

Tower Hamlets Partnership



# TOWER HAMLETS COMMUNITY PLAN 2011



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Image courtesy of Levitt Bernstein

*Artist depiction of the completed Ocean Estate Regeneration Project*





## Foreword



Tower Hamlets is a vibrant borough, at the heart of the regeneration of London's east end. What makes it special are its proud and diverse communities. The Tower Hamlets Partnership is committed to improving the lives of these communities – all those who live, work and invest in the borough.

The Partnership brings together people and organisations with a vital role in the borough:

residents; public services; voluntary and community groups and local businesses. We have made good progress over the past few years in improving the quality of life in Tower Hamlets. There is more housing provision in the borough, in 2010 we delivered more affordable housing than any other borough in the country; our young people are performing better at school; people are healthier; and the borough is safer.

The next few years will be challenging for Tower Hamlets. We are living through the most austere times – with public services having far less money to spend on services than before. Despite these difficult times the Partnership remains dedicated to making the borough a better place to live and work, particularly for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our communities. We will continue to strive for the very best for our borough.

I am therefore pleased to present the new Tower Hamlets Community Plan on behalf of the Tower Hamlets Partnership. The Plan sets out our shared vision for improving the borough over the next three years. It is an ambitious Plan. It outlines how we will continue to reduce inequality and poverty in the

borough to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential – articulated in our One Tower Hamlets aspiration.

The Plan has been informed by the views of local people. Through a number of consultation events, local people, organisations and businesses have told us what matters to them most.

The key priority areas of the Plan reflect what local people have been telling us. They include: providing more affordable housing – particularly family sized social rented housing, supporting local people into employment, improving the education of our young people as part of creating a culture of aspiration, and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

We all have a role to play in achieving the vision of the Community Plan. The current financial climate means we are going to have to work more efficiently together to be able to do so.

I believe that this Plan, including the key strategies listed to help deliver it, will enable us to make a lasting difference to local people and communities in Tower Hamlets. I look forward to working with you all to make it a reality for our borough.

### **Lutfur Rahman**

*Mayor of Tower Hamlets and  
Chair of the Tower Hamlets Partnership*



## 1

# Tower Hamlets Story



*St Katharine's Docks*

## Growth and diversity

- 1.1 Tower Hamlets is unique; unparalleled in its history of diversity and growth. Situated at the edge of the City and on the River Thames it has long been a centre of industry, migration and culture: from its internationally significant docks that brought maritime trade to London, to the clothing industry through the industrial ages, to a global financial power house today.
- 1.2 In recent times Tower Hamlets has experienced the largest growth in the country and has been the focal point of regeneration in London. Significant development activities include the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, continued development within the Thames Gateway and the expansion of Canary Wharf. This presents immense opportunities for the borough.
- 1.3 The borough's Local Economic Assessment, an analysis of the local economy and future economic prospects, shows that the economy has changed from a strong manufacturing base to an economy primarily of financial services. Other important industries include retail, wholesale, hotels and restaurants. The local economy has been affected by the downturn but is beginning to recover and further growth and employment opportunities are forecast, supported by the planned growth of Canary Wharf and the City Fringe.
- 1.4 Diversity has always been a key strength of the borough. Tower Hamlets has historically been home to a mix of communities. Waves of migration to the borough include the Flemings in the 14th century, French Huguenots in the 17th century, the Jewish community, Irish Catholics, Bangladeshis in the mid 20th century and more recently Somali, Chinese and Eastern European communities.
- 1.5 The borough's population peaked at the turn of the 19th and 20th century, dropping in the post-war period and increasing again in the 1960s. It now has the fastest growing population in London, estimated to be 242,000 and projected to increase to 316,300 by 2026. This growing population is ethnically diverse, with almost half of the borough's population comprising of Black and minority ethnic groups, with the largest of these (33%) being the Bangladeshi community.
- 1.6 Religion continues to play a prominent role in the lives of many of the borough's population, with 80% of residents claiming a religious belief and Tower Hamlets being home to the largest Muslim population in the country. The borough also has a relatively young population with 37% of people aged 20-34, compared to 20% across England. The borough's population is expected to grow across all age groups, but growth is strongest in the older age groups.
- 1.7 The richness of Tower Hamlets is also evident in its physical and cultural assets. The borough's diverse history is reflected in the collection of hamlets that grew along and around the trade and movement routes between the City of London and the hinterlands of Essex. Tower Hamlets boasts extensive waterways, Victoria and Mile End Park, an assortment of markets, and the Tower of London from which it derives its name. A rich cultural scene consisting of community and music festivals, a vibrant gallery sector and museums, including the Museum in Docklands and the Museum of Childhood, reflect the historical and contemporary cultural diversity of the East End. All of these contribute to the borough's unmatched sense of place and identity.

## Challenges ahead

- 1.8 Tower Hamlets is improving. Residents are healthier, our children are performing at or above the national average in school and there are fewer young people not in education, training or employment. Businesses continue to be attracted to its growth, location and connectivity and the borough's streets and public spaces are cleaner and safer. Its town centres and neighbourhoods are also being developed and regenerated.
- 1.9 Despite the improvement and regeneration, deprivation and poverty continue to be prominent features in the distinct story of Tower Hamlets. The borough's historic challenges – housing, employment, poverty, crime and health inequalities – continue to be key issues and major concerns for local people.
- 1.10 Tower Hamlets remains a place of contrast: immense wealth sitting alongside stark poverty. The average annual earnings of those working in the borough is £64,000, yet a third of residents live in poverty and the borough has the highest rate of child and pensioner poverty nationally. Health inequality remains a key characteristic of the borough, with the average life expectancy below the London average for both men and women. All of these issues converge to make Tower Hamlets one of the most deprived boroughs nationally.
- 1.11 The next few years will be challenging for Tower Hamlets. The improved outcomes for local people over the past decade have, in part, been as a result of the level of resources available to public services. We are now experiencing challenging financial times, with the public sector having far less money to spend on services than before. This is happening alongside growing demand on services including a rapidly growing and ageing population.
- 1.12 The new national policy context is important for Tower Hamlets. Policy developments including changes to social housing provision, the new Work Programme for those out of work,

## Despite the existing and emerging challenges facing the borough, the Tower Hamlets Partnership remains dedicated to making Tower Hamlets a better place to live and work, and has developed a new Community Plan to assist it in doing so.

changes to education funding and reform of the health service, pose challenges and opportunities for the borough.

- 1.13 The reform of the welfare system, including changes to benefits, tax credits and support for families, will also have a considerable impact on many residents in the borough. The combined effect for many residents will be a drop in household income both immediately and over time. Given the already high levels of poverty and deprivation in the borough, these changes will make it even harder for many households to get by; potentially affecting educational attainment, crime, health and wellbeing in the borough.

## A New Community Plan

- 1.14 Despite the existing and emerging challenges facing the borough, the Tower Hamlets Partnership remains dedicated to making Tower Hamlets a better place to live and work, and has developed a new Community Plan to assist it in doing so. It is an ambitious strategy for an aspirational borough. It outlines how we will continue to reduce inequality and poverty, particularly among the most disadvantaged in our borough, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. As a Partnership we are determined that the next chapter in the history of our borough is one of resilience and opportunities for all.



- 1.15 This new Community Plan reflects our understanding that we need to work differently: smarter and more innovatively as a partnership in the current challenging climate. There is a stronger emphasis on the cross-cutting principles that will underpin the Partnership's approach to achieving the Community Plan. These are One Tower Hamlets – including community engagement; efficiency; and localisation. One Tower Hamlets is central to achieving the Community Plan aspiration of tackling exclusion and inequality. As part of this, community engagement is our commitment to better support residents to engage in issues that matter most to them, recognising that we all have a collective and personal responsibility in achieving the Plan. Indeed the views of local people have helped to develop the Plan through a number of consultation events.
- 1.16 In this current financial context efficient use of resources becomes paramount. The new Community Plan places the need to provide value for money services at the forefront of all that we do. The final principle is our localisation approach – a drive to integrate and deliver services closer to local people and with residents, neighbourhood and community groups fully involved.
- 1.17 The Community Plan has been refined to ensure that the borough is best placed to address its key issues and maximise opportunities. It also captures the core objectives of the borough's directly elected Mayor.
- 1.18 The Great Place to Live theme continues to be about the liveability of the borough: housing, transport, public realm, town centres and facilities. There is now also a greater focus on providing affordable social rented housing, particularly family-sized housing, and addressing energy efficiency and fuel poverty as part of providing decent quality housing.
- 1.19 The Prosperous Community theme remains centred on tackling worklessness, improving education and supporting enterprise.

There is a new emphasis on responding to the national welfare reform programme: making the most of its opportunities and reducing its negative impact on local people. Embedding a culture of aspiration among residents – especially our young people – is a key priority within this theme.

- 1.20 There is a new Safe and Cohesive Community theme, enabling a stronger concentration on crime, anti-social behaviour and people's perceptions of feeling safe in the borough.

*Chrip Street Idea Store*







*Mela Festival down Brick Lane*

Alongside this is a focus on community cohesion, supporting and celebrating the borough's diverse communities as well as protecting this from the threat of extremism.

- 1.21 The Healthy and Supportive Community theme is the new theme centred on supporting residents to live healthier, more independent lives and reduce the risk of harm and neglect to vulnerable children and adults. It also articulates the borough's initial response to the changing structures of health care.

### The Tower Hamlets Partnership

- 1.22 The Tower Hamlets Partnership is responsible for delivering the Community Plan. It was established in 2001 and brings together residents, the Council, Police, the health service and other public services, voluntary and community groups, faith communities and businesses – with the aim of working together to improve the borough.
- 1.23 The Partnership consists of different structures with varying roles and responsibilities.

- **The Partnership Board**  
provides the overall strategic direction of the Community Plan. Its membership includes the Mayor and other local community leaders such as councillors and school governors, as well as representatives from public services and businesses. The Board meets three to four times a year.
- **The Partnership Executive**  
oversees the delivery of the Plan on behalf of the Partnership Board. This includes allocating resources as necessary to deliver outcomes and regularly monitoring progress against the objectives of the Community Plan. The Executive is chaired by the Mayor of Tower Hamlets and includes key public sector organisations along with representatives from regional and sub-regional groups.
- **Community Plan Delivery Groups**  
are responsible for the specific delivery of the thematic objectives. There is a delivery group for each Community Plan theme consisting of specialist representatives from partner organisations including third sector representation.
- **Issue-based groups**  
are important bodies in the Partnership that contribute to delivering the Community Plan by leading on specific issues such as the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum, Localisation Board, Diversity and Equality Network and Third Sector Advisory Board.
- **Localised governance structures**  
includes locality based community groups, led by ward councillors and local people, focusing on how the Community Plan is being delivered locally and providing the local governance frameworks to hold the Partnership to account.



## 2 Developing the Community Plan

- 2.1 The Plan reflects the needs and aspirations of the borough's diverse communities and has been informed by detailed analysis of current and future needs in the borough. The Partnership has brought together its resources and expertise on the borough to develop social, economic and environmental trends and projections to feed into the development of the Plan.
- 2.2 Local people and organisations have played an integral role in the development of the Plan through an informative

consultation process. This included community based events across the borough, market stall sessions at some of the borough's well known markets, a series of workshops and online surveys. Residents, community groups, local businesses, elected members, third sector organisations and public bodies all contributed to deciding the Tower Hamlets we all want to live, work and study in.

*Consultation event with residents at Central Foundation Girls' School*



## What local people said



**“It’s important to focus on things that make the East End – not just buildings”.**

**“Housing facilities are most important”.**

**“The actions taken to prevent crime need to be visible”.**

**“Fun things for families to do”.**

**“We are importing more than exporting. We should encourage people to set up their own businesses”.**

**“I think that we’ve done well so far, but there is room for improvement”.**

**“School education in the borough has improved, but jobs are not available for the local children”.**

**“As communities, we don’t know enough about each other although we nod and say hello. There is respect, but need basis of trust”.**

**“Developments built on green spaces and lots of housing is set aside for buying/investment opportunities – not available to local people”.**





## 3 Vision and Priorities

*The overall vision for the Community Plan remains to:  
'Improve the lives of all those living and working in the borough'.*

3.1 Turning this vision into reality is based on achieving four main priorities, articulated as the four themes of the Community Plan. These themes remain broadly similar with the previous Plan, as discussions with local people and partners revealed that these priorities are still as relevant now as they were in 2008. There have been some changes to the Community Plan themes to ensure they are better aligned. A Safe and Supportive Community is now a Safe and Cohesive Community to focus on crime and building a more cohesive and resilient community. A Healthy Community is now a Healthy and Supportive Community to better recognise the overlap between health and social care.

⊙ **A Great Place to Live**

Tower Hamlets will be a place where people live in quality affordable housing, located in clean and safe neighbourhoods served by well connected and easy to access services and community facilities.

⊙ **A Prosperous Community**

Tower Hamlets will be a place where everyone, regardless of their background and circumstances, has the aspiration and opportunity to achieve their full potential.



⊙ **A Safe and Cohesive Community**

Tower Hamlets will be a safer place where people feel safer, get on better together and difference is not seen as threat but a core strength of the borough.

⊙ **A Healthy and Supportive Community**

Tower Hamlets will be a place where people are supported to live healthier, more independent lives and the risk of harm and neglect to vulnerable children and adults is reduced.

3.2 Though presented as four distinct themes, these priorities are not mutually exclusive but interdependent. Collectively they will help support the cross-cutting social, economic and environmental change necessary to improve the lives of local people.





## 4 Achieving Our Vision – Cross-Cutting Principles

- 4.1 The Community Plan priorities are underpinned by four cross-cutting principles that will guide how we work together to achieve our shared vision. These principles apply to all the Community Plan themes and are integral to the delivery of the Plan.

### One Tower Hamlets: tackling inequalities and promoting inclusion

- 4.2 One Tower Hamlets is our aspiration to reduce poverty and inequality, bring local communities closer together, and provide strong leadership by involving and empowering people and giving them the tools and support to improve their lives.
- 4.3 Tower Hamlets is a place of immense opportunity, but we know that poverty and inequality stop residents achieving their full potential. The borough is one of the most deprived nationally and the cuts in public funding have the potential to hit some of our poorest and most vulnerable communities hardest. The Partnership also takes seriously its responsibilities under the new Equality Act 2010 to demonstrate that local priorities are underpinned by a robust analysis of inequality.
- 4.4 The Partnership has always been at the forefront of tackling inequality and promoting inclusion. The new Plan provides a more targeted approach to tackling inequality, with specific equality priorities for each theme. The Partnership will focus on the most significant inequality gaps that are at risk of further widening. The Tower Hamlets Diversity Network which brings together equality practitioners from across partner organisations will support the delivery of the One Tower Hamlets priorities. The Network will work with each of the Community Plan Delivery Groups to implement the priorities through the



*Pupils from Arnhem Wharf Primary School*

borough's strategies and equality schemes such as the Tower Hamlets NHS Single Equality Scheme and the Council's Single Equality Framework.

### Community Engagement: supporting a powerful public

- 4.5 Involving local people is central to how we work as a Partnership. The vision of the Community Plan cannot be achieved without the active role of those who live and work in the borough. Local people have a good understanding of their communities and often know how to better tackle local issues. A lot of the challenges facing the borough require the active participation of local people. Action by public sector agencies alone will not reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, improve the cleanliness of the public realm, reduce smoking and substance misuse or tackle worklessness. These issues require personal responsibility and collective action.



- 4.6 We are developing our understanding of community engagement to better enable local people to decide the solutions to issues affecting them and their communities. Through the Tower Hamlets Citizen Engagement Strategy we are setting out our approach to better support a 'powerful public' – active and resilient local communities, empowered to hold public services to account.
- 4.7 The Partnership is starting from a strong base of community engagement. Tower Hamlets has one of the highest rates of volunteering and civic participation in the country, including our community champions (local volunteers) and community forums. The Partnership also has a strong history of using innovative methods to engage the borough's diverse communities to help improve services. This includes You Decide! our nationally recognised good practice model of participatory budgeting and citizen empowerment and our Young Mayor and Youth Parliament – which attracts enormous attention from young people. In 2010 over 50% of young people took part in the vote for the Young Mayor – equating to 8,500 votes.

### **Efficiency: delivering value for money services**

- 4.8 We are now living through the most financially challenging time for public services in many decades. The 2010 Spending Review signalled reductions in public spending in excess of £80 billion over the next four years, which will have a significant effect on all local services and radically transform the way services are delivered. The Partnership now has far less resources to achieve the vision of the Community Plan. The Council will see a reduction of £100 million in its budget for the next four years and the police will also experience significant reductions to their budget. There will be a very small increase in health spending, despite a growing increase in healthcare needs, and potentially less money for voluntary and community organisations who provide vital services in the borough.

### **A significantly reduced budget means that we will have to do things differently, more efficiently – maximising resources to produce better outcomes – in order to continue providing vital services for local people and meet growing needs.**

- 4.9 At a time when we are experiencing significant reductions in public spending, the demand for services continues to increase. Our population is growing at one of the fastest rates, people are living longer and the difficult financial context makes some people more reliant on public services and the support they offer. A significantly reduced budget means that we will have to do things differently, more efficiently – maximising resources in order to continue providing vital services for local people and meet growing needs.
- 4.10 We are already working more efficiently as a partnership. We have developed a public sector asset strategy to make better use of our assets and established joint commissioning arrangements to maximise benefits locally. We also launched a Total Place programme looking at how we can better use resources across the borough to achieve better outcomes for our residents more efficiently. We will be using a Partnership Budget Congress approach to develop this further and collectively respond to the challenging financial climate facing the borough.

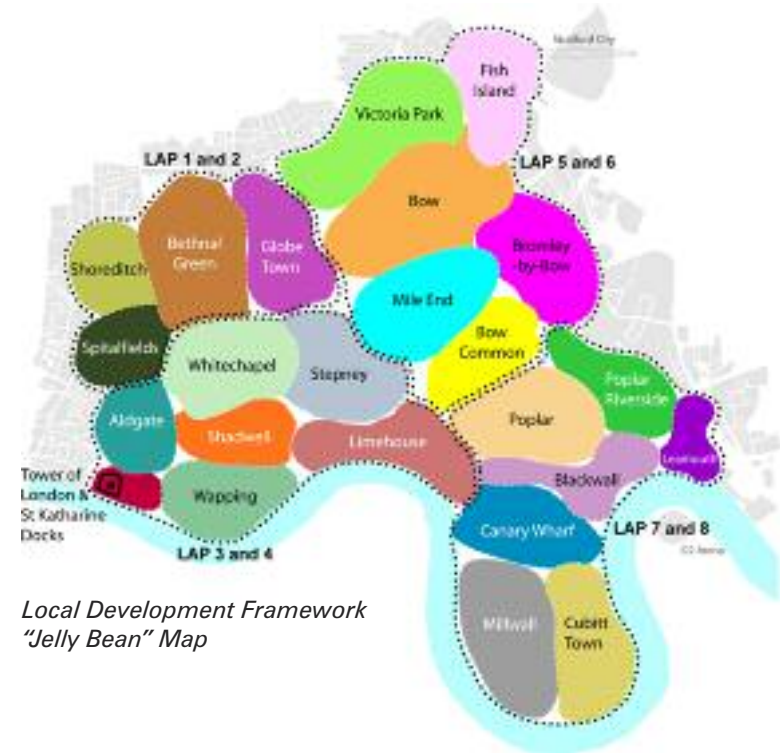




*Housing blocks in Wapping*

### Localisation: delivering services closer to people

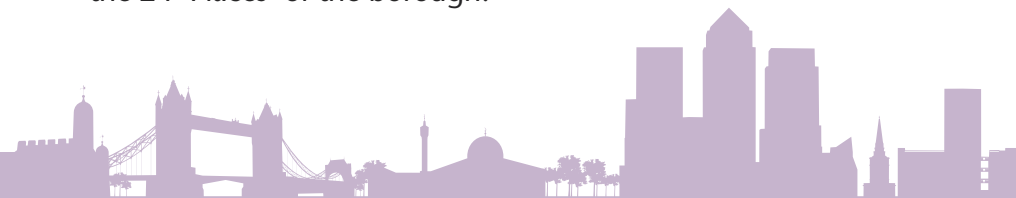
- 4.11 Our localisation agenda is part of our drive as a partnership to do things differently in order to continue improving the lives of local people. Whilst the issues and challenges facing the borough affect all areas of Tower Hamlets, our response to these must be tailored to reflect the differences between the borough’s localities. Our localisation programme aims to improve outcomes for local people by bringing services together locally and better involving local people in how services are run. This will lead to more efficient and effective outcomes by avoiding duplication and empowering people to take greater responsibility of their local services and facilities.
- 4.12 We are currently piloting this model of integrated service delivery in Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) 1 and 2, with a view to extend it to the whole of the borough. The model is bringing together community safety, police, public realm and environmental control teams, and co-locating them in Toby Lane. Neighbourhood agreements and wider citizen engagement to improve services are also being piloted on the



*Local Development Framework  
'Jelly Bean' Map*

Boundary Estate. All of this is being led and co-ordinated by the Localisation Board which brings together a number of partner organisations.

- 4.13 Alongside the Community Plan, we will be developing Locality Plans outlining how the Community Plan vision will be translated in localities – focusing on the specific issues for each local area. These will provide a clear set of actions for each local area as part of achieving the Community Plan objectives and responding to local priorities. Locality Plans are being developed alongside emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) planning documents to ensure alignment with the concept of the 24 ‘Places’ of the borough.





# 5 Achieving Our Vision – A Great Place to Live

## Vision

*A Great Place to Live reflects our continuing ambition to make Tower Hamlets a place where people are proud to live, work and study. Our vision is to achieve a borough where people live in quality affordable housing, located in clean and safe neighbourhoods served by well connected and easy to access services and community facilities. Underpinning this aspiration is a focus on sustainability.*

## Key Achievements

- The 2009/10 Annual Residents Survey shows that 72% of residents agree that the Council is making the area a better place to live
- We delivered over 2,600 affordable homes in the borough between 2009 and 2011, this is the most achieved by any local authority in the country
- We successfully prevented 1,083 households becoming homeless in 2009/10
- Tower Hamlets Homes awarded 2 out of 3 stars by the government's independent housing inspectors
- We completed our Core Strategy – an ambitious spatial strategy to prepare the borough for ongoing and sustainable growth
- We have made good progress on the estate renewal projects for the Ocean Estate and Blackwall Reach
- Recycling is now up to 27.7% – compared to 19.3% in 2009

## Challenges and Opportunities for Tower Hamlets

- 5.1 The Partnership has made good progress in making Tower Hamlets a more sustainable borough. There still remains a number of key challenges to making the borough a better place to live: large and growing demand for affordable housing, particularly social rented family housing; managing a housing stock that is predominantly flats and estates; lack of open space; transport and connectivity.
- 5.2 Despite record levels of housing provision, demand for housing in the borough continues to outweigh supply. Providing quality affordable housing is an integral part of making Tower Hamlets a great place to live. It remains one of the main concerns of residents, particularly the need for more socially rented family housing.
- 5.3 There are many people in the borough needing suitable accommodation. These range from single people needing one-bedroom properties to families requiring larger accommodation, to those needing specially modified properties to meet their changing needs. The significant increase in property prices make it difficult for many local people to purchase their own homes. As a result, many people remain reliant on social housing and overcrowding continues to be the most acute and persistent housing challenge in the borough, with over 8,500 people experiencing overcrowding.



- 5.4 Housing quality has an important effect on people's quality of life. Poor housing affects our health and wellbeing, family relationships and can have a detrimental impact on young people's educational attainment. Many social and private rented properties in the borough are inadequate and non-decent. This includes properties with low energy efficiency levels, which can lead to fuel poverty and affect the environment.
- 5.5 Local people have told us that the cleanliness and attractiveness of their neighbourhood affects their sense of satisfaction and pride in their area. The quality and accessibility of green open spaces and cleanliness of the urban environment are important parts of this. We are committed to achieving a cleaner and better maintained public realm. This includes: parks and open spaces, streets and roads, street furniture and lighting and communal areas outside housing estates. People dropping litter, fly-posting and graffiti in the borough makes maintaining the cleanliness of the public realm difficult.
- 5.6 Accessible and sustainable transport also plays a critical role in making the borough a great place to live. It influences where people choose to live, work and study. It is important that all local residents are able to move easily around the borough and access the services and facilities they need. The borough's proximity to central London means that it benefits from a number of transport networks; however there are some parts of the borough that are not as well served and connected. Residents have told us that some of the transport infrastructure in the borough can divide communities and hinder community cohesion. Another key transport issue is the growing level of congestion in the borough, making it more difficult to move around the borough.

### Making Tower Hamlets A Great Place to Live

- 5.7 The Local Development Framework translates the Community

Plan aspirations into a physical reality and is the primary mechanism for delivering the priorities within this theme. The LDF will help to manage development, identify locations for services and provide detailed guidance for areas of significant change. Using the LDF new facilities and services are being planned to meet the borough's growing needs including more affordable housing, schools, health centres, transport links and parks.

- 5.8 Reductions in public spending will have an impact on affordable housing provision in the borough. The government's changes to social housing and Housing Benefit will also affect housing affordability in Tower Hamlets. Our approach to delivering affordable housing is therefore partly based on maximising the existing social housing stock of the Council and Registered Social Landlords. For example, the Council has brought back into use a number of empty properties and regained social housing that had been illegally sublet. It is also working to reduce the length of time properties are left empty between tenancies to provide a more efficient lettings service.
- 5.9 Despite the difficult climate for providing social housing, the Partnership is determined to make sure that new homes are provided to meet local needs. Land value in Tower Hamlets is one of our biggest assets. The level of regeneration taking place in the borough and our proximity to central London attracts developers to the borough. The Council will use its position to influence developers to provide a level of affordable housing in the borough. Where possible, the Council will aspire to 50% of new housing being affordable homes, with socially rented homes a priority.
- 5.10 Tower Hamlets Homes, the organisation managing Council housing in the borough, recently secured £94 million to deliver Decent Homes. Tower Hamlets Homes and the Council are working together to deliver Decent Homes investment work to

modernise Council housing and help reduce fuel poverty for residents. The Partnership is also developing a Fuel Poverty Strategy to provide vulnerable residents with the information, guidance and support they need to make their homes more energy efficient. This will align with the borough's Climate Change Strategy to help make all homes more energy efficient and ensure new homes meet the national target of zero carbon emissions by 2016.



*Mile End Park cycle bridge to Meath Gardens*

- 5.11 Our approach to improving the quality of the public realm will be taken forward through the Public Realm Management Plan and Neighbourhood Agreements with local people. This includes developing a common housing management standard and outlining the roles and responsibilities of service providers and residents in improving and maintaining the public realm. Community engagement is central to this approach – with community groups and community champions helping to achieve this. Local community and environmental groups will continue to play an important role working with public sector organisations to manage and take care of the borough's green open spaces and natural environment.
- 5.12 Through our Transport Strategy we will ensure that communities are well connected by good local transport provisions that enable everyone to move easily around the borough. An integral part of this will be to provide and encourage more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and walking through the borough's Green Grid Strategy and Open Space Strategy to connect and enhance new and existing green space. This will

make it easier for people to walk and cycle around the borough whilst also improving their health and wellbeing. It will also improve the environmental wellbeing and sustainability of the borough by reducing our carbon footprint.

### The Objectives

**To make Tower Hamlets a Great Place to Live the Partnership will focus on achieving the following objectives:**

- Objective 1:** *Providing quality affordable housing*
- Objective 2:** *Improving and maintaining the quality of housing, including maximising energy efficiency*
- Objective 3:** *Improving the public realm*
- Objective 4:** *Improving transport links and connectivity*
- Objective 5:** *Providing effective local services and facilities*



### Partnership strategies that will contribute to this theme:

The following strategies and plans will help provide a clear delivery framework to inform partnership working on this theme:

- ⊙ Local Development Framework
- ⊙ Housing Strategy
- ⊙ Homelessness Strategy
- ⊙ Climate Change Strategy
- ⊙ Fuel Poverty Strategy
- ⊙ Public Realm Management Strategy
- ⊙ Transport Strategy
- ⊙ Open Space Strategy
- ⊙ Heritage Strategy



### One Tower Hamlets Focus: A Great Place to Live

Overcrowding and homelessness continue to be key housing challenges for the borough, particularly affecting our poorest families. Having somewhere safe and warm to sleep is fundamental to quality of life and wellbeing. It has a bearing on health, ability to gain and maintain employment, play an active role in community life and educational attainment. The reforms to Housing Benefit, as part of the wider welfare reform, mean that some households will face a drop in their income. This, coupled with the high cost of housing in the borough, puts many vulnerable households at risk of losing their homes or living in further overcrowding. This makes access to decent housing a key equalities priority for the borough.

The low levels of income in the borough means that some households are also at risk of fuel poverty – unable to afford to keep their homes warm at a reasonable cost and spending more than ten percent of their income to do so. Fuel poverty particularly affects vulnerable groups such as older people and families on low income. Improving the energy efficiency of homes in the borough, as part of the decent homes agenda, is crucial to tackling fuel poverty.

An accessible transport system is also a key equalities and social inclusion priority for this theme. Though Tower Hamlets is an inner city borough benefiting from good transport links with the rest of London, for many people, particularly older and disabled people, moving around the borough to access services and facilities can be difficult. In some areas of the borough this is made more difficult by the transport infrastructure which can sometimes be a barrier to moving across the borough and community cohesion.

In order to achieve our commitment to One Tower Hamlets we will:

- Focus on homelessness prevention and reducing and mitigating the effects of overcrowding
- Prevent and reduce fuel poverty for vulnerable groups
- Ensure that the local transport system makes the borough's town centres and neighbourhoods more accessible for all local people, particularly older and disabled people.

# Case Study

## A Great Place to Live: The Ocean Estate Regeneration Project

### Background

The common image of the Ocean Estate, situated in Stepney, is one of missed opportunities and decline. The estate is amongst the most deprived in England, with the vast majority of rented homes falling below the national Decent Homes Standard. Although much has been done to improve the estate, the core challenge remains the physical renewal of the existing council homes and the provision of new homes to help meet need and achieve the aspirations of residents in the area.

In 2009 Tower Hamlets Council came together with East Thames Housing Group, in partnership with Bellway Homes, to deliver transformational change to the estate. The comprehensive regeneration scheme will develop 819 new homes over the next 3 years, of which 48 per cent will be affordable for rent and shared ownership. In addition, the project will deliver external refurbishment to 1,229 homes, including 448 leasehold properties, together with related environmental improvements. 781 social rented homes will have internal improvements to the Decent Homes Plus standard.

### How it's benefiting the borough

At the heart of the Ocean Estate Regeneration Project is the desire to reduce the inequalities that exist in the borough and bring local communities closer together. The regeneration scheme will lead to an increase in affordable housing, as well as improved wellbeing for local residents through new community, health and retail facilities.

### *Consultation event for the Ocean Estate Regeneration Project*

Construction work will provide employment and training opportunities to local people, including apprenticeships.

Significant improvements in housing standards will be provided through a phased programme of redevelopment and refurbishment. The scheme has been designed to

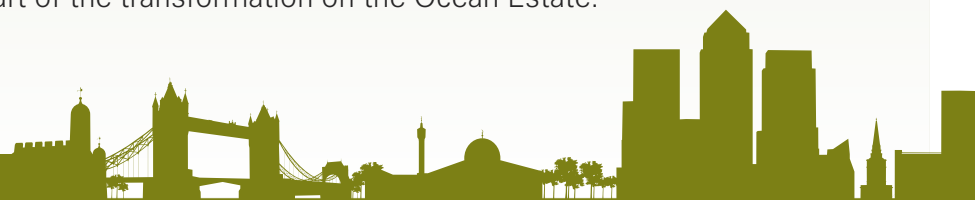
reduce overcrowding, reduce crime, improve the environment and integrate these developments into the surrounding area.

As well as the integration of sustainable features, such as natural ventilation, cycle storage areas and recycling facilities to the estate, the regeneration project will also spend more than £10 million on high quality, well designed improvements to open and amenity spaces and play areas. The scheme will deliver a vibrant new neighbourhood centre on the estate, as well as a range of enhanced services for existing and new users, including a new GP surgery.

The Council has worked closely with community representatives to facilitate the regeneration project. The involvement of residents at every stage of development has brought communities together to be part of the transformation on the Ocean Estate.



Image courtesy of Levitt Bernstein





*A Prosperous Community...*



## 6 Achieving Our Vision – A Prosperous Community

### Vision

*We aim to create a Tower Hamlets in which everyone, regardless of their background and circumstances, has the aspiration and opportunity to achieve their full potential. At the heart of this theme is a focus on combating social exclusion, reducing poverty and improving the life chances of all of the borough's residents.*

### Key Achievements

- Over 1,800 people have found jobs through our Working Neighbourhoods Fund programme to tackle worklessness and build skills
- Tower Hamlets children achieved their best ever GCSE results in 2009, we are improving at twice the national average rate. Results at age 11 exceed the national average in both maths and science
- There is a continued reduction in young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) – down to 6%, a 40% decrease in two years
- We have developed and implemented a Third Sector strategy, with a new Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) now set up to provide sustainable support to the Tower Hamlets third sector
- Over 2m visitors come to our Idea Stores to access library, learning and information services, which help them develop their employment skills

### Challenges and Opportunities for Tower Hamlets

- 6.1 Tower Hamlets has a vibrant local economy and has experienced improvements in educational attainment and young people not in education, employment and training. There still remain substantial challenges to prosperity across the borough, made more difficult by the current economic situation. These include:
- ⊙ One of the highest unemployment rates in London;
  - ⊙ Low skills level among residents;
  - ⊙ The highest child poverty rate nationally;
  - ⊙ Low attainment levels at post 16; and
  - ⊙ Significant levels of disability among residents that make accessing employment opportunities difficult.
- 6.2 Employment opportunities in Tower Hamlets are among the highest in London, with almost a third of all employment opportunities in East London located within the borough. Despite the levels of employment prospects, unemployment remains a key issue for many people, with Tower Hamlets having the second lowest employment rate in London. Economic inactivity, those not actively looking for work, particularly among women in the borough, is also among the highest in London. The challenge for the Partnership is to ensure that local people are able to share in the prosperity of the borough through accessing sustainable employment opportunities and business growth.



- 6.3 The government's policies on welfare reform will transform the benefit system for those receiving both in work and out-of-work benefits. This brings added challenges to the borough with implications for improving the prosperity of the borough. The combined impact of the reforms to the welfare system will result in a reduction in the household income of some of the borough's residents and many people could be further marginalised from the labour market.
- 6.4 Not being in work, particularly for long periods of time, has significant implications for residents, the most obvious of which is poverty, made difficult by the high cost of living in London. There are many children in low income families in the borough living in poverty – the highest proportion nationally. One-third of households in the borough live on less than £20,000 a year. This affects the opportunities of our young people to reach their full potential and research shows that workless people often suffer from ill-health and low self-esteem.
- 6.5 Worklessness is a complex issue and there are many barriers that make it hard for people to be able to get and keep a job. One of the main barriers is inadequate skills to access the types of employment opportunities in the borough. Many of our residents have little or no qualifications at all; others lack the specialist skills and experiences needed to gain employment in the borough's growing financial industries. This resultant skills gap and skills mismatch means that local people are unable to take advantage of the growing employment opportunities in the borough. Many residents often feel unable to access the jobs generated in Canary Wharf.
- 6.6 Health and disability are also barriers for some of our residents to accessing employment opportunities. Local people have also highlighted that the limited availability of part time work, the complexities of the benefit system, the inflexibility and cost of childcare, poor financial management skills and a lack of supportive networks, all make it difficult to access and keep employment.
- 6.7 For our young people, educational attainment remains the best means of securing a good future and breaking the cycles of inter-generational worklessness. We believe that the high levels of deprivation in the borough should not limit the aspiration of our young people. Whilst school performance is improving, there are some children who are finding it hard to achieve, particularly Somali pupils and White working class boys. Similarly, performance at GCSE level is improving well in the borough, but our young people are not doing as well in post-16 education and training: we have one of the highest rates of young people dropping out of university.
- 6.8 Tower Hamlets is an entrepreneurial borough. The number of new business developments continues to grow. A recent survey of local businesses shows that many want to remain in the borough. Businesses have been affected by the economic downturn, though the outlook is improving. It is important that local partners continue to support business development in the borough through support and advice. The borough has very high levels of economic activity, yet the number of local people who are self-employed is relatively low. We are committed to encouraging greater entrepreneurship among residents to improve employment and boost the local economy.

### Making Tower Hamlets A Prosperous Community

- 6.9 We aim to tackle worklessness and poverty in the borough by focusing on narrowing the gap between the borough's employment rates compared to the rest of London and by creating a culture of aspiration among all local residents.
- 6.10 A key element of our approach is to ensure that the new national Work Programme is working locally and local people are

receiving the necessary support they need to access employment and maximise their income levels. We will also work together to ensure that the opportunities offered by the reforms result in the best possible outcome for Tower Hamlets. This includes working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions and its contractors in Tower Hamlets to facilitate the Work Programme to support local people into sustainable employment. This will be overseen by a new Employment Taskforce for the borough, chaired by the Mayor, to target resources on getting local people into employment.

- 6.11 We will continue to work with community and voluntary organisations to tackle the barriers to employment that local people experience and to engage those that are further away from the labour market who can be better engaged by community groups. We are investing in evidenced based projects, to be taken forward by the Employment Strategy, to better understand what works locally to support people into employment and prevent poverty, targeting particular groups including: women, people with disabilities and young people who find it harder to access jobs. We are also working closely with employers in the borough, including businesses in Canary Wharf, to help provide work training and experience for local people.
- 6.12 We will provide support for people in our communities who will be negatively impacted by the reforms to the welfare system. This includes developing effective information networks, providing early support and guidance to those who need it; helping people to claim all the benefits and tax credits they are entitled to in order to maximise their income; and providing advice and support to improve financial management and help tackle debt. The borough's Financial Inclusion Strategy and the Advice Commissioning Framework will provide the mechanism for developing this work further.

- 6.13 The borough's Enterprise strategy will help provide the conditions for an effective entrepreneurial environment – including maximising the opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the borough from the Olympics and Paralympic Games; sustaining and supporting established enterprises and championing Tower Hamlets as a leading economic centre on a regional, national and global scale.
- 6.14 The Tower Hamlets Children and Families Plan will form the basis of our approach to raising the aspiration and improving educational attainment of children and young people. This includes a focus on increased targeted provision from early years settings – including helping parents support the learning and development of their children. In addition there will be better support for the transition from education to employment and improved provision of post-16 learning. This includes provision of vocational apprenticeships and foundational opportunities for young people.
- 6.15 The Idea Store Strategy sets out how we will build on the success of the Idea Stores so far to focus our offer more effectively on supporting employment skills. We will build the first Idea Store Local and revise our lifelong learning courses to address skills gaps.

## The Objectives

**To make Tower Hamlets a Prosperous Community the Partnership will focus on achieving the following objectives:**

**Objective 1:** *Supporting more people into work and improving employment skills*

**Objective 2:** *Supporting residents through national welfare reform*

**Objective 3:** *Improving educational aspiration and attainment*

**Objective 4:** *Fostering enterprise and entrepreneurship*





*Pupils at Marian Richardson Primary School*

### Partnership strategies that will contribute to this theme:

The following strategies and plans will help provide a clear delivery framework to inform partnership working on this theme.

- ⊙ Employment Strategy
- ⊙ Enterprise Strategy
- ⊙ Financial Inclusion Strategy
- ⊙ Advice Commissioning Framework
- ⊙ Children and Families Plan and 14-19 Plan
- ⊙ Child Poverty Strategy
- ⊙ Third Sector Strategy
- ⊙ Town Centre Spatial Strategy
- ⊙ Idea Stores Strategy

### One Tower Hamlets Focus: A Prosperous Community

A Prosperous Community is about all residents being able to achieve their full potential: to access and contribute to the prosperity of the borough, making social mobility obtainable for all. Education, employment and a thriving enterprise environment are essential to creating equality of opportunities. We know that for some groups in our community, tapping into these opportunities is difficult.

There are many residents whose circumstances put them at risk of under achievement and labour market exclusion. These circumstances often represent the root causes of poverty, multiple deprivation and disadvantage. Some of the borough's residents are also at risk of social exclusion because they lack the basic adult literacy and English language skills to be able to participate in community life. The Partnership will continue to address the obstacles that hinder local people from achieving and perpetuate inequality.

In order to achieve our commitment to One Tower Hamlets we will:

- Focus on removing barriers to work for people that find it harder to access the labour market this includes women and people suffering from mental health issues.
- Improve the educational attainment for under achieving children and young people including Somali and White working class boys.
- Improve the basic skills and qualifications of those at particular risk of being excluded from engaging in community life.

# Case Study

## A Prosperous Community: Tackling and Preventing Child Poverty

### Background

The average salary for those working in Tower Hamlets is around £64,000, yet 33% of families are living on less than £20,000 a year. According to some of the key poverty statistics 57% of children in the borough live in poverty, the highest nationally.

### What we have done

We know that children who grow up in poverty are less likely to succeed at school, more likely to suffer from poor health, are more likely to offend and less likely to get a good job as adults. We have developed a good picture of the nature and causes of poverty in the borough and established a Child Poverty Strategy to address the high levels of child poverty. The strategy includes: supporting parents who are job-ready, or close to job readiness, to find work and providing high quality childcare options; focusing on education for young people and interventions to reduce youth offending. It also aims to provide cultural, sporting and leisure opportunities to those who would not normally access them.

More recently the Tower Hamlets Partnership has undertaken a detailed needs assessment, service mapping and consultation with families to help inform our approach to tackling poverty. This includes supporting families to maximise their income and building resilience and aspiration in families and communities.

### How it is benefiting the borough

Tackling and preventing child poverty in Tower Hamlets is everyone's business and we have made outstanding progress in addressing the root causes of poverty and breaking cycles of deprivation in the longer-term. This has resulted in a 6.6% reduction in child poverty levels in the borough, the largest reduction nationally. Our work in tackling and preventing child poverty was recognised with both Beacon and London Child Poverty Awards in 2009. Key successes include:

- Supporting over 1,800 local residents into working during 2009/10 through the borough's Working Neighbourhood Fund Programme.
- Significant achievements at primary school level, with 89% of pupils progressing by two levels in maths in 2009/10.
- Improvements at GCSE (based on provisional 2010 figures), with over half of all 16 year olds getting 5 or more A\* to C grades including English and maths.
- An increase in participation in learning at age 16 and 17 and a reduction in the number of children leaving Year 11 who are not going on to education, employment or training.





# 7 Achieving Our Vision – A Safe and Cohesive Community

## Vision

*Our aim is to have a safer Tower Hamlets: a place where everyone feels safe, gets on better together and difference is not seen as a threat but a core strength of the borough.*

## Key Achievements

- Overall crime has dropped by 5% which means 952 fewer crimes
- We have made 409 arrests under the 'Dealer a Day' initiative
- There has been a dramatic reduction in numbers of young people entering the criminal justice system – halved on this time last year
- In our Annual Residents Survey, residents confirmed that anti-social behaviour was reducing across a range of areas – particularly in relation to young people and litter
- 75% of residents in the Survey agreed that the borough is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
- 2 million people attended recent events in our parks and the Mela was the most successful ever

## Challenges and Opportunities for Tower Hamlets

- 7.1 Tower Hamlets is becoming safer, with significant reductions in the levels of crime. Whilst crime is falling, overall crime levels continue to be one of the highest in London. Crime remains the biggest concern for local people, although concerns have fallen for a number of years.
- 7.2 We recognise that reducing crime alone is not enough; residents need to feel safer in their neighbourhood and when moving around the borough. Visible crime plays a strong role in people's sense of feeling safe; this includes drug use and drug dealing, which many people report to be a problem in their local area, particularly around Bethnal Green, Spitalfields and Banglatown.
- 7.3 Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is also a key driver to people feeling unsafe. ASB is a complex issue. What might be perceived as anti-social behaviour by one group could be seen by others as appropriate use of public space. What is clear is that ASB affects all members of our community. It can blight neighbourhoods and affect people's wellbeing.
- 7.4 The Tower Hamlets Partnership defines ASB as any aggressive, intimidating or destructive activity which damages or destroys another person's quality of life.



Better managing ASB, particularly low-level persistent ASB such as nuisance and intimidating behaviour, is crucial to improving people's sense of feeling safe. Residents have told us that the Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers and Safer Neighbourhood Teams have improved the levels of visible enforcement and made them feel safer but believe that more needs to be done to tackle and prevent crime in the borough.

- 7.5 Tower Hamlets has long been a place where people from different backgrounds have lived together and there are now over 90 languages spoken in the borough. Part of the vibrancy and strength of the borough is its historic attraction of diverse people and communities. However, a fear of crime, a lack of understanding of difference between some communities, the growth of extremism and the historic social and economic challenges facing the borough, can threaten its cohesiveness. Strengthening community cohesion is important as it impacts upon the social fabric of the borough and the wellbeing of residents.

### Making Tower Hamlets A Safe and Cohesive Community

- 7.6 The Partnership's problem-solving approach to tackling crime focuses on the victim, offender and location of crime to better detect and prevent crime. We know that the majority of crimes are committed by a small group of people and are concentrated in particular areas across the borough. Shared crime data will be used to analyse crime trends and develop better initiatives to target crime hotspots.
- 7.7 This is underpinned by a stronger focus on enforcement. The Council and Police will use existing enforcement powers, particularly on licensing, to target anti-social behaviour around particular premises

and establishments. Local partners will be bringing together their enforcement resources to ensure that effort is targeted where it is most needed in a co-ordinated way to achieve maximum impact. For example we are integrating local police and Council enforcement services in the Toby Club, to effectively deploy our resources in one of the highest crime areas in the borough.

- 7.8 This strong enforcement approach is coupled with interventionist support to address the multiple socio-economic causes of crime and anti-social behaviour. Multiple disadvantage, including poverty, deprivation, poor parenting and a lack of positive activities, can lead people, particularly young people, into anti-social behaviour and crime. Intervening early to provide support for those at risk of criminal activity and re-offending will help prevent crime and social exclusion. This includes effective treatment for problematic drug users and housing and employment support for ex-offenders.



*Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers carrying out enforcement work in Watney Market*





*Respect Festival in Victoria Park*

- 7.9 Greater community involvement in community safety and in holding the police and community safety partnership to account is crucial to making Tower Hamlets a safer and more cohesive borough. We will make greater use of ward panels, neighbourhood watch groups, police volunteers, police cadets and the Police and Community Safety Board – a resident-led body informing policing priorities – to help improve local policing.
- 7.10 A fundamental aspect to cohesion is the perception of fairness. Tensions often arise between communities when one group feels that it is being treated less favourably compared to another. Our approach to fostering community cohesion is based on providing inclusive services and working closer with communities. The way we deliver services and take decisions has a significant impact on how people feel about their local area and perceptions of fairness.
- 7.11 We will work with communities to help build stronger relationships between people. Promoting community cohesion amongst our young people is an important aspect of this. It will help support interaction, mutual understanding and respect between and within communities. We will continue to develop the capacity of the voluntary and community sector to deliver a variety of high quality festivals and community events celebrating the diversity of Tower Hamlets and bringing people together.
- 7.12 The work of the borough’s equalities groups, including the Inter Faith Forum and No Place for Hate Campaign, will be important to celebrating and strengthening community cohesion. Local community leaders also have an integral role to play in fostering community cohesion. Councillors, for example, have championed cohesion in the borough, spearheading innovative work to tackle cohesion issues.
- 7.13 Tackling violent extremism remains a key priority for the Partnership. We are currently evaluating what we have learnt over the last three years about the risk of violent extremism in Tower Hamlets and what works in reducing the vulnerability of individuals to extremism and improving community resilience. We are using this information to develop a more effective and flexible local response to preventing extremism, informed by national changes to the Prevent agenda and closer working with government departments.



## The Objectives

To make Tower Hamlets a Safe and Cohesive Community the Partnership will focus on achieving the following objectives:

*Objective 1: Focusing on crime and anti-social behaviour*

*Objective 2: Reducing re-offending*

*Objective 3: Reducing the fear of crime*

*Objective 4: Fostering greater community cohesion*

*Objective 5: Tackling violent extremism*

### Partnership strategies that will contribute to this theme:

The following strategies and plans will help provide a clear delivery framework to inform partnership working on this theme.

- ⊙ Crime Reduction Strategy and Plan
- ⊙ Drugs Harm Reduction Strategy
- ⊙ Alcohol Strategy
- ⊙ Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy
- ⊙ PREVENT Plan

## One Tower Hamlets Focus: Safe and Cohesive Community

As part of making Tower Hamlets a safer borough the Partnership is committed to reducing crime and making people feel safer, including protecting and supporting victims of crime. The borough has experienced an increase in violence against women which remains largely hidden and victims often suffer in silence. Children who experience domestic violence are denied the safety and protection they need at home to achieve and become confident, healthy adults.

Hate crime also remains a challenge for the borough. Diversity is one of the borough's key strengths and the majority of people get on well together. However there can be levels of tension between groups. If these are left unchecked they can undermine cohesion in the borough and make people feel unsafe, denying them of the right to live, work and study in the borough safe from fear and intimidation.

The Partnership recognises the importance of cohesion to delivering One Tower Hamlets and the Community Plan priorities. It will work together to foster cohesion supported by a shared cohesion framework.

In order to achieve our commitment to One Tower Hamlets we will:

- Prevent and reduce violence against women and girls.
- Target all forms of hate crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Develop and deliver the Partnership's approach to community cohesion.

# Case Study

## A Safe and Cohesive Community: Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers

### Background

The fear of crime is by far the biggest concern for residents – with 46 per cent rating it as a concern. It is often low level crime that impacts residents the most and as a result this type of crime has the greatest impact on the quality of life for residents. That makes tackling not only crime but also the fear of crime a standout priority for the Tower Hamlets Partnership.

### What we have done

In direct response to this concern, the Council has taken an innovative approach to improving the personal safety of residents and introduced Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers (THEOs) in November 2009. Providing a uniformed, high visibility presence on the streets of Tower Hamlets they create a cleaner, safer environment. THEOs work alongside the Police Safer Neighbourhoods Teams (SNTs) to tackle low level crime, such as dog fouling, litter, fly tipping, graffiti, fly posting, nuisance, abandoned vehicles and illegal street trading.



The team of 16 THEOs spends more than 1,500 hours per month patrolling the streets of Tower Hamlets. Armed with overt body CCTV cameras, their high-visibility presence helps to reassure residents and deter trouble-makers. THEOs have multi-disciplinary training and can respond to the variety of offences they encounter out in the borough.

### How it is benefiting the borough

Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers are part of the Partnership's wider approach to reducing crime. THEOs are trained and accredited to deal with a wide range of community safety and anti-social behaviour issues including consumption of alcohol in public places and highway control.

THEOs are deployed across the whole borough operating seven days a week. Their work is designed to specifically address the identified needs of the local wards and directly address local concerns. They are able to respond immediately to resident needs through communication with the CCTV Control Centre and the Customer Contact Centre.

Since their introduction, the Council's Annual Residents Survey has shown that anti-social behaviour is decreasing including a decrease in rubbish and litter. THEOs have also helped residents to be more safety conscious.



*A Healthy  
and Supportive  
Community...*



## 8 Achieving Our Vision – A Healthy and Supportive Community

### Vision

*Our aim is to support residents to live healthier, more independent lives and reduce the risk of harm and neglect to vulnerable children and adults.*

### Key Achievements

- We have had the biggest reduction in teenage pregnancy in London and third biggest nationally
- We are exceeding our targets for people supported to stop smoking, with nearly 3,000 people quitting smoking
- We have made strong progress in integrating community health and social care
- Adult's Services has been assessed as performing excellently and Children's Services as performing well and we won a Beacon Award for positive engagement with older people
- We have introduced free swimming for residents and people using leisure centres are more satisfied with them

### Challenges and Opportunities for Tower Hamlets

- 8.1 Health outcomes are complex and are determined by a number of factors. We know that the high levels of deprivation in the borough contribute to health inequalities, as does personal behaviour and a lack of access to treatment and services. Housing, employment, diet, the physical environment and crime all contribute to our health and wellbeing.
- 8.2 Though people in Tower Hamlets are healthier and living longer, health inequalities remain a key issue. Health outcomes for local people still fall short of the London average. The Tower Hamlets Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – an analysis of health and social care needs in the borough – shows that despite improvements, the gap between all age mortality rates in the borough to that of London continues. The average life expectancy is 75.2 years for males and 80.2 for females, compared to an average of 77.4 years for males and 82.0 for females in London. There are also important differences in health inequalities within the borough: life expectancy is highest in Millwall ward and lowest in St Dunstan's and Stepney Green.
- 8.3 Behaviour related illnesses and diseases, such as respiratory, heart and liver diseases, are more prevalent in the borough than in other parts of London. This is due to some segments of the population having among the highest smoking and alcohol rates in London. Less than a quarter of residents in the borough eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables a day, which is among the lowest rate in London. The figure is also very low for children



and young people in the borough. National lifestyle data reveals that the level of physical activity in the borough among adults is below the average. This is also the case for children in the borough and childhood obesity continues to be a challenge. The prevalence of obesity in the borough is the fifth highest nationally for 4 year olds and the six highest for 10 year olds. Childhood obesity not only impacts the health of our young people but can also affect their health in later life.

- 8.4 There are a high number of people in the borough with long-term illnesses and disabilities. The number of people suffering from mental health problems, in particular, is one of the highest in London. Risk factors for older people developing dementia or mental health problems in Tower Hamlets (e.g. deprivation, chronic physical illness) are also significantly greater than the national average. The prevalence of learning disabilities in Tower Hamlets is predicted to increase substantially. Furthermore, as the life expectancy of people with learning disabilities increases this will also lead to an increase in the number of older adults with a learning disability.
- 8.5 There are many people in the borough providing unpaid care for relatives. People in Tower Hamlets provide more hours of unpaid care a week than the national average. The proportion of the population providing 50 hours or more of unpaid care a week is the highest in London. These carers need to be given support and advice to enable them to care for their loved ones as well as look after themselves.
- 8.6 The fundamental and rapid transformation of the health service planned by the government provides both challenges and opportunities for the borough. Healthcare commissioning will be transferred to GP consortia accountable to the new NHS Commissioning Board. Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) will be abolished and local authorities will have an enhanced role over public health and healthcare

advocacy, as well as facilitating the new Health & Wellbeing Board. Local partners are working together to ensure that these changes lead to better health outcomes for the borough.



*Accessibility Day in Mile End Park highlighting transport for disabled people in and around the Arts Pavilion*

## Making Tower Hamlets A Healthy and Supportive Community

- 8.7 Our approach to improving the health and wellbeing of local people is based on early intervention and prevention, supporting independent living and improving access to quality integrated health and social care. This is underpinned by evidence-based policy informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- 8.8 The Tower Hamlets Improving Health and Wellbeing Strategy is the overarching joint planning framework through which health inequalities in the borough will continue to be tackled. The delivery plan for the strategy focuses on, among other things, tackling tobacco use and obesity; promoting healthy lifestyles through the Time for Health campaign; utilising the Olympics and Paralympics to improve health and fitness and tackling worklessness. Our leisure centres and parks provide affordable and accessible places to be active while our Idea Stores will provide improved access to information on healthy living.
- 8.9 The Partnership's ambitious Integrated Care Programme has been bringing together health and social care services together through locality networks. This, alongside the wider integration of early intervention, prevention, out of hospital care and intermediate care services will help ensure that all local people have access to locally-based services which help keep them living independently at home.
- 8.10 The Council-led Transforming Adult Social Care programme is the primary vehicle through which we are developing social care that is more efficient and personalised, empowering people as active citizens to self-direct their own support. This includes increasing our provision of information advice, and community-based preventative and wellbeing services, continuing the roll out of personal budgets for people with long-term support needs, and developing a broad and diverse market of care and support options across all sectors.

- 8.11 The Partnership has developed an innovative Family Wellbeing Model to provide greater support for children and families in the borough. The model articulates the integrated thresholds between different levels of need, to ensure that the most appropriate support is offered to each family. It will formalise our structure for consultation, co-ordination and co-operation between agencies to promote family wellbeing and make certain that the children and families of Tower Hamlets get a better experience and outcome from services.



## The Objectives

To make Tower Hamlets a Healthy and Supportive Community the Partnership will focus on achieving the following objectives:

- Objective 1:** Preventing people from dying prematurely
- Objective 2:** Helping people to live healthier lives
- Objective 3:** Enabling people to live independently
- Objective 4:** Keeping vulnerable and high risk children, adults and families safer and minimising harm and neglect
- Objective 5:** Providing excellent primary and community care



### Partnership strategies that will contribute to this theme:

The following strategies and plans will help provide a clear delivery framework to inform partnership working on this theme.

- ⊙ Improving Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- ⊙ Tower Hamlets Alcohol Strategy
- ⊙ Multi-agency Obesity Strategy
- ⊙ Multi-agency Carers Strategy
- ⊙ Family Wellbeing Model
- ⊙ Leisure Facilities Strategy



*Adidas Zone fitness equipment in Mile End Park*

### One Tower Hamlets Focus: Healthy and Supportive Community

Public health inequality is a major issue for Tower Hamlets. Children in the borough are more likely to be obese and the prevalence of smoking and substance misuse is very high among some groups. Socio-economic inequalities are a big determinant of health inequality in Tower Hamlets and if left unchecked results in poor outcomes throughout life and generational deprivation. This makes addressing public health inequality fundamental to improving the opportunities of local people.

Carers in the borough are also at risk of experiencing unequal outcomes. We know that there are many people in the borough, many of whom are children, providing unpaid care for relatives and people in Tower Hamlets provide more hours of unpaid care than the national average. Carers need to be given support and advice to enable them to care effectively for their loved ones as well as look after themselves.

In order to achieve our commitment to One Tower Hamlets we will:

- Tackle public health inequalities including obesity, smoking, substance misuse and teenage pregnancy.
- Improve access to health and supportive services for all our communities.
- Support carers to care safely and improve their health and wellbeing.
- Support people with mental health problems to live independently.



# Case Study

## A Healthy and Supportive Community: Supporting people to stop smoking

### Background

The use of tobacco products is a serious public health issue and there is a greater proportion of our local community using tobacco than in any other part of the country. There are an estimated 70,000 smokers in the borough meaning almost one in three of our population smoke compared with the England average of just over one in five. The borough also has a very high rate of people using oral tobacco and shisha. The Tower Hamlets Tobacco Control Alliance has been created to address this and is led by NHS Tower Hamlets and the Council and includes GPs, registered social landlords, business and the third sector.

### What we have done

We have developed a Tobacco Control Strategy for the borough to support people to stop smoking, which includes:

- **Making it hard to start:** focusing on preventing young people from starting smoking through education and reducing the availability and appeal of tobacco
- **Making it easy to stop:** frontline health and social care staff supporting people to stop smoking and holding flexible and culturally sensitive cessation services in community settings and incentive schemes for high risk groups such as pregnant women

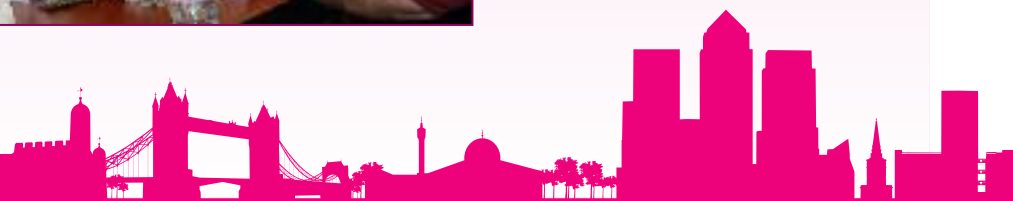
- **Smoke free environments:** actively promoting smoke free environments to reduce the affects of second hand smoke, including establishing the 'Smoke Free' business awards
- **Communications:** campaigns raising awareness of health issues associated with tobacco use through local media and promoting local free NHS services to help local people stop smoking, along with a 'health hotline' in multiple languages to promote cessation services

### How it is benefiting the borough

In 2009/10 the Partnership supported more than 5600 smokers to stop smoking with nearly 3,000 being successful. Tower Hamlets helped more people to stop smoking than any other London borough.



The smoking cessation services are reaching the needs of the borough's diverse communities and helping some hard to reach groups to stop smoking. This is contributing to the health and wellbeing of the borough, helping to make residents in Tower Hamlets healthier.



## Appendix 1: Community Plan Framework

The following grid provides a tabular summary of the Partnership's approach to delivering the Community Plan vision. It highlights the objectives and related outcome measures for each of the Community Plan themes, along with the key delivery arrangements, strategies and

initiatives that will be used to achieve them. The grid also outlines the main partner organisations that will be responsible for delivering each of the objectives.

A Great Place to Live			
Proposed Objectives	Proposed Measures	Delivery Arrangements: Strategies, Plans and Key Initiatives	Delivery Partners
1 Providing quality affordable housing	1 The number of additional homes provided 2 The number of affordable homes provided 3 The number of socially-rented family sized homes delivered 4 The number of people prevented from being homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Development Framework</li> <li>Housing Strategy</li> </ul>	Tower Hamlets Council, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), Homes and Communities Agency, Private Developers
2 Improving and maintaining the quality of housing, including maximising energy efficiency	5 Housing decency levels of Council properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing Strategy</li> <li>Tower Hamlets Homes Service Improvement Plan</li> <li>Decent Homes Programme</li> <li>Climate Change Strategy</li> <li>Fuel Poverty Strategy</li> </ul>	Council, Tower Hamlets Homes (THH), RSLs, Third Sector Organisations, Private Developers, Homes and Communities Agency

A Great Place to Live			
Proposed Objectives	Proposed Measures	Delivery Arrangements: Strategies, Plans and Key Initiatives	Delivery Partners
3 Improving the public realm	<p>6 The levels of street and environmental cleanliness</p> <p>7 Satisfaction with local parks and open spaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Realm Management Strategy</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Agreements</li> <li>• Open Space Strategy</li> <li>• Heritage Strategy</li> <li>• Local Development Framework</li> </ul>	Council, RSLs, THH, Police, Third Sector Organisations
4 Improving local transport links and connectivity	8 Overall general satisfaction with the local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Development Plan</li> <li>• Sustainable Transport Strategy</li> <li>• Local Implementation Plan</li> </ul>	Council, Transport for London (TfL), RSLs, Third Sector Organisations
5 Providing effective local services and facilities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Localisation Development Programme</li> <li>• Infrastructure Delivery Plan</li> <li>• Local Development Framework</li> </ul>	Council, NHS Tower Hamlets, RSLs, Third Sector Organisations, TfL

A Prosperous Community			
Proposed Objectives	Proposed Measures	Delivery Arrangements: Strategies, Plans and Key Initiatives	Delivery Partners
1 Supporting more people into work and improving employment skills	9 Employment rate 10 Jobseekers Allowance Claimant Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Strategy</li> <li>• Enterprise Strategy</li> <li>• Child Poverty Strategy</li> <li>• Children and Families Plan</li> <li>• Idea Stores Strategy</li> </ul>	Council, Businesses, Job Centre Plus, Third Sector Organisations, Tower Hamlets College, NHS Tower Hamlets
2 Supporting residents through national welfare reform	11 The proportion of children in the borough living in poverty 12 Number of young people not in employment, education or training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Strategy</li> <li>• Child Poverty Strategy</li> <li>• Financial Inclusion Strategy</li> <li>• Advice Commissioning Framework</li> <li>• Children and Families Plan</li> </ul>	Council, Job Centre Plus, Businesses, Third Sector Organisations
3 Improving educational aspiration and attainment	13 Early Years Foundation Stage 14 The percentage of children who achieve Level 4 in Maths and English at Key Stage 2 (Year 6) 15 The percentage of young people who achieve 5 or more A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths (Key Stage 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and Families Plan</li> <li>• New Youth Volunteering Strategy</li> <li>• Building Schools for the Future Programme</li> </ul>	Council, Schools, Tower Hamlets College, Third Sector Organisations

A Prosperous Community			
Proposed Objectives	Proposed Measures	Delivery Arrangements: Strategies, Plans and Key Initiatives	Delivery Partners
	<p>16 The percentage of young people from low income backgrounds in the borough who progress to higher education</p> <p>17 Reduction in number of schools where less than 60% of pupils achieve Level 4 or above in English and Maths at Key Stage 2</p> <p>18 Improving A Level attainment – A Level Average Points Score per student in Tower Hamlets</p>		
4 Fostering enterprise and entrepreneurship		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Strategy</li> <li>• Enterprise Strategy</li> <li>• Third Sector Strategy</li> <li>• Street Markets Strategy</li> <li>• Town Centre Spatial Strategy</li> <li>• Core Strategy</li> </ul>	Council, Businesses, Third Sector Organisations

A Safe and Cohesive Community			
Proposed Objectives	Proposed Measures	Delivery Arrangements: Strategies, Plans and Key Initiatives	Delivery Partners
1 Focusing on crime and ASB	19 Serious violent crime rate 20 Serious acquisitive crime rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime Reduction Strategy and Plan</li> <li>• Drugs Harm Reduction Strategy and Plans</li> <li>• Alcohol Strategy</li> <li>• Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy</li> <li>• Anti-defacement Strategy</li> <li>• CCTV Strategy</li> </ul>	Police, Council, Probation Services, Third Sector Organisations, NHS Tower Hamlets, RSLs
2 Reducing re-offending	21 The rate of proven re-offending by adults under Probation supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime Reduction Strategy and Plan</li> <li>• Integrated Offender Management Board</li> <li>• Youth Crime Action Plan</li> <li>• Youth Justice Plan</li> <li>• Supporting People Strategy</li> <li>• Youth Inclusion and Support Strategy</li> </ul>	Police, Council, Probation Services, RSLs, Third Sector Organisations, Schools

### A Safe and Cohesive Community

Proposed Objectives	Proposed Measures	Delivery Arrangements: Strategies, Plans and Key Initiatives	Delivery Partners
3 Reducing fear of crime	22 Local concern about ASB and crime, including perception of drug abuse  23 Satisfaction with the Police/Community Safety Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime Reduction Strategy and Plan</li> <li>• Drug Intervention Enforcement Strategy</li> <li>• Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy</li> </ul>	Police, Council, RSLs, Third Sector Organisations, Schools
4 Fostering greater community cohesion	24 The percentage of people who feel that people from different backgrounds get on well together (Annual Resident Survey measure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Cohesion Framework</li> <li>• Work of the Tower Hamlets No Place for Hate Forum</li> <li>• Work of the borough's Equalities Forums</li> <li>• Community Cohesion Contingency Planning Group</li> <li>• Local Development Framework</li> </ul>	Council, Police, Third Sector Organisations, RSLs
5 Tackling violent extremism		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PREVENT Action Plan</li> <li>• Work of the borough's Equalities Forums</li> <li>• Community Cohesion Contingency Planning Group</li> </ul>	Council, Police, Third Sector Organisations, RSLs

A Healthy and Supportive Community			
Proposed Objectives	Proposed Measures	Delivery Arrangements: Strategies, Plans and Key Initiatives	Delivery Partners
1 Helping people to live healthier lives	25 The number of people that have stopped smoking 26 Healthy weight of children at 4-5 years 27 Healthy weight of children at 10-11 years 28 Under 18 conception rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</li> <li>Primary Care Investment Programme</li> <li>Obesity Strategy</li> <li>Alcohol Strategy</li> <li>Children and Families Plan</li> <li>Leisure Facilities Strategy</li> <li>Local Development Framework</li> </ul>	NHS Tower Hamlets, Council, GPs, Local Health and Wellbeing Board, Third Sector Organisations, Schools
2 Preventing people from dying prematurely	29 All-age all-cause mortality rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment based strategies</li> </ul>	NHS Tower Hamlets, Council, GPs, Local Health and Wellbeing Board, Third Sector Organisations



A Healthy and Supportive Community			
Proposed Objectives	Proposed Measures	Delivery Arrangements: Strategies, Plans and Key Initiatives	Delivery Partners
3 Enabling people to live independently	30 Social care clients and carers in receipt of Self Directed Support 31 Self reported experience of social care users 32 Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service, or advice and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</li> <li>Transforming Adult Social Care programme</li> </ul>	Council, NHS Tower Hamlets, GPs, Local Health and Wellbeing Board Third Sector Organisations
4 Keeping vulnerable children, adults and families safer, minimising harm and neglect	33 The percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Wellbeing Model</li> <li>Children Safeguarding Board Business Plan</li> <li>Adult Safeguarding Board Business Plan</li> <li>Carers Strategy</li> </ul>	Council, NHS Tower Hamlets, Schools, Police, Probation Services, Third Sector Organisations, GPs, Local Health and Wellbeing Board
5 Providing excellent primary and community care		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated Health and Social Care Programme</li> <li>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</li> <li>Primary Care Investment Programme</li> </ul>	NHS Tower Hamlets, GPs, Council, Local Health and Wellbeing Board, Barts and the London Hospital, Third Sector Organisations

