



Our Tower Hamlets

A Plan for a More Cohesive Community 2020-25 (Summary)



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What we mean by community and cohesion

By 'community' we mean people from different backgrounds and interests who live, work or study in Tower Hamlets.

Tower Hamlets has adopted the definition of Community Cohesion linked to the Cantle and Denham reports. This definition is widely accepted and is embedded in both national and regional approaches to social integration.

It states that *a cohesive society is one in which:*

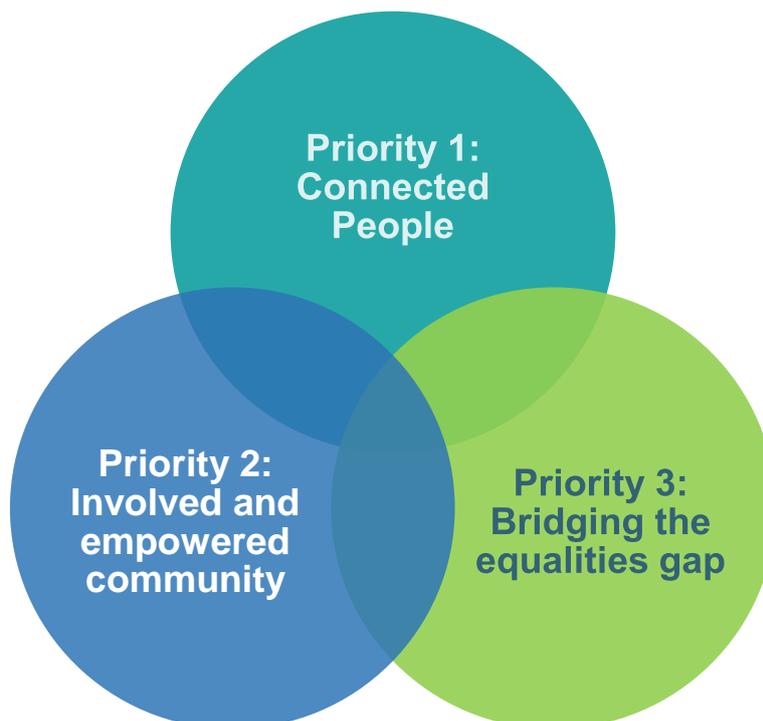
- *there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities;*
- *the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued;*
- *similar life opportunities are available to all; and*
- *Strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.*

Our vision

We will have a strong and cohesive borough, where different parts of the community are connected, and people of all backgrounds feel they belong; participate in community life; and have equal opportunities

Our priorities

Our 2020-2025 cohesion plan is based on 3 key priorities, each with different areas of focus and commitments to achieve them and detailed in the following pages. The priorities are:



Priority 1: Connected people

Outcome: People have strong and positive relationships with others from the same and different backgrounds

We will	So that
<p>Our Places and Spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Embed cohesion principles in the regeneration delivery plan so the regeneration projects and programmes facilitate development of positive relationships between people of different backgrounds• Help to ensure that the design of new high-density development in the borough contributes toward a high-quality of life. Encouraging mixed and balanced communities, providing opportunities for inclusive play and enabling people to be better supported in the different aspects of their everyday life• Waive street closure charges when residents make a successful application to close local streets for community events such as for street parties <p>Children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen the connection of children and young people from demographically diverse backgrounds across different schools, so they can interact and build positive relationships.• Work with a range of services to develop a Play Charter which emphasises the importance of inclusive play and promotes play across all cultures, ages and abilities• Embed cohesion and intergenerational activity as a priority within the review of the youth service, ensuring that our youth clubs are places where a diverse mix of people come together	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We have a stronger and more resilient community• People have opportunities to mix with others from different backgrounds• A greater understanding of people from other backgrounds• Fewer people are lonely or isolated

We will	So that
<p>Community projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop programmes at Idea Stores which encourage people to share stories and histories in order to learn more about each other and encourage new conversations. • Continuing to have community cohesion as a key theme for the LBTH Small Grants Fund enabling local voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver projects that strengthen cohesion in the Borough. • Connecting people and institutions from different faiths through the Tower Hamlets Interfaith Forum (THIFF) and encouraging collaboration of people from different faiths to help tackle social issues such as homelessness, poverty, knife crime etc. <p>Loneliness and social isolation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a new fund to enable local groups to deliver community led projects tackling loneliness and social isolation by encouraging neighbourhood based social interaction projects to help remove local barriers between people. • Develop a neighbourliness campaign that encourages more acts of neighbourliness to increase the connections between neighbours and helps to overcome isolation. 	

Priority 2: Involved and empowered community

Outcome: People have a common vision and a greater sense of belonging in the community

We will	So that
<p>Celebrating diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and reorganising our funding for events that celebrate particular parts of the community to create a Celebrating Diversity fund, enabling more community groups to hold events celebrating e.g. disabled, LGBT+, faith communities and women as well as overall diversity • Build on the success of the 2019 Youth Achievement Awards, using them as a platform for enabling adults in the community to have greater recognition of the contributions of young people to the community • Promote the Great Get Together campaign and encouraging local residents and groups to run events or street parties. <p>Strengthening leadership and bringing leaders together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear Localism Policy that sets out how we will encourage and empower the community to take the lead • Work with our Partners and local businesses to deliver on our priorities to create a more cohesive borough, including building on the importance of the workplace as a place where different people can come together. • Utilising Council grants and procurement to ensure that the things we fund reach our diverse communities and contribute to community cohesion <p>Effective volunteering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage volunteering in the borough that creates civic pride and a sense of belonging • Build on volunteering during the pandemic, empowering people to be active in their local community, in order to address the impacts of Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People participate actively in community life in ways that are positive for them • Community assets grow across the borough (people, associations, institutions) • Communities help shape their local area and services • People have greater pride in their local area

We will	So that
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the SEND Parent Ambassador programme to all schools. <p>Participation and social action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and encouraging social action, including through programmes such as The Big Clean Up and the Public Health led Communities Driving Change programme • Launch an interactive engagement programme to increase democratic participation of residents including registering to vote and voting. • Improve the quality of engagement with Council services to enable a range of community voices to be heard including through the implementation of the consultation hub and consultation and engagement guidance 	

Priority 3: Bridging the equalities gap

Outcome: Similar life opportunities are available to all

We will	So that
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reorganise our diversity networks to empower the community to identify and tackle inequalities they share with others and to enable their voice to be heard in shaping the future of the borough. This includes provision for disabled, LGBT+ and faith communities.• Work with our partners to enable more people to take up of Skills for Life training (which includes ESOL, English, Math's and IT), and developing a new element of the programme to support participation in community life.• Support BAME groups and women to enter into employment• Implement the Poverty Proofing the School Day project in the Borough which supports schools to create an equitable experience of the school day for all children, regardless of their parental income.• Work to tackle violence against women and girls by providing support and protection for victims, bringing offenders to justice and engaging with communities to raise awareness and challenge misogyny• Improve the way that Council staff understand about our diverse communities and the inequalities people face by launching a new equality and diversity training offer• Continue to work with our partners to tackle hate crime through the No Place for Hate Campaign• Explore how the digital exclusion and digital poverty of people in our community can be systematically addressed to ensure that everyone has access to digital tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New communities feel supported• There is Less inequality in the borough• People feel the diversity of the community is valued• Women are visible in our community and in leadership roles• The people of our borough are instrumental in tackling the inequalities they face

How we will know this is working

The table below shows whether our actions to strengthen cohesion in the borough are having the impact we want. Part of our approach to cohesion is to work in individual neighbourhoods, and the impact of this will be measured locally. Measures relating to cohesion will be influenced by a wide range of factors, far wider than the actions we commit to in this plan. When all the measures below are taken together, however, they should give a strong picture of how cohesive the borough is.

Outcomes	Measure
People have strong and positive relationships with others from the same and different backgrounds	More residents feel people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
	More young people feel Tower Hamlets is a place where young people from different backgrounds get on well together
	People have friends /acquaintances from different backgrounds ((by ethnicity, age, level of education, income, religious group)
	Fewer residents feeling lonely some of the time or all the time
People have a common vision and a greater sense of belonging in the community	More residents are satisfied with their local area / neighbourhood as a place to live
	More residents and staff undertake volunteering
	More people register to vote and use their vote
	More people feel the Council involves residents in making decision
Similar life opportunities are available to all	More women and residents from BAME backgrounds are supported into sustainable employment
	Level of hate crime
	Adults from the most deprived postcodes complete training & skills programmes
	Percentage of learners who complete their ESOL programme and the percentage who achieve the outcomes of the programme.