1961 (the **1961 Act**) governs the amount and assessment of compensation. In addition, local planning authorities must have regard to the Guidance relating to the management and disposal of land that is compulsorily acquired.
- 17.4 The 1981 Act provides that the authorisation of a compulsory purchase is to be covered by an order, called a compulsory purchase order. A CPO is required to be made in a prescribed form and must describe the land to which it applies by reference to a map.
- 17.5 When seeking to make a CPO, the Council must publish a notice of making the CPO confirming that the order has been made. This notice must include details such as a description of the land subject to the order, details as to where hard copies of the order and map may be viewed and specifying how objections to the CPO may be made and the time frames within which they are required to be made. The procedure for confirmation is specified in the 1981 Act.
- 17.6 The making of a CPO is an executive function, by virtue of section 9D of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000. Pursuant to section 9E(2) of the Local Government Act 2000, the Mayor may arrange for the discharge of an executive function by an officer of the authority.
- 17.7 In order to ensure that the Scheme can proceed within the agreed timescale and cost it is likely necessary for the Council to utilise compulsory purchase powers. The Council will, nonetheless, continue to engage with leaseholders and attempt to acquire the remaining interests in the site via private negotiation.
- 17.8 The Council have been advised by Trowers & Hamblins LLP in the preparation of this Report.

17.9 Human Rights and Equalities Implications

Human rights

- 17.9.1 The Council must have regard to potential interference with Articles 6 and 8, and Article 1 of the First Protocol, of the European Convention on Human Rights (**ECHR**).
- 17.9.2 Article 1 of the First Protocol of the ECHR provides that every natural or legal person is entitled to peaceful enjoyment of their possessions (“**human rights**”). The compulsory acquisition of property interests involves interference with a person’s rights under this Article. As these rights are enjoyed by corporate bodies as well as individuals, all of those whose rights will be affected can claim an infringement. However, the right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions provided under this Article is a qualified rather than absolute right, as the wording of Article 1 of Protocol 1 permits the deprivation of an individual’s possessions where it is in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.
- 17.9.3 Article 8(1) provides that everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence. Article 8 would be engaged as a result of a CPO being implemented. Article 8(2) allows for interference which is “in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the protection of health and morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others”.
- 17.9.4 There must, therefore be a balancing exercise between the public interest and the individual’s rights whereby any interference in the individual’s rights must be necessary and proportionate. “Proportionate” in this context means that the interference must be no more than is necessary to achieve the identified legitimate aim, thereby striking a “fair balance” between the rights of the individual and the rights of the public.
- 17.9.5 The Development Committee has resolved to grant the Planning Permission for the Scheme which is considered to accord with national and local planning policies. The public benefits arising from the development, and thus the public interest, are set out earlier in this Report. Furthermore, compensation will be available to those who are affected. On this basis it is considered that the public interest in facilitating the development of the Order Land outweighs the rights of the individuals to peaceful enjoyment of their possessions and to their homes and that the proposed use of CPO powers results in a proportionate infringement.
- 17.9.6 As to Article 6 rights, these allow parties affected by the exercise of CPO powers to a “fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law”. Those affected by the Order will be informed and advised of their right to make representations to the relevant Secretary of State, their right to be heard as part of the confirmation process for the Order, and of a fair entitlement to compensation

(where applicable). If the Order is confirmed, that decision is reviewable by the courts. All of this ensures compliance with Article 6 of the Convention and a right to a fair hearing.

Equalities

17.9.7 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). This duty has already been addressed elsewhere in this report.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Order Map

Appendix 2 – Appropriation plan

Appendix 3 – HAP Landlord Offer (Feb 2020)

Appendix 4 – Equalities Impact Assessment (Sept 2024)

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Cabinet report 15 December 2021

<https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=720&MId=12320&Ver=4>

Cabinet report 31 January 2024

<https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=720&MId=14141&Ver=4>

Development Committee decision 12 June 2024

<https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=312&MId=14396&Ver=4>

Rehousing guide for resident leaseholders of Harriott, Apsley and Pattison House – selling your property to the council (November 2020)

A guide for non-resident leaseholders of Harriott, Apsley and Pattison House – selling your property to the Council

A guide for Council Secure Tenants - Harriott, Apsley and Pattison House (November 2020)

Officer contact details for documents:

Monju Ali (Monju.Ali@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

PROPOSED MAP REFERRED TO IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS (HARRIOTT HOUSE, APSLEY HOUSE, PATTISON HOUSE) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2024



Key:	Sheet 1 of 1	LRS LAND REFERENCING SERVICE
 Land to be Acquired	1:300 When Printed A1	
		01/10/2024 4.0
<p>Where applicable the plot boundaries show the general boundaries of the registered land. It does not show the exact line of the boundaries. Measurements scaled from the plan may not match measurements between the same points on the ground.</p> <p>This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Unauthorised reproduction of this map is prohibited. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number: 100031673</p>		
<p>THE COMMON SEAL OF THE MAYOR AND BURGESSES OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS WAS HERETOFORE AFFIXED IN THE PRESENCE OF:</p>		
(AUTHORISED SIGNATORY)		
DATED THIS	DAY OF	2024

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Key:	Sheet 1 of 1	
Land to be Acquired	1:500 When Printed A1	
		11/10/2023 3.0
<p>Where applicable the plot boundaries show the general boundary of the registered land. It does not show the exact line of the boundaries. Measurements scaled from the plan may not match measurements between the same points on the ground.</p> <p>This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Unauthorised reproduction of this map is prohibited. Ordnance Survey is a registered trademark. Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey Licence number: 1000391873</p>		
<p>THE COMMON SEAL OF THE MAYOR AND BURGESSES OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS WAS HERETOFORE AFFIXED IN THE PRESENCE OF:</p> <p>(AUTHORISED SIGNATORY)</p> <p>DATED THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 2024</p>		

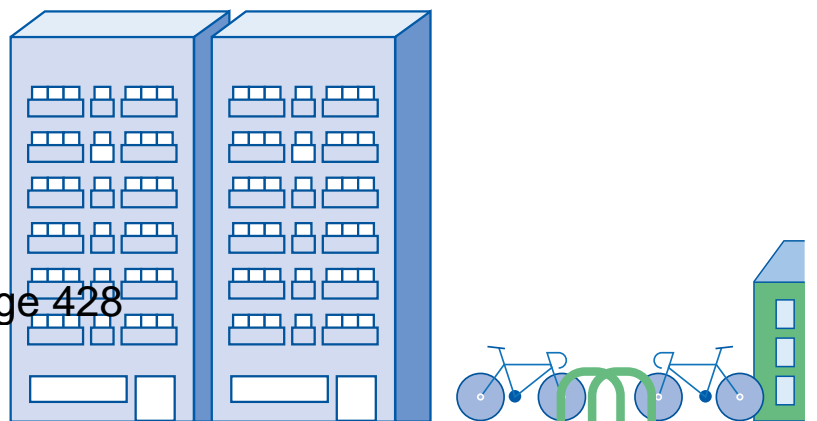
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The future of Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses **Landlord offer**



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Introduction

Since July of last year, the council has been discussing with residents of Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses, the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque and other stakeholders about the potential to regenerate your estate.

We are grateful for the contributions so far and we share your excitement about the positive opportunities – including new housing and a new replacement for the mosque – that redevelopment would offer.

The majority of residents have been able to take part in one or more of the consultation events held in recent months. These helped to shape the vision for a future development and you will have seen the outline proposals which give an indication of what can be achieved.

The proposed new homes will provide a much improved standard of accommodation for existing residents and their families. They will be well designed, built to the highest standards and energy efficient.

A new development will have secure, safe, green play areas and new trees with roadways designed to combat anti-social behaviour. We will ensure existing residents are rehoused in the new development. We will also be able to provide a new mosque.

As you know, we will need to show that a majority of residents are in favour of our plans before we can move forward.

We will be holding a ballot from Wednesday 18th March to Thursday 9th April 2020 where you will be given the chance to vote. It is your decision that counts.

On page 19 of this booklet, we describe how the ballot process will work including details of who is eligible to vote and how it can be done. It is important that anyone who is eligible to vote knows how to take part.

We have also set out what you can expect from the council and how we will continue to work with you to ensure the new development meets your expectations.

This is your chance to have your say. We hope that you will take this opportunity to secure a bright new future for Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses. We would of course respect your decision whatever it is.



John Biggs
Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets



Our promise to residents

- We will keep the community together
- More council homes for social rent
- Reduced crime and anti-social behaviour through better design
- New homes at social rents for all existing council tenants
- Options to suit every leaseholder
- Addressing overcrowding on the estate through the provision of new affordable homes
- One move to a new home, wherever possible
- Financial compensation and all reasonable moving costs paid
- Current street parking permits guaranteed
- Residents' Panel representing residents in decision making and shaping the future of their estate
- Door-to-door moving support for older and vulnerable residents



What you told us and how we've responded

In putting together our plans for the proposed redevelopment of Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses, we've listened carefully to what you have told us about the things you like and dislike about the current estate.

What you told us about homes in the existing buildings:

- Flats are damp and poorly insulated
- Bin stores are smelly and dirty
- Communal lobbies and stairwells are dingy
- There are concerns about the cost of major repair works
- Homes are overcrowded
- There is no lift access in Apsley and Pattison Houses

What you have told us about antisocial behaviour:

- Communal areas are poorly lit and laid out
- Drug dealing is taking place
- Bulk rubbish and litter are dumped too often
- Green spaces do not feel safe and secure enough for kids to play



The proposed redevelopment will help to address these concerns by using careful design and making sure that any building work is of the highest standard. We will of course continue to involve residents in our plans to allow you to hold us accountable.

A new development would also meet the significant affordable housing needs of local people, including the needs of current residents.



It would make it easier for residents to enjoy the green space in their community, recognising that the way the existing blocks are organised makes that difficult.

We know that you like the sense of community the area offers, the spacious homes with good storage and having separate kitchens. We will try to keep these features, wherever possible, in any new development.



Your ambitions for a new development

These are the things you told us you would like to see as part of a new development:

Design:

Safe and secure open spaces

Enclosed green courtyards

Lift access for all above-ground properties

Play areas

Brick built buildings

Separate kitchens in larger units

Clear separation between ground floor homes and public areas

Dual aspect homes (windows on two sides)

Preference for individual recessed balconies

Improved communal areas

High levels of sound insulation

Good storage

Parking provision

More homes for social rent

Secure cycle storage

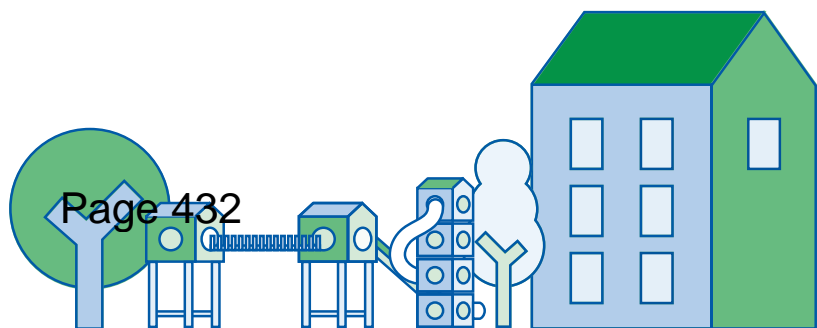
Community:

A homely feel with a good sense of community

A new mosque

Quiet streets that discourage dangerous car use such as joy riding or rat running

An artist's impression showing what a new mosque as part of the proposed development could look like



Design principles

The council is committed to providing high quality, well-designed homes and surroundings to create healthy and sustainable environments where people want to live.

We will deliver a mix of home sizes to meet the local housing need, with a combination of flats and duplexes and a mix of tenures for families with children and for small and single person households.

Landscaped spaces will include trees, planting, grassed areas and children's play areas. Biodiversity will be key in planning planting, buildings will be laid out to maximise daylight and sunlight, while homes will be energy efficient.

Developments will be well connected, with safe and active streets designed to reduce anti-social behaviour.

We will enhance and continue to build a strong sense of community and belonging in any development.

What regeneration will deliver:

- A mixed, cohesive and sustainable community
- Good quality and well-designed homes that will meet residents housing needs
- More social rented homes
- More family sized homes

- Private amenity space to all properties with gap between homes and public areas to provide privacy for ground floor properties
- Safer streets and homes through good design and improved lighting
- New, usable secure open communal spaces creating a network of private green spaces for residents
- Energy efficient homes
- Homes built to minimise noise nuisance
- Improved and secure provision for bins and bike stores
- Maximised green space by keeping car use to a minimum
- A home adapted to your needs, if you have a disability.
- All homes will benefit from at least the national standard required for storage.
- Family units with three or more bedrooms will have separate kitchens.
- Wherever possible, two bedroom homes will have options for separate or open plan kitchens and living space.



How many new homes will be built?

The proposed redevelopment will provide approximately 450 homes, of which 79 will be replacement homes for existing tenants and resident leaseholders.

In line with our Local Plan, the additional homes created will provide at least 35 per cent genuinely affordable housing and contribute to an overall target for 50 per cent of all new homes to be affordable. The council will prioritise and maximise the development of genuinely affordable homes where feasible. The remainder will be developed for market rent or sale and will help to fund the construction of the affordable homes.

New homes will be a mix of one, two, three and four bedroom properties. They will be both flats and duplexes. The new development will meet the needs of existing residents by providing more new family sized homes as well as smaller sized homes for the adult children of existing residents who are both on the housing register and in housing need.

Map showing the boundary of the existing estate



Map showing the proposed boundary for the new development



Designing the look of your new home:

Current secure tenants and resident leaseholders, in conjunction with the Residents' Panel, will be given the opportunity to choose from a range of selected materials and colours including:

- Kitchen units (door fronts, worktops and handles)
- Floor coverings
- Paint colour for walls in selected rooms

Other practical features:

- Homes will deliver a high level of noise insulation to avoid noise nuisance issues.
- Security will be provided through secure courtyards and video entry systems with fob access.
- Lifts will be provided in all buildings with level access to all properties.

Heating and hot water:

A sustainable, energy efficient heating system will be installed in the development. Properties will be thermally insulated. Further details will be provided during the design consultation process.

Community infrastructure:

Green spaces will be designed into any new development. Play facilities will be provided close to

homes for families to enjoy.

A significant number of existing residents currently worship at Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque. The existing facility is housed in temporary structures. A new mosque would be larger than the current building and would have homes on upper floors allowing it to meet the needs of a growing community. It will be re-provided in the north-east corner of the estate and this part of the project will go ahead whether or not there is a majority for regeneration in the ballot.

Parking:

The new development will be 'car free', which is part of the council's planning policy.

Parking spaces will be available for adapted/wheelchair accessible homes only. This will allow us to create more enjoyable and practical green and open spaces.

If you are an existing resident living in Harriott, Apsley or Pattison House, you will be able to retain your rights to apply for a parking permit after moving into one of the new homes in the development but this will be for general on-street parking.

Engagement:

Our commitment to ongoing open and transparent consultation and engagement:

We are committed to involving residents at all stages of the regeneration process:

- We will meet regularly with the Residents' Panel and with other residents on a one to one basis if required.
- We will publish regular newsletters and maintain a dedicated project webpage.
- We will continue to hold open days and consultation events.
- We will set up a design panel and organise visits to other successful regeneration schemes.
- PPCR (the Independent Residents' Advisor) will be on hand throughout the regeneration process to provide independent advice and support.
- PPCR will provide capacity building – such as training and workshop sessions – to resident and design panel members to prepare them in their scrutiny role.

Was regeneration the only option?

Like many urban areas, Tower Hamlets is experiencing a housing crisis. The council has committed to having 2,000 new council homes in delivery by 2022. We're making the most of land that we already own, including buildings no longer used as they once were, as well as buying additional homes. But that isn't enough. We also need to look closely at whether there is room for us to increase the number of

homes on existing estates. During the consultation events, we gave examples of how we increase the number of homes on the estate by both regeneration and infill schemes.

Infill would involve new buildings being built in unused spaces on the estate, with existing buildings staying where they are.

In addition to the regeneration and infill options shown to residents, the council also looked at refurbishing the existing

buildings. Most residents told us that refurbishment would only provide a temporary solution as it could not effectively address issues such as damp, poorly laid out communal areas and limited accessibility within the blocks.

There would also be a substantial cost for leaseholders to meet if this option was chosen.

The Residents' Panel met to discuss all these issues and indicated infill/refurbishment would not meet their aspirations

for the estate. They were happy for officers to move forward with exploring the regeneration option. It is important to note that because we must take action to tackle the housing crisis, if residents decided not to support the regeneration proposals in the upcoming ballot, one of the infill options would likely be chosen instead.

We strongly believe that regeneration is the best option, but we need your support to make it a reality.

An artist's impression of what the new development might look like



The new homes

All new homes will meet minimum space standards set out by the Greater London Authority. Below are some examples of the sort of layouts that would be available on the new development. These plans are indicative and could change either as a result of the detailed design consultation process and/or any revision that is required as part of the planning approval process.



Two bed flat with separate kitchen

Floorspace:
Existing homes 72.2 sqm
New homes 72.2 sqm

Balcony:
Existing homes 2.8 sqm
New homes 7 sqm



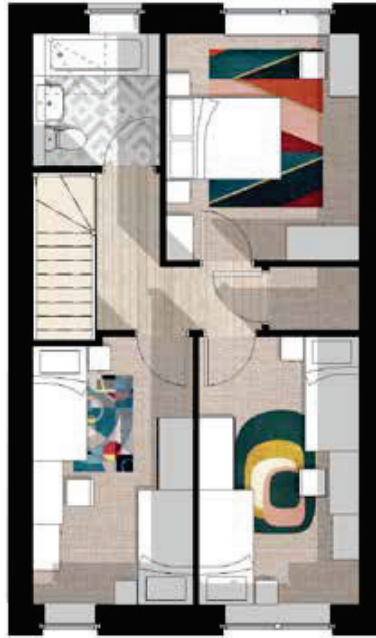
Two bed flat open plan

Floorspace:
Existing homes 72.2 sqm
New homes 72.2 sqm

Balcony:
Existing homes 2.8 sqm
New homes 7 sqm



Ground floor



First floor

Three bed duplex flat with separate kitchen

Floorspace:
Existing homes 83.3 sqm
New homes 102 sqm

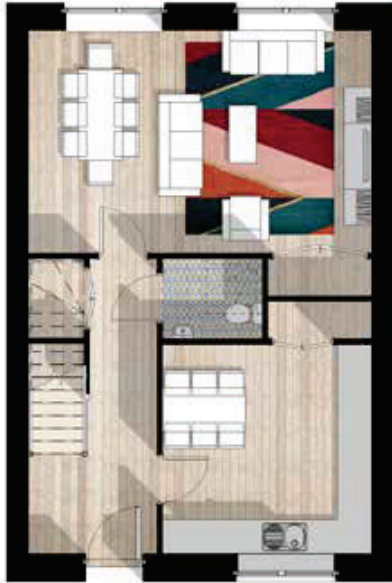
Balcony:
Existing homes have no balcony
New homes 9 sqm



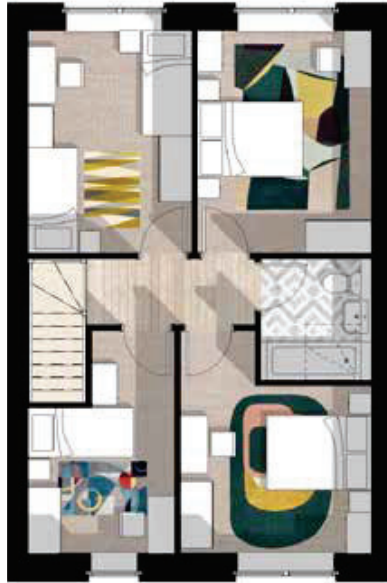
Three bed flat

Floorspace:
Existing homes 76.5 sqm
New homes 86 sqm

Balcony:
Existing homes 2.8 sqm
New homes 9 sqm



Ground floor



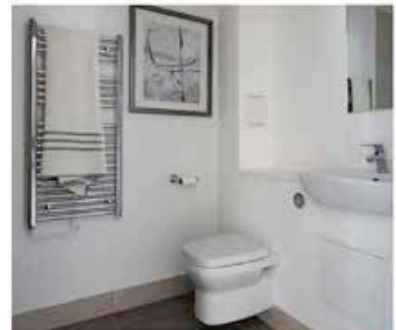
First floor

Four bed duplex flat

Existing homes 94.4 sqm
New homes 108 sqm

Balcony:
Existing homes 2.4 sqm
New homes 9 sqm

The design team working on this development have carried out similar projects in the past. The images below show some examples of the homes they have designed.



Your rights as a secure tenant

Remaining and returning:

All tenants will have the right to a tenancy of a newly built social rented home in the new development. They will continue to be a tenant of Tower Hamlets Council with their existing tenancy rights such as the right to buy and succession rights retained.

If tenants don't wish to remain in the new development, they will have a choice of permanent rehousing by bidding through the Choice Based Lettings Scheme for:

- **An existing council home elsewhere in Tower Hamlets, still as a secure tenant of the council with the same tenancy rights. Those who choose this option will not be able to return to the new development.**
- **A home with a housing association either in Tower Hamlets or another London borough (if available). Existing council tenancy rights would not be protected under this option.**

If a temporary move away from the estate is necessary, residents would still be entitled to a new home once the development has been completed. This is a right to return.

Rent and service charges

Rents for your new home:

Existing secure tenants who take

up the offer of a newly built home on the estate with Tower Hamlets Council will be charged 'social rents'.

This means that rents for the new council properties will be comparable with rents for council properties of a similar type and size, but they will reflect the fact that these are new homes. Rent levels may increase slightly and tenants will be made aware of rent levels prior to agreeing on any move.

Service charges (included in social rent):

Residents can only be recharged for services that they benefit from. The law is clear that only the actual cost of services can be passed on by the landlord. We are committed to making sure any charges are kept as low as possible and carry out regular reviews to ensure value for money.

Compensation

Council tenants who have been secure tenants for at least 12 months before a decant is agreed are entitled to home loss payments and disturbance allowances.

Home loss payment:

Tenants will be entitled to a home loss payment which is currently set at £6,400. The amount is set by the government and not by the council.

Disturbance allowance:

The council will also pay a disturbance allowance to ensure that you are not financially disadvantaged by the regeneration.

The disturbance allowance covers reasonable expenses for items such as removal costs, disconnection and reconnection of services including gas, electricity, telephone and re-direction of posts for three months.

Hidden households

The redevelopment will also allow the council to identify and rehouse 'hidden households' provided they meet certain criteria. 'Hidden households' are typically considered to be adult children of the tenant who are known by the council to have been living with the tenant or leaseholder for over a year.

Depending on their circumstances, these 'hidden households' will have the option to remain living as part of their parent(s) household, or to be registered independently on the council's housing register with additional priority for their own home as part of the rehousing process.

It is very important you read the rehousing guide that was sent in December for much more detailed information about your rights and rehousing options.

Your options as a leaseholder

Resident leaseholders:

Compensation

The council will purchase your property for the full open market value, plus a 10% statutory home loss payment. We will also reimburse you for the reasonable cost of your own independent valuer and their negotiation with the council, legal fees, stamp duty, financial advice and removal costs.

The council's key commitments include:

- Resident leaseholders should not be made financially worse off as a result of the scheme.
- Resident leaseholders should be able to buy a suitable replacement home (with the same number of bedrooms) in the development, if this is your preference, at no extra cost.

As a leaseholder, you will have the following options:

- Buying a new home on the open market elsewhere
- Lease swap
- Buying a new home in the new development:
 - Outright
 - Shared equity
 - Part shared equity/part-rent

Lease swap:

A leasehold swap is when the council offers you the option to relocate to another council owned property of similar age and value, providing you can acquire the full value of the new home.

Shared equity:

The option to purchase a new property as part of the redevelopment on a shared equity basis (with no rent payable on the portion of equity retained by the council).

Shared equity (Guarantee)

- If you invest the full market value of your existing home (the full amount you agree to sell it to the council for), then the council will guarantee you can use this to purchase one of the new homes (with the same number of bedrooms) and will charge no rent on the remaining share of the property not acquired, regardless of what percentage of the new home this amounts to.
- You are free to decide how to use your home loss payment (either to invest it in the new property or use it for other things).
- Any deductions from the agreed sale value (i.e. for service charge arrears or other personal debts secured against the property) will need to be repaid using either the home loss payment or other savings you may have.

Shared equity (Flexi)

- If you cannot invest the full market value of your existing home, you will be required to use whatever funds you receive from the sale of your existing property. If this exceeds 50 per cent of the value of the new property, you will not need to pay any rent.

- You will have the choice whether to invest your home loss payment in the home.

Part shared equity/part rent:

This option allows you to part own and part rent a newly built council home. This option is for homeowners who are unable to invest the full market value of their existing home (perhaps due to not being able to replace a mortgage or having other personal debt secured against the property).

- If the funds you receive from the sale of your existing property (minus deductions and debt repayments), as well as your full home loss payment, do not amount to 50 per cent of the value of a new home, you will be asked to pay rent on the unpurchased portion of the property up to the lower of:

50 per cent of the value of the new property, or

The full market value agreed for your existing property.

- You will be required to invest your full home loss payment, in order to get as close as possible to either of the two above thresholds (whichever is the lower).
- You are required to purchase a minimum of 25 per cent of the value of the new property.

- Rent will be charged at 2.75 per cent on the difference between the share purchase price and the full market value or 50 per cent of the value of the new property, whichever is lower.

Buying a larger property

Larger or smaller homes than the one you are currently in may be available to buy, but this cannot be guaranteed. These will cost more and you must demonstrate that you are in a position to buy a minimum share of at least 50 per cent of the market value.

Succession

Following discussion with the Resident's Panel, we have improved this element. Instead of permitting one succession of the shared equity or part shared equity/part rent home to an immediate family member; we will now allow two successions, before the council's share of equity must be repaid.

It is very important you read the rehousing guide for resident leaseholders that was sent in December for detailed information on your rights and rehousing options. This will be updated to reflect the improved offer after the ballot.

Hidden households:

Adult children or anyone living in a leasehold property who has been registered on the housing register for over one year prior to this Landlord Offer being published and who is in housing need (bands 1 & 2) will be offered a new council home in the proposed development at London Affordable Rent levels. This offer is limited to one applicant per property registered on the housing register in priority housing need.



Your options as a private tenant

Some of the homes in the development are proposed to be for either market rent or sale. If homes for market rent are built, then you would be given priority in the letting of these, subject to being able to pay the market rent and passing credit checks.

If you have been on the council's housing register and living on the estate for over one year prior to the publication of this document then you may be eligible for a direct offer of a new secure council tenancy on the estate at London Affordable Rent level. In order to be eligible for this offer, you will need to be assessed as being in priority housing need (bands 1 or 2). This offer is limited to one applicant per existing property.

If neither of the above solutions is appropriate for you, please speak to a member of the project team or contact the council's Housing Options service. Specialist officers will be able to advise you on your housing situation and any additional options available to you. You can contact the relevant team by calling 020 7364 5000 or by emailing homeless@towerhamlets.gov.uk



Timescales and phasing

Estimated planning submission date	November 2020
Estimated planning decision date	June/July 2021
Estimated start on site date	April 2022

We expect to submit a planning application in November 2020 if residents vote in favour of regeneration. The timeline enables the Project Team to continue to consult and engage residents in the detailed design for the estate. This will be done alongside consulting with the planners. Residents and the wider community will have further opportunities to comment on the proposals once the planning application is submitted

Based on statutory timescales and processes we estimate that planning consent will be issued in summer 2021. The process to procure and appoint a development partner or contractor will start as soon as planning consent is obtained and this could take approximately six months to complete.

Once a contractor/partner is on board, we could be on site within three to four months of the appointment. The development is likely to be carried out over three phases to minimise disruption to residents. The phasing plan and decant strategy will be developed further during the detailed design stage.



Having your say – the ballot process

The ballot will run from Wednesday 18th March to Thursday 9th April 2020.

Residents will be asked the following question:

Are you in favour of the proposal for the regeneration of Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses?

Anyone whose home could be affected by the proposals will be eligible to vote as long as they are aged 16 or above and fall into one of the following categories:

- Council tenants (including those with secure or probationary tenancies) named as a tenant on a tenancy agreement dated on or before 28 February 2020 which is the date this booklet was published.
- Resident leaseholders who have been living in their properties as their only or principal home for at least one year prior to 28 February 2020 and are named on the lease for their property.
- Any resident whose principal home is on the estate and who has been on the local authority's housing register for at least one year prior to 28 February 2020, irrespective of their current tenure.

Ballot papers will be posted to residents by Wednesday 18th March and you can vote as soon your voting pack arrives. Voting will close at 5pm on Thursday 9th April 2020.

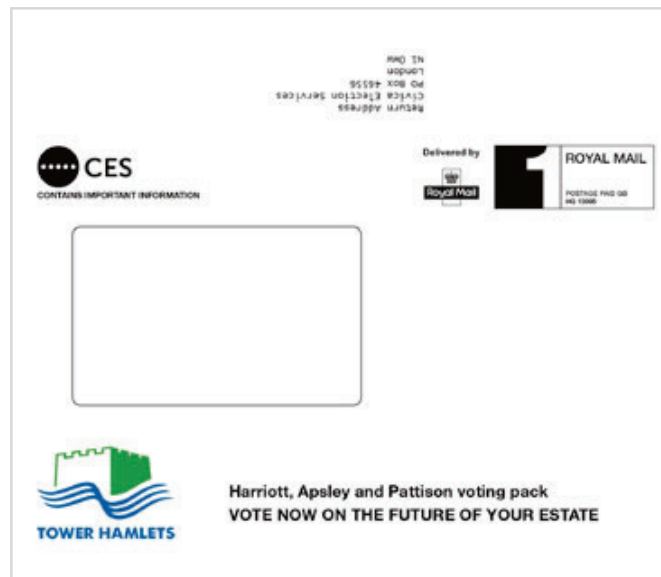
Those eligible to vote can do so by any of the following methods:

- Postal voting using the pre-paid reply envelope which will be provided in your voting pack. You must ensure that your postal vote has arrived before the deadline if it is to be counted.
- Online at www.CESvotes.com/HAP
- Telephone via the secure number listed on your ballot paper

Civica Election Services (CES) is an independent body that will run the ballot in line with guidance set out by the Greater London Authority. CES will issue, collect, verify and count the ballots.

The ballot result will be shared with residents after the 7th May elections, as the council is prohibited from making new announcements in the run-up to an election. CES will also send a confirmatory letter to all residents in the week following the 7th May.

As we get closer to the ballot start date, please look out for an envelope in the post which will look like the image below:



Contacts

For further information about the ballot or if you have lost/spoiled your ballot paper and require a replacement, please contact CES:

020 8889 9203
(weekdays 9am – 5pm)

support@cesvotes.com

For independent advice for residents, please contact PPCR:

0800 317 066 (Freephone)
info@ppcr.org.uk

Please contact the regeneration project team if you wish to discuss any aspect of this offer or have any questions:

020 7364 7799
housing.regeneration@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Information is also available online at
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/HAP



LB TOWER HAMLETS
EQUALITY IMPACT
ASSESSMENT (REFRESH)

HARRIOTT, APSLEY AND
PATTISON HOUSES
REGENERATION SCHEME

September 2024



**LB Tower Hamlets
Equality Impact Assessment (Refresh)**

Harriott, Apsley & Pattison Houses Regeneration Scheme

Independently Reported by Ottaway Strategic Management Ltd

September 2024

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1 Executive Summary

Introduction and context

- 1.1 Regeneration programmes need to be managed to ensure that the positive impacts of the regeneration are maximised and correspondingly to ensure that the negative impacts are minimised. In this context, the regeneration of Harriott, Apsley & Pattison Houses has undergone an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA).
- 1.2 This independently commissioned Equality Impact Assessment seeks to understand how this regeneration programme will impact on different equality groups and protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Approach and methods

- 1.3 This EQIA includes a comprehensive desktop review of core legislation, policy and council papers. These are set out in Appendix 3. The report also reviews local demographic data as per the 2021 census and the equality information specific to housing needs in the borough. Data held by the borough has also been reviewed relating to those living on the estate as well as the borough's common housing register for people seeking a social housing tenancy. This data only includes the equality characteristics of age, gender and ethnicity.
- 1.4 On this basis, it was agreed with the Housing Regeneration Team that this EQIA would be supplemented with a targeted household survey completed by a survey team. To this end, a full household equalities survey was conducted in February and March 2021.

Key household survey findings

- 1.5 The survey was undertaken between 24th February and 12th March 2021 and 72 responses were captured. Full details of the household surveys are set out in the main report in Section 4. These survey responses were based on self-declarations by a household member, but the information gathered relates to all the members of that household. In total, 72% of the targeted households were engaged in this survey, or 72 of the estate's 100 units. The key findings of the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison survey comprised of responses from:
 - 31 council homes, comprising 43.1% of the survey respondents and 86% of the sample of council owned homes on the site (36 units).
 - 23 resident leaseholder homes, comprising 31.9% of the survey responses and 68% of the sample of resident leaseholders on the site (34 units).
 - 2 non-resident leaseholders and 16 privately tenanted households, comprising 25% of the survey sample and 60% of the sample of non-resident /privately tenant households on the site (30 units).

1.6 The headline equality findings of the survey were:

- 74 households engaged in this survey, or 74% of the estate (100 units).
- Collectively 76% of residents in the survey sample have lived in their home for more than 6 years.
- From the sample there were 344 people living in the 72 units, 141 of which are council tenants, 112 are resident leaseholders and 91 are non-resident / private tenants.
- BAME populations on the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House are significant. The white British population in Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House is 7%, leaving a 93% ethnic minority population¹ and a BAME population² of 90.6% non-white populations. This compares to a borough ethnic minority population of 66% and a BAME population of 55%. The residential profile of Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House is more diverse than the profile of the borough.
- The Bangladeshi population of the estate is the majority ethnic grouping, with 72.2% of the population overall, 80.1% of council tenants, 79% of resident leaseholders and 52% of non-resident leaseholders and private tenants.
- The gender profile of the estate is comparable with the borough's gender profile with 51% stating they were male, and 49% female compared to 52% male and 48% female in the borough.
- 8.3% of the households were run by lone parents.
- 15.3% of respondents on the estate stated they have a disability.
- Of these, 43.9% stated they had a long standing illness and health condition, 42.4% with physical impairments, 6.1% with mental health conditions, 4.5% learning disability and 3% sensory impairment.
- 6.9% of residents in the sample are registered carers.
- 31.9% of households have family members that look after or support someone else in their home who needs help with their day-to-day life due to a disability, illness, or old age.
- 15.3% of households in the sample stated they had made an adaptation to their home.
- 27% are under 18. The working age population (18-64) of those on the site is 66.9% and the over 65 population is 6.1%.
- None of respondents stated they were gay/lesbian or bisexual, 100% stating they were straight/heterosexual.
- 81% of respondents said they were Muslim, 10% with no religion and 6.1% stated they were Christian.
- Respondents stated that 0.87% of population (3 women) were either pregnant or had given birth in the last 12 months.

¹ Ethnic minority is defined as people who differ in race or colour or in national, religious, or cultural origin from the dominant group of the country in which they live. For the purposes of this EQIA ethnic minority is used where people have not been defined as White British

² The acronym BAME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and is defined as all ethnic groups except White ethnic groups.

- In terms of marriage and civil partnership, 53% of adults over 16 have never been married or in a civil partnership, 41.4% were married, 1.4% separated, 1.4% divorced and 3.2% widowed.
- 80% were economically active, including 42% of household members who are employed full time, 9% employed part time with 12% in full time education and 17% unemployed and available for work. The remaining categories were economically inactive, including permanent sick and disabled, retired, looking after the home or full time carer, which collectively came to 20%.
- Bangladeshi is spoken as a main household language in 53% of households, English as a main household language is spoken in 40% of responding households. Somali and French is spoken in 2.8% of households respectively and 1.4% of households speak Portuguese. Moreover, of those who had English as a second language all households stated that they have strong written and spoken English.
- Respondents to the survey stated that 25% of households lived in 2 bedrooms, 58.3% in 3 bedrooms, 12.5% in 4 bedrooms and 4.2% in 5 bedrooms. Nb there are no 5 bedroom units in Harriott, Apsley and Pattison and these responses came from private tenants of leasehold units, who clearly must have been using the living room as a bedroom.
- 44% stated their household has the right number of bedrooms, 56% stated they did not.
- 58% stated their household was overcrowded and 40% stated theirs was not.
- 4.2% stated that their home was under occupied and 93.1% stated that it was not.
- 12% of respondents felt there would be a negative impact on the health and wellbeing needs of their household.
- 8% felt there would be a negative impact on the childcare school provision of members of their household.
- 1% felt there would be a negative impact on the employment and skill needs of members of their households.
- 5% felt there would be negative impacts on the elderly care/support received by members of their households.
- 86% wanted to see improvements to health services, 85% improvements to community facilities, 46% to play areas, 36% to local shops, and 26% to local transport.
- 54% of household residents are on some form of income related benefit.
- 28.7% of households stated that their annual household income was less than £15,000 per annum, which suggests a high level of poverty.
- The preferred forms of communication about the regeneration proposals were telephone (75%), letter (42%) and email (29%).

Profile of the Redcoats Community Centre and Mosque

- 1.7 At the time of this EQIA refresh, the Mosque were approached to request a profile breakdown of those who worship there. Unfortunately, the General Secretary of the Redcoats Community Centre and Mosque declined to provide any information about the equality and diversity profile of its worshipers/congregation, as they were still in negotiations with the council, and they did not want to provide this information until the negotiations were complete.
- 1.8 It is, however, safe to suggest that the worshipers at the Mosque come from a range of ethnic backgrounds and that they represent all age groups and genders. Clearly, there is also a collective association with the Islamic faith.

Perception of impact

- 1.9 The major issues and concerns raised by residents regarding their perceptions of the impact of the regeneration proposals are highlighted below:

Perceived concerns

- Car parking – this issue was raised repeatedly and there was great concern about how this was to be addressed following the regeneration of the estate.
- The loss of green space across the estate was also raised by several participants.
- Lack of warmth in the current properties.
- Concerns around the possibility of fewer school places.
- Some general concerns about the uncertainty of regeneration and what it may bring for residents.

Perceived positives

- Many welcomed the regeneration of the estate, feeling that it would improve the look of what some considered to be a rundown estate and welcomed the possibility of a better environment.
- Some residents were experiencing overcrowding and felt that this may be addressed in the new development.
- Some leaseholders stated they couldn't currently sell their flat but, in the future, this would be easier, or they could sell to the council and move.
- A fresh environment and better housing conditions.
- Likelihood of larger properties.
- Reduction in anti-social behaviour.

Summary of positive, negative and neutral equality impacts.

Short term construction and environmental focused impacts include:

- The disruption accompanying the construction phase is expected to have a **negative impact**, particularly for older people, disabled people

and those with specific health conditions, pregnant mothers and post birth mothers with young babies.

- The short-term changes to play space provision are expected to have a **negative impact** specifically for younger people.
- In the short term, the changes to social infrastructure provision are expected to have a **neutral impact**, particularly for those who worship at the mosque which will be relocated before it is demolished.
- In the short term, the changes to housing provision are expected to have a **neutral impact**, particularly as all moves to new properties will be arranged as a single move. This will somewhat mitigate the negative impacts of decant for older and disabled residents, and those with health conditions.

Medium to long terms impacts

- The housing needs of a wide range of protected characteristics will be **positively** enhanced through the development of these new units, providing opportunities for housing.
- The housing register in the borough has significantly more people from diverse communities when compared with the population profile of the borough, many of whom are likely to **benefit** from this regeneration scheme.
- Once the process is completed the new replacement housing is expected to have a **positive impact** for all the protected characteristics represented on the 3 blocks.
- The upgraded and improved social infrastructure provided as part of the completed development is expected to have a **positive impact** for young, older and disabled residents, those with health conditions and pregnant and or young mothers.
- The improved opportunities for social interaction provided as part of the completed development are expected to have a **positive impact** for young, older and disabled residents, those with health conditions and pregnant and or young mothers.
- The improved and expanded play space provided as part of the completed development is expected to have a **positive impact** for young residents.
- The community facilities provided as part of the completed development are expected to have a **positive impact** for young, older and disabled residents.
- The improved access to the site is expected to have a **positive impact** for young, older and disabled residents and pregnant and or young mothers.
- There will be more homes designed to a category 2 standard³ for accessibility which is broadly equivalent to 'lifetime homes'

³ Category 2 means a home must be accessible to most people and able to suit older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users, and is estimated to cost developers an extra £1,400 per home. Requirements include level access front and rear doors, an entrance level bathroom, kitchen and dining area and low height windows.

standards 10% of homes will be built for people with a disability which will have a **positive impact** for older and disabled residents.

- Improving the housing stock will provide homes to higher standards and hence improve the quality of accommodation for residents currently on the estate, potentially having a **positive impact** on residents' health and wellbeing.
- Residents will have units that are in much better condition than those they currently occupy.
- The s106 agreement will provide economic benefits to the local community.
- Energy efficient design and improved sustainability should have the **positive impact** of lower running costs for new homes.

Summary of Equality Impacts by protected characteristics.

1.10 Summary of key points identified in relation to each protected characteristic, and related priorities of language, socio-economics and health:

Race	Gender	Transgender
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of racial diversity on the estate. • Critical that the regeneration outcomes are consistent/fair and not influenced by someone's race. • Regeneration plans as currently proposed are neutral from a race perspective. • Negative impacts of other protected characteristics will be experienced more by minority ethnic groups given the estate's high levels of diversity; however, these negative impacts relate to other protected characteristics. • No direct negative impacts identified from a race perspective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender profiles are broadly balanced within and outside the site. • Strong sense that the improvement to housing stock and the provision of new homes would be a strong positive for the regeneration process benefiting families and all genders. • Regeneration plans are neutral from a gender perspective. • From the evidence gathered there are no identified negative impacts from a gender perspective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No individuals have undergone or are undergoing a gender transition on the estate. • Limited data on the transgender population around the estate. • The regeneration plans are neutral from a gender reassignment perspective.
<p>Pregnancy/Maternity Negative impacts identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption during the construction period may negatively impact on pregnant 	<p>Sexual Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited data available on the sexual orientation of the residential population, as 	<p>Religion/Belief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No aspect of the scheme that prevents residents from practicing their religion/faith.

mothers, babies and families with newborn children.

- Efforts to address this disruption will be universal to the whole population of the estate.

many households chose not to declare.

- Secure by design should afford greater levels of safety for all, which LGBTQ residents may also benefit.
- From the evidence of the scheme plans and the data collected, there are no stated negative impacts from a sexual orientation perspective.

Indeed the scheme offers a new mosque.

- The rehousing team may need to ask people about how they use their places of worship to see the extent to which disruption to resident's lives could be minimised.
- No identified negative impacts from a religion/belief perspective.

Disability

Negative and positive impacts identified.

- Relatively high proportions of residents with disabilities and life limiting illnesses on the estate (15.3%).
- Disturbance of moving home & quality of life particularly if disability is associated with respiratory conditions.
- Potential for those with sensory impairments and issues relating to the nervous system to be affected by construction noise.
- New physical layout will be a challenge to those with visual/mobility impairment.
- People with learning difficulties may need specific forms of engagement to enable their understanding of the scheme.
- New homes, however, will be to Part M of the building regulations and hence will be based on lifetime homes principles.

Age

Negative and positive Impacts identified.

- The estate has many long-standing residents who are older, this is reflected in both secure tenants (11%) and leaseholders (17.7%) over the age of 55.
- The scheme is more likely to negatively impact older people with a disability or health need, particularly during the demolition/ construction period.
- Older people are likely to be more settled and in need of support when moving.
- Disturbance, particularly for those on their own and those who are frail and vulnerable.
- Older homeowners may find it difficult to access financial products.
- For C&YP the loss of amenity and play space during the

Marriage/Civil Partnership

- Marriage and civil partnership status may have implications regarding property ownership and tenure if there have been changes since the initial occupation of the home.
- There are no identified negative impacts from a marriage / civil partnership perspective.

construction period will apply.

- Potential loss of informal childcare arrangements.

Language

Possible negative impacts identified.

- Possible lack of ability to communicate and or understand the implications of the regeneration process for some households.
- Understanding may also be connected to mental health, learning disability and age particularly those who are digitally excluded.
- Research suggests that all residents currently on site have good grasp of written and oral English.

Socio-Economic

Possible negative impacts identified.

- Potential increase in costs of rent for social rents in the new units and for leaseholders in shared equity accommodation.
- Potentially higher costs for older people with less earning capability.
- 28.7% of residents with household incomes below £15,000 (i.e. below the 'poverty line'.
- Potential savings due to energy efficient homes, although energy prices are rising steeply.

Health

Possible negative impacts identified,

- Disruption of moving home and uncertainty about the future is likely to cause higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Construction exacerbates existing conditions and may cause new health conditions, with likely impacts on respiratory and circulatory disease.
- High levels/prevalence of life limiting long term illness and long-term conditions.
- Self-declared health needs like musculoskeletal pain, suggest a need for the design of pathways and walkways to meet physical mobility needs.

Impacts to residents adjacent and in the vicinity of the scheme.

- 1.11 It is important in all regeneration schemes to review the impacts likely to be felt by those local communities and businesses who are either adjacent to the site or who are in the vicinity of the scheme. Most of these impacts are likely to be either the loss of open space, the construction and traffic movements to and from the site and the general disruption caused by the regeneration scheme.
- 1.12 From a business perspective there are 2 businesses within a 300m radius of the site. This includes a food retailer (chicken shop) and a general convenience store. Previous consultation with these businesses has suggested that they are supportive of the

scheme as it is likely to provide some business growth during the construction period and beyond, when the additional new units are developed.

1.13 From a residential population perspective, this EQIA has some baseline population data for the Stepney Green Ward. To this end the key population characteristics for the ward are:

- Stepney Green has a proportionally larger younger person's population when compared to the borough and London. In contrast there are proportionately more older people (65+) in Stepney Green than in Tower Hamlets but less than in London and England.
- Stepney Green has a high proportion of black, Asian, mixed and minority ethnic populations, more than the borough and London.
- At just under 50%, Stepney Green has the third highest proportion of Muslims compared to other wards in Tower Hamlets.
- The proportion of residents in Stepney Green with disabilities and long term life limiting illness is greater than Tower Hamlets and London.
- The median household income in Stepney Green is below the levels for Tower Hamlets and London.

1.14 From this headline data, it is likely that there will be a higher proportion of older and disabled residents and black, Asian, mixed and other minority ethnic populations that would feel impact from the construction and development phase of the scheme. This is likely to mean that the scheme's development partner will need to address and consider these populations. This is particularly important in terms of the environmental and construction impacts of the scheme and to address the needs of residents and businesses in the vicinity as effectively as possible.

Mitigation Priorities

1.15 As part of this EQIA, the following mitigation activity has been highlighted.

Generic mitigation activity

- An EQIA refresh programme to be adopted alongside predicted key milestones in the project lifetime.
- The staff working on this project are experienced and have worked with similar regeneration schemes across the borough, delivering to a diverse community. They have had equality training/briefings on one to one liaisons with residents.

Disability Mitigation activity

- Operationally, early engagement with those residents and households that have a member with a stated disability would be appropriate. This is particularly relevant to the households who identified sensory and physical impairments within their families, and where this would place additional challenges when moving disabled families to new properties. Consulting and engaging with disabled groups before, during and after

change to check effects, outcomes and results is a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010.

- In terms of formal adaptations for disability - some engaged have previously sought social services assessment for adaptations and equipment. In some cases, these assessments should be applied as the design of new homes can more easily accommodate these needs.
- The regeneration team to obtain the support of a dedicated occupational therapist / social services worker to assess the disability needs of residents.
- If leaseholders are seeking to leave the estate, referrals on to other Social Care Services should be made to mitigate any possible negative impacts that disabled people may experience.
- Support with adaptations in units on the new estate, designed specifically for the disabled person's needs should be a prerequisite.
- Disability grants reviewed and accessed for residents in specific need of support with funding of adaptations.

Age Mitigation activity

Children and Young People

- Secure amenity space both during and after the regeneration programme, and C&YP should also be engaged in the design of these future facilities.

Older People

- Ensure that tenants, particularly those who are older, only move once into their new homes.
- Support for and recognition of the financial constraints that many older people will experience with an aim to support them to come to terms with the transition to a new home (if a tenant or leaseholder is staying on the estate) and to support older people (tenants and leaseholders) who are moving away from the estate.
- To support older leaseholders to access the right options for them and to ensure that their support is maintained through to the conclusion of the CPO process and the allocation of new homes.
- Social services should be engaged to support any adaptations to new homes for older people, particularly those with a disability/health conditions as part of the decant process.
- Ensure that the shared ownership option for older people will allow them to transfer the equity in their proportion of their estate to their relatives/spouses.

Socio-Economic Mitigation issues

- Resident homeowners would be compensated by offering them market value, plus 10% home loss for their current home. Non-resident homeowners are being offered market value plus 7.5% for home loss. Disturbance costs including reasonable legal and valuation costs will

also be paid, including moving costs, disconnection/reconnection of utilities, post redirection.

- The covering of these costs are also being given to council tenants.
- The regeneration programme will have impacts on residents, tenants and leaseholders alike, which might incur greater costs and hence become a burden for those residents unable to afford the associated costs. The council needs to monitor the potential for a consequential rise in the costs of the new properties both in terms of property value and in terms of rent.
- The council will need to carefully monitor how the proposals affect older leaseholders or leaseholders with reduced financial capacity.

Language Mitigation

- Ensure the availability of adapted communications, translation and interpretation services for residents and leaseholders, when specific tenant engagement and leaseholder negotiation is being undertaken.

Health Mitigation issues

- Health Needs Assessments will need to be carried out, where required, and dedicated rehousing support provided by the council, including access to mental health support.
- Serious and long-term health conditions should be prioritised, but progressive conditions may need to be addressed. This information via the research that has been carried out is available to the council.
- OT assessments may need to be established to mitigate negative impacts.

Intersectionality

- When you analyse what different groups are saying, like what the young and old, families, disabled people and more vulnerable groups are asking for: a key priority is to restore the communities that they value and that they are currently part of. Rebuilding houses and people's lives must be accompanied by enrichment activities that place Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House communities in control of designing their future communities with all the values and commonality they shared in the past.

Conclusions

- 1.16 The regeneration of the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison Houses will have generic impacts for the whole community. However, equality impacts are likely to be concentrated through the protected characteristics of disability, age, health, socio-economic inequality and language.
- 1.17 Most significantly, the implications of the regeneration on disabled people, older and younger people on the estate is likely to be the most significant, both in terms of health and access to amenity provision. Cost implications of the regeneration have also been highlighted and these are to do with the regeneration process, for example costs of

moving from the old property and resettlement into the new home. In terms of cost the council intends to cover all reasonable costs to the new home. Moreover, the rehousing offer seeks to protect older leaseholders who may not be able to renew a mortgage with a variety of options.

- 1.18 The impact of the regeneration process will have a significant bearing on leaseholders both resident and non-resident. As the scheme will require the CPO of their properties if voluntary settlements cannot be achieved.
- 1.19 In some cases, those with less disposable income may have difficulty with maintaining leaseholder status if they decide to stay on the estate. This has been addressed through the leaseholder guarantees, which provide alternative options of shared equity and shared ownership arrangements. The borough will support the housing needs of private tenants displaced through the repurchase of lease holder properties, if they are on the housing register and are in bands 1 and 2. The remaining private tenants will be able to access housing advice or have their housing options assessed, and we understand that the council have been in contact with these private tenants.
- 1.20 Set out below are the key actions recommended as part of this EQIA. These have been put into an action plan laid out in section 9 of this report.

Generic Actions

- Run EQIA briefing sessions, review training needs, and establish training where appropriate.
- Establish training where appropriate equality training / briefing / workshops for housing regeneration liaising teams.

Disability Mitigation Actions

- Arrange relevant occupational therapy/social services assessments for residents where identified.
- Liaison with social care teams in other authorities where residents are seeking to move to.
- Work with residents with complex disability and or health needs and provide services accordingly.
- Support with adaptations in new units on the new estate.
- Commission a repair person service to support additional fixtures and fittings.
- Ensure reasonable adaptations are implemented within the new homes in line with OT assessments.

Age Mitigation Actions

- Engage young people in the design of the future amenity space within the new estate. Ensure existing amenity space is retained where feasible and safe, during the regeneration and construction.
- Provide opportunity for independent financial advice for any resident needing it.

- Commission handy person service to support additional fixtures and fittings.
- Support older leaseholders to access the right options.
- Ensure that the shared ownership option for older people will allow them to transfer the equity from their property, should they die, to their relatives/spouse.

Socio-economic Mitigation Actions

- The council to monitor the potential for a consequential rise in the costs associated with the new properties both in terms of living costs and in terms of rent/mortgages.
- Private tenants will be rehoused if they are on the housing register and if they are in bands 1 and 2. The remaining private tenants will be signposted to the relevant housing options team/service and provided with information as to what their housing options are.
- The council to monitor how the proposals affect older leaseholders or leaseholders with reduced financial capacity.
- Facilitate access to Independent Financial Advisors for all residents.

Language Mitigation Actions

- Make alternative formats, translation and interpretation provision available when specific tenant engagement, leaseholder negotiation and wider off-site consultations are being undertaken.

Health Mitigation Actions

- Undertake health and medical assessment or OT assessments where required.

Intersectionality Mitigation Actions

- Develop enrichment activities for residents of the estate designed to rebuild communities.

2 Introduction and context

2.1 This Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been commissioned as an independent report by LB Tower Hamlets Housing Regeneration team and it will focus on the key elements of the housing regeneration proposals for the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison Houses.

Equality Act 2010

2.2 Tower Hamlets council, like all other public bodies, has a duty pursuant to s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act,
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Tower Hamlets Equality Policy

2.3 Tower Hamlets is one of the most diverse boroughs in the country and equality is a central priority to the way the borough works for its communities. Moreover, in addition to the nine protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010, this EQIA will also consider 3 additional priorities of socio-economic inequality, health inequality and language, particularly English as a second language.

Equality Impact Assessments

2.4 This EQIA adopts the borough's model for equality assessments set by the borough's equalities policy leads. Like most other authorities, Tower Hamlet's equality assessments are a self-assessment tool to help look at the likely positive and negative impacts of the borough's work on staff, citizens, partners and communities regarding equality of opportunity, and promoting diversity in employment and service delivery.

2.5 Tower Hamlets is one of the most diverse boroughs in the country and its approach to equality expressed through an ambition of fairness and the guiding values of equal opportunity and social justice. The protected characteristics and Tower Hamlet's priority

characteristics are set out below. Each of these protected characteristics and Tower Hamlet's local priority characteristics will be assessed in this EQIA.



2.6 The EQIA will cover the following areas in the context of the council's general duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Promote good relations between different people.

2.7 From a methodological perspective, the EQIA will focus on addressing:

- Likely regeneration programme impacts.
- Likely / expected equality impacts (i.e. impacts on protected characteristics/local priorities).
- Direct equality impacts.
- Indirect equality impacts.
- Proportionality of impact across protected characteristics/local characteristics including proportion, and disproportion, thereby assessing proportional positive impacts and negative impacts and or disproportional positive and negative impacts.
- As part of this process it is critical to enable the council to assess what actions it will undertake to address the outcomes of these assessments.
- This analysis will enable a process of highlighting these impacts, which will enable Tower Hamlets to choose options for the mitigation of negative impacts accordingly.

2.8 The housing regeneration scheme for Harriott, Apsley & Pattison Houses will also operate within the council's own policies. To this end the EQIA has reviewed:

- The Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy 2016-2021

- 'Homes for Londoners- A Draft Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration' (GLA)
- Strategic Plan 2020-2023
- Local Plan 2031
- The Council and its Common Housing Register Partners' Allocations Scheme (2020)
- London Plan

2.9 This EQIA has sought to address the context of the regeneration programme in Tower Hamlets and the core housing policies and processes which impact on residents.

3 The scheme

- 3.1 The current site consists of 100 homes based in the three blocks of Harriott House, Apsley House and Pattison House. The current tenure profile of the site is made up of 36 secure council tenancies, 34 residents leaseholders and 30 non-resident leaseholders, the majority of whom are renting their units to private tenants. Within the site there are also three additional non-residential facilities, the Redcoat Community Centre and mosque at 256 Stepney Way and two day care units for people with learning disabilities, the Day Opportunities Service (operated by LBTH) at 260-262 Stepney Way and the Vibrance Day Care unit at 262 Stepney Way (operated privately).
- 3.2 Like most urban areas, Tower Hamlets is experiencing a housing crisis. The council has committed to having 2,000 new council homes in delivery by 2022. The borough is seeking to make the most of land that they already own, including buildings no longer used as they once were, as well as buying additional homes. However, this is not enough.
- 3.3 Through its options appraisal, the borough identified three options of refurbishment of the existing buildings, the regeneration of existing building and the development of infill sites and the full demolition and redevelopment of the whole site. A ballot was undertaken in 2020 and showed a universal support for the demolition and redevelopment option.
- 3.4 The proposed development comprises the demolition of existing buildings (including Harriot House, Apsley House, Pattison House, the Redcoat Centre and Redcoat Community Centre) to provide 407 residential units, together with associated landscaped communal amenity space, accessible car parking, secure cycle parking spaces and refuse/recycling storage facilities.
- 3.5 63 of the 407 new homes will acts as replacement homes for existing tenants and resident leaseholders (the remaining units will be made up of 106 social rented and 232 private sales). The scheme will also accommodate a new mosque and community centre. The two disability day centres have now been relocated to sites in other parts of the borough and replicate the facilities currently available on the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House site.
- 3.6 Planning permission ref. PA/21/02703 was granted on 9 August 2023 in respect of the regeneration of the Estate (the **2023 Permission**). The council submitted a further application on 1 March 2024 allocated reference PA/24/00368 to secure a new location within the Order Land for the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque so that it is located within a standalone building, rather than being located below residential flats as per the consented 2023 Permission (the **Planning Application**). On 12 June 2024 the Development Committee resolved to grant planning permission pursuant to the Planning Application (the **Planning Permission**).
- 3.7 The Planning Permission is for the redevelopment of the estate, comprising the demolition of existing buildings (including HAP Houses, the Redcoat Community Centre

and mosque to provide 407 residential units (Class C3) across buildings ranging in height from 4-8 storeys and community centre building of 1,167m² GIA (Class E (e-f), Class F1 (e-f), Class F.2 (b)), together with associated landscaped communal amenity space, accessible car parking, secure cycle parking spaces and refuse/recycling storage facilities (the **Scheme**). The Scheme and its benefits are explained in more detail below.

- 3.8 The council will prioritise and maximise the development of genuinely affordable homes, where feasible. In line with the Tower Hamlets Local Plan, the additional homes created will provide 111 genuinely affordable rented housing (32.6%) and 232 homes for private sales (67.4%). The homes for private sale will help to fund the construction of the affordable homes.
- 3.9 New homes will be a mix of one, two, three and four bedroom properties. They will be both flats and duplexes. The new development will meet the needs of existing residents by providing more new family sized homes as well as smaller sized homes for future residents who are both on the housing register and in housing need.
- 3.10 In order to proceed with the scheme the council is seeking to use its compulsory purchase powers, which it will use alongside its buy back team to secure the site for development. This EqIA has been drafted alongside a Statement of Reasons and a Cabinet Report seeking agreement to make a compulsory purchase order to facilitate the redevelopment of this site.

4 Summary of equalities evidence held by LB Tower Hamlets.

4.1 This section will set the context by reviewing the borough's equality and diversity profile, the equality and diversity profile of those on the borough's housing register and the equality and diversity profile of those living in Stepney Green Ward.

Borough Profile 2021⁴

4.2 This section is based on a mixture of 2021 census data and 2019 ONS estimates for the borough. Tower Hamlet's population at the time of the last census was 310,303. Tower Hamlets has experienced the fastest growing population nationally, with a 2.2% population increase in past years (from 2018 to 2019). That is the fourth highest after the City of London (11.7%), Camden (3.0%) and Westminster (2.3%). This is an equivalent to 19 additional residents every day in the last year.

4.3 Tower Hamlets has a similar proportion of young people aged 0-15 to England & Wales and London. Just under one in five (18.5%) of the borough's residents are in this age group. This compares to 18.3% for London and 17.7% for England and Wales. The working age population i.e. 16-64 in Tower Hamlets in the 2021 census was 75.9% compared to 69.7% for Greater London and 63.6% for England and Wales. The 65+ population in Tower Hamlets was 5.6% compared to 13.0% in Greater London and 18.8% in England and Wales. This suggests a borough with a high younger population with less residents over 65 years of age in Tower Hamlets than Greater London and England & Wales.

4.4 In 2019 there were 4,331 live births in Tower Hamlets. Between 2018 and 2019 the borough experienced a 4.0% decrease in the number of live births compared to 3.1% nationally and 3.8% regionally.

4.5 The borough has around 1,400 more male residents than female residents. The borough has 50.2% male residents and 49.8% female residents, compared to 48.5% male and 51.5% female in London and 49.0% male and 51.0% female in England and Wales.

4.6 According to the Census 2021, Tower Hamlets has a significantly higher proportion of residents who are single (53.8%) compared to London and England & Wales, compared to 46.2% in London and 37.9% in England & Wales.

4.7 The data for the sexual orientation of residents in the borough, based on the 2021 Census, was released in January 2023 and shows that nationally 89.37% are heterosexual. In London this percentage was 86.19%, and in Tower Hamlets this was 83.07%. From the perspective of those who stated they were gay or lesbian the national figure was 1.54%, London was 2.23%, and Tower Hamlets was 3.96%. For those that stated they were bisexual the national figure was 1.29%, London was 2.23%, and Tower Hamlets was 2.52%. The remaining either stated they were pan sexual, asexual, queer or stated they were of another sexual orientation (0.69% in the case of

⁴ Borough Profile 2021 Census release July 2022. All statistical outputs from the 2021 Census relate to the population defined as 'usually resident' on census day (21 March 2021). Unfortunately, that date was during a period of COVID-19 lockdown and/or restrictions which affected the number of people living in Tower Hamlets.

Tower Hamlets) or that they 'did not answer' this question (9.76% in the case of Tower Hamlets).

- 4.8 Nationally, the proportion of the population aged 16 years and over whose gender identity was different from their sex at birth was 0.45%, in London this was 0.78% and in Tower Hamlets this was 0.85%. This is the closest assessment of gender identity available through the 2021 census.
- 4.9 The two largest ethnic groups in the borough are white British (22.9%) and Bangladeshi (34.6%). Tower Hamlets has the largest Bangladeshi population in the country.
- 4.10 Across England and Wales, in 2021, 81.7% of the residents were from white backgrounds (down from 86% in 2011) and 74.4% were white British. London is the most ethnically diverse area of the country. Across London there has been an 8.1% decrease in people from white backgrounds, down from 3.7M (44.9% of the total) in 2011 to 3.2M (36.8%) in 2021.
- 4.11 One in six Bangladeshi residents across England and Wales live in Tower Hamlets. Locally, the Bangladeshi population remains by far the largest in the country in both proportionate (34.6%) and numerical (107,333) terms. The local Bangladeshi population in Tower Hamlets is almost twice the size of the next largest within a local authority area. After Tower Hamlets, Newham with 55,677 Bangladeshi residents, has the second highest local Bangladeshi population.
- 4.12 At 22.9% the white British population in Tower Hamlets is the fourth smallest in England and Wales behind Newham, Brent and Harrow. In 2021 there were 45,187 white other residents in Tower Hamlets; 14.6% of the overall local population, a significant increase compared to 2011. In 2021, 6,180 residents identified as Somali or Somalilander, this is 2% of the overall population.
- 4.13 The black African population has increased. 5% of residents of Tower Hamlets identified as black African which, at 5% of the local population is double the proportion of England and Wales as a whole (2.5%) but lower than the rate in London (7.9%).
- 4.14 The local Chinese population in Tower Hamlets (3.3%) is the third highest proportion in England and Wales, behind City of London and Cambridge. Tower Hamlets has the fourth largest Roma population in England and Wales after Brent, Sheffield and Newham. (2,225 people identified as Roma in Tower Hamlets).
- 4.15 Nationally, for the first time, the census reports that less than half of residents across England and Wales identify as 'Christian' (46.2%) though this is still the largest single religion nationally. Tower Hamlets has the largest proportion of Muslim residents of any local authority area across England and Wales. In Tower Hamlets, 39.9% of residents (123,912 people) reported that they were Muslim. This is an increase compared to the last census in 2011 when 34.5% stated they were Muslim.
- 4.16 Just 22.3% of residents in Tower Hamlets stated their religion as Christian which is the lowest proportion of any local authority area across England and Wales. The largest

increase was seen in those reporting 'no religion'. 19.1% of residents stated they had 'no religion' in 2011. The 2021 Census shows 26.6% of Tower Hamlets residents in 2021 describe themselves as having no religion.

- 4.17 73% of residents in Tower Hamlets reported that English is their main spoken language and an additional 20.7% of residents stated that, whilst it is not their main language, they can speak English well or very well. 6.2% of residents don't speak English well or at all.
- 4.18 Proficiency in spoken English has improved slightly in the decade between 2011 and 2021. In 2011, 8% of residents could not speak English well or at all, compared to just 6.2% of residents in 2021. After English, Bengali is the most commonly spoken language in Tower Hamlets (11%) then Italian (2.2%) and Spanish (1.7%).
- 4.19 In England and Wales, 90.3% of residents identified with at least one UK national identity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, and Cornish) in 2021 which is a very slight decrease from 2011 (92%). In Tower Hamlets, just 73.5% of residents identified with at least one UK national identity and 26.5% stated non-UK national identities.

Demand for Housing

- 4.20 The Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy 2016-2021 outlines the major concern over the shortage of affordable housing and that future rents set by the council and housing associations will force people out of the borough. 44% of households live in income poverty and the average cost of a property in LBTH is more than 14 times (£450,000) what a typical essential worker could earn in wages (£35,000). The population of Tower Hamlets is likely to increase by 26% by 2026, adding further pressure.
- 4.21 The purpose of the Housing Delivery Strategy is to demonstrate how Tower Hamlets is proposing to reduce the current anticipated housing shortfall and deliver housing sustainably, and in a way that meets local housing needs.
- 4.22 Tower Hamlets has the highest housing target of all London Boroughs (3,473 homes a year⁵). This figure is derived from the Mayor of London's publication of the London Plan (March 2021) and was set following a London-wide Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The SHMA has identified the need for 66,000 additional homes per year in London. The SHMA covers overall housing need as well as exploring specific requirements for purpose-built student accommodation and specialist older persons' accommodation within the overall figure.
- 4.23 The London Plan target is significantly higher than the borough's Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) of 3,100 homes a year, established by the LBTH SHMA (2017). The OAN

⁵ Table 4.1 – 10-year targets for net housing completions 2019/20 – 2028/29

provides an estimate of the borough's housing need, based on the latest population projections.

4.24 Key Housing data shows that:

- The private rented sector is the fastest growing housing sector in the borough.
- There are close to 15,000 ex-council homes which have been bought under the right to buy. An estimated 6,000 of these are now being let, usually as Houses in Multiple Occupation, by private landlords.
- The borough is growing by over 3,000 homes per year, making Tower Hamlets the quickest growing borough in London.
- MHCLG⁶ data on dwelling stock records a figure of 121,539 private homes in the borough for 2019. The MHCLG data breaks down the tenure types of these properties, 9% were identified as local authority stock, 26% identified as being private registered provider stock and 64% (78,040 homes) in the private sector (comprising both owner occupier and the private rental market).
- There has been a slight fall in the number of owner occupiers from 24.2% (of households) in 2011 to 23.1% in 2021. In 2021 Tower Hamlets had the lowest proportion of owner occupiers of any area in England and Wales. The ten areas with the smallest proportions of owner occupiers were all inner London boroughs.
- There are 121,539 households in Tower Hamlets, of which council and registered provider homes constitute 35.9%. The number of affordable homes in Tower Hamlets is 42,539.
- There has been a fall in social renting households from 39.6% in 2011 to 35.9% in 2021. Of these, 16,697 (13.9%) of households reported that they rent from the local authority.
- There are 24,639 households on the council's Common Housing Register (CHR) as of 1st May 2024.
- The borough needs to deliver 1,965 affordable homes each year to meet housing needs. This figure has been calculated from the council's Local Plan 2031 that sets out the borough's overall housing supply target of 58,965 new homes to be delivered between 2016 and 2031, of which 50% to be affordable.
- The average level of affordable housing completions over the last 3 years (2017-2020) is 833, significantly less than half the above annual target.

4.25 Summary context:

- Tower Hamlets remains a borough of high housing need.
- There is a sustained increase of net migration into the borough.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

- While the borough has a good average income, a significant percentage of the population has incomes of less than £15,000 per year, which has impacted upon their ability to meet their housing costs, particularly as the largest housing tenure available in the borough is the private rented sector.
- The borough needs to deliver a significant number of affordable homes each year to meet housing need; and:
- A substantial percentage of those homes must be three bedrooms plus, to meet demand from overcrowded households.

Housing Register

4.26 This section describes the profile of Tower Hamlets' housing register applicants. The data is based on a snapshot of the housing register on 1st May 2024. This information was provided by Tower Hamlets.

4.27 Key information:

- 24,639 live applications on the borough's common housing register.

4.28 The borough's housing register holds basic equality information, which is set out below.

Applicants on the housing waiting list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On 1st May 2024, there were 24,639= applicants on the council's housing register. 																					
	<p>Age:</p> <p>The table below shows the spread and breakdown of the ages of current common housing register applicants as of 1st May 2024.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #6aa84f; color: white;">Age Group Summary</th> <th style="background-color: #6aa84f; color: white;">Count of Applications</th> <th style="background-color: #6aa84f; color: white;">% of Applications</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>18 to 25</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">2,154</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26 to 40</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">10,546</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">43%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>41 to 50</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">6,323</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">26%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>51 to 60</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">3,166</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Over 60</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">2,450</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grand Total</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">24,639</td> <td style="color: #6aa84f;">100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age Group Summary	Count of Applications	% of Applications	18 to 25	2,154	9%	26 to 40	10,546	43%	41 to 50	6,323	26%	51 to 60	3,166	13%	Over 60	2,450	10%	Grand Total	24,639	100%
	Age Group Summary	Count of Applications	% of Applications																			
	18 to 25	2,154	9%																			
26 to 40	10,546	43%																				
41 to 50	6,323	26%																				
51 to 60	3,166	13%																				
Over 60	2,450	10%																				
Grand Total	24,639	100%																				
<p>Gender:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are more female (52%) than male (47%) applicants (% other, refused/unknown). This is broadly comparable to the gender profile of the population of Tower Hamlets (aged 18 and over). 																						
<p>Disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A disability was reported in 343 applicants on the housing register, representing 1.4% of all applicants on the housing register. 393 were unknown representing 1.6%. the remaining were not disabled 23,903 (97%). 																						

	<p>Race:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The largest ethnic group represented on the common Housing Register as of 18th August 2023 are those who identify as Asian (56%), with applicants who identified as from white ethnic groups representing 16% of all applicants. 9% of applicants identified as black, 5% were from other ethnic groups and 2% were of dual heritage. 12% either refused to complete this part of the application or their ethnicity is unknown. ▪ Removing those who did not respond or who refused out of the calculations this shows that those on the CHR who stated they were Asian was 63%, black 11%, dual 2%, other 6% and white 18%. ▪ In summary, those with ethnicity records from a black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic heritage represented 82% of applicants.
	<p>Religion or belief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a deficit in the information available on the religion or belief systems that applicants on the Common Housing Register identify with. This is largely because this is a voluntary part of the application, and the majority of applicants (90%) choose not to disclose this information.
	<p>Sexual orientation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Again, there is a deficit in the information available on the sexual orientation which CHR applicants identify with, the majority of applicants (92%) either choose not to answer or do not disclose this information.

Equalities issues raised by applicants on the Housing Register

- 4.29 What this data clearly describes is the extreme diversity of people on the borough’s housing register. Any provision of social housing is likely to address this diversity and the increase of affordable housing on the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison site is likely to benefit a diverse cross section of those on the Common Housing Register. This is likely to have a positive equality outcome for those seeking new accommodation.
- 4.30 However, the true measure of this however will only be observed going forward. Indeed, it may be important for the council to monitor the profile of those residents in the newly developed private housing to assess this impact effectively; this will also enable the assessment of the furtherance of the borough wide commitment to community cohesion.

Stepney Green Ward

- 4.31 The table below summarises data findings for Stepney Green ward, taken from the 2021 census and subsequent research and is collated by the GLA. For consistency purposes both London and England data is based on 2021 census findings. This data provides a

baseline for an understanding of the wider area around which the regeneration scheme will have impact.

Stepney Green Ward	Equalities and diversity data
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the 2021 Census, the population for Stepney Green ward was 12,349 which accounted for 4% of the total population of Tower Hamlets.
Age 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child population (0-15) represents 21.2% of the total population in Stepney Green, this is more than Tower Hamlets 18.5%, London 18.3% and England 17.7%. Working age population 16-64 in Stepney Green is 70.3% this is less than Tower Hamlets 75.9%, but higher than London 69.7% and England 63.6%. Older people (65+) in Stepney Green are 8.5% more than the level in Tower Hamlets 5.6%, but less than London 12.0% and England 18.8%.
Gender 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the 2021 Census the ward had 6,251 males and 6,093 females providing a gender split in the ward of 50.6 % male and 49.4 % female. In comparison the borough profile is 50.2% male and 49.8% female, London is 48.5% male and 51.5% female and for England and Wales it is 49% male and 51% female.
Race 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 71% of residents in Stepney Green are from BAME groups, more than Tower Hamlets 67%, London 53% but higher than England 19%. The Bangladeshi population of the ward at the Census was 52%. The three largest ethnic groups in the borough (white British, Bangladeshi and white other) accounted for 79% of all residents in this ward.
Main languages spoken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The % for whom English is not their first language in Stepney Green is 39%, higher than 34% for Tower Hamlets and 12.9% for London and higher than 4.4% for England.
Region or belief 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of residents who identified themselves as Christian was 17.9% – lower than the borough average of 24%. At 56.7% of the population, the proportion of Muslim residents was a higher proportion than the 43% of Muslims in the borough. 16.5% of residents in the Stepney Green ward stated that they had no religion, this is lower than the borough proportion of those stating no religion of 29%.
Gender reassignment 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Tower Hamlets, 90.65% of those asked in the 2021 census stated that their gender identity was the same as sex registered at birth, 0.85% stated their gender identity was different from that registered at their birth, 0.14% stated they were non binary, and 0.6% stated another gender. 8.29% did not respond to this question.
Sexual orientation 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Tower Hamlets 83.07% of those asked in the 2021 census stated their sexual orientation was heterosexual, 3.96% gay or lesbian, 2.52% bisexual, 0.46% pan sexual, 0.06% a sexual, 0.13 queer, 0.04% all other sexual orientations and 9.76% did not answer this question.
Pregnancy and maternity 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2019 the live births data showed that there were 4,307 live births in Tower Hamlets and there were 164 live births in Stepney Green representing 3.7% of the live births in the borough.
Marriage and civil partnership 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Stepney Green in 2021, 41.6% have never been married, 27.1% are married to someone of a different sex, 0.3% are married to someone of the same sex, 0.2% are in civil partnerships, 1.8% are separated, 4.3% divorced, 3.5% widowed and for 21.1% this question did not apply because of their young age.

Stepney Green Ward	Equalities and diversity data
Health and disability 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On census day 2021, 877 residents (7.2%) in Stepney Green had a long term health problem or disability limiting their day to day activities a lot, while around 8.2% (991 residents) had a long term health problem or disability limiting the persons day to day activities a little. Collectively there were 15.4% whose day to day activities were limited either a little or a lot. 84.6% of the population of Stepney green did not have a disability under the Equality Act 2010. ▪ In Stepney Green, the rate of people with a long term health problem or disability limiting day to day activities a lot and the rate of people with a long term health problem or disability limiting day to day activities a little were both above London and Tower Hamlets averages. ▪ Those who stated their health was good came to 81.4% (9,871) and those who stated their health was not good came to 18.6% (2,258).
Economic activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The employment rate for residents in Stepney Green was 47.7% compared to 57.6% for Tower Hamlets, 62.4% for London and 62.1% for England. ▪ The unemployment rate for residents in Stepney Green was 7.1% compared to 6.7% for Tower Hamlets, 5.2% for London and 4.4% for England.
Benefit claimants⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The claimant count in Stepney Green ward rose sharply from March 2020 onwards as the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic took effect. As of January 2021, the claimant count was around three times higher than it had been in January 2019. The most affected age group was the 25-49 year old group where the number of claimants was four times higher, whereas the claimant count among 50+ year olds had doubled.
Household Income 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tower Hamlets had a median household income of £28,769 in 2020, slightly below the medium household income in London. In 2020, Stepney Green ward had the 5th lowest median income of any ward in Tower Hamlets, with the average household income being below £23k. 3,700 households had an income below £35k and 1,100 had an income below £15k. (Source: CACI Paycheck 2020)

⁷ Department for Work and Pensions 2021.

Stepney Green Ward	Equalities and diversity data
<p>Deprivation – 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2019, Tower Hamlets was the 50th most deprived local authority area (of 317) based on its Rank of Score⁸. It was the 14th most deprived local authority area based on Income Deprivation Affecting Children and the most deprived area in the country based on Income Deprivation Affecting Older People. ▪ Stepney Green ward has high levels of deprivation compared to the borough as a whole and the London region. According to Greater London Authority analysis of the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Stepney Green ward was the 5th most deprived ward in Tower Hamlets (of 20). It was the 69th most deprived ward in London out of 633 based on rank of score, placing it just outside the most deprived decile of wards in the capital. ▪ Stepney Green ward was the 6th most deprived in Tower Hamlets based on Income rank (within the most deprived 1% of wards) and the 38th most deprived in London. It was 6th most deprived ward in Tower Hamlets based on employment rank and the 94th most deprived in London. ▪ In terms of Income Deprivation Affecting Children, Stepney Green ranked as the 140th most deprived ward in London. In terms of Income Deprivation Affecting Older People, it ranked 7th most deprived in both London and Tower Hamlets.

Commentary on these Data sets

4.32 An overall assessment of household information held by housing shows that there are limitations with these recorded datasets from an equality perspective. In all cases, the profile of information is based on the head of household with no way to distinguish between other members of the household. Moreover, not all protected characteristics have been addressed and the level of health need is not fully stated.

4.33 A case for additional data, and more targeted primary research:

- Need for full household data.
- Need for data on all 9 protected characteristics and additional requirements based on health, socio economic and language priorities.
- Extending the data analysis beyond the red line of the CPO process.
- Consideration of alternative data sources to build a fuller picture of the equality impacts from this regeneration process.

4.34 With this case in mind, regeneration managers agreed that a household survey of residents within the development site should be completed to capture the equalities and diversity data for residents affected by this regeneration scheme. This survey’s findings are summarised in section 5 of this EQIA. The survey seeks to profile the protected characteristic make up of each household that responded to the telephone survey team and the face to face follow ups.

⁸ The 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation rank each local authority area and each ward location within local authorities and sets these against national comparators.

5 Primary Research: Summary of Household EQIA Survey Findings 2021

Introduction and rationale

- 5.1 The data below sets out the findings of the household survey completed in February/March 2021. The survey had 45 questions, which were asked via a telephone survey and followed up by interviewers through a doorstep survey of households on the estate. The recorded data is broken down by the profiles of respondents for the whole estate, council tenants, resident leaseholders, and non-resident leaseholders/private tenants (renting from non-resident leaseholders).
- 5.2 It was felt that for this refresh this data did not need to be recaptured.
- 5.3 In 2021 there were 100 properties in the sample for the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House (the site). In total the survey team completed 72 surveys. This represented:
- 72% of the estate (100 units), comprised of:
 - 31 council homes, representing 43.1% of the survey respondents and 86% of council owned homes on the site (36 units).
 - 23 resident leaseholder homes, being 31.9% of the survey responses and 68% of the sample of resident leaseholders on the site (34 units).
 - 2 non-resident leaseholders and 16 privately tenanted households, representing 25% of the survey sample and 60% of non-resident / privately tenanted households on the site (30 units).

Methodology and approach

- 5.4 The survey included 45 questions which profile all 9 protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 as well as other questions agreed with officers from Tower Hamlets. The equalities characteristics, when broken down, have been defined by both national data sets and categories used by the borough, both of which align to guidance of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).
- 5.5 The field work was delivered by experienced interviewers and street/household survey practitioners.
- 5.6 A database of property contact details (telephone numbers and emails) was provided by LB Tower Hamlets and each property was contacted at least once and in some cases several times. Indeed, the residents who did not respond had at least 6 call backs and their household was also visited by a researcher on more than 2 occasions.
- 5.7 The household data captured through the survey is reliant on the respondents fully describing the make-up of their household. The survey was not an audit of the household profile, but it is a reliable account of the household makeup from the respondents' perspective. With this note in mind the findings of the survey are considered to be the most detailed and reliable summary of household composition. This data has been summarised and is reported below.

Key findings

5.8 The first three survey questions identified the house number, block and the residents' name. The fourth question identified the **tenure** of the occupant's household, the profile of which is set out below.

Which of the following describes how you occupy your home?	Frequency	Percent
Council Tenant	31	43.1
Resident Leaseholder	23	31.9
Non-resident leaseholder	2	2.8
Private tenant	16	22.2
Total	72	100.0

5.9 From those identified as resident and non-resident leaseholders, 48% had a mortgage and 52% were without a mortgage.

If you are the owner occupier, are you an owner occupier	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
With a mortgage	12	16.7	48.0
Without a mortgage	13	18.1	52.0
Total	25	34.7	100.0
Missing	47	65.3	
Total	72	100.0	

5.10 The **length of time** people have lived in their homes is varied and differs between the whole sample and among council tenants, resident leaseholders and non-resident leaseholders /private tenants. Collectively 76% of residents in the survey sample have lived in their home for more than 6 years. This rises to 87% for council tenants and 91% for resident leaseholders. However, for non-resident/private tenants the length of time they have lived in their home is lower, at 39%. Nonetheless what this collectively shows is that the majority have lived on the site for a long period of time. Furthermore, just under 50% have lived in their homes for over 20 years.

How long have you lived in your home?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 year	4	5.6	0	0			4	22.2
1-5 years	13	18.1	4	12.9	2	8.7	7	38.9
6-10 years	11	15.3	6	19.4	1	4.3	4	22.2
11-20 years	9	12.5	4	12.9	4	17.4	1	5.6
20+ years	35	48.6	17	54.8	16	69.6	2	11.1
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.11 Responses to the **total number of people that live in each household** is set out below. The table beneath that calculates what this means in terms of the total population from the respondents engaged in the survey by tenure type.

How many people live in your household?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
person 1	3	4.2	2	6.5	1	4.3		
person 2	4	5.6	3	9.7	1	4.3		

How many people live in your household?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
person 3	9	12.5	3	9.7	5	21.7	1	5.6
person 4	19	26.4	8	25.8	3	13.0	8	44.4
person 5	13	18.1	5	16.1	4	17.4	4	22.2
person 6	12	16.7	6	19.4	4	17.4	2	11.1
person 7	6	8.3	2	6.5	3	13.0	1	5.6
person 8	3	4.2	1	3.2	1	4.3	1	5.6
person 9	3	4.2	1	3.2	1	4.3	1	5.6
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.12 With these responses it is possible to calculate what this means in terms of the population of these 72 units that responded to the survey. To this end there are some 344 people living in the 72 units, 141 of which are council tenants, 112 are resident leaseholders and 91 are non-resident / private tenants.

Household size	Whole Sample	Council Tenants	Resident Leaseholders	Non Resi/Private Tenants
1	3	2	1	0
2	8	6	2	0
3	27	9	15	3
4	76	32	12	32
5	65	25	20	20
6	72	36	24	12
7	42	14	21	7
8	24	8	8	8
9	27	9	9	9
Total	344	141	112	91

5.13 The next question identified the **gender** profile of each household,

- 50.9% were male.
- 49.1% were female.
- None preferred not to say.

5.14 There were slight variations to this profile by tenants, residential leaseholders and non-resident leaseholders/private tenants. This is set out in the table below.

Gender profile	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Male	174	50.9%	68	48.2%	60	54.1%	46	51.1%
Female	168	49.1%	73	51.8%	51	45.9%	44	48.9%
Prefer not to say		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Total	342	100.0%	141	100.0%	111	100.0%	90	100.0%

5.15 The full **age** profile of the population living on Harriott, Apsley and Pattison is set out in the table below:

Age Profile	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tens	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
0-5 years	23	6.7%	9	6.4%	13	11.6%	1	1.1%
6-11 years	25	7.3%	10	7.1%	5	4.5%	10	11.1%
12-17 years	45	13.1%	22	15.6%	11	9.8%	12	13.3%
18-24 years	49	14.2%	29	20.6%	10	8.9%	10	11.1%
25-34 years	68	19.8%	16	11.3%	22	19.6%	30	33.3%
35-44 years	51	14.8%	16	11.3%	23	20.5%	12	13.3%
45-54 years	41	11.9%	22	15.6%	7	6.3%	12	13.3%
55-64 years	21	6.1%	10	7.1%	10	8.9%	1	1.1%
65-74 years	15	4.4%	5	3.5%	8	7.1%	1	1.1%
75-84 years	5	1.5%	2	1.4%	2	1.8%	1	1.1%
85+ years	1	0.3%		0.0%	1	0.9%	0	0.0%
Total	344	100.0%	141	100.0%	112	100.0%	90	100.0%

5.16 The under 18 profiles of the respondents to the survey within the site is 27%. This shows that 3 in 10 members of the site are under 18. The working age population (18-64) of those on the site is 66.9% and the over 65 population is 6.1%. This is summarised in the table below.

Summary age groups	Whole Sample	Council Tenants	Resident Leaseholders	Non Resi/Private Tenants
Under 18	27.0%	29.1%	25.9%	25.6%
Working age	66.9%	66.0%	64.3%	72.2%
Over 65	6.1%	5.0%	9.8%	2.2%

5.17 The next question sought to identify those people living on the site who have their day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. This is as close a proxy there is to understanding the number of people living on the site with a **disability**. To this end 7.2% have a health problem/disability that limits their life a lot and 8.1% had a health problem/disability that limits their life a little. Some 100 people preferred not to disclose

this information. This sample suggests that some 15.3% have a health problem/disability of some form. This is set out in the table below:

Are any person's day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months (include any problems related to old age)?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes, limited a lot	24	7.2%	9	9.7%	11	18.0%	5	6.2%
Yes, limited a little	27	8.1%	12	12.9%	12	19.7%	3	3.7%
No	183	54.8%	72	77.4%	38	62.3%	73	90.1%
Prefer not to say	100	29.9%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Total	334	100.0%	93	100.0%	61	100.0%	81	100.0%

5.18 A more detailed breakdown of types of **disability/health problem** is set out below. This accounts for sensory impairment, physical impairment, learning disability, mental health conditions and long standing illness or health condition. This is set out in the table below:

Please state the type of health problem or disability that applies to each person (if applicable)?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Sensory impairment, (such as being blind / having a visual impairment or being deaf / having a hearing impairment)	2	3.0%	1	3.0%	1	4.2%		0.0%
Physical impairment, (such as using a wheelchair to get around and / or difficulty using your arms)	28	42.4%	14	42.4%	11	45.8%	3	33.3%
Learning disability, (such as Downs syndrome or dyslexia) or cognitive impairment (such as autism or head-injury)	3	4.5%	2	6.1%	1	4.2%		0.0%
Mental health condition, (such as depression or schizophrenia)	4	6.1%	2	6.1%	1	4.2%	1	11.1%
Long-standing illness or health condition (such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy)	29	43.9%	14	42.4%	10	41.7%	5	55.6%
Total	66	100.0%	33	100.0%	24	100.0%	9	100.0%

5.19 Long standing illness or health conditions represented 43.9% of the cohort of those with health problems and/or disabilities. This was followed by physical impairments at 42.4%, mental health conditions at 6.1%, learning disability at 4.5% and sensory impairment at 3%.

5.20 The table below sets out the numbers and profiles of those who stated that a member of their household is a **registered carer** of someone living at that address. It shows that 6.9% of residents in the sample are registered carers.

Are you, or any member of your household a registered carer to someone living at this address?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	5	6.9	1	3.2	3	13.0	1	5.6
No	43	59.7	24	77.4	14	60.9	5	27.8
Total	48	66.7	25	80.6	17	73.9	6	33.3
Missing	24	33.3	6	19.4	6	26.1	12	66.7
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.21 The table below shows the number and profile of those who are a **volunteer or family carer** that look after or support someone else in their home who needs help with their day-to-day life due to a disability, illness, or old age. 31.9% of households had a family member that fulfils this role.

Are you a volunteer or family carer who looks after or supports someone else in their home who needs help with their day-to-day life due to a disability, illness, or old age?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tens	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	23	31.9	12	38.7	9	39.1	2	11.1
No	25	34.7	13	41.9	8	34.8	4	22.2
Total	48	66.7	25	80.6	17	73.9	6	33.3
Missing	24	33.3	6	19.4	6	26.1	12	66.7
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.22 The next question sought to establish, for those that deliver this role, the average weekly number of **hours people undertake in providing care**.

If 'Yes', how many hours a week do you provide care for on average? (Please enter approximate hours per week)	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
10	1	1.4			1	4.3		
14	1	1.4			1	4.3		
20	3	4.2	2	6.5	1	4.3		
25	1	1.4	1	3.2				
30	2	2.8			1	4.3	1	5.6
40	10	13.9	7	22.6	3	13.0		
50	1	1.4	1	3.2	1	4.3		
60	3	4.2	1	3.2	1	4.3	1	5.6
80	1	1.4			1	4.3		
168	1	1.4	1	3.2				
Total	24	33.3	13	41.9	9	39.1	2	11.1
Missing	48	66.7	18	58.1	14	60.9	16	88.9
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.23 The next question sought to identify which of the following **health needs** apply to members of each household.

Which of the following health needs apply to member/s of your household? Self-Declared Health Needs	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Problems with arms, hands	1	1.4%		0.0%	1	3.7%		0.0%
Problems with legs or feet	16	22.5%	7	20.0%	7	25.9%	2	22.2%
Problems with back or neck	2	2.8%		0.0%	1	3.7%	1	11.1%
Difficulty in seeing	1	1.4%		0.0%	1	3.7%		0.0%
Difficulty in hearing		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Speech impediment		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Skin conditions, allergies		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Chest, breathing problems	4	5.6%	2	5.7%	2	7.4%		0.0%
Heart blood pressure, circulation	6	8.5%	3	8.6%	3	11.1%		0.0%
Problems with stomach, liver, kidney, digestion		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Diabetes	8	11.3%	3	8.6%	4	14.8%	1	11.1%
Depression, bad nerves	4	5.6%	2	5.7%	2	7.4%		0.0%
Epilepsy		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Learning difficulties	3	4.2%	2	5.7%	1	3.7%		0.0%
Mental illness, phobia, panics	3	4.2%	2	5.7%	1	3.7%		0.0%
Learning disabilities		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Long term medical condition	19	26.8%	11	31.4%	4	14.8%	4	44.4%
Progressive illness	4	5.6%	3	8.6%		0.0%	1	11.1%
Total	71	100.0%	35	100.0%	27	100.0%	9	100.0%

5.24 Finally, from a health and social care perspective, the survey asked residents if they had made any **adaptations** to their homes providing aids for their health problem/disability. 15.3% of households in the sample stated they had made an adaption to their home. Specific forms of adaptations provided by respondents included adaptations to their bathrooms, including baths and toilets.

Have you had any aids or adaptations made to your home?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	11	15.3	5	16.1	5	21.7	1	5.6
No	36	50.0	19	61.3	12	52.2	5	27.8
Total	47	65.3	24	77.4	17	73.9	6	33.3
Missing	25	34.7	7	22.6	6	26.1	12	66.7
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.25 The table below sets out the **ethnic** profile of the respondents to the survey from within the site. The Ethnic Minority⁹ profile of respondents for the site is 93.0%, the BAME¹⁰ population of the estate is 90.6%. Clearly, this shows that there is a significantly strong level of diversity on the site with Bangladeshi residents making up 72% across the whole sample of residents. This can be broken down further to show that 80% of

⁹ Ethnic minority is defined as people who differ in race or colour or in national, religious, or cultural origin from the dominant group of the country in which they live. For the purposes of this EQIA ethnic minority is used where people have not been defined as White British.

¹⁰ The acronym BAME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and is defined as all ethnic groups except White ethnic groups.

council tenants, 78.9% of resident leaseholders and 52% of non-resident leaseholders/private tenants identify as Bangladeshi.

Ethnicity	Whole Sample	Council Tenants	Resident Leaseholders	Non Resi/Private Tenants
Ethnic Minority	93.0%	100.0%	90.8%	84.8%
BAME	90.6%	100.0%	89.9%	77.2%
Bangladeshi	72.2%	80.1%	78.9%	52.2%
Black African	7.6%	11.3%	3.7%	6.5%
White British	7.0%	0.0%	9.2%	15.2%

5.26 A full breakdown of ethnicity is set out in the table below.

Ethnicity	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
White: English/Welsh/Scottish /Northern Irish/British	24	7.0%		0.0%	10	9.2%	14	15.2%
White: Irish		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
White: Roma	3	0.9%		0.0%		0.0%	3	3.3%
White: Other White	5	1.5%		0.0%	1	0.9%	4	4.3%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean	6	1.8%	6	4.3%		0.0%		0.0%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Africa	5	1.5%		0.0%		0.0%	5	5.4%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	3	0.9%	2	1.4%	1	0.9%		0.0%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	5	1.5%	4	2.8%	1	0.9%		0.0%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	6	1.8%		0.0%	6	5.5%		0.0%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	247	72.2%	113	80.1%	86	78.9%	48	52.2%
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	1	0.3%		0.0%		0.0%	1	1.1%
Asian or Asian British Vietnamese		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	3	0.9%		0.0%		0.0%	3	3.3%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	26	7.6%	16	11.3%	4	3.7%	6	6.5%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Somali		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Other ethnic group: Arab		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	8	2.3%		0.0%		0.0%	8	8.7%
Prefer not to say		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Total	342	100.0%	141	100.0%	109	100.0%	92	100.0%

5.27 The **sexual orientation** profile of respondents is set out in the table below:

What is the Sexual Orientation of your household members? (This only applies to residents over 18 years of age)	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Straight/Heterosexual	225	100.0%	87	100.0%	73	100.0%	65	100.0%
Gay or Lesbian		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Bisexual person		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Other		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Prefer not to say		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Total	225	100.0%	87	100.0%	73	100.0%	65	100.0%

5.28 The data states that 100% of respondents stated that they were straight/heterosexual.

5.29 The **religion/faith** profile of responding households is set out below:

What is the Faith of members of your household?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Atheist/Agnostic		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Christian	21	6.1%	7	5.0%	1	0.9%	13	14.3%
Buddhist		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Hindu		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Jewish		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Muslim	277	80.8%	128	90.8%	93	84.5%	56	61.5%
Sikh		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Humanist		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
No Religion	34	9.9%	6	4.3%	12	10.9%	16	17.6%
Other	4	1.2%		0.0%	4	3.6%		0.0%
Prefer not to say	7	2.0%		0.0%		0.0%	6	6.6%
Total	343	100.0%	141	100.0%	110	100.0%	91	100.0%

5.30 The Muslim faith makes up the largest group of respondents at 80.8% of the whole sample, 90.8% of council tenants, 84.5% of resident leaseholders and 61.5% of non-resident leaseholders/private tenants.

5.31 The number of residents who are either **pregnant** or who have given birth in the last 12 months was 3. This represents some 0.87% of the population from the sample. While this does seem quite low it is consistent with the lower proportion of pregnancies during the Covid 19 pandemic.

5.32 There were no responding households that indicated that there were any members of that household who have undergone or were presently undergoing a **gender reassignment** process.

5.33 The responses to the question about the marital or registered civil partnership or cohabitation status is set out below:

What best describes each person's marital, registered civil partnership or cohabitation status? (This only applies to persons over 16 years of age)	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Never married and never registered a same sex civil partnership	116	52.7%	39	45.9%	32	47.1%	45	67.2%
Married	91	41.4%	39	45.9%	32	47.1%	20	29.9%
Separated, but still legally married	3	1.4%	2	2.4%		0.0%	1	1.5%
Divorced	3	1.4%	3	3.5%		0.0%		0.0%
Widowed	7	3.2%	2	2.4%	4	5.9%	1	1.5%
In a registered same-sex civil partnership		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Separated, but still legally in a same sex civil partnership		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Prefer not to say		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Total	220	100.0%	85	100.0%	68	100.0%	67	100.0%

5.34 The high proportion of those that have never married and never registered a same sex civil partnership (52.7%) will mostly be young adults. Within the responding households 41.4% of people over 16 were married, 1.4% were separated, 1.4% divorced and 3.2% widowed.

5.35 It is, however, worth noting that in some of these cases the legal status does have an impact when tenure and leaseholder status come into play. This occurs in cases where a marriage ceases and or in situations of divorce and separation and even in the case of death, particularly for cohabiting partners.

5.36 The **employment/economic activity** status of respondents is set out below:

Which of the following applies to members of your household? (This applies to those over 16 years of age)	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Employed Full Time	101	42.3%	29	33.0%	35	42.7%	37	53.6%
Employed Part Time	21	8.8%	7	8.0%	9	11.0%	5	7.2%
Self-employed Full Time or Part Time	2	0.8%		0.0%	2	2.4%		0.0%
On a government supported training programme e.g. Apprenticeship/Training		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Full time education	29	12.1%	14	15.9%	3	3.7%	12	17.4%
Unemployed available for work	41	17.2%	23	26.1%	12	14.6%	6	8.7%
Permanently sick/disabled	3	1.3%		0.0%	3	3.7%		0.0%
Retired	24	10.0%	7	8.0%	14	17.1%	3	4.3%
Looking after the home	9	3.8%	4	4.5%	2	2.4%	3	4.3%
Full time carer of elderly or disabled person	4	1.7%	3	3.4%	1	1.2%		0.0%
Full time child carer	3	1.3%	1	1.1%	1	1.2%	1	1.4%
Doing something else (please specify?)		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Prefer not to say	2	0.8%		0.0%		0.0%	2	2.9%
Total	239	100.0%	88	100.0%	82	100.0%	69	100.0%

- 5.37 42% of household members are employed full time, 9% part time and 12% are in full time education. Additionally, 17% are unemployed and available for work. This is data gathered in 2021 and reflects the estate population during the third Covid-19 lockdown (January 2021). In summary, 81.2% of the estate are economically active and 18.0% are economically inactive and 0.8% preferred not to say.
- 5.38 The numbers of households where there was currently a **furloughed employee** was 4 (5.6%) of responding households.
- 5.39 The **status of under 18 year olds** is set out in the table below. What this shows is that 14.9% of children are under school age and intending to enrol in a state school in the borough. 5.3% are under school age and intending to enrol at a state school outside the borough. 67% were currently in a school or nursery in the borough. 4.3% in a state school or nursery outside the borough. 3.2% are in private schools or nursery outside the borough and 3.2% are in post 16-18 colleges and 2.1% are in post 16 employment.

What is each person under 18s status?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Under school age & intend to enrol at a state school in Tower Hamlets	14	14.9%	5	11.6%	9	30.0%		0.0%
Under school age & intend to enrol at a private school in Tower Hamlets		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Under school age & intend to enrol at a state school outside of Tower Hamlets	5	5.3%	3	7.0%		0.0%	2	9.5%
Under school age & intend to enrol at a private school outside of Tower Hamlets		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
School or nursery pupil enrolled in state school in Tower Hamlets	63	67.0%	30	69.8%	18	60.0%	15	71.4%
School or nursery pupil enrolled in private school in Tower Hamlets		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
School or nursery pupil enrolled in a state school outside Tower Hamlets	4	4.3%		0.0%		0.0%	4	19.0%
School or nursery pupil enrolled in a private school outside Tower Hamlets	3	3.2%	3	7.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Post 16 -18 college student	3	3.2%	1	2.3%	2	6.7%		0.0%
Post 16-18 employment	2	2.1%	1	2.3%	1	3.3%		0.0%
Prefer not to say		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Total	94	100.0%	43	100.0%	30	100.0%	21	100.0%

5.40 The range of **languages** spoken as a main language in households on the estate is set out below. Bangladeshi is spoken in 52.8% of households and English is spoken in 40.3% of responding households. Somali and French is spoken in 2.8% of households respectively and 1.4% of households speak Portuguese.

Which of the following, is the main language spoken in your household?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
English	29	40.3	10	32.3	13	56.5	6	33.3
Bengali	38	52.8	18	58.1	10	43.5	10	55.6
Somali	2	2.8	2	6.5				
French	2	2.8	1	3.2			1	5.6
Other please specify (Portuguese)	1	1.4					1	5.6
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.41 A supplemental question was asked of those who did not have English as their first language. None of the respondents marked their spoken or written English as being anything less than 5 out of 5. The overall ranking score was 5 for spoken English and 5 for written English. This suggests that written and spoken English is good in all households.

If English is not the main language of people living in your home, please rate on a scale of 1 to 5 your household's ability to converse in English? With 1 being low and 5 being high.	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Average ranking
Spoken English					43	43	5
Written English					42	42	5

5.42 The next question asked respondents how many **bedrooms** were in their home. To this end, 25% of households occupy 2-bedroom units, 58.3% occupy 3-bedroom units and 12.5% occupy 4-bedroom units and 4.2% occupy 5-bedroom units. Nb there are no 5-bedroom units on the estate and these responses came from non-resident leasehold units that were occupied by private tenants, and hence it is assumed are using the living room as a bedroom.

How many bedrooms does your property have?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
2	18	25.0	7	22.6	4	17.4	7	38.9
3	42	58.3	23	74.2	16	69.6	3	16.7
4	9	12.5	1	3.2	3	13.0	5	27.8
5	3	4.2					3	16.7
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.43 The next question asked respondents if they currently consider their household to have the **right number of bedrooms**. 44% stated they did and 56% stated they did not. The detail of this response is set out below.

At the moment, do you consider your household has the right number of bedrooms?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	32	44.4	13	41.9	8	34.8	11	61.1
No	40	55.6	18	58.1	15	65.2	7	38.9
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.44 The next question asked if respondents felt their household was **overcrowded**. 58.33% stated it was and 30% stated it was not. 2 households did not respond to this question.

At the moment, do you consider your household is over-crowded?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	42	58.3	20	64.5	14	60.9	8	44.4
No	29	40.3	11	35.5	9	39.1	9	50.0
Total	71	98.6	31	100.0	23	100.0	17	94.4
Missing	1	1.4					1	5.6
Total	72	100.0					18	100.0

5.45 The next question asked if their home was **under occupied**. 4.2% stated that it was and 93.1% stated that it was not. Once again, 2 households did not respond to this question.

At the moment, do you consider your household is under-occupied?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	3	4.2	2	6.5	1	4.3		
No	67	93.1	29	93.5	22	95.7	16	88.9
Total	70	97.2	31	100.0	23	100.0	16	100
Missing	2	2.8					2	11.1
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

5.46 The next four questions sought to understand whether residents felt there would be **positive or negative impacts** caused by different aspects of the rebuilding proposals including health and wellbeing, childcare and school provision for young people, employment and skills and elderly care/support. In part, this data would describe people’s sense of concern re the proposals.

Perceptions of Impact		Whole Sample	Council Tenants	Resident Leaseholders	Non Resi/Private Tenants
Overall how would the rebuilding of this estate impact on the health and wellbeing of your household?	Positive	67%	77%	57%	33%
	No Impact	20%	10%	17%	61%
	Negative	12%	13%	26%	6%
How will the rebuilding of this estate impact on the childcare and school provision of young people in your household?	Positive	16%	22%	17%	6%
	No Impact	75%	72%	70%	89%
	Negative	8%	6%	13%	6%
How will the rebuilding of this estate impact on the employment and skills needs of those in your household?	Positive	1%	0%	4%	0%
	No Impact	97%	100%	91%	100%
	Negative	1%	0%	4%	0%
How will the rebuilding of this estate impact on the elderly care/ support received by members of your household?	Positive	3%	6%	0%	0%
	No Impact	92%	90%	87%	100%
	Negative	6%	3%	13%	0%

5.47 What is clear is that the levels of perceived negative impacts seem low.

- 12% of respondents felt there would be a negative impact on the health and wellbeing needs of their household.
- 8% felt there would be a negative impact on the childcare school provision of members of their household.
- 1% felt there would be a negative impact on the employment and skill needs of members of their households.
- 5% felt there would be negative impacts on the elderly care/support received by members of their households.

5.48 These questions also gave respondents the opportunity to explain their responses. A summary of these open-ended statements is set out below. N.B. these statements are themes emerging from the responses gathered. Some are supportive or positive statements and others set out people's concerns:

Respondent's perceptions of the impact of the regeneration programme on the following aspects			
Health and well being	Childcare/School Provision	Employment and Skills	Elderly care/support
Stress and fear of the unknown and the construction period	Concerns re children's play facilities and open spaces reducing	No perceived concerns raised	Concern regarding electrical supply due to dialysis
Lack of warmth in current properties	Concerns about the loss of school places		Unknown and carer parking
Reduced Anti-Social Behaviour	More security		
More space, need for bigger property			
Loss of green space, reduced physical space			
Fresh environment			
Loss of parking amenity			

5.49 The next question asked residents to think about the future of their area and identify those **facilities they feel would benefit residents.**

Thinking about the future of your area, what facilities and services would benefit residents? Please tick all that apply:	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	Percent response	Count	Percent response	Count	Percent response	Count	Percent response
Improved health services	62	86%	29	94%	21	91%	12	67%
Improved community facilities	61	85%	28	90%	22	96%	11	61%
Play areas	33	46%	16	52%	15	65%	2	11%
Local shops	26	36%	13	42%	12	52%	1	6%
Local transport	19	26%	11	35%	8	35%		
other	9	13%	6	19%	3	13%	0	0%

5.50 86% wanted to see improvements to health services, 85% improvements to community facilities, 46% to play areas, 36% to local shops, and 26% to local transport. The additional other areas of improvement identified are set out in the table below:

If other, please specify	Frequency	Percent
No suggestions offered	59	81.9
More external space	1	1.4
Bike sheds	1	1.4
Infrastructure challenge and security	1	1.4
More open space	2	2.8
Need green areas	1	1.4
Need to quadruple play space, trashing of community and loss of community infrastructure	1	1.4
Overcrowding in area	1	1.4
Parking	1	1.4
Parking issue	1	1.4
Parking key issue	1	1.4
Reduce anti-social behaviour	1	1.4
Secure areas	1	1.4
Total	72	100.0

5.51 The proportion of those on the site where there are members of a household in receipt of an **income related benefit** is set out in the table below. 54% of household residents who completed this question are receiving some form of income related benefit. The remainder either stated they were not or were not sure.

Are there any members in your household in receipt of income related benefit?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	90	54%	49	75%	27	53%	14	27%
No	70	42%	16	25%	21	41%	33	65%
Not sure	7	4%		0%	3	6%	4	8%
Prefer not to say		0%		0%		0%		0%
Total	167	100%	65	100%	51	100%	51	100%

5.52 The annual **household income levels** of respondents for the whole of the estate are set out below:

Which of the following bandings does your annual household income fall within?	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tenants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Less than £10,000	12	16.7	6	19.4	2	8.7	4	22.2
£10,000 - £15,000	8	11.1	7	22.6			1	5.6
£15,000 - £20,000	3	4.2	3	9.7				
£20,000 - £25,000	1	1.4	1	3.2				
£25,000 - £30,000	1	1.4			1	4.3		
£30,000 - £35,000	1	1.4	1	3.2				
£35,000 - £40,000	2	2.8	1	3.2	1	4.3		
More than £50,000	3	4.2			3	13.0		
Don't Know	34	47.2	12	38.7	11	47.8	11	61.1
Prefer not to say	7	9.7			5	21.7	2	11.1
Total	72	100.0	31	100.0	23	100.0	18	100.0

- 5.53 27.8% of households stated that their annual household income was less than £15,000 per annum, which suggests a high level of poverty. This suggests there is likely to be a sizeable number across the estate beneath the poverty line as defined by the DWP¹¹.
- 5.54 The final question asked residents their **preferred forms of communication** about the regeneration proposals, with telephone, letter and email being the highest preferred options.

Preferred communication methods	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tens	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Telephone	54	75.0%	23	74%	16	70%	15	83%
Letter	30	41.7%	15	48%	10	43%	5	28%
Email	21	29.2%	10	32%	9	39%	2	11%
Noticeboard	2	2.8%		0%		0%	2	2%
Newsletter	2	2.8%		0%		0%	2	2%

Contextual concerns raised by residents from Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House.

- 5.55 The points below represent key concerns that residents have raised and or issues that were felt to be pertinent to this EQIA.
- Many welcomed the regeneration of the estate, feeling that it would improve the look of what some considered to be a rundown estate and welcomed the possibility of a better environment.
 - Car parking – this issue was raised repeatedly and there was great concern about how this was to be addressed following the regeneration of the estate.
 - The loss of green space across the estate was also raised by several participants.
 - Some residents experienced overcrowding and felt that this would be alleviated in the new development.

Profile of the Redcoats Community Centre and Mosque

- 5.56 At the time of this EQIA, the mosque was approached to request a profile breakdown of their worshippers. Unfortunately, the General Secretary of the Redcoats Community Centre and mosque declined to provide any information about the equality and diversity profile of its worshippers/congregation, as they are still in negotiations with the council, and they did not want to provide this information until the negotiations were complete.
- 5.57 It is, however, safe to suggest that those who working at the mosque come from a range of ethnic backgrounds and that they represent all age groups and genders. Clearly, there is also a collective association with the Islamic faith.

¹¹ DWP in 2017 put the level of household incomes beneath the poverty line at a weekly average of £288 per week. This equates to an annual income of £16,128. Annual incomes beneath £15,000 per annum would represent households beneath the UK poverty line.

Headline Summary of the Primary Research completed.

5.58 Implications for the EQIA

- In total 72% of households on the estate (100 units) engaged in this survey. These comprised of:
 - 31 council homes, representing 43.1% of the survey respondents and 86% of the sample council owned homes on the site (36 units).
 - 23 resident leaseholder homes, 31.9% of the survey responses and 68% of the sample of resident leaseholders on the site (34 units).
 - 2 non-resident leaseholders and 16 privately tenanted households, (25% of the survey sample and 60% of the sample of non-resident / privately tenanted households on the site (30 units).
- Collectively 76% of residents in the survey sample have lived in their home for more than 6 years.
- From the sample there were 344 people living in the 72 units, 141 of which are council tenants, 112 are resident leaseholders and 91 are non-resident / private tenants.
- BAME populations on the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House are significant. The white British population in Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House is 7%, leaving a 93% ethnic minority population¹² and a BAME population¹³ of 90.6% non-white populations. This compares to a borough ethnic minority population of 66% and a BAME population of 55%. The residential profile of Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House is more diverse than the profile of the borough.
- The Bangladeshi population of the estate is the majority ethnic grouping, with 72.2% of the population overall, 80.1% of council tenants, 79% of resident leaseholders and 52% of non-resident leaseholders and private tenants.
- The gender profile of the estate is comparable with the borough's gender profile with 51% stating they were male, and 49% female compared to 52% male and 48% female in the borough.
- 8.3% of the households were run by lone parents.
- 15.3% of respondents on the estate stated they have a disability.
- Of these, 43.9% stated they had a long standing illness and health condition, 42.4% with physical impairments, 6.1% with mental health conditions, 4.5% learning disability and 3% sensory impairment.
- 6.9% of residents in the sample are registered carers.
- 31.9% of households have family members that look after or support someone else in their home who needs help with their day-to-day life due to a disability, illness, or old age.
- 15.3% of households in the sample stated they had made an adaptation to their home.

¹² Ethnic minority is defined as people who differ in race or colour or in national, religious, or cultural origin from the dominant group of the country in which they live. For the purposes of this EQIA ethnic minority is used where people have not been defined as White British

¹³ The acronym BAME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and is defined as all ethnic groups except White ethnic groups.

- 27% are under 18. The working age population (18-64) of those on the site is 66.9% and the over 65 population is 6.1%.
- None of respondents stated they were gay/lesbian or bisexual, 100% stating they were straight/heterosexual.
- 81% of respondents said they were Muslim, 10% with no religion and 6.1% stated they were Christian.
- Respondents stated that 0.87% of population (3 women) were either pregnant or had given birth in the last 12 months.
- In terms of marriage and civil partnership, 53% of adults over 16 have never been married or in a civil partnership, 41.4% were married, 1.4% separated, 1.4% divorced and 3.2% widowed.
- 80% were economically active, including 42% of household members who are employed full time, 9% employed part time with 12% in full time education and 17% unemployed and available for work. The remaining categories were economically inactive, including permanent sick and disabled, retired, looking after the home or full time carer, which collectively came to 20%.
- Bangladeshi is spoken as a main household language in 53% of households, English as a main household language is spoken in 40% of responding households. Somali and French is spoken in 2.8% of households respectively and 1.4% of households speak Portuguese. Moreover, of those who had English as a second language all households stated that they have strong written and spoken English.
- Respondents to the survey stated that 25% of households lived in 2 bedrooms, 58.3% in 3 bedrooms, 12.5% in 4 bedrooms and 4.2% in 5 bedrooms. Nb there are no 5 bedroom units in Harriott, Apsley and Pattison and these responses came from private tenants of leasehold units, who clearly must have been using the living room as a bedroom.
- 44% stated their household has the right number of bedrooms, 56% stated they did not.
- 58% stated their household was overcrowded and 40% stated theirs was not.
- 4.2% stated that their home was under occupied and 93.1% stated that it was not.
- 12% of respondents felt there would be a negative impact on the health and wellbeing needs of their household.
- 8% felt there would be a negative impact on the childcare school provision of members of their household.
- 1% felt there would be a negative impact on the employment and skill needs of members of their households.
- 5% felt there would be negative impacts on the elderly care/support received by members of their households.
- 86% wanted to see improvements to health services, 85% improvements to community facilities, 46% to play areas, 36% to local shops, and 26% to local transport.

- 54% of household residents are on some form of income related benefit.
- 28.7% of households stated that their annual household income was less than £15,000 per annum, which suggests a high level of poverty.
- The preferred forms of communication about the regeneration proposals were telephone (75%), letter (42%) and email (29%).
-

5.59 The key concerns raised by residents regarding their perceptions of the impact of the regeneration proposals are highlighted below:

Perceived concerns

- Car parking – this issue was raised repeatedly and there was great concern about how this was to be addressed following the regeneration of the estate.
- The loss of green space across the estate was also raised by several participants.
- Lack of warmth in the current properties.
- Concerns around the possibility of less school places.
- Some general concerns about the uncertainty of regeneration and what it may bring for residents.

Perceived positives

- Many welcomed the regeneration of the estate, feeling that it would improve the look of what some considered to be a rundown estate and welcomed the possibility of a better environment.
- Some residents experienced overcrowding and felt that this may be addressed in the new development.
- Some leaseholders stated they could not currently sell their flat but, in the future, this would be easier, or they could sell to the council and move.
- A fresh environment and better housing conditions.
- Likelihood of larger properties.
- Reduction in Anti-Social behaviour.

6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 This section incorporates both data and analysis to assess the regeneration proposals and their associated decisions. It strives to consider the impact that the regeneration scheme will have on residents who fall under the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 and the additional priorities that Tower Hamlets seek to assess including, language, health and socio-economic factors.

Aims of the proposal.

- 6.2 The general aim of this regeneration scheme is to demolish 100 units that make up Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses and to rebuild 407 homes, of which 63 will be replacement homes for existing tenants and resident leaseholders. The additional homes created will provide at least 32.6% affordable housing and 67.4% housing for private sale which will support the affordability of the scheme.
- 6.3 The tenure profile of the existing homes on the site is made up of 36 secure council tenancies, 34 residents leaseholders and 30 non-resident leaseholders - the majority of whom are renting their units to private tenants.
- 6.4 Within the site there are also three additional non-residential facilities, the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque at 256 Stepney Way and two day care units for people with physical disabilities, the Day Opportunities Service (operated by LBTH) at 260-262 Stephney Way and the Vibrance Day Care unit at 262 Stephney Way (Operated privately). The new scheme will accommodate a mosque and community centre. However, the two day care centres have now been relocated to sites in other parts of the borough replicating the facilities currently available on the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House site.
- 6.5 Through its options appraisal, the borough identified three options of refurbishment of the existing buildings, the regeneration of existing buildings and the development of infill sites as well as the full demolition and redevelopment of the site as a whole. The ballot undertaken in 2020 showed a substantial majority that support for the demolition and redevelopment options.
- 6.6 Planning Permission was granted on the 12th June 2024 for the redevelopment of the Estate comprising the demolition of existing buildings (including HAP Houses, the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque to provide 407 residential units (Class C3) across buildings ranging in height from 4-8 storeys and community centre building of 1,167m² GIA (Class E (e-f), Class F1 (e-f), Class F.2 (b)), together with associated landscaped communal amenity space, accessible car parking, secure cycle parking spaces and refuse/recycling storage facilities in order to facilitate the scheme the council is seeking to undertake a compulsory purchase of the site.

Context of this EQIA

- 6.7 The regeneration of the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison Houses has been designed to address the needs of a wide range of people with protected characteristics.

Regeneration by its very nature can be a disturbing period, particularly for residents directly affected by it. Across regeneration schemes there are always likely to be a range of outcomes, some of which will be negative. However, the aspirations and aims of the regeneration are to maximise the positives for many more people and for a longer period.

- 6.8 What is critical in this EQIA is the need to ensure that any detriment experienced by residents is not a result of their protected characteristic. Indeed, there will be consequences of the unsettling and disturbing nature of the regeneration, which will include elements that have a direct impact on people within the site and in some cases, these direct/indirect impacts will be felt with more force by some people rather than others.
- 6.9 A pertinent differentiation is the ownership of each unit. The offer for secure tenants is different to the offer for resident leaseholders and non-resident leaseholders and private tenants of non-resident leaseholders. These offers will generate different impacts on households in each of these tenure types. However, these impacts are a direct result of the regeneration process and are therefore universally applied to tenants, leaseholders and non-resident leaseholders and private tenants of non-resident leaseholders. Nonetheless, some of these impacts may be disproportionately felt by some tenants and leaseholders by dint of their respective protected characteristic. This EQIA will seek to identify options that the council can consider to minimise/mitigate these regeneration impacts.
- 6.10 To this end, this EQIA has reviewed the regeneration proposals under consideration and seeks to assess plans in terms of their:
- Likely and actual benefits for the regeneration proposals.
 - Recognition of the negative impacts of the regeneration process.
 - An appraisal of impacts on people with protected characteristics.
 - Assessment of the direct and indirect impacts of the regeneration programme and their proportional or disproportional distribution between different protected characteristics.
 - Assessment of the specific impacts placed on tenants and leaseholders and those within and outside the CPO area and where different protected characteristics have a proportional or disproportional negative impact.

Mapping Impacts

- 6.11 A central process within this EQIA is to establish the planned activity set out in the Cabinet Report and to assess the impacts for residents in general. It also aims to highlight how these impacts may manifest themselves and how those with some protected characteristics may experience these impacts more than others.

Impacts to residents adjacent and in the vicinity of the scheme.

- 6.12 It is important in all regeneration schemes to review the impacts likely to be felt by those local communities and businesses who are either adjacent to the site and or who

are in the vicinity of the scheme. Most of these impacts are likely to relate to either the loss of open space, the construction and traffic movements to and from the site and the general disruption caused by the regeneration scheme.

- 6.13 From a business perspective there are 2 businesses within a 300m radius of the site. This includes a food retailer (chicken shop) and a general convenience store. Previous consultation with these businesses has suggested that they are supportive of the scheme as it is likely to provide some business growth during the construction period and beyond when the additional new units are developed.
- 6.14 From a residential population perspective, this EQIA has some baseline population data for the Stepney Green Ward. To this end the key population characteristics for the ward are:
- Stepney Green has a proportionally larger younger person's population when compared to the borough and London. In contrast there are proportionately more older people (65+) in Stepney Green than in Tower Hamlets but less than London and England.
 - Stepney Green has a high proportion of black, Asian, mixed and other minority ethnic populations, larger than the borough and London.
 - At just under 50% Stepney Green has the third highest proportion of Muslims compared to other wards in Tower Hamlets.
 - The proportion of residents in Stepney Green with disabilities and long term life limiting illness is greater than Tower Hamlets and London.
 - Median household income in Stepney Green is below the levels for Tower Hamlets and London.
- 6.15 From this headline data, it is likely that there will be a higher proportion of older and disabled residents as well as black residents. Asian, mixed and other ethnic minority populations that would feel impact from the construction and development phase of the scheme. This is likely to mean that the scheme's development partner will need to address and consider these populations particularly as a result of the environmental and construction impacts of the scheme and to address the needs of residents and businesses in the vicinity as effectively as possible.

Regeneration activity, programme rationale, regeneration impacts and equality impacts.

6.16 All of the impacts arising from different elements of the scheme will depend on how the proposals are implemented. The table below sets out the key components of the regeneration programme as described in the Cabinet Report. It seeks to describe generic impacts of the regeneration programme and to draw from that any equality impacts. The essence of this table will be drawn into the EQIA assessment that follows.

Activity planned	Programme Rationale	Regeneration impacts	Likely Equality impacts (Positive and Negative)
Reducing the borough housing waiting lists	Council-wide commitment to increase social housing by 2,000 units by 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing opportunities for those on the housing register to access social housing in the borough. ▪ Benefits of enabling more people to access social housing, the waiting list is highly diverse with higher levels of black, Asian, mixed and other minority peoples on the housing waiting list. ▪ Many residents are keen to see new properties, which are built to lifetime home standards, more energy efficient and with potentially less problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The housing needs of a wider range of protected characteristics currently represented on the common housing register will be positively enhanced through the development of these new units. ▪ There will be more homes designed to lifetime homes standards and with disability access. ▪ Improving the housing stock will provide homes to higher standards and hence improve the quality of accommodation for residents currently on the site, particularly those with sensory and mobility impairments, and long term health conditions.
Demarcation of CPO area	Central to assemble the development site to commence construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Highlight which units are included within the development red line area. ▪ Confirm those units that are due for demolition. ▪ Raises potential concerns for residents, particularly those with a leasehold interest in their property. ▪ Demolition places a strain on residents within the development red line area, with the realisation of the 'clock ticking' before they need to leave their old homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There may be negative impacts on older leaseholders who are less able to afford their new home. ▪ General sense of stress, anxiety and disturbance for residents within the development red line area.

Activity planned	Programme Rationale	Regeneration impacts	Likely Equality impacts (Positive and Negative)
Design	New energy efficient homes built to Lifetime homes standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transferring tenants/leaseholders will have access to the specification and designs of their new homes. ▪ Improved housing - better insulated, more energy efficient and removing current housing maintenance shortfalls. ▪ Design incorporates secure by design (SBD) principles which should improve safety and reduce anti-social behaviour and the landscape design ensures the open spaces are of a superior quality and more useable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The needs of older people and people with disabilities will be enhanced by the development of properties built to lifetime homes standards. ▪ Families with dependent children and or adults with specific needs will have units that are in much better condition than currently. ▪ The new units are likely to be better insulated and cheaper to heat, hence reducing the risk of fuel poverty.
Planning	Planning applications to release the development process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The planning of the scheme sets out the project masterplan, unit design and compliance with local and national planning regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The planning process itself should be equalities neutral.
Development programme	The construction programme itself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impact on residents within the site as well as those outside it. ▪ Impact of development for properties outside the CPO but immediately adjacent to the regeneration itself include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption, noise, dust, traffic and construction disturbance. • Potential parking issues on site during the period of the regeneration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential negative health impacts of the construction process including noise, dust, construction debris and environmental impacts that negatively impact on health and disability. ▪ Households with children and older people may find the regeneration process and the related construction harder to live with.

Activity planned	Programme Rationale	Regeneration impacts	Likely Equality impacts (Positive and Negative)
Decant	Decanting of those on the site to new units built on open land within the site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At this stage in the development the decant proposals have yet to be established. It is perceived that there will be an element of decant to enable the development, but this will be defined following the current consultation programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The decant process will need to address the equality needs of residents. Those are most likely to be affected negatively are those who are older, younger, disabled and/or have health conditions. ▪ Wellbeing is a critical factor, as is the support network previously available pre-regeneration. ▪ Some residents may lose immediate neighbours in the transfer to new accommodation which may have negative impacts on residents reliant on a local/neighbour care network. The council have stated that they will look to rehouse neighbours together especially if there is a relationship/responsibility of care expressed.
Allocations of new housing	The site specific allocations policy has yet to be developed/ drafted for this regeneration scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ While effort will be made to ensure there is as close to a like for like replacement of their homes, there are clearly going to be some residents who will not get what they had before. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effort is needed to ensure that the regeneration implications do not affect certain protected characteristics disproportionately, but also, and critically, it is important that the key needs of these protected characteristics are considered in the reallocation process, and there may be a need for specialist OT and support staff.
Transfer to new housing	Based on the allocation policy, the transfer will, for tenants and resident leaseholders wishing to remain on the estate, be to a new home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The designs of the new homes are finalised. ▪ The improved quality of homes will ensure greater energy efficiency, better design and will be built to lifetime homes standards. ▪ The details for future rents has yet to be defined. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transfers to new homes and the allocations/negotiation process, needs to be set against the resident's equality needs. ▪ Staff undertaking this work need to recognise these equality implications. ▪ Affordability of the new homes will impact more on those with less disposable income.

Activity planned	Programme Rationale	Regeneration impacts	Likely Equality impacts (Positive and Negative)
Phasing	The phasing of the development has been proposed in outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The development process has identified 2 phases of regeneration activity. This has allowed residents of future phases to move only once into new homes where requested. ▪ Creating opportunity to move (in a single move) residents to new properties to free up their previous unit/block to commence second and third phases of the development process. ▪ Minimising the number of moves is part of the aims of the regeneration programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarity and communication of the phasing process is critical, and residents have stated their concerns, frustration and the associated stress and anxiety around this.
Landlord Offer: Rights for Secure Tenants – the principles	All tenants will have the right to a tenancy of a newly built, social rented home in the new development. They will continue to be a tenant of Tower Hamlets Council with their existing tenancy rights such as the right to buy and succession rights retained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure tenants will be charged 'social' rents. ▪ Council tenants are entitled to home loss payments and disturbance allowances. ▪ Tenants will be entitled to a home loss payment, which is currently set by law at £6,400. ▪ The council will also pay a disturbance allowance to ensure that tenants are not financially disadvantaged by the regeneration. ▪ Tenants can apply for the size of home that meets the housing needs of their household. ▪ An additional bedroom may be requested on a discretionary basis for carers both within and outside the family. ▪ Some tenants may experience a move out of the estate before returning to a new home on it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The principles behind this offer seem to be equality neutral. The council should ensure that they are not applied differently for people with different equality characteristics. ▪ Many of the potential impacts are likely to become visible once residents are in detailed discussions with Tower Hamlets teams about their own personal circumstances including financial, physical and social, as they explore the options available to them. ▪ Staff completing this work will need to be mindful of the location's diversity and to address the needs of each household appropriately.

Activity planned	Programme Rationale	Regeneration impacts	Likely Equality impacts (Positive and Negative)
Landlord Offer: Rights to homeowners – the principles	The document explains the council’s approach to buying back their property when demolition or redevelopment is proposed and the options, they will have to buy a replacement home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides for the option of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing a replacement home. • Purchasing a new shared equity property at no extra cost. • Part-shared equity and part-rent. • Lease swap to a council property elsewhere in Tower Hamlets. • Sell to the council and buy a property elsewhere. ▪ Council offer options to discuss and hear leaseholder concerns. ▪ Following cabinet approval, the council will arrange an initial valuation of their property. ▪ The council would pay (within in certain limits) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home loss payments • Claiming fees for professional adviser • Valuation fees • Negotiation fees • Legal fees for the sale of their home • Legal fees for buying a replacement home • Removal fees • Surveyor’s fees on new home purchases (off site) • Stamp Duty Land tax ▪ Succession rights are defined for the leaseholders’ spouse or immediately family member living at the property to inherit it under the same financial/rental arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The principles behind this offer seem to be equality neutral. ▪ The key equality implications relate to older people, particularly those who are no longer earning, which may place a burden of financial hardships on those needing to raise further mortgage. ▪ Furthermore, some leaseholders, especially if they speak English as a second language, may experience difficulty in understanding the implications of the negotiation process. N.B. evidence from the survey has suggested that from the sample all those who do not speak English as a first language believe they have a good grasp of written and spoken English.

Activity planned	Programme Rationale	Regeneration impacts	Likely Equality impacts (Positive and Negative)
Rights for Non-Resident Homeowners – the principles.	Non-resident homeowners, (not living in the property for the last 12 months), will be offered the full market value by the council to purchase their property. They will also be paid a 7.5% basic loss compensation payment as well as reimbursements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reimbursements include reasonable fees and taxes incurred for both the sale of the property and for the purchase of a replacement property for a limited period, including independent valuation and legal support. ▪ Owners should engage with the council for an initial valuation, to discuss concerns and to negotiate a settlement. ▪ The council valuer will arrange an appointment to make an initial valuation of the property. ▪ The council will pay (within certain limits) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic loss payments • Repaying arrears • Fees for independent surveyor • Negotiation fees • Valuation fees • Legal fees for the sale of their home • Legal fees for buying another property • Removal fees • Stamp Duty Land tax (for the onward purchase of one property) ▪ The council does not have an automatic responsibility to rehouse people who may be occupying a property. If these 'private' tenants or other occupiers require housing advice, they can contact the council to obtain this, but that does not imply they will have any entitlement to relocation support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The principles behind this offer seem to be equality neutral. ▪ Whilst not an equalities impact, there are private tenants living in units owned by non-residential leaseholders. They have the right to be rehoused if they are on the housing register in bands 1 and 2. The remaining private tenants will be able to access housing advice and to review their housing options.

HARRIOT, APSLEY & PATTISON HOUSE

Equality Impact analysis in summary

6.17 Set out below is the equality impact analysis of each protected characteristics and local equality characteristics assessing impact in terms of, **positive**, **negative**, **positive** and **negative**, **none/neutral**, or unknown.

Race: EQIA Finding: None/neutral

Context:

6.18 Tower Hamlets has the highest Bangladeshi population in London (34.6% at the time of the 2021 census). The number of those from white British backgrounds is 22.9%. The black, Asian, mixed and other minority¹⁴ ethnic population for Stepney Green Ward at the time of the 2021 census was 73%, compared to 60.7% for Tower Hamlets, 46.2% for London and 19.9% for England. 82% of those on the borough's housing register with ethnicity recorded are from black, Asian, mixed and other minority ethnic communities and applicants from the Bangladeshi community represent 52% of those on the register. Black, Asian, mixed and other minority ethnic households have higher levels of housing need compared to white British households.

Race profile of the site

6.18.1 The white British population in Harriott, Apsley & Pattison House is 7%, leaving a 93% ethnic minority population and a black, Asian, mixed and other minority population of 90.6% non-white populations. Bangladeshi residents make up 72% of the site population, and 80% of council tenants, 78.9% of resident leaseholders and 52% of nonresident leaseholders/private tenants. The population on the site therefore has a higher BAME and Bangladeshi population than the local ward and borough population profiles.

Assessment

6.18.2 The positive impacts for this group relate to the same impacts that a successful regeneration of the estate will have. Homes will be available to all communities in the same way. The diversity of the local community is significant. A critical factor is the need to enable those wanting to stay on the estate to do so and to work to ensure that the relocation of residents is consistent and fair and not influenced by someone's ethnicity.

6.18.3 The EQIA survey undertaken in 2021 indicated that residents did not raise the issue of race as a concern.

¹⁴ NB this does not include White British, White Irish, Gypsy and Traveller and White Other.

- 6.18.4 Moreover, from the evidence gathered, there are no stated negative impacts from a race perspective and regeneration plans were seen as broadly positive from a race equality perspective.
- 6.18.5 It is critical to ensure that council tenants, resident leaseholders, and non-resident leaseholders and their private tenants have positive experiences from this regeneration proposal, irrespective of their race. There is clearly a majority of minoritised people living in Harriott, Apsley & Pattison. Nonetheless, there may be some groups that will have a higher likelihood of negative impacts. This is particularly true of those who are older, with lower socio-economic status and those with health conditions and disabilities. It's likely that many of these people will also be from black, Asian and minoritized communities. There is therefore a risk of indirect negative impacts on black, Asian and minoritized populations.
- 6.18.6 A central characteristic of Harriott, Apsley & Pattison is its diversity, and it is important to ensure that the black, Asian and minoritized residents and indeed all residents are effectively engaged through the regeneration process.
- 6.18.7 It is likely that the proportional benefits of the regeneration programme will be felt by these ethnic minority and black, Asian and minoritized populations, given the high proportions on the estate. It is equally critical that where negative impacts are identified for other protected characteristics or identified priorities, that these are addressed, thereby mitigating any indirect negative impacts felt by black, Asian and minoritized populations.
- 6.18.8 From the evidence gathered there are no direct negative impacts from a race perspective, and the regeneration plans are therefore broadly neutral from a race equality perspective.

Gender: EQIA Finding: None/neutral

Context

- 6.19 Tower Hamlets' gender split is 50.2% male and 49.8% female. In Stepney Green the gender profile is 50.6 % male and 49.4 % female. However, on the housing register there are more female (52%) than male (47%) applicants. Indeed regarding housing need, women applying for housing are more likely to have dependent children and therefore require family-sized homes, while men applying for housing more likely to

require studios or 1-bedroom homes. The gender split therefore has a bearing on the need for different property sizes.

Gender profile of the site

- 6.19.1 Based on the primary research carried out, the gender profile of Harriot, Apsley and Pattison shows a 50.9% male population and a 49.1% female population.
- 6.19.2 8.3% respondents to the survey indicated they were single parent families. The majority of these households were headed up by women.

Assessment

- 6.19.3 There was a clear sense that the improvement to housing stock and the provision of new homes would be a strong positive of the regeneration process. This should benefit both men and women and as such gender should not be a factor in the allocation of these social housing units going forward as the allocation policy should take over and hopefully secure equitable distribution of tenancies.
- 6.19.4 From the evidence gathered, there are no stated negative impacts from a gender perspective, thus plans are broadly neutral from a gender perspective.

Gender re-assignment: EQIA Finding: None/neutral.

Context:

- 6.20 Based on the 2021 census, nationally, the proportion of the population aged 16 years and over whose gender identity was different from their sex at birth was 0.45%, in London this was 0.78% and in Tower Hamlets this was 0.85%. This is the closest assessment of gender re-assignment available through the 2021 census.
- 6.21 Borough wide housing data is not available for people who have undergone or who are undergoing a gender reassignment process. Applicants are given priority according to the scheme criteria, not gender. Services are customer-focused and there is discretion within the proposed scheme to respond to individual circumstances if necessary.

Gender re-assignment profile of the site

- 6.21.1 Based on the primary research carried out there are no individuals who have undergone or are undergoing a gender transition process.

Assessment

- 6.21.2 From the evidence gathered there are no stated or perceived negative impacts from a gender re-assignment perspective and plans are broadly neutral from a gender re-assignment perspective.

Disability: EQIA Finding: Positive and Negative

Context

- 6.22 15% of Tower Hamlets' working age population have been identified as having some form of disability. The regeneration scheme is committed to supporting residents with a disability through medical and OT assessments to inform adaptations needed for units prior to residents with needs moving in.
- 6.23 Tower Hamlets' Common Housing Register Partnership Allocations Scheme (November 2020) has two Bands (1&2) which are the housing needs bands where applicants have reasonable preference to be housed. There are two groups within Band 1 (Group A and Group B) both of which would ensure that secure council tenants who have a medical or disability need for a ground floor or a wheelchair accessible property (Group A) or who are priority decants (these are decants with less than a year to clearance date – or a decant household which requires 4 bed or larger – or a decant requiring a wheelchair accessible property - category A or B), will be housed. Group B of Band 1 will cover priority medical and all other decants (with more than a year until clearance).
- 6.24 On Census Day 2021, 877 residents (7.2%) in Stepney Green had a long term health problem or disability limiting their day to day activities a lot, while around 8.2% (991 residents) had a long term health problem or disability limiting the persons day to day activities a little. Collectively, there were 15.4% whose day to day activities were limited either a little or a lot. 84.6% of the population of Stepney Green did not have a disability under the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.25 In Stepney Green, the rate of people with a long term health problem or disability limiting day to day activities a lot and the rate of people with a long term health problem or disability limiting day to day activities a little were both above London and Tower Hamlets averages.
- 6.26 Those who stated their health was good came to 81.4% (9,871) and those who stated their health was not good came to 18.6% (2,258).

Disability profile of the site

- 6.26.1 Based on the primary research carried out, the disability profile of the estate shows:
- 7.2% had a health problem/disability which limited their life a lot and 8.1% had a health problem/disability that limited their life a little. This suggests that some 15.3% have a health problem/disability of some form.
- 6.26.2 Several respondents to the open-ended health and age questions referenced members of their households with levels of disability.

6.26.3 A more detailed response of the types of perceived additional needs of residents is set out below:

- 44% had a long-standing illness or health condition (such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy).
- 42% had a physical impairment (such as using a wheelchair to get around and/or difficulty using their arms).
- 6.1% had a mental health condition (such as depression or schizophrenia).
- 4.5% had a learning disability (such as Down's syndrome or dyslexia) or cognitive impairment (such as autism or head-injury).
- 3% had a sensory impairment (such as being blind / having a visual impairment or being deaf / having a hearing impairment).

6.26.4 Responses suggest that there are some equality impacts which will impact either negatively or positively for residents with disabilities. These include:

Potential negative impacts:

- The disturbance of moving may have a disproportionate impact on disabled residents (66 residents from the survey sample).
- The quality of life of some residents will be affected by the regeneration programme itself, particularly if their disability is accompanied by a respiratory condition (29 residents have a long-standing illness).
- Residents with a sensory impairment may be particularly affected by loud noise or construction machinery.
- The new physical layout of the estates will be challenging to those with visual impairment (2 households with sensory impairment).
- It would be important to move people with a disability only once in the process and preferably into homes with readily set up adaptations (28 residents have a physical impairment).
- People with learning difficulties, subject to the intensity of their condition, will also be affected by the construction process and may need separate forms of communication and engagement to enable their understanding of the reality of their situation (3 residents from the survey).

Potential Positive Impacts

- All new homes will be built to lifetime homes standards.
- Tower Hamlets have made the commitment to ensure that at least 10% of properties are being built for disabled people and will have relevant adaptations and equipment built in. All existing tenants and leaseholders can complete a health assessment form, and this will be reviewed by the occupational health team and appropriate modifications will be made to the new units.

- Access and egress from the new homes will be supported with lifts and dedicated disabled parking supported by secure design principles.
- Greater choice to disabled people who cannot achieve independent living due to lack of suitable housing in the borough's housing stock.
- Application of Considerate Contractor requirements to minimise negative impacts during the construction period.

Age: EQIA Finding: Positive and Negative

Context

- 6.27 The child population (0-15) represents 21.2% of the total population in Stepney Green, this is more than Tower Hamlets 18.5%, London 18.3% and England 17.7%
- 6.28 Working age population 16-64 in Stepney Green is 70.3% this is less than Tower Hamlets 75.9%, but higher than London 69.7% and England 63.6%
- 6.29 Older people (65+) in Stepney Green are 8.5% more than the level in Tower Hamlets 5.6%, but less than London 12.0% and England 18.8%

Age profile of the site

- 6.30 The under 18 profile of the respondents to the survey within the site is 27%. This shows that 3 in 10 occupants of the site are currently under 18. The working age population (18-64) of those on the site is 66.9% and the over 65 population is 6.1%.

Assessment

- 6.30.1 The assessment suggests that there are some equality impacts (both negative and positive) for different age groups particularly children, young people and older people.

Potential negative impacts:

- Older people with disabilities are likely to have varying negative impacts potentially because of this regeneration programme.
- In general, older people have been living on the estate for a longer period than other residents and will be more settled and are likely to require more support when moving.
- For people of all ages, the regeneration programme is likely to cause disturbance, which is particularly likely to apply to older people if they are living on their own, are frail and vulnerable.
- For children and young people, the loss of the estate's amenities and play space can be critical during the construction period.
- There may also be disruption to school life, particularly for young people trying to study at home during the construction period itself.
- There may be an impact on childcare arrangements, particularly if there are informal arrangements with other residents who may be moving off the estate. Access to childcare, nurseries, creches and schools will need to be addressed to minimise any disruption.

Specific issues for older Leaseholders

- The profile of age by tenure type shows that there is a slightly higher proportion of resident leaseholders who are over 65.
- Older leaseholders may find it difficult to raise any additional mortgage on their new properties. The shared ownership/equity option seeks to address this, but this still may cause older leaseholders to feel their aspirations of owning 100% their own home is being undermined, although they will own an asset of the same value as that previously owned.
- All these aspects are likely to cause residential leaseholders, particularly older leaseholders' greater levels of anxiety, stress, depression leading to ill health.

Potential Positive Impacts

- All new homes will be built to lifetime homes standards.
- Tower Hamlets are committed to ensuring that 10% of properties are being built for disabled people and will have relevant adaptations and equipment built by design, many of these disabled people are also older people and this would benefit this community too. All existing tenants and leaseholders are able to complete a health assessment form, and this will be reviewed by the occupational health team and appropriate modifications will be made to the new unit/s.
- Key guarantees provide options for both tenants and residential leaseholders to relocate into new homes on the estate.

Sexual Orientation: EQIA Finding: **None/neutral.**

Context:

- 6.31 The data for the sexual orientation of residents in the borough, based on the 2021 Census, was released in January 2023 and shows that nationally 89.37% are heterosexual, in London this percentage was 86.19%, and in Tower Hamlets this was 83.07%. From the perspective of those who stated they were gay or lesbian the national figure was 1.54%, London was 2.23%, and Tower Hamlets was 3.96%. For those that stated they were bisexual person the national figure was 1.29%, London was 2.23%, and Tower Hamlets was 2.52%. The remaining either stated they were pan sexual, asexual, queer or stated they were of another sexual orientation (0.69% in the case of Tower Hamlets) or that they 'did not answer' this question (9.76% in the case of Tower Hamlets).
- 6.32 There is only a limited amount of information on sexual orientation available, regionally and nationally. Guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission states to collect it where relevant and sexual orientation is not relevant to the majority of housing

services, with the exception of tackling harassment. Sexual Orientation details are not recorded for those in the borough's Common Housing Register.

Sexual orientation profile of the site

- 6.33 The sexual orientation profile of residents responding to the survey shows that 100% of respondents stated that they were straight/heterosexual.

Assessment

- 6.33.1 In reviewing the current proposals for the regeneration of Harriott, Apsley and Pattisson there are no discernible negative impacts identified for LGBTQ groups. The design of the new homes and spaces will create a place that is secure by design and can be policed more easily. The public realm will offer a greater level of security to all which may be relevant to LGBTQ residents who are more likely to be subject to hate crime and harassment.
- 6.33.2 During the course of the engagement interviews with 72 householders on the site (72% of those on the site) there were no raised concerns regarding sexual orientation and the regeneration process.

Religion and belief: EQIA Finding: None/neutral.

Context:

- 6.34 The proportion of residents who identified themselves as Christian in Stepney Green was 17.9% – lower than the borough average of 24%. At 56.7% of the population, the proportion of Muslim residents was a higher proportion than the 43% of Muslims in the borough. 16.5% of residents in the Stepney Green ward stated that they had no religion, this is lower than the borough proportion of those stating no religion of 29%.

Religion and belief profile of the site:

- 6.34.1 The Muslim faith makes up the largest group of respondents from HAP at 80.8% of the whole sample, 90.8% of council tenants, 84.5% of resident leaseholders and 61.5% of non-resident leaseholders/private tenants.
- 6.34.2 The scheme also includes the demolition and rebuild of the Redcoat community center and mosque.

Assessment

- 6.34.3 There were no discernible negative impacts raised by residents in the engagement process. Moreover, there are no aspects which would prevent residents from practicing their religion/faith.
- 6.34.4 To this end, the council will consider people's ability to practice their faith through the different stages of the project. The rehousing team will ask

people about their use of places of worship to see the extent to which disruption to their lives can be minimised.

- 6.34.5 The extension of the mosque's lease is a key recommendation to cabinet. This would enable the mosque and its worshippers the benefit of a new purpose built 'standalone' building rather than the temporary units it currently operates from within. The proposal to develop a new standalone 3 to 4 story mosque is a positive impact for worshippers of the Redcoats Community Centre and mosque. These additional amendments were included in the June 2024 planning application.

Pregnancy and maternity: EQIA Finding: Positive and negative.

Context:

- 6.35 In 2019 there were 4,331 live births in Tower Hamlets. There were 164 live births in Stepney Green representing 3.7% of the live births in the borough.

Pregnancy and maternity profile of the site:

- 6.36 From the survey sample of residents the number of those who are either pregnant or who have given birth in the last 12 months was 3. This represents some 0.87% of the population from the survey sample. While this does seem quite low, it is consistent with the lower pregnancy rates since the Covid-19 pandemic.

Assessment

- 6.36.1 From previous analysis and engagement of partners with newborn children on regeneration estate schemes it is likely that there will be both negative and positive impacts. These include:

Negative impacts

- There is likely to be disruption during the construction period and the council may wish to provide access routes through the estate during this time. This may negatively impact on pregnant mothers or families with new-born children.
- Efforts to address this disruption will be universal to the entire population of the estate but are more likely to impact on people with buggies and or wheelchairs.
- Those who have to move as a result of the regeneration programme may lose the on-hand support of carers neighbours/family and friends in the area as a result of the move. Where possible, the council will seek to move neighbours with each other where this is requested.

Positive Impacts

- New housing will have greater accessibility and will support parents of new-born babies or mothers in periods of pregnancy and maternity.
- The design and layout of the new homes will consider access, lift and stairs so that larger family homes are either accessible by lift or not

above four storeys high without a lift. The design of the public realm will consider accessibility for people moving around the estate, pushing buggies etc.

- Any affected council tenants who are pregnant at the time of re-housing may be entitled to a larger property as per the allocations policy.
- The design will meet modern space standards with provision for buggy storage at ground floor level in blocks with no lift.

Marriage & Civil Partnership: EQIA Finding: **None/neutral.**

Context:

- 6.37 According to the Census 2021, Tower Hamlets has a significantly higher proportion of residents who are single (53.8%) compared to London and England & Wales, compared to 46.2% in London and 37.9% in England & Wales.
- 6.38 In Stephey Green in 2021, 41.6% have never been married, 27.1% are married to someone of a different sex, 0.3% are married to someone of the same sex, 0.2% are in civil partnerships, 1.8% are separated, 4.3% divorced, 3.5% widowed and for 21.1% this question did not apply because of their young age.
- 6.39 The council recognises same-sex relationships and civil partnerships with respect to household composition. There are no known negative impacts on these groups. Nonetheless there are other married or legal partnership statuses that will have some implications particularly where property ownership and tenure matters are concerned.

Marriage and civil partnership profile of the site:

- 6.40 The high proportion of those that have never married and never registered a same sex civil partnership (52.7%) will mostly be young adults. Within the responding households 41.4% of people over 16 were married, 1.4% were separated, 1.4% divorced and 3.2% widowed.

Assessment

- 6.40.1 It is worth noting that in law, marital status does have an impact, particularly, with regard to property tenure, ownership rights and access to finance/lending/pensions. This could apply in a number of ways:
- Tenancy rights for parties who are resident but who are not named as either the head of household and or not named on the tenancy agreement but who are either separated or divorced from that person.
 - Unmarried couples and those who are not named on property deeds.
 - Financial problems with couples who have separated, (reduction in joint earnings etc).
 - Financial difficulties in raising loans and or mortgages.
 - Splitting statutory loss payments.

- 6.40.2 Indeed, the stress and anxiety of regeneration schemes can be accentuated for people where their marital status has changed and/or if a partner has left or died. For example, some bereaved residents may experience higher levels of vulnerability in a regeneration environment particularly if they were not married to their partner who has died.
- 6.40.3 Support and advice may be required for tenants and leaseholders who have undergone either a divorce or bereavement to enable them to understand the implication of the regeneration process on their housing ownership, tenure rights and accessibility to obtaining a mortgage.
- 6.40.4 The scheme itself does not present a direct negative impact on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership and is thus seen as equality neutral. Nonetheless it may generate some indirect negative impacts for people where their marriage or civil partnership status affects their tenancy agreement and or ownership of property. In these cases, support and advice may be required to secure the necessary agreement on which to progress the transfer/ transaction and to mitigate any negative impacts of the scheme. These complexities are relevant in many regeneration schemes and will need to be addressed as they arise.

Socio Economic Inequality: EQIA Finding: Positive and negative.

Context:

- 6.41 While the borough has a good average income, a significant percentage of the population have incomes of less than £15,000 per year. The borough needs to deliver a significant number of affordable homes each year to meet housing need.
- 6.42 The employment rate for residents in Stepney Green was 47.7% compared to 57.6% for Tower Hamlets, 62.4% for London and 62.1% for England. The unemployment rate for residents in Stepney Green was 7.1% compared to 6.7% for Tower Hamlets, 5.2% for London and 4.4% for England.

Socio-economic profile of the site:

- 6.43 42% of household members are employed full time, 9% part time and 12% in full time education and 17% unemployed and available for work. This is data gathered in 2021 and reflects the estate population during the 3rd Covid-19 lockdown (January 2021). In summary 81.2% of the estate are economically active and 18.0% are economically inactive and 0.8% preferred not to say.
- 6.44 The proportion of those on the site where there are members of households who receive an income related benefit was asked as part of the survey. 54% of household residents who completed this question are in receipt of some type of income related benefit. The remainder either stated they were not or were unsure.
- 6.45 In the EQIA survey, 27.8% of households stated that their annual household income was less than £15,000 per annum, which suggests a high level of poverty. This suggests there is likely to be a sizeable number across the estate beneath the poverty line as defined by the DWP.¹⁵

Assessment

- 6.45.1 The regeneration programme will have impacts on residents, tenants and leaseholders alike, which might incur greater costs and hence become a burden for those residents unable to afford the associated costs, for example there may be a consequential rise in the value of the new properties in terms of rent levels. Many of the direct costs associated with the scheme are being addressed including legal costs, disturbance and moving costs. The points below highlight some of these potentially negative impacts.

Negative impacts

- Perception of increasing cost and affordability of living on the new development.
- Increased rental cost may have a negative impact on those on lower and fixed incomes including older people.

¹⁵ DWP in 2017 put the level of household incomes beneath the poverty line at a weekly average of £288 per week. This equates to an annual income of £16,128. Annual incomes beneath £15,000 per annum would represent households beneath the UK poverty line.

- Higher proportion of estate residents on income related benefits.
- Older people with less earning capability.
- Resident and non-resident leaseholders have no choice but to sell, however rehousing is available for resident leaseholders on the estate if they can afford the new home and/or the option of shared equity or shared ownership if they cannot. In short, they will be offered a property on a like for like basis. However, if they want a larger unit, they will need to demonstrate they have a housing need for any additional bedroom.
- For resident leaseholders wishing to remain on the estate, it is recognised that the value of similar sized new homes would be more than their current home and therefore it could be difficult for them to buy a new home on the estate outright. However, the provision of shared ownership/equity options does seek to mitigate this by giving them the ability to retain the same level of financial investment in a new home on the estate.
- It is recognised that there may be some leaseholders who may have re-mortgaged their homes, spent the money from equity release and may also be unemployed. In these circumstances, it may be difficult for leaseholders to either remain on the estate or buy elsewhere. The shared ownership option could cater for these circumstances.

Positive impacts

- The acute shortage of homes and rising population is adding extra pressure on the need to provide affordable and social rented homes in the borough, which this regeneration programme seeks to achieve.
- Regeneration of an estate and increasing supply of council housing stock will benefit the increasing number of Tower Hamlets' residents who cannot afford to buy or rent in the private sector.
- Improved energy efficiency of homes and use of sustainable technologies should lead to lower running costs.
- S106 obligations will provide employment and training opportunities.

Language: EQIA Finding: Positive and negative

Context:

- 6.46 73% of residents in Tower Hamlets reported that English is their main spoken language and an additional 20.7% of residents stated that, whilst it is not their main language, they can speak English well or very well. 6.2% of residents don't speak English well or at all.
- 6.47 Proficiency in spoken English has improved slightly in the decade between 2011 and 2021. In 2011, 8% of residents could not speak English well or at all, compared to just

6.2% of residents in 2021. After English, Bengali is the most commonly spoken language in Tower Hamlets (11%) then Italian (2.2%) and Spanish (1.7%).

- 6.48 The impact of the regeneration proposals on people who do not speak English as a primary language is likely to be significant. Alternative formats of the proposals are available upon request (such as audible copies for blind people) as well as being made available in different languages. At every stage of the regeneration, the council has sought to use plain English and avoid jargon.
- 6.49 The estates regeneration website, where residents can review the proposals, is translated into different community languages and support is available to those unable to use the system.

Language profile of the estate:

- 6.49.1 The range of languages spoken as a main language in households on the estate is set out below. Bangladeshi is spoken in 52.8% of households and English is spoken in 40.3% of responding households. Somali and French is spoken in 2.8% of households respectively and 1.4% of households speak Portuguese.
- 6.49.2 Moreover, of those who had English as a second language all households stated that they have strong written and spoken English.

Assessment

- 6.49.3 Language on its own is not likely to have any significant equality impacts from the regeneration programme itself other than the ability for residents to communicate and understand the implications of the regeneration process as it applies to different households. Most households have someone who does speak English although English is in many cases a second language in a home.

Key negative impacts

- Capacity and capability to understand is not always about language, it may also be connected to issues of mental health, learning disability and age.

Positive Impacts

- Robust engagement with residents through the scheme design process via the Residents Panel, newsletters, events, visits to other schemes and presentations.
- Input from residents into the scheme proposals and design and eventual planning submission.

Health: EQIA Finding: Positive and negative

Context:

6.50 Health and housing are intricately linked. Poor quality housing and homelessness can affect a person's health and wellbeing. As noted above with respect to disability, the reduction in priority given to homelessness leads to a corresponding increase in priority to those who need to move due to illness or disability.

Health profile of the estate:

6.50.1 The following health needs apply to members of each household.

Which of the following health needs apply to member/s of your household? Self-Declared Health Needs	Whole Sample		Council Tenants		Resident Leaseholders		Non Resi/Private Tens	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Problems with arms, hands	1	1.4%		0.0%	1	3.7%		0.0%
Problems with legs or feet	16	22.5%	7	20.0%	7	25.9%	2	22.2%
Problems with back or neck	2	2.8%		0.0%	1	3.7%	1	11.1%
Difficulty in seeing	1	1.4%		0.0%	1	3.7%		0.0%
Difficulty in hearing		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Speech impediment		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Skin conditions, allergies		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Chest, breathing problems	4	5.6%	2	5.7%	2	7.4%		0.0%
Heart blood pressure, circulation	6	8.5%	3	8.6%	3	11.1%		0.0%
Problems with stomach, liver, kidney, digestion		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Diabetes	8	11.3%	3	8.6%	4	14.8%	1	11.1%
Depression, bad nerves	4	5.6%	2	5.7%	2	7.4%		0.0%
Epilepsy		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Learning difficulties	3	4.2%	2	5.7%	1	3.7%		0.0%
Mental illness, phobia, panics	3	4.2%	2	5.7%	1	3.7%		0.0%
Learning disabilities		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Long term medical condition	19	26.8%	11	31.4%	4	14.8%	4	44.4%
Progressive illness	4	5.6%	3	8.6%		0.0%	1	11.1%
Total	71	100.0%	35	100.0%	27	100.0%	9	100.0%

Assessment

6.50.2 The regeneration programme is likely to have both positive and negative implications for people's health and wellbeing. This will affect households equally across the estate.

Negative impacts

- Negative health and well-being outcomes would be associated with disruptions to existing households on the estate and the inevitable stress this causes.
- Impacts in the short-term associated with the disruption of moving home and uncertainty about the future stress, anxiety and depression are issues that residents have stated will impact negatively on their health.
-

- The construction environment can exacerbate existing health conditions and may be, for some, the cause of new health conditions. Currently there are relatively high levels of Limiting Long Term Illness and Long-term conditions present on the estate (29 people).
- Resident's health can be negatively impacted by the development through respiratory and circulatory disease, asthma etc.
- Potential health impact when the demolition and construction activity starts, will necessitate the requirement to assess and diagnose those that have indicated their conditions are likely to be affected.
- The interview team uncovered residents with self-declared health needs describing particularly ailments/pain associated their legs, feet, neck and backs. This suggests that there is a need to address physical mobility/access as priorities in the regeneration design of walkways and pathways.

Positive impacts

- Longer term, positive impacts can be expected from providing much better-quality homes and reducing overcrowding.
- Quality homes designed according to best practice in urban design, producing a high-quality home and urban environment and a safe and secure new neighbourhood which will contribute positively to resident's quality of life.
- Application of Considerate Contractor requirements to minimise negative impact during construction period.

7 Key Findings

- 7.1 The regeneration of Harriott House, Apsley House & Pattison House is a major undertaking, which will have a range of impacts applicable to all the residents living on the site. In several cases these regeneration impacts will have a potentially greater bearing on certain equality groups. The protected characteristics of disability, age (particularly older and younger people), health, socio- economic inequality and language have been highlighted through this EQIA as having the most significance of impact.
- 7.2 The council and its housing regeneration team will need to work to address these equality impacts and to build in safeguards and mitigation activity in the programme they are designing.
- 7.3 The scheme is seeking approval to move to its next stage and to seek approval to make a CPO, to progress and finalise the Statement of Reasons, to prepare and male the order and schedule of the order, publicise and serve notices associated with the order, and to pay costs associated with making the order, and to prepare and present the Council's case at a public Inquiry (if required).
- 7.4 To date the scheme has achieved ballot approval from residents to demolish 100 existing units and build 407 new residential units on the site. Planning permission has been granted to demolish the existing buildings on the site (including HAP Houses, the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque) to provide 407 residential units across buildings ranging in height from 4-8 storeys and community centre building, together with associated landscaped communal amenity space, accessible car parking, secure cycle parking spaces and refuse/recycling storage facilities

CPO process

- 7.5 Much of the engagement with residents (tenants and leaseholders) has been based on the design and phasing process to date. The Cabinet report sets out a request to make the CPO. To this end, much of the proposed CPO activity is governed by the CPO legislation and guidance nationally. However, there are some impacts that are a direct and indirect result of the CPO process, which are identified below. Where feasible this EQIA has sought to distinguish between generic regeneration impacts and equality specific impacts:

Generic Regeneration Impacts

- The CPO process does have a direct impact on leaseholders (resident and non-resident) as their homes will be compulsorily purchased. This is universal to all leaseholders and is not in itself an equality impact.
- What resident leaseholders chose to do next will be based on the options set out in the right for resident leaseholder document. In short, they have the options of taking their sale value (subject to an independent valuation) and buying elsewhere or porting their mortgage and purchasing a home in the new estate or entering a shared equity

arrangement (not paying rent) or a shared ownership arrangement (part paying rent).

- Non-Resident leaseholders are being offered the sale of their property back to the council subject to an independent valuation.
- The CPO process may have a disproportionate negative impact on leaseholders who are less able to afford their new home.
- For some, the offer of porting mortgages and entering shared ownerships may place financial burdens particularly for people with low earning capability.

Equality specific impacts

- Some burden may arise from households where their marital status has changed since the property has been purchased and this may cause legal costs to clarify ownership and to agree the way forward for that household.
- The CPO process may have disproportionately negative impacts for leaseholders who are either older people, disabled and or single parent families or where they have less financial capacity to meet the increased value. Similarly, this will have impacts on all leaseholders who find difficulty in meeting the increased cost of home ownership on the estate.

Regeneration programme (design, and construction)

7.6 The regeneration of any physical space creates its own impacts, not simply because of the development process itself but also the associated impact that has on people living in or close to the development site itself. Particularly this relates to:

Equality specific impacts

- The inevitability of change and movement to a new home may place a burden on people who are settled and have established lives, particularly where care networks and support are based on neighbours and family members living close by. The council will work closely with residents to keep support networks together.
- Potential negative health impacts of the construction process including noise, dust, construction debris, increased construction traffic movement, and environmental impacts, often negatively impacting more disproportionately on people with poor health and disability.
- Households with children and older people may find the regeneration process and construction harder to live with.

Resident engagement

7.7 Critical to any regeneration process is the need to ensure that engagement with residents is maximised. There has been much work delivered on the estate by tenant liaison and advisors which has established some productive work. Moreover, since Covid

there has been much effort placed on remote and virtual engagement which has been supported with videos and graphical illustrations of design options.

Equality specific impacts

- Language is potentially an issue for residents (leaseholders and tenants alike) and residents who did not speak English as their first language could feel that their understanding of the impact of the regeneration scheme had suffered because of this. However, through the survey undertaken, all those engaged - even those that did not speak English as their first household language felt their written and spoken English was good.
- Much of the interaction with residents will be through housing staff and those negotiating with tenants and leaseholders. In these cases, there is a real need to ensure that the borough's equalities commitments are maintained in the negotiations process, particularly with the training of staff to recognise equalities issues of those in negotiation. We should note that the council has ensured that a Bengali translator has been made available at every engagement event held to date.

Decant and housing allocations process.

7.8 Elements of this EQIA are focused on activity that will happen in time. This includes the phasing of the scheme, the decanting of residents and the rehousing/allocation of housing for the new estate.

Equality specific impacts

- The decant process must address the equality needs of residents. These are most likely to be affecting those who are older, disabled and or who have specific health conditions.
- Wellbeing is a critical factor, as is the support network previously available pre-regeneration. Some of these networks are based on neighbours and, where feasible efforts should be made to enable neighbours to live close to one another.
- The loss of sense of community, particularly among those who are friendly with their immediate neighbours could have negative impacts on residents reliant on a local/neighbour care network. Potentially, this is most likely to impact on older people, disabled residents and those with health conditions. Where feasible the decant process is seeking to cluster residents from Harriott, Apsley and Pattison in new units together with those they had previously lived close to.

Positive Impacts

7.9 There is a counter-balance to these possible negative impacts as the regeneration programme has several positive impacts which many residents have bought into. These include:

Equality specific impacts

- The housing needs of a wide range of protected characteristics will be positively enhanced through the development of these new units providing new housing opportunities.
- The housing register in the borough has significantly more people from diverse communities when compared with the population profile of the borough, proportionally those from diverse communities are likely to benefit from this regeneration scheme.
- There will be more homes designed to Category 2 standard¹⁶ for accessibility, which is broadly equivalent to 'Lifetime' homes standards
- 10% of the new properties are being built for disabled people and will have relevant adaptations and equipment built in.
- Improving the housing stock will provide homes to higher standards and hence improve the quality of accommodation for residents currently on the estate, potentially improving residents' health and wellbeing.
- Energy efficient design and improved sustainability should lead to lower running costs for new homes.
- Families will have units which are in much better condition than those they currently occupy.
- The s106 agreement will provide economic benefits to the local community.

Summary of positive, negative and neutral equality impacts.

7.10 The lists below seek to summarise the equality impacts identified in this EQIA particularly those relating to the construction phase of the scheme and its environmental impacts as to the more permanent longer term impacts the majority of which are positive.

Short term construction and environmental focused impacts include:

- The disruption accompanying the construction phase is expected to have a **negative impact**, particularly for older people, disabled and people with specific health conditions and pregnant mothers and post birth mothers with young babies.

¹⁶ Category 2 means a home must be accessible to most people and able to suit older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users, and is estimated to cost developers an extra £1,400 per home. Requirements include level access front and rear doors, an entrance level bathroom, kitchen and dining area and low height windows.

- The short-term changes to play space provision are expected to have a **negative impact** specifically for younger people.
- In the short term, the changes to social infrastructure provision are expected to have a **neutral impact**, particularly for those who worship at the mosque which will be relocated before it is demolished.
- In the short term, the changes to housing provision are expected to have a **neutral impact** particularly as all moves to new properties will be arranged as a single move. This will somewhat mitigate the negative impacts of decant for older and disabled residents, and those with health conditions.

Medium to long terms impacts

- The housing needs of a wide range of protected characteristics will be **positively** enhanced through the development of these new units providing opportunities for housing.
- The housing register in the borough has significantly more people from diverse communities when compared with the population profile of the borough, many of whom are likely to **benefit** from this regeneration scheme.
- The new replacement housing is expected to have a **positive impact** for all protected characteristics represented on the 3 blocks.
- The upgraded and improved social infrastructure provided as part of the completed development is expected to have a **positive impact** for young, older and disabled residents, those with health conditions and pregnant and or young mothers.
- The improved opportunities for social interaction provided as part of the completed development are expected to have a **positive impact** for young, older and disabled residents, those with health conditions and pregnant and or young mothers.
- The improved and expanded play space provided as part of the completed development is expected to have a **positive impact** for young residents.
- The community facilities provided as part of the completed development are expected to have a **positive impact** for young, older and disabled residents.
- The improved access to the site is expected to have a **positive impact** for young, older and disabled residents and pregnant and or young mothers.
- There will be more homes designed to Category 2 standard¹⁷ for accessibility which is broadly equivalent to 'Lifetime' homes standards. At 10% with disability access, this will have a **positive impact** for older and disabled residents.

¹⁷ Category 2 means a home must be accessible to most people and able to suit older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users, and is estimated to cost developers an extra £1,400 per home. Requirements include level access front and rear doors, an entrance level bathroom, kitchen and dining area and low height windows.

- Improving the housing stock will provide homes to higher standards and hence improve the quality of accommodation for residents currently on the estate, potentially having a **positive impact** on residents' health and wellbeing.
- Residents will have units which are in much better condition than those they currently occupy.
- The s106 agreement will provide economic benefits to the local community.
- Energy efficient design and improved sustainability should have the **positive impact** of lower running costs for new homes.

8 Mitigation Recommendations

- 8.1 The points set out below list the core mitigation activity that is recommended to address the impacts highlighted through the EQIA.

Generic Mitigation Actions

- Run EQIA briefing sessions, review training needs, and establish training where appropriate.
- Establish training where appropriate Equality training / briefing / workshops for housing regeneration liaising teams.

Disability Mitigation Actions

- Arrange relevant Occupational Therapy/Social Services assessments for residents where identified.
- Liaison with social care teams in other authorities where residents are seeking to move to.
- Work with residents with complex disability and or health needs and provide services accordingly.
- Support with adaptations in new units on the new estate.
- Commission repair person service to support additional fixtures and fittings.
- Ensure reasonable adaptations are implemented within the new homes in line with OT assessments.

Age Mitigation Actions

- Engage young people in the design of the future amenity space within the new estate. Ensure existing amenity space is retained where feasible and safe, during the regeneration and construction.
- Provide opportunity for independent financial advice for any resident needing it.
- Commission handy person service to support additional fixtures and fittings.
- Support older leaseholders to access the right options.
- Ensure that the shared ownership option for older people will allow them to transfer the equity from their property, should they die, to their relatives/spouse.

Socio-Economic Mitigation Actions

- The Council to monitor the potential for a consequential rise in the costs associated with the new properties both in terms of living costs and in terms of rent/mortgages.
- Private tenants will be rehoused if they are on the housing register and if they are in bands 1 and 2. The remaining private tenants will be signposted to the relevant housing options team/service and provided with information as to what their housing options are.

- The Council to monitor how the proposals affect older leaseholders or leaseholders with reduced financial capacity.
- Facilitate access to Independent Financial Advisors for all residents.

Language Mitigation Actions

- Make alternative formats, translation and interpretation provision available when specific tenant engagement, leaseholder negotiation and wider off-site consultations are being undertaken.

Health Mitigation Actions

- Undertake health and medical assessment or OT assessments where required.

Intersectionality Mitigation Actions

- Develop enrichment activities for residents of the estate designed to rebuild communities.

9 Action Plan

9.1 The key mitigation activity set out in section 9 below detailing when and by whom actions should be undertaken to mitigate any potential negative impacts of this regeneration scheme. A large proportion of these mitigation actions are construction related and or relevant to the initial phasing of the scheme. To this end they have been identified as short term, medium term and longer term actions. This will need to be refined by the borough regeneration team in due course.

Mitigation Issue	Actions	Outcome	Date	Responsibility
Generic Mitigation				
Ensure all frontline staff and contractors are briefed on the findings of the EQIA and where appropriate undertake equality training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run EQIA briefing sessions. Review training needs Establish training where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All front-line staff able to address and identify the priorities to equality as set out in the EQIA. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Ensure staff consulting with residents understand the equality impacts of the scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality training / briefing / workshops for housing regeneration liaising teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition and understanding of equality impacts and issues as highlighted in this EQIA. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Disability Mitigation Activity				
Early engagement with people with a disability on the estate between the decant team and specialist social care staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange relevant Occupational Therapy/Social Services assessments for residents where identified. This is in place and will need to continue where relevant. Where necessary consideration should be given to residents that may need to be moved from the estate during the construction period because of their disability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasonable adjustments identified in new and future properties. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Ensure disability needs are picked up for residents who may opt to leave the estate under the key guarantees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with social care teams in other authorities where residents are seeking to move to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disabled residents leaving the estate are supported and are flagged to the relevant authorities. 	Ongoing	LBTH

Mitigation Issue	Actions	Outcome	Date	Responsibility
Ensure that all disability needs are picked up where reasonable adjustments are identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support with adaptations in new units on the new estate Commission repair person service to support additional fixtures and fittings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability issues built into home designs on the new estate. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Ensure that the cost of adjustments and needs of disabled people are addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure reasonable adaptations are implemented within the new homes in line with OT assessments as set out in the key guarantees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required adaptations are completed by the council in line with OT Assessment. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Age Mitigation Activity				
Address age impacts of regeneration as they apply to young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage young people in the design of the future amenity space within the new estate. Ensure existing amenity space is secure during the regeneration and construction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people engaged in the design of amenity space within the new estate. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Need to address age impacts of regeneration as they apply to older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunity for independent financial advice for any resident needing it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents enabled to make informed financial decisions. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Need to support older people through their move and settling into their new home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission repair person service to support additional fixtures and fittings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older residents given support in settling into their new homes. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Need to support older leaseholders through the regeneration process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support older leaseholders to access the right options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct engagement with older leaseholders. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Need for social support services for any adaptation to new homes for older people and those with a disability / health conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure a Social Worker/Occupational Health practitioners to work with Regeneration team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older people and people with disabilities supported through the engagement of health and social care. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Socio-economic Mitigation Activity				
Recognise and understand the cost impacts for individual households within the regeneration programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council to monitor the potential for a consequential rise in the costs associated with the new properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust estimates of future costs and values for new and existing 	Medium Term	LBTH

Mitigation Issue	Actions	Outcome	Date	Responsibility
	both in terms of living costs and in terms of rent/mortgages.	properties provided to enable informed decision making.		
Assess the potential impacts on Private tenants living in properties which is due for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Regeneration policy and identify ways to support private tenants made vulnerable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of options for private tenants 	Ongoing	LBTH
Recognise and understand the cost impacts for individual households within the regeneration programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council to monitor how the proposals affect older leaseholders or leaseholders with reduced financial capacity. Facilitate access to Independent Financial Advisors for all residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust estimates of future costs and values for new properties allowing informed discussions about financial options under the rights for homeowners. 	Medium term	LBTH
Language Mitigation Activity				
Ensure residents and wider consultees have adequate translation provision as part of the negotiation phase of the regeneration programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make alternative formats, translation and interpretation provision available when specific tenant engagement and leaseholder negotiation is being undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative formats, translation and interpretation identified and readily available. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Health Mitigation Activity				
Address the presented health needs of residents transferring from their existing home to any new property as part of the Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake health and medical assessment or OT assessments where required. Where necessary consideration should be given to residents that may as a result of their health condition need to be moved from the estate during the construction period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recommendations of assessments and prioritisation of serious / progressive conditions. 	Ongoing	LBTH
Intersectionality Mitigation Action				
Support to restore communities on the estate during and post regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop enrichment activities for residents of the estate designed to build communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower residents to promote, celebrate and harness community cohesion and shared values. 	Ongoing	LBTH

9.2 Suggested Future EQIAs and EQIA refreshes.

EQIA Subject	Date	Responsible Body
Regeneration phasing and housing transfer / allocation plans		
Construction management plan		
Post Development EQIA and evaluation		

10 Appendix 1: Key Definitions

Key Definitions

10.1 **Diversity** equals difference:

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. This means understanding that every person, family and group in the Tower Hamlets Estates Regeneration project is unique and has specific needs. The skill when offering services to individuals and groups is to take account of these characteristics sensitively and positively throughout this project.

10.2 **Equality** is the concept of knowing when to 'treat people the same' in this regeneration project and when to 'treat them differently'.

Often, we have policies, guarantees and standards which guide us to treat people the 'same' so that they receive their entitlements. But regularly in 2017 we are also faced with challenges to deliver individualised and tailored housing services to individuals, families and groups. The skill is to know when 'sameness or difference' applies and having a rationale to explain your actions.

10.3 **Inclusion** has been described as a sense of belonging.

A feeling of being respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of support and commitment from others who consult and negotiate with you over important matters, so that your voice is heard as a tenant, leaseholder or owner of a property and you can then help, shape and make important decisions.

10.4 **Human Rights** are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to all of us from birth until death. Our right to live, eat, be clothed and to be respected for private and family life.

The act protects ordinary people's freedom, safety and dignity and helps us hold authorities to account when things go wrong. In Britain, these important international rights are protected by the Human Rights Act 1998, which is now enshrined as part of UK domestic law.

10.5 **Ethnic Minority:** Ethnic minority is defined as people who differ in race or colour or in national, religious, or cultural origin from the dominant group of the country in which they live. For the purposes of this EQIA ethnic minority is used where people have not been defined as white British.

10.6 **BAME:** The acronym BAME stands for Black, Asian, mixed and other minority ethnic populations and is defined as all ethnic groups except white ethnic groups. NB this term is not currently used locally.

11 Appendix 2: The Landlord Offer

Rights for Secure Tenants – the principles:

Remaining and returning:

- 11.1 All tenants will have the right to a tenancy of a newly built social rented home in the new development. They will continue to be a tenant of Tower Hamlets Council with their existing tenancy rights such as the right to buy and succession rights retained.
- 11.2 If tenants don't wish to remain in the new development, they will have a choice of permanent rehousing by bidding through the Choice Based Lettings Scheme for:
- An existing council home elsewhere in Tower Hamlets, still as a secure tenant of the council with the same tenancy rights. Those who choose this option will not be able to return to the new development.
 - A home with a housing association either in Tower Hamlets or another London borough (if available). Existing council tenancy rights would not be protected under this option. If a temporary move away from the estate is necessary, residents would still be entitled to a new home once the development has been completed. This is a right to return.

Rent and service charges.

Rents for your new home:

- 11.3 Existing secure tenants who accept the offer of a newly built home on the estate with Tower Hamlets Council will be charged social rents. This means that rents for the new council properties will be comparable with rents for council properties of a similar type and size, but they will reflect the fact that these are new homes. Rent levels may increase slightly and tenants will be made aware of rent levels prior to agreeing on any move.

Service charges (included in social rent):

- 11.4 Residents can only be recharged for services that they benefit from. The law is clear that only the actual cost of services can be passed on by the landlord. We are committed to making sure any charges are kept as low as possible and conduct regular reviews to ensure value for money.

Compensation

- 11.5 Council tenants who have been secure tenants for at least 12 months before a decant is agreed are entitled to home loss payments and disturbance allowances.

Home loss payment:

- 11.6 Tenants will be entitled to a home loss payment which is currently set at £6,400. The amount is set by the government and not by the council.

Disturbance allowance:

- 11.7 The council will also pay a disturbance allowance to ensure that you are not financially disadvantaged by the regeneration.
- 11.8 The disturbance allowance covers reasonable expenses for items such as removal costs, disconnection and reconnection of services including gas, electricity, telephone and re-direction of post for three months.

Hidden households

- 11.9 The redevelopment will also allow the council to identify and rehouse 'hidden households' provided they meet certain criteria. 'Hidden households' are typically considered to be adult children of the tenant who are known by the council to have been living with the tenant or leaseholder for over a year.
- 11.10 Depending on their circumstances, these 'hidden households' will have the option to remain living as part of their parent(s) household, or to be registered independently on the council's housing register with additional priority for their own home as part of the rehousing process.

Specific points raised in the Guide for Secure tenants.**Housing need – number of bedrooms**

- 11.11 The council will work with you to ensure that your rehousing preferences are met as far as is possible. Tenants can apply for the size of home that meets the housing needs of their household, with the appropriate number of bedrooms, as defined in the council's lettings policy (which is available on the council's website).
- 11.12 If a resident receives care and support from someone who is not in their immediate family, an additional bedroom may be requested on a discretionary basis and in accordance with the council's lettings policy.
- 11.13 If a tenant currently lives in a home larger than the standard size defined by the council's lettings policy (i.e. when the tenant is under-occupying their current home), an application can be made for a property with a bedroom size that matches their needs, plus one additional bedroom, to recognise existing living arrangements. This is sometimes called 'housing need plus one.' It is subject to the following restrictions:

- 11.13.1 It must be a flat or maisonette on the same floor level or above as current home.
- 11.13.2 It cannot be for a property of four or more bedrooms as there is a significant shortage of homes of this size in Tower Hamlets.
- 11.14 Where the current property size is larger than the household requires, council officers will re-assess tenant needs and an appropriate alternative property will be offered. In that situation, an incentive payment would be offered for downsizing, in addition to the statutory home loss payment they will receive. The incentive amount will be discussed with each individual tenant in detail at a one to one meeting.
- Double decanting – having to move twice.**
- 11.15 Depending on the progress of the new build housing programme it is possible that some tenants, with specific needs may only have a restricted choice of home. As a result, there may need to be a temporary move to another home outside of the estate whilst the new home is being built. This process is known as 'double decanting.' It is expected that it will be limited to only a few tenants.
- 11.16 If such double decanting becomes necessary, those impacted will be given a clear assurance of their entitlement to a new home on the estate in the newly built homes, as well as the reasonable costs of both moves being reimbursed (details of reimbursements are given elsewhere in this document). If they decide not to exercise their option to return to the estate, the council will still be required, by law, to provide a suitable alternative permanent home.

Rights for Homeowners – the principles.

- 11.17 The borough has developed a guide for homeowners who live in the property they own as their main home and have done so for more than a year prior to the issuing of the Landlord Offer Document in February 2020. It explains the Council's approach to buying back their property when demolition or redevelopment is proposed and the options, they will have to buy a replacement home.
- 11.18 This includes the option of purchasing a new shared equity property at no extra cost on the new estate once it is ready. Other options include 'part-shared equity

and part-rent' on the estate or a lease swap to a Council property in the area or elsewhere in Tower Hamlets (subject to meeting the required criteria).

- 11.19 Alternatively, the leaseholder may prefer to sell to the Council and make their own arrangements to find another property to buy elsewhere, including out of the borough. All these options are explained in this guide.
- 11.20 The proposal for redevelopment is at an early stage. The Council will organise drop-ins, one-to-one surgeries and other events where leaseholders can discuss their options and raise any specific concerns they have.
- 11.21 Resident leaseholder will be invited to meet with Council officers to confidentially discuss their particular circumstances and any concerns that you may have about the process.
- 11.22 Once a redevelopment scheme is approved by Cabinet in 2021, the Council will contact leaseholder to arrange an initial valuation of their property. The assessment of full market value (FMV) is undertaken by a Council valuer.
- 11.23 The Council advises all leaseholders to get their own independent advice, including their own independent valuation done by a surveyor recognised by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. The cost of obtaining this independent advice from one qualified surveyor will be covered by the Council. The guide explains the process of the Borough and their surveyors negotiating an agreed value for the property. This could go to an Upper Tribunal should agreement not be made, the costs for which would be decided by the Tribunal.

Temporary decant.

- 11.24 The guide explains the possibility for some residents to first move out of their existing homes so work can take place. Where this cannot be avoided, affected residents will have priority for rehousing.
- 11.25 Resident leaseholders on the estate will have an option to return to a permanent new replacement home on the estate if this is their preference. If the resident leaseholder chooses the option to return, the Council will buy their existing property from them at the full market value and simultaneously enter into a contract to hold this money on their behalf until the purchase of their new property can be conducted. Leaseholders will not be charged rent during their stay at the temporary property, although they will be asked to pay the service charges. Any reasonable moving costs would also be covered by the Council for both moves.
- 11.26 The guide then sets out the fees the council would pay (within in certain limits) for:
- Home loss payments
 - Claiming fees for professional adviser
 - Valuation fees
 - Negotiation fees

- Legal fees for the sale of their home
- Legal fees for buying a replacement home.
- Removal fees
- Surveyor's fees on new home purchases (off site)
- Stamp Duty Land tax

11.27 The guide then sets out the options for buying a new home in the development, this includes:

- Option A - Buying a new home built by the Council outright.
- Option B – Shared Equity (Guarantee) - Buying a new shared equity home where the resident pays no rent on the remaining unpurchased equity.
- Option C –Shared Equity (Flexi) - Buying a new shared equity home where the resident pays no rent on the remaining unpurchased equity.
- Option D – Part Shared Equity / Part Rent) - Buying a property where you part- own and part rent the new home.
- Option E - Leasehold swap (to another property of similar age and value as their existing home, providing they can acquire the full value of the new home.
- Option F - Where home ownership is no longer a feasible option: Where a homeowner is unlikely to obtain a new mortgage or cannot financially manage the ownership of a new home, they should notify the Council immediately. The Council will work with homeowners to explore different options until a reasonable solution has been found.

Succession rights

11.28 The Guide also sets out succession rights for the leaseholders' spouse or other immediately family member living at the property as their permanent home to inherit it under the same financial/rental arrangements.

11.29 The Councils definition of immediate family member is defined as a person living in continuous occupation with the owner for a period of at least 12-months prior to their death, as part of their household, i.e. A spouse/civil partner, son/daughter, brother/sister, parent/grandparent, or in the case of another relative, having been similarly in continuous occupation as an acknowledged carer.

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)

11.30 The guide then explains the CPO process. It confirms that any potential development site may comprise multiple land interests, including leaseholders,

freeholders, commercial interests, access rights etc. Before it can start a development, the Council must acquire these interests from their legal owners.

11.31 Whilst the Council aims to purchase properties through negotiated settlements, it is normal practice to consider making a CPO to ensure the Council can obtain vacant possession of the buildings and land needed to commence with the redevelopment. The decision to request permission from the Secretary of State to make a CPO is taken by the Mayor for the Council, after weighing up the need for the regeneration proposals and the impact these will have on those affected.

11.32 A CPO process has several stages:

- Information gathering
- Making of the order
- Objections
- Public local inquiry
- Decision
- Further challenge
- Taking possession of the property

11.33 This section finally confirms that the Council would keep residents informed throughout all the stages of a CPO and it will continue to negotiate with residents even if there is an ongoing public inquiry.

Rights for Non-Resident Homeowners – the principles:

11.34 Non-resident homeowners will be offered the full market value by the council to purchase their property. They will also be paid at a 7.5% 'basic loss' compensation payment as well as reimbursements. These include reasonable fees and taxes incurred for both the sale of your property and for the purchase of a replacement property for a limited period, including independent valuation and legal support.

11.35 The Council encourages owners to come forward and talk to them so that they can arrange an initial valuation of the non-resident homeowner's property, discuss any concerns they may have and start to negotiate a satisfactory settlement for all parties. The Council valuer will arrange an appointment to make an initial valuation of the property.

11.36 The Council also recommends leaseholders to obtain their own valuation completed by a RICS (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors) qualified surveyor, the costs for which can be claimed back from the Council.

11.37 The Council will **not** acquire properties with tenants in occupation as they will be buying the property in the open market with vacant possession. If non-resident leaseholders rent their property, it will be their responsibility as the landlord to ensure that they give appropriate and timely notice to their tenants or other occupiers, in line with good practice and legal requirements, to secure vacant possession before completion of the sale to the Council. The Council cannot assist

non-resident leaseholders in this process. The Council does not have an automatic responsibility to rehouse people who may be occupying your property. If these 'private' tenants or other occupiers require housing advice, they can contact the Council to obtain this, but that does not imply they will have any entitlement to relocation support.

11.38 The guide then sets out the fees the council would pay (within in certain limits) for:

- Basic loss payments
- Repaying arrears
- Fees for independent surveyor
- Negotiation fees
- Valuation fees
- Legal fees for the sale of their home
- Legal fees for buying another property.
- Removal fees
- Stamp Duty Land tax (for the onward purchase of one property)

11.39 The guide then explains the CPO process as set out above.

12 Appendix 3: Policy Backdrop.

- 12.1 This appendix of the EQIA sets the legislative and policy context of the Equalities Impact Assessments for London Borough of Tower Hamlets Estate Regeneration Programme. Of central importance is the Equality Act 2010, which sets out the public sector equality duty.
- 12.2 The section sets out the legislation and policy directly relevant to housing regeneration and lists the desk research that has been completed to set the context for this Equality Impact Assessment:
- Equality Act 2010
 - Tower Hamlets equality objectives
 - Equal Life Chances for All, the Mayor's equality strategy revised in June 2014.
 - Mayor of London's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
 - London Plan 2016 and December 2021
 - Localism Act 2011
 - Tower Hamlets Equality Commission
 - Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and its implications for Tower Hamlets temporary accommodation
 - 2021 census releases up to and including July 2023
 - National Estate Regeneration strategy and Good Practice
 - Mayor's Estate Regeneration Good Practice Guide
 - Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy 2016-2021
 - Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan 2020 -2023
 - The Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031
 - Estate Regeneration National Strategy DCLG December 2017
 - Mayor of London: The London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2017.
 - Tower Hamlets Common Housing Register (2024)

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Agenda Item 6.9

Cabinet 16 October 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: David Joyce – Corporate Director of Housing & Regeneration	Classification: Part- exempt
Title: Harriott, Apsley & Pattison (HAP) Houses Regeneration Scheme – Two Stage Tender Negotiation	

Lead Member	Cllr Kabir Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding
Originating Officer(s)	Rupert Brandon & James Walsh
Wards affected	Stepney Green
Key Decision?	Yes
Reason for Key Decision	Approval of over £5m in capital expenditure
Forward Plan Notice Published	27/09/2024
Exempt information	<p>This report and/or its appendices include information that has been exempted from publication as the Monitoring Officer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has deemed that the information meets the definition of a category of exempt information as set out in the Council’s Access to Information Rules; and • has deemed that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. <p>The exempt information is contained in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Appendix 1 – Procurement Process</i> • <i>Appendix 2 – Evaluation Process</i> <p>The exempt information falls into this category:</p> <p>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority handling the information)</p>
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	<p>2. Providing homes for the future</p> <p>By working with developers and housing associations to deliver a minimum of 1000 social homes for rent each year.</p>

Executive Summary

This report seeks agreement to negotiate the second stage price with the selected bidder following their successful first stage tender submission and appointment to complete the Pre-Construction Services Agreement.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Note** the award of the Pre-Construction Services Agreement and JCT Minor Works Contract for the first stage procurement recently completed.
2. **Delegate** authority to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration, the authority to appoint any consultants required to assist the Council in the delivery of the Pre-Construction Services Agreement.
3. **Authorise the Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration** (in consultation with the Mayor) to enter into any negotiation of the Development Agreement and Second Stage Price with the successful bidder in order to facilitate the redevelopment of the Site and, to provide new and improved housing and community facility.
4. **Note** the intention to bring a further report to the Mayor in Cabinet later in 2025 recommending the formal entering of the Development Agreement.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The decisions sought in this report are to enable the delivery of more than 400 new homes and a new community centre, on council-owned land currently occupied by seven housing blocks (known collectively as Harriott House, Apsley House and Pattison House), comprising 100 flats and maisonettes, and two community buildings.
- 1.2 The scheme will deliver 64 high quality replacement homes for all existing secure tenants and leaseholders wishing to remain on the estate. The new homes will replace older blocks with ongoing damp issues and repair costs, instead providing homes with: greatly improved fire safety measures, high thermal performance and the lower energy use this enables, large balconies for every home, new communal place spaces and community gardens, secure bike storage for every resident, improved public realm and street scene benefiting the wider community, along with increased refuse storage in dedicated bin chambers, removing the current large number of bins spread across the estate.
- 1.3 A further 111 additional affordable homes will be delivered within the scheme, housing new residents to the estate, as well as helping to address

overcrowding within the existing homes. 22 of these homes have been identified for hidden households across the estate, ensuring that the scheme tackles the localised overcrowding in the community, as well as serving the borough's wider affordable housing needs.

- 1.4 A Resident Ballot was held between 18th March and 9th April 2020. Of the 132 eligible voters, 123 votes were cast, a turnout of 93%. 121 residents voted in favour of regeneration (98.4%) and 2 (1.6%) residents voted to reject the council's proposal, demonstrating strong community support.
- 1.5 The new homes are being designed to meet the planning policy requirements for sustainability, aiming to achieve an estimated site-wide CO2 emission reduction of at least 45% over the Target Emission Rate (TER) using the SAP 10 emission factors, through a combination of energy conservation measures, renewable heat, and electricity generation technologies, such as Photovoltaic solar panels (PV) and Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP).
- 1.6 Furthermore, the proposed development includes a new community space. The council have worked closely with RCCM to design a space which meets their needs and the needs of those who will be using the building.
- 1.7 Two-stage tendering was selected due to the perceived speed to appoint a developer, as well as the opportunity to work-up the detailed design of the scheme with the developer partner prior to the Build Safety Regulator Gateway 2 application, thereby ensuring mutual support and success of the application to the regulator.
- 1.8 The Invitation to Tender ("ITT") was issued using a two-stage procurement process, using the Open Procedure. The PAS 91 Questionnaire and the ITT were required to be submitted simultaneously, with the top four scoring bidders at the PAS 91 stage then having their ITT scored.
- 1.9 The first stage submission ITT was evaluated on quality (50%), price (40%) and social value (10%), and the developer who received the highest score when analysed using the evaluation criteria as set out in the ITT would be recommended award of the contract for the first stage, which consists of the Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) and enabling works.
- 1.10 Once the PCSA is completed, a second stage price will be received from the developer and a further report will be taken to Cabinet report in late 2025 to seek approval to enter into the Development Agreement to build out Phase 1.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The alternative approach would be to not to develop the site.

- 2.2 Or undertake a single stage tender. However, given the current position of the tender would result in significant programme prolongation to retender the scheme.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Two Stage Tendering is a procurement route that enables the early engagement of a contractor, in an advisory capacity, before the scheme is fully designed. The contractor work within an agreed scope of work to complete the design, enhance buildability and increase cost certainty.
- 3.2 The first stage tender involves multiple contractors competitively bidding and submitting a price, through an Invitation to Tender (“ITT”) arrangement, to complete an agreed scope through a Pre-Construction Services Agreement. The bidders will also submit fixed costs for the main works, such as prelims, overheads and profit, this is to ensure that as much of the second stage price can be competitively tendered before awarding the first stage.
- 3.3 During the first stage the contractor role is advisory, focusing on simplifying the design and improving the buildability, through a Pre-Construction Services Agreement. The contractor contributes to method statements, influences design choices, and helps shape the supply chain by securing subcontractors. The contractor’s involvement early on ensures that practical, safe, and economical solutions are integrated into the project.
- 3.4 The scope of the Pre-Construction Services Agreement is:
- Complete RIBA Stage 4 (Technical Design)
 - Undertake surveys
 - Discharge of Planning Conditions
 - Utility applications and negotiations
 - Make a Gateway 2 submission to the Building Safety Regulator
 - Undertake an open book package procurement to agree prices for each sub-contract and supplier
- 3.5 The scope of the Minor Works Contract:
- Install hoarding
 - Undertake intrusive surveys
 - Asbestos Removal
 - Soil Contamination remediation
 - Utility disconnections and diversions
 - Demolish Pram Sheds and Adult Social Care Building
- 3.6 The outcome of the Pre-Construction Services Agreement is a complete design, programme, contract conditions and second stage price. Due to the reduced competition of working with one contractor, LBTH will have a reduced negotiation position. Therefore, LBTH will need to negotiate with the Contractor to find agreement on both the price and terms of the contract to agree the main works price.

- 3.7 Two-stage tendering is often used for complex projects where early contractor engagement helps finalize the design, minimise risk and optimize cost and time efficiency.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 As part of the regeneration scheme, the council has been working closely with residents to ensure they are consulted on all aspects of the new development and has ensured that residents are listened to and their needs understood.
- 4.2 A comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed for the scheme by external specialists Ottaways and was presented to Members with previous Cabinet reports authorising different elements of the scheme (Dec 2021 and Feb 2024). A refreshed iteration of the EqIA report is appended to an alternate report on the October Cabinet Agenda addressing the decisions required in relation to the use of Compulsory Purchase powers.

This report does not make any changes to the nature of the equalities impact of the scheme considered in detail under these previous reports.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The risks associated with this project are monitored through a Risk Register and include:
- Operational risk
 - Reputational risk
 - Housing market fluctuations
 - Build cost fluctuations
 - Challenging commercial dynamics
- 5.2 Detailed risk implications of the proposed appointment are set out in para 9 of Exempt Appendix 1.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 Funding totalling £86m has been approved within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the delivery of phase I of the Harriot, Apsley & Pattison capital project to deliver over 400 new homes and a community centre on Council owned land. This funding is a mix of Right to Buy grant, capital receipts, s106 income and prudential borrowing. Any costs associated with appointing external consultants and surveyors to assist the Council in the delivery of the Pre-Construction Services Agreement and negotiating the Development Agreement and Second Stage Price with the successful bidder will be contained within this funding envelope.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 The information shown in the restricted appendices is Exempt Information for the purposes of section three of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act

1972. This is because it is information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). Release of the information could lead to the commercial detriment of either the Council or the developer. Therefore, the public interest in knowing the information is outweighed by the public interest to maintain the exemption

- 7.2 The Council has the legal power to undertake the actions referred to in this report.
- 7.3 The Council is legally required to deliver Best Value in respect of all its functions in terms of economy efficiency and effectiveness. The Council has carried out a procurement where the winning bidder has been selected upon scoring criteria which reflect a blend of quality and price. Making this award demonstrates strong evidence of compliance with the Best Value duty as economy efficiency and effectiveness are reflected in the evaluation criteria.
- 7.4 A two stage approach to tendering a contract of this nature is common place as the final cost of the construction will depend upon the design completed in stage 1. However, the approach can accelerate the overall construction process as appointment of the Contractor occurs earlier in the process. However, this could come at a cost risk but the Council has taken appropriate action in terms of ownership of the design, fixing the cost of known elements of the work early and controlling the relationship before construction with a preconstruction services agreement. In any case the Council will not be bound to proceed into the construction phase unless a reasonable final cost is agreed following development of the phase 1 design

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

None.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Procurement Process (Exempt)

Appendix 2: Evaluation Process (Exempt)

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

None.

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.


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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Cabinet 16 October 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Simon Baxter - Corporate Director, Communities	Classification: [Unrestricted]
Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) and Women's Safety Strategy	

Lead Member	Councillor Abu Talha Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities
Originating Officer(s)	Adam Price, Strategy and Policy Lead
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Forward Plan Notice Published	13/08/2024
Exempt information	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	Priority 5: Investing in public services Priority 6: Empowering communities and fighting crime

Executive Summary

The Council's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2024 expires this year, and a new strategy has been produced to set out our approach and priorities for 2024 to 2029. The Mayor in Cabinet is asked to approve the proposed strategy and consider how the council can deliver a truly holistic cross system response to support delivery of this important strategy across the whole organisation.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the council's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Women's Safety Strategy (Appendix 1).
2. Acknowledge that addressing and preventing violence against women and girls requires a whole system response and consider how members can support the delivery of this across the organisation, improving and strengthening system leadership of this cross cutting and critical agenda.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This strategy has been informed and is underpinned by the VAWG Needs Assessment (Appendix 3) carried out in 2023 and published in January 2024. This data led assessment sets out a strong evidence base of local need. It has also been informed by consultation with over 370 residents, experts by experience and 120 professionals via surveys, face to face engagement and dedicated focus groups. This important work was supported by the Mayor's Advisor for Women and Equalities and professionals across the Council.
- 1.2 The Strategy has been developed through workshops with a wide range of partners and stakeholders. Experts by experience have participated in the consultation and they have contributed in particular to the assessment of the equalities considerations and the Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) which supports this strategy. This work was delivered in collaboration with the Cornerstone Project.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Mayor could decline to approve the strategy and require substantial revision and changes to the structure before returning for approval on another occasion. However, this would result in further delays while the changes were made and have a significant impact on the development of other strategies in this area that are currently being scoped and taken forward.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Tower Hamlets is a young, diverse borough, with almost half of our residents between the ages of 20yrs and 39yrs. The Borough has largest Bangladeshi population in the country.
- 3.2 The needs assessment highlights that younger woman, women with disabilities and Black, Asian and minority ethnic women are more likely to experience gender-based violence and they face added barriers in accessing support.

- 3.3 This is also reflected in the fact that Tower Hamlets has the fourth highest rate of domestic abuse offences per 1,000 population in London in 2022-2023, and the second highest in North-East London, after LB Barking and Dagenham, for the period 2019-2023 (Mayors Office Policing and Crime 2023).
- 3.4 In 2023-24, the Police received 4519 domestic abuse reports from our residents. Tower Hamlets is one of the top five London boroughs for domestic abuse offences in terms of raw numbers. Nine domestic homicides have taken place between 2019 and 2024 with four of those occurring within the last 12 months.
- 3.5 A significant amount of work to tackle VAWG has been delivered under the previous partnership strategy between 2019-2024. This has included:
- Commissioning and providing specialist support for victims of VAWG. Tower Hamlets Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) The Service received 6382 referrals during this period, with a 96% satisfaction rate and 93% of victims feeling safer post support. This offer includes culturally appropriate services such as Somali specific casework and a dedicated Sylheti speaking IDVA
 - A new Family Nurse Partnership to improve identification and support to first time mothers experiencing intimate partner violence
 - Mainstreaming VAWG considerations in the Council's new licensing policy and making the nighttime economy safer. Dedicated work with the Licensing Service to deliver sexual harassment in the nighttime economy training for licensees alongside their WAVE programme
 - Tackling misogyny in the nighttime economy via the development of a groundbreaking anti-misogyny campaign with LB Hackney and City of London.
 - Development of a dedicated Economic Abuse Programme of work implemented in the borough including co-location of support for victims with Dept for Works & Pensions (DWP)
 - Protecting victims in their own homes. Accommodation support via the dedicated Sanctuary Scheme. This project provides free, tailored security for the homes. There are 333 installations and up to 60 victims of domestic abuse are supported per year so they can remain safely in the borough close to their support networks.
 - The Council continues to fund and invest in 34 refuge bed spaces, including culturally specific provision.
 - Development of a dedicated offer for women involved in prostitution and selling survival sex.
 - Commissioned a local research report into off street prostitution.
- 3.6 Additional detail on the achievements and challenges faced in this area are included under Appendix 5.
- 3.7 The new strategy for 2024-2029 aims to broaden the scope and the approach to all forms of gender-based violence. The new strategy will now encompass the work that the Council is undertaking beyond the community safety

partnership and the Criminal Justice system. This strategy takes into consideration the recommendations from the recent groundbreaking Tower Hamlets gender-inclusive design report (Appendix 4), and the council's Equalities Action Plan. It is recognised that there is a need for it to be flexible to ensure it is fully aligned with new and developing initiatives such as the Tower Hamlets Women's Commission.

3.8 Several significant ambitious developments are taking place during the lifetime of the new strategy. As highlighted below:

- The newly created Women's Commission will be undertaking work to increase our understanding of the lived experience of women across Tower Hamlets. We will take forward their recommendations for ensuring greater participation within the borough. The Commission will lead on bold new initiatives related to the needs of all women locally.
- We will deliver the Mayor's new flagship Women's Centre that will provide outreach programmes, workshops, and create a safe space for all women in Tower Hamlets
- Our services will feed into and take forward actions from the forthcoming new Trans Needs Assessment to better understand and address gendered violence in the borough in relation to our trans community.
- Experts by experience - we will involve women's groups and networks more closely in the commissioning of services.
- We will put in place additional tools including a toolkit and advisory hub to support professionals in working with perpetrators and address the training needs they have identified.
- Systemic change - professionals and practitioners across the organisation will understand the links between Violence Against Women and Girls, serious youth violence, contextual harm, and modern slavery and will provide a safe, consistent and supportive professional response.

3.9 The work within the strategy falls within three overarching priorities:

- 1) Prevention and Safety;
- 2) Supporting Victims and Survivors; and
- 3) Responding to Perpetrators.

3.10 Within each of these priorities we have identified key areas of focus where we will build on the platform of the good work done under the former strategy. We seek to continuously improve on what is already in place, based on the evolving evidence of need with expert input from stakeholders, experts by experience, residents and professionals.

3.11 The strategy is supported by a detailed action plan, (Appendix 6) which has been developed in collaboration with the multi-agency Violence Against Women and Girls Steering Group and the Council's VAWG service, the Mayor's Advisor for Women and Equalities, and other key stakeholders. The Action Plan will continue to develop and will be an iterative process. It will require whole system leadership to deliver it.

- 3.12 The Strategy itself does not have additional costs. The council and partner organisations will contribute through their own existing strategies, programmes of work and planning cycles.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Equalities impact analysis was supported by a range of residents and members of local voluntary and community organisations, who between them covered a wide variety of different equalities characteristics, through the Cornerstone Project coordinated by Tower Hamlets CVS.
- 4.2 An Equalities Impact Screening Tool is provided at the end of this document and a completed Equalities Impact Assessment is included in Appendix 2. In addressing support for victims and survivors the partnership recognises the importance of understanding the factors affecting each individual's journey and considering how questions of intersectionality can compound difficulties through discrimination, disability or disadvantage.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Effective partnership working and community engagement is an important way for councils to deliver their best value duty. Guidance on best value standards is clear that "Authorities should have a clear understanding of and focus on the benefits that can be gained by effective collaborative working with local partners and community engagement in order to achieve its strategic objectives and key outcomes for local people". This strategy supports the delivery of the Best Value duty via work with residents and partners to understand VAWG in the borough and tackle associated harms.
- 5.2 Since 2011, there have been 14 Domestic Homicide Reviews commissioned totalling approximately £130,000. This does not include the wider cost implications to service providers such as Social Care, schools, criminal justice agencies and health providers involved in managing the support provided to victims. The estimated cost to public services for a victim of domestic abuse is £34,015 and £58,860 for a victim of rape. Furthermore, the human cost of the physical and emotional impact of abuse significantly outweighs any immediate financial cost. Hence earlier intervention, prevention and safeguarding work is key to ensuring best value for money and a more invest to save approach has been adopted.
- 5.3 VAWG services play an important role in safeguarding residents in the borough and managing the risks faced from gender-based violence.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 This report is seeking approval of a new Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG) 2024-2029. The delivery of this strategy is supported by several funding streams in 2024/25. Consisting of MHCLG (£0.14m), Public Health grant (£0.48m), MOPAC (£0.09m) and contributions towards Sanctuary

Scheme from the HRA (£0.08m). The funding received is ring fenced for use on delivering these projects contained within this Strategy.

- 6.2 The Violence against Women & Girls service has a net budget of £0.48m in 2024/25, comprising of gross expenditure budget totalling £1.27m for staffing and the provision of funding to third party service providers, offset by income of £0.79m in the form of grants and recharges from internal service users.
- 6.3 Any resource requirements above budgeted levels will require additional funding to be sought or managed through in year cost reductions across wider Community Safety Service budgets. Grant awards from external bodies do not provide funding confirmations for the entire period of VAWG Strategy 2024-2029, uncertainties around future grant funding will be managed as part of annual budget setting process.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Refreshing the VAWG strategy complies with a number of the Council's key safeguarding duties. The Care Act 2014 sets out the council's duties to safeguard adults who are experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect. The Act also sets out the council's duties to ensure the provision of preventative services, promote wellbeing when carrying out any of their care and support functions (this includes protection from abuse and neglect), cooperate with relevant partners and provide information about services available in the area that can prevent abuse and support.
- 7.2 The Children Act 1989 provides the legislative framework relating to the council's duty to protect children from abuse and neglect and to promote the welfare of all children and young people in their area. The Children Act 2004 places duties on a council to ensure its functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to cooperate with other agencies to promote the well-being of children.
- 7.3 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the authority, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the 2010 Act, to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, and to foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The relevant protected characteristics with respect to this report are age; disability gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. The duty must be complied with at the time that the decision under consideration, but it is not a duty to achieve a particular result.
- 7.4 Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires an authority, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the likely effect of those functions on and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent: crime and disorder; the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; re-offending;

serious violence. With respect to serious violence, s.17(1A) imposes a duty on the Council to do all it reasonably can to prevent people from becoming involved in serious violence and to reduce instances of serious violence. The duty applies with respect to the local authority's area.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – VAWG and Women's Safety Strategy 2024-2029
- Appendix 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment
- Appendix 3 – VAWG and Women's Safety Public Health Needs Assessment
- Appendix 4 – Tower Hamlets Gender Inclusive Design Report
- Appendix 5 – Delivery Achievements, Challenges & Reflections VAWG Strategy 2019-2024
- Appendix 6 – VAWG Delivery / Action Plan 2024 - 2029

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

Adam Price – Adam.Price@TowerHamlets.gov.uk

Equalities screening tool

<p>Is there a potential that the policy, proposal or activity covered by this form disproportionately adversely impacts (directly or indirectly) on any of the groups of people listed below?</p> <p>Please consider the impact on overall communities, residents, service users and council employees. If you have answered Yes to one or more of the groups of people listed above, a full Equality Impact Analysis is required.</p> <p>This should include people of different:</p>	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sex 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Age 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Race 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Religion or Philosophical belief 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sexual Orientation 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gender re-assignment status 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People who have a Disability (physical, learning difficulties, mental health and medical conditions) 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marriage and Civil Partnerships status 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People who are Pregnant and on Maternity 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>You should also consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents and Carers ▪ Socio-economic status ▪ People with different Gender Identities e.g. Gender fluid, non-binary etc. ▪ Other 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VAWG and Women's Safety Strategy 2024-2029

Summary version



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Foreword

The epidemic of violence against women and girls exists in all communities and sadly Tower Hamlets is no exception. Upon being elected Mayor in 2022, I made tackling the issue a top priority. Already, we have taken significant steps towards making the borough a safer place for women and girls – from organising successful digital women's safety walks, to bringing forward the development of a brand-new Women's Resource Centre. Our new strategy was developed through months of detailed consultation with women from across the borough.

I want to thank officers and stakeholders who put so much effort into ensuring this document accurately reflects the complex and ever-evolving needs of our residents. I am proud to note that we were able to more than double the consultation sample from our last needs assessment, as well as conduct a number of specialised focus groups with some of our most under-served and marginalised communities.

I'd also like to thank our partners in the NHS and police, who have worked with us to address the appalling rates of gender-based violence in this borough over recent years. Thanks to these partners, Tower Hamlets has managed to secure the highest rate of rape convictions in London, provide trauma-informed support to hundreds of domestic abuse victims a year, and provide pathways to safety for victims of exploitation who would otherwise fall through the cracks. While these early successes are laudable, we still have a long way to go.

Tower Hamlets continues to rank highly in domestic and sexual violence statistics – a blight on our wonderful borough and its communities.

Remedying this situation will require comprehensive and long-term engagement. It will require hard work from all sectors of society; from the Council and from our partners. Fortunately, I believe we have the commitment and cooperation required to face this challenge. More than this, I believe we have put together a strategy that is truly groundbreaking in the way it places the safety and promotion of women and girls at the heart of all aspects of our council services, as well as spotlights the unique needs of the most marginalised women. It also centres the need to bring about wider cultural change around misogyny in our society.

In the coming years, I look forward to seeing this strategy unfold, helping to transform this borough into one where no woman – regardless of ethnicity, class, religion, or sexual orientation – has to feel unsafe in the streets or in their home.

Lutfur Rahman
Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets



Introduction

Our vision of a safe Tower Hamlets

As a worldwide issue of epidemic proportions that has a significant impact on the lives of our residents, Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is recognised at all levels as a council-wide priority.

Data suggests that 1 in 3 women in the United Kingdom will be victims of gender-based violence at some point in their life. For this council that is fundamentally unacceptable, and it is a top priority to ensure that no more women in Tower Hamlets be victimized in this way. We are committed to making serious investments in protecting women's safety. We are looking at a variety of new support services, enforcement initiatives, and targeted engagement projects to ensure that all Tower Hamlets residents can walk through our streets and sleep in their homes without fear of suffering gender-based violence. We must also look at changing cultures that lead to gender based violence, providing specialized support to our most marginalized residents, and putting a stop once and for all to Violence Against Women and Girls.

This strategy sets out the role we can all play in tackling VAWG as part of a coordinated community response, building on the sector-leading and award-winning work that has been happening within our borough since the launch of our first VAWG strategy in 2012.

What is VAWG?

VAWG covers a range of unacceptable and deeply distressing crimes, including rape and other sexual offences, stalking and harassment, domestic abuse, modern slavery, so-called 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and 'honour' killings) and image-based sexual abuse, among others.

VAWG is a term used to refer to a range of crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls. In common with others who are working to tackle violence and abuse and support those affected, we use the term 'VAWG' to ensure that we do not lose sight of those who are most affected. However, we recognise that people of any sex or gender can experience violence or abuse of this nature and the consequences affect everyone in our community.








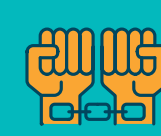

Safety in public spaces

For the first time this strategy will include a broader focus on women's safety in public spaces, considering how our streets, parks and public spaces affect women and girls and what improvements need to be made to make the borough feel inclusive, welcoming and safe. This strategy will also encompass work to address behaviours such as sexual harassment, catcalling, and the treatment of women in the nighttime economy through our Don't Cross the Line campaign, gender-inclusive design action plan, women's safety walks and making use of resources such as local enforcement officers and CCTV.

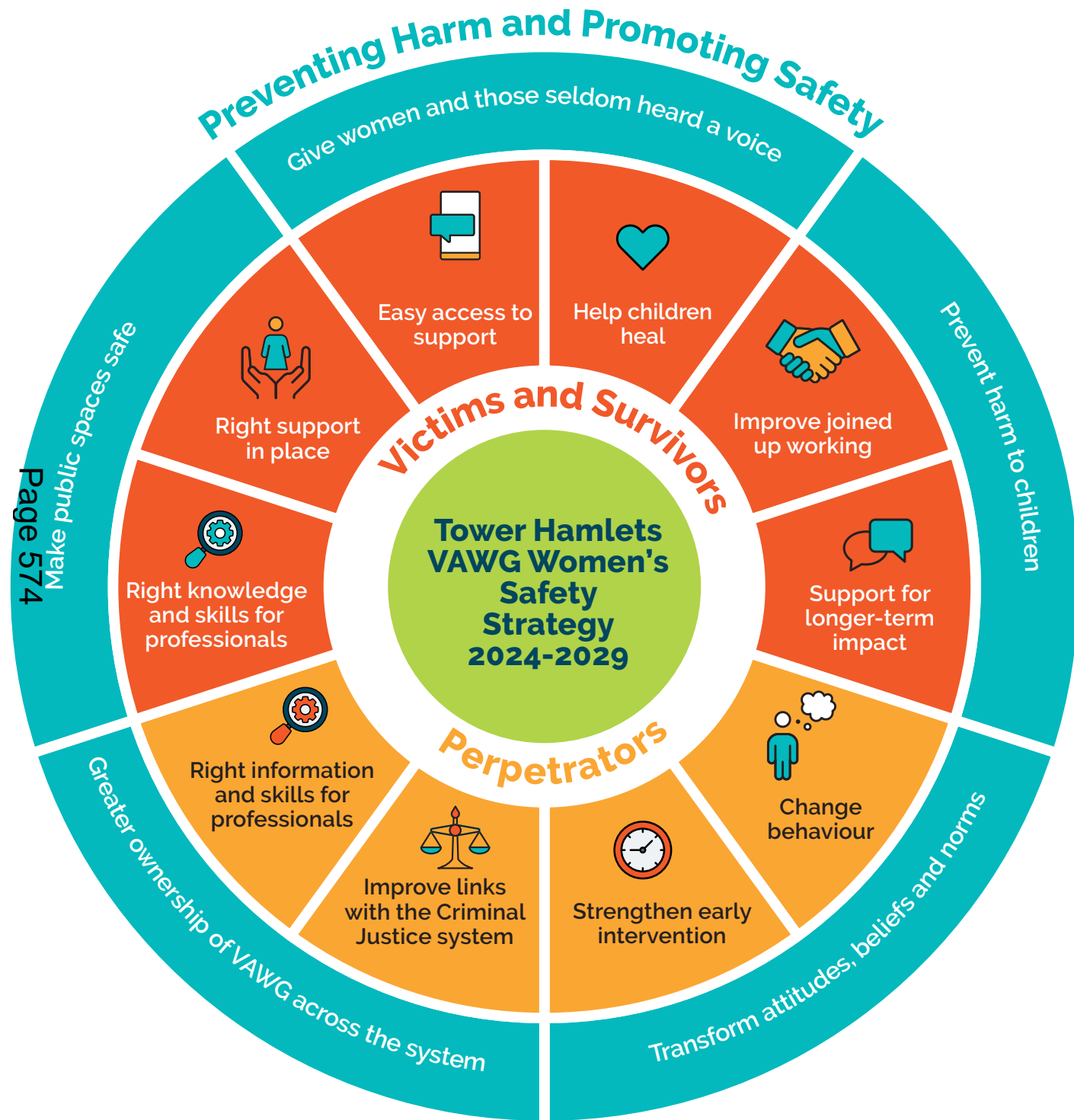
Intersectionality

It is also important to recognise that different forms of disadvantage are compounded by certain protected characteristics (e.g. race, faith, age) and by combinations of them. For example, the barriers faced by a young, black transgender woman may differ from those experienced as an elderly, Asian cisgender man. We seek throughout this strategy to apply an intersectional lens to VAWG and understand the additional vulnerabilities faced by some of the members of our community.

Why do we need a VAWG and women's safety strategy in Tower Hamlets?

<p>Tower Hamlets is the youngest borough in the Country and prevalence of domestic abuse nationally is highest amongst young adults</p> 	<p>Women in the borough are less likely to be employed than in the rest of Britain, with a 63% employment rate (compared to 74% in Britain in 2023). Financial dependence can be a significant vulnerability factor to VAWG</p> 	<p>4,519 domestic abuse offences reported by the Police in 2023-24</p> 
<p>In 2023, 490 domestic abuse cases were investigated and resolved</p> 	<p>5 domestic homicides have taken place since 2019</p> 	<p>83% of female residents surveyed in 2023 experienced stranger catcalling which made them feel unsafe</p> 
<p>577 cases of online abuse reported in 2023. The research suggests that many cases go unreported</p> 	<p>Police data shows 33 known survivors of modern slavery between February to August 2023</p> 	<p>821 sexual offences reported to Police in 2023-4</p> 

What are we doing to tackle VAWG and public safety?



Our priorities

We have three overarching priorities that capture the wide range of work we will be doing around gender abuse and public safety. These are:



More about our approach and the actions we'll be taking is provided on the following pages and in the action plan to be published which will sit under this strategy document.

Our principles



What is our approach?

Preventing Harm and Promoting Safety

"We will prevent violence and abuse through early intervention and education"



WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR	WHAT WE WILL DELIVER	HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 577 training and outreach activities training 9817 people in a range of topics (including coercive control, adult family violence, economic abuse, intimate partner violence, domestic abuse awareness) 275 VAWG Champions have been trained and over 2,000 staff have been trained to be trauma informed along with pilot projects to apply trauma informed practice in real-world settings such as hostels, employment services and maternity services. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) education sessions delivered to over 955 residents and 483 FGM survivors supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a package of VAWG awareness training with bespoke programmes tailored to individual services, enabling professionals to spot the signs of abuse and respond safely, regardless of their working environment Deliver a tailored programme of public-facing campaigns and culturally relevant communications, which raise awareness of abuse in all its forms and educate on how to get support from local and national services driven by data to focus on specific locations and populations Embed gender-inclusive design principles to parks and public spaces and empower local women and girls to feel ownership of those spaces Make reporting of anti-social behaviour that makes women feel unsafe quicker and easier Work with the local community and partners to build respectful shared cultures on streets and public spaces Develop a toolkit for primary and secondary schools to strengthen their delivery of healthy relationships education as part of the RSE curriculum, including to give them the confidence and skills to discuss issues of VAWG and domestic abuse. Expand and strengthen the male allyship programme to support a more appropriate culture and behaviour that is healthy and empowers women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professionals who encounter VAWG report that they understand what to look out for and how to direct residents to services Greater awareness of VAWG services (and website) and support available amongst local community and professionals Community groups are more confident to report abuse; and demonstrate increased trust in VAWG services Increased number of VAWG champions in the community who are confident and better equipped to spot the signs of abuse and respond safely. Greater resource of educational programmes and campaigns based on better understanding of wider determinants, risk factors and signs of VAWG More schools and teachers engaged with VAWG training and supporting local campaigns Higher footfall and organised activities in parks and open spaces for women and girls More men taking part in allyship programmes and campaigns that support a healthier attitude towards women and girls.

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Support Victims and Survivors

"We will provide support that keeps individuals and their families safe from harm"



WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR	WHAT WE WILL DELIVER	HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tower Hamlets Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) Provision received 6382 referrals with a 96% satisfaction rate and 93% feeling safer post support and includes culturally appropriate services such as Somali specific caseworkers and a dedicated Sylheti speaking IDVA Tower Hamlets provide accommodation support via the Sanctuary Scheme project, which provides free, tailored security for the homes and conducted 333 installations so they can remain in the borough 2673 highest risk cases were discussed at multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) ensuring a coordinated multi-agency response to safeguard victims and survivors. An increase in VAWG reporting has been reflected in referrals to MARAC, driven in part by the pandemic, but also accompanying efforts to increase reporting in the borough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve DAHA accreditation within our housing services Continue to commission a community-based specialist VAWG service. Support will be provided across all strands of VAWG Deliver a brand-new women's centre that will provide outreach programmes, workshops, and create a safe space for women in Tower Hamlets, including a Domestic Abuse one-stop-shop Use victims and survivors' voices as well as women's networks to shape our approach and services, including seldom heard groups in this space such as the LGBT+ community. Ensure that women involved in prostitution and hidden sexual exploitation do not fall through the cracks Work in partnership across health and community services to ensure that victims and survivors facing additional barriers to accessing help, such as those identifying as LGBT+, can get the support they need Develop tools and a checklist for ASC staff and other professionals to support clear pathways and strengthen the approach in which victims and survivors are supported and feel safe. Trauma-informed approaches are embedded across agencies in Tower Hamlets working with individuals and families affected by abuse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tower Hamlets residents know where to go to get help if they are experiencing violence and abuse, at the earliest opportunity Family, friends, and communities can recognise abuse in all its forms, and more residents report knowing how to direct victims and survivors to support Children and young people in Tower Hamlets receive appropriate education on safe and healthy relationships and understand that violence and abuse is not normal or accepted Victims and survivors have timely access to integrated VAWG services that take a whole-person approach in meeting their needs Increase the provision of refuge, safe spaces, and resources available to support victims and survivors Through improving commissioned services, enable high-quality services that meet the cultural needs of residents from diverse groups Partners take ownership for the elements of the pathways within their areas and ensure there are suitable arrangements in place Professionals working in agencies across Tower Hamlets have a shared understanding of criterion, provision, and processes in relation to VAWG Victims and survivors have access to evidence-based programmes to support recovery following abuse, including for children who witness or experience VAWG.

Responding to Perpetrators

"Holding perpetrators to account whilst providing opportunity for change and support"



WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR	WHAT WE WILL DELIVER	HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE
<p>● Tower Hamlets were one of the first boroughs to set up a Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC) over 15 years ago which included of a domestic abuse Best Practice Framework Plan to help those who experienced domestic abuse to access the criminal justice system, improve experiences of the court process, and increase the proportion of successful outcomes such as satisfaction rates, witness attrition rates and prosecution rates. The conviction rate at SDAC in Tower Hamlets was 71% in 2022-23. Unfortunately, as of April 2024, the SDAC no longer exists due to resourcing challenges within the Criminal Justice System agencies post-Covid.</p> <p>● Launched two new perpetrator programmes, the Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA) Programme and the Positive Change Service (for a total of three in-borough perpetrator programmes). Provision is available for those who are not parents as well as specialist streams for female perpetrators and same sex intimate partners, and uses a culturally sensitive, integrated, whole family approach.</p>	<p>● Limit perpetrator's ability to abuse and victimise by increasing the use of protection orders, including Domestic Violence Protection Orders, FGM Protection Orders and Forced Marriage Protection Orders.</p> <p>● Establish an advisory hub for staff to discuss their cases with specialist practitioners to provide them with the skills and confidence to work with perpetrators</p> <p>● Develop a toolkit for non-specialist staff focusing on engaging and working with fathers and partners, including in substance misuse and homelessness services</p> <p>● The use of tenancy enforcement tools, such as injunctions, breaches, and orders, to remove the perpetrator from the victim's home, and create safety using Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation principles</p>	<p>● Victims and survivors are satisfied with the support they receive</p> <p>● Perpetrators know that their behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by their community.</p> <p>● Perpetrators are engaged with programmes that are effective at changing their behaviour and preventing further harm to others.</p> <p>● Victims and survivors receive independent support from commissioned services whilst they navigate the Criminal Justice System when reporting VAWG.</p> <p>● Where appropriate and safe to do so, ensure parents who are perpetrators of intimate partner violence or abuse are considered within child safeguarding processes and decision-making</p> <p>● Everyone's rights are respected and upheld throughout the management of VAWG cases.</p> <p>● The council works through its partnership arrangements to ensure that residents feedback is taken into account to improve the experience of victims and survivors seeking justice.</p> <p>● Support higher rates off prosecution of VAWG perpetrators by utilising intelligence to cross reference domestic abuse offences with other violent offences.</p>

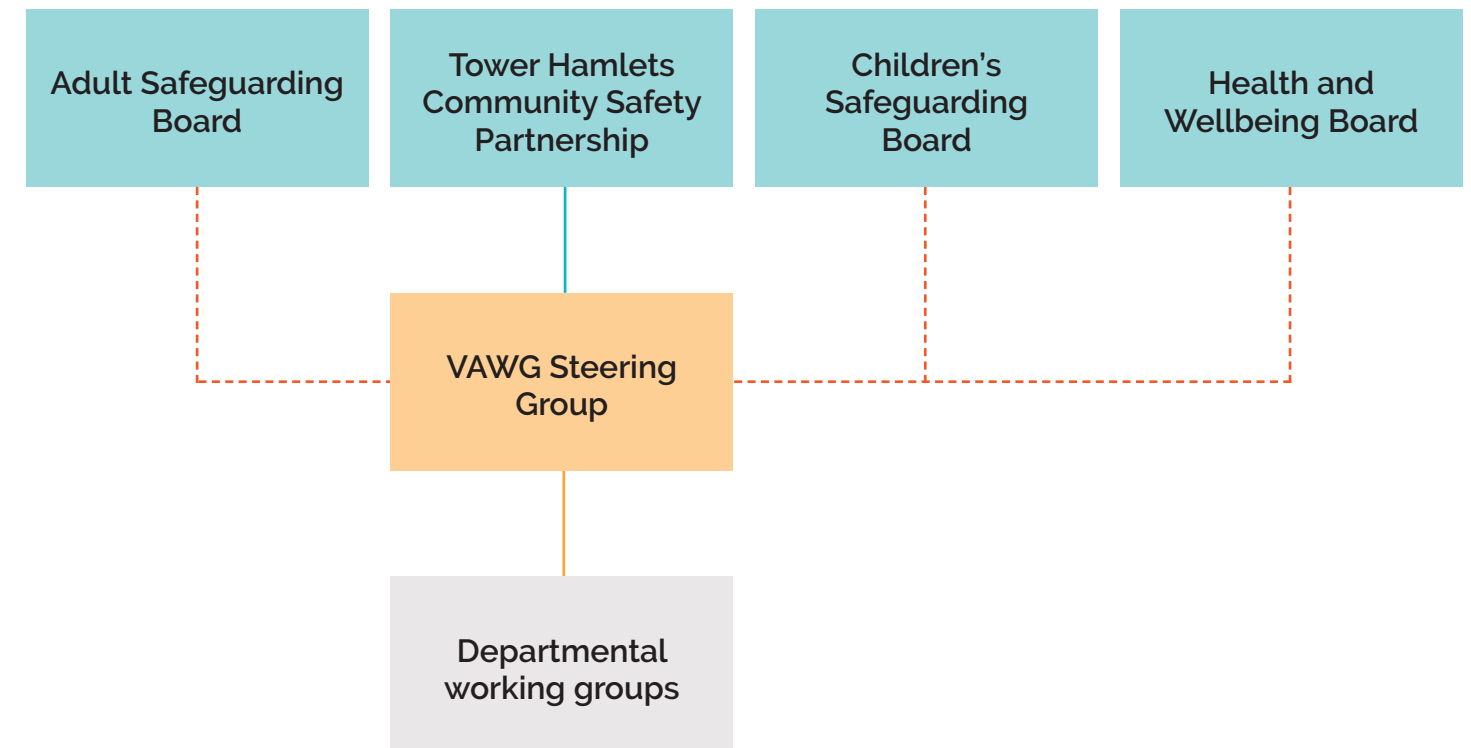
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Who is responsible for delivering our strategy?

The delivery of most parts of the VAWG and Women's Safety Strategy will be overseen by the Tower Hamlets VAWG Steering Group, the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and other key Tower Hamlets governance boards as outlined and illustrated in the diagram below. Working in partnership with public sector and voluntary and community sector stakeholders, the VAWG Steering Group aims to prevent VAWG in Tower Hamlets and reduce the emotional and physical harm it causes to individuals and to the community.

The VAWG Steering Group is responsible for developing the detailed action plan for the majority of elements of this strategy and will report to the CSP on progress quarterly. This action plan will be published as an appendix of the VAWG strategy available on our website or as a future update to this document. The action plan will be a dynamic, live document that will be managed by the group throughout the life of the strategy.

Where there are actions managed elsewhere, for example those arising from our Gender Inclusive Design Review or the Tower Hamlets Women's Commission which will be managed under the Local Plan, Corporate Equalities Board and the associated governance arrangements. However, they will also provide updates on progress to the VAWG steering group as part of regular reporting to align the work we're doing in those areas and ensure that the group has a view of activity across the whole system.



Where to find more information and access support



In an emergency you should always call **999**. If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call **999**, and then press **55**. This will transfer your call to the relevant police force who will assist you without having to speak.



For additional advice and support services on all VAWG areas, please see the Tower Hamlets VAWG [Service Directory](#) on our website. Specialist VAWG support is available via the Service Directory for:

[Disabled people](#)

[Male victims and survivors](#)

[Those from ethnic minorities](#)

[LGBT+ people](#)

[FGM, forced marriage and "honour" based abuse](#)

[Children and young people](#)

For domestic abuse support contact Solace. They provide a free and confidential support for women and men in Tower Hamlets affected by abuse.



020 3795 5064

Open: Monday – Friday 9am-5pm

For access to 24/7 Rape and Sexual Abuse Support line:



0808 500 2222

or start an online chat by going to



247abusesupport.org.uk

where you can find more information.

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Equality Impact Analysis Template

Section 1: Introduction

Name of proposal
For the purpose of this document, 'proposal' refers to a policy, function, strategy or project
VAWG and Women's Safety Strategy
Service area and Directorate responsible
Cross Council, including Community Safety, Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Public Realm, Public Health, Licensing and Leisure Services. The sponsor for this project is the Community Safety Director, supported by HASC SPI service.
Name of completing officer
Adam Price, Strategy and Policy Lead
Approved by (Corporate Director / Divisional Director/ Head of Service)
Divisional Director, Community Safety - Ann Corbett
Date of approval
29052024

Where a proposal is being taken to a committee, please append the completed EIA(s) to the cover report.

Conclusion – To be completed at the end of the Equality Impact Analysis process

This summary will provide an update on the findings of the EIA and what the outcome is. *For example, based on the findings of the EIA, the proposal was rejected as the negative impact on a particular group was disproportionate and the appropriate actions cannot be undertaken to mitigate risk. Or, based on the EIA, the proposal was amended, and alternative steps taken.*

The focus of this is to analyse the impacts of the proposal on residents, service users and the wider community that are likely to be affected by the proposal. If the proposed change also has an impact on staff, the committee covering report should provide an overview of the likely equality impact for staff, residents and service users and the range of mitigating measures proposed.

Conclusion	Current decision rating (see Appendix A)
Proceed pending agreement of mitigating action	Amber 

The Equality Act 2010 places a ‘General Duty’ on all public bodies to have ‘due regard’ to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between those with ‘protected characteristics’ and those without them
- Foster good relations between those with ‘protected characteristics’ and those without them

This Equality Impact Analysis provides evidence for meeting the Council’s commitment to equality and the responsibilities outlined above. For more information about the Council’s commitment to equality, please visit the Council’s [website](#).

Section 2: General information about the proposal

Describe the proposal including the relevance of proposal to the general equality duties and protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

The Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Women’s Safety strategy 2024-2029 sets out our approach to tackling gender-based violence in the borough, from street harassment such as catcalling through to domestic abuse and the wide range of VAWG crimes that the council seeks to address in partnership through prevention, community education, support for victims and

survivors, and responding to perpetrators. It sets out the direction of the council's efforts in this area for the life of the strategy, highlights what's new about the environment in which we work and the approach we will be taking, and clarifies our understanding of the complex range of issues surrounding gender-based violence.

Section 3: Evidence (consideration of data and information)

What evidence do we have which may help us think about the impacts or likely impacts on residents, service users and wider community?

The strategy is informed by a thorough needs assessment conducted by an analyst within the Public Health division. It includes detailed research and analysis of local data as well as qualitative research through surveys and focus groups. This consultation involved over 370 residents of Tower Hamlets and more than 120 professionals working in the borough in and around VAWG in 2023.

The 2021 census data also provides us with an estimate of the prevalence of some protected characteristics across Tower Hamlets.

Research and recommendations from the Tower Hamlets Gender Inclusive Design report from May 2024 has also been used to inform the strategy.

We have also referred to data from commissioned providers who support people with domestic abuse for the period 2023-24 which, as the largest commissioned VAWG service, can help us understand who uses our services.

This analysis was conducted with the help of residents representing a range of protected characteristics through the Cornerstone Project, supported by Tower Hamlets CVS, which aims to produce a best practice guide to equality impact assessment. This includes representatives from the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program, GALOP, Tower Hamlets Inter-faith forum, Praxis, and women's Groups such as Somali organisations and Women's Aid.

Section 4: Assessing the impacts on different groups and service delivery

Groups	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Considering the above information and evidence, describe the impact this proposal will have on the following groups?
Protected				
Age (All age groups)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Young adults are among those most at risk of being victims of domestic abuse. According to our data for 2023-24, 85% of referrals to our commissioned domestic abuse service for domestic abuse were for people between the ages 16-45 years.</p> <p>Other forms of VAWG such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and harassment disproportionately affect younger women and girls. Decisions taken about</p>



			<p>VAWG services within the scope of the strategy therefore have the potential to have a disproportionate impact on these groups.</p> <p>In addition to this, there are specific forms of abuse within VAWG that have a particular impact on older members of the population. For example, familial abuse involving elderly relatives or abuse of those with dementia.</p> <p>Broader issues of women's safety around access and use of public space affect different age groups differently – younger people surveyed as part of our gender inclusive design work were more likely to report that fear of victim blaming shaped their decisions about walking in the city.</p> <p>While specific projects will be accompanied by their</p>
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				own equality impact analysis to consider the associated implications in more detail, it is intended that the work we undertake on this during the life of the strategy to provide appropriate services for specialist need and embedding gender-based design will improve the experiences of these groups in accessing support or in making use of public space in the borough.
Disability (Physical, learning difficulties, mental health and medical conditions)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Evidence shows that disabled women and girls have an increased risk of violence and abuse compared those who are not disabled and typically experience abuse for a longer time before accessing support (SafeLives, 2017).</p> <p>The percentage of disabled people reporting sexual offences is lower than we</p>



			<p>would expect – around 20% of residents report having a disability compared to 5.6% of those who reported sexual offences to police in Tower Hamlets between 2021-23.</p> <p>This lower than expected rate of reporting suggests the potential for increased accessibility of awareness, educational and outreach work to have a significant positive impact on disabled residents, which this strategy aims to do. While ~25% of those accessing our IDVA service reported having a disability, this is a service where we might expect to see a greater number of those with additional intersectional vulnerabilities and it is difficult to draw informed conclusions on whether we have sufficiently addressed barriers to access for different types of disabilities. This is particularly true given the</p>
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			<p>extremely wide range of access needs faced by different people with various disabilities – being wheelchair accessible does not make a premises more accessible to the deaf community, for example.</p> <p>It is therefore anticipated that work within the strategy that considers specific barriers to access for different groups and training for professionals to help address this will also have a positive impact on disabled people affected by the VAWG and Women’s Safety Strategy.</p> <p>Some forms of disability such as autism or learning disabilities may also be relevant to improving our approach to working with perpetrators where these disabilities have an impact on forms of VAWG or misogynistic behaviours and where effective</p>
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				intervention to prevent recurrence of these behaviours requires a different approach as a result.
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Violence against women and girls is recognised as a highly gendered form of violence that is to a large extent committed by men against women. Women are at greater risk of these forms of violence and men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators. All of our services in this area will therefore disproportionately have an impact on women.</p> <p>One in three of reported cases of domestic abuse in Tower Hamlets involve a male victim. However, those accessing our commissioned domestic abuse service in 2023-24 are almost entirely female (95%). This suggests a high level of unmet need in</p>

				the male population of the borough and the need to address access for male victims and survivors as part of work to improve access within this strategy.
Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Domestic abuse services in the borough see extremely few transgenders and non-binary individuals. Since this population group is known to be at significantly greater risk of gender-based violence, there are concerns that the low reporting and access to services in the borough reflects distrust in public institutions rather than low prevalence.</p> <p>Understanding the particular needs of this group has been highlighted within the strategy as an area requiring additional work to understand and address boroughs and</p>

				<p>increase access to services.</p> <p>Data quality regarding gender reassignment tends to be poor across services and research; improvements to the quality and consistency of data will support better insight on this area. However, there is known good practice to apply in services regarding inclusion and access among trans and non-binary people, regardless of data quality.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>For those in an abusive relationship, marriage or civil partnership can be a complicating factor, throwing up additional barriers to leaving that relationship. This could be due to questions around finances, the ownership of the home, entitlement to housing support, child custody, legal migration</p>



			<p>status and no recourse to public funds among other things.</p> <p>Additionally, in conjunction with religious considerations (also referenced below), attitudes and beliefs about a person's responsibility to stay and accept abusive behaviours may be influenced by what religious cultural practices say about the duties of married people in particular. We recognise the role that faith leaders have in challenging misogyny and abuse.</p> <p>As part of work included within this strategy we intend to do more work with cultural and faith groups and religious representatives to ensure that the messages residents receive do not negatively impact on their situation, as well as ensuring that the advice</p>
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				and support that victims and survivors receive enables them to navigate financial and legal complexities thrown up by marriage or civil partnership.
Religion or philosophical belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>According to people who access domestic abuse service (2023-24) around 55% are Muslim and 14% identify as Christians. Tower Hamlets has one of the largest Muslim populations in England. Religion or belief and how they are interpreted within certain cultures can play a significant role with respect to attitudes in relation to women, trans or non-binary individuals at risk of gender-based violence and misogyny. Some communities across a wide range of religions may hold views about the role of women and the subordination of their lives to those of men.</p>



				<p>Additionally, cultural practices involving violence against women and girls may be mistakenly considered or labelled by residents or professionals as religious practice, for example in the case of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or other forms of honour-based violence. Our Sister Circle FGM programme preliminary report suggests that those who are engaging with service are approx. 85% Muslim and 15% Christian.</p> <p>As set out in the section on marriage above, religious and cultural mores against divorce or on the role of women can be complicating factors that lead to additional barriers for those experiencing abuse.</p> <p>Victims or survivors may face accessibility barriers in relation to religion,</p>
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			<p>whether in terms of availability in relation to religious observance, the desire for gender-segregated services, or other needs.</p> <p>As mentioned above, work with cultural and faith groups and religious representatives is intended to address some of these elements and champion the positive actions that religious institutions can take to address male violence.</p> <p>It is also worth noting that we have seen from nationally reported cases of the grooming of young Asian women by extremists that the work of Prevent and similar initiatives can have significant implications with respect to violence against women and girls. Getting the council's partnership working right in relation to this sensitive area also has</p>
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				the potential to affect the experiences of young women in this respect.
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>As an extremely diverse borough with significant Somali and Bangladeshi populations, any decision that affects Tower Hamlets residents is likely to have a significant impact in relation to this protected characteristic. In relation to VAWG, this can be in relation to cultural barriers that affect access, the mistrust of VAWG, legal and criminal justice services among some ethnic communities. It may also arise to a degree in relation to how a focus on larger communities might obscure the needs of smaller population groups.</p> <p>Over half of all those accessing our commissioned domestic abuse service are from</p>



				<p>Asian ethnicities (2023-24, 54%), of which the Bangladeshi community made up approx. 48%. White British made up 19% of those using the service. In keeping with our Tower Hamlets Partnership Plan's call to action, to be a fair, inclusive and an anti-racist borough, this strategy highlights the importance of addressing individuals' needs relating to race or associated cultural factors and not taking a one-size-fits-all approach. This aims to build on work such as the Haawa Project during the last strategy that provided tailored support to predominantly (~80%) Somali women as well as a selection of other ethnicities. The commissioned support service provider will work with a third sector organisation specialising in working with Black and Asian minority ethnic groups.</p>
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				<p>The domestic abuse service recognises language barriers and provided translation support to 30% of clients. These additional barriers if not addressed can make communities less likely to access service and more vulnerable to violence and abuse.</p> <p>Any approach that is affected by migration status is also likely to have a disproportionate impact on race, due to the demographic make-up of migrants. Where those suffering abuse have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), this can be a significant factor in the services they receive or individuals may even have their migration status used against them as a threat by perpetrators.</p> <p>The VAWG service recognises the importance</p>
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				of managing these particular complexities and work planned during the life of this strategy aims to improve our offer and the experience of victims and survivors with NRPF.
Sexual orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>93% of domestic abuse service users in 2023-24 are recorded as heterosexual, while 7% of recorded users are unknown or declined to answer.</p> <p>However, the 2021 census data which showed Tower Hamlets has a higher percentage of those who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual than England and Wales as a whole – 7.2% compared with 3.1%. As with other elements of the LGBTQ+ community, we see underreporting and a distrust of institutions in relation to VAWG crimes such as domestic abuse. Combined with a higher</p>



				<p>level of risk and no way to know whether those who chose not to declare their sexual orientation are from these groups, this presents as an area of significant unmet need.</p> <p>This strategy sets out to improve our understanding of the particular cultural needs faced by particular groups in relation to sexual orientation, such as those who are gay, lesbian and bisexual, the barriers they face, their service needs and the best way to engage with these communities.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>It is recognised that abuse and coercion often starts or becomes worse when pregnancy becomes known. It can increase vulnerability to certain kinds of VAWG and maternity has a number of implications for access to services in terms of the</p>



			<p>ability to travel far with a baby as well as factors such as potential health complications. Similar to marriage, it can be associated with additional concerns around financial dependence that can be a barrier.</p> <p>Tower Hamlets does not commission specific services for women who are pregnant or recent mothers as part of our work on VAWG, but it is anticipated that their needs will be included within the work to identify barriers to access and ensure that specific access needs, including those in relation to intersectional vulnerabilities, are met. For example, Barts Health and GP Care Group train midwives to support women and identify FGM within midwifery Services.</p> <p>Our VAWG work will involve building stronger</p>
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				links with services that work with residents during pregnancy and maternity period such as antenatal services, infant feeding, or health visiting.
Experience of Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The 2021 Domestic Abuse Act recognised abusive behaviour between 16-17 year olds as domestic abuse as well as recognising children who witness or experience domestic abuse as victims and survivors. Children under the age of 18 years old are considered victims of domestic abuse if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse and are related or under the care of either the victim or perpetrator of abuse. As those with experience of care are more likely to have experience of domestic abuse prior to being in care, and the power dynamics or lack of alternatives available to

				<p>those in case can be a barrier to addressing abuse, this has a particular impact on that population group.</p> <p>This expansion of the definition of domestic abuse is something that will be addressed during the strategy and the council intends to adjust its service offer for children in response to this change.</p>
Other				
Socio-economic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Socio-economic deprivation is strongly linked with homelessness, where we saw almost 10% of cases linked to domestic abuse between 2018-2023. Consideration of housing pathways within this strategy is intended to support those in this situation and improve joined-up working between VAWG services and services such as housing or our tackling poverty team.</p>

<p>Parents/Carers</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>VAWG training offer is available to parents and carers in Tower Hamlets. Many parents and carers have undergone VAWG champions training and are linked in with safeguarding processes including Multi Agency Support Teams (MAST) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).</p> <p>However, as discussed above under Pregnancy and Maternity, parents with small children may face additional barriers in relation to accessing services. Their needs will be included within the work to identify barriers to access and ensure that specific access needs, including those in relation to intersectional vulnerabilities, are met.</p>
<p>People with different Gender Identities e.g.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<p>Gender fluid, Non-Binary etc</p>				<p>We know that non-binary people, gender non-conforming people, and people with diverse sexualities can be targeted for forms of gender-based violence based on their sexuality, gender identity and/or gender expression.</p> <p>The exploration of barriers faced by LGBTQ+ communities as part of the strategy will require recognising the sometimes-particular needs that these individuals will have in relation to gender-based violence.</p>
<p>Any other groups</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Migrant survivors - Migrant victims and survivors of domestic abuse face some of the most significant barriers to accessing support simply because of their immigration status. 'Immigration abuse' is a tactic used by abusers as a form of coercive control.</p>

				<p>See the section on NRPF in relation to race, above.</p> <p>Intersectional groups - We recognise that whilst each protected characteristic has barriers, vulnerabilities can be compounded further for intersectional groups too i.e. someone who is not only Asian but also gay.</p>
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Section 5: Impact analysis and action plan

Recommendation	Key activity	Progress milestones including target dates for either completion or progress	Officer responsible	Update on progress
VAWG Steering Group to agree regular cycle of reporting on demographics of service use, that includes consideration any necessary response and incorporating these into their action plan/s, and to update their Terms of Reference accordingly.	Update ToR	By September 2024	Simon Smith	
Revision of data collection across partnership to capture information which would adequately inform equalities impact assessment and support service improvements and adaptations.	Review Data collection and establish key metrics for delivery of outcomes	Ongoing	Simon Smith	
VAWG services and commissioned providers to identify	Target interventions for specific under represented	By January 2025	Simon Smith	

<p>underrepresented groups and agree/implement mitigating actions to respond.</p>	<p>groups in terms of service take up (somali community, older victims/ male victims/ LGBT victims).</p>			
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Section 6: Monitoring

What monitoring processes have been put in place to check the delivery of the above action plan and impact on equality groups?

Work is planned with the VAWG Steering Group to develop their action plan and the requirements above will be included within it.

Appendix A

EIA decision rating

Decision	Action	Risk
<p>As a result of performing the EIA, it is evident that a disproportionately negative impact (direct, indirect, unintentional or otherwise) exists to one or more of the nine groups of people who share a Protected Characteristic under the Equality Act and appropriate mitigations cannot be put in place to mitigate against negative impact. It is recommended that this proposal be suspended until further work is undertaken.</p>	<p>Suspend – Further Work Required</p>	<p>Red</p> 
<p>As a result of performing the EIA, it is evident that there is a risk that a disproportionately negative impact (direct, indirect, unintentional or otherwise) exists to one or more of the nine groups of people who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is a genuine determining reason that could legitimise or justify the use of this policy.</p>	<p>Further (specialist) advice should be taken</p>	<p>Red Amber</p> 
<p>As a result of performing the EIA, it is evident that there is a risk that a disproportionately negatively impact (as described above) exists to one or more of the nine groups of people who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, this risk may be removed or reduced by implementing the actions detailed within the <i>Impact analysis and action plan</i> section of this document.</p>	<p>Proceed pending agreement of mitigating action</p>	<p>Amber</p> 

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Needs Assessment about Violence Against Women and Girls in Tower Hamlets 2023

22 December 2023

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of this Needs Assessment is to provide an updated view of need in relation to violence against women and girls (VAWG) in 2023 and provide recommendations for planning and commissioning of interventions to prevent and reduce violence against women and girls and its impact in Tower Hamlets.

VAWG is considered a complex public health issue with risk and protective factors. This framing supports consideration of the root causes of violence through the lens of wider determinants of health like social norms, financial security, housing, and the built environment. It will then enable Tower Hamlets Council to consider interventions on at different levels of prevention, from reducing the likelihood of violence, access to support and safety and reduction of the long-term impacts on wellbeing and health on victims and survivors.

VAWG includes a range of crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls (although different genders can experience these crimes) – these include domestic abuse, rape and other sexual offences, stalking, harassment, ‘honour’-based abuse (female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and ‘honour’ killings), digital abuse (e.g., ‘revenge porn’, ‘upskirting’), among others. Experiencing violence has negative effects on physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health as well as wider determinants of health like social isolation and economic insecurity.

National and Regional Context

There are national and regional policies and strategies in place that can help inform the definitions and expectations of Tower Hamlets’ actions towards preventing and responding to VAWG locally. National legislation includes the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Sexual Offences Act, Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 and Modern Slavery Act 2015. Additionally, there is a national Tackling VAWG Strategy which launched 2021, with ambitions to increase support for victims and survivors; increase the number of perpetrators brought to justice; increase reporting to the police; increase victim engagement with the police and wider public service response and reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls.

The London Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime has a VAWG strategy for 2022-2025 with similar priorities to the national strategy and a significant focus on partnership working with London stakeholders including partners from the VAWG sector, local authorities, police, the crown prosecution service, probation, HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) and new commitments from the health sector.

Promising approaches for prevention and response to VAWG

Chapter 4 of this needs assessment summarises some of the existing guidance available for planning for prevention and reduction of VAWG at a local level, including:

- approaches for prevention, women’s safety and education;
- support for victims of VAWG;
- services directed towards perpetrators;
- addressing risks to health and security;
- ensuring approaches address inequalities and social exclusion and
- trauma-informed approaches.

Local risks factors and patterns of violence

Chapter 5 of this needs assessment includes information about the local population of Tower Hamlets, including risk factors for violence, as well as the occurrence of violence at a

population level. National and London-level data are included where there is limited local information. Below are some of the key findings from this chapter:

- Residents and professionals think that VAWG in Tower Hamlets is influenced by wider social issues like poverty and housing, lack of education and awareness, and cultural and social norms for different genders (misogyny and toxic masculinity).
- Some risk factors for experiencing different forms of VAWG as well as experiencing barriers to seeking support are common in Tower Hamlets (financial and housing insecurity, disability, LBGTQ+, specific ethnicities at risk of honour-based abuse and FGM).
- Male residents are more likely to feel very safe in the borough than female residents both during the day and night.
- Different forms of VAWG are frequently reported by Tower Hamlets residents, with some of the highest rates of reported domestic abuse, sexual violence, and online abuse in London.
- Although most victims were female, there were also male victims and victims of other genders, especially in modern slavery offences and in one-third of domestic abuse cases.
- Young adults make up the highest proportion of victims, although other age groups are also represented; young people aged 17 or under have one of the highest victimisation rates for sexual offences.
- Online safety is also a growing concern across London, with reports of abuse through online methods increasing each year. The majority of recorded victims were female.
- Women also shared different forms of 'lower level' violence/abuse they experienced in Tower Hamlets, including catcalling, invading personal space, unwanted contact in public spaces and social settings.
- Experiencing VAWG impacts residents in a range of ways including increasing risk of homelessness, poor mental health, and poor physical health including physical injuries and sexual health.

Achievements and Areas for Further Improvement in Tower Hamlets

In Chapter 8, there is a summary of the main achievements and areas for improvement across various areas of prevention and response to VAWG. Below are some of these findings. Further explanations of these summaries are described in Chapter 6, regarding local implementation, and Chapter 7, regarding local perspectives of residents and professionals.

Awareness and attitudes

- Tower Hamlets Council have implemented many training and outreach activities with professionals and residents, including VAWG Champions, campaigns with local businesses, and information for schools.
- Residents report limited awareness about local services and pathways among residents.
- Residents considered male residents, faith groups, and schools to be the most influential for influencing attitudes and increasing awareness.
- Although many professionals have participated in training about VAWG, 21% had not been aware of any training opportunities and over 10% reported not having enough time to participate.

Levels of resident engagement and involvement

- Only 8% of residents responding to the VAWG survey had previously involved in planning, designing, or reviewing action to prevention or address VAWG in Tower Hamlets.
- About half of professionals feel 'quite/extremely' confident in involving victims in planning and delivery.
- Tower Hamlets Women's Network has enabled involvement and empowerment among female residents since 2021, including the Gender Inclusive Design research project which applied online and in-person methods of gathering insight from female residents about their views.

Access to support

- When seeking support after experiencing VAWG, most residents say they would first speak to a friend or family member, followed by the police. Some residents also report that speaking to their GP has been helpful for seeking help with VAWG.
- Residents and professionals identified many barriers to seeking support such as lack of information about services, trust, awareness about abuse, and different fears.
- There are high numbers of groups who are more likely to experience barriers to support in Tower Hamlets (people with limited English proficiency, LGBTQ+ people, disabled people).

Support services for victims

- Tower Hamlets has a range of specialist services available for people who experience different forms of VAWG which are accessed by hundreds of residents, especially women.
- While just over half of professionals report feeling 'quite/extremely confident' in signposting or referring to support, nearly half of professionals have not participated in training and many didn't know about services aside from domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- Residents have varying views about services, with police, council housing and social care frequently viewed as 'not very helpful'.

Responding to perpetrators

- Perpetrators of domestic abuse and sexual violence are most often men. Perpetrators of honour-based abuse including FGM are less well recorded.
- Sanction and detection rates are low (9% for domestic abuse and 10% for sexual offences).
- Over one-third of professionals reported being 'not at all confident' on working with perpetrators
- Until recently, the main perpetrator service was available only to people with children, with few completions among perpetrators.
- Specialist Domestic Abuse Court was previously in place but is no longer operational.

Multi-agency and system response

- Over 500 of cases are discussed at MARACs each year to identify actions for safety planning, with a repeat victimisation rate between 15-18%.
- Domestic Homicide Reviews have offered multi-agency learnings and recommendations for organisations to take forward regarding training, policy, information sharing and processes.
- There are partnership groups for improving the support for women in contact with the criminal justice system and victims of modern day slavery.

- Professionals across Tower Hamlets organisations and services have participated in training about trauma-informed approaches, but implementation varies.

Recommendations

This needs assessment provides recommendations for future planning from 2024 in Chapter 9. The recommendations include actions towards preventing violence and increasing community safety; improving support for victims; holding perpetrators to account as well as cross-cutting recommendations to be applied across all areas of action related to VAWG in the borough. These actions relate to the local authority, criminal justice system, NHS organisations, voluntary sector organisations and the wider community.

Chapter 1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Needs Assessment is to provide an overarching view of need in relation to violence against women and girls (VAWG) and provide recommendations for planning and commissioning of interventions to address violence against women and girls in Tower Hamlets. The Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan 2023-2026 includes an ambition that 'residents, workers and visitors of all backgrounds feel safe and welcome in Tower Hamlets' with several objectives relevant to VAWG prevention and response including a specific objective, 'Tackle violence against women and girls and support victims'. The current VAWG strategy comes to an end in 2024, so this will help inform the development of a new strategy for 2024 to 2029.

VAWG includes a range of crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls (although different genders can experience these crimes) – these include domestic abuse, rape and other sexual offences, stalking, harassment, 'honour'-based abuse (female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and 'honour' killings), digital abuse (e.g., 'revenge porn', 'upskirting'), among others.

This needs assessment will seek to answer the following questions:

1. What is the national and regional context of VAWG in terms of legislation and policy?
2. What is considered good practice for the prevention and response to VAWG and women's safety at a local level?
3. What are the relevant demographic considerations for designing and delivering action on VAWG in Tower Hamlets?
4. How frequently do different forms violence against women and girls occur in Tower Hamlets, London and England?
5. What are the patterns in violence experienced by subgroups of women and girls?
6. What is the impact of violence on women and girls' lives?
7. What do residents, including survivors and victims, and professionals in Tower Hamlets say is needed to prevent and reduce the impact of VAWG and/or improve women and girls' safety?
8. What has been implemented since the start of the current strategy in 2019?
9. What are residents, including survivors and victims, and professionals in Tower Hamlets knowledge and views about what is currently in place?
10. What should be incorporated into future planning to reduce VAWG and its impacts?

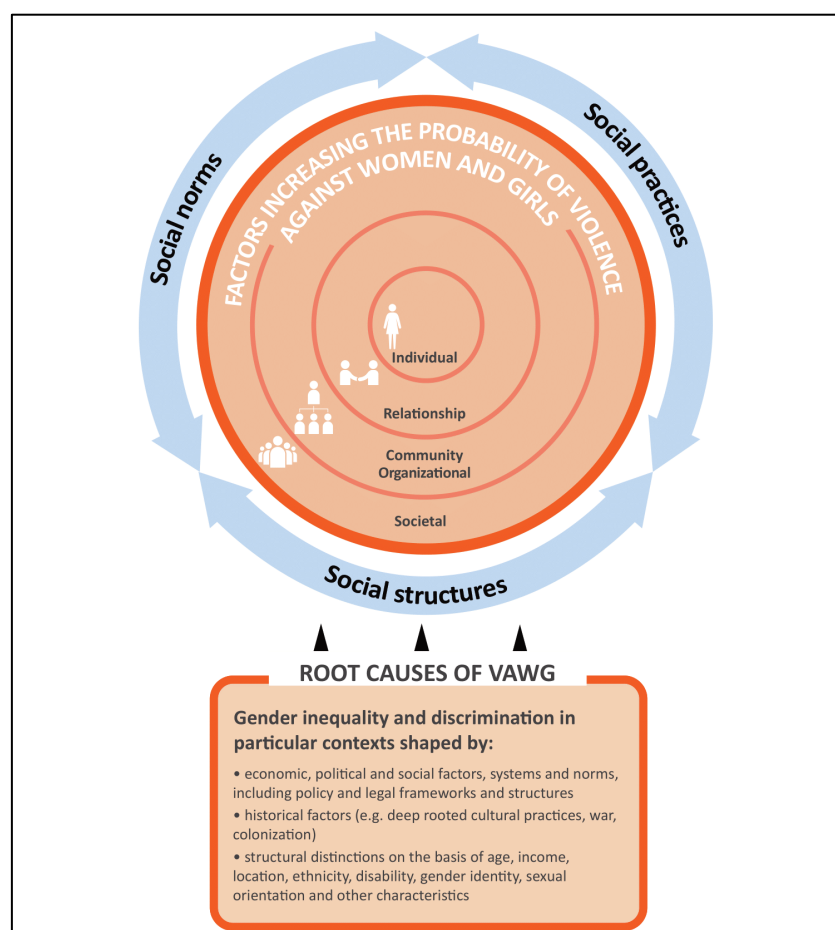
VAWG is influenced by misogyny (prejudice against women) and it can also lead to further inequalities in health and wellbeing experienced by women. To understand the local needs around prevention and reduction of VAWG, it is essential to consider multiple dimensions of inequality that can compound risks and increase barriers to support. It is also important to consider that different factors can overlap to influence the ways different people experience violence or can access help or support.

Alongside this needs assessment, there is a Serious Violence Duty Needs Assessment (SVD NA), which has been developed in 2023 to enable local authorities and local services to work together and plan to prevent serious violence (this includes information about domestic abuse, sexual violence, and any violence and exploitation affecting young people under the age of 25).

Chapter 2 Background

According to UN Women, VAWG is related to gender-based discrimination, social norms that accept violence, and gender stereotypes that continue cycles of violence. Using a socio-ecological model to consider the drivers of VAWG enables a broader understanding of the factors that intersect at the individual, interpersonal, community and societal levels to increase or decrease the likelihood of violence (as depicted in Figure 1)¹. This lens helps identify a broad set of opportunities to intervene and reduce VAWG. We should consider how each level influences the other when designing interventions (for instance, how wider societal and community factors influence family and partner relationships).

Figure 1: Understanding violence against women¹



Experiencing violence and abuse often have traumatic and long-lasting effects on victims, survivors and loved ones – including physical and mental health, damage to self-esteem and confidence, isolation, homelessness and reduced economic prospects. These result in negative impacts in wider society, including social and economic costs.

Given its negative consequences on health and wellbeing, VAWG is considered a major public health issue globally and in the UK. To address VAWG using a public health approach, it is necessary to define and understand the issue and levels of need including risk and protective factors before going on to identify appropriate interventions to deliver. This framing

¹ UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP, OHCHR, UNESCO, & ILO (2015). A Framework to Underpin Action to Prevent Violence against Women. UN Women. Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/11/prevention-framework>

supports consideration of the root causes of violence through the lens of wider determinants of health (e.g., factors such as gender norms, financial security, housing, and the built environment). It will then enable Tower Hamlets Council to consider interventions for different levels of prevention, from reducing the likelihood of violence, access to support and safety and reduction of the long-term impacts on wellbeing and health on victims and survivors.

Chapter 3 Policy and Legislative Context

There are national and regional policies and strategies that can inform local action around VAWG:

National

Domestic Abuse Act 2021: In 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act was signed into law, providing a statutory definition of domestic abuse which includes any of the following behaviours between two people are aged 16 years or older personally connected to each other, regardless of if it is a single incident or a course or recurring²:

- physical or sexual abuse.
- violent or threatening behaviour.
- controlling or coercive behaviour.
- economic abuse; and/or
- psychological, emotional or other abuse.

Children under the age of 18 years old are also considered victims of domestic abuse if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse and are related or under the care of either the victim or perpetrator of abuse. However, the law does not pertain to behaviour between two children under the age of 16 years old (e.g., young people in a romantic relationship).

This law also places a duty on local authorities to provide accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation. All eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance. In addition, the law ensures that where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an assured shorthold tenancy) this must be a secure lifetime tenancy.

Beyond these specific implications, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 also places a general duty on local authorities to take all reasonable steps to prevent domestic abuse and support survivors through different policies and services.

Sexual Offences Act 2003: The Sexual Offences Act 2003 sets out provision about sexual offences, prevention and protection of children from harm³. It provides definitions for different sexual offences including rape, assault, child sexual exploitation, trafficking, prostitution, abuse of positions of trust, and voyeurism. Additionally, the Act also sets out a definition of consent as well as criteria for offences where consent is not required to be proved (e.g., specific sexual offences against children under specific ages as well as sexual offences against persons with a mental disorder in particular circumstances).

² Domestic Abuse Act 2021, c. 17. Retrieved from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/enacted>

³ Sexual Offences Act 2003, c. 42. Retrieved from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003: This Act defines female genital mutilation (FGM) as a criminal offence and that FGM includes the excision, infibulation or other mutilation of part of or all of a girl's labia majora, labia minora or clitoris. The Act also established a duty to notify police of FGM for people working in regulated professions (e.g., healthcare professionals, teachers)⁴.

The FGM Act 2003 sets out a duty for local authorities to take all reasonable steps to prevent FGM, including raising awareness and working with communities to challenge attitudes. Additionally, local authorities have a duty to provide support to victims of FGM, including practical health, access to specialist services and provision of emotional support.

Modern Slavery Act 2015: This Act sets out definitions for modern slavery and exploitation, penalties, prevention orders and requirements for the protection of victims⁵.

Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy: In 2021, the Government launched the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy⁶, replacing the previous strategy that ran from 2016-2020⁷. The strategy document explains that the term VAWG refers to acts of violence or abuse known to disproportionately affect women and girls but says that the strategy refers to all victims of any of these offences (rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, 'honour'-based abuse, and online offences). This strategy has the following ambitions:

1. To increase support for victims and survivors
2. To increase the number of perpetrators brought to justice
3. To increase reporting to the police
4. To increase victim engagement with the police and wider public service response
5. To reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls

The strategy notes that a cross-system approach with coordinated and cohesive response between organisations is necessary to reduce VAWG, improve support and increase the number of perpetrators brought to justice. The Home Office invested £43 million towards tackling VAWG, including perpetrator interventions, Domestic Homicide Review improvements, and specific funding for addressing forced marriage.

The Strategy also sets out several actions towards these ambitions including:

- **Prioritising prevention**
 - Compulsory relationship education in all primary schools and relationship and sex education in all secondary schools
 - Updated guidance for school and college staff for managing reports of sexual violence and harassment as well as identification and response to all forms of abuse and neglect including peer-on-peer abuse
 - Investment in the safer public spaces including streets and transportation

⁴ Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, c. 31. Retrieved from:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/31/contents>

⁵ Modern Slavery Act 2015, c. 30. Retrieved from:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted>

⁶ Home Office (2021). *Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>

⁷ Home Office (2021). *Strategy to end violence against women and girls: 2016 to 2020*. Retrieved from:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7f56b6e5274a2e8ab4b936/VAWG_Strategy_FINAL_PUBLICATION_MASTER_vRB.PDF

- An Online Safety Bill introducing new measures for prevention of harmful online content and safeguards for children and vulnerable adults
- National public information campaign targeting perpetrators and harmful misogynistic attitudes in wider society
- Resourcing for community advocates to engage on the topic of 'honour'-based abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- **Supporting victims**
 - Investment in community-based sexual violence and domestic abuse support services including specialist organisations that support people from different ethnic backgrounds, LGBT and disabled victims
 - Increasing investment in Independent Sexual and Domestic Violence Advisers
 - Clinics which support victims and survivors of FGM
 - Increase in funding for revenge porn helpline
- **Pursuing perpetrators**
 - Additional funding for police capacity with the aim of improving response and investigation
 - Funding evidence-based perpetrator programmes for a range of offence types including intimate partner violence, sexual offending, and serious violence
 - Campaigning and legislation against street harassment
 - Preventing offending from escalating amongst repeat perpetrators
 - Addressing 'sex for rent' and exploitation and bringing forward a Tackling Modern Slavery Strategy
- **Strengthening the system**
 - Funding for projects that aim to improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls
 - Funding to enhance multi-agency working and information sharing
 - Sharing best practice in policing to improve the response to VAWG
 - Provide a resource pack for local authorities and other partners on forced marriage
 - Resource allocation from Department of Health and Social Care to provide necessary support services for survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse and ensure safe, effective support for staff affected by VAWG
 - Raise awareness of the FGM mandatory reporting duty

Women's Health Strategy 2022-2032: In 2022, the Department of Health and Social Care established a 10-year Women's Health Strategy for England which has seven priority areas, including one about the health impacts of violence against women and girls as a public health issue as well as a criminal justice issue. The ambitions under this priority area are⁸:

- Prevention and reduction of VAWG is prioritised by the health and care system
- Women and girls who are victims of violence or abuse are supported by the healthcare system and in the workplace including increased focus on prevention, early identification and provision of victim support
- Greater awareness among the general population of healthcare services that provide specialist treatment and support for sexual violence and FGM
- NHS and social care staff who are victims of VAWG are better supported in the workplace by employers and colleagues, and know how to access support they may need.

⁸ Department of Health and Social Care. (2022). *Women's Health Strategy for England*. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/womens-health-strategy-for-england>

- Learnings and recommendations from the Domestic Homicide Reviews for health should be embedded.

Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023-2028: A major part of the cross-government Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023-2028 identifies groups that should be prioritised for support due to increased risk factors for suicide or self-harm. These groups include people in contact with the justice system and people who have experienced domestic abuse.

London

The London Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) has a VAWG strategy for 2022-2025 with the following priorities and actions⁹:

1. Preventing and reducing VAWG	2. Supporting all victims and survivors	3. Holding perpetrators to account	4. Building trust and confidence
1.1 Coming together as partners to prevent VAWG 1.2 Tackling VAWG through better education 1.3 A public challenge to the attitudes that enable VAWG so that Londoners, especially men, feel able to call it out 1.4 Equality and freedom for women and girls in public and online spaces	2.1 Helping more victims and survivors to rebuild their lives through access to specialist services 2.2 Improving the experience of victims and survivors through the CJS 2.3 Safe reporting and support for all victims and survivors	3.1 Perpetrators across all forms of VAWG are identified and pathways for abuse are disrupted 3.2 Early intervention for individuals displaying potentially harmful attitudes and behaviours 3.3 Perpetrators are effectively managed and reoffending is reduced	4.1 Taking action to build trust and confidence

The London VAWG Strategy emphasises partnership working in order to achieve these ambitions, calling on partners from the VAWG sector, local authorities, police, the crown prosecution service, probation, HMCTS and the NHS. There is a London VAWG Board which holds statutory partners to account which is co-chaired by MOPAC and a representative from the VAWG sector. There is also a VAWG Expert Reference Group which acts as a voice of the voluntary sector. In addition, MOPAC also provide funding for delivery of violence reduction programmes and services.

The London Women’s Night Safety Charter has a list of pledges for organisations that operate at night to sign up to, including having a champion, communications, staff training, design of the physical space as well as support for victims. There is a toolkit with ideas and resources for supporting organisations with adopting the pledges¹⁰. The Charter has hundreds of signatories from across London.

⁹ Mayor of London (2022). Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2022-2025. Retrieved from: <https://www.london.gov.uk/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls>

¹⁰ Mayor of London (2019). Women’s Night Safety Charter Toolkit. Retrieved from: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/wnsc_toolkit_final.pdf

Following a call to action by the Mayor of London, London Councils, NHS England London and Integrated Care Boards came together in autumn 2023 to hold the Violence Against Women and Girls is Everyone's Business: Health Summit. This Summit of partners across the health and care system (e.g. NHS organisations, Councils, voluntary sector organisations) set out a framework for pledges to be committed in alignment with the following principles:

- **Recognise all forms of violence against women and girls in everything we do** - Develop strategies and policies to identify how each respective organisation tackles all VAWG in all areas of business.
- **Embed action to end perpetration of VAWG** - Address offender behaviour, supporting them to change, while ensuring the safety of the victim is at the heart of any action.
- **Work together to actively tackle VAWG** - Create a culture across all partners where all staff are confident to identify and respond to VAWG whether it's dealing with a staff issue or supporting a patient.
- **Strengthen workplace safety** - Acknowledge and address the role of power dynamics within work environments and providing protection and support for staff who are experiencing or have experienced VAWG.
- **Promote a collaborative learning environment** - Understand the gaps in knowledge within our services and listening to experiences of colleagues to provide effective staff training focused on providing bespoke support to the needs of individual.
- **Ensure an anti-misogynistic environment** - Develop a shared understanding of what misogyny is, identifying structural barriers and working to address them, and through training with a focus on allyship to ensure there is no space for misogyny in the workplace.

Chapter 4 Promising approaches for addressing VAWG at a local level

This section provides information about approaches which are recommended for preventing and reducing the impact of VAWG at a local level, including the rationale and detail related to:

- approaches for prevention, women's safety and education;
- support for victims of VAWG;
- services directed towards perpetrators;
- addressing risks to health and security;
- ensuring approaches address inequalities and social exclusion and
- trauma-informed approaches.

Public Health and Prevention

Public health approaches have the following underlying principles, which can be applied to preventing VAWG¹¹:

- A focus on a defined population
- With and for communities
- Not constrained by organisational or professional boundaries
- Focused on generating long-term and short-term solutions
- Based on data and intelligence about need and inequalities
- Rooted in evidence of effectiveness for how to address needs

Local areas should apply a place-based, multi-agency approach to violence prevention which incorporates 'The 5Cs' to address specific needs in a population:

- Collaboration
- Co-production
- Co-operation in data and intelligence sharing
- Counter-narrative development
- Community consensus

Prevention—addressing the structural causes, as well as the risk and protective factors, associated with violence—is pivotal to eliminating violence against women and girls completely. It requires political commitment, implementing laws that promote gender equality, investing in women's organizations, and addressing the multiple forms of discrimination women face daily. In 2019, the World Health Organization published 'RESPECT Women: Preventing Violence Against Women' guidance for policymakers and programme implementers which includes the following 7 strategies to prevent violence against women¹²:

- **R**elationship skills strengthened
- **E**mpowerment of women
- **S**ervices ensured
- **P**overty reduced

¹¹ Public Health England (2017). A whole-system multi-agency approach to serious violence prevention. Retrieved from:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/862794/multi-agency_approach_to_serious_violence_prevention.pdf

¹² World Health Organization, 2019. *RESPECT women: Preventing violence against women*.

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-RHR-18.19>

- Environments made safe
- Child and adolescent abuse prevented
- Transformed attitudes, beliefs and norms

The document also sets out guiding principles for effective programming:

- Put women’s safety first and do no harm
- Promote gender equality and women’s human rights
- Address multiple and intersecting forms based on personal characteristics
- Develop a theory of change
- Promote evidence-informed programming
- Use participatory approaches
- Promote coordination
- Implement combined interventions
- Address the prevention continuum
- Take a life course approach

Women’s safety in public spaces: UN Women’s Global Flagship Initiative, Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls, challenges cities to¹³:

- Identify locally relevant and owned interventions that are related to gender
- Develop and effectively implement comprehensive laws and policies to prevent and respond to sexual violence in public places
- Invest in safety and economic viability of public spaces
- Change attitudes and behaviours to promote women’s and girl’s rights to enjoy public spaces free from violence

Education: In England, Relationships Education has been compulsory for all students in primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for students in secondary education since 2020. Statutory guidance includes the legal duties required of schools as well as expectations around age appropriateness¹⁴.

Setting	Content
Primary schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships (focused on family and friends) • A range of contexts, including online • Information about how to be healthy
Secondary schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of health with increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol • Knowledge about intimate relationships, sex, how to have positive and healthy sexual relationships

¹³ UN Women (2023). Safe cities and safe public spaces. Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/creating-safe-public-spaces>

¹⁴ Great Britain. Department for Education (2021). Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

A review of RSE implementation by SafeLives provided the following recommendations¹⁵:

- Guidance about RSE should reflect the diversity of the population of young people and their relationships including LGBT+ relationships, gender inequality, boundaries and consent
- Governance bodies should support schools to ensure RSE is prioritised and resourced to be embedded using a whole-school approach
- Schools should have a pool of trained RSE teachers who deliver the subject each year, enabling learning and support among staff as well as increased trust among young people.

Bystander interventions: Another promising approach to preventing different forms of VAWG in public spaces are bystander interventions, where people who might witness a form of VAWG play a role in prevention by recognising and responding to behaviours or attitudes. Intervention programmes involve raising awareness about VAWG; building skills (e.g., how to assess a situation, communicate with perpetrators and victims, and get help if needed); and changing social norms about violence and equality. These kinds of interventions support prevention of some forms of VAWG, including intimate partner violence and sexual violence, if specific to the local context and tailored to audiences' learning needs¹⁶.

Support for victims and perpetrators

There are existing recommended approaches for services for victims of VAWG as well as programmes for perpetrators, some which are specific to certain types of abuse or violence while others are relevant to different forms of VAWG.

Trauma-informed approaches: Experiences of violence and abuse are likely to be traumatic for victims and potentially also for perpetrators; trauma occurs when harmful or life-threatening events or circumstances people experience (such as violence or abuse) have lasting negative effects on their mental, physical, social, emotional or spiritual wellbeing. Specialist services and systems that aim to support people affected by violence should be trauma-informed. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) (2022) explains that trauma-informed approaches in care and practice aims to reduce these negative effects among people and communities by addressing barriers that people affected by trauma can experience when seeking services or support. Being trauma-informed means that individuals, services and organisations¹⁷:

- Realising that trauma can affect individuals, groups and communities
- Recognising the signs, symptoms and widespread impact of trauma
- Prevent re-traumatisation (exposing people to experiences that feel like previous traumatic experiences).

¹⁵ SafeLives (2022). "I love it – but wish it were taken more seriously": An exploration of relationships and sex education in English secondary school settings. https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/RSE_Report_2022_0.pdf

¹⁶ Great Britain. Public Health England (2020). Bystander interventions to prevent intimate partner and sexual violence: summary. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/interventions-to-prevent-intimate-partner-and-sexual-violence>

¹⁷ Great Britain. Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (2022). *Working definition of trauma-informed practice*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-definition-of-trauma-informed-practice/working-definition-of-trauma-informed-practice>

This can be done by applying the six principles of trauma-informed practice, which OHID (2022) described in relation to health and care services:

Safety	The physical, psychological and emotional safety of service users and staff is prioritised
Trustworthiness	Transparency exists in an organisation's policies and procedures, with the objective of building trust among staff, service users and the wider community
Choice	Service users are supported in shared decision-making, choice and goal setting to determine the plan of action they need to heal and move forward
Collaboration	The value of staff and service user experience is recognised in overcoming challenges and improving the system as a whole
Empowerment	Efforts are made to share power and give service users and staff a strong voice in decision-making, at both individual and organisational level
Cultural considerations	Move past cultural stereotypes and biases based on, for example, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, geography, race or ethnicity

According to guidance published by the Centre for Mental Health (2022), trauma-informed services for women have ongoing processes, approaches and values that focus on:

- listening to women's stories;
- understanding with empathy;
- responding in timely, holistic and tailored ways to individual needs and
- checking with victims that services are listening, understanding and responding appropriately.

Services for women should also prioritise equality of access, respect, and empowerment through co-production.¹⁸

Support for victims of domestic abuse: The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published guidelines in 2014, which set out a series of recommendations for local authorities to apply to address domestic abuse through multi-agency working across different themes¹⁹:

Planning and delivery of services:

- Recommendation 1: Plan services based on an assessment of need and service mapping
- Recommendation 2: Participate in a local strategic multi-agency partnership to prevent domestic violence and abuse
- Recommendation 3: Develop an integrated commissioning strategy

¹⁸ Wilton, J. & Williams, A. (2022). *Engaging with complexity: Providing effective trauma-informed care for women*. Centre for Mental Health.
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-08/engaging-with-complexity-publication.pdf>

¹⁹ Domestic violence and abuse: multi-agency working (2014) NICE Public Health Guideline 50. Last update 2018. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph50>

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- Recommendation 4: Commission integrated care pathways
- Recommendation 5: Create an environment for disclosing domestic violence and abuse
- Recommendation 6: Ensure trained staff ask people about domestic violence and abuse
- Recommendation 7: Adopt clear protocols and methods for information sharing
- Recommendation 8: Tailor support to meet people's needs
- Recommendation 9: Help people who find it difficult to access services
- Recommendation 10: Identify and, where necessary, refer children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse
- Recommendation 11: Provide specialist domestic violence and abuse services for children and young people
- Recommendation 12: Provide specialist advice, advocacy and support as part of a comprehensive referral pathway
- Recommendation 13: Provide people who experience domestic violence and abuse and have a mental health condition with evidence-based treatment for that condition
- Recommendation 14: Commission and evaluate tailored interventions for people who perpetrate domestic violence and abuse.

Training and professional development:

- Recommendation 15: Provide specific training for health and social care professionals in how to respond to domestic violence and abuse
- Recommendation 16: GP practices and other agencies should include training on, and a referral pathway for, domestic violence and abuse
- Recommendation 17: Pre-qualifying training and continuing professional development for health and social care professionals should include domestic violence and abuse.

In 2022, the Home Office published guidance for commissioners as well as service providers for how commissioned local services can best support victims and survivors in England, with recommendations for different phases of the commissioning cycle²⁰:

Analyse	Plan	Do	Review
<p>Conducting a specific VAWG needs assessment, with involvement from current or potential service users in the planning process</p> <p>Mapping existing provision of both commissioned and non-commissioned services (pathways, criteria, gaps, alignment to</p>	<p>Develop a strategy with a vision, understanding of the context, the impact of VAWG, a proactive approach to perpetrators</p> <p>Equality and diversity considerations must be taken into account across VAWG commissioning processes</p>	<p>Market development and capacity building should support specialist 'by and for' organisations, smaller and larger organisations</p> <p>Value should incorporate cost as well as savings, recognising that services with higher unit costs may deliver support in a</p>	<p>There should be a continuous cycle of review of impact and experiences of services for service users</p> <p>Commissioners should seek to understand the extent that services are effective in delivering desired changes and identify what isn't working</p>

²⁰ Great Britain. Home Office (2022). Violence Against Women and Girls Services: Commissioning Toolkit. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1064572/VAWG_Commissioning_Toolkit_2022_Final.pdf

population needs, effectiveness, value for money)	Service specifications should consider the additional needs of VAWG victims including mental health, substance use, disability, language barriers and immigration status	way that reduces costs to other services	from victims' and staff's perspectives
Mapping spend			
Co-production of services			

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): In the UK, FGM is illegal and considered an unacceptable practice – it's a form of VAWG and is sometimes associated with other behaviours that harm women and girls such as forced marriage and domestic abuse. FGM is practiced in some countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia for a range of complex reasons. In 2020, the national government also published multi-agency statutory guidance about female genital mutilation, including²¹:

- There is a mandatory duty to report when a child or young person has informed that they have had FGM or physical signs have been observed in a patient.
- Organisations should have a designated lead person responsible for addressing FGM with relevant experience and knowledge
- Response to FGM should be everyone's responsibility
- Response to FGM should be informed by the needs and views of women and girls affected
- Commissioned services should work with local community organisations and people with lived experience to meet physical and mental health needs
- Training should include topic overview, laws, potential consequences, procedures to follow when FGM is suspected or known, and roles of different professionals and multi-agency working.

So-called 'honour'-based violence or abuse: The police and Crown Prosecution Service define so-called 'honour'-based abuse as 'an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour.'²² With forced marriage in particular, this happens when one or both individuals do not or cannot consent to marriage and are pressured or coerced²³.

²¹ Great Britain. HM Government (2020). Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

²² Crown Prosecution Service (2019). So-Called Honour-Based Abuse and Forced Marriage: Guidance on Identifying and Flagging cases. Retrieved from: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/so-called-honour-based-abuse-and-forced-marriage-guidance-identifying-and-flagging>

²³ SafeLives (2017). *Your Choice: 'honour'-based violence, forced marriage and domestic abuse*. Retrieved from: <https://safelives.org.uk/spotlight-4-honour-based-violence-and-forced-marriage>

SafeLives (2017) recommends for local authorities to ensure local services, including those working with children, are aware of 'honour'-based violence issues and appropriate reporting procedures; transnational marriage; and how 'honour'-based violence relates to child manipulation by perpetrators and the impact on child contact arrangements²³.

Statutory guidance for handling cases of forced marriage notes that²⁴:

- Forced marriage is commonly unreported and hidden
- Preventing forced marriage should form part of existing child and adult protection structures, policies and procedures
- A victim-focused approach and information sharing are essential
- People with learning disabilities are sometimes forced to marry and there are particular considerations regarding capacity to consent and particular risk factors and reasons (e.g., obtaining a carer, financial security or status).

Modern Slavery: The Human Trafficking Foundation developed a process guide and example referral pathway for local authorities to use for support adult victims of modern slavery²⁵. The guide includes detailed recommendations for each step of the victim journey including how to carry out assessments of risk or need and national contacts such as the Adult National Referral Mechanism.

Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs): MARACs are local meetings where agencies share information about adults at high risk of domestic abuse and discuss options for a coordinated action plan to address the individual's safety, health and wellbeing. The victim is represented by an IDVA in the meeting. Interventions with a MARAC and IDVA service appear to reduce the occurrence of violence experienced by domestic abuse victims²⁶.

Perpetrator interventions: The Home Office published standards for domestic abuse perpetrator interventions in 2023 which cover intimate partner violence and abuse as well as other abuse where the victim and perpetrator are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. There are different types of interventions set out by these standards²⁷:

- **Help-seeking:** Interventions for people to talk about behaviour early on through a brief intervention
- **Early responses:** This is usually a short-term intervention that involves one to one or group work where information is provided and/or there is an aim to motivate perpetrators to look at joining a behaviour change programme.
- **Behaviour change work:** Longer-term interventions (22+ weeks) for perpetrators where abuse has become an ongoing pattern

²⁴ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office & Home Office (2023). Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage>

²⁵ Human Trafficking Foundation (2023). *Modern Slavery Protocol*. Retrieved from: <https://www.humantraffickingfoundation.org/modern-slavery-protocol>

²⁶ SafeLives (2023). <https://safelives.org.uk/practice-support/resources-marac-meetings/latest-marac-data>

²⁷ Home Office (2023). *Standards for domestic abuse perpetrator interventions*. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-domestic-abuse-perpetrator-interventions/standards-for-domestic-abuse-perpetrator-interventions-accessible>

- **Intensive multi-agency case management:** Police-identified cases where there is greater harm and risk involved (e.g., repeat call outs or multiple victims); importantly this management includes both coordinated multi-agency response as well as direct work with the perpetrator.

Seven standards were developed, with engagement with practitioners, policymakers, victim-survivors and perpetrators:

1. The priority outcome for perpetrator interventions should be enhanced safety and freedom (space for action) for all victim-survivors, including children.
2. Interventions should be located within a wider co-ordinated community response in which all agencies share the responsibility of holding abusive behaviour in view, enabling change in perpetrators and enhancing the safety and freedom (space for action) of victim-survivors and their children.
3. Interventions should hold perpetrators to account, whilst treating them with respect, and offering opportunities to choose to change.
4. The right intervention should be offered to the right people at the right time.
5. Interventions should be delivered equitably with respect to protected characteristics that intersect and overlap.
6. Interventions should be delivered by staff who are skilled and supported in responding to domestic abuse.
7. Monitoring and evaluation of interventions should take place to improve practice and expand the knowledge base.

Police, prison and probation services in local areas are responsible for Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs), which are put into place to manage violent and sexual offenders, including perpetrators of different forms of VAWG. HM Prison & Probation Service published updated guidance for MAPPAs in 2023 which includes information for different partners roles including local authority teams about how to identify and notify offenders; information sharing; risk assessment and management plans; and multi-agency public protection meetings²⁸.

Health Services

Experiences of VAWG has a range of health consequences on victims²⁹:

- **Physical health:** acute injuries, impairments, gastro-intestinal conditions, chronic pain, death
- **Sexual and reproductive health:** unintended pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy complications, vaginal bleeding or infections, chronic pelvic infection, urinary tract infections, injuries to the genital area, painful sexual intercourse, sexual dysfunction
- **Mental health and wellbeing:** depression, stress, anxiety disorders (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder), sleeping and eating disorders, poor self-esteem
- **Behaviours:** self-harm and suicide attempts; harmful substance use; multiple sexual partners; risk of future abusive partners; lower rates of contraception and condom use.

Health systems can play an important role in the prevention and response to VAWG. There is a need for a priority for VAWG in health policies and budget allocations as well as

²⁸ Great Britain. Ministry of Justice (2023). Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs): Guidance. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-public-protection-arrangements-mappa-guidance>

²⁹ World Health Organization (2012). Understanding and addressing violence against women: Health consequences. Retrieved from: https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/77431/WHO_RHR_12.43_eng.pdf

leadership and awareness among health policy makers of the health burden of VAWG and importance of prevention. Health systems should also provide enabling conditions such as coordination, referral networks, protocols, and capacity building. Additionally, there is a need for integration of VAWG into medical, nursing, public health and other curricula and ongoing training. Finally, more research on the health burden of VAWG and interventions for prevention and response to VAWG should be conducted.

The role of health care response at different levels of prevention can include³⁰:

Primary prevention	Secondary prevention	Tertiary prevention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy and awareness • Interventions to address child maltreatment • Reduction of harmful alcohol consumption • Data collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of violence • Acute care for health problems • Long-term care for mental and physical health • Referrals to other support services • Data collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation • Long-term mental health and other support • Support with wider determinants of health • Advocacy for survivors

In England, there is specific guidance for how health professionals can support adults, young people and children who are experiencing domestic abuse. This guidance, published by the Department of Health in 2017, provides advice on how to identify potential victims, initiate enquiries, and respond to disclosures effectively including making referrals to specialist services³¹.

Housing

A ‘whole housing approach’ aims to improve the housing options and outcomes for people experiencing abuse to have stable housing, live safety and overcome their experiences of abuse for all housing tenure types (social housing, private rented sector, privately owned, refuge services, and supported or sheltered housing)³². This approach also sets out the housing options, initiatives and support that should be offered to victims and survivors. The Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation (DAHA) is a UK-based accreditation scheme that supports housing providers to respond to domestic abuse. The DAHA includes 8 priority areas³³:

1. Staff development and support
2. Policies and procedures
3. Publicity and awareness raising
4. Partnership and collaboration
5. Safety-led case management
6. Survivor-led support
7. Intersectional and anti-racist practice

³⁰ Garcia-Moreno et al. (2015). The health-systems response to violence against women. *Lancet*; 385: 1567–79. Retrieved from: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(14\)61840-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61840-7)

³¹ Great Britain. Department of Health (2017). Domestic abuse: a resource for health professionals. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-a-resource-for-health-professionals>

³² DAHA (2023). What is the Whole Housing Approach? Retrieved from: <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/innovations-in-practice/whole-housing-approach/what-is-the-whole-housing-approach/>

³³ DAHA (2023). What is DAHA accreditation. Retrieved from: <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/membership-accreditation/what-is-daha-accreditation/>

8. Perpetrator accountability

Inequalities and Social Exclusion

Different population groups can experience specific risks for VAWG and barriers to seeking support. This section describes some of these barriers as well as recommendations specific to different groups. Individuals may experience more than one inequality or form of exclusion. There are some common themes across the recommendations for addressing inequalities and social exclusion, including:

- Adapt and tailor services to meet needs of specific groups including disabled women and girls; women and girls who are Black, Asian or from a minority ethnic group; LGBT+ people (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and additional sexual orientations and gender identities); people from different faith and religious groups;
- Ensure professionals have adequate skills and knowledge to provide appropriate support
- Ensure data quality about different characteristics
- Address lack of trust and fear of statutory services including police
- Collaborate with and support specialist organisations who have expertise and relationships with specific communities.

Disabled women and girls have an increased risk of violence and abuse than those who are not disabled and typically experience abuse for a longer time before accessing support. To address these barriers in the context of domestic abuse, organisations are recommended to³⁴:

- Invest in more in-person services and support, including court interpreters, that are accessible for different abilities
- Ensure institutional advocacy for disabled victims of domestic abuse
- Involve disabled people in prevention of domestic abuse
- Promote greater understanding about the dynamics of disability and domestic abuse
- Promote greater awareness of hidden impairments such as mental illness and learning disabilities.

Women who are Black, Asian and or other minority ethnic groups experience barriers and difficulties in relation to domestic abuse that are additional to those experienced by all victims and survivors. A review of domestic homicides where victims were Black, Asian or minority ethnic women found that common barriers to seeking support with VAWG included³⁵:

- Language barriers including lack of independent interpretation
- Social isolation from the wider community and help seeking opportunities
- Pressure from family and community
- Lack of trust in and fear of police
- Fear of having children taken away by social services

³⁴ SafeLives (2017). Disabled survivors too: Disabled people and domestic abuse. Retrieved from: <https://safelives.org.uk/knowledge-hub/spotlights/spotlight-2-disabled-people-and-domestic-abuse>

³⁵ Imkaan & Centre for Women's Justice (2023). *Life or Death? Preventing domestic homicides and suicides of Black and minoritised women*. Retrieved from: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5aa98420f2e6b1ba0c874e42/t/655639ddc55be306e7dfa5c5/1700149727418/Life+or+Death+Report+-+Nov+2023.pdf>

- Fear of information being shared with immigration enforcement

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities guidance for healthcare practitioners working with migrant women notes that women who have experienced forced migration are at increased risk of having experienced VAWG (whether prior to, during or following forced migration journeys)³⁶.

Recommendations for supporting migrant and ethnic minority women:

- Work on race/ethnicity should include understanding of the intersections with gender
- Include trauma-informed training in the workforce development strategy for all employees that work with VAWG survivors, which includes the impacts of systemic racism and unconscious bias experienced by Black, Asian or minority ethnic women
- Mandate completion of ethnicity data fields to enable analysis and disaggregation by ethnicity
- Provision of interpreters for accessing services including police for victims and survivors of VAWG, of the sex of choice and ensuring interpreters are briefed about sensitive topics that may be disclosed
- Provide equal support for victims and survivors with insecure immigration status
- Record the immigration status of victims whenever they are not a UK national
- Mainstream victim support services should ensure that Black, Asian and minority ethnic survivors are given the choice to be referred to services which are led and run by 'by and for organisations' (people with similar lived experience)
- Support women to register for GP services.

LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and additional sexual orientations and gender identities) have increased risks of experiencing abuse by previous intimate partners as well as having experienced abuse as a child or young person. Additionally, LGBT+ individuals may experience abuse related to their identities, such as when a perpetrator holds the victim's trans identity against them as a tactic of abuse. LGBT+ victims of abuse experience barriers to disclosing and reporting abuse, including child sexual abuse, due to homophobia and transphobia in society.

Some indicators of LGBT+ inclusion, in relation to domestic abuse interventions³⁷, are:

- Training on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and additional identities' needs in relation to service provision
- Monitoring for both sexual orientation and gender identity³⁸
- Advertising domestic abuse services in LGBT+ specific or relevant settings
- Explicitly stating that services are open to LGBT+ victims and survivors online or in promotional materials
- Providing gender-neutral bathrooms on premises
- Requiring or encouraging staff to put their pronouns in their email signatures
- Asking new service users their pronouns
- Partnership working with LGBT+ domestic abuse organisations and services

³⁶ Great Britain. Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (2021). Women's health: migrant health guide. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/womens-health-migrant-health-guide>

³⁷ Galop (2022). LGBT+ domestic abuse service provision mapping study. <https://galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Galop-LGBT-Domestic-Abuse-Service-Provision-Mapping-Study-Final.pdf>

³⁸ LGBT Foundation (2021). Monitoring sexual orientation and trans status. Retrieved from: <https://lgbt.foundation/monitoring>

- Recruitment of LGBT+ staff

Recommendations for local actors, such as commissioners³⁹, include:

- Ensure that needs of LGBT+ victims and survivors are considered through service user consultations and forums as well as through Equality Impact Assessments
- Ensure there is enough local specialist support, which might involve regional pathways
- Training, education and awareness efforts should reflect the experiences of LGBT+ victims and survivors
- Collect and analyse data about LGBT+ victims access and experiences and address gaps in knowledge or provision.

Different faith and religious factors can influence the response to VAWG. A report from the Faith and VAWG Coalition which involved mixed-methods research with specialist VAWG organisations found that⁴⁰:

- Faith and community leaders have an important and unique role
- Faith and community leaders must become more literate regarding different forms of abuse and violence
- Faith and religion can be a source of comfort for some victims and survivors of VAWG
- Faith and religion can also be used as tools of abuse

The recommendations of this report were for local and central governments to show they value the work of 'by and for' organisations by adequately resourcing them; consider faith communities and leaders as allies in addressing VAWG and create and enable spaces that understand the complex relationships between faith and domestic abuse⁴⁰.

Women in contact with the criminal justice system are likely to have specific factors, like abuse and trauma, that influence their offending. Experience of violence or abuse can be a driver to women's offending in different ways, such as the impacts of trauma or coercive control by an abuser on offending behaviours; for example, nearly two-thirds (60%) of women in custody have experienced domestic violence and almost half (48%) reported committing their offence to support drug use of someone else⁴¹. The Prison Reform Trust have published a guidance report about the role of local authorities in supporting women with multiple needs in contact with the criminal justice system. The guidance encourages local authorities to lead on early intervention, co-location and integration of services around individual needs, multi-agency partnerships and ensuring strategic oversight.

Prostitution or sex work is diverse in nature and includes a range of activity including street sex work as well as off-street in physical venues and online. People involved in prostitution or sex work experience specific risks due to the stigma associated with the sex industry; as activity is often hidden, this increases the risk of abuse and exploitation. Beyond the Streets, a charity that works with women in the sex industry, has collated information about particular support needs to consider and address. These support needs vary widely and include mental health and emotional wellbeing, trauma, relationships, employment and

³⁹ SaveLives (2018). Free to be safe: LGBT+ people experiencing domestic abuse.

Retrieved from <https://safelives.org.uk/knowledge-hub/spotlights/spotlight-6-lgbt-people-and-domestic-abuse>

⁴⁰Faith and VAWG Coalition (2020). *Keeping the faith: What survivors from faith communities want us to know*. Retrieved from: <https://www.faithandvawg.org/blog/keeping-the-faith-report/>

⁴¹ Ministry of Justice (2018). Infographic for the Female Offender Strategy. Retrieved from: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5b32807ee5274a55d4c296bc/infographic-for-the-female-offender-strategy.pdf>

education, abuse, coercion and exploitation, housing, substance use, social stigma, physical and sexual health, and navigating with the criminal justice system. Support to exit or sustain exit from prostitution was identified as a support need for some but not all respondents⁴².

Guidance from the National Police Chief's Council recommends that professionals who work with people involved in prostitution or sex work should build relationships with partners to facilitate information sharing that generates an accurate understanding of the nature of local issues and vulnerabilities, including online activity. Additionally, partners who engage with people involved in prostitution or sex work should focus on building trust; using open discussion rather than formal questioning; and addressing safety in a sensitive and supportive manner⁴³. Beyond the Streets have also produced guidance for how to collaborate with people with diverse lived experiences of prostitution or sex work, which is essential for the design and delivery of support⁴⁴.

⁴²Beyond the Streets (2022). Needs of women involved in the UK Sex Industry: Learning from frontline services. Retrieved from: <https://beyondthestreets.org.uk/new-report-highlighting-support-needs-of-women-involved-in-uk-sex-industry/>

⁴³ National Police Chief's Council (2019). National Policing Sex Work and Prostitution Guidance. Retrieved from: <https://library.college.police.uk/docs/appref/Sex-Work-and-Prostitution-Guidance-Jan-2019.pdf>

⁴⁴ Beyond the Streets (2022). Lived experience: learning from others. Retrieved from: <https://beyondthestreets.org.uk/lived-experience-learning-from-others/>

Chapter 5 Population data

This Chapter includes descriptive statistics about:

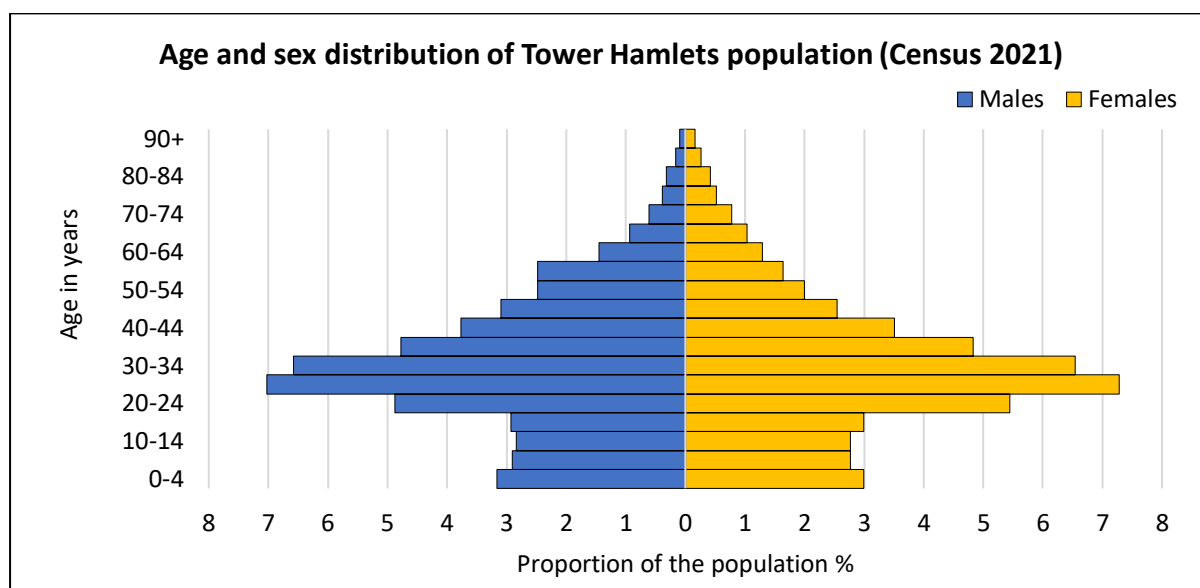
- The local population in Tower Hamlets including demographic factors related to risk of VAWG and/or risk of barriers to support
- Occurrence of different forms of VAWG nationally, at a London level or locally where available.

Local population

This section of the needs assessment describes the Tower Hamlets population. When planning interventions to address VAWG, it is essential to consider the local context and population. Certain population groups may experience increased risk of perpetrating or experiencing VAWG.

In addition to these risk factors for experiencing violence, many groups may experience barriers due to the way systems, services or information are designed and delivered if their views are not heard. As summarised in Chapter 4, factors which increase the likelihood of increasing barriers include being Black, Asian or another ethnic minority; lacking English language proficiency; identifying as LGBTQ+; being disabled or having a long-term health condition; having an insecure migration status; being socially isolated; and lacking digital access or skills.

Age: According to the Census conducted in 2021 by the Office of National Statistics, Tower Hamlets has a total population of 310,300 residents. Tower Hamlets is one of the youngest local authority areas in the country – the median age is 30 years old (compared with 40 years old for England).⁴⁵



Sex and Gender: 50.2% of these residents were male while 49.8% were female. While 90.7% of Tower Hamlets residents had the same gender identity as their sex registered at birth, 1.0% had a different gender identity to their sex registered at birth.⁴⁵

Sexual orientation: Among residents aged 16 years old and over, most (83%) identify as straight or heterosexual. However, about 7% of Tower Hamlets residents aged 16 years or

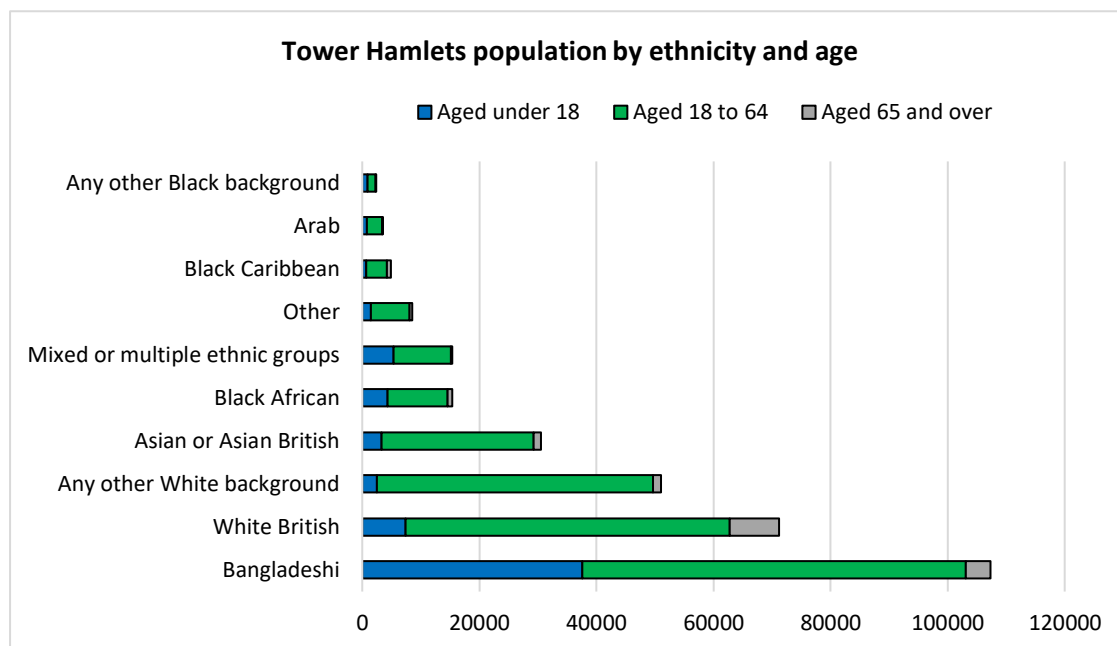
⁴⁵ Office for National Statistics (2023). Census. Retrieved from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

older identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual or another queer sexual orientation.⁴⁵

Health and disability: Tower Hamlets has a relatively high proportion of the population reporting bad (7%) / very bad (2.5%) health⁴⁵. Healthy life expectancy, which is a measure incorporating self-reported health as well as life expectancy, is lower among women in Tower Hamlets than both London and England. Long-term conditions are prevalent in the borough: 9.7% of adults have a recorded long-term musculoskeletal condition; 7% have hypertension; and 6.6% have diabetes. About 20% of residents report some form of disability – 9% whom report their disability

Mental illnesses are also prevalent in Tower Hamlets. Over 50,000 adults have a recorded common mental illness (e.g. depression or different forms of anxiety disorders). Rates of depression and anxiety are higher among female than male residents, while PTSD prevalence is higher among males than females. Additionally, 1.2% of the adult population has a serious mental illness (schizophrenia, bipolar, or other psychotic disorder)⁴⁶.

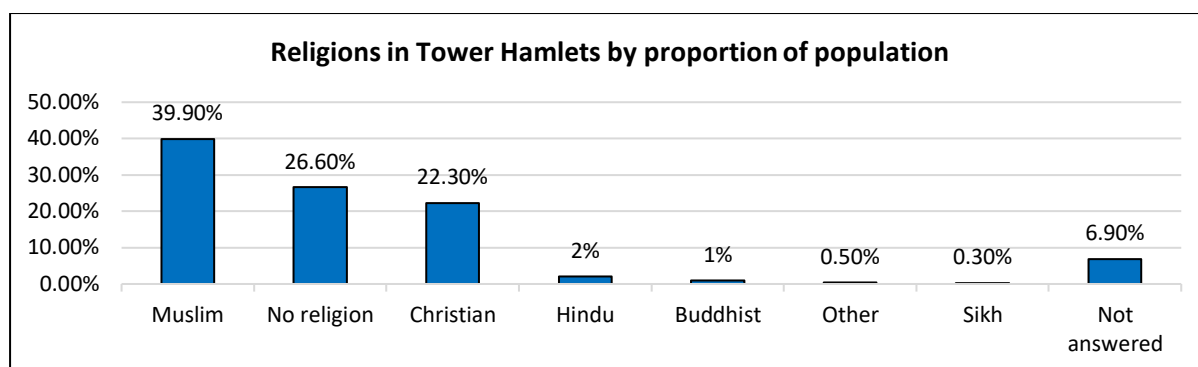
Ethnicity and Culture: Tower Hamlets is a diverse borough in terms of cultures, ethnicities, languages and religions. According to the 2021 Census, Bangladeshi residents are the largest ethnic group followed by White British/Northern Irish. Other ethnic groups make up about one-third of the resident population in the borough including White, Asian and Black African ethnicities including Somali.



Just under half of residents born outside of the UK, although many had lived in the UK for at least 10 years while 7.8% arrived in the past 5 years. Nearly two-thirds of households in Tower Hamlets reported that all adults in household have English as main language (62.9%); while some (18.1%) households had at least one adult with English as their main language and other households had no adults with English as their main language (15.7%)⁴⁵.

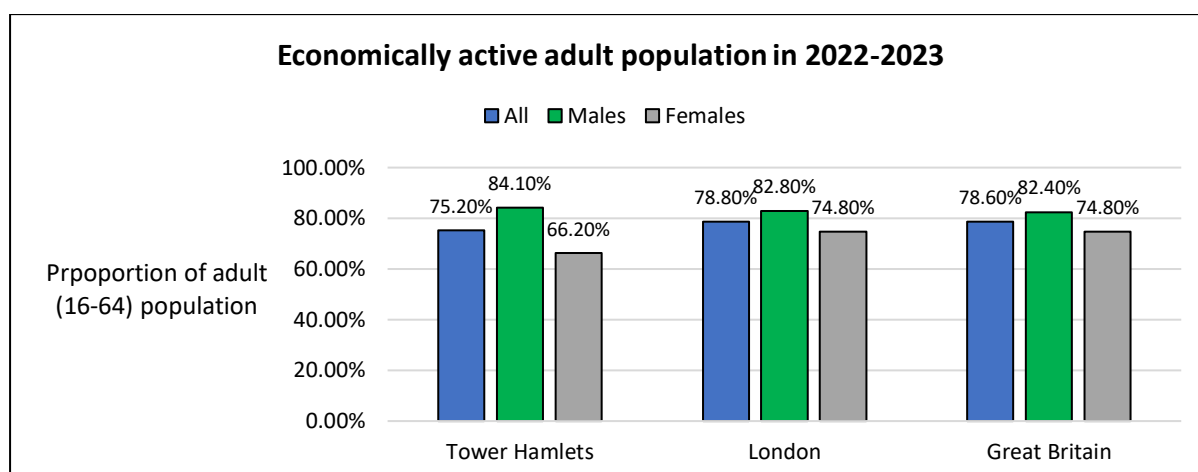
Below are the religions people have identified with in Tower Hamlets⁴⁵:

⁴⁶ Clinical Effectiveness Group, 2022.



Poverty and deprivation: 11,935 residents are claiming Out-Of-Work Benefits – about 6.1% of males and 5.1% of females. Nearly one-third of lower super output areas (LSOAs) are among the 20% most deprived in England; 3/4 of LSOAs are among the 40% most deprived. About 8.7% of households in Tower Hamlets are fuel poor, equivalent to just over 11,000 households.⁴⁷

Economic activity: Tower Hamlets has a lower proportion of the adult female population who are economically active (66.2%) compared with London (74.8%) and Great Britain (74.8%).



Housing: Tower Hamlets, along with most of Inner London, has very high housing costs – the median monthly rent for a 1-bedroom flat is £1,550⁴⁸. About one-quarter (23%) of households are owner occupied while 34% are social renters and 38% private renters. Tower Hamlets is also very densely populated and 15.8% of households are overcrowded⁴⁵.

Social relationships: Of the Tower Hamlets residents aged 16 years old and over, 42% have never married, 38% are married or in a civil partnership, 9% are divorced, 8% are widowed, and 3% are separated. 34.5% of 'economically inactive' people report looking after

⁴⁷ Great Britain. Department for Energy and Net Zero (2023). Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2023 (2021 data). Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-data-2023-2021-data>

⁴⁸ Mayor of London (2023). London rents map. Retrieved from: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/london-rents-map>

their family/home and 6.4% of residents provide unpaid care⁴⁹. About 21% of Tower Hamlets residents reported feeling lonely often or always in 2019/2020, similar to London⁵⁰.

Homelessness: The rate of homelessness in Tower Hamlets is 15.2 per 1,000 (similar to London). 400 people seen rough sleeping in 2020/2021 (83% male and 17% female).

Substance use: 19.5% of adults binge drink in TH vs. 14.6% in London; 1,945 people in treatment for substance use; 15.1% of residents 18+ are smokers (above London average).

⁴⁹ Office of National Statistics (2022). Economic activity status, England and Wales: Census 2021. Retrieved from:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/economicactivitystatusenglandandwales/census2021>

⁵⁰ Office of National Statistics (2021). Loneliness rates and wellbeing indicators by local authority. Retrieved from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/lonelinessratesandwellbeingindicatorsbylocalauthority>

VAWG in the population

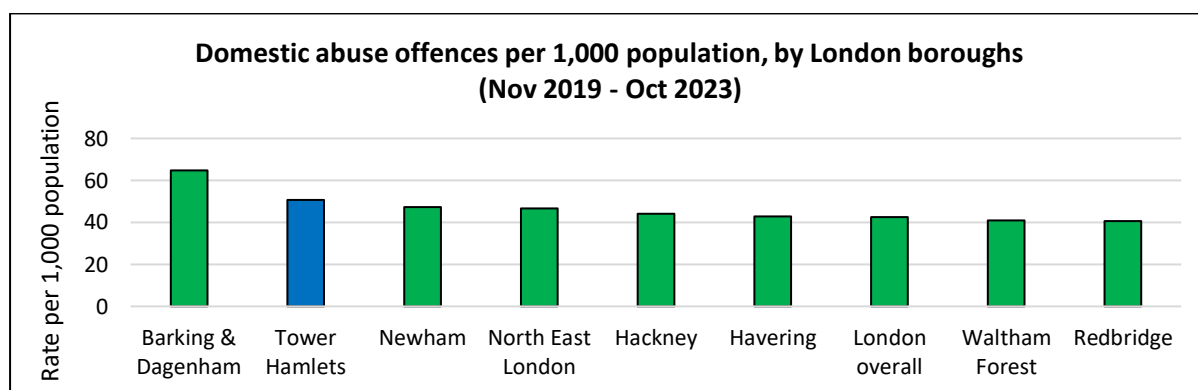
The primary sources of information for this section are police-reported crime data from the Metropolitan Police and the national Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). It is worth noting that incidents of VAWG are likely to be underreported in both formal data sources for a range of reasons including stigma, fear of repercussions, and lack of understanding of what is considered to be abuse or violence among community members. Furthermore, there are limitations in data quality regarding demographic characteristics such as ethnicity and gender.

Domestic Abuse

Across England and Wales, approximately 1.7 million women and 699,000 men aged 16 years or older reported experiencing a form of domestic abuse between April 2021 to March 2022 across England and Wales. 1 in 5 people aged 16 years or older in England and Wales have experienced domestic abuse. Concerningly, 1 in 4 adult women had experienced a form of abuse before the age of 16 years⁵¹.

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline received a total of 48,593 calls in 2022-2023; 89.9% of these callers were female while 6.1% of callers were male and 0.2% of callers were transgender or non-binary⁵². Callers varied in age but the majority were adults between the ages of 21-39 years old. Callers reported different types of domestic abuse with the most frequently reported being psychological or emotional abuse (79%); threatening or intimidating behaviour (53%) and controlling behaviour (50%).

There were 1.5 million domestic abuse related incidents recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in April 2021-March 2022. Rates of these recorded incidents have been increasing since 2015/2016 in England as well as in Tower Hamlets. Tower Hamlets has the fourth highest rate of domestic abuse offences per 1,000 population in London in 2022-2023, and the second highest in North East London after Barking and Dagenham for the years 2019-2023⁵³.



In comparison between different offence categories related to domestic abuse per population over the age of 15 in London, North East London, and Tower Hamlets, Tower Hamlets appears to have higher rates of domestic incidents than England and London. Domestic

⁵¹ Office for National Statistics (2022). Domestic abuse victim characteristics in England and Wales: year ending March 2022. Retrieved from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022/pdf>

⁵² Office of National Statistics (2022). Domestic abuse victim services. Retrieved from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/domesticabusevictimservicesappendixtables>

⁵³ Metropolitan Police Service (2023). MPS Monthly Crime Dashboard Data. Retrieved from: <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/metropolitan.police.service/viz/MonthlyCrimeDataNewCats/Coversheet>

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abuse where there is assault without bodily injury appears to be slightly more common than assault with bodily harm or other injury.

Offence category	London	North East London	Tower Hamlets
Hate Offence -Domestic Incident	8.71	10.18	11.69
Assault without Injury	3.06	3.50	3.63
Actual Bodily harm and other Injury	2.16	2.37	2.58

According to police reported data from 2020-2023, suspects of domestic abuse offences in Tower Hamlets⁵³:

- Over three-quarters (77%) of suspects were male while the remaining 22% were female;
- The most common age range of suspected perpetrators was 18-39 years old;
- Over half of suspected perpetrators were Asian while 33% were White, 11% were Black and 1% were other ethnicities;
- More than two-thirds (70%) of suspected perpetrators are partners or ex-partners; others include brother, son, and other familial relationships in smaller quantities as well as acquaintances.

There are also differences in characteristics among victims of domestic abuse in Tower Hamlets, according to police reported data:

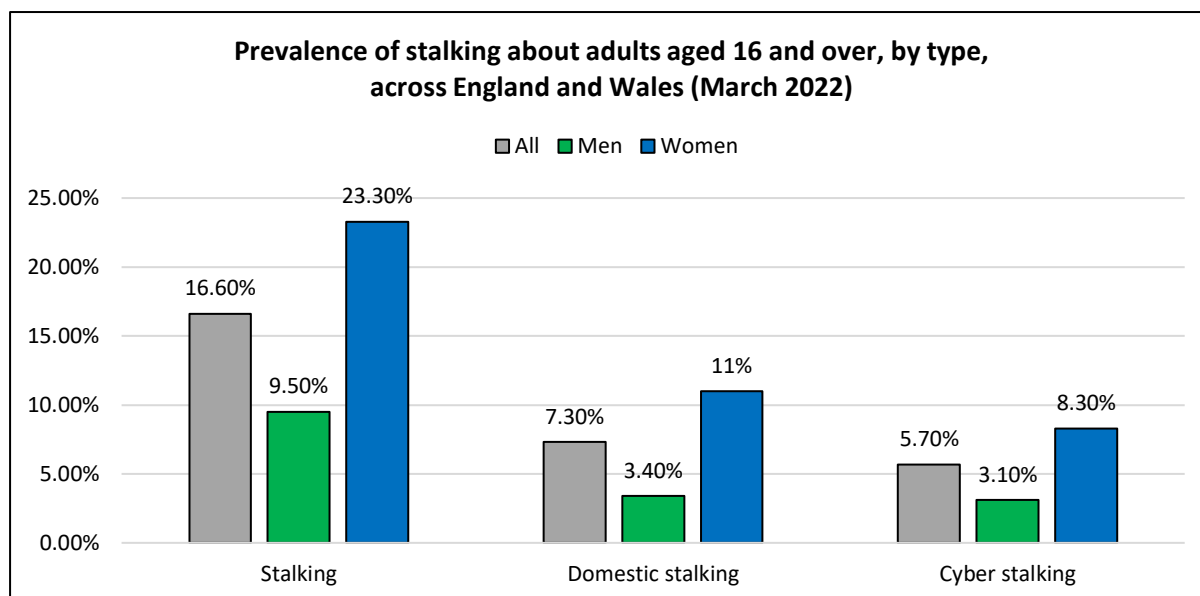
- About two-thirds of victims in Tower Hamlets were female; while the remaining third were male;
- 64% of victims were 18-39 years old; 27% were 40-64 years old; 3.5% were 65 years or older; 3% were 1-17 years old;
- Gender differences in number of offences are greatest for victims between 18-40 years old; more similar among those under 18 and over 65;
- About half of victims were of Asian ethnicity while 35% were White, 12% Black and 1% other ethnicities;
- Same sex domestic abuse offences made up under 1% of all MPS cases in Tower Hamlets (25-46 offences each year).

The LBTH Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) received a total of 4,642 contacts relating to domestic abuse in the year July 2022 to June 2023, which was about one-quarter of all contacts. Over half of these were related to domestic abuse between adults in families with children while over 350 were domestic abuse related to a young person. Referrals relating to domestic abuse most commonly came from police, schools and health services.

Adult Safeguarding concerns are typically raised in relation to people with care and support needs, such as disabilities or long-term health conditions, when there is a risk of abuse or neglect. Between November 2019 to October 2023, a total of 4,044 Adult Safeguarding concerns were raised to Tower Hamlets Council about 2,852 individuals; of these, 508 concerns were related to different forms of domestic abuse. concerns are typically related to people with care and support needs such as disabilities and long-term conditions).

Stalking and Harassment

In England and Wales, police-recorded crime of stalking has increased greatly since 2015, after stalking was introduced as a separate crime classification in 2014. Adult women are more likely to report ever experiencing stalking than men⁵⁴.



There were 24,383 domestic abuse-related stalking and harassment crimes across London recorded by MPS in 2021/2022, which was 37% of all offences. Below is a comparison of different offence categories related to stalking and harassment per population over the age of 15 in London, North East London, and Tower Hamlets⁵⁵.

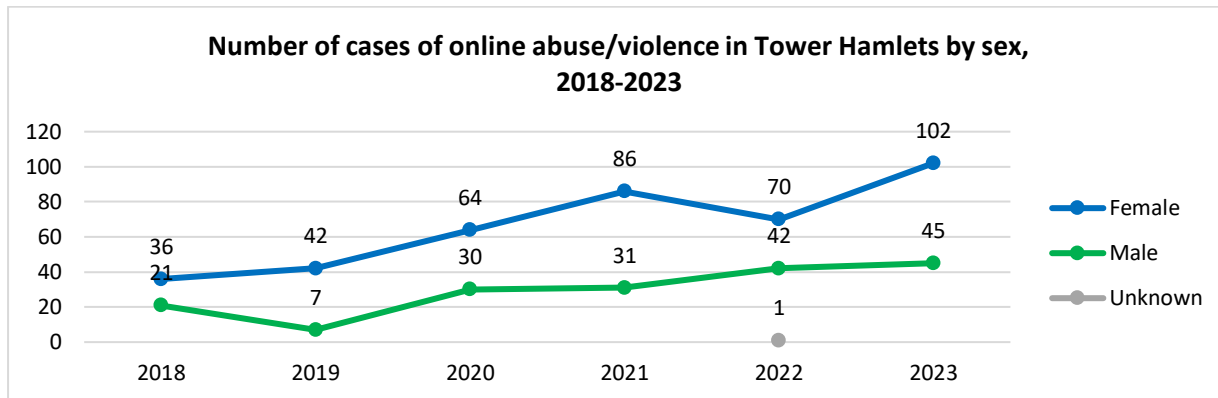
Offence category	London	North East London	Tower Hamlets
Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety	1.10	1.16	1.27
Pursue course of conduct in breach of Section 1(1) which amounts to stalking	1.09	1.10	1.14
Harassment	0.78	0.84	1.14

⁵⁴ Office of National Statistics (2022). Stalking: findings from the CSEW. Retrieved from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/stalkingfindingsfromthecrimesurveyforenglandandwales>

⁵⁵ MPS, 2022.

Digital and Online Abuse

The number of police-recorded cases of abuse and violence using digital or online forms across London has increased from 967 in 2018 to 3472 in 2023. Of all the cases during this period, 577 were in Tower Hamlets. A greater proportion of cases were linked to domestic abuse in Tower Hamlets (46%) than for London overall (32%). For both London and Tower Hamlets, the majority of victims of these offences were female. A greater proportion of victims were female in the cases that were linked to domestic abuse (about three-quarters) than those not linked to domestic abuse (about two-thirds).



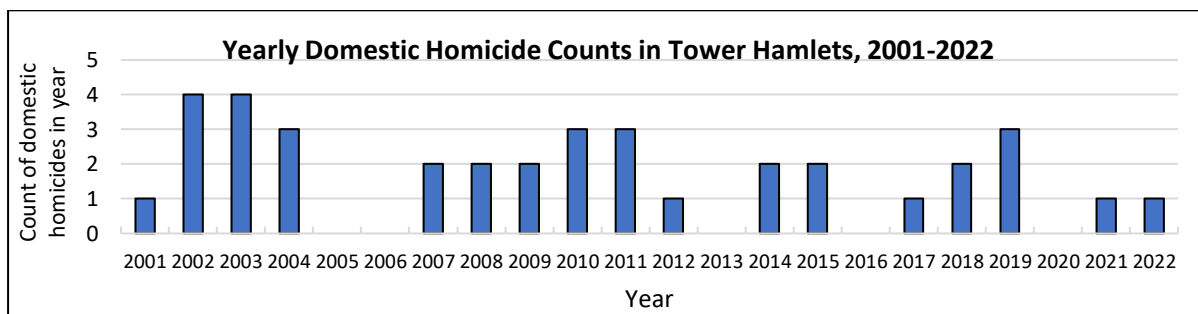
The data recorded by MPS has a very wide range of offence classes; some of the most recorded offence types were sending letters to cause distress; harassment; disclosure of sex-related photos or threat to; stalking; and sexual communication with a child.

Domestic Homicides

There were about 129 domestic homicides every year in England and Wales throughout the last decade. Between April 2018 and March 2020, nearly 20% (362 of 1903) of homicides of victims aged 16 years or older in England and Wales were domestic homicides. The Home Office Homicide Index for 2019-2021 indicated that:

- Nearly 3 in 4 victims of domestic homicide were female (in comparison with non-domestic homicides where nearly 90% of victims were male)
- In nearly all cases of DH where victim was female, the suspect was male (260 of 269) and 3 in 4 of the suspects were a male partner / ex-partner

In Tower Hamlets, 33 of the 108 homicides known to MPS since 2003 were considered domestic homicides. 24 victims were female while 9 were male. Most (26 of 33) were between the ages of 20 to 54 years old⁵⁶.



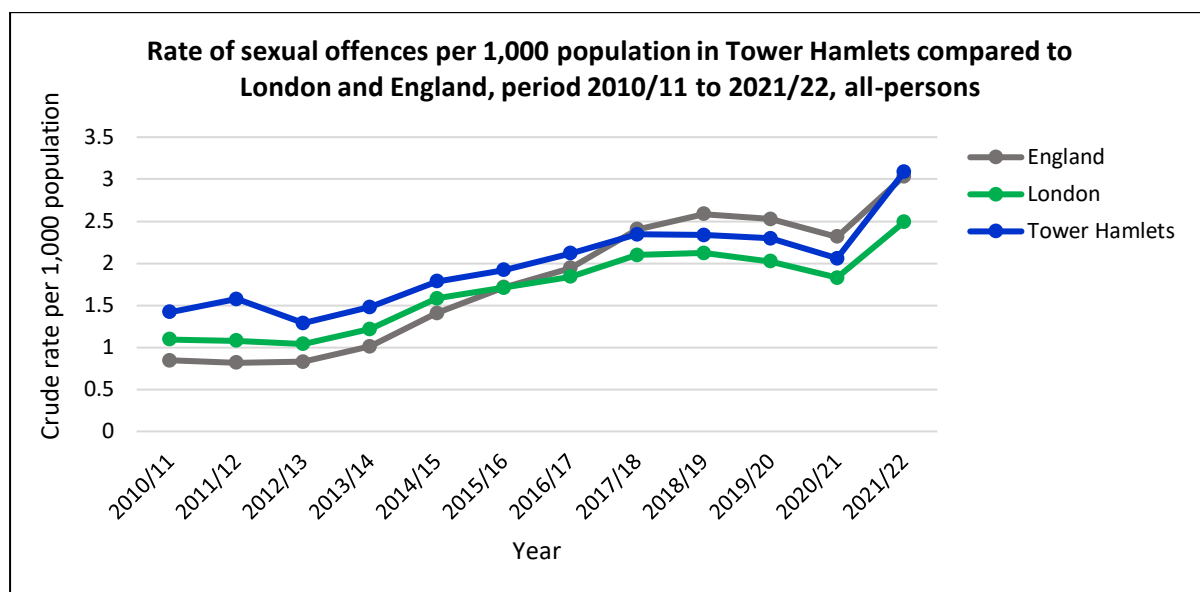
⁵⁶ Metropolitan Police (2023). *Homicide Victims in the MPS, 2003 to 2023*. Retrieved from: <https://www.met.police.uk/sd/stats-and-data/met/homicide-dashboard/>

Sexual Violence

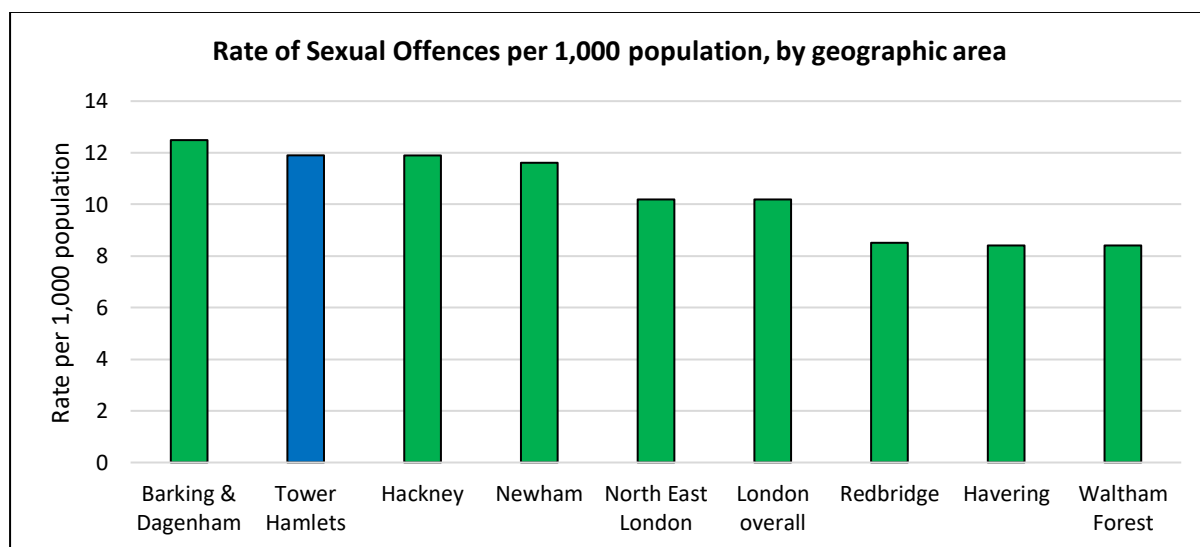
Sexual offences recorded by the police cover a broad range of offences including rape, sexual assault, sexual activity with minors, sexual exploitation of children, and other sexual offences. There are different offence codes used for rape and sexual assault, depending on the age and sex of the victim.

National CSEW data shows that women were more likely than men to be victims of sexual assault in the last year. In the year ending March 2022, 3.9% of women and 1.4% of men aged 16 to 59 years had experienced any type of sexual assault in England and Wales.

Police data indicates that reported rates have increased steadily across England, London and Tower Hamlets since 2013, with a slight decrease in 2020.

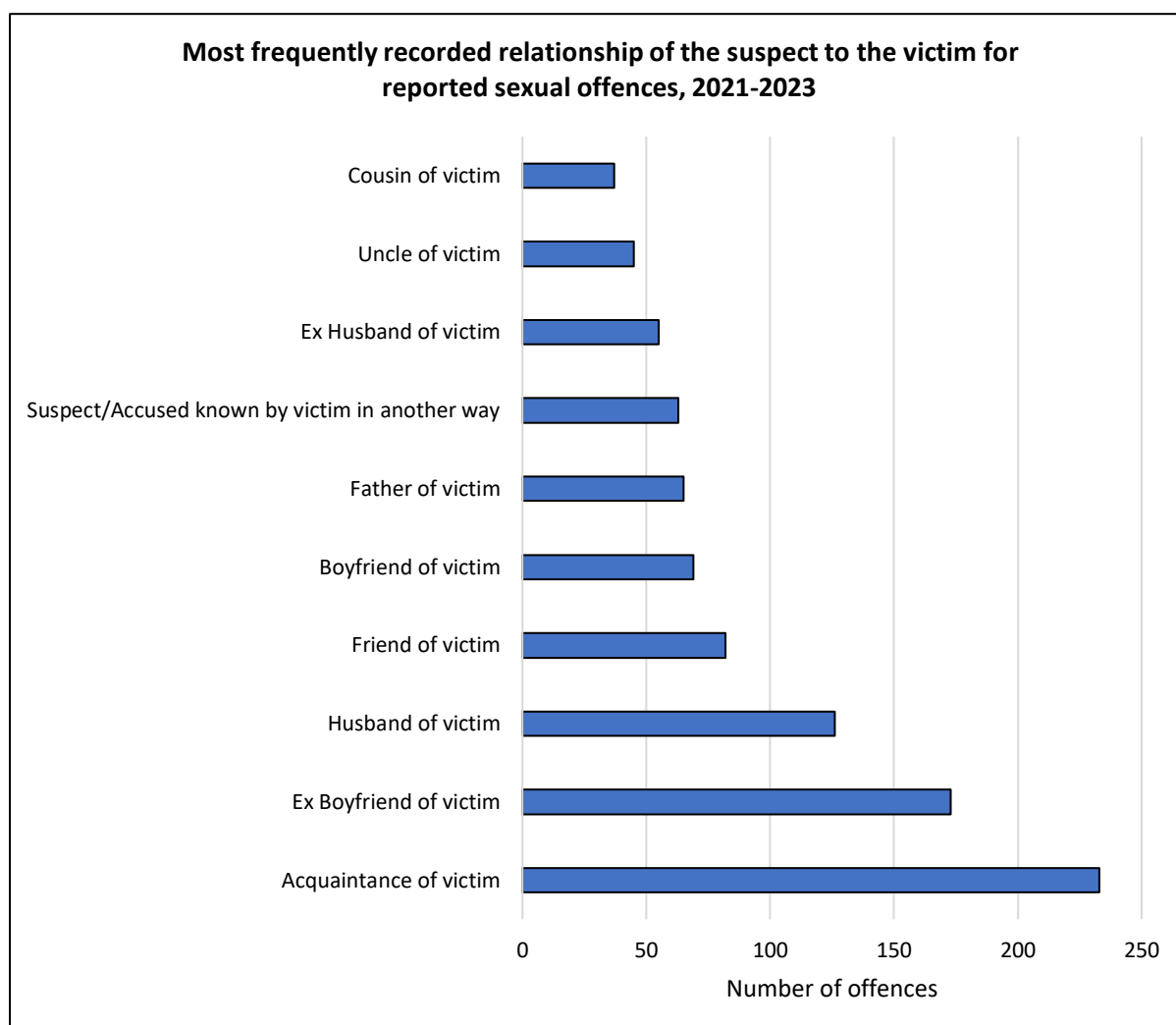


The crude rate of sexual offences per 1,000 people in Tower Hamlets in 2021/2022 was 3.1 per 1,000 – among the highest in London. This reflects a total of 1,024 police-recorded sexual offences during that period.



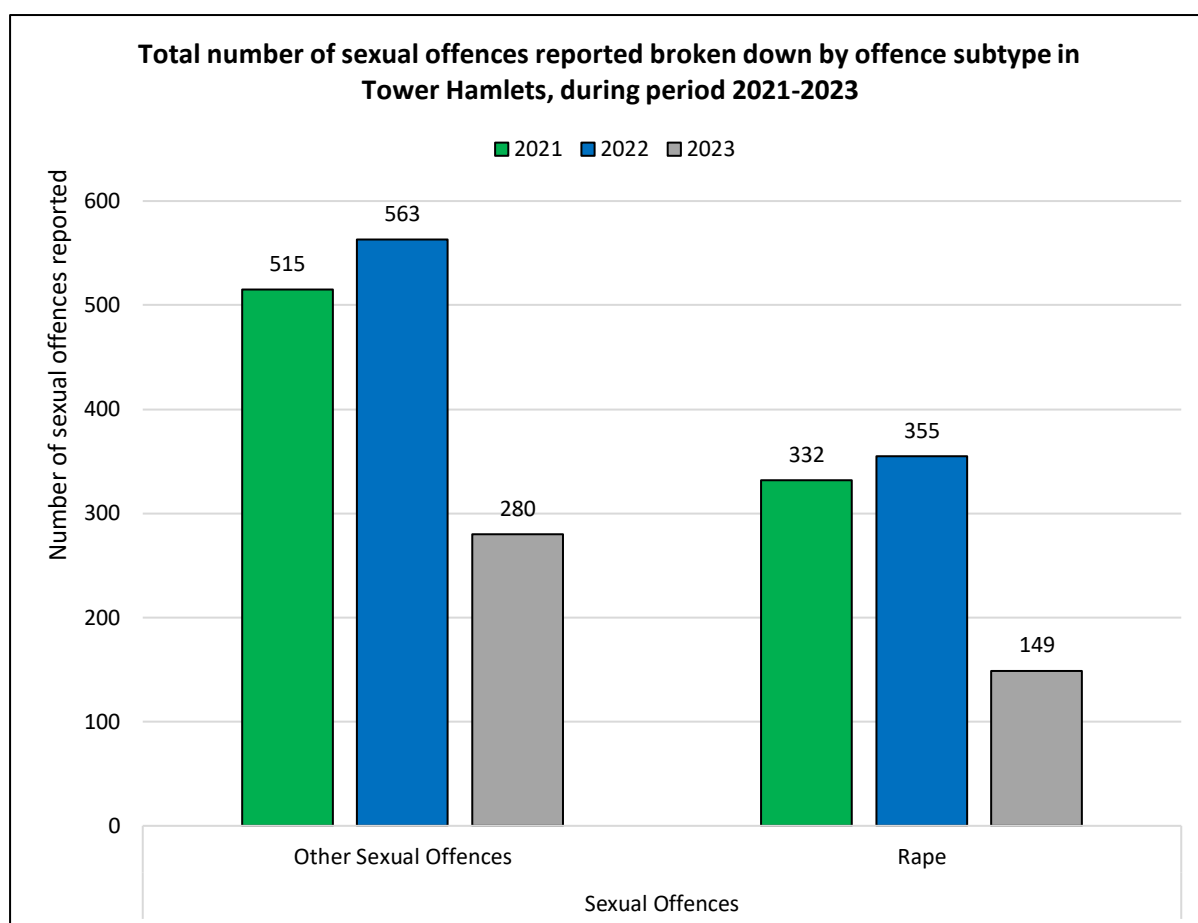
According to MPS data about sexual offences in Tower Hamlets between 2021-2023⁵⁷:

- There were 2,273 sexual offences reported to police in Tower Hamlets.
- There were more 'other sexual offences' than rape offences recorded. Other sexual offences includes a range of crimes: contact sexual assault, grooming, sexual activity with a child, child sexual exploitation, abuse of position of trust of a sexual nature, up skirting, familial sexual offences, exposure, and voyeurism.
- Sexual violence victims were most often female (84%) although males (16%) also experienced sexual violence.
- Rates of being a victim of sexual violence are highest among people aged 18-24, 25-29, and those aged 17 and under.
- 5.6% of victims self-identified as having a disability – of these victims, the most frequently reported disabilities were mental health issues (57%) and learning difficulties (17%)
- Where the victim and perpetrator relationship was recorded, the perpetrator was known to the victim in most cases (most frequently an acquaintance, ex-boyfriend or husband if the victim).



⁵⁷ MPS, 2023.

Data from Tower Hamlets Council Adult Safeguarding concerns from November 2019 to October 2023 indicated that there were 175 sexual abuse and 50 sexual exploitation concerns raised (of a total 4,044 concerns) – these relate to adults with care and support needs such as disabilities and long-term conditions.



A Survivors UK report summarising responses from a national survey with 505 people identifying as gay, bisexual and men who have sex with men, which indicated that:

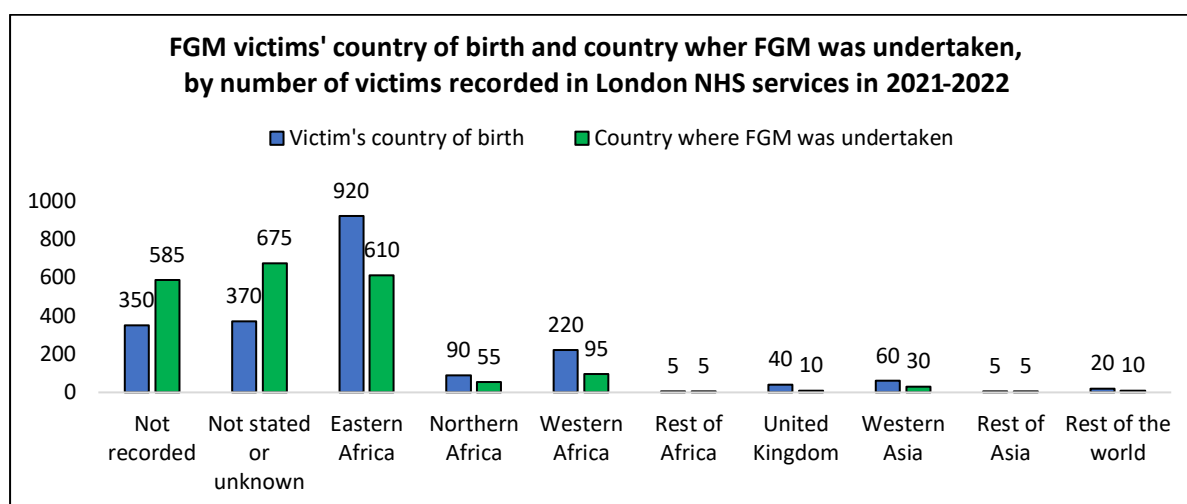
- 45% of respondents had experienced something that could be described as sexual assault
- 50% had experienced sexual or intimate contact without their consent
- 40% had felt pressured into sexual activity they weren't comfortable with
- 28% had a sexual experience where they initially consented but it became something they had not consented to
- 24% had intimate pictures of themselves shared by someone else to others without consent
- 17% had been filmed whilst engaging in sexual activity without consent
- 13% had been involved a chemsex (use of crystal methamphetamine, mephedrone and/or GHB during sex) party involving sexual activity that was not connected to.

As Tower Hamlets has a significant LGB+ population, similar experiences may also be common among residents of the borough.

‘Honour’-based abuse and FGM

So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) is defined as ‘an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community’s code of behaviour’ – this includes female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and other crimes. In the year ending March 2022, there were 2,905 HBA-related offences recorded by the police in England and Wales. Of these, 84 were related to FGM and 172 were forced marriages⁵⁸.

More than 100,000 women who have migrated to England and Wales from different countries are living with the consequences of FGM, with London having the highest numbers of known cases. Considering the diversity of victims and perpetrators in the UK, FGM is called many different names such as ‘female genital cutting’ or ‘cut’ as well as numerous terms in other languages. In the year of April 2021 to March 2022, over 2,000 women and girls were recorded as being a victim of FGM attending NHS services in London. Where the location was known, the FGM was more frequently among people born outside of the UK and the FGM itself was most frequently undertaken outside of the UK.



The Forced Marriage Unit, a joint operation between the Home Office and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), leads on policy, outreach and casework related to forced marriage. This operation recorded and gave advice or support for 302 cases in 2022. Of these cases⁵⁹:

- **Location:** One-fifth of cases were in London while most other cases were in other regions of England, compared with the overall population which is closer to one-sixth.
- **Age:** most related to people between the ages of 16 to 25 years old (55%), although 14% of cases were people aged 15 years old or younger and 27% of cases were people aged 26 years old or older.
- **Nationality:** three-quarters of cases were among British nationals (including those with dual nationality) and 19% of cases were among non-British nationals.

⁵⁸ Office of National Statistics (2023). Statistics on so called ‘honour-based’ abuse offences, England and Wales, 2022 to 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/so-called-honour-based-abuse-offences-2022-to-2023/statistics-on-so-called-honour-based-abuse-offences-england-and-wales-2022-to-2023#key-results>

⁵⁹ Home Office & FCDO (2023). Forced Marriage Unit Statistics 2022. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/forced-marriage-unit-statistics-2022>

Prostitution

Measuring participation in prostitution is challenging for several reasons, including stigma and privacy; the range of activities; and the transience of activity.

In 2021, Tower Hamlets Council commissioned Beyond the Streets to produce a scoping report about off-street sex industry in TH (there is currently provision only for women selling sex on-street). Off-street includes: escorting, sugar arrangements (where an individual spends time with someone else in exchange for money or gifts), brothels, massage parlours or saunas where sexual services can be bought, sexual entertainment venues, pornography, and other forms. The majority of people involved in escorting and brothels are cis women, with smaller numbers of trans women and cis men. Analysis of escorting websites where available in NEL found over 600 women (majority non-British), 16 men (majority British) and 10 trans people (majority British)⁶⁰.

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery includes any form of human trafficking, slavery, servitude or forced labour. The national referral mechanism is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery so they receive the right support. In 2022, there were nearly 17,000 potential victims of modern slavery referred to the Home Office nationally and the vast majority (16,821) reasonable grounds decisions were issued for these referrals. Over three-quarters potential victims were male (78%) while 21% were female. Labour exploitation makes up the highest proportion of exploitation type for adult victims while criminal exploitation makes up the highest proportion of exploitation type for child victims (aged 17 years old or under)⁶¹.

A snapshot of MPS data in Tower Hamlets from a six month period in 2023 indicated there were 33 known survivors of modern slavery or human trafficking. About one-third (33%) of these individuals were female while 42% were male (sex was unknown for the remaining victims). The majority (30 or 33) of the individuals were aged 18 years or older. From November 2019 to October 2023, there were 34 Adult Safeguarding concerns raised related to modern slavery or human trafficking (adult safeguarding concerns relate to adults who have care and support needs such as disabilities or long-term conditions).

Impact on Health, Wellbeing and Socioeconomic Factors

Socioeconomic needs

The Tower Hamlets Council (LBTH) Housing Options team record reasons for seeking support with homelessness, including abuse. From 2018-2023, there were an average of 2098 homelessness approaches to the Council each year, of which an average of 219 or 10% were reportedly related to domestic abuse.

Health and wellbeing

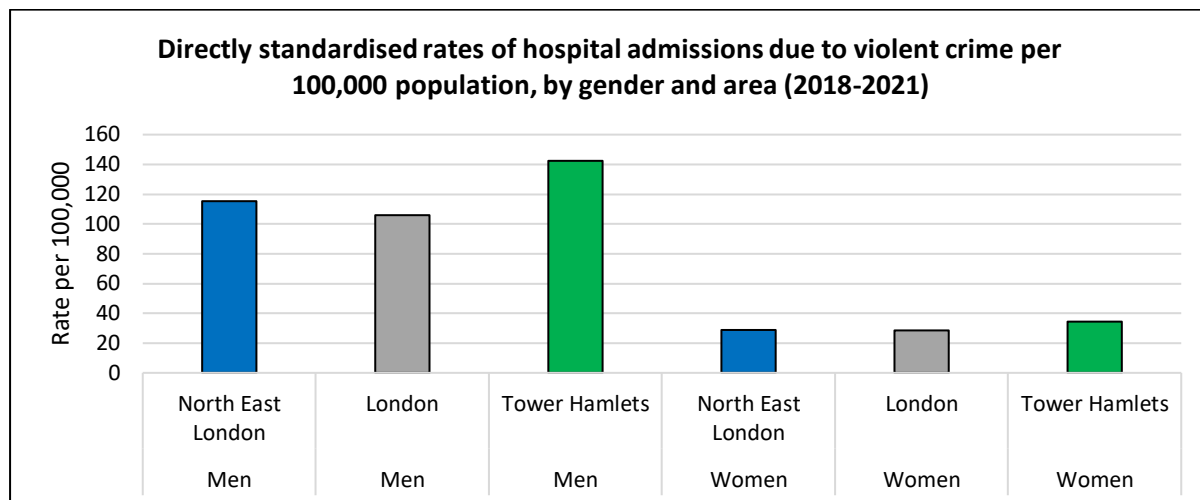
VAWG, including intimate partner violence, is associated with poor mental health, self-harm and suicidality⁶². In local mental health services, patients' experiences of domestic abuse, sexual violence and other forms of VAWG are typically recorded in free text notes which are not easily exported for analysis. Therefore, this information was not included in this needs assessment. However, anecdotal information from professionals from local mental health

⁶⁰ Beyond the Streets (2021). The off-street sex industry in Tower Hamlets: Scoping report to inform service provision.

⁶¹ Home Office (2023). Modern Slavery: National Referral Mechanism and Duty to Notify statistics UK, end of year summary 2022. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/modern-slavery-national-referral-mechanism-and-duty-to-notify-statistics-uk-end-of-year-summary-2022>

⁶² McManus et al (2022). Intimate Partner Violence, Suicidality, and Self-Harm: A Probability Sample Survey of the General Population in England. The Lancet Psychiatry, doi: 10.1016/S2215-0366(22)00151-1

and wellbeing services such as the 24/7 mental health crisis line and local suicide prevention services indicates that patients or service users have reported that being a victim of VAWG has negatively impacted their mental health.



Experiencing certain forms of VAWG can also negatively impact physical health. However, due to the varying nature of the harm from abuse and violence (e.g., if harm was not physically severe or if a victim was afraid to attend services), many victims may not present to physical health services and therefore the physical harms may not be recorded in health data. Tower Hamlets has one of the highest rates of emergency hospital admissions due to violent crime, including sexual violence, in London (59.9 per 100,000 compared with 44.3 per 100,000 for London overall). Men have higher rates of hospital admissions due to violent crime, including sexual violence, than women.

Chapter 6 Local programmes, services and other interventions

This chapter provides summaries of the interventions that have been delivered since 2019 to prevent or address VAWG in Tower Hamlets, across the following themes: prevention and community response; support and protection for victims; perpetrator interventions and multi-agency arrangements.

VAWG Strategy and Delivery Plan 2019-2024

The current Tower Hamlets VAWG Strategy for 2019-2024 has 3 priority areas, with aims and objectives for each⁶³:

Priorities	What we want to achieve	How will we do this?
Engage with communities to raise awareness and challenge misogyny	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Agencies and residents challenge misogynistic attitudes and behaviours 2) A 'Think Family' approach to tackle VAWG 3) Schools know how to identify signs of VAWG 4) Young people have an awareness of VAWG 5) Increased community understanding and challenge of 'harmful practices' 6) Support parents and children to enable understanding about adverse childhood experiences and their impact on health and behaviour 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Lobby the Government to make misogyny a hate crime 2) Co-ordinate a bi-annual forum for VAWG Champions and agencies to learn about local and national VAWG provision 3) Utilise multi-agency forums to address the needs of the entire family 4) Publicise and develop anti-VAWG campaigns in accessible formats 5) Offer schools targeted support around VAWG 6) Promote key messages through faith groups 7) Deliver training and family reflective practice around adverse childhood experiences
Support and protection for victims	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Victims know how to access specialist VAWG support 2) Victims of VAWG have safe temporary accommodation if they choose to leave their home 3) Further develop Tower Hamlets Council Housing response to victims of VAWG 4) Agencies are confident working with VAWG victims with multiple needs through a trauma-informed approach 5) VAWG victims are able to remain within their communities if it is safe to do so 6) VAWG victims utilising the Criminal Justice System have high satisfaction 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Maintain provision to support VAWG victims and review current delivery model 2) Maintain refuge and Sanctuary Scheme provision 3) Achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation 4) Implement a relationship based practice model and trauma informed social work practice to prevent and reduce harm 5) Support VAWG victims going through the Criminal Justice System 6) Improve risk assessment tool for children with adverse childhood

⁶³ Tower Hamlets Council (2019). Tower Hamlets Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2019-2024.

Retrieved from:

<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.towerhamlets.gov.uk%2FDocuments%2FCommunity-safety-and-emergencies%2FDomestic-violence%2FVAWGStrategy2019-24.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>

	7) Early identification of family needs around VAWG	experiences including those at risk of sexual exploitation 7) Enable front line staff to intervene, especially in relation to drug and alcohol use, mental health and VAWG
Bringing perpetrators to justice	1) Perpetrators will be dealt with robustly through the Criminal Justice System 2) Perpetrators will not be 'hidden' within statutory processes 3) Lessons learned through Domestic Homicide Reviews, both locally and nationally 4) Victims experiences improve processes 5) Agencies are held to account for how they are disrupting perpetrators 6) Identify and target areas where child sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and prostitution occur 7) Examine the relationship between extremist activity and perpetrators of VAWG	1) Police and Specialist Domestic Abuse Court monitor their outcomes to maximise on bringing perpetrators to justice 2) Agencies will engage with or signpost VAWG perpetrators to encourage behaviour change 3) Disseminate learning from local and national Domestic Homicide Reviews 4) Act upon feedback received from victims 5) Monitor and address hotspots where child sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and prostitution occur 6) Commission research to identify links between extremism and perpetrators of VAWG

The VAWG Strategy Steering Group, a multi-agency group led by the Senior VAWG and Hate Crime Manager, has provided oversight of the implementation of the Strategy through annual Delivery Plans, monitored quarterly. According to the Terms of Reference, the group also has aims to:

- Ensure the partnership focus on the priorities of the VAWG Strategy
- Identify and resolve gaps in services to ensure adequate provision across all the VAWG strands
- Improve accountability and ensure quality assurance
- Increase awareness and understanding of VAWG amongst staff, policy makers and the community as a whole through the provision of information, public awareness campaigns, training and events
- Review and develop trauma informed responses to victims of VAWG, hold perpetrators accountable for their abusive behaviour and focus on early intervention
- Reduce duplication of effort, and provide greater efficiency and consistency across agencies
- Improve communication and transparency amongst agencies
- Improve sharing of good practice and lessons learnt
- Provide long term direction and vision for the area, including prioritisation of work-streams
- Manage performance
- Identify and resolve area wide issues
- Monitor and review voices of survivors of all forms of VAWG.

The following sections summarise some of the progress towards addressing local needs that

have been taken in the past few years, most of which are monitored within annual VAWG Delivery Plans. The monitoring information in the delivery plans is stored as free text, frequently with different indicators of delivery included in the same cell (reducing the ease and speed of analysis).

Prevention and Community Response

The LBTH VAWG team have delivered training and outreach sessions for professionals across Tower Hamlets since 2019 about a range of topics including coercive control, adult family violence, economic abuse, intimate partner violence, domestic abuse awareness, and good practice for housing professionals. The trainings have reached large numbers of participants each year. In addition to these training sessions, the VAWG team also trained 220 VAWG Champions between 2019-2023 to help professionals and community members feel supported to signpost victims of VAWG to support services and raise awareness about VAWG issues wherever they are located. These Champions form a coordinated network across Tower Hamlets and are responsible for raising awareness in their organisation or community by sharing materials or organising events. There is also an extensive online VAWG service directory on the Tower Hamlets Council website, which has information about VAWG including training as well as a directory of local and national services for different VAWG-related issues⁶⁴.

Indicator	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Number of training and outreach sessions	140	98	128	121
Number of people trained	2025	1652	2012	2076
Number of VAWG champions	66	33	73	48

LBTH have organised tailored training and information for specific audiences in the borough:

- **Social care:** Tailored training has been delivered to Children’s Social Care via the Social Work Academy.
- **Male staff:** The VAWG and Hate Crime Team responded to a Law Commission consultation advocating that misogyny is considered as a hate crime. Misogyny and Allyship training was developed to target male allyship in the Council and there are 25 men who have joined the Male Allies group.
- **GP Practices:** the IRIS programme was funded to support local GP surgeries to offer tailored training on domestic violence and abuse to support domestic abuse victims at an early stage. While the programme was running in Tower Hamlets, a total of 15 practices were trained (of the 36 GP practices in TH) and 76 clinicians.
- **Schools:** VAWG Training was delivered to 20 schools staff across 10 schools in 2020-2021. Talks with schools have begun about their policies, ‘Anti-VAWG’ pledge, and training for the new school year in September.
- **Parents:** 4 sessions were delivered via St Pauls Way Trust School to raise awareness about toxic masculinity, misogyny, and peer-on-peer sexual abuse.
- **Residents:** FGM education sessions delivered to over 80 residents each year.

The LBTH Healthy Lives team share information with school staff via a monthly newsletter. Over the past year, articles related to VAWG have included information about Sexual Health Week; understanding and challenging gender stereotypes; positive relationships; bullying

⁶⁴ Tower Hamlets Council (2023). Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) service delivery. Retrieved from: [Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) service directory \(towerhamlets.gov.uk\)](https://towerhamlets.gov.uk/vawg-service-directory)

and cyber-bullying; emotions; and girls-only activities. The team have also promoted training and a toolkit about increasing awareness of gender-based violence for primary and secondary school staff and governors.

In addition to this, the LBTH Parent and Family Support Service also provide a four-week programme called Speakeasy for parents to talk to their children about growing up, relationships and growing up. The sessions look at how Relationship and Sex Education is taught in schools as well as the effects of media.

Trauma-informed practice: Tower Hamlets Council commissioned training about trauma-informed practice and approaches over 2,000 staff have participated in between 2019-2023 (from across a range of sectors including social care, health, housing, education and the voluntary sector). Pilot projects have been funded to explore how to apply trauma-informed practice training in real-world settings such as hostels, employment services and maternity services. The evaluation from this programme of work indicated that although the initiatives have supported wellbeing and relationship building, there is more organisational support and resources needed for trauma-informed approaches to be fully applied in settings. Currently, there is a local community of practice in place to support local professionals with continuous learning and application in their organisations and services, which is attended by 10-30 professionals each month.

Campaigns: Furthermore, the VAWG team disseminated information about VAWG to residents and community members through a range of campaigns. The LBTH VAWG team have coordinated the local delivery of the 16 Days of Activism, an annual international campaign against gender-based violence which begins on 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women). This yearly campaign has included a range of engagement activities such as workshops, social media and leaflets distributed throughout LBTH as well as in the wider Tower Hamlets community. The long standing local Domestic Abuse No Excuse Campaign was continually promoted to encourage reporting and access to support, in addition signing up and promoting national campaigns like Ask Angela to support women who attended venues within the Night Time Economy. The Ask Ani Campaign was also adopted locally to increase means of reporting via local pharmacists. The Home Office also launched the You Are Not Alone Campaign which aimed to encourage victims to come forward. In December 2023, Tower Hamlets Council partnered with Hackney Council and the City of London Corporation to prevent and reduce sexual harassment through the Don't Cross the Line campaign, with resources for night time economy businesses to display or post on social media.

Tower Hamlets Council has funded the several 'Equalities Hubs' from 2021-2024 to promote empowerment and involvement among different groups including women, LGBTQ+ individuals, disabled people, ethnic minorities, different faith groups, older people and younger people. One of these hubs is called the Tower Hamlets Women's Network, which aims to provide a network of diverse local women to strengthen representation and participation among women residents in addressing local issues.

Tower Hamlets Council's Community Safety team have led efforts to create a safer environment for women and girls in the Tower Hamlets community including in specific places:

- Engagement with local businesses and Public Realm (e.g., encouraging businesses to adopt the Ask Angela campaign and sign up to the Women's Night Safety Charter)

- The Licensing Policy consultation conducted in 2023 included question on including misogyny and drink spiking. This applies to premises where alcohol is sold or supplied as well as late night food or drink premises and regulated entertainment venues.
- A police and education safeguarding partnership 'Operation Encompass', enabling schools to enable early intervention and offer immediate support to children experiencing domestic abuse. There are more than 100 schools signed up to the partnership.
- There has been a recruitment drive for additional Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers in 2023, with an aim to recruit more women.
- Self defence classes have also been made available for women in Tower Hamlets.

Support and Protection for Victims

National support

There are national services available for specific issues and populations, who also signpost or refer to local services:

- National Domestic Abuse Helpline provided by Refuge
- 24/7 Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Line provided by Rape Crisis England and Wales
- Men's Advice Line
- Muslim Women's Network Helpline
- National Helpline for LGBT+ Victims and Survivors of Abuse and Violence provided by Galop
- The Forced Marriage Unit.

Local support

Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) Provision: IDVAs' main purpose is to address the safety of victims at high risk of harm due to domestic abuse. Typically, IDVAs work with clients from a point of crisis by assessing risk levels, discussing suitable options and developing safety plans for the short and medium term. In Tower Hamlets, The VAWG Team commission the domestic abuse casework service to Solace Women's Aid and attained 4 short-term grants of varying lengths to increase provision from 3.5 Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs)/caseworkers to 14.1 IDVAs between 2019 to 2023. This enabled the new service to support more victims with specialist provision for Bengali/Sylheti victims at risk of homelessness, victims of economic abuse, victims whose mental health was impacted and Somali women.

Of the service users supported by Solace since Q4 2021:

- **Gender:** Nearly all people supported have been cisgender women, while there have been comparatively small numbers of people supported who are men, transgender men or women, or other gender identities. This suggests that male residents are not accessing the service as much as would be expected, given that about one in three reported victims are male. Additionally, given that trans victims often experience barriers to disclosing and reporting abuse, this is likely lower than the actual number of victims who experience abuse.
- **Age:** People aged 19-40 years old make up the greatest proportion of people supported (71%), followed by people aged 41-60 years old (25%), people aged 61 years or older (3%) and people aged 16-18 years old (1%). The age group data for the service was not directly comparable with police reported data, however, the approximate distribution appears to look similar.
- **Ethnicity:** People with Asian ethnicities made up nearly half (49%) of the total, while 22% had White ethnicities, 7% were Black ethnicities, 4% had mixed ethnicities, 1% had Arab ethnicities, 1% other ethnicities and 15% people supported do not have a recorded

ethnicity. While Asian victims appear to be accessing support, other ethnicities are less represented compared with police reported data.

- **Disabilities:** Most people have reported not having any disability. The most frequently recorded disabilities were mental health disabilities, physical disabilities and learning disabilities.

Solace monitors the types of domestic abuse that victims experience: 37% of all service users supported experienced stalking/harassment; 20% sexual abuse; 3% honour-based abuse; 1% forced marriage and 1% female genital mutilation. Specialist IDVA support is also available for economic abuse, housing and health. Between 91-99% of those supported by an IDVA felt safer and between 98-99% felt satisfied with support received.

Indicator	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Number of referrals to IDVA service	564	1370	1586	1643
Number of people supported by the IDVA service	-	148 (Q4 only)	700	1324
Victims of VAWG feel more confident after IDVA support	98%	99%	91%	82%
Victims feeling safer after IDVA support	99%	96%	98%	90%
Victim satisfaction after IDVA support	99%	96%	98%	90%

Haawa Project: To reach a wider range of residents, particularly women who experience barriers to accessing mainstream services, the Haawa project was delivered by Women’s Inclusive Team. The project supported over 62 survivors over a 12 month period, all from different ethnic communities (80% Somali, 10% Bangladeshi and 10% other Black and Asian minorities) and reached more than 500 people through awareness campaigns.

Sister Circle: LBTH commission Sister Circle provide holistic support for women experiencing health complications because of FGM, as well as one-to-one advocacy and counselling. Services are provided in English and Somali. Additional funding allocated to this service has reduced barriers of childcare and transport. Sister Circle also provide FGM awareness raising sessions which are targeted at specific groups including men and boys, health professionals.

Indicator	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Number of FGM survivors supported	88	86	116	99

Shewise: This pan-London domestic abuse service with an aim to offer holistic and culturally tailored support for minority ethnic women. The service has supported 130 women since it re-launched in 2022, and despite being based in Hounslow, 12% of service users have been Tower Hamlets residents.

Housing: In England, referrals to refuge accommodation for victims of domestic abuse are managed centrally by the National Domestic Abuse Helpline. The number of refuge bed spaces in England has increased from 3,578 spaces in 2015 to 4,332 in 2022. However, this is still 23.2% lower than the minimum number of bed spaces recommended by the Council of Europe, which is one space for a mother and the country’s average number of children per

10,000 of the population⁶⁵. In the year ending March 2021, 61.9% of referrals of women to refuge services in England were declined. Tower Hamlets has two women's refuges with 34 bed spaces in total, including a specialist refuge for Asian women and their children. It is worth noting that women seeking accommodation in refuge are most often placed in a refuge outside of their local area as a safety measure (meaning that Tower Hamlets residents are typically placed in hostels outside of the borough and people placed in Tower Hamlets refuges tend to have moved from another local authority area).

LBTH also provide accommodation support via the **Sanctuary Scheme** project, which provides free, tailored security for the homes of up to 60 victims of domestic abuse so they can remain in the borough). Victims must have a sole tenancy (not a shared tenancy with the perpetrator).

LBTH commission **Riverside Hostel**, a supported accommodation for single women with complex needs. There has been cross-department working within the Council to ensure women in contact with the criminal justice system and victims of VAWG have safe and suitable accommodation.

LBTH is implementing a project to attain **Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation** and has undergone a review of all domestic abuse practices in Housing services. This has previously been delayed due to competing housing priorities but is now underway. LBTH have been encouraging all registered providers of social housing (RPSH) in borough to also obtain accreditation and currently 2 RPSH's have gained accreditation.

Support for victims of sexual violence: The **Havens** are specialist centres in London for people who have been raped or sexually assaulted in the past year, including one located at Royal London Hospital. The service can be accessed 24/7 and provide urgent support with forensic medical examinations. The Havens also provide emergency contraception, counselling, tests and treatments. Their services are free of charge and provided to victims of any gender or age.

East London Rape Crisis (NIA) provide support to victims of rape and sexual abuse in Hackney, Havering, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Waltham Forrest, Redbridge, and Barking and Dagenham. NIA provide support by phone, email and online chat as well as individual counselling. NIA also have Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) as well as support for young women and girls aged 11+ who provide emotional and practical support as well as advocacy navigating the criminal justice system.

Prostitution exit: LBTH commissions the Door of Hope project, delivered by Beyond the Streets, which aims to help women to exit on-street prostitution. Door of Hope uses a holistic, wrap-around approach to enable access to services and provide therapeutic support. The ultimate supports women involved in prostitution through daytime support and evening outreach. There are currently 30 women on the active caseload for the service.

Women in Contact with the Criminal Justice System (CJS): LBTH has a specialist role leading on the coordination of pathways for women away from the CJS and into support as well as a partnership plan with parts of the Council, Probation, Police, voluntary sector organisations and the NHS. LBTH have also funded expansion of the London Female Diversion Service to Tower Hamlets and Hackney, delivered by Advance Charity. The service recognises the unique experiences of women in the CJS and addressing wider needs

⁶⁵ Office for National Statistics (2022). Domestic abuse victim services, England and Wales: 2022.

including housing and VAWG. Since July 2023, six women have been supported through this pathway.

Health and wellbeing: There is a team at Royal London Hospital (the Gateway Team) which provides support to vulnerable pregnant women including victims of domestic abuse, complex safeguarding issues as well as teenagers. The team provide tailored antenatal and postnatal care in community clinics and women’s homes. In addition, All East provide a psychosexual support service for people experiencing different sexual difficulties including those associated with sexual trauma. In 2022, about 14% of the 500 patients assessed for the psychosexual service involved sexual violence, rape or assault. An additional 22% of referrals presented with ‘pain with penetrative sex’.

Woman’s Trust provide support groups for women who have lived experience of domestic abuse across London, including Tower Hamlets, with aims to reduce stress and anxiety, improve self-esteem, and reduce social isolation. Generic mental health services also provide support for issues that may be related to trauma from experiencing VAWG. Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies provide short-term services for people with depression and/or different forms of anxiety, including post-traumatic stress disorder, which adults in Tower Hamlets can self-refer themselves to for self-directed, one-to-one and group-based psychological treatments. There are also a range of secondary mental health services provided by East London NHS Foundation Trust and Neighbourhood Mental Health Teams for people with severe mental health issues that may be related to experiences of VAWG, such as complex trauma and emotional needs.

Workplace policies: Tower Hamlets Council has up to date workplace policies for sexual harassment and domestic abuse, reviewed in 2023. There is also an e-learning course available for staff to increase their understanding of the issue and how to address it. The Council’s Women’s Network has shared that about one-fifth of members (22%) say that sexual harassment is an issue in the workplace, which led them to conduct a survey about sexual harassment to learn more about internal issues to address.

Perpetrators

Sanction Detections: There are low sanction and detection rates for perpetrators. In Q1 2023-2024, these were 9% for the Domestic Abuse Sanction Detection rate and 10.6% for the Sexual Offences Sanction detection rate. There is currently a push to reduce outstanding suspects for domestic abuse offences with significant funding and support from specialist crime.

Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC): The SDAC was introduced to increase ease of victims of domestic abuse to access the criminal justice system, improve experiences of the court process, and increase the proportion of successful outcomes. There are specially trained personnel and measures in place to support victims such as separate locations for entrance, exit and waiting areas.

Indicator	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Conviction rate at Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC)	72%	Not available	65%	71%
Witness satisfaction rate at SDAC	74%	Not available	72%	Not available
Victim attrition rate	38%	55.3%	54.1%	Not available

Early Intervention: There are two early intervention programmes for parents in Tower Hamlets (the Early Repair Dads course and the Reducing Parenting Conflict).

Perpetrator Behaviour Change: The **Positive Change Service (PCS)** is part of and receives referrals from LBTH Children’s Social Care as well as Early Help. The aim of the programme is to increase the safety and wellbeing of children and adults affected by domestic abuse and develop effective, sustainable interventions with perpetrators, survivors and children. PCS interventions are informed throughout by an understanding of trauma, gender, culture and intersectionality. The programme applies the following principles: (1) Holding perpetrators to account for their behaviour and providing opportunities for change; (2) Supporting - not burdening - victims/survivors of domestic abuse; and (3) Understanding and working to repair the impact of the abuse on the child and their relationships.

The aims of the perpetrator component of the programme are to increase understanding of impacts of violence and abuse on victims including children; increase understanding of factors like trauma and power dynamics; and develop emotional regulation as well as de-escalation and conflict resolution skills. In the year 2022-2023, 33 perpetrators, 98 survivors, and 19 children completed most or all of the programme.

Audience	Referred	Assessed	Began programmes	Completed between 75%-100% of programme
Perpetrators	164	106	60	33
Survivors	229	155	123	98
Children	30	26	26	19

There is a new perpetrator programme, the Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA) Programme, which is available for perpetrators including people who are not parents as well as specialist streams for female perpetrators and same sex intimate partners.

Prostitution: From 2019-20 Q3, referrals into the ‘You Choose’ programme, a diversionary education programme for buyers of sex, stopped, which meant only 28 men were referred into the service. Police committed to running 4 kerb crawler operations annually to target buyers of sex however only 3 operations ran due to Met police resource allocation.

Multi-agency arrangements

Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs): Hundreds of cases are discussed each year through MARACs, increasing in line with the increased reports of domestic abuse and referrals to the IDVA services. There repeat victimisation rate in Tower Hamlets has not reduced since 2019. A review of MARACs in Tower Hamlets has been conducted with lessons learned shared via the VAWG Steering Group and other partnership networks.

Indicator	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Number of cases discussed at MARAC	406	560	583	567
Number of repeats MARAC	57	102	108	98
Repeat victimisation rate	14%	18%	19%	17%

Domestic Homicide Reviews: An analysis of 11 Domestic Homicide Reviews in Tower Hamlets has provided learning and 60 recommendations for a wide range of stakeholders (health, housing, police, Crown Prosecution Service, Adult Social Care, the LBTH VAWG

team, substance misuse services and Children's Social Care) regarding training, policy, information sharing, referral processes and other topics.

Modern Day Slavery: The Tower Hamlets Modern Day Slavery Forum includes Council staff, police, probation services, and voluntary and community sector groups. Its aims include enabling fulfilment of statutory obligations related to identifying and responding to potential victims of modern slavery and human trafficking. Additionally, the Forum aims to ensure that appropriate pathways are in place to manage relevant concerns when raised. The Forum have identified areas for improvement to the local pathways for referrals to safeguarding, the national referral mechanism and to wider support.

Chapter 7 Local perspectives

VAWG Engagement Survey and Workshops

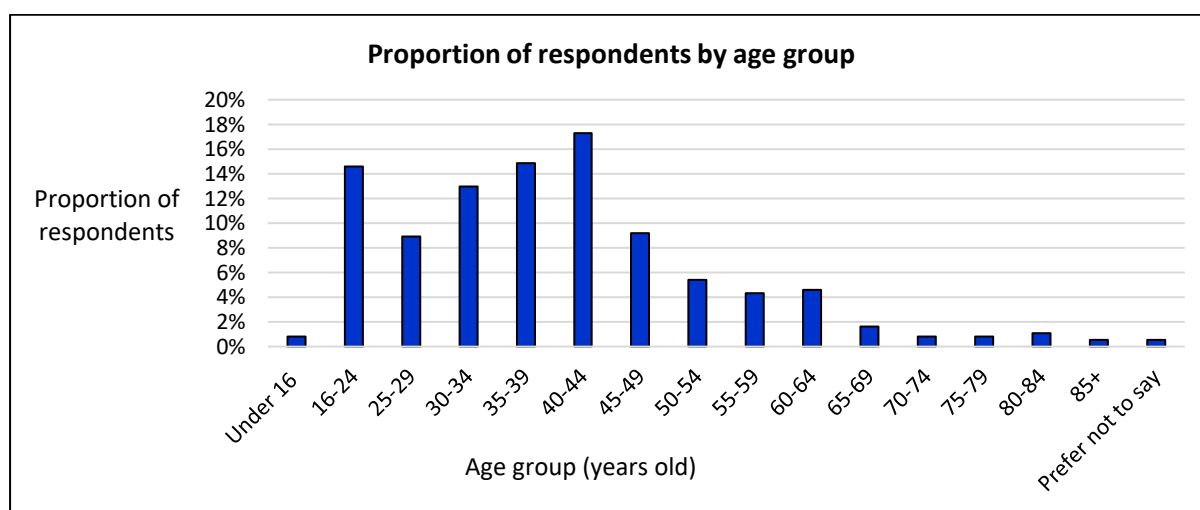
To inform this needs assessment, LBTH Public Health gathered information about a range of VAWG-related topics from residents, visitors, students and people working in the borough between August to November 2023 using a survey (both online on Microsoft Forms and on paper forms). We also conducted several in-person engagement workshops with specific demographic groups. The survey questions asked about demographic characteristics, awareness of services, barriers, helpfulness of services and ideas for addressing local barriers and issues.

Profile of Respondents

A total of 370 people who live, work, study or visit Tower Hamlets responded to the survey. Of these respondents, most had never been involved in planning, designing or reviewing action to prevent or address VAWG in Tower Hamlets previously – although 8% had.

The survey respondents represent a range of demographic groups:

- **Age:** 1% under 16 years old, 51% aged 16 to 39 year olds, 41% aged 40 to 64 year olds and 5% aged 65 years or older
- **Gender:** 84% women, 9.73% men, 1% non-binary or gender queer, 0.5% other, 2% prefer not to say
- **Ethnicity:** 45% Asian (including 38% Bangladeshi), 25% Black (including 18% Somali), 22% White, 5% Mixed or multiple ethnicities, 2% prefer not to say
- **Religion:** 63% Islam, 13% Christianity, 1% Agnostic, 1% Undecided, 0.83% Hinduism, 0.6% Humanism, 0.3% Judaism, 0.3% Buddhism, 16% no religion, 4% prefer not to say
- **Sexuality:** 84% heterosexual, 9% LGB+, 8% prefer not to say
- **Disability and long-term conditions:** 19% have a disability or long-term condition (including learning disabilities, mental health conditions, physical impairments, or sensory impairments), 75% had no disability nor long-term condition, 6% prefer not to say
- **Parenting and caring responsibilities:** 50% neither parent nor carer, 45% parents, 8% carers for adults
- **Pregnancy and maternity:** 3% pregnant currently or in the past year, 93% no, 3% prefer not to say
- **Housing:** 45% social renters, 24% homeowners, 17% private renters, 4% staying with friends/family, 1.5% in temporary accommodation, 7% prefer not to say



The three workshop discussions that LBTH Public Health held in September-October 2023 were supported by different voluntary sector organisations who work with specific groups: carers, Somali women, and residents living at the specialist refuge for Asian women.

Survey and Workshop Findings

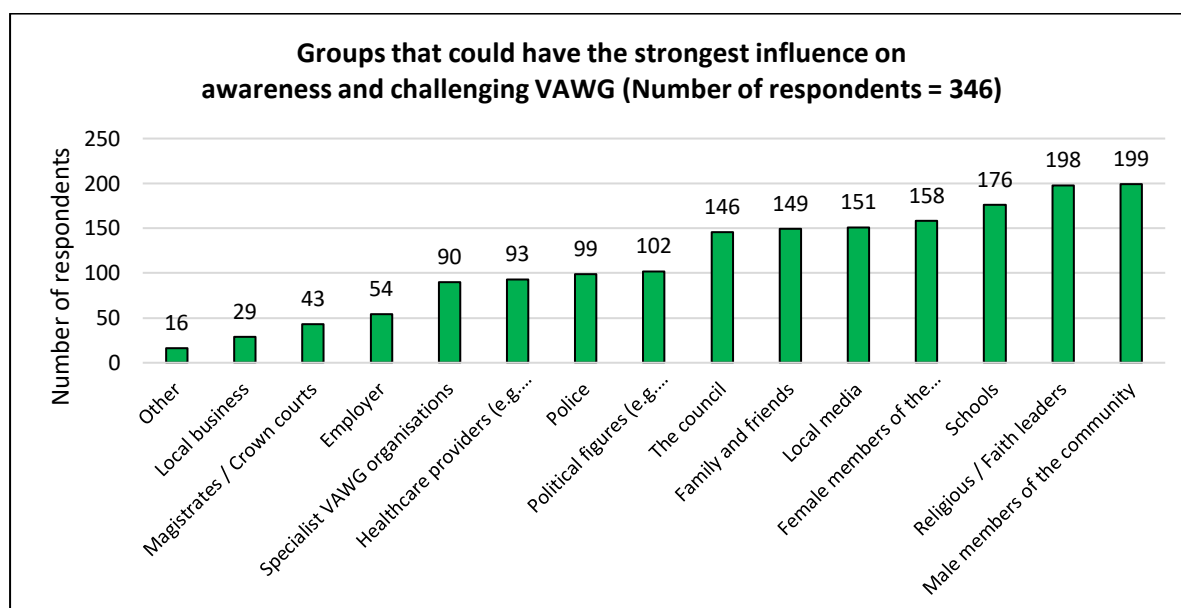
Societal and community influences on VAWG

A total of 351 respondents noted issues that increase the likelihood of VAWG in Tower Hamlets, including:

What do you think are the main issues that make violence against women and girls more likely?	Number of respondents
Wider social issues such as poverty, housing, lack of opportunities	207
Lack of education / awareness among young people	212
Lack of education / awareness among adults	199
Cultural / social norms against women or girls (misogyny) in media	212
Cultural / social norms against women or girls (misogyny) in community, school or work	207
Cultural / social norms for how men or boys should behave (e.g., toxic masculinity)	216

In the workshops with Somali women and at the specialist Asian women’s refuge, participants shared that they think wider social issues they face can interact with cultural and social gender norms in their community to negatively influence relationships. For instance, one participant explained how experiencing barriers to employment creates added pressure for men with traditional gender roles as breadwinners while living in overcrowded housing, particularly in large families, adds more stress to existing conflicts between partners. Another participant shared that some men can be dismissive of women’s contributions and some men try to isolate women and prevent them from taking part in the wider community. Lack of control over finances and housing as a woman had an influence on multiple women’s experiences of VAWG.

Survey respondents also shared their views about which groups could have the greatest influence in raising awareness and challenging attitudes around VAWG. The groups that were most frequently selected were male members of the community, religious and faith leaders, and schools.



Personal experiences of VAWG in the borough

A total of 34 of these respondents (9%) self-identified as a victim of VAWG. However, 177 respondents identified experiences they had in Tower Hamlets which are related to VAWG (respondents could select more than one option from the list of experiences). In contrast, 99 respondents reported not having experienced any form of VAWG.

Have you experienced any of the following in Tower Hamlets in the past year?	Number of respondents
A stranger catcalling, wolf whistling or making other provocative sounds at you	83
A stranger intentionally brushing up against you or invading your personal space in an unwelcome way	77
Unwanted contact in a public space - examples shared included public transport, in parks, and on the street	66
Unwanted contact in a social setting (e.g. parties, festivals, bars)	37
Received unwanted images or text(s) of a sexual nature	28
Being pressured by someone to do something sexual	24
Unwanted contact in the workplace	17
Someone taking and/or sharing sexual pictures or videos of you without your permission	7
Unwanted contact in a place of worship	5

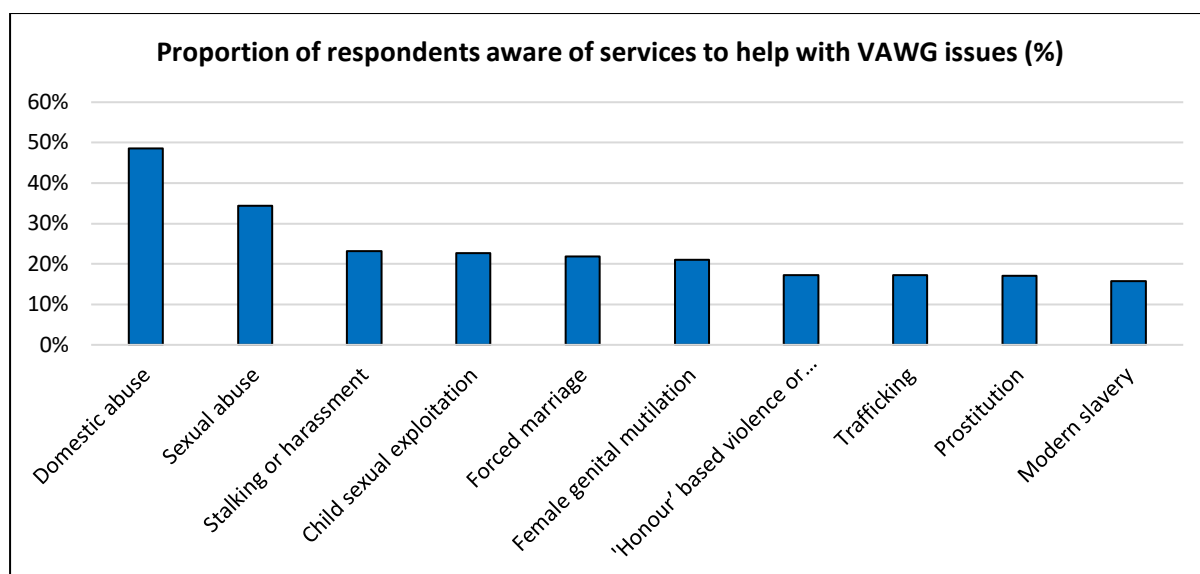
Preferences for first seeking support

Of the 341 respondents who answered the question ‘Who would you most likely speak to first if you had experienced a form of VAWG?’, most said they would most likely speak to a friend (58%) or family member (58%) first if they experienced a form of VAWG. Some respondents said they would speak to police (39%), health care practitioners (27%) or Adult Social Care (13%).

When speaking to women staying at the local specialist refuge for Asian women, several participants shared that speaking to their GP about their experience enabled them to seek support with domestic abuse. In the workshop with carers, participants shared that they would be willing to speak to professionals if they were competent and trained to respond to issues related to VAWG.

Awareness of services

Nearly half of survey residents (42%) were not aware of any of the local VAWG services available in Tower Hamlets. Respondents most often knew about local domestic abuse services (49%) and sexual violence services (34%). Services for other VAWG-related issues were not as commonly known (modern slavery, trafficking, prostitution, ‘honour’-based violence or abuse, FGM, forced marriage, child sexual exploitation, and stalking/harassment).



Barriers to support

A total of 306 respondents shared a wide range of barriers they experience to reporting experiences of VAWG to agencies in Tower Hamlets. The most frequently noted barrier was not knowing where to access to support.

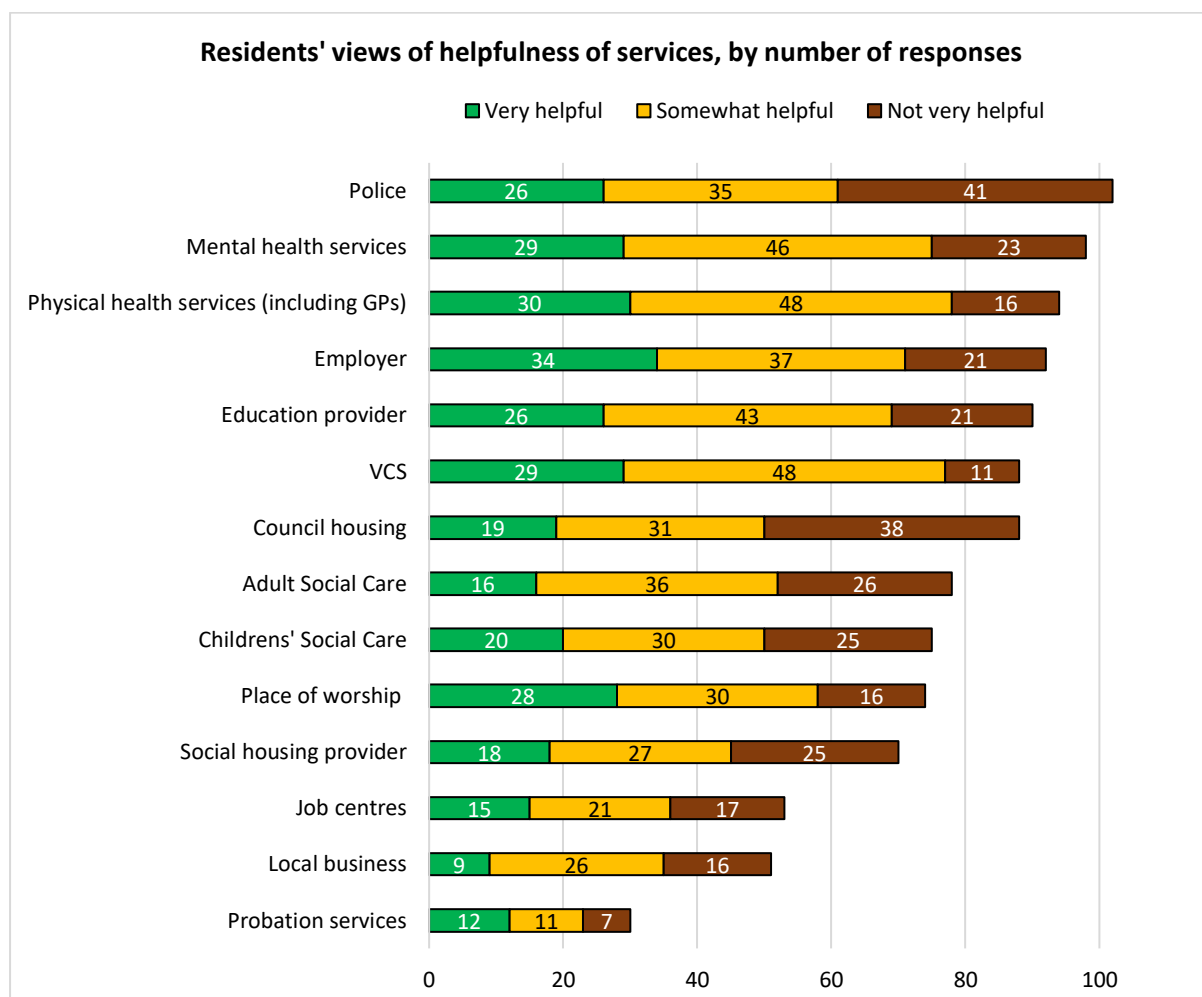
What were/would be the biggest barriers that would stop you from reporting your experiences(s) of VAWG to an agency in Tower Hamlets	Number of respondents (%)
Don't know where to access support	125 (41%)
Don't trust criminal justice system	102 (33%)
Didn't see your experience as abusive at the time	99 (32%)
Fear of not being believed	98 (32%)
Poor responses from professionals	81 (26%)
Fear of agencies (e.g. Police, social services)	77 (25%)
Fear of repercussions from perpetrator	76 (25%)
Fear of 'bringing shame' on the family / community	74 (24%)
Fear of 'breaking up' the family / community	65 (21%)
Fear of losing children	38 (12%)
Fear of discrimination against my culture or ethnicity	38 (12%)
Financial barriers (e.g. can't afford to pay mortgage alone, can't afford childcare etc.)	32 (10%)
Language barrier / no access to interpreter	27 (9%)
You do not fit criteria for services (e.g. considered too low risk, age limits etc.)	27 (9%)
Lack of specialist support services (e.g. LGBT, young people, male etc.)	26 (8%)
Fear of becoming homeless	22 (7%)
Fear of my faith community rejecting me	22 (7%)
Services are not accessible for your needs (e.g. no wheelchair access. no childcare facilities etc.)	9 (3%)
Fear of discrimination as a transgender or non-binary person	5 (2%)

In the workshop with carers, some participants explained that their role as a carer can sometimes act as a barrier to seeking help. Carers explained that this is because the behaviours of the perpetrator, the person they care for, can be related to their condition.

In the workshops with Somali women and residents of the Asian women’s refuge, participants stated that language was one of the most significant barriers to them seeking support from services – either not having sufficient English language skills or not being able to receive support in their preferred language.

Helpfulness of services

Most respondents had not engaged with local services regarding any VAWG-related issues. However, many did share their views about how helpful they have found different local services in supporting them. Although some of the responses may be related to issues other than VAWG, these perceptions can still provide insight about how residents view different local services. The services or sources of support that respondents most often found were ‘very helpful’ or ‘somewhat helpful’ were physical health services, VCS organisations, mental health services and employers. The services that were viewed most often as ‘not very helpful’ were police and council housing.



The most frequently stated ‘helpful’ aspects of services or sources of support in Tower Hamlets included:

- Emotional support / encouragement
- Listening / having someone to speak to

- Increasing my awareness of VAWG
- Helping me understand the system and which services to access
- Accessing a safe place to stay
- Physical / mental health service provision, including support with addiction

Below are some examples of what residents expressed as helpful:

'I feel lucky that there are staff in the hostel I can speak to and other residents who understand my situation.'

'Homeless team saved me and my children from having to rough sleep again'

'I took 9 sessions of CBT therapy to help with my PTSD (due to long term domestic abuse that happened in another city, years before) through Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies. The therapist was amazing, my only complaint would be that 9 sessions were not enough and I wish I could have had continued support.'

'The sexual health clinic at Spotlight has worked with me before and is AMAZING ... Absolutely makes you feel validated, safe and informed of all of the action and support.'

Residents' recommendations for future action on VAWG in Tower Hamlets

A total of 190 respondents further shared many different recommendations for how to reduce barriers and make Tower Hamlets feel safer in relation to VAWG:

Increase awareness and change attitudes among community members	Provide more and better support from services	Enhance community safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How: visible ads, posters, leaflets through doors, street art, workshops, social media, speaking in cultural settings / places of worship, school curriculum, multiple languages • Who: men and boys, specific faith groups, health care professionals, schools, workplaces • What: What is abuse, that abuse is wrong and unacceptable, what the repercussions and consequences are, Misogyny/sexist attitudes in the community, Celebrate women role models and better role models for men, Services including direct telephone numbers, how to access local networks, women's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helplines / emergency contact numbers and easier reporting • Community support groups and workshops • Counselling / therapy to deal with trauma and long-term effects on mental health • Safe, women's only support / places • Offer translation / interpretation • Legal aid for VAWG victims • Better knowledge in services about where to refer to • More warmth, support, confidentiality, quicker responses, easier and simpler access routes, anonymity • Services around the borough • Check-ins and long-term support • Shorter waiting lists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase presence of law enforcement professionals in community (police, THEOs) • CCTV • Lighting and cleanliness • Increase trust in police • Safety on public transport • More action and involvement from members of the public

Needs Assessment about Violence Against Women and Girls in Tower Hamlets 2023

<p>empowerment and knowing rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsiveness of services • More youth services 	
<p>Address local housing and financial security</p>	<p>Make institutional and system changes</p>	<p>Improve the response to perpetrators</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring victims have safe places to stay or go in the middle of the night / short term • Suitable accommodation for different women's needs (e.g. mothers with children, people with complex needs) • Financial support for women fleeing abuse • More women working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce misogyny and increase equality / social justice (reference to police culture and treatment of women) • Trauma-informed approaches embedded across services • Better complaint procedures and accountability • Believing people and taking people seriously • Quicker responses and timescales • Zero tolerance for VAWG • Reduce victim blaming and increase belief of victims • Increased funding to support programmes and enable changes to the system • Improve trust and confidence in police • Support equality and voices of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase conviction rates • Increase confidence that arrests / prosecutions will happen • (Harsher) penalties • Take action to prevent future harm/perpetration • Report on numbers and convictions to the public • More support for perpetrators to address their behaviour and build healthier relationships

VAWG Professionals Engagement Survey

A total of 123 professionals working in Tower Hamlets participated in an online survey conducted by LBTH Public Health between August and October 2023. The survey included questions about knowledge and skills, awareness of services, gaps and barriers, facilitators, and common beliefs or attitudes they encounter in their work that hinder gender equality.

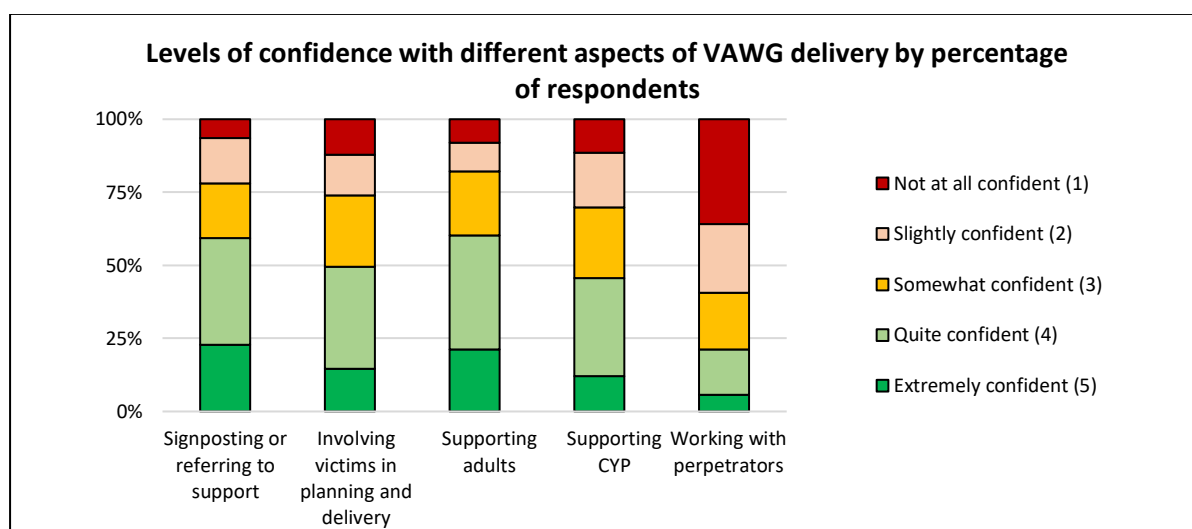
Profile of respondents by place of work

Tower Hamlets Council staff who work with adults and/or children made up 46% of the respondents to the survey, followed by people who work for various VCSE organisations (32%), NHS organisations (13%), education (7%), and 'Other' (4%).

Survey Findings

There were gaps in professionals' knowledge, skills, and training:

- While 55% of respondents had participated in training about VAWG previously, 21% had not been aware of any training opportunities and 13% reported not having enough time to participate
- Nearly all respondents (114 of 123) reported being aware of local domestic abuse services and many (92 of 123) were aware of local services for victims of sexual violence
- However, far fewer professionals were aware of other VAWG-related services such as perpetrator programmes, FGM specialist services, stalking and harassment, trafficking, modern slavery, 'honour'-based abuse and violence, forced marriage, and prostitution.
- Responding professionals had varied levels of confidence in different aspects of VAWG delivery. More than a quarter of respondents reported that they were 'not at all' confident in working with perpetrators (chart below).
- The training needs respondents most frequently requested were around general VAWG response and signposting, working with perpetrators, as well as preventative approaches.



The professionals who responded to the survey identified harmful beliefs and attitudes that hinder gender equality, which they have observed among residents and/or staff:

- Misogynist or patriarchal attitudes among both residents and staff
- Discrimination (systemic racism, lack of cultural competence, homophobia, transphobia)
- Religious or cultural views
- Lack of awareness or persisting assumptions about specific issues
- Lack of hope and trust in services or the system

Professionals also shared their views about the range of remaining gaps and barriers in addressing VAWG in Tower Hamlets:

Most frequently selected gaps in addressing VAWG in Tower Hamlets, by number of responses						
Criminal justice system outcomes/issues, 62	Limited resources, 53	Support for victims (long-term), 48	Agencies not challenging perpetrators, 43	Faith organisations/ leaders addressing VAWG, 42		
Communities not challenging perpetrators, 58	Lack of communication between agencies, 51	Lack of therapeutic options for victims / perpetrators , 47	Lack of training/ awareness, 34	Support for victims (short-term), 34	Prevention of VAWG (including reducing misogyny and gender...	
			Schools addressing VAWG, 30	Lack of employment opportunities (economic /...	Lack of policies/ procedures to guide...	
Inequalities of access (e.g. for different languages, abilities, digital skills, cultural needs), 55	Lack of trust and confidence in authorities, 51	Housing access, 46	Response to perpetrators, 29	Poor record keeping enablin...	Victims and perpetr... not...	Ot... 9

Conversely, professionals also noticed things that support their work in preventing or responding to VAWG:

- **Information, training and resources** about services to refer or signpost to (e.g. the online directory)
- **Relational and trauma-informed approaches:** having time to build relationships and trust with residents; flexible approaches such as meeting in the community; listening without judgement; opportunities for social support groups and other ways to connect
- **Agencies working together well:** clear referral pathways and information sharing protocols, support and advice from other professionals such as the VAWG team and IDVAs; having professionals in the right place such as Beyond the Streets; clinical leads supporting IDVAs through the IRIS project.

Finally, professionals in Tower Hamlets also shared their views about actions to address gaps in future planning:

Increase awareness of VAWG and its impacts	Improve community engagement	Improve accessibility and inclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where to get support • What is not acceptable behaviour • How to appropriately challenge • Low level issues to highlight pervasive nature, prevention • Forced marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer spaces to foster trust • Gender equality and rights with faith and community groups • Community champions • Have conversations with different generations • Speak to victims about their experience, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve language skills / ESOL • Provide support in different languages • Knowing how to challenge VAWG in different cultures • Islamic counselling

Needs Assessment about Violence Against Women and Girls in Tower Hamlets 2023

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGBT+ specific awareness 	<p>especially those who decline support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training about how to support LGBT+ community Improve support for people with high needs (substance use, MH, involvement in survival sex) Improve support for people new to the UK
<p>Focus on men and boys</p>	<p>Work with children and young people</p>	<p>Offer women's spaces</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More male allies Young boys and adolescents Understand the awareness and interest among men in power, such as politicians Engagement with men Groups for men and women about relationships, conflict, equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy relationships, good communication and signs of coercive control How to fact check things online related to VAWG Having school/community-based family support workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women only provision and targeting women for engagement where they are underrepresented Muslim women need single sex spaces Female only coaches and instructors for sports or physical activity
<p>Organisations and professionals</p>	<p>Address housing and financial insecurity</p>	<p>Resources</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More joined up working Consistency in quality Long-term and therapeutic support access More female professionals (e.g. THEOs) Better communication between professionals and services Recruiting a MARAC Liaison Nurse Reinstate SDAC with support from Councillors, CPS and judicial system Adoption of trauma-informed care across the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the lack of affordable housing Reduce the impact of increasing the cost of living on residents Support for women with high needs such as those risk of homelessness Better pathways needed as hostels/temporary accommodation offer considered inadequate for women and children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding and ringfencing resources Resourcing in context of increased costs Increase availability to meet demand on both victim and perpetrator side

Residents' views from additional sources

Annual Residents Survey

The Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey 2023 was conducted in June 2023, with a total of 1,117 respondents (568 males and 549 females). This survey included a wide range of questions covering topics about personal concerns, safety, services, as well as a specific focus on cost of living. Below are some key gender differences in the findings from the survey which are relevant to prevention of VAWG and risk factors:

Perceptions of safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male residents were more likely than female residents to say they feel very safe both during the day (56% of male residents vs. 47% of female residents) and after dark (22% of male residents and 11% of female residents). • After dark, 18% of female residents and 9% of male residents reported feeling unsafe (compared with 17% overall in 2019). • Even during the day time, a greater proportion of female residents responded they felt 'fairly safe' (versus 'very safe') while a greater proportion of male residents responded they felt 'very safe' (versus 'fairly safe').
Perceptions of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant differences between male and female opinions about policing in Tower Hamlets. • About one-third of male residents (30%) and one-quarter of female residents (24%) viewed council housing positively, while male residents were more likely to rate housing benefit service as poor than female residents. • A significantly greater proportion of female residents (30%) than male residents (21%) reported that they did not know enough about leisure and sports facilities to comment their opinion on their quality.
Personal concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater proportions of female residents reported concerns about paying utility bills and paying council tax compared with male residents (47% and 24% respectively). • A greater proportion of male residents (11%) than female residents (6%) were concerned about the availability of employment in the borough, while a greater proportion of female residents (20%) than male residents (14%) were concerned about homelessness. • About one-third of both female and male residents reported not being concerned about any issues related to finances.

Gender Inclusive Design Project

Tower Hamlets Council's Public Realm team also conducted a research project throughout 2023 to help inform planning to improve gender inclusiveness in public spaces, including the development of the new Tower Hamlets Local Plan. Over 320 women responded using different methods including audio-recorded street interviews, digital walks, an online survey, and 2 consultation events.

Some of the key findings from the report include:

- Women are not scared of the dark, but they feel burdened with managing constant low-level threats and maintaining awareness as they navigate the city during any time of day, not just nighttime. These perceived threats include encountering drug dealing, drug taking, homelessness, drunken behaviour, groups of young men gathered, and staring.

- Seeing other women and girls and wider sense of community, such as people being friendly to each other on the streets, fosters feelings of safety.
- Having public places, including streets, where women feel a sense of ownership and enabling community inclusion also feel more pleasant and welcoming.
- Women shape their cities by walking and prefer quiet, green, well looked after streets as well as access to parks and gardens – these qualities support a sense of safety
- Women consider green spaces to be restorative and social spaces, including playgrounds and canals, and want greater access, organised activities (e.g., running groups), and better lighting and connectivity
- There is a need for greater diversity and representation of women and marginalised groups in professions such as architecture, planning and development

Recommendations from the research have been incorporated into the draft Women's Safety Action Plan as well as the new draft Tower Hamlets Plan.

Pupil Attitude Survey 2022

The most recent Pupil Attitude Survey was conducted with 1,516 primary school pupils and 271 secondary school pupils in Tower Hamlets. Findings from this survey relevant to VAWG and safety include:

- **Feelings of safety among primary school aged children:** Most boys and girls in primary schools (80-90%) reported feeling 'very safe' or 'quite safe' in the area where they live, going to and from school, and in school. In contrast, a smaller proportion (60-65%) of boys and girls in primary schools reported feeling 'very safe' or 'quite safe' outside of their area. 15% of primary school pupils reported that being a victim of crime was the thing they worried about most often.
- **Feelings of safety among secondary school aged children:** Most boys (81-86%) feel 'very safe' or 'quite safe' in their local area, going to and from school, and in school while about two-thirds (64%) reported feeling 'very safe' or 'quite safe' outside of their area. Among secondary school girls, most reported feeling 'very safe' or 'quite safe' going to and from school (81%) and at school (85%). However, a lower proportion (69%) reported feeling 'very safe' or 'quite safe' in their area. An even lower proportion (49%) reported feeling 'very safe' or 'quite safe' outside of their area. 14% of secondary school pupils reported that being a victim of crime was the thing they worried most often about while 15% reported worrying most often about relationships (boyfriends or girlfriends) and 10% most often worried about sex.
- **Digital and online safety:** Over half of primary school pupils (55%) and nearly all (92%) of secondary school pupils reported having their own mobile phone. Primary school pupils most frequently reported using Google+ (33%), WhatsApp (30%), TikTok (26%), and Snapchat (15%). Among secondary school pupils, the most used apps were WhatsApp (81%), Snapchat (69%), TikTok (67%), and Instagram (64%). A quarter (24%) of responding secondary school pupils reported that someone had shared a photo or video with them that made them feel uncomfortable; concerningly, 37 of these pupils stated that this was because it was of a sexual nature.

Chapter 8 Conclusions

This Chapter sets out the main conclusions for population needs and issues as well as the achievements and gaps in what has been delivered in Tower Hamlets to address prevention, support for victims, perpetrator interventions and wider system issues. The summary of population needs is based on the main findings from Chapter 5, regarding population data, and Chapter 7, where residents shared their experiences of VAWG and local need. The assessment of achievements and gaps is based on the context of the national and regional strategies and policies listed in Chapter 3; the recommended practices set out in Chapter 4 and the perspectives of residents and staff described in Chapter 7, within the capabilities and responsibilities of Tower Hamlets Council as a local authority.

Population needs and risk factors

Residents and professionals think that VAWG in Tower Hamlets is influenced by wider social issues like poverty and housing, lack of education and awareness, and cultural and social norms for different genders (misogyny and toxic masculinity). Some risk factors for experiencing different forms of VAWG as well as experiencing barriers to seeking support are common in Tower Hamlets (financial and housing insecurity, disability, LGBTQ+, specific ethnicities at risk of honour-based abuse and FGM).

Different forms of VAWG are frequently reported by Tower Hamlets residents, with some of the highest rates of reported domestic abuse, sexual violence, and online abuse in London. Although the majority victims were female, there were also male victims, especially in modern slavery offences and in one-third of domestic abuse cases. Young adults make up the highest proportion of victims, although other age groups are also represented; young people aged 17 or under have one of the highest victimisation rates for sexual offences. Women also shared different forms of 'lower level' violence/abuse they experienced in Tower Hamlets, including catcalling, invading personal space, unwanted contact in public spaces and social settings. Experiencing VAWG impacts Tower Hamlets residents in a range of ways including increasing risk of homelessness, poor mental health, and poor physical health including physical injuries and sexual health.

Prevention and Safety

Component	Achievements	Areas for further development
Wider risk factors for VAWG	LBTH and Tower Hamlets Women's Network have collaborated on efforts to address unemployment and financial insecurity among women in the borough. There is a supported accommodation for women who are at risk of homelessness. There has been cross-department working within the Council to understand the needs of women with complex needs including homelessness and involvement with the criminal justice system.	There is a relatively low proportion of women who are economically active in Tower Hamlets. Tower Hamlets has high housing costs and levels of overcrowding. Residents report that wider issues like housing, poverty and lack of opportunities increase the likelihood of different forms of VAWG in Tower Hamlets.
Transforming attitudes, beliefs and	LBTH have delivered hundreds training and outreach activities across Tower Hamlets	Residents and professionals report that attitudes, beliefs and norms like misogyny and toxic

norms that increase likelihood of VAWG	throughout the past 4 years, reaching over 2,000 people including 220 VAWG champions.	masculinity are common in Tower Hamlets. Residents also reported experiencing catcalling and unwanted contact in public spaces in the borough.
Prevention with children and young people	The Supporting Families Social Work Academy organise tailored training for children’s social care staff. In addition to this, the LBTH Parent and Family Support Service also provide a four-week programme called Speakeasy for parents to talk to their children about growing up, relationships and growing up. The sessions look at how Relationship and Sex Education is taught in schools as well as the effects of media.	Levels of engagement with children, young people and parents is variable across different schools and areas in the borough. Residents considered a lack of awareness and education among young people was considered one of the driving issues for increasing the likelihood of VAWG in Tower Hamlets.
Engagement with men	Misogyny and Allyship training was developed to target male allyship in the Council and there are 25 men who have joined the Male Allies group.	Male allies group currently only focusing on LBTH staff. Residents and professionals think that there should be more engagement with influential male community members.
Use of participatory approaches and empowerment of women	LBTH has implemented a VAWG Champions programme with The Tower Hamlets Women’s Network enables participation by local women and girls. The LBTH Women’s Staff Network enables participation by female staff.	The level of activity and impact of VAWG champions is currently unknown. Only 8% of people who responded to the residents survey for the VAWG Needs Assessment had previously involved in planning to address VAWG in the borough.
Safe public spaces	LBTH have undertaken research to assess women’s perceptions of public spaces in Tower Hamlets and produced a new Women’s Safety Action Plan to be delivered.	The latest Annual Residents Survey indicates a greater proportion of women than man report feeling unsafe at night. Residents report experiencing unwanted contact in public spaces such as public transport, parks, and on the street or pavement.
Online safety	The LBTH Parental Engagement Team have offered sessions for parents about keeping children safe online.	Residents, including young people, have received online abuse of different forms. The level of support and response to this is not well understood.

Supporting Victims

Components	Achievements	Areas for further development
Access to support	There is an extensive online service directory with information about different types of support available locally and nationally. LBTH has promoted information about local services and pathways through outreach and training for professionals as well as through VAWG Champions who are both staff and community members.	Residents and professionals have highlighted a range of barriers to accessing support including lack of awareness of support, lack of trust in systems and services, lack of understanding of abuse, and fears related to shame, discrimination and other factors. Over half of residents shared that they would initially speak to a friend or family for support with VAWG, indicating a need for local community members to have the right information to support others.
Support for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence	LBTH commissions an IDVA service, which aims to address the safety of victims at high risk of harm due to domestic abuse. Hundreds of victims have received support from the Solace IDVA service since 2020, with increasing referrals each year due to expanded capacity of the service. Specialist IDVA support is also available for economic abuse, housing and health. The Haven at Royal London Hospital provides counselling, forensic and medical services for victims of sexual assault in the past 12 months. East London Rape Crisis provide services and support to victims of rape and sexual abuse in Tower Hamlets.	Available support is mostly limited to short-term support related to immediate safety, with limited support available for victims in the longer term. Residents have mixed perceptions about the helpfulness of local services, including social care (about one-quarter find it 'not very helpful').
Support for victims of so-called 'honour-based' violence and abuse including FGM and forced marriage	There is culturally sensitive support available through Sister Circle for honour-based violence and abuse, including FGM, in Tower Hamlets.	More than half of the residents responding to the VAWG residents survey report not being aware of the support available for victims of so-called 'honour-based' violence and FGM.
Accessibility and Inclusion	The IDVA service monitors service users' protected characteristics; Bangladeshi women have been particularly well represented among service users in the past 3 years.	Some groups of victims have lower than expected uptake in the Solace IDVA service such as men and diverse ethnicities. Residents cited barriers that would stop them from reporting

	There is also specialist domestic abuse provision for victims with Bangladeshi or Somali ethnicities.	experiences of VAWG to agencies in Tower Hamlets included fears of bringing shame, fear of being rejected by faith community, language barriers, lack of specialist services (e.g., for men, LGBTQ+), lack of accessibility (e.g., wheelchair access, childcare), fear of discrimination against culture or being transgender or nonbinary.
MARACs	Hundreds of cases are discussed each year through MARACs, with a relatively low repeat victimisation rate. Tower Hamlets has conducted a MARAC review with lessons learned shared via the VAWG Steering Group and other partnership networks.	Repeat victimisation has not decreased since 2019. There is need for follow-up regarding the recommendations coming from the MARAC review to understand gaps to address.
Housing	LBTH is implementing a project to attain Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation (DAHA) and reviewed its practices related to domestic abuse in housing. LBTH provide a Sanctuary Scheme, which provides free home security for domestic abuse victims with sole tenancy. LBTH commissions two women's refuges for victims of domestic abuse with a total of 34 bed spaces, including a specialist refuge for Asian women and their children. LBTH commissions a supported accommodation for women with complex needs (Riverside Hostel).	About 10% of homelessness approaches to LBTH were reportedly related to domestic abuse. Residents also shared that financial and housing barriers would stop them from reporting experiences of VAWG. The LBTH DAHA project was previously delayed, although it is now in progress. Only two local registered providers of social housing have gained accreditation.
Health services	Violence against women and girls is a new priority for the NHS and there is commitment across health partners in London to address the impacts of VAWG in health. A total of 15 GP practices and 76 clinicians have participated in IRIS training for supporting victims of domestic abuse. Some residents report that their GP helped them to access VAWG services. There are specialist services that aim to support victims of violence including maternity services,	There is a lack of continuous provision in primary care for identifying and supporting people who have experienced violence, although the IRIS programme is re-launching in Tower Hamlets. Long waiting times for long-term support for victims with issues related to traumatic impacts of experiencing violence, including counselling and therapy.

	<p>psychosexual support and Women’s Trust mental health support groups. Tower Hamlets also has a wide range of mental health services for issues such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and complex trauma and emotional needs.</p>	
<p>Trauma-informed approaches</p>	<p>There is an increasing level of awareness about and interest in trauma and trauma-informed approaches among people working in Tower Hamlets services due to ongoing training, a borough-wide community of practice, and service-level initiatives.</p>	<p>Application of trauma-informed approaches is inconsistent across different services and organisations in the borough. Initiatives often focus on training rather than practical application of trauma-informed approaches.</p>
<p>People involved in prostitution or sex work</p>	<p>Door of Hope uses a holistic, wrap-around approach to enable access to services and provide therapeutic support for 30 local women involved in on-street prostitution.</p>	<p>There is limited specific provision for women involved in different forms of off-street prostitution, such as escorting. The stigma of engaging in prostitution among community members and professionals may prevent people from accessing support for issues related to VAWG.</p>
<p>Women in contact with the criminal justice system</p>	<p>LBTH has a specialist role leading on the coordination of pathways for women away from the CJS and into support and expanded funding for the London Female Diversion Service, supporting 6 women since July 2023.</p>	<p>Women in contact with the criminal justice system are at increased risk of poor mental health, trauma, financial insecurity, and experiencing violence. The lack of trust in services and the criminal justice system commonly reported among Tower Hamlets residents may be particularly pronounced among women in contact with the criminal justice system, which may create barriers to seeking support.</p>
<p>Workplaces</p>	<p>Tower Hamlets has updated its policies for sexual harassment and domestic abuse. NHS organisations in London have committed to addressing violence experienced by staff by addressing power dynamics, reducing misogyny and providing protection and support for staff who are experiencing or have experienced VAWG.</p>	<p>Members of the LBTH Women’s Network have reported that sexual harassment is an issue in the workplace in 2023 and will examine further survey results to address internal issues.</p>

Perpetrators

Components	Achievements	Areas for further development
Help-seeking and early intervention	LBTH training about VAWG issues has included some early intervention topics including positive relationships, There are also two early intervention programmes, which are focused on parents (Early Repair and Reducing Parental Conflict).	There is a lack of early intervention programmes for perpetrators who are not parents. One-third of professionals report that they are not at all confident in working with perpetrators. Professionals identified working with perpetrators as well as preventative approaches as some of their top learning needs.
Changing perpetrator behaviour	There is a behaviour change intervention available for parents (Positive Change). There is also a new service for any perpetrators, including those who are not parents, called the Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA) programme. This service includes specialist streams for female perpetrators and same sex intimate partners.	There has been low completion of the Positive Change service among perpetrators. The CIFA programme has just started implementation in Tower Hamlets. Perpetrator behaviour change programmes can only be accessed with a referral by a professional.
Criminal justice response	There is significant funding and support to address domestic abuse offences from specialist crime in London. London MOPAC also has strategic priorities focused on reducing reoffending and building trust and confidence in the criminal justice system. Tower Hamlets previously had Specialist Domestic Abuse Court which included measures to improve the ease and experience of victims in the criminal justice system. Between 2019-2023, it had a conviction rate of between 65-72% and a victim satisfaction rate of over 70%.	Residents and professionals note that there is a lack of trust and optimism in services including the criminal justice system. There are low sanction and detection rates for domestic abuse and sexual offences. Specialist domestic abuse court lacks system wide support and is yet to be reinstated, so court experiences are likely to feel less safe for victims. Police targeting of buyers of sex has reduced capacity.

Chapter 10 Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the findings from this needs assessment, including the recommendations provided by residents and professionals. The recommendations should help inform future planning to prevent and respond to VAWG in Tower Hamlets.

Cross-cutting

- Improve use of high-quality information, insight and evidence in planning to address specific VAWG issues and specific groups, including transgender residents
- Increase meaningful involvement of women, victims and survivors in planning, delivery and review of VAWG prevention and response
- Embed trauma-informed principles and approaches into all VAWG-related programmes, services and policies including non-specialist services
- Enhance collaboration and ownership among teams, services and organisations in Tower Hamlets towards reducing VAWG and its impacts on residents and staff

Prevention and safety

- Address wider determinants of VAWG including housing insecurity and financial insecurity with a gender-informed lens (e.g. unemployment and access to finances)
- Improve community engagement and outreach about prevention and reduction of violence and abuse with key messages about abuse definitions, harmful attitudes, unacceptable behaviours, consequences, celebration of positive role models and relationship examples, and services
- Work with range of influencers like male residents, faith groups, schools, and workplaces
- Increase involvement of diverse women and girls in communication, planning and delivery
- Improve community safety measures' abilities to address VAWG (police/THEOs, CCTV) and help build residents' trust in police for addressing VAWG issues
- Work with local women and girls to improve perceptions of safety in public spaces
- Offer more women only activities and provision including physical activity opportunities

Supporting victims

- Support professionals and residents across Tower Hamlets to have the right information and skills to support victims and survivors of VAWG, accounting for barriers
- Ensure support is accessible and appropriate for people with different language needs, cultures, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and nationalities
- Ensure communication with residents about how to access support and services is accessible and tailored for different audiences
- Ensure appropriate support is available for victims of all VAWG strands including domestic abuse, sexual violence, harassment, online abuse, honour-based abuse, FGM, modern slavery, exploitation, as well as women in contact with the criminal justice system
- Enhance the quality of housing provision for victims with diverse needs including women at risk of homelessness, women with substance use issues, women with children
- Ensure that support for addressing the longer-term negative impacts of violence are available and accessible (e.g., mental health, trauma, sexual and reproductive health)

Holding perpetrators to account

- Support professionals to have the right information and skills to respond to perpetrators
- Increase uptake and completion of intervention programmes by diverse perpetrators
- Improve partnership working between responsible organisations e.g., courts and police
- Foster improvement in residents' trust and confidence in criminal justice system by improving experiences and outcomes.

This is for the Majority

Gender inclusive design – creating a welcoming, inclusive and restorative borough

May 2024



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1. This is for the Majority

1.1 About this report

Gender inclusive design is an approach to development that learns from the experiences of women and girls in order to build inclusive, healthy, child friendly, climate resilient places that are socially and economically prosperous.

This report has been prepared to inform planning policy in London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It is an evidence base for the new Local Plan and has been through public consultation under regulation 18 (December 2023) and regulation 19 (June 2024). The findings of this research have been aggregated throughout the new Local Plan draft with input into each policy and this document will be circulated across the council and further afield, in order to encourage shared approaches and collaborative strategies that embed equity in the built environment.

When this research process began in December 2022, the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), the Greater London Authority (GLA), The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the World Bank had published documents focusing on

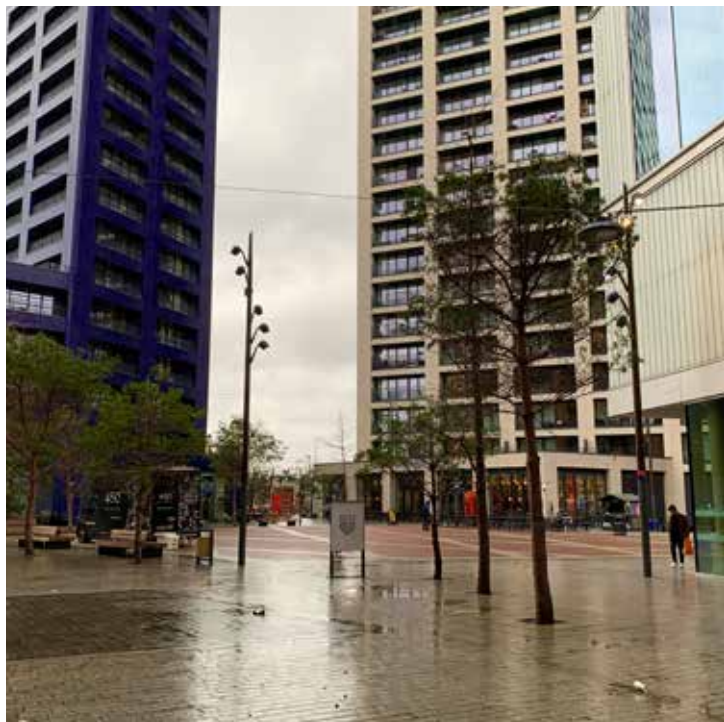
women's safety and street safety. Make Space for Girls and LSE Cities have also made significant headway, changing the conversation around gendered provision for teenagers in parks and public space. This network of research and broader discourse around women's safety, is formative and has been used as a reference tool (see the policy review in section 02).

Being part of this broader conversation created an opportunity for the scope of this evidence base and design guidance to respond in a more holistic way to the experiences of women and girls in London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

While this document sits within the Local Plan evidence base at Tower Hamlets, it is also part of an unfolding conversation which is becoming more nuanced as thinking about gender inclusion in the built environment evolves. The ambition of this guidance goes further than addressing the limiting belief that design is a defensive strategy to protect women from violent men and presents an expanded vision that considers the built environment as a language that can be an agent for change and inclusivity.

Our work in Tower Hamlets has prioritised listening to and learning with women and girls at the outset and this document grows out of an iterative engagement programme that has been shaped, at each stage, by an ongoing process of learning and reflecting. It was important that this document put lived experience at the centre of the evidence base and that recommendations are drawn out of a consensus rather than fall back on assumptions or led by perceptions.

This report is written at the mid-point of an inclusive research project working, to date, with over 450 women, girls, and non-binary people from across the borough. The title of the report – This Is For The Majority – is reflective of the fact that the recommendations that are made will have a positive impact on all residents, because designing with the needs of women and girls in mind, will





lead to improved public realm for the majority of people who live and work here. Furthermore, designing with women and girls in mind aligns with biodiversity net gain objectives, planning for climate mitigation, healthy, child friendly places, vibrant local neighbourhoods and brings social and economic prosperity to a place.

Adopting an inclusive design framework will support and enable a cultural shift not simply to 'level up' women's experience but to create an entirely new, shared context which is empowering and enabling for women and girls and offers broader benefits to the wider community. The report maps the scope of findings that have emerged through engagement, a 'vision' for greater inclusivity, a set of themes and a series of recommendations to ensure greater balance and representation in the planning and design of the borough. The report provides insights into the evidence base, so that the source of recommendations can clearly be traced through to the original research.

The second phase of this document will be published later in 2024 and will outline a framework for gender inclusive design. It will be a 'how to' guide that enables place shapers to apply gender inclusive approaches as a design tool.

Whilst this document is written to inform design and planning it is envisaged as useful tool for teams working with violence against women & girls team (VAWG), youth service, community safety provision and strategic planning for public health, high streets, parks and green spaces, leisure and planning for new developments.

1.2 Executive Summary

A legacy

Cities, towns, and public spaces are an ongoing human project to co-create, make, and re-make spaces that both speak of who we want to be 'now,' and how we wish to be seen by future generations. Historically this has been led by able bodied, white men. This statement does not undermine or judge their contribution; it is merely a statement of fact that provides insight into the shape of built world we have inherited.

A city out of step

Living in cities, towns and public spaces means navigating this inherited patchwork of histories structures, systems and institutions that had limiting views of women and girls, disability and neurodiversity, race and ethnicity and sexual and gender identity. This has shaped spaces that favour and celebrate the lives of men. From street names and public sculptures through to a skyline of blocks and towers that replicate male power, to a transport system designed for a smooth daily commute 'into' town. We live amongst and navigate a built environment that is out of step with a contemporary culture that explicitly values plurality, inclusivity, and diversity.

"In general, cities work better for heterosexual, able-bodied, cisgender men than they do for women, girls, sexual and gender minorities, and people with disabilities. Key aspects of the built urban environment – related to access, mobility, safety and freedom from violence, health and hygiene, climate resilience, and security of tenure – create disproportionate burdens for women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities of all ages and abilities, thus exacerbating and reinforcing existing gender inequities"

World Bank, Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Planning & Design, 2020

What needs to change?

To bring ourselves more in step with contemporary culture the question we must ask is; what needs to change, from the fine detail to the big picture, to make spaces that work for everyone? Central to making space work for everyone is making spaces feel welcoming and therefore safe.

Our work in Tower Hamlets makes it clear that it is important to change the narrative and language around street safety. Statistics show men and teenage boys are also at risk from random violence, but that women, girls and non-binary people carry a greater daily burden of dealing with sexism and misogyny on the street and that acceptance of this lower-level behaviour, leads to broader acceptance of crimes such as domestic abuse, rape, and murder.

The link here is male violence – whether that is targeted at women or other men. So, making spaces safe also means asking: how can male violence be challenged, and men helped to manage and change their behaviour?

Clearly this question is complex and there are many reasons, from broader cultural and historic acceptance of male violence to upbringing, poverty, lack of deterrent and poor education. In the context of this report, it is a question of how the 'language' of the city supports and communicates shared value through design, the ways that inequality is replicated through the built environment and the practical considerations that make places feel more welcoming to women and girls.



Welcoming places feel safe

Participants in our research told us that they felt welcome in places where there was a range of activity happening and where they could see other people; women, families, people from several generations and cultural backgrounds. That designing 'welcoming' places both encouraged diverse users to spend time there and discouraged anti-social behaviour. This creates a positive feedback loop.

Focusing only on safety further perpetuates limiting views of the experience of women and girls and this creates a contradiction. Safety is important, but in the context of design, perpetuating the narrative that women and girls are potential victims and limiting discussions about gender inclusivity to safety, is missing an opportunity to think about the big picture changes that can happen when places are designed by and for everyone. One of the ways urban design can support a culture change is to shift narratives by designing with the needs of women and girls in mind.

We talked to some 450 people about the design of streets and public spaces and some of the many topics that were discussed included provision in parks, biodiversity, climate mitigation, opportunities for children to play, the harms caused by high levels of pollution and the fact that they would like greater opportunity to socialise in parks and outdoor spaces, as well as talking about safer parks and streets.

It's nuanced: thinking about approaches

When women and girls change their behaviour, it has an impact on the social and economic prosperity of a place. Therefore, proactively designing welcoming spaces that encourage women and girls to feel welcome, is also proactively designing regenerative spaces that benefit the whole community.

Design by and for women and girls is important because it can help us create a new vision for our built environment which is more in line with the big picture changes we need to make to support Biodiversity Net gain and climate sensitive planning. When these elements align places feel welcoming and this in turn has social and economic benefits for an area.

Recommendations at the close of this report consider on street interventions, changes to the way inclusive approaches are implemented and big picture thinking about the language of the built environment.

The breadth of responses and more nuanced comments from women and girls about safety should not be overlooked and one truth which flows through this report is that all women, girls, and gender diverse people, feel or perceive safety or public space differently. However, 96% of survey respondents agreed that a holistic culture shift is necessary in order to challenge violence against women and girls.

Design of the built environment can contribute to this culture shift by ensuring that the 'language' of the city speaks of equality.

Gender mainstreaming

One of the ways to make places for people is to ensure greater representation in planning, policy, and design teams by adopting gender mainstreaming with a focus on intersectionality.

Gender mainstreaming at policy level, through design guidance, can help to shift the culture of a place, with the aspiration being to create something new that is of benefit to all people of all backgrounds and genders.

Gender mainstreaming is a tool that can be used to identify gaps in policy where the experience of women and girls is absent. The aim of gender mainstreaming is to achieve equality.

In 1998, the Council of Europe defined gender mainstreaming as:

"The (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policymaking." (Council of Europe)

In this policy document, gender mainstreaming relates to planning, policy, urban design and architecture and the built environment.

1.3 A vision for greater inclusivity in LBTH

Welcoming borough:
Empowering and educating.



Inclusive borough:
Enabling individuals and
strengthening community.



Restorative borough:
Prioritising health and
ecology



1.4 Context: Places shape people and people shape places

Architecture makes our culture legible. It communicates the aspirations and values of the dominant culture (i.e. those with capital). Planning shapes this language, providing the grammar and structure by holding space for conversation, collaboration and indeed the robust push and pull between the will of the market and the needs of the community.

Cities play a vital role in production, consumption and reproduction of gendered norms and biases and are themselves shaped by gender embodiment and the experiences of its inhabitants. These biases are communicated through design, materials, and spatial planning all of which are historically shaped by and for priorities determined by men. This limits opportunities for layering or multiplicity, for places to be more than one thing- something women who are caring for children often experience as a failing and a comment on the value of mothering.

Gender and feminist studies show that women and men experience the built environment differently, and insufficient attention to women's needs within planning processes reproduces gender inequality.

A key tool for communicating inclusive and egalitarian public spaces is through good design. Design not only shapes spaces it communicates a level of care and makes a visual statement to the people who use those spaces that those with governance are considering their needs.

The design and nature of that intervention is iterative, relational, formative and communicates a kind of politics. Whether people know it, or not, they are constantly reading and internalising design- or entropy, as a reflection on them and their sense of self in that place.



In short, the built environment communicates not just 'where' we are but also 'who' we are. It frames the personal and inter-personal relationships we have in those spaces; memories, stories, and aspirations. Children growing up are shaped by the built world and its generosity towards them. External architectural environments are internalised and shape both memory and identity.

Our relationship with place is therefore porous – places shape people, just as people shape places.

The question that gender inclusive design asks, and which this report will ultimately make recommendations on, is what needs to change, from the fine detail to the big picture, to make Tower Hamlets work for the majority?

1.5 Background: This is our city. These are our streets.

This report was initially envisaged as a 'Women's Safety' Project. It was set up in the light of the tragic murders of Sarah Everard, Bibaa Henry, Nicole Smallman, Sabina Nessa and many others whose stories may not have received national coverage. Horrific acts of misogyny, which shone a light on the precarity women face within a legal and judicial system that empowers men to act against women.

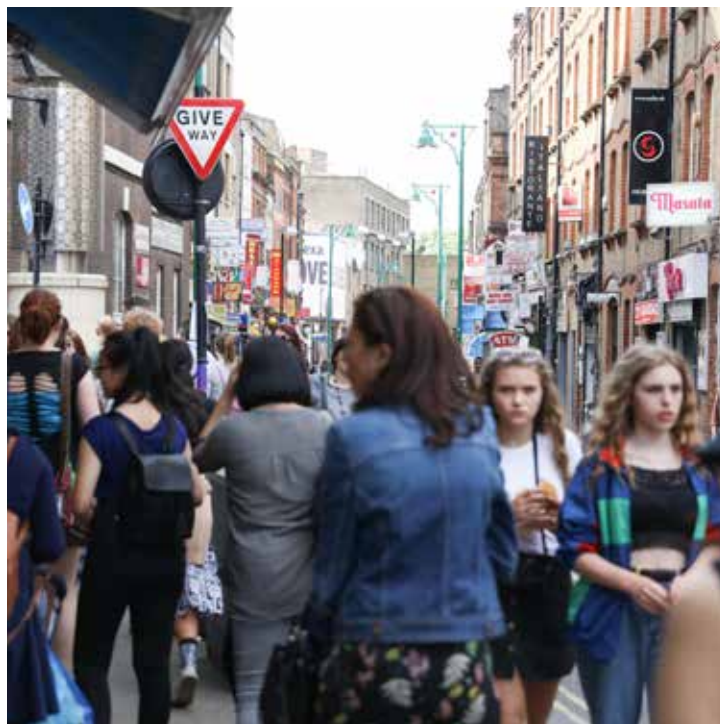
Male violence and fear of male violence is a facet of gendered experience must be countered through whole system thinking, starting with adequate police and judicial processes that promise justice to women through the prosecution of offenders, and by sending the clear message that violence, sexual violence and abuse of women and girls is unacceptable and punishable by law.

The report carefully weighs the accounts of women who report feeling unsafe or indeed being assaulted, the poverty of justice for women and under reporting, against the problem of over-sensationalising levels of fear and indeed danger. Some elements of the city are dangerous; however, this must be balanced against the alternative dangerous path of turning women into 'victims' and therefore perpetuating rhetoric around victim blaming, control of women through fear, being an equally problematic path to travel.

Women and girls are more likely to suffer violence or death through contact with family, partners, and ex partners, than they do from random attacks on the street by a stranger.

ONS data the year ending March 2021 shows that of 177 women who were victims of homicide across the UK, 95 percent of perpetrators were known to the victim. According to the Femicide Census, a woman is killed every three days in the UK and research has shown that incidents of violence towards women have increased in recent years.

This includes a 13 percent increase in the number of women who are sexually assaulted from the year ending September 2021. A recent report found that the leading cause of femicide is intimate partner



and ex- partner violence, followed by son-mother domestic violence and then killings that were sexually motivated.

Sexual offences recorded by the police were at the highest level recorded within a 12-month period (194,683 offences) in the year ending March 2022, a 32% increase from the same period in 2021. (During the Covid 19 pandemic) Of all sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2022, 36% (70,330) were rape offences. This was a 26% increase from 55,678 in the year ending March 2021. Other sexual offences increased by 35% to 124,353 compared with 92,212 the previous year.

(Office for National Statistics 2023)

These figures are high and contrasted by extremely low rates of prosecution and conviction.

However, for the purposes of this report about the design of streets and public space, it is important to bear in mind the statistic that 5% of these crimes are committed by a stranger on the street.

Violence against women and girls in the UK is a national outrage and this document will not minimise this fact, however it is a misconception that the greatest threat to women and girls is from a stranger on a dark secluded street.

Our engagement has shown that we must consider safety from the fine detail to the big picture considering on street interventions to create a welcoming and inclusive public realm whilst at the same time understanding that the design, material and spatial planning of cities is gendered, legible and indeed this power in-balance is internalised by both women and men. This is echoed by respondents to our survey who state that community, a diversity of people on the streets, and seeing other women created welcoming places and that when women and girls feel welcome, they also feel safe. For these reasons, the emphasis of this report has shifted from focusing on a defensive night-time strategy, to looking more broadly at how to strengthen community and design welcoming places so women and girls can confidently use their streets and reclaim that space, while feeling safe to do so.

The evidence gathered during our engagement shows that women feel relatively safe most of the time but that they feel less safe at night. 'Feeling safe' is personal and everyone will experience and perceive safety differently. Intervention in the built environment such as better lighting, greater passive surveillance, active frontages, better visibility, focus on entrance and exists, can make places feel safer and these recommendations will be aggregated through the Local Plan.

The majority of participants told us that they are not in the main navigating the city in a heightened state of fear but that they are burdened by exposure to elements that will be read as low-level threat; graffiti, trash, poor maintenance, drug dealing and taking, cat calling, ASB and concerns about low level crime. Most of the time this burden is carried with a level of vigilance. However, this raises to threat when experienced in combination. Women did not talk about living in fear, instead many women spoke in resigned terms about carrying this additional responsibility of staying safe as a burden. That navigating threat is part of city life.

Women have described how they create routes that navigate around places where groups of men congregate and cat call, hot spots for drug dealing or

where they have previously experienced threat. They also navigate around streets that feel unsafe due to limited sight lines, escape routes or poor lighting and that this 'way' of getting around is precautionary. They spoke of situations and moments when they became more stressed, for example pausing to find keys and unlock their front door especially if that was poorly lit or lacked passive surveillance. Many of these situations can be countered through design and solutions are suggested in the recommendations listed later in this evidence base.

The issue of taking up space runs like a golden thread throughout the research and it is extremely complex both because of the contemporary culture in which young men are growing up, because of the effects of fifteen years of austerity impacting youth services and provision, because of the density of population in Tower Hamlets, and issues of overcrowding, which sees cultures, families and inter-personal conflict heightened because space operates at a premium.

Young men are, themselves, living in fear as they are aware of knife and gang crime and stabbings, meaning a certain amount of bravado is partly a survival strategy for them.

This report is written with empathy towards young men and the complex issues they face. However, the scope of this work is to make space for women, girls and gender diversity and part of that must be to articulate the impact that groups of young men have. This imbalance (inequality) impacts how women use space and the confidence they have about navigating the borough by day and by night.

The negative impact of this is much wider because when women and girls avoid somewhere it quickly becomes a no-go area. For example, when a small park becomes unwelcoming or attracts ASB, women stop taking their children there to play, the elderly do not go there, and the park gets a reputation as a problem area. When women and girls stop using an area it goes into decline. Therefore, proactively designing welcoming spaces that encourage women and girls to go there and feel safe doing so, is also proactively designing regenerative spaces that benefit the whole community.

This document will look at the role design can play in creating more welcoming places to make a more balanced city.

1.6 We are the majority: Understanding Intersectionality.

“In general, cities work better for heterosexual, able-bodied, cisgender men than they do for women, girls, sexual and gender minorities, and people with disabilities. Key aspects of the built urban environment – related to access, mobility, safety and freedom from violence, health and hygiene, climate resilience, and security of tenure – create disproportionate burdens for women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities of all ages and abilities, thus exacerbating and reinforcing existing gender inequities.”

World Bank, Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Planning & Design, 2020

Gender inclusive design is about making places better for the majority. Modelling the experience of women, and girls, and gender diversity makes places better for all inhabitants.

Whilst it is well established that historically, architects and planners have built cities that serve the needs of men, we cannot assume that the ‘men’ for whom the city is built, represent 50% of the population.

There are many other factors beyond gender that make the city tricky to negotiate or which communicate one’s ‘otherness’ to the norm, making it hard to fit in by setting individuals aside because they ‘can’t,’ ‘won’t’ or ‘don’t’ conform. Physical disabilities can make it harder to get around, neurodiversity can make certain spaces feel overwhelming or simply being older or indeed very young, means moving more slowly or differently which can make it harder to negotiate the city.

These are all issues that affect women or can be modelled through the experience of women and girls.

Whilst at first glance gender inclusive design targets the missing 50%. In fact, gender inclusive design also considers differences which can be articulated or modelled through a ‘gendered’ experience and will, in fact, enable many others to participate.

A gender lens can provide, insights into being ‘other’ in the city, because at different times in her life a woman will be ‘other’, whether that is other as a sexualised body, other as a mothering or pregnant body, other as a menopausal body or an elderly body or other as a transgender body or other as racialised body or an intersection of these considerations.

Intersectional experiences will mean many women face compounding forms of discrimination. All forms of inequality are mutually reinforcing. Women on low-income, with a disability; single parents, women dealing with racism, trans and homophobia; any women who face multiple challenges have greater struggles and it is often the case that disadvantage is magnetic. Being a single parent, on a low income with an abusive ex-partner; facing racism; dealing with mobility issues may also affect a woman’s mental health, make work challenging, and in turn impact her children if she has them.

Women of colour, may, for example, face greater challenges when reporting to the police and, during a listening workshop at Account 3 in Tower Hamlets, a woman shared her story of an assault and described her hesitancy to report to the police. The decision to pick up the phone and call the police to report a crime is complex for all women. For women of colour there might be additional concerns around trust, around putting themselves in potentially harmful situations and the tacit understanding that they are going to have to interact with systemic racism and misogyny in the police force, even if individual officers are sympathetic or helpful. Women at the ‘Account 3’ listening exercise explained that it is complex for women of colour to report, as she may have already been harmed or let down by the system.

However, whilst this statement is true for the Women at Account 3 it may not be true for all and, of course this is a blanket term again that negates the complexities of class, cultural identities, histories, and heritage.

So this evidence must acknowledge and hold on to our differences. There is a complex ebb and flow



to negotiate and throughout this report the word 'WOMEN' will at once refer to a generalised concept of women but it will also indicate the complexity of that term as it refers to intersectional experience of both gender and sexual identity, race, culture, disability, age, neurodiversity, and lived experience.

WOMEN must navigate a built environment that is spatially and architecturally coded to favour a male experience and they must also navigate the social systems designed to create order in those places, systems also designed for and made by men.

Consider gender inclusive design is to be a model that shapes the borough through the experience of women, girls, and gender diversity, to create a more equal and equitable experience for all people. It is then possible to see that this is a strategy that rebalances streets and public spaces to benefit the majority and seeks to empower women and girls by making space for them. This shift is about changing the conversation and creating better, safer feeling, public realm that everyone can enjoy by improving wellbeing, supporting inclusive community, and driving an agenda of social prosperity.

1.7 Scope: Acting and doing is shaping and making

Conversations about safety and feeling safe are extremely complex and whilst the media sensationalises 'random' assault and plays down partner abuse, the majority of violence against women and girls is unreported and threat on the street is more likely to be experienced through continuous exposure to low- level interactions- commenting, cat-calling, threatening behaviour which continues to exert male dominance and lead to broader cultural acceptance of crimes against women and girls. These are behaviours that urban design can do little to change and as Leslie Kern has often been quoted saying "No amount of Street lighting will abolish the patriarchy" (Feminist City, 2020).

It is therefore important to change the narrative and language around street safety. The fact is whilst the media focuses on women and safety, creating an impression that it is dangerous for women to go out at night, statistics show men and teenage boys face the same risks of random violence. The key defining a link here is men. Whether it is men being violent

to women or men being violent to other men the problem, or question is:

Why are men violent? And how can men be helped to manage their behaviour?

Clearly this question is complex and there are many reasons, from broader cultural and historic acceptance of male violence to upbringing, poverty, and education, however it is time to shift the narrative away from 'Women's Safety' and toward the problem of male violence and abuse of power. This is fundamental and connects all abuse from workplace harassment and bullying, domestic or partner abuse to knife and street crime.

With this in mind, this document takes a much broader scope focusing on the development of 'gender inclusive design' to rebalance inherent inequalities that exist in the built environment and therefore be part of a culture change that empowers women and girls by changing the shape of the built environment. It is felt that whilst much research has focused on identifying specific design interventions that mitigate 'feeling' unsafe at night-time, such as better lighting and street design, limiting the research to a night-time 'defensive' strategy, ignores the opportunity to tackle more inherent and systemic inequalities. **That, instead of focusing on 'designing out' threat, we can instead prioritise 'designing in' what women and girls want and need.**

Allowing women 'in' to the design of the city will develop of more complex and nuanced places which can be socially and economically prosperous, child friendly, healthy, climate resilient and rich in biodiversity and gender inclusive design provides development with a framework or an approach to build more successful and inclusive places.

This approach will be controversial because what women describe as welcoming, challenges 'Secure By Design' and the over- provision of 'pitch' space allotted in parks across the UK. Recommendations made later in this report will seek to rebalance this unequal approach.

Jane Jacobs famously describes the 'sidewalk' as a dance of people moving through their day and the fact that this movement playing out on the street

makes the city, is the city. She is famously quoted from *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) "Think of the city, what comes to mind? The streets." She then goes on to state: "Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because and only when they are created by everybody."

Streets and public places are where everybody can take up space. Where all people are entitled to be. To sit on a bench in the sunshine, walk the canal and take in the scene, window shop, go for a run, take your child to the park, walk home after seeing friends, after school or work.

Public space is where there is interplay. In an age of division and polarity, the streets are where we meet. Where we see each other.

This notion of sharing or co-designing space is current. Simply by using the street, by going to the park, or sitting on a street bench, we are participating in the making and re-making of place. Acting and doing is making and shaping.

How we interact with the streets is, in and of itself, an act of faith in the other humans around us. One principle of gender inclusive design must therefore be to consider how we are included and how we take part in space.

Parks and green spaces have been a key discussion and focal point of all workshops. A theme repeated over and over by women is that groups of teenage boys or young men in smaller parks feel threatening and make parks feel unsafe, particularly if they are taking or dealing drugs. Women and girls then avoid these places meaning the user group is un-balanced, in turn parks get a reputation for being unsafe.

This is an example of how acting and doing is also shaping and making place. It is also a good example of an opportunity where design can help with behaviour change by considering the physical interventions that can be made in a place to encourage a broad range of users.

2. Policy Review

This section of the report sets out the existing policy context regarding gender inclusive design. It includes a review of the policy directly relevant to Tower Hamlets, including national and London policies; policies and evidence from other London boroughs and British local authorities; and international exemplars.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 sets out the objectives and structure of the planning system in England. While the NPPF does not explicitly address gender inclusive design, it does include several references to the need to design for safe and inclusive spaces, including in Chapter 2, where the social objective of sustainable design includes fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe spaces, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

Chapter 8 provides more detail on planning for healthy and safe communities. It expects planning policies to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

- a. Promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;
- b. are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and
- c. enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.



Chapter 8 also expects planning policies to:

- a. plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- b. take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
- c. guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
- d. ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
- e. ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

Chapter 12 also includes a requirement that planning policies ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

The London Plan provides strategic planning policies at a regional level, and includes more detailed development management policies. The London Plan forms part of the development plan for Tower Hamlets and is a material consideration in determining planning applications.

London Plan policy D5 supports inclusive design. It expects boroughs, in preparing their development plans, to support the creation of inclusive neighbourhoods by embedding inclusive design, and collaborating with local communities in the development of planning policies that affect them. Policy D5 also expects development proposals to achieve the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design by:

1. being designed taking into account London's diverse population
2. providing high quality people focused spaces that are designed to facilitate social interaction and inclusion
3. being convenient and welcoming with no disabling barriers, providing independent access without undue effort, separation or special treatment
4. being able to be entered, used and exited safely, easily and with dignity for all
5. being designed to incorporate safe and dignified emergency evacuation for all building users.

London Plan policy S6 expects large-scale developments that are open to the public, and large areas of public realm, to provide and secure the future management of:

1. free publicly-accessible toilets suitable for a range of users, including disabled people, families with young children and people of all gender identities; and
2. free 'Changing Places' toilets designed in accordance with the guidance in British Standard BS8300-2:2018.

These should be available during opening hours, or 24 hours a day where accessed from areas of public realm.

London Plan Policy GG1 sets out the principles of building strong and inclusive communities. It requires those involved in planning and development to:

- A. encourage early and inclusive engagement with stakeholders, including local communities, in the development of proposals, policies and area-based strategies
- B. seek to ensure changes to the physical environment to achieve an overall positive contribution to London
- C. provide access to good quality community spaces, services, amenities and infrastructure that accommodate, encourage and strengthen communities, increasing active participation and social integration, and addressing social isolation
- D. Seek to ensure that London continues to generate a wide range of economic and other opportunities, and that everyone is able to benefit from these to ensure that London is a fairer, more inclusive and more equal city
- E. ensure that streets and public spaces are consistently planned for people to move around and spend time in comfort and safety, creating places where everyone is welcome, which foster a sense of belonging, which encourage community buy-in, and where communities can develop and thrive
- F. promote the crucial role town centres have in the social, civic, cultural and economic lives of Londoners, and plan for places that provide important opportunities for building relationships during the daytime, evening and night time



- G. ensure that new buildings and the spaces they create are designed to reinforce or enhance the identity, legibility, permeability, and inclusivity of neighbourhoods, and are resilient and adaptable to changing community requirements
- H. support and promote the creation of a London where all Londoners, including children and young people, older people, disabled people, and people with young children, as well as people with other protected characteristics, can move around with ease and enjoy the opportunities the city provides, creating a welcoming environment that everyone can use confidently, independently, and with choice and dignity, avoiding separation or segregation
- I. support and promote the creation of an inclusive London where all Londoners, regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, marital status, religion, race, sexual orientation, social class, or whether they are pregnant or have children, can share in its prosperity, culture and community, minimising the barriers, challenged and inequalities they face.

London Plan policy D8 provides details regarding the design of public realm. It includes an expectation that development plans should ensure the public realm is well-designed, safe, accessible, inclusive, attractive, well-connected, related to the local and historic context, and easy to understand, service and maintain. Landscape treatment should be of good quality, fit-for-purpose, durable and sustainable. Lighting, including for advertisements, should be carefully considered and well-designed in order to minimise intrusive lighting infrastructure and reduce light pollution.

As part of the establishment of the Mayor's Design Advocates programme, the GLA published a guidance document on safety in public spaces for women and girls. It provides a framework for the consideration of gender issues as part of the assessment of the design of a project. It encourages stakeholders to consider the following questions:

- Is project leadership addressing exclusion?
- Is the project team gender informed and diverse?
- Is the project budget appropriate?
- Are you practicing inclusive engagement?
- Is your data collection process adopting inclusivity principles?



- Are you adopting genuine co-design with women, girls and gender diverse people?
- Are your design features gender-informed?
- Are you considering diversity and inclusion issues beyond the site boundary?
- Are appropriate policies and strategies in place to support women's safety in the longer term?
- Is there an agreed approach to continuing community programming in the space?
- Directing pedestrians to particular, well-lit routes at night;
- Improving the visibility of bridges, providing different route options, and introducing human-scale lighting;
- Specific interventions on isolated routes, particularly the Greenway, to make them more welcoming;
- Longer-term planning for safe routes;
- Develop a site wide strategy for biodiversity that takes into account the need to address dark areas.

The London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) was established to deliver large scale redevelopment in and around the Olympic Park in East London. The LLDC acts as the local planning authority for an area that includes parts of four London boroughs including Tower Hamlets. In May 2022, the LLDC commissioned a study that looked at how public realm interventions could enhance safety and feelings of safety for women and girls. The study recommended a number of actions, including:

The LLDC study was based on extensive engagement with women, girls and gender diverse people in the LLDC area and more widely. It will inform the management of the Olympic Park and public realm interventions, and can serve as evidence for policies within the boroughs that will take over planning powers from the LLDC in 2024.

In 2018, the City of London Corporation commissioned a lighting strategy to inform the design of street and other lighting, as well as planning policies and other local authority policies. It includes a number of recommendations, including avoiding overly bright lighting that creates areas of high contrast, using integrated lighting to illuminate changes of level, and prioritising lighting for pedestrians and cyclists. It also recommends that planning policies require a detailed lighting strategy to be provided for planning applications at the pre-application stage.

UN Habitat is an agency of the United Nations that focuses on policies and research in the built environment field. In 2012 UN Habitat published a guidance document to support gender issues in urban planning and design. Its focus is on gender mainstreaming in decision-making around urban issues. It encourages stakeholders to undergo training and workshops on gender-sensitive urban planning, gender-based violence and gendered dimensions in access to housing and other essential infrastructure and services. This guidance document is focused on the process of decision-making and does not recommend any specific design interventions or planning policies.

As part of the planning of a major urban extension in the 1990s and 2000s, the city government of Vienna developed a process for gender mainstreaming in the planning process. The process was led by the city's women's office, and initially only female architects were invited to submit proposals. The development was focused on how women were using the city, including prioritising shorter journeys and the pedestrian experience between public transport and the front door. The principles of this initial development were then incorporated into a more comprehensive plan for the city, with gender-mainstreaming incorporated into public realm and new development design in existing parts of the city

3. Methodology

Co-designing research with Women and Girls in Tower Hamlets: Or how to do justice to the multiplicity of voices and experiences in the borough, and how to respond to them.

This evidence base has gathered a unique set of insights about gendered use and perceptions of public space. The report uses what we have learned from our listening exercise to formulate recommendations about how to better include women and girls in streets and public spaces. The research will be impactful both in terms of recognising specific local issues and helping to mainstream gender in future planning decisions .

For this evidence base to be of value it is imperative that it is co-designed by women and girls that live in the borough. The voices of residents have been key to shaping the conceptual scope of this document. Their experiences have been drawn together to find points of consensus from which to design principles and shape project themes and recommendations.

To date the research has comprised of:

- 40 street Interviews with Women and Girls across the borough
- 81 attendees at the LBTH Women's Network consultation
- 102 women, girls and non binary people attending digital walks with the community safety team.
- 60 women attending a women's safety event at Account 3
- 60 participants at the listening workshop, Queen Mary University
- 100 people from diverse backgrounds completing an online survey.

In total the research, so far, draws on direct input from 440 women, girls and non-binary people from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds.

Phase two of the project will test specific ideas through micro- projects and design workshops. A 'How To' guide will be produced with a focus on implementation and delivery.

The evidence base for this report has focused on gathering data in Tower Hamlets. The approach to research is generative and starts from a point of wishing to learn from participants, as opposed to testing and re-testing a specific question. This approach is situated in a field of analysis called Grounded Theory, a methodology for conducting qualitative research that creates theory- or in this case design recommendations, projects, and plans, through the generative process of gathering data, reflection, testing, re-gathering. Projects emerge from the synthesizing of analysis to conceptual theory, design themes, principles, and project outcomes.

This approach to creating design principles is grounded in design thinking, an approach to problem solving founded through the cognitive, strategic, and practical approaches to problem-solving used in the practice of design. This follows a similar route of gathering, testing, ideating, re-testing and to find answers that are human centred.

The engagement process started from a position of 'not knowing', setting out to ask questions, gather insights and learn from the shared, collective and intersectional experiences of women and girls in Tower Hamlets.

Outline of the design process

1. Making a broad range of street recordings.
2. Reflection and synthesis- looking for repeated themes, shared experience, and points of consensus.
3. Testing initial themes with women at the Tower Hamlets Women's Network (80 attendees) and in person event at the Brady Arts Centre where attendees were invited to listen to themes and respond.
4. Learning from this session to write an online survey for Let's Talk.
5. Womens safety walks, collaboration with the Community Safety Team
6. Listening exercise at Account 3, an organisation working with women and girls from diverse communities in Bethnal Green.
7. Synthesising results to create themes/ principles and design projects.
8. Producing an interim report.
9. To follow- final version of interim report
10. Engagement and testing phase.
11. Final report.
12. 'How to ' guide to delivery and implementation.



Audio street recordings

In January 2023 recorded 40 street interviews with women across Tower Hamlets. Key recording spots were Spitalfields Market, Regent Canal and Victoria Park, Poplar High Street, Limehouse Basin, behind Mulberry Place, Fish Island, Whitechapel High Street and Commercial Road, Toynbee Hall Gardens, Brick Lane area, Bangla Town and Globe Town.

Street recordings are a way to quickly map out the key themes and understand a range of perspectives. They enable the interviewer to engage directly with people on the street. This approach cuts out lengthy recruitment process, saves inconveniencing people and enables the interviewer to ensure a broad social/ cultural/ generational mix of interviewee.

The audio recordings are a practice of deep listening. It uses a universal starting question, in this case 'How do you feel about the streets and public spaces in Tower Hamlets' and then leaves spaces for the participant to direct the response and the rest of the interview. The interviewer will then converse freely from within the context set by the interviewee, responding to points made by the participant, for example, "Can you tell me more about that park? Can you tell me more about your walk home from the tube at night?"



This practice of deep listening establishes a 'fair exchange' with participant by ensuring they feel deeply heard, acknowledged and assured that their voice will make a valuable contribution to effecting positive change. The interviews lasted between 10 minutes and 35 minutes.

The audio interviews are edited to short clips in which the participant makes a specific point. Over the course of editing all of the interviews in this manner the researcher is able to build points of consensus and find common threads and themes.

The limitations of this approach are that I am an English speaking, middle aged, white woman and therefore embody institutional inequality, to an extent. I was only prepared to conduct interviews in places where I was visible on the street and felt safe. Whilst I was able to engage with women living across the borough, a number of women did not want to speak because they felt their English was poor.

Audio Interviews can be heard [here](#)

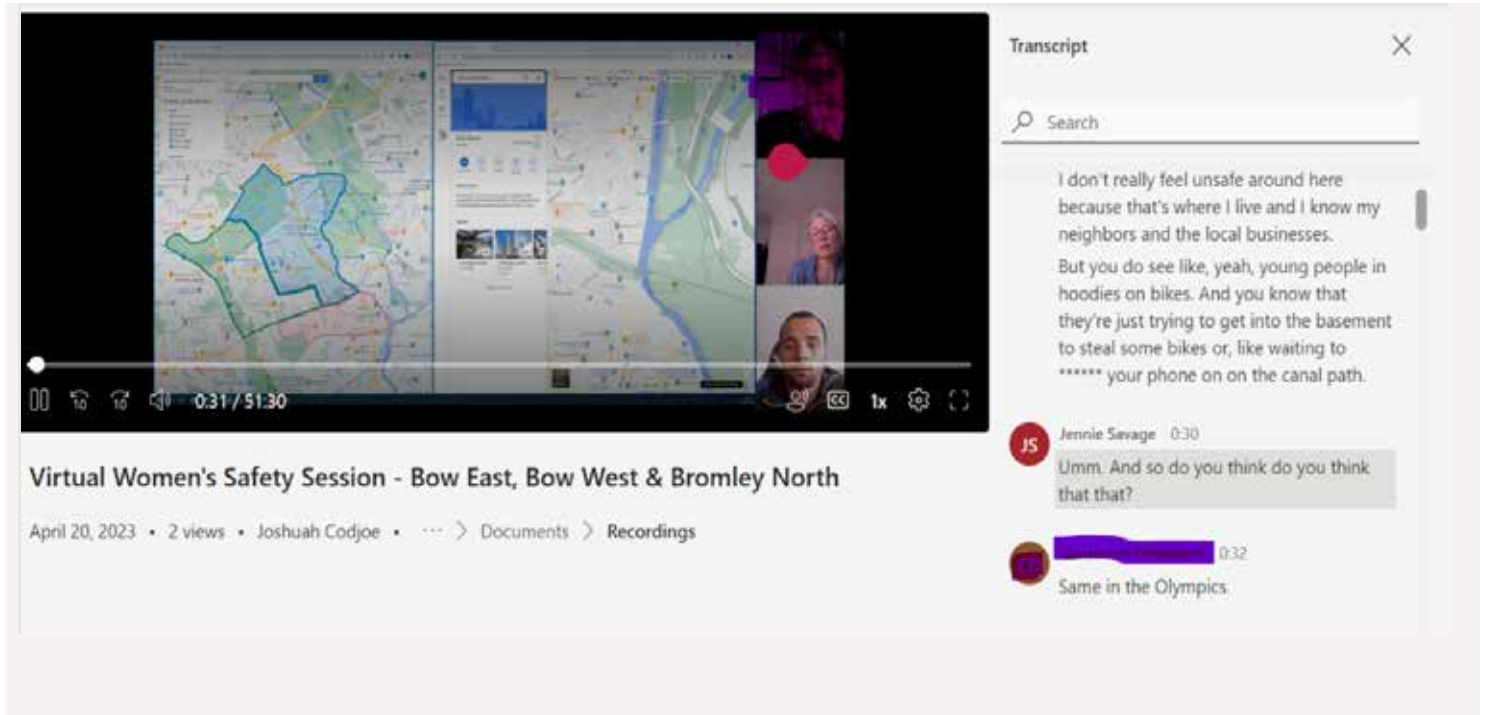
Consultation & Engagement, Women's Network event

The event was at the Brady Arts Centre, organised by the Tower Hamlets Women's Network and bought together, primarily women, and some male colleagues from across the council.

The event was set up to test emerging initial themes.

Worksheets, based on the initial scoping work and audio interviews asked participants to comment and expand on the themes. Participants worked in groups to complete the worksheets. After an introduction to the project and an outline of key themes, participants broke into groups and were asked to discuss, share ideas and experiences. At the end of the session the groups fed back thoughts to the room and there was a general discussion.

80 attendees.



'Women's Safety Walks', A collaboration between the Community Safety Team & Plan Making Team

The 'Women's Safety Walks' are an innovative collaboration between the Community Safety Team and the Plan Making Team.

The sessions were held online and participants could join anonymously if they wished.

Google Street View was used to talk about the places where participants live, regular walks and the local area.

During these sessions people talked about preferred routes and explained what they were attracted to. They also identified hot spots and tricky areas, explaining why they chose to avoid these places.

The purpose of these sessions was to create a safe space for women to talk to the Community Safety Team and report their concerns. The Community Safety Team were then able to action any issues in a swift and timely manner and participants were able to see the issues they had raised taken seriously.

The digital walks provided the Plan Making Team with a new data set, focusing solely on women's experience. The meetings revealed both 'threat' typologies – the kinds of places that feel unsafe and the strategies that women adopt to mitigate feeling unsafe.

There were 24 sessions which were advertised extensively by the community safety team with a special event run for NHS staff working at the Royal London and an event run with ELOP and LGTB+ charity working in the borough.

102 participants



Account 3 meeting

Account 3 was established in 1991 in Bethnal Green, an area of East London which is home to socially and economically excluded minority groups from across the globe. Account 3's overall driver is gender equality and economic independence for women with reference to women facing multiple disadvantages.

The community Safety Team/Plan making team worked with women at Account 3 to represent the experiences of women from culturally diverse backgrounds, through an in-person listening event. The aim of this session was to connect to any women who had been unable to join the digital walks and was important as we were able to hear intersectional experiences of women from the borough.

51 attendees

Let's talk: Online Survey

The 'Let's Talk' platform was used to share a survey which has 103 responses from a broad demographic across the borough.

The survey consolidated learning from all the previous engagement activity and created a feedback loop to test emerging themes and principles.

102 surveys completed

Summary of Research

A variety of approaches were adopted to listen to the experiences of women and girls from, a range of ages, educational, social, and cultural backgrounds. Varying the research tools provided insight into the lived experience, aspirations and challenges of women and girls living in Tower Hamlets. The engagement was designed with specific barriers that women might face in mind – for example, time limitations in the evening, the need for flexible engagement, inclusive space to speak about gender specific issues etc.

Approaches to gathering research were generative. Each stage provided an opportunity to stop, reflect, draw together, and understand what had been learned, what further questions needed to be asked, what theories needed to be tested and necessary next steps.

The research process was open to anyone who identified as a woman. Broadly speaking the research has achieved a strong and representative cultural and class mix. Interaction with the gender and sexual identities have been led by ELOP a LGBTQIA+ group who collaborated with LBTH.



4. Vision

A Vision for Gender Inclusive Design in London Borough of Tower Hamlets

**Welcoming borough:
Empowering and educating.**



**Inclusive borough: Enabling
individuals and strengthening
community.**



**Restorative borough:
Prioritising health and ecology**



5. Themes and recommendations

Design Themes



1. Welcoming Borough

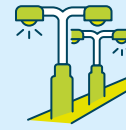
5.1.1
Women are not
scared of the dark
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5.1.2
Constant, low
level threat
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5.1.3
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5.1.4
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5.1.7
Wayfinding and
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2. Inclusive Borough

5.2.1
Valuing the local:
strengthening
community
55



5.2.2
High Streets and
shopping areas
60



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Communicating a
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5.2.4
Acting and doing
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64



5.2.5
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Is Vital
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5.2.6
Co-designing with
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3. Restorative Places



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Green spaces are
social spaces
70



5.3.2
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71



5.3.3
Benches are not
the problem
76



5.3.4
Plants and
flowers, trees and
green streets:
Bio Diversity is
restorative.
82



5.3.5
Play parks are also
social space
86



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The green grid
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5.3.7
Walking is a social
space
92



5.3.8
Active travel-
walking, running,
cycling and
exercise after dark
94





5.1 Welcoming Borough



5.1.1 Women are not scared of the dark

“ With the news stories recently, going for a run at night. It gets so dark in winter the idea of exercising outside is not available. I'm lucky to be able to cycle to work at 2 in the afternoon. If I had to get work early in winter, when it's still dark, No I couldn't do it. If I had to cycle home late I couldn't do that. It's not about whether I am wearing enough reflective clothing, it is about how unsafe the streets can be. I am lucky that I am married I am not often walking about late at night on my own in London. I feel safest late at night on the tube, that is one of the ways to feel safe because there are people around.

[Audio transcript](#)

“ On Canning Town High Street there have been children who have been attacked and killed. That is gang and school violence. It is very sad and I feel awful for them, but that doesn't make me feel unsafe, because I am not part of it. But things like Sarah Everard do make me think twice, because it was so random.

[Audio transcript](#)

These quotes are taken from the audio street interviews, where women and girls were stopped on the street and asked to describe how they felt when out and about, using streets and public spaces in Tower Hamlets. Discussions about safety were frequent but depended on context, for example when women with children talked about safety it was with regard to busy roads, fears about exposure to pollution and the stress they felt when walking children to school along busy streets. These conversations and others like them reflected the complexity of talking about safety and the fact that one person's safe street- which is busy and well- lit, is another's stressful after school, winter commute.

One interviewee described her time as a student in Leeds and how she would frequently walk home at night alone or walk through parks after dark. She reflected that this was 'risky behaviour' and that she would not do this now, in London. This was an interesting conversation, as Leeds is also a big city, however the woman seemed to reflect on her past self with judgement, as though she had been naive and stupid to take such risks, and that she was 'lucky', nothing had happened.

These quotes raise several questions about how perceptions of safety are transmitted locally, how our behaviour is affected by context and the fact that time and time again the focus is on the behaviour of women and their responsibility to stay safe. Clearly between leaving Leeds and moving to London, this young woman adopted the view that she is responsible for keeping herself safe- which given our culture and the current context is sensible, but that she must also take responsibility for the unpredictable behaviour of the 'unknown other'. Again, a reality for most women.

During the digital walks participants told us that they feel least safe outside their building. Arriving home, getting keys out, entering their building was the place where women felt exposed because it was the threshold between leaving the outdoors and arriving home. Several women talked about getting to know shops and restaurants locally as this assured them that they could get help. (Digital walks)

During the audio recording a number of women talked about exercising at night and wishing to have the agency to go for a run after work, but feeling this was risky after dark.

There is a difference between feeling safe and being safe. It has been established in previous chapters that statistically crimes and violence against women, girls and gender diverse people are most often perpetrated by people known to them with 5% of serious crime being perpetrated by strangers (ONS 2022) and the majority of crime being committed by partners, ex partners or family members.

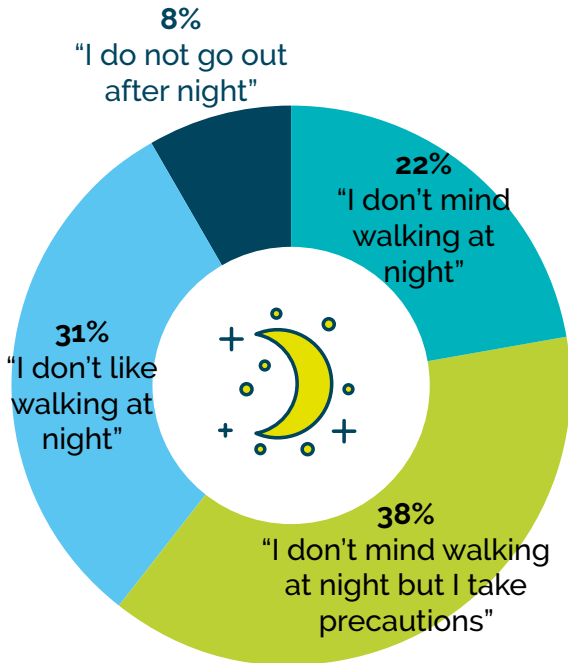
However women, girls, and gender diverse people are constantly negotiating the world under the scrutiny and power of the male gaze. This means that women, girls, and gender diverse people are aware of male power and in turn the potential threat of unpredictable behaviour. Living with threat is oppressive and women and girls carry a greater daily burden of dealing with sexism and misogyny on the street. An acceptance of this 'low level' threat leads to broader acceptance within our culture of crimes such as domestic abuse, rape and murder.

Looking at the statistics may provide comfort however knowing the statistics provides little reassurance when walking home in the dark and having a stranger walk closely behind or passing a group of men that stare and make comments.

These are the contradictions women, girls and gender diverse people must negotiate. Design cannot mitigate the actions of a man with malicious intent. It can make day-to-day life easier and help a place feel safer through the design of welcoming streets and public spaces.

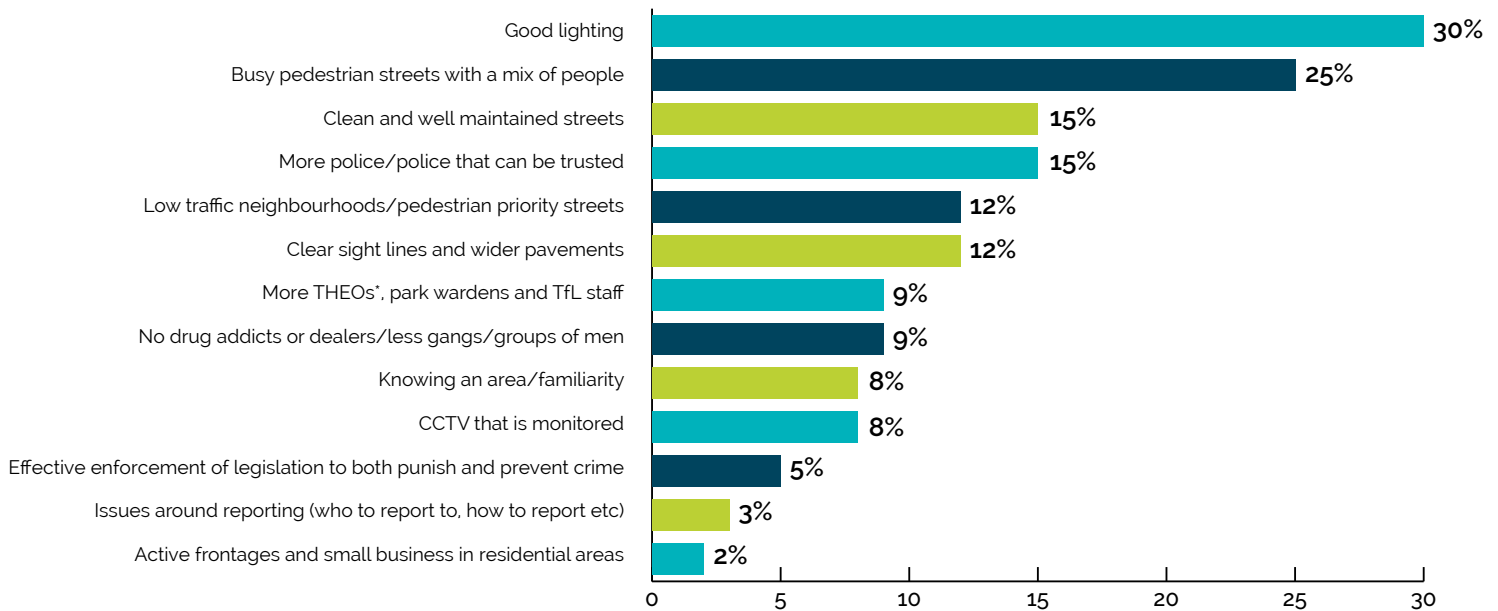
The 'let's talk' survey asked women 'Do you mind walking in Tower Hamlets after Dark?' Responses to this question were varied. They included comments about car drivers behaving more dangerously at night, through to respondents disclosing that they had been assaulted, but still liked to walk at night.

Figure 1: Do you mind walking in Tower Hamlets after dark?



Of the above 10% Disclosed assault/ harassment as part of their answer.

Figure 2: What strengthens feelings of safety for you?



• Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officer

Summary

Public space is contradictory. Women, girls, and gender diverse people are navigating streets, public spaces and transport systems whilst being in a woman's body which means living with the abject, additional demands of biology (periods, pregnancy, breastfeeding, menopause) and/or at the same time potentially avoiding unwanted attention and the gaze of others, being aware of how to position that body in space to avoid attention or confrontation, being cat called (objectified), or simply not wanting to travel, with a pushchair, in a lift that somebody else has used as a toilet.

There is a world weariness when women talk about safety.

The women that have participated in the research for this report say they feel both safe and unsafe in Tower Hamlets. They are not, in the main, living in fear. They are carrying the burden of living in a system that is not designed by or for them, having been bought up in a culture that anticipates male violence and perpetuates the idea that we should fear the 'faceless stranger' hiding in the dark.

Women and girls manage the potential of threat at a subconscious level, knowing that should something 'happen' they are unlikely to be supported by the police and should not expect justice.

What emerged most clearly from this research is that serious assault, sexual assault, stalking and homicide should not be grouped under the same banner as cat calling, staring, and other anti-social behaviour that is maddening and diminishes women. That the former must be effectively tackled by police and judicial systems that take assault of women seriously. And understanding that by accepting this low-level misogyny to persist unchecked, we are enabling a culture that is permissive of worse crimes.

The latter, day-to day casual misogyny that women encounter through contact with strangers on the street, can and must, be tackled by instigating a culture change and it is here that design can play a role in supporting change.

One of the questions the survey asked is whether a respondent felt that 'victim blaming' played a role in their decision to take a specific route. It was interesting to note that younger respondents stated that fear of victim blaming did shape their response to walking in the city, whereas women over 35 were generally perplexed, some even outraged, by the suggestion.

This could be read in a number of ways, and it perhaps reflects the more general 'shaming' of young women and therefore broader 'controls' placed on their behaviour. These responses highlight fundamental and systemic sexism and broader controls subconsciously or otherwise, imposed on the behaviour of younger women to mitigate the behaviour of men. It underlines the importance of changing cultures around male behaviour. (Let's Talk Survey)

It may also be useful to raise a question about the language that is being used around projects like this one. Where there is a focus on 'women's safety,' words like 'fear' and 'protection' and 'victim' are being used frequently. It is important to evaluate this language and question whether even framing this work in this way is perpetuating a control of women. This language is neither empowering nor does it hold men to account. These are catch-all terms that address domestic abuse, workplace harassment and street violence and all the other myriad ways that men abuse their power or indeed manage their feelings of powerlessness, because it is of course moments when they lose control, don't get what they want or can't understand their feelings, that men turn to violent, abusive and controlling behaviours. It may be better to consider 'the problem of men's violence' or the 'difficulty men have managing their feelings'.

Recommendations

1. Consider the language that LBTH uses to talk about women's safety. Create a borough wide policy to shift language and terms towards moderating the behaviour of men.



2. Use the term 'welcoming' instead of safety. We will create welcoming public spaces rather than 'safer' public space.



3. Co-create signage for parks and public spaces to indicate acceptable shared behaviour.



4. Raise the profile of women in LBTH by naming new streets, buildings and public spaces after women that have shaped the area.



5. Commission new public artworks by women.



6. Design is a language, from the fine detail to the big picture. LBTH should consider design that empowers women, girls, and gender diversity.

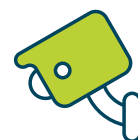


7. Focus on educating people and asking the question, why are men violent?





5.1.2 Constant, low level threat



The greatest impact on women's feeling of safety is managing constant low-level threat and maintaining awareness as they navigate the city. This is true both at night and by day.

Women reported that the things that make them feel unsafe are encountering drug dealing and drug taking, high levels of homelessness and drunken behaviour, groups of young men gathering on pavements, staring, commenting and crimes such as phone theft, ASB including people smoking cannabis, taking nitrous oxide, and street drinking.

These interactions do not pose a direct threat, however they are unwanted and navigating around this activity feels uncomfortable and threatening. It makes an area seem unsafe.

Women are not scared of the dark. In fact they are not, in the main, scared. They are burdened. There is a difference.

Walking down a dark street, late at night, alone, with a suspicion that somebody might be following you, is terrifying. (Digital walks)

This is not an everyday reality for most women and the majority of men do not pose a direct threat.

Women manage low level threat and fear by drawing on their network for support. They text a friend to say they are home, they walk and talk on the phone, and choose routes that are well known and punctuated by community- for example, knowing the security guard in the local shop, passing a friend's house or staffed tube station. Consciously or unconsciously clocking points of potential contact. (Digital walks)

Women also walk at night for pleasure. There is a freedom to navigating the city by night and walking quiet streets. It is important to acknowledge and give voice to the women who actively enjoy a stroll after dark, choose to walk home after a night shift or enjoy a walk back from the pub. These women are not stupid. They are not taking risks. They are simply walking in the city at night. (Let's talk survey and Street Recordings)

However many women talked about the level of burden they carry whilst dealing with the behaviour of men. (Digital walks)

This could be the equivalent of an almost full jug of water below a dripping tap. That the greater reality is managing risk and carrying the awareness of that risk. It is the constancy of encounter with drug dealers, with litter, with graffiti, nitrous oxide canisters, of walking around groups of men drinking on the street, or inconsiderate groups of men dominating the parks, staring, commenting, of feeling lost but not wanting to look at a phone in case it gets snatched, of wondering why the light outside your house has been out for five years, of stopping people tailgating you into your block or dealing class A drugs in the alleyway behind your place of work or stepping over the homeless person blocking the way into your child's nursery or walking your 12 year old daughter to school because there is a weird man that hangs around outside and the police won't move him on. (collated from digital walks, audio recordings, 1:1 interview John Fortune & public meetings at account 3)

Managing this constant interaction with a 'man's world' weigh far more heavily on women and girls and it is the combination of all of these things contribute to a generalised feeling of stress, which is replaced by fear in moments when any one of these generalised threats becomes specific or amplified.

Women are not scared of the dark they are stressed and fed up. They just want to be able to go for a walk without some man commenting on what they are doing, or making some helpful suggestion or other about how she could do it better. These intrusions are maddening and although they do not pose a threat, they reiterate the fact that men believe they have the right to pass judgement and comment. That they believe in their own power.

The majority of participants have stated clearly that seeing other women and girls and experiencing a sense of community strengthens feelings of safety. Witnessing people being friendly to each other on the streets is a key indicator of safety. When women are unfamiliar with a place, they will conduct a dynamic risk assessment looking at whether the area is maintained, seeing whether people are friendly to each other, seeing how green a street is, is there litter? Who is around and where the exits are.

Crucially from a design perspective key themes that have emerged around the design of streets. These responses predominantly show that good street design cultivates feelings of safety and that a welcoming 'community' feel is achieved by a combination of - low traffic, busy pedestrian streets with a diversity of people, inter- generational mix, street activity, pedestrian priority streets with low or no car use, streets that are green with street trees and planting, streets that are clean, well maintained; are the places that feel most safe.

Participants in the digital walks agreed that diversity of people on the streets, busy streets, wide pavements, street trees and well-maintained streets, parks and public spaces, made places feel welcoming and pleasant. They also talked about the value of devolving some power and focusing hyper local governance around parks and green spaces, that a local group were able to manage and make some decisions there was less ASB, higher levels of community participation and strengthening of social infrastructure. That enabling greater local ownership was of benefit to local communities, making places feel better.

This notion of local ownership was discussed both in relation to places, parks, gardens, areas along the canal, but also in relation to events; street closures for parties and festivals, party in park, carnivals and performance of theatre, dance, art or music. That enabling people to put on local events and be the creators of culture strengthened community, was empowering and by giving ownership, cut down levels of fear.

Summary

Women and girls have reported that they are navigating constant low-level threat and evaluating risk. It is sensible for anyone in a busy city to be aware and street smart, however women experience this low-level threat as stress and burden and they remain vigilant.

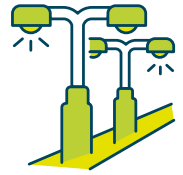
A focus on strengthening community and inclusion through design of welcoming streets, parks, and public spaces, enabling community, keeping streets well maintained and nurturing green networks, carving out low traffic areas, will build feelings of safety.

Streets and public spaces that have a combination of these elements feel welcoming and pleasant. Places where people feel a sense of ownership, where they can influence hyper local decision making, put plans into action, act within a community have strengthened sense of place and feel more welcoming and pleasant.

This is enabling and it also means that people who choose to can get involved in projects in their area this could be around (for example) gardening, the arts, activities for children, young people, health and wildlife promotion and conservation.

Recommendations

- A combination of design interventions make an area feel pleasant and welcoming. These include widening pavements, planting street trees and plants, maintenance, wayfinding, benches, and bins. Ensuring there is passive surveillance via street level activity such as cafes and shops with active frontages and street engagement.
- Avoid streets that feel closed, with poor visibility, narrow pavements, shuttered windows, 'backs' of property facing onto a street or alleyway.
- Encourage hyper local governance of parks and gardens, encourage community involvement and participation and include budgeting for gardeners and wardens for three years after a schemes completion.
- Facilitate events and enable community activity through arts, culture and events.
- Enable public participation in the organisation of their local area by providing guidance on local governance, for example how to close a road for a street party or organise a party on bank holiday.
- Give 'in kind' support to activity by making shared resources accessible.
- Support applications by community groups for funding by offering support in kind.
- Also see recommendations on co-design.



5.1.3 Lighting

“ The experience of other people makes me wary and think that could happen to me. If it has happened once, it could happen again. It could easily be me. I think it is down these little alleys there is no one around a lot of the time. I mean you can run, but if there is no one around to help... And maybe more lighting and police presence. It's a funny area around here. There is a lot of big buildings and big business, but there are a lot of junkies... and that makes you feel unsafe, they ask you for money. That adds to the unsafeness. You don't want to get your purse out and it be a trap. But also, its because you don't want to be approached in the first place.

Audio Transcript

“ I live in Old Street, when I am walking home it is really dark around there. I think it is important the streets are well lit.

Audio Transcript

“ I think about lighting, although you don't want everything to be hideously lit up, that is the alternative. Iron gardens where I work, is not well lit and there is a high hedge and you have to walk past it. Actually, it is a really high hedge, when you walk past you think anyone could be hiding behind there. I don't think I have changed in my view, thirty years ago I felt the same, you always have to be careful, you need to be aware, you always need to feel cautious.

Audio Transcript



30% of people that responded to the survey stated that good lighting makes places feel safe after dark. In the street interviews there were many references to lighting and the importance of improved lighting was stated as an important issue.

Later in the survey respondents were asked to weigh the value of lighting against the importance of dark skies to human sleep patterns and biodiversity.

The responses to this question showed lighting as a more complex issue with answers ranging from the suggestion that Londoners wear sleep masks, through to considering areas and situations where different approaches could be taken to lighting. These included consideration of the types of lighting through to locations where it would be good to have bright light or to keep lighting to a low level and indeed the times lights might switch off.

The question of walking through parks and along the canal or exercising after dark was addressed throughout all the engagement events. Again, this was something that divided people. Some women advocated for the closure of parks and canals after dark, saying that this was safest option, whilst others

felt their freedom was being limited by not being able to run in the park at night. Lighting was seen as key to making this possible. Many people talked about the need to illuminate cycle lanes or cycle pathways after dark whilst others felt lighting should be approached from the perspective of biodiversity and night skies.

Lighting was also discussed during the digital walks and workshop at Account 3. People told us that arriving home can be the most stressful part of a journey because it was a moment to stop and pause, perhaps search for keys in a bag in a spot that may be poorly lit. The transition from the public space of the street to a private residence being a moment of potential exposure. Women of the digital walks talked about being tailgated into their block. Women stated that good lighting and visibility at the entrance of blocks would make arriving home less stressful.

Summary

Lighting is the go-to solution to women's safety. However, under closer scrutiny it becomes a much more complex issue. This complexity is acknowledged by respondents to the Let's Talk Survey and on the digital walks.

Guidance on lighting should be considered in relation to specific development schemes and domestic contexts, for example how to illuminate entrances and exits to homes, how to light areas around bins and cycle stores and ensure that any temporary routes around developments feel safe.

Further consideration should then be given to streets and public spaces, parks, and walkways. With specific focus on safety around the entrance/ exit to buildings and ensuring good visibility around doorways, whilst also maintaining privacy- a healthy contradiction!

Recommendations

- Commission a lighting design code. This should consider lighting as a design element, the ways that lighting can shape and enhance areas after dark, create social spaces and discourage anti-social behaviour.
- As part of this design code LBTH should conduct a survey of current lighting provision, identify gaps and areas for improvement.
- Implement these findings and ensure any new development adheres to lighting strategy.
- Ensure that entrances into apartment blocks are well lit, they feel safe to enter and exit. Also consider rear entrances, entrances and exits into parking areas and around new development.
- Ensure good visibility and passive surveillance common areas and around entrances and exits to buildings.
- The decision to light or lock parks should be made on a case by case basis considering the specifics of that park.
- Clear post occupancy guidance on maintenance of grounds and in particular lighting.



5.1.4 Design and maintenance



At the Women's Network event, participants told us that looked after places feel safer. The following comments were noted by women who explained that seeing heavily littered areas, unemptied bins, graffiti meant they would feel uneasy and be on their guard in that place.

Whereas well looked after green spaces and maintained areas with working streetlights and a pleasant atmosphere all add up to an area feeling safe.

In turn, busy places with a good intergenerational mix are described as 'safe'.

Therefore, ensuring a place is clean and well maintained will encourage users, which will encourage more users and in turn deter littering and ASB. This is generative and self-perpetuating.

At the Women's Network event participants stated:

“ I live in a nice part of LBTH in a private society who have their own cleaner. But when I go out, I do see a lot of litter. I don't know if that is because of the council or because of the people. I saw somebody dropping litter today, but I didn't feel comfortable to say anything. Cleaner streets make you feel safer.

Audio Transcript

“ Not a single lift on the DLR is clean, so even though I have an ACL injury and I'm advised to take the elevator, I prefer taking the stairs because I feel better (complains about smell of urine in lift). I am wondering how women with children, pregnant women, or the elderly would be experiencing this. I don't think this area is good for elderly people as there is so much walking to do and too many stair climbing. My society is really nice but it is a difficult to navigate. The elderly or the disabled experience would not be great.

Audio Transcript

Looked after environments encourage feelings of safety.

Small green areas/ gardens and looked after green areas feel safer.

Routes and social spaces need to be clean.

Looked after environments encourage feelings of safety.

Spaces that are maintained and monitored feel safe

Freedom to use alley ways that are free from litter, graffiti and well lit.

Looked after environments encourage feeling safe, rather than run-down areas – might attract people you feel less safe around.

These comments from the Women's Network event are strongly echoed in the Let's talk survey.

A key learning that emerged from the networking event was that women experience Tower Hamlets

in a non-linear way. That is, as they walk from, say home to work, they are having to navigate not only a physical geography but also a patchwork of extremes as they pass through dilapidated high street areas, new developments that are 'looked after' but feel empty and isolated, pass by areas that feel unsafe or where they feel they 'shouldn't' be.

There were many comments made about the lack of joined up experience over any one journey. And that this disparity made the extremes of poverty and wealth even more stark. Comments suggested that a greater coherence and harmony between places would integrate the transition between, for example, a new development and a local high street. Addressing these issues would be sense making for the communities who live there and level out the visible and sometimes stark polarities.

A number of women joined the digital walks calls and raised a different kind of issue about care and cared for places. These people were living in new developments, places, which to the outsider look cared for. However, they described the ways in which lack of community and a sense of emptiness contributed to a sense of isolation. Some of the issues raised were about the lack of inhabited flats due to properties bought for investment or as Airbnb, which contributed to a feeling of transience. However the knock-on effect of this is that ground floor shops, cafés and restaurants, active frontages, have closed down as there is not enough general footfall to keep businesses open.

Women on the calls reported that their area had become a target for low level crime and that they were aware of being 'tailgated' into the building, of buggies and bikes being stolen and feeling unsafe walking around the development with ASB such as street drinking and cat calling, adding to a feeling of threat.


It is therefore important to acknowledge that 'care' and 'cared for' spaces are crucially about signs of human intervention.

The 'dodgy' high street, that feels rough and run down feels excluding with a sense of dilapidation adding to low level threat, and equally the over-designed, over-coiffured space feels exclusive and excluding. That this is also read as threat.

Both places make women feel out of place and ill at ease.

Both accentuate polarities in wealth and advantage, and this adds to a general feeling of imbalance and mistrust of the other.

Levelling up the experience of public space and creating a more even flow across the borough would add to the creation of more coherent places and accentuate feeling of community and feelings of safety. This would include levelling up areas that are currently under resourced, creating greater porosity across and through new developments and utilising ground floor spaces for community infrastructure, for example childcare, gyms, community spaces, youth groups etc. (comments from women's networking event)

 **It is important to protect local independent retail shops and community services such as laundrettes, corner shops and food shops in residential streets. Seeing a shop light and a known storekeeper definitely puts me at ease. A trades people in workshops makes walking around my neighbourhood pleasant and safe. The council can do more to make sure rent increases do not displace them.**

Let's Talk Survey

Summary

Well maintained areas signal that there are people around who are responsible and who care. Well maintained places evidence human infrastructures of care and therefore care over other people. They are a sign of respect.

When applied to streets and walkways women are reading levels of care and maintenance and weighing them against the care that others will show them.

Deprived, uncared for streets feel hostile as do uninhabited, isolated new developments both extremes feel unsafe because they are empty of people.

Seeing other people, a good intergenerational mix from a diversity of cultural backgrounds, makes a place feel safe.

Levelling up areas that are deprived and integrating developments that feel hostile will create a more coherent experience and help to make streets feel safer.

Participants on the digital walks, the audio recordings and Let's Talk survey, noted that green streets with street trees and diversity of planting contributed to a greater feeling of care and made streets feel safer.

Recommendations

- Connected walking routes ensure an 'even' experience between areas. Avoid creating situations where new developments sit in stark contrast to high streets. Prioritise flow and create shared community infrastructures to avoid polarity.
- Use CIL and Section 106 funding to develop whole community infrastructure.
- Ensure new developments are porous and connect to existing streets and pathways.
- Avoid dead ends, narrow walkways and ensure good visibility/ entrances and exits.
- Use wide pavements to avoid close encounter and enable safe passage for buggies and wheelchairs.
- Encourage community usage to encourage footfall and ensure a diversity of people on the streets.
- Ensure new developments become communities by privileging the development of housing for owner occupiers, rather than remaining empty, used for Airbnb or as investment property. This can be enforced through leasehold agreements and legislating higher council tax rates for unused or second property.



5.1.5 Infrastructure

“ I'm a Gynaecologist and I specialise in issues of incontinence, especially with older women and in fact it affects women at all ages. I know for older generations it's a real issue and it does effect where they go and what they do. Access to good clean toilet facilities is important for everyone but they are especially important for women.

Audio Transcript

“ I like a water- front, a park, the canal, a café, a terrace, a museum, a park is nice, somewhere I can access for free, a bench, I like to sit by a tree and having access to nature. I burn easily, I like shade and trees. There is something comforting about it. I like being able to have access to nature, it is calming. There are those parks that have trees around the outside then nothing in the middle. That just seems weird and the grass goes yellow. There is a big open space and no shade.

Audio Transcript

“ You see a lot of people gathered here in the summer. It's really chilled, everyone has their lunch on the grass. There is plenty of benches and seating for people to sit down together and there is a little grass space for people to sit on, when there is hardly any grass space around here. There are so many food and drink places around here to get their lunch and everyone sits here to have their lunch. It's a relaxed atmosphere. You do start to recognise people. There is a community here and there are sunflowers in the summer.

You don't feel threatened here, because you can see everything that is happening.

Audio Transcript



Gender inclusive design embeds the experience of women and girls from the fine detail to the big picture. Consider the precarity of carrying a heavy pushchair up several flights of stairs- with a child strapped in and possibly a young sibling messing around, many mothers will have experience of a situation like this. It is stressful, difficult, dangerous and a constant reminder that she is navigating a place that does not value the important role of parenting children.

Ensuring walkways are open and that parks have public toilets or that pavements are accessible with a pushchair, that the pavement is not being blocked by bins, cracked or uneven slabs, simply make life easier not just for parents with small children but also to wheelchair users and those with mobility issues.

This section will focus on specific design interventions that will make it easier to get around the borough:

Facilities

- Clean, well maintained public toilets with baby changing.
- Enough women's toilets to avoid excessive queues.
- Enough public toilets discourage misuse of the street/ lifts etc.
- Modern, self-cleaning toilets with floor to ceiling cubicles that open outwards (rather than entering a toilet block with cubical inside) This is also better and safer for gender diverse people.
- Communal bins for litter that are regularly emptied.
- Timely removal of household and business waste.
- Bins and bike stores in apartment blocks that consider safe access and safe passage- i.e. easy and safe for residents to access whilst avoiding blocking sight lines and through routes.
- Picnic tables, parklets and social benches that are appropriately located and placed to create social spaces.
- Benches and social seating.
- Ensure that during construction phase, building sites consider any diversion and/ or temporary pathways / covered walkways/ hoardings etc through the lens of gender and safer feeling spaces.
- Wide pavements create space, easy passing and avoid confrontation.
- Wide pavements are safer and easier for walking with children.
- Keep public amenities such as lifts and walkways clean and free from urine and litter.
- Ensure alternative routes to avoid stairs exist and are well signposted.

Notes from Women's Network Event

“ I love walking around here, it is very green which is much better as it is less polluted (she is walking with a small baby) we have an older four-year-old as well, so when you have the playground and the canals it's great, we love living in London because of the green space. We live in Peckham and we walk from Shoreditch down through Limehouse and across the river. There could be more facilities along the canals, cafés and coffee shops, public toilets and drinking fountains. I'm just thinking I have to change and feed the baby and I don't know where to do that. I also haven't walked down the canal at night and I think as a woman I probably wouldn't feel that safe.

Further design interventions that will improve people's experience of the borough include levelling up between areas to create an even flow through the borough so that new development does not sit in stark contrast to under-resourced communities and ensuring active frontages on high streets are welcoming and inclusive.

Design plays a key role here in shaping the 'feel' of a place- for example metal shutters on high streets make a street feel closed off and unwelcoming, whereas well-lit streets with attractive window displays and restored frontages are visually interesting, invite window shopping and browsing.



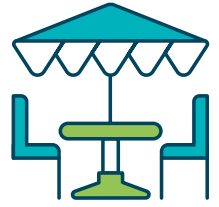
Summary

Consideration of design details is important because it makes getting around easier. It also sends a clear message to women and girls, people with mobility issues, that they are included. Research shows that women measure and read a place by assessing the social interaction that is happening around them. Paying attention to details such as litter and graffiti, checking to see an area is well maintained and understanding the kind of area they are in by measuring design detail, plants and planting the kind of street furniture and noise levels from roads. The right combination of these elements creates a calm and convivial space where women and girls can feel comfortable.

Lighting is a further design intervention – see sub-theme 02.

Recommendations

- Connect walking routes and ensure an 'even' experience between areas. Avoid creating situations where new developments sit in stark contrast to high streets with poor public realm. Prioritise flow and porosity.
- Ensure streets have good visibility and entrance/ exit routes.
- Wide pavements make it easier to walk with children and have better access for wheelchair users. Wide pavements also make it easier to avoid unwanted encounters/ make eye contact.
- Lighting doorways and areas outside property make arrival and departure feel safer.
- Active frontages with ground floor activity should face onto the street and consider natural surveillance.
- Active frontages should be open and avoid metal shutters or window coverings that block passive surveillance.
- Support independent business and workshops through managing rent and rates.
- Ensure streets that connect to parks are well lit, well maintained and have good way finding.
- Provision for public toilets across the borough is poor. Greater access to sanitation is important. However consideration must be given to the design and placement of blocks.
- CCTV cameras should be clear and visible in places, where women feel vulnerable.



5.1.6 Busy Roads

“ Recently I have noticed that the businesses down by the canal are doing really well. Because they are away from traffic there is a sense of a place that is completely free, where you don't need to worry about where your child is running and there is a playground area there, so it is multi use. You don't have to constantly check where your child is and think about the road. It is this multi-use space which is really important.

Audio Transcript

“ The routes that we walk to school. They are not safe. Sometimes we just don't walk that way because it is too stressful. Car free zones change the way the streets are used. It means there is more room for parklets and places to spend time. Speeding cars and traffic pollution is a constant worry and a more specific, real worry that we can observe and measure.

“ Audio Transcript

I think what they have done in Old Bethnal Green Road is really pleasing, it is now is really lovely. I think if you can walk along a quieter road with less or no traffic, I would walk further. It would be great to have connected, linked routes to walk, off roads.

Audio Transcript



“ Cycle lanes that are separate from the roads, you see families out on the roads. Over lock down there were loads of families out on their bikes, because it was safer.

Audio Transcript

Cars Create Unsafe streets

“ The routes that we walk to school. They are not safe. Sometimes we just don't walk that way because it is too stressful. Car free zones change the way the streets are used. It means there is more room for parklets and places to spend time. Speeding cars and traffic pollution is a constant worry and a more specific worry that we can observe and measure.

Audio Transcript

Participants throughout the research have stated emphatically that busy roads are part of the low-level threat that adds to the burden women are managing daily. The strain this puts on women is exponential if they are walking with small children or babies, firstly because they worry about the very real risks posed to their child by pollution and secondly because they are always managing the child and focusing on keeping them safe. This makes day to day journeys like the school run difficult and stressful for parents and can, in turn lead to increased car use and congestion.

A broader observation of this research is that the perception of an area is read through a combination of elements and that women are constantly 'reading'

the signs of a place to check in with themselves about safety and their perceptions of the area. The reading of this complexity is highly nuanced and informs not only feelings of safety but also how to behave in certain contexts and situations, how to fit in, be invisible or stand out.

Busy roads are a key element of this combination and the 'busy ness' of a road contributes to a sense of overwhelm where children and belongings must be highly monitored and watched. There were high levels of support for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in the Let's Talk survey and majority of respondents talked about the value of quiet roads and walking streets.

Question	Answers
<p>Could you tell us about any places in Tower Hamlets that have a positive impact on your well being:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the LTN's, especially Old Bethnal Green Road. • Columbia Road and Wapping • Parks and canal Tow Paths. I like Low Traffic Schemes which humanise spaces and challenge our in- built deference to cars • Local high streets and markets • Answers talking about car free routes or car free places are typical
<p>What is it about that street or journey that works for you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car free, wide pavements, benches and flowers • Lots of people around, clean, quiet • Its quiet, no cars zooming by, my child can walk or scoot by herself (4) without me constantly shouting at her to watch out • Large pavements, cycle lane, pocket park, chairs for sitting, fewer cars and large vehicles • Green space with less pollution • I walk here to avoid noise and pollution. I like the trees • Fewer vehicles and lots of people/ pedestrians and people out on bikes, they are pleasant places to spend time with clean air • I try to minimise my babies exposure to pollution so I always choose small roads and back streets • Green. Full of trees. Green. No cars. Quiet • Quiet healthy parks with clean air • I avoid busy roads on my bike. There are less problems from car drivers towards women.

The surveys predominantly feature reference to car free streets and clean air, especially with children and babies because when walking with children, women prioritise the needs of their child with health risks from busy roads at the fore front of their minds. When talking about busy roads, women speak about cars and pollution as a threat to their health and safety.

Women in the Let's talk survey and the audio recordings also report that men in cars behave badly towards women, calling out of windows as they drive past, littering and throwing rubbish out of moving cars or parking up on the side of the road and throwing litter on the street. (digital walks)

Summary

This section acknowledges that participants on both the audio walks, the digital walks and in the survey emphatically stated that busy roads are perceived as a threat, particularly by women walking with children and babies.

This report has been commissioned to look at women's safety. It must therefore be acknowledged that women and girls report that busy roads and high levels of pollution make them feel unsafe and contribute to a general feeling of threat.

When roads become too busy, they create a tipping point where more people drive, because they don't want to walk on a busy road. This is especially true of women with children who must manage the stress of the school run, for example, the worry of busy roads and the ease of jumping in the car.

Recommendations

- School streets and flexible road closures around school pick up and drop off.
- Ensure routes into and out of parks are low traffic and accessible.
- Connected, well-lit walking and cycling routes away from busy roads encourage active travel and reduce car use.
- Wide pavements and street trees create a buffer to busy roads and improve pedestrian experience.
- Develop inclusive active travel strategies that tip the balance away from heavy car use.
- See also green grid.



5.1.7 Wayfinding and signage

“ I live near the East India DLR I don't think it seems very nice. There is a lot of construction happening. If the roads are well lit and cleaner then maybe it is better. Also maybe signs and better signage because it is a confusing area. I did hear some phone snatching stories so I would want to avoid taking out my phone.

Audio Transcript

“ If there were more marked spots along the canal, more seats, more spaces to meet that would be great. So better wayfinding and meeting spots. It would be amazing to connect the whole greenways of London. Maybe we need an app that does that, so you could walk the whole city without going on roads.

Audio Transcript



Women on the digital walks described how they make 'their' place by connecting joined up routes and curating their 'version' of the city. Most participants described way finding by day via green ways, quiet roads, across parks and through gardens, even if that made their journey longer. Navigating the borough in this way is about making or co-creating their city, finding pleasurable moments in the day, and adding enjoyment to day-to-day life, finding joy in the city. On the digital walks women showed us a regular journey. In the majority of cases they told us how they navigated to work (for example) by linking quiet roads and parks so as to avoid traffic and connect to nature.

By night they would use different routes taking busier, more populated streets, past shops, along high streets and past transport hubs. Participants told us they would take routes via a parade of shops or well-lit and busy areas. That they would walk with an awareness of where to find help, and where they were in relation to safer areas. This knowledge helped them feel safer.

Participants told us they would often speak on their phone or use their phone to feel connected to others whilst walking, but that now, due to high incidents of phone theft, they felt cautious to use the phone in this way. They also told us they no longer feel comfortable using the phone to navigate in case it was snatched.

This approach to mapping and navigating the city is shaped by an awareness of risk and to an extent this is sensible. We know cities can be unpredictable simply due to the high density of people. All users must make choices about what feels right to them. However participants on the digital walks also told us they shaped their city with joyful moments and interactions, seeking out routes where they can connect to community, fresh air, green space and bio diversity by day. This is an important distinction to make as it is evidence of how participants shape the city by walking and the fact that they do this pragmatically prioritising, for example green space for relaxation or pleasure or lighting for a sense of safety.

During the event at Account 3 and the Women's Network event there was discussion about signs and signage in parks. Many participants felt that clear guidelines about acceptable behaviour in parks would discourage some men from hassling, propositioning or cat calling women. Stating it is a criminal offence to do these things may be enough of a deterrent and educate offenders. Workshop participants felt that establishing clear 'rules' would help everyone to know what behaviour was acceptable and it would strengthen women by showing them they were supported and giving them clear messaging to point to in the event of a problem.

Finally the Metropolitan Police joined a number of the digital walks. During these calls they suggested places could be better or more clearly named so any victim of crime on the canal or in the park could easily state their location in the event of an incident.

Summary

Women navigate the city differently by day and by night. By day looking for 'restorative' spaces and enjoyment, connection to nature or social spaces. By night prioritising well-lit routes, busier areas and tracking community or help points.

Way finding and route shaping could reflect these impulses and respond with a focus on night routes that take in shops and busy areas that are well lit.

Simple signage about acceptable behaviour in public spaces would strengthen women and show them they are supported, whilst educating and discouraging offenders.

Consider suggestion by London Met to name places in parks and canals clearly, to locate victims of crime.

Recommendations

- Co-design signage for parks and public spaces to indicate shared behaviour. Signage could also give guidance to dog owners. Women have talked about fear of dogs and dogs around children.
- Create a way finding safety 'kit' that combines monitored CCTV units with way finding signage and intercom linked directly to THEOs/ police.
- Develop night-time super highways, well-lit walking routes with plenty of passive surveillance and a variety of evening activity. GLA good growth promotes night markets and diversifying the nighttime economy. Later opening shops and café's to provide passive surveillance and increase footfall.
- Name unnamed places (areas within parks or along canals) so victims of crime can easily provide a location.
- Also see section on the green grid, relating to restorative spaces and day-time navigation.



5.2 Inclusive Borough

5.2.1 Valuing the local: strengthening community



The Tower Hamlets, Let's Talk survey asked women and girls to talk about whether knowing people locally and recognising people on the street, helped them feel safe. 68% of respondents felt that living in an area where they recognised people, helped them to feel safer. This question was expanded in the digital walks where participants stated that even a connection as tenuous as recognising the security guard in the local supermarket was enough to make a journey feel safer.

"Even Sainsbury being open, you are popping into your local shops and cafes locally and you say hello to people, because you see them all the time. It is things like that that foster community, so if someone comes in who is not quite acting right people will spot it and do something about it."

However when talking about 'feeling' safe respondents clearly stated that knowing people locally and feeling connected, even in a tenuous way, to their local area strengthened feelings of belonging. They also stated that seeing other people be friendly toward each other made an

area feel safer and that seeing diversity of age and background on the street, made an area feel more welcoming.

The local, walkable neighbourhood is a planning concept that favours locality over travel and it gained popularity over lockdown when people started to see the value of the local and being able to access what they need within a short walk or cycle of their home.

In LBTH the notion of the hyper local neighbourhood perhaps echoes the network of high streets, parks, leisure facilities, medical centres, schools and colleges and housing, ensuring people can access to shops, culture, leisure and services is within a short journey is important. However a key concern about adopting a hyper local city model in Tower Hamlets would be that it would create greater polarity, with less well-off neighbourhoods, high streets and parks, feeling increasingly siloed and well-off, new developments becoming more segregated. The idea of the hyper local neighbourhood should therefore be seen as a chance to level up and even out areas, to reduce disparity. A further issue with this model in

LBTH is that many people travel much further on a day-to-day basis and their network of home/ work/ socialise/ school / shops is across a far wider area.

Maximising 'the local' is important for many reasons however in the context of this report it boosts the sense of a vibrant locality, forges greater local networks and brings people into conversation.

Residents create their own hyper local neighbourhoods, simply by living in urban contexts. These networks are shaped by the local shop, gym, access healthcare, friendships and for children- trips to school, nursery or childminder, visits to friends' houses to play, local activities such as sports, culture and religious clubs and groups.

It is important to caveat the next few paragraphs because the report does not seek to assume that women should or will adopt a 'caring' role, either for children or relatives, it also does not seek to perpetuate these assumptions or create guidelines that are rigid or restrictive.

But, there are currently 74,700 children under 18 in Tower Hamlets and somebody is looking after them.

The informal networks that are established around caring for children is an example of where acting and doing are not, at the moment, shaping and making. These informal networks evolve and change quickly at different stages of a child's life, and are established by parents to look after, provide fun activities, do the best for their children by providing education, friendship and opportunities to socialise and learn about the world.

This is another example of how the lives of women has failed to impact the built environment and failed to be an agent that shapes the world through the experience of women.

Parents looking after children must adapt and shape their behaviour to fit into cities that do not acknowledge the impact of spending a year at home with a baby, balancing work and home life and the considerable burden of managing the behaviour of an unpredictable being, in a city that has been shaped and designed by men, for men.

The model of the hyper local neighbourhood, when seen through the lens of gender, does begin to answer this question and give the informal networks of care, visibility. Indeed Vienna and Barcelona,



both cities where gender mainstreaming has had extremely positive impacts for all, both use the fifteen minute neighbourhood to model gender inclusion.

For many, a nearby parade of shops or high street will be at the centre of their neighbourhood, it will be the place to stop by for provisions on the way home from the school drop off, get a pint of milk or to meet at a café or attend a market, go to the library or run an errand. For those without children the local high street is a place to shop locally, to access local services and facilities, take part in local cultural activity. It is the limit of activity on a Sunday morning after a night out and the place where you might say 'hi' to someone you have passed on the street several times.

Enhancing these local hubs and ensuring they are well connected to, health, leisure, and social activity makes for a walkable neighbourhoods in which people feel connected to each other. Connected these walkable routes to the green grid in turn opens up the possibility of a walkable borough to residents.

Women who have participated in this research have stated that building in this connectivity improves peoples quality of life.

The Tower Hamlets Women's network made the following suggestions:

Building resilient, friendly communities:

- More local facilities on high streets (day care/ gyms/ shops/ youth clubs/ after school clubs)
- More fully accessible spaces.
- A design code that is inclusive would include car free streets, courtyards, walkable routes, well lit, social. Car free/ car sharing streets (eg Lambeth's Van Gough walk) Seating, planters, basketball hoops.
- Invest in infrastructure that can build better communities.
- More female business owners
- Male dominated business, for example around the markets and high street traders. Be active including/ recognising women
- Co-ordinate services so there is a joined up approach to community building which can be accessed on the high street.
- Community hubs and spaces for non- religious women.
- Build trust in the police
- Partnership working with the local community to build flexible public space, this could mean more events and community focused activity.
- Retrofit inclusion in private developments and 'Take back' private spaces and privatised feeling, public realm.
- Financially inclusive spaces, public spaces accessible to all.
- Sense of community, changing people's mindsets – feeling safe

Communicating Our Place:

- Public art that connects to local history and character and celebrates the lives of women.
- Public campaign to promote better behaviour and instruct on better behaviour.
- Embrace the history of the area (and tell those stories)
- Acknowledge intersectionality through place names, public sculpture, and public realm.

Sense making and story building through public art can be a way for people to build a shared understanding and appreciation of where they live. Shared stories from the past connect people to place and to each other. Uncovering the lives of women and those of diverse communities can be a way to re-make places through identification with past and aspiration for the future – what are the future stories we can tell through public interventions?

The Fifteen-minute neighbourhood offers a toolkit for community development and community building shaped by local activity. It encourages lower car use and encourages people to shop locally and enjoy local goods and services. Maximising the local, ensuring that there is a diversity of amenities accessible, and that local high streets and shops become centres of the community will build local resilience, help areas to feel safer, enable people a greater sense of empowerment to get involved with the local areas and care and pride in the local.

Summary

The hyper local neighbourhood is a model that focuses on maximising quality amenities that can be accessed. This can be amplified by diversifying nighttime offer on high streets to include more after school and holiday activities for young people and children, and by diversifying the evening economy to ensure a greater mix of business are open later into the night.

This sense of the local can be further amplified by enabling and supporting events and activities to flourish, supporting community leaders to produce street festivals, carnivals and other cultural activity to the streets and parks. The key being to support groups to develop ideas about how to take to the streets.

Enhancing a sense of the local, ensuring that high streets offer a range of services and enabling people to take the lead on events, will, in time build a greater sense of community. This will make areas feel welcoming and pleasant.



Recommendations

More local facilities on high streets (day care/ gyms/ shops/youth clubs/after school clubs)

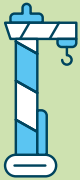


More fully accessible spaces



A design code that is inclusive would include car free streets, court yards walkable routes, well lit, social. Car free/ car sharing streets (eg Lambeth's Van Gough walk) Seating, planters, basketball hoop +cars.

Invest in infrastructure that can build better communities



More female business owners



Co-ordinate services so there is a joined up approach to community building which can be accessed on the high street



Community hubs and spaces for non-religious women



Partnership working with the local community to build flexible public space, this could mean more events and community focused activity



Retrofit inclusion and 'Take back' private spaces and privatised feeling, public realm



Financially inclusive spaces, public spaces accessible to all



Sense of community, changing people's mindsets – feeling safe





5.2.2 High Streets and shopping areas

High Streets are typically the centre of hyper local neighbourhoods in London, and LBTH is no different. Whitechapel High Street and market, Limehouse High Street or the small parade of shops off Bethnal Green Road, wherever there is a combination of amenities - a corner shop, a hairdressers, cards and gift store and a takeaway, there is a community of people for whom those businesses become central to day-to-day life, particularly for women, the elderly and teenage girls or for those who now work from home either part or full time.

This section will use gender as a model to explore the 'new local' and potential growth of high streets as community centres and to model regeneration post-pandemic.

High Streets are important as they express something of the culture of an area- both positive and more challenging. The focus on lifting high streets and framing positive aspects of the area will also frame people's perception of where they live and in turn who they are- their place in the world. Most crucially high streets are community centres, places where we can all take up space and where everyone can meet.

This is important because this is democratic space.

For many women the local runs between the park, the school run, friends and relatives, the local shop, work and other caring responsibilities; the hyper local will frame their lives. These spaces are populated with social networks. Networks take work, and women work hard to maintain networks of care because they are also linked to being able to work and socialise. Informal networks that involve sleepovers and playdates for dependent children enable women's economic and social activity as well as providing a sounding board to off load on the often-circular activity of childcare. This nurturing of relationships is invisible, it is multilayered and based in fragile inter-personal relationships that are formative to the smooth running of many families and many types of family. It is about maintaining friendships between children and their parents

because those relationships mean that a child is taken to 'Guides' or picked up from an after-school club, enabling a parent to leave work on time. These communities of care are not exclusive to women with children, for example LGBTQ+ communities that form around sexual and gender identity can also be considered communities of care which are place shaping- think of the Gay district in Manchester or Manhattan as place shaping.

These fragile, tenuous and ever-changing arrangements may seem a world away from town planning, but they are not. Or at least they shouldn't be. Because even though it is rarely explicitly stated these rhythms of caring and of providing care are central to the lives of many women for some or part of their lives. Not all women will have children, but those who do will inevitably become involved in such arrangements and the voices and needs of women who care for children are largely absent from planning policy and indeed silenced as conversations about 'mothering' become obscured. However, the role of this report is to talk about women's experience and articulate the views of the 450 women that have participated in the research. It can also be confidently stated that these assertions are cross cultural and expressed variously through the lives of women from diverse cultural backgrounds in the borough; women carry the mental load of managing and maintaining these hyper local relationships.

How can acknowledging these intangible relationships shape the high street?

High streets are central to the local and they are places where multi-faceted lives cross over. They serve the needs of the surrounding community and are central to the expression of that community. They are places to gather and meet, places where inter-cultural and inter-generational activity can build social networks and strengthen a sense of community- even if the extent of participating is simply to show up and be present on the street.

Design recommendations can be applied to support and strengthen community and articulate how these intangible networks can be made formal by making space for them.

The high street as a flexible space where a regular market or stalls bring an injection of variety, an opportunity to collect and gather or run into a friend or acquaintance. Equally it might be the place where a local club puts on a dance event or piece of street theatre, where a group of artists organise an event in a meanwhile space, or an annual carnival is prepared. Flexibility can be designed in by making space for events, activity and meeting.

Shops and businesses reflect this sense of locality. Independent businesses can respond to local need. These could include after school clubs or soft play or indeed flexible spaces that could be hired by groups. They could be places to access services such as healthcare, advice and support and they could be home to hyper local leisure services. Diversifying the high street would place a gym or childcare next to a corner store, the takeaway and the florist but it could also mean the health and leisure services could respond to local demand and be co-designed with residents.

Businesses that celebrate the uniqueness of the area can convey a sense of character and community. Flexibility around opening hours and licensing can ensure that high streets remain active through the evening- thus creating more active frontages and the appearance of safety. Night markets and nighttime activity can also create safer way-finding on dark evenings and provide a sense of 'event'.

Physical design interventions are also important, well-lit high streets can feel safe, but lighting that is playful, creates a festival atmosphere or provides variety and character and will create a different kind of night-time environment.

Ensuring high streets have wide pavements, uniform frontages and signage (but with the opportunity for character and difference) Avoiding metal shutters and grills in favour of well-lit window displays will all make the nighttime feel safer and bring social and economic prosperity to an area.

'Experience' is also taking up space on many high streets with underutilised shops becoming eventful spaces, hosting pop up activity or hosting businesses that are experiential and provide activity that engages people, where people can learn something new or take part in something. This in turn will enliven and enrich a place. Giving permission to meanwhile use is a good way for people to test creative business ideas and bring something new to a hyper local community whilst also responding to local knowledge and cultures. (cultures in the plural referring to interest and specialism as well and background and identity).

Some of the ways the council can support this is by saying yes and supporting ideas. Becoming an organisation that supports local people and guiding them through the myriad of red tape involved in organising a festival or carnival or setting up a project in a meanwhile space, in order to support and enable activity.

These are all ways to enhance local character, celebrate local heritage and make an area feel unique. They are also ways that the informal networks women and girls form, can co-create space and ensure visibility.



Summary

Celebrating the status of high streets, no matter how small, as centres of community, can be a way to articulate and make space for the invisible network's women build, networks that are most tangible around care. They can be flexible spaces of encounter, (Carnival/ dance/ music) hold a regular market or events. They can diversify to include activities as well and shopping and they can celebrate local history and the culture of the area.

The council needs to get good at saying yes! And supporting hyper local activity by providing space through meanwhile use, supporting those who 'do' by providing a guide through red tape, and making it known that the council will enable local activity.

Recommendations

- Markets should be designed with women in mind and prioritise visibility, variety and a range of stalls.
- Diversify high street use with a varied offer and opening hours: a gym, childcare and clothes shop may sit next to each other and support each other.
- Prioritise community activity and become and council that says, YES! How can we help!
- Design interventions such as lighting, opening up shop fronts and picture windows to create a pleasant and welcoming night-time.
- Licensing can play a role in varying the nighttime economy.
- Flexible adaptable architectures support events.



5.2.3 Communicating a sense of place

Intergenerational and intercultural spaces can further strengthen a sense of community. Local history and culture build shared values and opportunity for dialogue. Where parks, high streets and public spaces provide opportunity for the community to take up space, understanding place, history and locality can build understanding, support culture change, empower and shift perspectives. Appreciation of or participation in the natural environment can connect communities through shared activity.

Public art that connects to local history and character and celebrates the lives of women. (this doesn't mean statues of women it means art by women that reflect on women's experience)

Contemporary art can communicate shared values and a sense of place



Architecture and development co-designed to build new spaces that relate to history and heritage



Embrace the history of the area (and tell those stories)



Acknowledge intersectionality through place names, public sculpture, and public realm



Participate in local activity to actively co-design space and implement real small scale/big impact change





5.2.4 Acting and doing is shaping and making

Many of the women interviewed as part of this research have talked about their role as a mother and the specific experience of becoming a mother and being a parent to children or a child under five. It is of course acknowledged that many fathers actively parent and take care of their children, but it is equally fair and true to say that on any given weekday the majority of people at the park looking after children are women. This statement does not diminish what all parents do or the role they play or seek to push women into the silo of carer. But it does invite a speculative conversation about how 'mothering' children could and should be a model to reframe public space, particularly play parks.

However in researching this document it has been hard to find design guidance on the specific situation of being a mother and the ways in which this relationship with a child or children, totally re-frames a woman's relationship to their body, how women perceive or map the city both in terms of shifting focus towards the local, new communities and social dynamics, and most crucially a complete re-framing of how mothers use space and their local area, when caring for children. Emphasis perhaps shifting drastically from a daily commute to accessing nearby healthcare and socialising for small babies at, for example, children's centres or playgroups.

When recording street interviews and talking to mothers with children under five it is striking that the act of parenting creates new communities and informal infrastructures that are place shaping and community building. They are place shaping in the sense that being visible on the street, walking with children, children playing in parks animate the city in a 'friendly' and safe feeling way. That mothers with children make parks feel safe, but they also show us a diversity of use and as an onlooker, we might, for a moment, see the local park from a new perspective and be reminded that play is an important and creative way to take up space. It adds a layer of richness and complexity to the city.

Equally 'seeing' this kind of diverse and intergenerational use connects people, it leads strangers to chat on a bench, and creates inter-generational connection and a feeling of safety; one student in her early twenties reporting that seeing



women and children in the park help her to feel safer.

The 'optics' of seeing women and children out in the park, is the first way that 'mothering' shapes places, adding a visual reminder that there are different ways of occupying and taking up space and helping others to feel safe.

However, being a mother in Tower Hamlets is also about the social connection's people create around caring for children, and parks are the key 'stage' on which these connections play out. One interviewee with two small children described how she and her friend were always looking for parks and outdoor spaces to meet up, away from busy roads, so she would be able to let her children play and keep an eye on them, whilst meeting and talking to a friend. Other women talked about how she would go to the park and look for people to chat to if she was feeling lonely.

The role that these short term and long-term connections play in raising children cannot be underestimated. Most new mothers will struggle at some point with isolation, a child that won't stop crying, a difficult partner or simply the shift towards a relentless pattern of laborious work.

Parks and playgrounds are often places that hold women and frame these relationships, provide a sense of community and a moment away from occupying a child in a small flat.

They are also places of warmth and community. Places to laugh, to make long term friendships and to talk; even on the bleakest winter days you will find groups of women huddled under the trees in Victoria Park whilst their kids run around and play outdoors.

Finally, they are well used. With women taking their child to the park several times a week if not every day. A visit to the park often being part of a routine built around the child eating and napping.

The effects on health have been noted by women as key to supporting their mental health and with child experts stating the value of open space and being outdoors for children.

It is therefore astounding that the timeless act of raising children, the communities women build around their families and maintain as their children get older and start school, have made very little impact on the built environment with most parks not even providing the basic essentials such as a public toilet. Whilst other parks offer the most rudimentary and basic amenities. A barren patch of grass, a set of swings contained in a metal cage, a graffitied slide. These parks perpetuate inequality not only in terms of offer but also long-term impact on educational attainment.

What would play parks and public spaces look like if they were shaped around these informal communities? What basic amenities would be present? And how would parks and public spaces be different if they considered the needs of women, children and teenage girls?

Recommendations

- Maximise the space for users by developing a 'kit' of parts that can be scaled up and down depending on location. This kit should include:
 - i) Wayfinding.
 - ii) Place names and Place identity.
 - iii) Play-on-the way interventions for small children
 - iv) Parklets- social benches with planting
 - v) Small areas with interventions for older children and teenagers located near to a kiosk or youth hub. This could be playful features such as three-person swing or low level but challenging climbing areas.
 - vi) Meet up spots with benches.
 - vii) Regular public toilets.
 - viii) Kiosks providing refreshment and natural surveillance 'help' spots/visibility.
 - ix) Water tap to fill up bottles.
 - x) 'Hubs' for education and community use.
 - xi) Sensitive lighting.
- Park wardens and THEOs help places feel safer as do other 'officials', someone running a café or hub, gardeners, someone managing play hubs, youth workers walking around chatting to teens. These people are not police but they make women and girls feel safer and that there is 'help' on hand.
- Green spaces are community centres. Design interventions that encourage community include places to sit and meet, good views, wild flowers and landscaping, spaces to exercise, activities for teenagers and play facilities for smaller children.



5.2.5 Industry Diversity Is Vital

Diversity within the built environment industry, particularly planning, engineering and architecture is vital if gender inclusive design is to become mainstream. Opening these potential industries to girls and gender diversity must start in school through primary and secondary education enabling pupils to understand the breadth and potential of working in design, planning and engineering industries.

In higher education a decolonised and indeed de-gendered curriculum will open out individual research projects beyond the traditional male dominated cannon. This will help female students to find a voice and articulate a broader scope of experience. (Teaching through traditional routes replicates existing power structures, hence the drive to decolonise curricula post BLM) this is important because success for women at architecture school can mean successfully reproducing work that replicates traditional power dynamics etc.

Research shows that women and minority ethnic groups are underrepresented in the field of architecture. According to the Architects Registration Board, 80% of architects classed their ethnicity as 'white'; with minority ethnic groups representing the remaining 20%.

Additionally, as of 2020, only 29% of registered architects are women. (Architects Registration Board, Architects Journal, 2020)

Architects play a crucial role in creating a built environment that is safe, sustainable and where everyone in society can live well, and it makes sense that a profession that designs in the interests of a diverse society should be drawn from and representative of that society.

Promoting an inclusive community

Buildings are the products of people's creativity, and if architecture and urban design is going to represent the diversity of our cities effectively, the creators must be representative.

A diverse design industry can help to build an environment that reproduces our diverse world. Through collaboration and sharing ideas.

The contribution of Architecture and development to communities can be inadequate when they fail to include a variety of ideas and perspectives. Without diverse ideas behind the construction of buildings, the industry is operating in a restricted bubble and failing to fulfil its true potential. They will reproduce gendered norms and fail to express the lived experience of women and girls.

Diversity can result in greater success for the industry

There is substantial research showing that more diverse teams are more successful. Working with individuals who offer diverse ways of thinking and whose cultural backgrounds and experiences differ encourages us to indulge in a wider spectrum of possible approaches to challenges and tasks. This, in turn, results in a more effective and prosperous industry

(The Architects Registration Board 2017)

To create a borough that is more inclusive there needs to be greater inclusion in the architecture, urban design, planning and built environment industry at large. This could be actioned by ensuring that contractors have a balanced and diverse workforce and that they are supporting and investing in women, gender diversity and women of colour.

Recommendations

- Use women architects and designers and ensure teams are diverse. When assessing suppliers ensure workplace diversity is a consideration.
- Consider who is planning/ who is designing/ who is building.
- Are developers women and are women represented on their teams at decision making level?
- Write into policy that teams will be scrutinised for diversity stating that LBTH understands the pressing need for inclusion and diversity within architecture and the construction industry and the value of employing diverse teams because of the broader range of ideas that can lead to inclusive design in all projects.
- Set inclusion targets and implement a detailed equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) action plan.
- Commit to improving workplace culture to support diversity and inclusion.
- More broadly look to create internship and work experience opportunities for school age girls in LBTH encouraging cultural and ethnic diversity and inclusion of all socio-economic groups.
- Connect to youth groups and youth provision in the council and establish collaborative youth projects that aim to encourage girls in design.
- Look to also embed opportunities through schools.
- Ensure routes into architecture, planning and design are clear by presenting at career open days in schools, colleges and universities in the borough.
- Ensure that taught programmes encourage women designers to succeed on their own terms.





5.2.6 Co-designing with communities

It is crucial that the voices of women and girls are heard and not assumed. It is vital that women and girls are engaged prior to design stage and they are able to shape, improve and input changes and that the lives of women shape and change cities.

Listening to a diversity of voices will lead to innovative, inclusive places that reflect our diverse world and meet the needs of a broader range of people.

Co-designing project briefs, ensuring women and girls are consulted on plans and inviting creative input into design processes are all ways to ensure the LBTH better reflects the diversity of people that live here.

Prior to consulting with or engaging residents the below considerations have been set out as a flexible framework for engagement:

Barriers to engagement for women and girls

- Development projects that are paying consultants and profit-led must pay participants for their time and local knowledge.
- Covering the cost of childcare and travel in the case of face-to-face participation.
- Time and timing of events - ensure a range of times are offered to ensure diversity of participation.
- Mental load - just too busy and day too fragmented. In this case consider running engagement sessions at the school after drop off/ pick up, join existing groups or networks such as the library service.
- Value and feeling valued – If women have joined sessions previously and been talked over/ disregarded they won't return. Ensure meetings are chaired and all voices valued and heard. Better still frame sessions to prioritise listening.

- Not wanting to speak in public- Lack of confidence will often mean women stay silent. Ensure sessions offer break out groups and 1:1 options so all voices can be heard and valued.
- Ensure ground rules are set before meeting starts.
- Work with expert facilitators, skilled at creating spaces that are enabling.

Summary

Make space to hear the voices of women and girls and ensure participation.

Engagement must be done at scale and in response to the project, who is paying/ what for etc.

Private developers should pay people for their time and local knowledge and people must be valued accordingly. In this instance the council or a third party practice should manage engagement and provide independent brief based on this work.

Engagement with women and girls is vital to shape places that are balanced and equitable. Women face many barriers to participation and any work that is done must acknowledge time and financial pressures, responsibility, and mental load. It is therefore important to plan engagement by first considering how to make it as easy as possible for people to join in.

Consider WHO leads engagement. Who is appropriate? For example, it is better to draw down funds from a developer and commission an engagement programme via the council, the results of which get fed back to the developer in order to ensure oversight and good practice.

Co-design is not the same as coms & marketing. Allocate budgets to pay a skilled co-design practitioner.

Recommendations

- Engage women and girls in design process prior to design phase.
- Create opportunities to hear about their experiences and how they use a place or area.
- Synthesis learning to write design brief.
- Create feedback loops to test ideas and check in.
- Design engagement strategies with barriers to participation in mind.
- Engagement is a creative, design process. Whoever is engaging should collaborate with design teams.
- Pay or compensate participants.





5.3 Restorative Places

5.3.1 Green spaces are social spaces



Access to green space is a priority to the women and girls that participated in the research. This is true for women from a range of cultural backgrounds and generations.

This research shows that parks and gardens are vital and a valuable piece of community infrastructure, indeed the 'Let's Talk' survey of women and girls showed that 89% of respondents considered parks and green spaces to be social spaces.

Giving parks and green spaces status as social infrastructure enables greater consideration of how these spaces are designed, managed, and accessed by the public and re-focuses the priorities about how these spaces are organised and managed.

What women and girls feel about the value of parks, gardens and outdoor spaces must be taken seriously because women and girls view parks as centres and hubs of social activity impacting on all aspects of individual health and wellbeing, the health, wellbeing and development of children and young people and the health of the community itself.

Parks and gardens in the borough are valuable community assets. Consideration of gender in relation to the boroughs green spaces and climate

resilience could be seen as twin imperatives that work in harmony to both manage and mitigate the effects of the climate emergency and provide restorative space for all.

It must, therefore, be a priority to maximise all green space in the borough and to transform any under used or paved area into a green space that can also support community. This will strengthen community, the wellbeing of women and girls, build climate resilience and capacity for BNG.

This chapter will share what women have said about the value of parks and green spaces and outline some of the issues which could be designed out by adopting an inclusive approach to the borough's green spaces.

The developing themes and ideas will make recommendations about how to deliver better green space for women and girls, create capacity for BNG and climate resilience. It will improve living standards for those living in overcrowded accommodation, improve the quality of life of children growing up in the borough and create intercultural, intergenerational meeting spaces, that strengthening a sense of community.



5.3.2 Levelling up parks

“ I live in Mile End Park just down the bottom end. The streetlights stop before my house. I don't like walking at night because of safety. I run around Victoria Park and the canal. I do it for my mental health to go outside and be around nature. I like the access to green space and nature. I don't know how to improve it and make it more woman friendly. I guess if there was more lighting it would attract more people. But I feel that if it was busier, I would feel safer. When you are in a busier environment, I feel like if something happened, there would be someone to help you.

Audio Transcription

Tower Hamlets has some fantastic parks that are loved and celebrated by the community. However, provision of and within parks is patchy and tends to reflect the areas general level of prosperity. In many places there is a clear indexical link between the quality of outdoor green spaces and the prosperity of the surrounding area. This is compounding inequality with those on lower incomes, living in overcrowded accommodation also being deprived through poor quality outdoor space, play equipment and opportunity to socialise outdoors. Improving local outdoor space, especially in low-income areas will have an impact and improve lives.

Actively 'levelling up' parks and outdoor provision is important as all people living in the borough should be able to access high quality, diverse, green areas with a range of planting and trees, good seating, and quality play areas. This is vital for women and children living in overcrowded flats where easy access to green outdoor space provides places for children to run around and make noise, for women and girls to meet, to walk and exercise.

“ I take my son to the park. His behaviour is better afterwards. This makes life easier for me.

Let's talk

This finding is in line with the Mayor of London's vision to ensure that every household should be within 400 meters of green space.

Account 3's is a charity in Bethnal Green that supports women from socially and economically excluded minority groups from across the globe. Account 3 and Tower Hamlets organised a listening exercise to hear from local women about their experience of parks and public space.

“ We need to do something about our parks. It is the only outdoor space where we can take our children, but we don't feel we can go there, because there are always boys there smoking cannabis. Parks are a big problem.”

“Yes, there needs to be police or wardens patrolling the parks, to help them feel safer.”

“Teenagers or, usually men, smoking weed, it makes the area feel unsafe and I don't want my kids breathing that, they already know what weed smells like, they know what it is because they see people smoking.”




A lot of general conversation about how teenage boys dominate parks. At least 5 women and a chorus of agreement about how groups of young men feel threatening, stop the parks being accessible to all and make the area feel unsafe. In general, there was an acknowledgement that this didn't pose a threat but that it contributed to generalised sense of uncertainty, another factor to map when thinking about going out. Many women talked racial motivations for assault or attack.

There needs to be clear signs telling people what they can/ can't do in the park.

However the conversation evolved to adopt a more nuanced view. Women in the room acknowledged that they had teenage sons and that boys hanging around in parks was a sign of more complex issues about masculinity and practical issues about space and youth provision. Women talked about lack of youth provision, the importance of male role models for young men, and that they needed to be provided with interesting, alternative things to do.

The group discussed the value of providing better, intergenerational design, so that young men still had a place to meet, but that they didn't dominate parks or take over.


Women talked about the problem of overcrowding and that when there is not enough space indoors, young men hang about in parks. They said young people often have complex or difficult family lives, that they don't want to be at home, the fact that there is not enough good provision for teens after school and not enough good outdoor spaces that are inclusive of everyone.

 **If we can deal with the problems caused by teenage boys (and young men) women will feel safer."**

"Young people face all kinds of problems, when we see them on the street it looks bad, but they also need their own spaces and to be listened to."

"It's not just teenage boys though. Teenage girls need somewhere to go as well."

We talked about increasing youth provision, positive role models for boys and better intergenerational spaces which are inclusive of all people and don't polarise but instead build community and connections. Parks and gardens where everyone can take part.

 **I live near Weavers fields. It is a beautiful place and I love it there, but I was assaulted by a man in front of my children. He pushed me over. It made me feel scared but it also scared my children. We don't go to Weavers fields so much now. I have to make myself go."**

This led to a conversation about dogs and dogs in parks. One woman stated it was known that Asian people didn't like dogs and that some women present had experienced people using dogs to scare or threaten them. Many women present nodded in agreement and shared their experiences of dogs in parks.

The women's networking event saw similar reactions and participants shared ideas about how to improve parks in the borough.

These comments focus on strengthening local community to make parks feel inclusive.

- Playgrounds for parents. We spend a lot of time in parks too!
- Community fun days and local events to encourage community.
- Include activities in parks for teen girls and young adults. Ways to play and participate – PLAY for all.
- Organised activity in parks to feel safer eg outdoor gym classes/ women only sports activity
- Family night-time events
- More planned local sessions and activities in parks.
- Dedicated sessions for vulnerable people and carers.
- Dedicated spaces for young people in particular girls, women, and children.

- Opportunity to populate green spaces through volunteer schemes that keep places busy through activities such as gardening (could this include organising clubs and events – Js)
- Women's community safety walking groups
- Why are parks only centred on small children and teenagers – no space for childless adults to use – how do we make women feel safe in parks if they're not by the play area?
- Parks in the borough very well-used though, and lots of people in the borough have no alternative outdoor space, so do use them. Park design to consider all ages and promoted as community meeting spaces.
- Over 50% of our play equipment is inclusive, play should include older kids too.
- Outdoor gyms – less used by women because there's no funding for organised classes to use them.

This is not without friction and the number one barrier for women in LBTH is groups of young men colonising and taking up space, making spaces feel unwelcome and dominating green spaces. Over dominance of young men in parks, smoking drugs or dealing drugs, taking nitrous oxide, has been named as the number one block to women of all ages accessing smaller parks. Young men are allowed to meet and gather in parks and that is what parks are for. It is only a problem or 'anti-social' when it stops others using that space.

Levelling up parks by investing in planting, play equipment, landscape design and furniture will increase busy-ness and natural surveillance, it will stop the dominance of one group and it will level up access to high quality outdoor space and challenge inequality.

Drug dealing and drug use and associated activity in parks was cited throughout all of the engagement activity as a number one barrier for women park users.



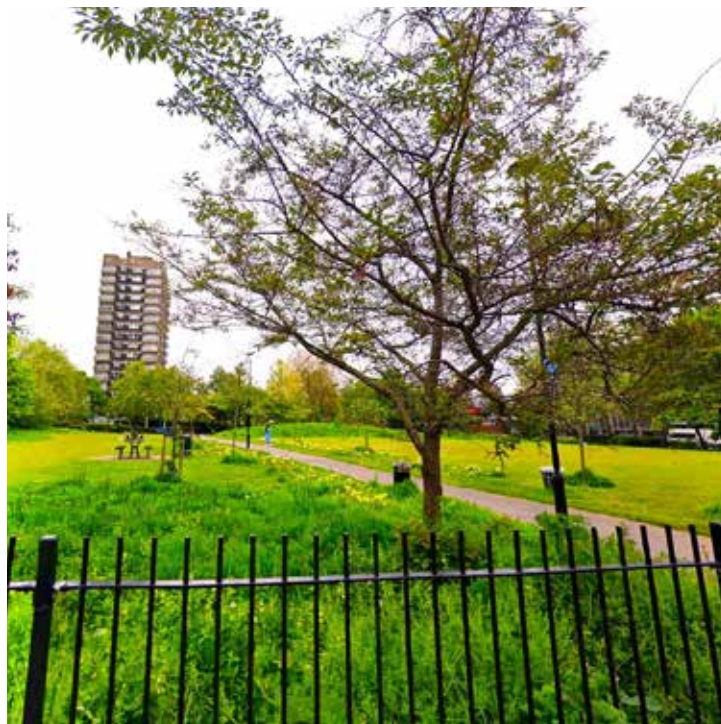
The digital walks participants noted that hyper local governance of parks leads to greater feelings of safety and inclusion. Rectory Road park, has a 'friends' group. This local governance builds community, cuts down ASB, gives people an opportunity to get outdoors, make friends with each other, have a say in how the park is run and what happens there. Evidence from the digital walks shows that parks with local governance have less ASB and suffer less from over dominance of one group.

Summary

Parks and green spaces in Tower Hamlets are vital pieces of the boroughs social infrastructure and participants have identified parks and green spaces as key to physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing providing access to the outdoors and to the myriad benefits that being part of a natural ecology affords. On a practical level they are vital spaces for the many people who do not have gardens offering the opportunity to step away from busy roads and get fresh air.

This research has identified inherent inequalities in provision, meaning that some parks are impoverished and feel intimidating, whilst others are populated with diverse planting and great play areas. This inequality will impact women and children the most. Opportunities to play and access not only decent play equipment but also diverse and interesting ecology; the sounds of water, the shadows cast by trees, and the chance to run and make a noise are important for the development of young children.

They are also important for the mental health and wellbeing of women and girls. Levelling up parks, green places and play areas will ensure that all areas of the borough have access to high-quality, well-designed parks and foster inter-generational and intercultural activity with access to complex ecologies. This will benefit women and girls by creating restorative spaces that support health and wellbeing, improve the lives of children and build in climate resilience.



Recommendations

- Recognise parks as community infrastructure in the local plan.
- Design at scale and level -up park facilities:

Pocket parks and community gardens

- Remove metal barriers and gates, open up spaces for hyper-local community use. Include benches, planting, trees- to provide shade in hot summer, picnic tables.
- Connect small parks to green grid. These pocket parks and gardens could be co-designed with residents, who could be encouraged to take hyper local governance, setting up resident's 'Friends' group.
- A games/ toys hub that can be accessed by residents, ping pong or swing ball, roller skates, other games. The hub can be opened up at certain times for people to use.
- Parks as community centers : Organised activity throughout the day, under 5's play and gardening, exercise for the elderly, urban garden apprenticeships.

Medium size green space

- Benches, planting and public areas to sit in the evening. Picnic tables and play area. Public toilets, café or kiosk (provide surveillance and increase feeling of safety)/ hub space- a local venue that could be used to organise events and activities, hold a birthday party, a weekend workshop, a place for people to meet and do exercise (e.g running club or use outdoor gym), regular youth club or youth drop-in space.
- Connect to green grid.
- Co- design/ friends groups create social architecture and shared ownership.

Large park

- These large open spaces are really valued by residents and people love to be able to walk in the park. People have told us how much they value being able to connect to nature, access green and blue ecologies and get a sense of space and distance.
- There is a perception by women that vast areas of open green space exclude women. Many women associate large areas of grass with team sports such as rugby and football. Even though many girls participate in team sport it must be acknowledged that reserving vast areas of grass is perceived by many women as space 'exclusive' to men and boys. It is also known that such large areas of cut 'pitch' grass do not meet criteria for BNG. Areas of grass could be divided to ensure there is still capacity for field sports whilst also building in greater capacity for BNG and more diverse uses such as forest schools, wild areas, areas for games. These bigger parks are also key event spaces with the capacity to bring people together and create festivals and parties that are positive for the community.



5.3.3 Benches are not the problem

Seating is integral, and it has to have more shade. As the climate is heating and we are seeing more extreme weather. In parks I use I try to find a place in the shade where I can sit, and people find somewhere where they can observe their children, and also have a nice time. Multi-generational space is also important so it works for the young child but also needs to cater for the growing child and also adults can engage with their child, but maybe can also be used for exercise, a space for the elderly and for local people to meet. I think it is about scale and location.

Audio Transcript

Officers from the Metropolitan Police who joined the digital walks, were able to share their views on public space and how to mitigate the impact of groups of young men, suggesting that the removal of benches and placement of benches were a key factor in designing out crime.

Advocating that street furniture be removed is however problematic because the availability of benches has been mentioned across all the research. Make Space For Girls found that park benches were the only resources that teenage girls saw as available to them to use.

On the digital walks and during the interviews benches were mentioned and described by participants as the safest feeling place to sit. Sitting on a bench is comfortable, it enables frequent breaks for the elderly or less mobile, it's a place to stop for a snack with children, a place to eat lunch, a place to watch the world go by, meet friends or encounter and chat to a stranger.

This was highlighted by one of the participants in the digital walks who talked at length about how the placement of benches were key to her own feeling of safety both in terms of walking past groups of young men and where she felt most comfortable sitting.



“...you know, I don't want to necessarily draw attention to myself when I'm sitting down reading a book. I just kind of want a nice view, a quiet spot away from people like, you know, ropemakers field, for example. You know, having rather than have the benches that are right on the main pathway and everybody's way, you're going to be spotted by everybody. Like it's a runway. But if you have benches that kind of face the river or the canals and, you know, just a quieter outlook, you're facing away from people.”

Figure 3: Do you feel comfortable sitting alone in the park?

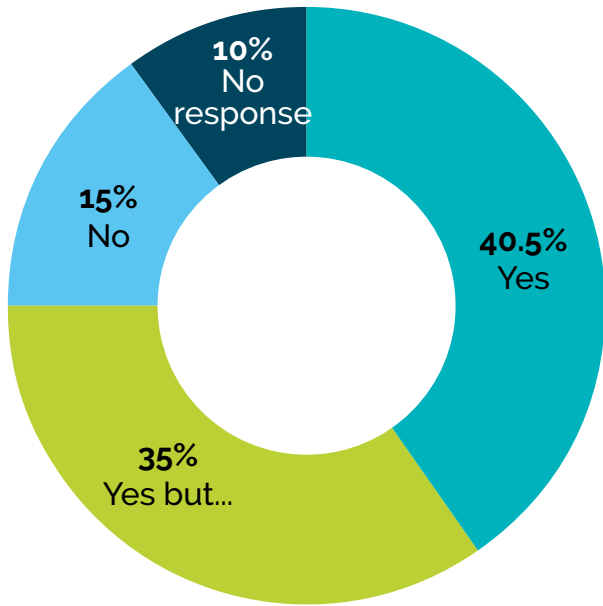


Figure 4: When alone where do you sit?

	When alone	With friends
On a bench	66	42
Under a tree	21	25
On grass to side	20	21
Grass in the middle	38	31
Somewhere secluded	12	13
In or next to play area		18

The question, do you sit alone in the park 40.5% responded with a clear yes. 35% said yes but caveated answer e.g. in daytime, depends on park, sometimes men harass me, I wouldn't sunbathe because men stare, usually not always, fear of dogs.

The data regarding where women sit is more nuanced. The first clear take away is that there is a really strong preference for benches. Women who have mobility issues, young children, those who don't want to sit on the ground, put bench at the top of their priority. Women want benches!

But there is also something more interesting around choices that are made when someone is alone- for example they will feel safer sitting on a bench. The same person meeting a friend would choose to sit in a secluded spot. Similarly women with children are more likely to sit in the play park or the middle of the grass, than at the edge, presumably so children can run freely, whereas those with babies who are breast feeding need a bench.

Teenage girls are all but excluded from public space, designed out of the city. They have told a study by Make Space For Girls and LSE that for them a specific park bench might be the only place they can take up space or have a sense of place in the city.

These findings contradict the reflex of Secure By Design to reduce benches and seating in order to limit opportunity for groups gathering and ASB.

The question is not should there be benches, but how to design benches and seating that foster community, allow for conversation or reflection, and cut down ASB. The psychology of benches is a fascinating area of growing research and recent projects, such as LDA's social seating on the Strand and Vestre's regeneration project in Brixton show how well thought through seating that considers placement and relationship can enhance an area.



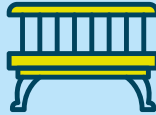
Question, Let's Talk: What would improve your local park or green space?

(listed in order of frequency mentioned)

1. Public toilets



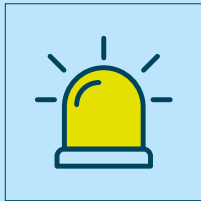
2. Benches



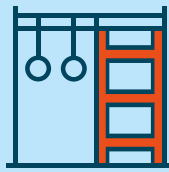
3. Rangers or wardens



4. Law enforcement to stop dealers and gangs



5. Play equipment for kids



6. Bins and less litter



7. More trees



8. More bio diversity of plants and planting to encourage pollinators and look good



9. Picnic tables



10. Water fountains



11. Less dog poo



One solution to consider is putting more (not less) benches and seating in parks, increasing park infrastructure so that a group of youths gathering around a bench is just one group of users framed in the context of another group of people gardening, some children playing, a running group meeting up. So rather than one group of young men dominating the park, they are a part of a much bigger picture. When this is the case they will manage their behaviour accordingly. This is where design and in particular co-design with residents, can play a role in designing out crime and ASB. Moving the focus away from visibility and towards directing activity will design -in women who have also told us they want to see more landscaping, more plants and flowers and a greater sense of multi layered activity.

The approach here moves away from vast swathes of green space that afford the opportunity to spot a figure on the horizon, and, move towards designing multi-layered spaces with a range of activity and multiple viewpoints. This is a fundamental conceptual shift as well because it suggests that we think about parks differently. Rather than focusing on the preservation of vast areas of open grassland, designers can think about increasing biodiversity, planting more complex ecology and designing in activity and sociability.


Crucially by putting more social infrastructure in parks and creating opportunities for older teenagers to play, the focus moves away from the singular gang and towards a multiplicity of activity, of which the group of boys are one part. It shifts the framing by encouraging ownership of the space.

The issue of taking up space runs like a golden thread throughout the research and it is extremely complex both because of the contemporary culture in which young men are growing up, because of the effects of fifteen years of austerity impacting youth services and provision, because of the density of population in Tower Hamlets, and issues of overcrowding, which sees cultures, families and inter-personal conflict heightened because space operates at a premium.


Young men are, themselves, living in fear as they are aware of knife and gang crime and stabbings, meaning a certain amount of bravado is partly a survival strategy for them.

This report is written with empathy towards young men and the complex issues they face. However, the scope of this work is to make space for women and girls and part of that has to be to articulate the impact that gangs of young men have on women and girls, their use of space and the confidence they have about navigating the borough by day and by night. It is also to note that for every group of young men on the street there are far more teenage boys at home, not fitting into this picture and also perhaps feeling alienated.

To advocate for women and girls it must be clearly acknowledged and stated that, whatever the root cause, women and girls are changing behaviour as they move through the borough, avoiding making eye contact, interacting with or being challenged by groups of young men. It prevents many women from using smaller parks and gardens and forces them to make choices about how they walk down high streets, use pavements and sit in or take up space in parks.

 **What works well with this particular square is it's not too big. Where this is just the right size you do start to recognise other people who use it. It's a little secluded area, a little oasis! It's nice in the summer. Everyone has their bit of grass. We like to get out for lunch, we like the benches and palm trees, we like the plants, there are load of lovely plants and flowers here. The park is small enough to feel safe.**

[Audio Transcript](#)

 **I like a water- front, a park, the canal, a café, a terrace, a museum, a park is nice, somewhere I can access for free, a bench, I like to sit by a tree and having access to nature.**

[Audio Transcript](#)

“ Most of our public space would need a more multigenerational focus, with space for resting and sitting, for talking and multigenerational use, maybe play areas but also space for older people.

[Audio Transcript](#)

“ I imagine women would like more space like the Barbican, where it is nice bricks outside. It's a space that feels like you are still in a building, like you are protected. Maybe a space with a heightened level of protection. So even it was something like those built-up bricks, with plants and flowers. Somewhere for conversation.

[Audio Transcript](#)

Summary

Benches and seating are important because they provide places to rest in hot weather, somewhere to have a rest for the elderly or people walking with young children, outdoor space to sit and chat. Benches are important for teenage girls because there is so little else on offer to them, they use benches to socialise outdoors.

The police are wary of benches and seating as they know that benches become sites of ASB, somewhere groups and gangs congregate, drink after work or regular spots to deal drugs.

This research finds that benches are important for women and girls and that benches per se are not the issue. That design can play a role in locating benches appropriately and that the design of benches can support sociability and regenerate an area.


Designing infrastructure into parks will create a greater diversity of use and activity. This will encourage multiplicity of use by all generations and ensure spaces are not dominated by one group.

Recommendations


- Co-design parks with residents.
- Co-design and make improvements to parks and green spaces with residents. Find out what people would like to use the park for and work together to implement changes.
- Shift emphasis away from large open areas of green towards more landscaped planting, complex ecology and zoned areas that facilitate activity and community.
- Consider placement and design of benches.
- Ensure Parks have visible entrances and exits, walking loops and tracks to walk with a dog or a friend or alone. To be able to run, roller skate or dog walk.
- New infrastructure could facilitate local events, sporting activity. A small stage for low-key local gigs, a volleyball net or bouldering wall. Through to park run and larger scale weekend events.
- Gardening clubs and user groups give people ownership and increase passive surveillance.
- Move drug dealing and drug taking out of parks by increasing THEO'S (Tower Hamlets enforcement officers) park wardens and policing in parks.

5.3.4 Plants and flowers, trees and green streets: Bio Diversity is restorative.

Plants and Flowers make you feel better.

 I like nice things to look at. I'm a sucker for a view, a water feature or something nice to look at like a statue or some art, a nice water feature wouldn't go a miss. We want more green too, more plants and flowers, more bio-diversity, more plants the better- it makes you feel better seeing plants and flowers.

A Great place for lunch.

 What works well with this particular square is it's not too big. Where this is just the right size. You do start to recognise other people who use it. It's a little secluded area, a little oasis! It's nice in the summer. Everyone has their bit of grass. We like to get out for lunch, we like the benches and palm trees, we like the plants, there are load of lovely plants and flowers here. The park is small enough to feel safe.

Tree lined streets, gardens with flowers, complex planting, green buildings, trees in parks that provide shade on a hot day or shelter in the rain, throughout the research there are multiple references to greening the city. Seeing street trees makes a street feel safer and engenders a sense of community.

Participants in all aspects of the research talked about the value of complex urban ecology, the benefits to mental and physical health, to children and young people and a sense of safety.

Large open areas of green space are important, however many participants felt they were underutilised and could be of greater benefit with more diverse planting and landscaping. Many women felt that large open green space was not for them. They would not feel comfortable sitting in the middle of a large open space, it was associated with sports and the open-ness left them open to ambush.

Over a quarter of survey respondents stated that they visited the park for access to nature. Plants and flower are frequently stated as adding value to a place in the street interviews, whilst the Tower Hamlets networking event advocated for "Opportunity to populate green spaces through volunteer schemes that keep places busy through activities such as gardening".

The benefits of being able to walk amongst trees and meadow planting is well documented as restorative, however creating opportunities to get involved in gardening has the added benefit of social and physical activity, with associated known health benefits, whilst other people choose to grow food and use produce to feed families or source hard to find ingredients.

Many respondents talked about wanting to 'connect to nature' in the park and talked about listening to birds singing, the smell of flowers as sensual connections to a more complex world.

These conversations point to a deeper cultural shift towards living as part of ecologies, rather than being separate to 'nature'. It is important to pay attention to this cultural shift as we move towards actively living with the effects of the climate emergency. The voices of the women and girls included in this research are calling for a climate resilient city in which ecology is threaded through daily life, rather than constrained and organised into parks.

There is no reason why cities cannot be home to greater biodiversity. Car use is diminishing and much of the industry of our time is desk based and small scale. Actively embracing BNG directives and consciously investing in the local ecology to enable the growth of a green city will cool in the summer, suck up rain in the winter and most interestingly of all create space to grow an entirely new, previously unimagined city that is verdant and rich.

Imagining a place like this is perhaps a glimpse into a possible future that could be inclusive, green- a better way for people to live. Is this what a gender inclusive city looks like? Could it give rise to entirely new industries? New growth economies?

"My walking is about my mental health. Yes it's about fitness, but for me is about my mental health. I have teenagers at home, and getting out for a walk, even if it is to go around the block for ten minutes, it is just lovely to get out. To get out and do a longer walk, half an hour, an hour. I think it proximity to green space, walking along the river, being close to the water, the ponds and the canals it's just lovely. "

94% of survey responders go to the park and use the park. A key take away from the research however is that in the survey responses, digital walks and workshops women and girls described access to green spaces as an antidote to living with the constant low level threats they are managing on street level.

That is not to say parks are without threat. All following discussion of parks is a discussion about day- time use, however the language used by women and girls in the research changed when talking about parks and canals. There is a clear consensus that parks and green space make Tower Hamlets a great place to live and respondents were proud of the canal networks and the lifestyle this walkable network affords.

A place to relax, access peace and calm, to go for a walk, to access 'nature', fresh air, and sunshine. A place to go with children, do sport, socialise, and picnic. With health and mental health listed as a top benefit.

When asked in the survey to speak about a place in Tower Hamlets that felt good, the majority of women listed green spaces, parks and public gardens. These were places respondent actively chose to spend time. They were described as places that provide respite. One woman who completed the survey frequently talked about her loneliness and that she would sit in the park on a bench at lunchtime to connect with others and see people.

Why do you go to park?

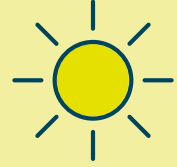
Walk/dog walk



Relax/quiet/peace/calm



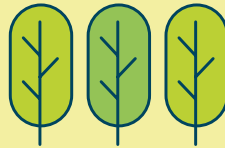
Fresh air/sun



Kids to play park/
family time



Green space and trees
access nature



Short cut or active travel



Healthy/good for
mental health



Beauty/scenery



Sport/exercise



Socialise/café/picnic



How does access to green space improve the quality of your life? (in order of frequency)

- Mental health and well being
- Happier
- Calmer
- Fitter
- Connection to green space
- Better air quality
- Respite from high density
- Space and time out
- Essential/ tranquil
- Improves the mood of children
- Better quality of life
- Necessary because of density and crowding
- Place to decompress
- Peace
- Positivity/meditate

Summary

Cultivating complex ecologies and supporting BNG harmonises with the needs of a climate resilient city. It also supports human health and wellbeing by creating restorative places.

Recommendations

- Transform underutilised green space to serve as community gardens for flats and apartments and provide shared outdoor social space. Good design of these spaces will maximise green space and create opportunities for all local people to gain the use of garden outdoor space. Restorative spaces can diminish ASB, improve mental health and create opportunities to socialise and for play.
- Smaller gardens can connect to the green grid.
- Making specific decisions about parks and walkways on a case-by-case basis. The Let's Talk survey a number of women advocated for parks to be locked at night and canals to be shut at a certain times. Whilst other people talked about better lighting in parks so they can be walked at night. In each instance the respondent will be holding a specific context in mind. It is appropriate to lock some parks at night and close some pathways. Whilst other routes can be kept open and used. These decisions can and should be made in consultation with local people.



5.3.5 Play parks are also social spaces

The National Study of Playgrounds found that over half of park users are over thirteen years old.

“Despite Perceptions that playgrounds are just for children, they are a public resource for all, however they are typically not designed to support teens, adults or seniors to be more active and foster social connection. Adults and seniors are more attracted to picnic table, beams, and boulders, all places where they can perch and have clear lines of sight to children playing. Teens were found most on swings and in spaces where they could connect with friends.

The National Study of Playgrounds (US)

“Most parks have more facilities for dog waste than for teenage girls.”

Make Space for Girls have published their ParkWatch report. The report looked at who was using the facilities aimed at teenagers in parks. The results are shocking, but not surprising:

Overall 88% of users of these facilities were boys



On Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs), the most popular facility, 92% of users were boys



On skate parks and BMX tracks, 84% of users were boys



MUGAs, BMX tracks and skate parks make up 90% of facilities that the local councils surveyed in the report fund and 90% of their users are boys.

That means that these councils are in effect spending just 10% of the money they spend on park facilities on girls. We know from our research that teenage girls don't feel parks are spaces for them – and this report shows why. But we also know that if we listen to teenage girls and design parks with them in mind then we can change this and make parks a welcoming space for everyone

Teenage girls are largely excluded and excluding themselves from parks and green spaces because they don't feel safe, included, or welcome. The design of MUGA's does not serve them, and teen girls perceive MUGAS as spaces for boys and considered risky because they often have only one entrance/ exit.

The charity 'Make Space for Girls' was set up to advocate for facilities and space in parks for teenage girls, a group that are excluded from planning, design and provision of outdoor space. Their research underlines the concern that teenage girls disappear from public space around the age of 13 because provision for teens is limited to skate parks and MUGA'S. Through their research however they have discovered that, in fact, MUGA's and Skate parks only serve a minority of teenage boys and that actively designing the needs of teenage girls into parks, accommodates the needs of other, less sporty young people who do not play football or skateboard. The findings from their research inform and shape the recommendations for parks and green spaces. (MSFG)

They key findings from Make Space for Girls:

- Girls use parks less than boys
- Girls face many barriers to using the parks as a space to be active.
- These barriers come from: a lack of understanding of the needs of teenage girls in park design; and the way society treats teenage girls if they do go to the park.
- These barriers stifle the girls' opportunities to enjoy the amazing public resources that our parks ought to be
- These barriers limit the rights of teenage girls to enjoy the many health and wellbeing benefits of being outside.



Provision of high-quality play areas for younger children has been established by writers such as Tim Gill in the book 'Urban Playground', through the work of the Bernard Van Leer Foundation and the urban designer, Jan Gehl.

Gender Inclusive Design goes beyond limiting perceptions of women as people who must be taken care of and protected. Instead, inclusive design actively asserts the rights of women and girls to be included in the design of public spaces.

Parks are a key amenity where women are under considered.

Levelling –up parks must be a priority for the borough because the current provision is perpetuating inequality between children and young people. This will affect health, mental health, development and educational attainment. However, levelling up parks must also incorporate the needs of women in any improvements and should consider seating, lighting, increased bio diversity and planting, areas to sit where small children can play nearby, social infrastructures such as park wardens and gardeners, good visibility, wayfinding, interesting planting and trees, wild areas, 'beauty' or attractive areas, clean, tidy and well maintained with clear entrances and exits. However one of the key findings is that parks that are co-designed, co-delivered and have hyper local governance are also welcoming to all.

Recommendations

- Involve teenage girls in shaping parks
- Consult and co-create with local teenage girls to design and develop inclusive, active parks that meet girls' needs, and those of the wider community
- Create varied, exciting and innovative spaces so teenage girls can get active
- Facilitate organised opportunities and community events for girls to enjoy physical activity with others.
- Reframe perceptions of parks as active spaces for everyone, with local campaigns and messaging.
- A good variety of benches and parklets create options for seating. Situating benches away from the path means groups of men are less intimidating to walk past.
- Benches and picnic tables with good visibility, a public toilet and sanitation facilities, bike locks and equipment they can play on with their kids.
- Roving youth teams in parks to engage young people in activities.
- Outdoor gyms could be extended to include women and girls. Equipment arranged socially and not weighted for adult men; to include space for an exercise class to meet outdoors or become a temporary dance floor or stage.





5.3.6 The green grid

On the Digital Walks many women told us 'how' they navigate the city, describing the ways that they curate regular journeys, defining 'their city' by walking. 76% of respondents to the 'Let's Talk' survey stated they actively choose green walking routes to improve their day to day life and avoid busy roads and high levels of pollution.

This is interesting because by and large the routes women described taking by day create a city that is green, pleasant and traffic free. This shows how women modify the city to create an experience of place that fits their aspiration of it.

One woman described taking her route to work, using a longer route that took her across Weavers Fields, down quieter roads, where people had 'taken care of their front gardens' out across Cambridge Heath Road and through the network of alley ways and parks until she reached her place of work. (Digital Walks)

This use of the city and the way it is framed by walking demonstrates the value that residents place on quiet streets, interesting high streets, green routes, parks and gardens. That actively joining up these routes adds genuine richness and value to their day to day lives and quite simply creates a sense of happiness, belonging and ownership and wellbeing.

Furthermore the same women described how they would navigate home after dark, connecting busier, well-lit routes to find their way home via transport hubs and well-lit roads, the shops, to get something for dinner, or socialise or pick up children from childcare.

This 'way' of navigating the city was common and many participants talked about positively mapping routes that gave them pleasure, that were joyful to walk and improved their day.

This is important to acknowledge because this study is about gender inclusive design, responding to what women have told us they like or enjoy, this sense of the 'green grid' as a source of joy, wellbeing and way to connect to friends is present throughout the research. It is therefore a point to listen to.



One of the key themes that connected their walks was quiet streets, green, well looked after streets and access to complex ecologies, parks and gardens. Respondents also told us how these routes were key for exercise and also socialising and that they also bring a huge amount of pride to Tower Hamlets and joy at living there.

The Green Grid concept describes an endeavour to create a grid of connected walking routes across the borough to enable residents to walk safely, create corridors for biodiversity net gain and a joined-up experience of the borough that enables residents to map the area on foot in pleasant, peaceful and safe footpaths. We should perceive this green grid as a social space as much as a green space, the green context in and of itself supporting new relational forms that are both urban and not urban.

This research shows that in fact residents co-create the green grid on a daily basis, choosing routes that enable them to connect to both blue and green ecology and that they do this consciously, acknowledging its value to wellbeing and mental health.

This is another example of how acting and doing are also ways of shaping and making the city, and that paying attention to how women have reported they 'create' their city, by walking, can give us key insights into how to make small adjustments to create maximum benefit to residents' health and well being in the borough. Paying attention to what women and girls have reported both about how they walk in the city and the value and sense of wellbeing that brings to their day to day lives, provides clear direction - a principle, that re-focuses on valuing the experience of walking in Victoria Park or along the canal can provide maximum return in terms of improving wellbeing.

“ Victoria Park is just phenomenal. There are so many little pockets like iron gardens or Meath gardens, Im still surprised. We are so spoilt in Tower Hamlets. I have done the capital ring route.

Connect green routes across London.

“ If there were more marked spots along the canal, more seats, more spaces to meet that would be great. So better wayfinding and meeting spots. It would be amazing to connect the whole greenways of London. Maybe we need an app that does that, so you could walk the whole city without going on roads.

Linked Walking Routes

“ I think what they have done in Old Bethnal Green Road is really pleasing, It is now is really lovely. I think if you can walk along a quieter road with less or no traffic, I would walk further. It would be great to have connected, linked routes to walk, off roads.

When you go for a walk do you actively choose 'green' or off - road walking routes? If so, can you tell us why and explain how those routes benefit you?

- Yes 76%
- No 13%

Overwhelmingly people stated they took green routes to avoid traffic, exposure to pollution, exposing children and babies to pollution, clean air, noise and stressful traffic and the stress of walking on busy roads with small children and babies.

People also commented the canals were friendlier and people smile at one another, the canals make Tower Hamlets feel like a village in the city, it is better for mental health, gives respite from the city and that people wanted to connect to nature by walking next to water, trees.

The complaints focused on aggressive cyclists and feeling unsafe around bikes, having disabilities which mean the uneven surface is tricky and preferring busy roads because of better visibility. Two people also stated they like to look at architecture and walk on streets to see more city scape.

Summary:

The Green Grid is already a popular and well used part of the borough comprising of a network of pathways along the canals and through parks, gardens and quiet tree lined roads. Participants in this research spoke of their pride in this area describing the lifestyle it affords as beneficial to health, wellbeing, community and sociability in the borough. They also talked about how they created their version of the borough by mapping pleasant routes by day and 'safer' routes after dark. The primary positives people stated for using the green grid was to be close to nature, to breath clean air, to escape the noise and pollution of busy roads and to be able to walk safely and easily with children, without fear of traffic.

Participants also talked about the value of the green grid as a place to exercise, again, avoiding pollution, noise and traffic on busy roads.

Recommendations

Maximise all green space in the borough for biodiversity NetGain and to support social infrastructure by developing or creating parks and gardens.



Connect parks and gardens across the borough with a network of greenways and walking routes.



Ensure this network of green routes can support social infrastructure by including meet up hubs, café stops, play areas for children, play on the way and interventions to encourage 'play' for older children and teenagers.



Work with local land owners to connect the green grid, this could include institutions such as Queen Mary University London, who would like to be part of the scheme.



Give the Green Grid a name, visual identity, maps, and wayfinding that tell people they are on the green grid and how to navigate Tower Hamlets via its current greenways.



The green grid is a source of local pride.



Connect to education and school projects.



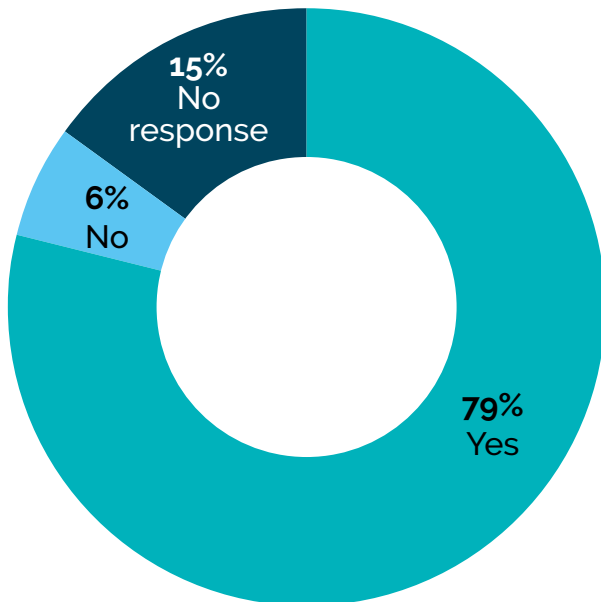
Wayfinding to connect to identity or the borough, tell our stories and narrate local history, ecology etc.





5.3.7 Walking is a social space

Figure 5: Do you consider parks and canals to be social spaces?



Caveated 1 responses stated: Parks are social spaces, canals not so much.

- They are social spaces, but drug dealing makes them feel unsafe
- Social spaces for others, not me.
- Dangerous at night.
- Cyclists too fast.

The aspirations for a joined up green grid across Tower Hamlets are echoed by survey responses in which 76% of respondents stated they actively choose to walk on green routes, away from traffic and roads, if they could.

Overwhelmingly people stated they took green routes to avoid traffic, noise, exposure to pollution, and exposing children and babies to pollution.

People also stated it was extremely stressful to walk along busy roads with small children and babies and that they actively choose green routes because of benefits to health and wellbeing.

The Green Grid is a tried and tested positive asset in Tower Hamlets. Women and girls have told us about the value this brings to their day to day life in the borough, the impact walking in green space has on their mental health and sense of wellbeing, their capacity to care for their children. They have talked about canals and green spaces as social spaces, with % of people stating they view green spaces as social spaces. It is free to meet a friend and walk along the canal or in the park and provides meeting places for all, regardless of impact. Women have reported that the green grid is where they exercise and that it is a place to run, cycle and walk away from busy roads. Finally, they have talked about the green grid as a good place to walk with babies and children because it is a way to avoid stressful walks down busy roads and limit exposure to air pollution.

More Facilities on the Canal

I love walking around here, it is very green which is much better as it is less polluted (she is walking with a small baby) we have an older four-year-old as well, so when you have the playground and the canals it's great, we love living in London because of the green space. We live in Peckham, and we walk from Shoreditch down through Limehouse and across the river. There could be more facilities along the canals, cafés and coffee shops, public toilets and drinking fountains. Im just thinking I have to change and feed the baby and I don't know where to do that. I also haven't walked down the canal at night, and I think as a woman I probably wouldn't feel that safe.

Audio Transcript

Summary

Women and girls have reported that the parks and canals in LBTH are social spaces, and that walking is a social activity that gives them a sense of community, freedom and enjoyment. Participants in this research have said they value the lifestyle this network of parks affords, and they name it as one of the best aspects of living in the borough.

Recommendations

- Maximise the current green grid and parks.
- Expand the green grid and extend connecting routes to other parks and greenways.
- This can be used to improve failing areas by adding the grid effect- footfall.
- This can enable improvements to parks and gardens that need it and extend the scope of the grid.

5.3.8 Active travel- walking, running, cycling and exercise after dark



Shared spaces can feel cramped.

“ There are not enough cycle routes around here. The cycle routes are also used by walkers and runners and it can feel quite cramped at times. I think there needs to be some dedicated routes for cyclists.

Audio Transcript

The Green Grid presents a complex set of questions that are not easily solved to satisfy all people. There are many issues here which are at once interconnected and at the same time each complex and in need of in-depth attention. People on foot value the canals and parks as a social space, a place to meet, walk with children and meet friends or exercise, they see it as a leisure space, or a walking space to connect areas whilst avoiding roads. Those who travel by bike see it as a way to navigate the borough without travelling on busy roads.

This report focuses on representing the experience of women and girls. The overwhelming response regarding cycling and cycle routes is that male cyclists feel dangerous and aggressive. This annoys pedestrians, makes walking with children on shared cycle paths tricky and puts off many women who want to cycle or want to cycle with kids.

The conflict here is that the current network of canals and pathways feel cramped. As places for active travel they enable people to get around on foot or by bike quickly, but as spaces for leisure they can feel less relaxing.

In turn there is an issue of lighting. If this network are to be focal active travel routes they would then need adequate lighting to ensure safe passage after dark (particularly given the proximity to the canal!) however this network are also preserved for biodiversity netgain, and there is conflict here around lighting.

- Participants talked about wanting to be able to exercise outdoors and run all year round.
- They wanted to be able to walk all year round after dark on the canal.
- They wanted to be able to cycle.
- They wanted to be able to cycle but felt they couldn't because of the 'alpha male' attitude of many cyclists stopped them.
- They wanted to be able to cycle their children to school but felt other cyclists created an aggressive attitude.
- They wanted to be able to cycle on roads but felt cycle provision was inadequate or male dominated.
- They wanted to be able to walk along the canal without intrusion from bikes.
- They felt that sharing pedestrian and cycle routes caused conflict.
- They felt that shared pedestrian and cycle routes made walking tricky with children.
- The green grid supports bio diversity which needs darkness at night.
- Women wished for the canals to be locked at night and alternative busy routes to be better lit.
- Women wished for the canals to be lit at night and usable.

At the moment this very fine network of routes is being asked to be all things to all people. Cyclists become frustrated by pedestrians and vice versa and this conflict is counterproductive, especially when one of the greatest values is peace, tranquillity and mental health and wellbeing.

Summary

There is a need for active travel and exercise after dark to be a readily available option for women. Cycling superhighways are male dominated and women have reported that they feel aggressive. Whereas running after dark feels unsafe and stressful to many women. Women don't want to run along well lit busy roads that are highly polluted, nor can they run at night in parks alone.

Some women want more lighting and to make parks safe, whilst others talked about options like running groups and specific groups or activity that make parks feel safe. Others talked about appropriating spaces such as Canary Wharf or Westfield for night time running and leisure.

There was however clear conflict between the runners who wanted to run and not be 'lumped together' with cyclists or the cyclists who wanted well lit highways to be more accessible to them.

By day women felt that cycling had become very aggressive and dominated by men.

The development of active travel in Tower Hamlets could be seen in line with the green grid. However, there is a lot of conflict between daytime and nighttime and whether shared highways work.

Recommendations

- Further study is needed to look at how to solve the complex problem and lay the foundations for a really efficient set of cycle routes- transport, set against the need for restorative spaces, places for women to walk, socialise, walk with children, without being in conflict with bikes.
- Clarification around types of active travel and whether people are running, cycling and walking for leisure or for transport. Separating out leisure walking, running and cycling from active travel could be a way to re-prioritise the green grid.
- The Green Grid would be an area for leisurely travel which would focus on enjoyment of the space and a focus on prioritising the experience of other users. Cyclists could therefore use these routes, but on the understanding it is for slow travel, cycling with kids, social walking and running. A leisure space. Where speed does not have right of way and consideration of other users is a priority. This network would be unlit at night to prioritise Bio diversity and nature.
- For those wishing to actively travel for transport and/ or after dark an alternative active travel network would prioritise commuters and provide a safe busy route for cyclists after dark. This network could connect to the after dark walking super highways in order to populate busy, well lit routes and create safer feeling areas after dark.
- Considering this as a leisure space then in turn creates the option to weave in amenities.



6. Summary of key recommendations

Gender inclusive design is a highly consultative and responsive approach to design that factors in the need for streets, parks and public spaces to perform multiple roles. Gender inclusive places are hard working. They can simultaneously be somewhere to play, somewhere to socialise, somewhere to relax, a pleasant way to travel, somewhere to feel safe, somewhere to sit with nature.

Gender inclusive spaces are layered and multi-use. They are created collaboratively with input from all users especially women, girls and gender diverse people.

Gender inclusivity should be seen as a design tool and an approach to urban design. The second half of this document (to be published later in 2024) will look at how to deliver and implement for gender inclusivity.

The following recommendations summarise recommendations and are organised under the headings 'Empowering and educating' which look at how design interventions can make getting around easier and reinforce positive cultures.

Inclusive, enabling and strengthening community considers the social infrastructures that are needed to create better places.

Recommendations under the heading 'restorative borough', look at changes that can support health and wellbeing and offset the burden and stress women and girls (and most people) experience in the borough.

Recommendations
1. Welcoming Borough- Empowering and educating
Development
Design of public realm should include a combination of the following elements: wide pavements, street trees and plants, wayfinding, benches, good lighting and street seating, playable elements where appropriate to create more welcoming places. Ongoing programs of work should be planned to ensure places are kept clean and well maintained.
Eyes on the street- opportunities for passive surveillance via street level windows, active frontages that have a range of uses (shops and cafes, community resources such as childcare, gyms etc), avoid creating alleyways and concealed exits or routes with limited escape options.
Ensure that entrances into apartment blocks are designed with clear sight lines and good visibility and that rear entrances and exits, routes to bins, cycle stores and car parking areas are well lit.
Lighting is place shaping and should be considered a design element. Lighting can shape and enhance areas after dark, create social spaces and discourage anti-social behaviour.
Conduct a survey of current lighting provision, identify gaps and areas for improvement. Commission an SPD for lighting that considers how good lighting can enhance places and make them feel more welcoming. It is important to explore flexible solutions for example temporal interventions such as changing the brightness of lighting at certain times of the evening considering impact on wildlife and human sleep patterns.
Design of parks and public spaces should focus on welcoming people by encouraging a range of activity, different environments to sit in, variety of seating and activity. Teenagers like to and should be encouraged to play. Simple interventions like swings from trees can connect young people to nature and create social spaces.
Ensure good visibility and passive surveillance in common areas and around entrances and exits to new development creating an 'even' experience between areas. Avoid making situations where new developments sit in stark contrast to high street or existing estates.
Prioritise flow across an area and build shared community infrastructures.

Recommendations
Design clear post occupancy guidance on maintenance and in particular lighting so that tenants know how/ who to report and resolve maintenance issues.
Use CIL and Section 106 funding to develop whole community infrastructure. Ensure gender equality by co-designing with residents and speaking to women and girls. Residents can benefit from new development through improvement to existing facilities for example levelling up parks and play areas.
CCTV cameras should be clear and visible in places, where women feel vulnerable. (Front and back door to block/ car parks)
Safer streets mean less traffic. Safe routes to schools, local parks, high streets and leisure facilities should design out the threat posed by busy roads and pollution making it easier for parents to walk with children.
Culture shift
Use the term 'welcoming' instead of safety. If we will create welcoming public spaces. The word 'safe' is misleading because design cannot guarantee safety.
Consider the language that LBTH uses to talk about women's safety and be aware of how that perpetuates sexism and victimisation of women and girls. Focus on asking the question, why are men violent?
Co-create signage and messaging for parks and public spaces to indicate and build positive shared behaviour.
Raise the profile of women in LBTH by naming new streets, buildings and public spaces after women who have shaped the borough.
Commission new public artworks from and by women.
Design is a language, from the fine detail to the big picture. Imagine a future city shaped by inclusive design- feminist architecture?
Improved facilities
Provision for public toilets across the borough is very poor. Greater access to sanitation is important particularly in parks and green spaces. However, consideration must be given to the design and placement of new toilet blocks and avoid creating new 'unsafe' places.
Blocks should be self-contained cubicles with floor to ceiling doors that open outwards. Placement should consider passive, but not direct, surveillance; near café or shops (e.g. slightly set back from a high street), in a busy car park or set off to the side of a public square.
Toilets should be free.
There should be 'women's' toilets and mixed gender toilets, with baby change facilities in the mixed cubicle and men's toilets with a ratio 2:3:1. Consideration should be given to where queues would form and whether that would be a mixed queue or separate gender queue. If a queue is mixed it should form in a visible area (not behind the block or out of sight)
Blocks should have an auto cleaning function that is activated after 15 minutes or after use.
Clear wayfinding and route maps for navigation through parks and green spaces is important. Wayfinding should also be legible at night and guide people towards nearest 'peopled' place- offering, for example daytime and nighttime routes. (This should link to green grid strategy)

Recommendations
<p>Benches are important and make places more inclusive for women and girls. This is a conflict with advice from the police, however research into the psychology of seating shows that when design and placement of benches is considered improved seating 'people's' places and creates a more diverse user group. The recommendation here is to increase benches, social spaces and seating outdoors in order to develop more diverse user groups.</p>
2. Inclusive Borough- Enabling individuals and strengthening community
<p>The development or regeneration of any new park or public space should consider and implement community infrastructure from the outset. This could include employing wardens, gardeners, youth workers, setting up social groups to programme or manage the space and creating community gardens and food growing areas. This should connect to cross cutting themes such as health determinants or social prescribing.</p>
<p>Design alone cannot make a place feel safe, passive surveillance and activity make a place feel welcoming. Awareness of authority figures (This could be a café owner, gardening team, youth worker or park wardens) can provide light touch reassurance.</p>
<p>Facilitate and enable community activity through arts, culture and events.</p>
<p>Help people and communities to set up an event or street party with minimal red tape by making council systems clear and easy with short turn around.</p>
<p>Council to provide 'in kind' support to activity by making shared resources and expertise accessible.</p>
Change starts with us
<p>Within the council there is extensive local place knowledge, a broad range of expertise and deep connections with the local community.</p>
<p>LBTH should establish a pool of employees to consult on new development proposals and share their professional and local knowledge with DM teams.</p>
<p>They could advise on the detail of proposed development and the broader local context including potential impact/ improvements to local community.</p>
<p>Stop letting flats and apartments stand empty. Discourage the purchase of investment property or Air B&B through Leasehold agreements, by increasing rates and council tax for second homes.</p>
<p>Support independent and diverse business- offer a variety of units and manage rents and business rates to create more unique and independent places with variable opening hours.</p>
<p>Encourage school streets, low traffic neighbourhoods and flexible road closures around school pick up and drop off so that it feels safer to choose active travel.</p>
<p>Co-design signage for parks and public spaces to indicate shared behaviour and build shared mutually respectful culture.</p>
<p>Co-design and make improvements to parks and green spaces with residents and work together to implement changes.</p>

Recommendations
<p>Engage women and girls in design process prior to design phase. Create opportunities to hear about their experiences and write design brief together. Create feedback loops to test ideas and check in.</p> <p>Design engagement strategies with barriers to participation in mind. Pay people for their time or offer a fair exchange.</p> <p>Co-designers should be independent.</p>
<p>Public space should be flexible.</p> <p>Activate local parks at varying times of the day; activities for pre-school children in the morning, after school activity for older children, youths and teens early evening, apprenticeships in urban gardening, and initiatives linked to the circular economy, community gardening groups or activity via social prescribers, meet ups for the elderly.</p> <p>Consult on a park-by-park basis and add infrastructure and a program as needed.</p>
<p>Embrace the history of the area and tell its stories through murals and public art. Build shared culture across the borough by developing history and art trails. Ensure that these illuminate the lives of women.</p>
<p>Encourage hyper local governance of parks and an open dialogue with residents. This could include working with existing stakeholders and community groups to extend their activity outdoors in summer months or linking to initiatives such as social prescribers, food banks or London wide charities such as 'National Park City'.</p> <p>Focus policing and wardens to tackle drug dealing, drug taking and associated activity in public spaces.</p>
Inclusive practice
<p>Employ women architects and designers and ensure teams are diverse. When assessing suppliers ensure workplace diversity is a consideration.</p>
<p>Consider who is planning/ who is designing/ who is building. Are developers women and are women represented on their teams at decision making level?</p>
<p>Set inclusion targets and implement a detailed equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) action plan.</p>
<p>Include a policy at corporate equality level, that teams will be scrutinised for diversity stating that LBTH understands the pressing need for inclusion and diversity within architecture and the construction industry and the value of employing diverse teams because of the broader range of ideas that can lead to inclusive design in all projects.</p>
<p>Support equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.</p> <p>LBTH can build equity into teams by setting up peer mentoring for new colleagues and help build confidence to, for example, speak up in meetings, navigate stressful encounters and learn from more established colleagues.</p>
<p>Create internship and work experience opportunities for school age girls in LBTH encouraging all women, women from diverse backgrounds and socio-economic groups.</p>

Recommendations
Connect to schools, youth groups and youth provision in the council and establish collaborative youth projects that encourage girls into careers in design and the built environment.
3. Restorative Borough- Prioritising health and ecology.
Level up parks and green spaces. Current provision replicates inequality across the borough. This impacts women, girls, school age and preschool children and perpetuates socio-economic deprivation.
Level up access to play grounds, play equipment and increase the variety of trees and plants, materials, surfaces, levels in parks and play areas to encourage curious inventive and risky play.
Women socialise at the play-park too. Create places to meet, interesting, flexible spaces that women can enjoy in all weathers whilst looking after children. Consider making some covered seating, places to chat with good visibility over playground, things that adults and kids can play on together.
Shift emphasis away from large open areas of ground towards more landscaped planting, complex ecology and zoned areas that facilitate a variety of activity and community interaction including non gendered sports such as handball and volley ball, rollerskating, swings and risky play, rounders and international sports.
Many women feel that football pitches and large areas of grass are excluding and not for them.
Wide pavements and street trees create a buffer to busy roads and improve pedestrian experience.
Consider placement and design of benches. Provide a good variety of benches, parklets and options for seating.
Situating benches away from the path means groups of men are less intimidating to walk past. Boys and young men are entitled to meet in parks but large groups can feel intimidating. Situating some benches away from the path would give teenagers space to socialise.
Ensure Parks have visible entrances and exits, walking loops and tracks to walk with a friend, to run, roller skate or dog walk etc.
Transform underutilised green space to serve as community gardens for flats and apartments.
Good design of these spaces will maximise green space (creating opportunities for BNG) and provide residents with access to the outdoors and therefore space to socialise, play, chat etc.
Outdoor spaces can be restorative, improve mental health, build community connection and has been shown to reduce ASB.
Smaller gardens can connect to the green grid and walking routes.
Consult and co-create with local teenage girls to design and develop inclusive, active outdoor spaces that meet girls' needs, and those of the wider community. Create varied, exciting and innovative spaces to support girls to get active.

Recommendations

Outdoor gyms could include women and girls. Equipment arranged socially and not weighted for adult men; to include space for an exercise class to meet outdoors or become a temporary dance floor or stage.

Developing the concept of the green grid

Give the Green Grid a name, visual identity, maps, and wayfinding that tell people they are on the green grid and how to navigate Tower Hamlets via its current greenways. Use this identity to build pride in the borough and celebrate its unique green assets, history and culture.

Encourage new development and current land owners to connect to the green grid.

Whilst land is at a premium in LBTH the experience of green space can be extended by connecting parks and gardens via walking routes and avoiding busy roads.

Ensure this network of green routes can support social infrastructure by including meet up hubs, café stops, play areas for children, play on the way and interventions to encourage 'play' for older children and teenagers.

VAWG Strategy 2019 – 2024 Achievements and Challenges

Achievements

- Celebrated residents and professionals working to tackle VAWG through 'Blooming Strong' awards
- Annual campaigns to raise awareness of VAWG: '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence'; White Ribbon Campaign and local campaign 'Domestic Abuse No Excuse'. Activities and literature available in several languages. Including 2 multi agency conferences raising awareness around VAWG, one around perpetrator theme and the other Honour Based Abuse.
- Ongoing development of the Anti-Sexual Exploitation (ASE) Champions role in response to the recommendations from the research paper LBTH commissioned. A guide created to help professionals identify and respond to women selling sex.
- Collaborating with the Licensee Team to deliver sexual harassment in the nighttime economy alongside their WAVE programme.
- Increase in IDVA provision and victims supported
- Economic Abuse Programme of work implemented in borough including co-location at DWP.
- Learning from DHR (please refer to DHR Analysis for achievements)
- Children Social Care Domestic Abuse Summit and conference occurred. Development of THSCP DA Subgroup and delivery of action plan improving services for children impacted by DA.
- 220 VAWG Champions trained between 2019-2023, including 11 councillors from previous administration
- Increased engagement with Muslim and Bangladeshi communities
- Maintained 34 refuge bed spaces, including specialist Asian bedspaces
- Single women with complex needs supported in Riverside women-only accommodation; all bedspaces maintained
- VAWG training programme extended to include trauma-informed practice, coercive control training, economic abuse, allyship and misogyny, VAWG and non-English speakers.
- Maintained funding for Sanctuary Project which assists VAWG victims remain in their home
- Positive Change Service increased provision for DA perpetrators who are fathers including secured funding for pan London DA Perpetrator programme for non-fathers called Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA) recognising need for culturally appropriate interventions and support to change behaviours.
- Pan London DRIVE Perpetrator Programme also funded and available in TH. Pathways established via MARAC representation.
- MARAC review conducted and increase in victims supported. Repeat victimisation rate remains low.
- ELFT's Domestic Abuse and Harmful Practices policy updated
- VAWG and extremism research conducted, and recommendations incorporated into Prevent Delivery Plan
- LBTH Council's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace policy reviewed
- Increased funding for female genital mutilation service

- VAWG directory developed and maintained; during Covid 'one page' detailed important contacts for VAWG victims and perpetrators
- Increase in men being involved with raising awareness of VAWG, with male allies' sub-group of LBTH Women's Network, circulation of the 'Good Guys Guide' and communication strategy always including how perpetrators can stop their abusive behaviour
- Beyond the Streets maintained outreach services during Covid and supported Public Health with Covid vaccinations
- Family Nurse Partnership piloted ADAPT2 to improve identification and support to first time mothers experiencing intimate partner violence
- Police introduced a Stalking Prevention Officer
- Drug & Alcohol commissioned service amended data monitoring system to include ability to flag perpetrators of domestic abuse on their system
- Licensing Policy reviewed and consultation includes question on including misogyny and drink spiking
- Modern Slavery Group formed
- Pan-borough funding attained for perpetrator education programme CIFA, WiSER for single women with complex needs, Safe & Together model training for social workers and IDVA provision
- Ongoing development of anti-misogyny campaign with Hackney and City of London.
- Domestic Abuse Best Practice Implementation Group formed with focus on improving criminal justice experience for victims/survivors and increasing perpetrator's conviction.
- DA Criminal Justice training/briefings offered to DA services, Police, CPS, children services, substance misuses services.
- Criminal Justice Operational Partnership further established with Witness Service, police, Solace IDVA service, CPS and probation.
- DAHA Accreditation near complete since dedicated Housing Lead brought in.
- CSC programme of work including THSCP Plan outcomes, REPAIR Model introduced. (Habon will provide finer details if required).

Challenges

- Police no longer referring into 'You Choose' programme to educate buyers of sex
- Pandemic and consequently Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop no longer operational.
- High profile incidents (Sarah Everard, Sabina Nessa and Zara Aleena) have resulted in increased fear for women.
- National and local increase in DA and sexual offences reported.
- Consistently very low sanction detection rates for domestic abuse
- Police not continuing with their operation to target buyers of sex
- Reprioritisation of local authority police officers meant out of court disposal scheme for women involved in prostitution fully ceased
- HMCST not engaging with Specialist Domestic Abuse Court framework leading to it being disbanded
- Domestic Abuse Best Practice Implementation Group agencies engagement not regularly consistent

- Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation has been delayed due to housing priorities
- One of the highest boroughs for domestic homicides
- Schools lack of engagement with the 'anti-VAWG whole school approach'
- Covid causing in-person services to stop, including 'Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop' and outreach activities
- Feedback from service users across all services is difficult to obtain given lack of engagement from residents once case closed

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London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH)
VAWG and Women's Safety Strategy Action Plan
2024 – 2029

This document is the action plan supporting the LBTH Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Women's Safety Strategy. It details specific actions, outcomes, outputs and timelines structured around the three key strategic priorities:

1. Preventing Harm and Promoting Safety - *We will prevent violence and abuse through early intervention and education*
2. Supporting Victims and Survivors - *We will provide support that keeps individuals and their families safe from harm*
3. Responding to Perpetrators - *Holding perpetrators to account whilst providing opportunity for change and support*

The plan details a coordinated, multi-agency approach involving statutory and non-statutory services to ensure a comprehensive response to VAWG.

Governance and accountability:

The VAWG and Women's Safety Delivery Group will monitor and oversee delivery of the action plan and will report progress to the Community Safety Partnership on a quarterly basis.

Priority 1: Preventing Harm and Promoting Safety

'We will prevent violence and abuse through early intervention and education'

No.	Action	Output	Outcome	Timescales	Lead Officer
1.1	Provide tailored VAWG/Domestic Abuse awareness training to statutory and non-statutory services. Including developing new training on stalking and harassment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver 7.5 multi-agency VAWG training sessions quarterly • 42 Domestic Abuse (DA) sessions a quarter • 50 VAWG Champions trained per year • Launch stalking and harassment training Jan 2024 onwards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased professionals' ability to spot signs of abuse, respond safely and VAWG strands • 100% of attendees are aware of where to signpost survivors for support • Raised awareness of VAWG services • Increased understanding of an intersectional approach to domestic abuse support, leading to more inclusive support • Improved understanding of trauma-informed care and how this applies to VAWG • 95% of participants felt more confident in recognising and responding to VAWG 	March 2025	VAWG Training and Awareness Officer LBTH & Domestic Violence Projects Officer, LBTH
1.2	Coordinate council wide participation in 16 days of Activism and the White Ribbon Campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch an event to commence the 16 Days of Activism and White Ribbon • Be involved and/or host events daily on VAWG, gender equality, partnering with support services and local organisations • Create and distribute posters, flyers, and social media content to promote the campaign and VAWG work across LBTH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding of gender-based violence, ways to prevent and eliminate VAWG and raising awareness about men's responsibility in achieving this • Professionals felt more knowledgeable and proactive in addressing VAWG issues and supporting victims 	December 2024	VAWG Training and Awareness Officer LBTH & Domestic Violence Projects Officer, LBTH
1.3	Achieve White Ribbon (WH) Accreditation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 3-year action plan to achieve White Ribbon Accreditation • Set up the White Ribbon Steering Group • Train all members as WH Champions and/or Ambassadors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced and improved LBTH commitment to ending VAWG • Improved reputation and credibility for leading advocates to prevent VAWG 	December 2026	Domestic Violence Projects Officer, LBTH

1.4	Young People's voice, participation and awareness - coordinate champion meetings, distribute VAWG Youth Champions resources and deliver healthy relationship workshops for young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and pilot VAWG Youth Champion training by October 2024 and evaluate in November 2024 • Train all youth council reps to become VAWG Champions, with 10 youth champions trained per year and 1 youth champion meeting coordinated per year • Youth Service staff to meet monthly/quarterly to plan and deliver VAWG & HC sessions in youth safe spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased training options to young people on VAWG issues • Increased reach and uptake of the VAWG Champion training particularly in the youth space • Increased engagement and coordination between Youth VAWG champions • Increased young people's knowledge of healthy relationships • Established safe boundaries develop tools to manage difficult relationships 	December 2024/ Quarterly	VAWG Training and Awareness Officer, LBTH & Youth Participation Practitioner, CSC, LBTH
1.5	Continue commissioning an FGM service to raise community awareness, educate members, and engage men in anti-FGM initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 360 men and women from FGM practising communities attend awareness raising sessions per annum. • 8 male-only workshops delivered to men from FGM practising communities per annum • 20+ FGM survivors are supported quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% participant have an increased understanding of impact of FGM and the law • 95% of survivors report an increased belief of feeling supported once case is closed • Challenged attitudes around FGM to prevent girls suffering in future • Increased understanding of referral pathways • Survivors of FGM felt supported after accessing services and cases closed • Reduced barriers for survivors accessing support especially financial and women with no recourse to public funds 	March 2027	VAWG Coordinator LBTH & Chief Executive Sister Circle
1.6	Commission and deliver Sanctuary Scheme provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 properties secured per annum and 15 per quarter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households at risk of domestic abuse remained in their own homes safely, reducing the risk of repeat victimisation through enhanced security measures • Victims/survivors experienced a greater sense of security and control over their living situation • Reduction in households who left their homes due to domestic abuse, leading to greater stability 	Quarterly	Sanctuary Scheme Officer, LBTH

1.7	Launch a Women's Commission focused on bringing women's lived experience and experts by experience to improve safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the Women's Commission • Produce women safety recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amplified women's voices in policy and decision-making • Enhanced community safety for women 	March 2025	Head of Corporate Strategy and Communities, LBTH
1.8	Continue funding the Mayor's Community Grants Programme, including a Community Safety theme, with opportunities for VAWG organisations to apply.	<p>The following VCS organisations and projects will continue to be funded by the Mayor's Community Grants Programme for this priority till March 2027:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being Heard, Step Forward • Door of Hope, Beyond the Street • Haawa Project, Women's Inclusive Team (WIT) • Children's Domestic Violence Support Worker, Look Ahead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased support and safety for VAWG survivors 	March 2027	Head of Corporate Strategy and Communities, LBTH
1.9	Host a new programme of VAWG action days for local businesses to promote participation in VAWG training and awareness sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote VAWG offer to businesses through comms e-newsletter (c8000 businesses) • Promote VAWG offer to Whitechapel businesses through monthly e-newsletter as well as via engagement sessions, 1-2-1 meetings and in person group discussions – 4/6 annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses owners/employees increased ability to spot signs of abuse and respond safely • Raised awareness of VAWG services and referral pathways. Increased quality of referrals • Strengthen businesses links increasing uptake of VAWG training offer 	August 2025	Whitechapel Town Centre Manager, LBTH
1.10	Whitechapel Town Centre commission self-defence classes for local businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 weekly self-defence classes within the area: Whitechapel Leisure Centre & the Maryam Centre • Contact all attendees detailing VAWG training provisions and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased women's access to physical and mental health, positively impacting on public health and increased confidence • Increased awareness and sign up to training and other VAWG events 	March/April 2025	Whitechapel Town Centre Manager, LBTH
1.11	Co-produce and collaborate with local Somali women and girls' sports session to promote safety in sport/outdoor activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise community events including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2 Self Defence/Boxercise Sessions per week, targeting approx. 12 women ○ 3 Badminton 16yr+ session per week, targeting approx. 48 women ○ Weekly Women Running Session, targeting approx. 25 Women ○ 3-9 March International Womens & Girls Week 2025 Sports & Physical Activity/Health & Wellbeing sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment of Somali Women and Girls • Increased Safety Awareness in Sports, among Somali women and girls 	Quarterly	Physical Activity Officer Culture LBTH

		<p>Target 15 partners Delivering 25 Sport & physical Activities /Wellbeing Sessions.</p> <p>Engaging 1200 women across 7days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Holiday Half Terms/ Summer Sports Programme. Engaging 7 partners delivering 12 sports and physical activities/wellbeing sessions. Targeting 250 women. 			
1.12	Embed gender-inclusive design principles to parks and public spaces and empower local women and girls to feel ownership of those spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a combination of design interventions to make the borough more inclusive. This includes, consistent signage, adding branding, benches/picnic tables, infrastructure, inclusive play areas incl. provision for teenage girls and variety of sports provision • Strengthened Local Ownership and diverse use of parks and public spaces, encouraging participation in playgroups/youth groups, community growing schemes, health sport activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public spaces are designed and maintained to be welcoming and inclusive • Enhanced women and girls independent use of parks and public spaces • Increased participation in Outdoor Clubs and Groups • Improved Health, Wellbeing, and Social Prosperity 	December 2027	Public Realm Project Officer, LBTH
1.13	Co produce and work with the local community and partners to build respectful shared cultures on streets and public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up youth projects with teen boys and girls that educate through school, youth, community and religious groups • co-design signage and public information for streets and parks that indicate positive behaviour • Commission public artworks that promote conversation and discussion about how to create respectful shared street cultures • Commission urban design that creates welcoming, shared spaces to encourage diverse and intergenerational activities. • Ensure placemaking teams are trained in approaches to inclusive design and that applications are scrutinised for innovation and inclusivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets and public spaces become safer for all community members • Greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures within the community • Implement projects to enhance the design and functionality of public spaces, such as parks 	December 2027	Public Realm Project Officer, LBTH

1.14	Ensure annual attendance for Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement (WAVE) training, covering topics such as sexual harassment and misogyny, and promotes the #DontCrossTheLine campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Min of 2 WAVE training session take place each quarter Number of attendees reported to VAWG team quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevented and reduced violent crime linked to the licence economy Prevented and reduced sexual offences Promoted partnership and engagement with communities and key stakeholders in the licensed economy 	March/April 2025	Service Manager Regulatory Services, LBTH
1.15	Report on breaches of compliance with Licence Conditions in respect to strip clubs and massage parlours.	<p>All SEV premises visited per year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All to have one Mystery Shopper One intelligence lead Mystery Shopper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in licensed massage parlours compliance with licence conditions An increase in Sexual Entertainment Venues (SEV) compliance with their licence conditions 	March 2025	Service Manager Regulatory Services, LBTH
1.16	Raise awareness and provide essential information on support and resources through all LBTH communication channels on VAWG service activity and on accessing support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailor information with an intersectional framing that is sensitive to different groups (e.g., LGBTQ+ individuals, elderly people, those with disabilities) Disseminate leaflets, article and digital content raising awareness of all forms of VAWG Promote "Domestic Abuse No Excuse" and Don't Cross the Line campaign Provide materials in multiple languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of VAWG support and how this can be accessed Made campaign more community-focused Improved ability of individuals to recognise signs of abuse and its impact 	Quarterly	Senior Communications Officer, LBTH & VAWG Coordinator, LBTH
1.17	Co-produce and deliver regular Women's Safety Walks to provide an opportunity for female residents to share concerns over specific areas in LBTH.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sessions cover all 20 wards Hold a minimum of 14 women safety walks per annum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved ability to identify key areas of the borough which are a public safety concern Improved public safety 	July/August 2025	Neighbourhood Safety Manager, LBTH
1.18	Children Social Care (CSC) provide training and implement a relationship-based practice model and trauma-informed approach practice to prevent and reduce harm. As well as continue to implement the REPAIR model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case file audits show the repair principles implemented Training on DVA repair framework provided to all CSC staff Regular case consultation occurring each quarter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased understanding of how to provide a trauma informed practice. Staff gained a thorough understanding of trauma-informed principles Strengthened and improved approach to Domestic Abuse through REPAIR model 	Quarterly	Head of Children's Services, LBTH
1.19	To streamline and simplify the reporting of anti-social behaviour, consulting with women's groups as part of the process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the reporting of anti-social behaviour and customer service processes, meeting with relevant women's groups to shape the design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visible reporting and quick responses create a deterrent effect, reducing the prevalence of anti-social behaviour Women feel more empowered and secure in reporting incidents 	December 2025	Community and Safety, LBTH

	<p>Incorporate a focus on women's safety and a gendered lens into the Modern-Day Slavery Board.</p> <p>Additionally, ensure that relevant partners are trained on the gender-specific approach relating to the modern-day slavery National Referral Mechanism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include agenda items at the board that consider women safety and gender in relation to modern day slavery. • Training on the National Referral Mechanism, incorporating a gender lens, is provided to all responsible authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding among board members of the specific vulnerabilities women faces in modern slavery contexts • Partners gained a deeper comprehension of the unique challenges women face when completing referrals 	December 2025	<p>Community and Safety, LBTH</p> <p>Assessment, Safeguarding, ASC, LBTH</p>
1.20	<p>Ensure that all operators monitoring CCTV are adequately trained on responding to women safety issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All operators trained on how to respond to women safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster and more effective responses to incidents involving women, enhancing overall safety • Operators feel more confident in their ability to intervene appropriately in situations affecting women's safety • Overall enhanced of safety in monitored areas, contributing to a greater sense of security for women in the community 	December 2025	<p>Keith Stanger, Community and Safety, LBTH</p> <p>John Fortune, Neighbourhood Manager, LBTH</p>
1.21	<p>Comply and develop a policy to fully respond to the new Work Protection Act duty for employers to prevent sexual harassment (SH) in the workplace.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Council's Sexual Harassment Policy in June 2025 in consultation with staff networks and Trade Unions • Share and cascade E-learning module on SH • Conduct training for investigators to ensure complaints are dealt with and investigated in a timely way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures implemented to prevent SH in the workplace • Developed and enforced a comprehensive SH prevention policy • Conducted regular training sessions for employees on responding to SH • E-learning module on SH shared and implemented across the organisation 		Head of HR, LBTH
1.22	<p>Support schools with their PSHE provision and delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96% of schools having a bronze healthy schools award from the Mayor of London • Deliver 2 RSHE training sessions per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased schools' confidence and skills to deliver PSHE 		Head of Healthy Lives, LBTH
1.23	<p>Distribute a toolkit for primary and secondary schools to strengthen their delivery of healthy relationships education as part of the RSE curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination toolkit on healthy relationships to all primary and secondary school coordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased schools' confidence and skills in discussing issues of VAWG and domestic abuse • Increased young people's knowledge of VAWG and domestic abuse issues and how to access support 		Head of Healthy Lives, Children's Services LBTH

Priority 2: Supporting Victims and Survivors

‘We will provide support that keeps individuals and their families safe from harm’

No.	Action	Output	Outcome	Timescales	Lead Officer
2.1	Continue to review equalities data to ensure services reach all marginalised groups, including Bangladeshi and Somali communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and analyse quarterly reports on support service reach, highlighting the demographics of service users • Commission for Somali, Bengali speaking IDVA and co-located IDVAs (MASH, DWP, Housing, RLH) • Increase in joint engagement events with specialist support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of VAWG services, particularly for marginalised groups • Increased knowledge and understanding of satisfaction among service user from targeted groups 	Quarterly/ March 2025	VAWG Coordinator, LBTH
2.2	Continue to commission a community-based specialist domestic abuse service. Additionally, collaborate with ICB and relevant partners to explore Identification and Referral to Increase safety (IRIS support for primary care) funding options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure provision of DA support service is maintained/enhanced through funding opportunities • Evaluate and analyse quarterly reports on support service reach with 95% of survivors feeling safer. • Implement the commissioning of a Somali IDVA • Regularly engage with ICB and other relevant partners to explore funding options for IRIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided effective provision of support across domestic abuse • Increased in report satisfaction with support services across IDVA casework • Increased in the number of individuals being referred and accessing DA services • Commissioned domestic abuse services approached was intersectional, addressing the diverse needs of all survivors • Increased positive outcomes for survivors of DA 	March 2027	Senior VAWG and HC Manager, LBTH & VAWG Coordinator, LBTH & Service Manager, Solace Women’s Aid
2.3	Coordinate family intervention for high-risk victims of VAWG through Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in repeat incidents of abuse among MARAC cases • Hold fortnightly MARAC review involving all relevant partners • Hold quarterly steering group meetings to ensure optimal outcomes • Provide training for all agencies involved in MARAC to ensure they understand the processes and their roles • Monitor and work to reduce the number of repeat perpetrators discussed at MARAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased safety and protection for individuals at high risk of domestic abuse • Improved outcomes for victims, including better access to support services, housing, and legal protection • Strengthened collaboration and communication between agencies involved in supporting high-risk individuals • More effective multi-agency interventions led to successful disruption of repeat offending patterns 	Quarterly/ March 2025	MARAC Coordinator LBTH & Senior VAWG and HC Manager, LBTH

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2.4	Continue developing and implementation of VAWG programme of work to raise awareness and promote VAWG offer/women safety with Tower Hamlets Inter-faith Forum (THIFF) and Council of Mosques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver 4 training and/or outreach sessions per annum to promote LBTH VAWG support offer at Mosques and faith groups • Yearly meeting with the Council of Mosques to plan further engagement to increase reach mosques across LBTH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved awareness of VAWG in faith communities across LBTH, increasing awareness of support services available to women • Strengthened support networks within faith communities, enabling better identification, support, and referral of VAWG victims • Enhanced collaboration between THIFF, the Council of Mosques, and LBTH, leading to a unified approach to tackling VAWG 	March 2025	Senior VAWG and HC Manager, LBTH & Mosque Engagement Coordinator, Council of Mosques & Head of Programmes Maryam Centre
2.5	Marginalised Migrant Women - Collaborate with Praxis and join the VAWG/Asylum GLA London Council Group to actively contribute to ways to address the significant barriers asylum seekers face when reporting incidents of VAWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek expert consultation from Praxis on strategies to support asylum seekers/migrants • Attend monthly meetings to coordinate efforts and share best practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened collaboration between organisations to improve comprehensive support to asylum seekers/migrants facing VAWG 	Quarterly	VAWG Coordinator LBTH
2.6	Continue commissioning hostel provision for single women with multiple complex needs ensuring they receive comprehensive, psychologically informed wrap around support that is gender informed.	<p>Riverside (40-bed service support for women)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals, acceptances and utilisation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing option team referrals ○ Who was accepted ○ Utilisation of service per quarter (percentage) • Move-On: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Women moved on in a planned way ○ Women moved on in a unplanned way • VAWG related data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of MARAC referrals (DA support need identified in SMART plan) ○ Number of MARAC referrals submitted (selling sex support need identified in SMART plan) • Recommission Riverside Complex by End 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced mental and physical well-being of women receiving support • Increased housing stability and reduced risk of homelessness among residents • Increased independence and life skills, enabling women to transition to more permanent housing. 	Quarterly/ December 2024	Strategy & Policy Manager, LBTH
2.7	Recommission a new delivery model for Domestic Abuse Refuge Provision and ensure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver an Asian Women's refuge by 01/04/25 and Generic Women's Refuge by 01/06/25 that have: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access to and effectiveness of domestic abuse refuges, ensuring they meet the needs of survivor 	April 2025/ Jun 2025	Aging Well Commissioning Manager,

	Domestic Abuse Refuge bedspaces are maintained and culturally informed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An understanding of intersectionality and trauma informed approaches ○ accessible referral pathways and eligibility information ○ Engagement and inclusion of service users ○ Partnership working ● Provided 34 bed spaces for women fleeing domestic abuse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhanced capacity and operational efficiency of refuges, allowing them to serve more individuals and families effectively 		LBTH
2.8	Establish a new Women's Resource Centre (Tower Hamlets Naari Centre)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft Service Level Agreements with internal and external partners ● Women's Centre launched by March 2025 ● Deliver workshops and outreach programme to address VAWG Needs Assessment findings ● Set up a domestic abuse one-stop-shop ● Dedicated VAWG advice base at the new Women's Resource Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provided a safe space for women in Tower Hamlets where they can learn and develop ● Created a space where support for women included addressing the equity challenges for marginalised women including victims of domestic abuse and especially Bangladeshi women ● Increased support and provision for victims/survivors of VAWG 	Spring 2025	Head of Corporate Strategy & Communities, LBTH
2.9	Work with the Council of Mosques to tackle VAWG, provide activities for women and girls in mosques, and encourage more representation of women in mosque management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4 campaigns, types of materials distributed, and community feedback ● Two training sessions held, number of women trained, and progress in leadership representation ● 2 x child protection and protecting vulnerable adults training delivered to imams and relevant staff / volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhanced awareness and understanding of VAWG within the Muslim community, leading to increased prevention efforts ● Women and girls gained greater access to activities and support, fostering empowerment and community participation ● Increased representation of women in mosque management roles, contributing to more inclusive decision-making 	March 2025	Head of Corporate Strategy and Communities, LBTH & Senior Strategy and Policy Officer, LBTH
2.10	Achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation within our housing services and implement good practice including use tenancy enforcement tools like injunctions, breaches, and orders to remove the perpetrator from the victim's home, ensuring safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver a domestic abuse and legal measures training programme to 300 Housing options and Housing Management staff ● Deliver awareness raising sessions, 3 per or 60 participants per quarter on effective housing interventions for council partners ● Recruit 2 new 'floating support' to deliver sustained support to victims of DA, Target of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivered safe and effective housing interventions in domestic abuse delivered ● Staff felt able to adequately support survivors/victims of DA and hold abusers to account through the appropriate processes 	December 2024 April 2025	Assistant Transformation Project Manager, Housing Options, LBTH

		<p>10% increase in victims receiving longer-term (over 6 months) support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed new domestic abuse enforcement procedures for perpetrators living in temporary accommodation • Monitor referrals to behaviour changes courses and deliver interventions, with a target of increasing direct referrals to perpetrator courses by 25% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to behavioural change and support services 		
2.11	Conduct and produce a Transgender Needs Assessment which identifies/considers Transgender survivors experience of VAWG and service gaps in provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a transgender needs assessment focus group with service providers by September 2024 • Conduct community research with transgender and non-binary residents by December 2024 • Complete needs assessment and produce recommendation by January 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed insights into the specific challenges and barriers faced by those who are transgender and non-binary • Improved service accessibility and quality 	January 2024	Strategy and Policy Officer, LBTH
2.12	Delivery of Operation Encompass through ensuring Schools are informed of pupils within domestic abuse households, so support can be offered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of referrals made to schools quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased earlier intervention and support for pupils affected by VAWG • Increased staff awareness on mechanism to inform schools 	Quarterly	DS Safeguarding PPD Safeguarding, Met Police
2.13	Create tools and a checklist for Adult Social Care (ASC) staff and professionals to clarify pathways and enhance support for victims and survivors to feel safe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASC have mandatory Domestic Abuse training • Development of learning sessions and resources on VAWG • Safeguarding annual Conference (LBTH SAB) to be themed around DA and coercive control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASC staff and professionals are confident in the process for supporting victims and survivors • Victims and survivors felt safer due to timely and appropriate interventions 		Principal Social Worker, LBTH Adults Social Care Services
2.14	Coordinate multi-agency support and risk management of young women and children being exploited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 training sessions delivered • Chair pre-MACE and discuss any children with new and reviewed risk assessments • Partnership Intelligence Officer presents at MACE to identify trends and patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved ability to identify at-risk young people early, leading to timely intervention • Enhanced cooperation among agencies ensures effective risk management and coordinated support • Data analysed to identify trends and make informed decisions, enhanced young people's safety and well-being 	Quarterly	Group Manager Supporting Families Division, LBTH

2.15	<p>Children Social Care (CSC) embed Parental Conflict' approach being as an Early Help offer. Additionally deliver a clear triaging systems and resources.</p> <p>CSC teams and Early Help services provide support to VAWG survivors, this include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using risk assessment tools that consider barriers like language, culture, and gender identity. <p>CSC enhance and strengthen Partnership, involvement across all services, particularly front door (MAST).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake Twice Yearly dip auditing of families where domestic abuse is a concern • Increase MARAC referrals • Reviewing and revision of the CSC SW MARAC research forms • Dip sample audits undertaken to evidence use of DVA risk assessment tools as appropriate. • IDVA in the MAST/ MASH team to support decision making at the point of contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline processes to ensure early identification and support • Families receiving timely and appropriate interventions • Effective collaboration between CSC and other agencies ensures cohesive support is provided • CSC teams and Early Help services provided tailored, accurate support to VAWG survivors. • Risk assessment tools were effectively used to consider barriers. • Increased early identification and support • Children and families received high-quality assessments and decisions with an effective understanding of risk 	<p>December 2024</p> <p>November 2024</p> <p>September 2024</p>	<p>Head of Children's Services, LBTH & Service Manager, Children Looked After, LBTH</p>
2.16	<p>LBTH Education Safeguarding Service will continue to promote the VAWG strands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver safeguarding training school stakeholders, including All Staff groups, Governing Bodies, and Designated Safeguarding Leads, and the termly Designated Safeguarding Leads Forums • VAWG Training and Awareness Officer invited to present at the termly school DSL Forum • Annually send to all schools an updated model Child Protection Policy • Hold bi-annual Section 175/11 Safeguarding Audit Cycle for schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved prevention and response strategies for VAWG in educational settings • Heightened awareness and understanding of VAWG among educational staff and students 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Education Safeguarding Manager, LBTH</p>
2.17	<p>Further raise awareness of Clare's Law disclosures/DVPN and other tools and powers available to protect VAWG victims (e.g. Forced Marriage Protection Orders).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Clare's Law disclosures • Number of Domestic Abuse Protection Notices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAWG Survivors are better protected • Practitioners felt more confident to use powers available to protect survivors, where appropriate • Increased sharing of information with partners of domestic abuse offenders 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Met Police</p>
2.18	<p>Ensure training for Police Officers on domestic and sexual abuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 domestic abuse training session happens quarterly per every team of officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police officers are better equipped to respond sensitively and effectively to 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Met Police</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly domestic abuse refresher training offered to all staff – ongoing corporately 	<p>domestic and sexual abuse cases, leading to improved support for victims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better trained officers contribute to a decrease in repeat victimisation through timely and appropriate protective measures 		
2.19	Police to improve their relationship and build trust with women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MPS direction to conduct 1 Walk, Talk and Do per ward per month VAWG cars out in the NTE in peak busier seasons such as Summer, Spiking intensification weeks, Halloween, Christmas and New Year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved relationship and increased trust between the police and women and girls, resulting increased reporting to police. Enhanced community engagement and communication with women and girls 	Quarterly	NTE Met Police
2.20	Collaborative work with Youth Offending Service, to focus on interventions for girls in the criminal justice system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VAWG CLO Deliver presentations of restorative justice throughout the year Produce and disseminate a short video Youth Justice and Restorative justice and roll out to LBTH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced collaboration between police and Youth Offending teams Improved support for women and girls in the criminal justice system 	Quarterly	Met Police
2.21	Improve VAWG information and referral pathways from health services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of health professional trained on VAWG (this includes health, mental health and GP) Number health referrals Solace IDVA received (this includes GP's, Health Visitors/Midwife, Mental Health services and PCT/Hospital/Health) MARAC health referrals received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MASH referrals Mental Health Primary Care Services Secondary Care/ Acute trust referrals Barts Health NHS Trust referrals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MASH IDVA MARAC SG Adults Crisis MH So called/Honour Based Abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health professionals are well-informed and skilled in identifying VAWG cases and making appropriate referrals Survivors had a positive experience with health services and reported increased in satisfaction with the referral and support process 	Quarterly	Young Adults Programme Lead LBTH & VAWG Coordinator LBTH & Barts Health NHS Trust

2.22	Ensure that women involved in prostitution, selling survival sex and sexual exploitation receive bespoke comprehensive support and assistance in exiting prostitution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommission the Door of Hope, ensuring it is tailored to effectively reach women in prostitution and sexual exploitation and addresses gaps in provision. • Evaluate and analyse quarterly reports, identifying reach. • Tower Hamlets Prostitution Partnership (THPP) Forum meets monthly (MARAC-style case management meeting) and the THPP Strategic Committee meets bi-yearly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women involved in prostitution and sexual exploitation had increased access to specialised support services • Increased levels of trust and engagement from women involved in prostitution and hidden exploitation with support service 	March 2025	Women's Criminal Justice Pathway, LBTH
2.23	Pursue, disrupt and prosecute perpetrators involved in sexual exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Delivery of Operation Make Safe to ensure safeguarding of children and young people exploited within hotels and the nighttime economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of arrests for child abduction • Number of Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWN's) issued as a result of arrests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims/Survivors are safeguarded against sexual exploitation • Increased in enforcement action against perpetrators 		Missing Persons Unit and Exploitation Team Met Police
2.24	Collaborate with Probation to bolster use of GPS tagging for high-risk offenders to mitigate against repeat victimisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased numbers of perpetrators with tags 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perpetrators held accountable • Reduced repeat offending of perpetrators • Reduced repeat victimisation 	Nov / Dec 2024	McPherson Met Police
2.25	Implement DA DfE recommendation into Family Hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract a DA caseworker in LBTH family hubs • Hopscotch physically located in family hubs for 2 days per month • Bite-sized' training delivered family hubs staff who do not require more in-depth training • Provide private spaces for survivors to speak confidently • VAWG awareness raising information provided • Create online information family hubs on domestic abuse services and advice about responding to survivors/victims of DA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved protection and support for children and families affected by domestic abuse. • Greater awareness among staff and service users about domestic abuse, available support and Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance and how to respond to DA appropriately • Increased staff awareness of perpetrator support programmes. 	March 2025	Transformation Project Manager, LBTH
2.26		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		

Priority 3: Responding to Perpetrators

'Holding perpetrators to account whilst providing opportunity for change and support'

No.	Action	Output	Outcome	Timescales	Lead Officer
3.1	Commission and complete Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR) with lessons learned implemented via Action Plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of DHR reviews commissioned, panel meetings held, reviews published Number of recommendations and/or action plans completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons were learned and implemented through DHRs Improved support, protection and earlier intervention for victims and survivors Improved DA intervention across services, based on learning from DHRs Improved information sharing between key partners Implemented recommendations from Domestic Homicide Reviews so that improvements are made, and victims are better safeguarded 	Quarterly	Senior VAWG and HC Manager, LBTH
3.2	Deliver the Positive Change programme for domestic abuse perpetrators known to Childrens Social Care (CSC).	PCP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of survivors received and worked with Number of children in children group Number of perpetrator referrals and worked with Deliver regular consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborated effectively between CSC and other agencies, ensuring coordinated support for perpetrators and their families Reduced abusive behaviours, leading to a lower risk of reoffending and causing harm 		Team Manager - Positive Change LBTH
3.3	Offer Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA) to domestic abuse; A Programme for domestic abuse perpetrators who are not fathers. Monitor the number of The Drive Project referrals.	Work with partners to encourage referrals through raising awareness of new provision. CIFA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of perpetrator referrals and worked with. Number of referrals Representation at MARAC and meet with key front line statutory services to encourage and identify referrals The Drive Project:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perpetrators achieved long-term behavioural change, reducing the likelihood of future domestic abuse incidents Reduced abusive behaviours, leading to a lower risk of reoffending and causing harm 	Quarterly	Senior VAWG and HC Manager, LBTH

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of perpetrator referrals and worked with Number of referrals 			
3.4	Deliver operations to target kerb crawling. And the buyers of sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run 4 operations per annum Number of arrests to individual caught kerb crawling number of training sessions on kerb crawler to officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perpetrators knew that their behaviour was unacceptable and would not be tolerated by their community Decreased the number of kerb crawling incidents within the target area 	March 2025	Metropolitan Police
3.5	Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers (THEOs) to issue Community Protection Notice (CPN) and Community Protection Warnings (CPW) to “kerb crawlers” to develop a better intelligence picture and provide deterrence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular issuance of CPNs and CPWs to identified kerb crawlers Number of kerb crawling incidents Training sessions for THEOS officers on issuing CPNs and CPWs and gathering intelligence effectively Number of referrals to You choose programme to ensure perpetrator behaviour addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved a reduction in kerb crawling incidents CPNs and CPWs acted as a deterrent to repeat offenders, reducing the likelihood of reoffending 		Head of Safer Neighbourhood Operations, LBTH & Women’s Criminal Justice Pathway, LBTH
3.6	Improved Identification - record numbers of Service Users known to Reset and DIP identified with a perpetrator risk flag.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring number of perps flag referred to perpetrator programmes. Identify number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adults’ risk to other adults. service users at risk to children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved identification of service users with perpetrator risk flags leading to more effective risk management and intervention strategies. Increased safety for survivors and victims Receive tailored support aimed at reducing risk behaviours and preventing future harm, including increased referrals to perp programmes. 	March 2025	Head of Safer Neighbourhood Operations, LBTH & Women’s Criminal Justice Pathway, LBTH
3.7	Work with Criminal Justice Agencies to ensure positive outcomes around VAWG/DA for women in the criminal justice system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly London Criminal Justice Board meetings representation Quarterly Local Justice Area meetings representation Regular meeting with local Police teams to ensure support for women selling survival sex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved victims support and safeguarding Enhance collaboration across agencies 	Quarterly	Senior VAWG and HC Manager, LBTH & Lidia Blachowicz Women’s Criminal Justice Pathway, LBTH
3.9	Undertake high impact arrest days to specifically target domestic abuse offenders to improve sanction detection rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrest cars out Monday – Friday every week Number of domestic abuse offenders arrested each quarter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of perpetrator enforcement 	Quarterly	Met Police

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sanction detection rates 			
3.10	Women/Children community focused groups focusing on informal conversations around lived experiences of crime and support needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold monthly sessions with Ramla Ali sisters' Quarterly WIT VAWG engagement sessions young girls/adults. Support at IDEA store drop-in sessions for women Carry out yearly school summer camp engagement visit Hold weekly east London Mosque engagement sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced support for women and children Increased community engagement Improved understanding of lived experiences of crime Better identification of support needs 	Quarterly	Met Police
3.11	Police target perpetrators within the night-time economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WAVE Training to all venues, VAWG cars out in the NTE in peak busier seasons such as Summer, Spiking intensification weeks, Halloween, Christmas and New Year Engagement stands with partners throughout the year at various locations particularly during spiking intensification week and peak seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased safety and visibility within the night-time economy Enhanced police presence, response and effectiveness in night-time economy and responding to NTE Crimes 	Quarterly	NTE Met Police