

Appendix I: Description of community support hub

Overall, the vision is to have a community support hub that acts as a flexible 'base' for people to access the huge and vibrant range of activities that are available to people living in Tower Hamlets, dropping into the building itself as needed; whilst providing a safe space and incorporating the things that service users have told us are important to them. This document describes what this could look like in more detail.

Example case studies

Mr A normally goes to the hub on a Tuesday lunchtime, using a direct payment to get a taxi to travel there and back. He goes to check his email, have lunch at the café and to see what the activities programme is for the week. Based on this, Mr A attends a book club group that afternoon at the hub. He signs up for a gardening session at a 'spoke' site the following day, and for an exercise class targeted at older people run out of a leisure centre on Saturday.

Mrs B goes to the hub three days per week, preferring to have a structured routine that works for her and her family. Mrs B talks to hub staff about what she wants to do, discussing her interests and needs. Hub staff plan out activities with Mrs B, noting that she needs support with transport and access to toilets that are fully accessible. As a result, on a Monday, Mrs B attends a gardening session and arts class at the hub. On a Tuesday, Mrs B meets friends at a Linkage Plus centre for a coffee morning. On a Wednesday, Mrs B helps run a cooking class at the hub which is open to visitors.

1. What is the community support hub?

Building and staff

- The hub will be based in one building, although activities will be planned across a range of sites ('spokes'). Support staff will be based in the hub and work primarily from that site.
- The hub will provide a safe space and there will be staff presence on-site to provide support when needed.
- The role of hub staff will include information and advice provision as and when needed – e.g. a service user needing support with benefits could get advice or be signposted to specialist advice provision.
- Staff will work with service users to identify their interests and support them to access tailored activities designed around their likes and dislikes. Each service user will be supported to decide how they would like to spend their day. Staff will then support service users build connections with the things and people that are important to them and will work through considerations such as transport with service users.
- Staff will facilitate some of the activities in the hub – e.g. facilitating peer support groups.
- Staff will organise other activities in both hubs and spokes – e.g. organising a yoga class in another location.
- Staff will have strong links with the reablement service, taking a 'reablement approach' in supporting people to be as independent as possible. Reablement staff can also work on-site and from the hub as needed.
- Staff will have expert and up-to-date knowledge of the needs of older people and adults with a physical disability and the activities and facilities available in the local area. Community languages will be spoken.
- A network of volunteers will supplement the work of staff.
- In addition, advocacy support will be available to service users to resolve issues (e.g. difficulties in resolving a housing issue). Depending on needs and preferences, this advocacy can be offered directly by hub staff to through our commissioned advocacy services.

Activities

- Activities organised through the hub will enable people to come together and socialise: People will be able to spend time with others with whom they have a shared understanding based on their age or disability. Some facilitation may be needed to support people to do this.
- Activities will reflect user needs and wishes. Based on the consultation results, this includes activities that build skills, confidence and improve mental and physical health.
- Taking a reablement and strengths-based approach, activities will support people to be as independent as possible. Service users can share skills and contribute to their communities.
- Some activities will take place in the hub building, such as gardening or cooking classes.
- Some activities will take place in other sites ('spokes'), such as coffee mornings or book clubs. Some of these activities will need to be organised by hub staff, some will be pre-existing activities that the hub can promote
- The hub will hold a schedule of weekly activities available in the hub, in spokes and in other services or facilities (e.g. Idea Stores). The hub will have strong links with Linkage Plus centres and the activities run from these.
- Some activities will be digital and service users will be supported to access these

Facilities

- The hub will provide a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment for visitors.
- It will have a range of rooms and flexible spaces for different activities, including a kitchen area and garden.
- It will include meeting rooms to enable private meetings between service users and staff.
- The hub or spoke sites will include a social enterprise café, run by service users, open to all, providing a place to meet and use or develop skills.
- There will be internet access and a focus on digital inclusion.
- Assistive technology will be on-site.
- The hub will have fully accessible toilets and changing facilities.
- The spoke sites will give service users access to a wider range of facilities – e.g. sports facilities or pottery rooms.
- Transport facilities will be thought through: For those who need support, options include hub-owned transport and direct payments for people to travel by taxi.

Where is it?

- We recommend that the hub be based at Sonali Gardens.
- Spoke activities – arranged by the hub - could be at a range of locations including Idea Stores, Pritchard's Road and/or an accessible site on the Isle of Dogs. For example, weekly pottery classes or IT classes could be held at Pritchard Road. A calendar of activities in spoke will be held by the hub.
- As previously noted, the hub will link in with a range of other activities taking place around the borough. This includes activities in Linkage Plus centres, leisure centres and Idea Stores around the borough.

When will it open?

- The hub will be open seven days a week.
- The hub will be a flexible service that enables people to come and go in line with their needs and interests.
- However, there will be the ability for people to agree a structure or routine in when and where they get support if they want to.

Who is it for?

- The hub will be targeted at older people and adults with a physical disability, but also open to adults with mental health issues and those with a learning disability.
- It will be available for service users who currently attend Riverside and PD Day Opportunities, pending a review meeting to discuss individual needs and wishes.
- Although it is not targeted at adults with a mental health issue, the hub will be available to current Pritchard's Road day service users, pending a review meeting to discuss individual

needs and wishes. This includes service users being able to take part in activities that take place in the hub and/or spoke sites.

- It will be available for new people who are eligible for social care following a Care Act social care assessment, using our existing referral routes into social care (e.g. via GPs, self-referrals, referrals following a period of reablement).