



Annual Residents Survey 2014 Action Plan

Introduction

The Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey is designed to collect data on resident perceptions about the council, local services and the area. The survey has been running for 15 years and provides trend data about how perceptions are changing over time. The questions are closely tied to service priorities, and form a core component of the council's performance monitoring.

The Tower Hamlets Annual Residents Survey for 2014 took place between June and July 2014 and was carried out by TNS-BRMB. The survey is based on face-to-face interviews with 1,147 residents.

The overall picture is similar to the previous year's (2012/13) findings.

- The Council has largely maintained its performance in relation to service satisfaction, including an improvement for parking services and the highest ever satisfaction level for street lighting.

- Views about the image of the Council have held up and are similar to last year. There has been an increase in the proportion of residents who felt that the Council does a better job than one year ago, up 6 points on last year.
- There is now less resident concern in key areas such as crime, lack of jobs and level of council tax.
- Views about the area and cohesion remain positive.

This action plan is focused on those areas where performance is worse than last year

Street cleaning

Resident satisfaction has deteriorated -4 (59% to 55%)

Lead Officer: Jamie Blake

55 per cent of residents rated street cleaning in the borough as good, very good or excellent; satisfaction has deteriorated since last year by 4 percentage points.

The delay to this year's survey fieldwork, timed to avoid the lead up to the election period, is likely to be an influencing factor on this return. In summer months, there is greater footfall in public locations and heavier use of facilities which can impact on perceptions of services such as street cleaning. Reductions to the Veolia contract costs and communications funding for the service may also have impacted. In addition, during the pre-election period some political campaign messages focussed on borough cleanliness and missed collections; the Council was not able to respond due to communication restrictions during the period.

London Councils benchmarking data shows that Tower Hamlets has one of the best street cleanliness records in London.

The Council has successfully launched the Find It, Fix It, Love It (FIFILI) app as part of the Council's commitment to making the borough cleaner and safer place. The app has allowed users to highlight issues that need addressing such as graffiti, fly tipping and over-flowing bins.

The borough-wide deep clean has enabled the service to deploy extra resources in high footfall areas, including litter pickers and graffiti/chewing gum removal teams. The success of this initiative has been seen in the measured improvements in street cleanliness.

Key actions for the year (14/15) are set out below:

Strategic Plan Actions	Lead	Deadline
Undertake a borough wide deep clean	Jamie Blake (CLC)	30/06/2014
Support the development and re-launch of Find It, Fix It, Love It (FIFILI) and develop the use of direct service delivery through publicly accessible technologies	Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/08/2014
Develop further the Community Volunteering programme, and deliver at least 50 projects	Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/03/2015
Additional actions	Lead	Deadline
Reactive inspections for complaints within 1 working day	Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/03/2015
Proactive inspections of high risk areas bi-weekly	Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/03/2015
Proactive inspections of LAP areas on a monthly schedule	Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/03/2015
Proactive seasonal inspections of the borough	Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/03/2015

Pollution of the Environment

Resident concern has gone up +4 (12% to 16%)

Lead Officers: Andy Bamber (CLC) and Jamie Blake (CLC)

16 per cent of respondents rated pollution as top area of personal concern, an increase of 4 percentage points since last year.

Transport causes most air pollution in Tower Hamlets with the biggest contributor being through-borough journeys that are beyond the Council's direct remit. Work with Transport for London and other partners is being undertaken with an aim of reducing pollution levels. In addition, the Council is continuing to deliver its Air Quality Programme, including work in Shoreditch, at Tower Bridge and with the Barts Trust.

Noise pollution continues to be a challenge for the borough, in part due to the active night time economy and construction projects. Actions to improve the responsiveness of the Council's ASB services have been implemented; these changes are likely to have a positive impact on noise nuisance.

Key actions for the year (14/15) are set out below:

Strategic Plan actions	Lead	Deadline
Manage continued improvement in reducing traffic disruption through the Street Works Permit scheme for utilities and road works, with an annual report produced in May 2014	Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/05/2014
Deliver projects towards improving air quality under the Air Quality Strategy programme: 1. Expand the zero emissions network in Shoreditch, working with small businesses 2. Deliver and evaluate a pilot No-idling project at Tower Bridge 3. Design and deliver the clean air awareness project with the Barts Trust	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Continue to liaise with Crossrail delivery companies and contractors to ensure that the impact on the environment and local residents is minimised	Andy Bamber (CLC) and Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/03/2015

Plan and develop proposals for a boroughwide 20mph limit, including consultation with TfL	Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/03/2015
Deliver phase 3 of the £3m highway infrastructure improvement programme. Total 18 streets resurfaced; 6 by September 2014	Jamie Blake (CLC)	31/03/2015
Help make our borough greener by implementing a four year rolling programme of tree planting on streets, parks and open spaces	Jamie Blake & Shazia Hussain (CLC)	31/03/2015
Improve the responsiveness and visibility of our ASB services	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015

Number of homeless people

Concern has risen +4 (to 14%)

14 per cent of residents said that the number of homeless people was a top area of concern to them. This has risen by 4 percentage points since last year.

The number of residents who are assessed as being statutory homeless – i.e. eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need – has been reducing, from a peak of 168 this time last year, to 120 as at end of September 2014. Additional communications work will be undertaken to raise awareness of the borough's actions in tackling homelessness.

The public perception of homelessness may be raised as a result of seeing incidents of rough sleeping. Whilst there has been a significant London-wide increase in rough sleeping, the change in Tower Hamlets has been relatively small. The Council's approach to rough sleeping has been identified as best practice at the regional level and the Council has recently won an award for its 'Routes to Roots' project for street-homeless hospital patients.

Residents' perceptions around homelessness may also be based on their experience of street beggars, who are not typically homeless. The Council's Enforcement, Drug and Alcohol teams have a role in working with street beggars, including by directing them towards relevant agencies for support where appropriate.

Action for the year (14/15) is set out below:

Actions	Lead	Deadline
Communications activity highlighting LBTH action to tackle homelessness	Takki Sulaiman	January 2015

Views about antisocial behaviour

An increase in residents who feel the issue is a very or fairly big problem in their local area:

- People using or dealing drugs (59% up 4 points compared to last year)
- Rubbish and litter lying around (55% up 5 points compared to last year)
- People being drunk or rowdy (50% up 4 points compared to last year)

Lead Officer: Andy Bamber (CLC)

The survey's findings may partly be explained as an effect of the fieldwork being undertaken in the summer months, particularly with the World Cup and other sporting events taking place.

In response to this rising trend, there has been recent investment in new THEOs, as well as extra support for the CCTV room to assist triaging ASB reports within the Council. The second Council funded Police Team – Partnership Taskforce 2 – has now been launched and will provide a more nuanced response to particular types of ASB e.g. related to prostitution or gangs. There is also greater capacity for the new team to work more closely with the THEOs. The Police have also recently made use of the power under s30 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 to create a dispersal zone, with a number of such zones now operating in this borough.

The series of ward walkabouts recently undertaken are also a useful mechanism for identifying and responding to ASB problems affecting local areas. The THEOs based in the local ward forums are prioritising reducing anti-social behaviour with Joint Police / THEO patrols now taking place in ASB hot-spot areas. THEOs are also being tasked to patrol more ASB areas so that police resources can be used on more serious crime issues such as drug dealing. In addition, 101 publicity continues as the central number for all ASB reporting.

The Council has made a number of improvements in managing the night time economy. The Licensing Policy has been reviewed to detail to licensees the standards that are expected to reduce nuisance and ASB due to alcohol sales. The Saturation Policy is providing stronger controls around the licensing of alcohol or late night refreshments of additional premises in the Brick Lane area. Sexual Entertainment Venues are now able to be licensed to address some concerns raised by residents.

Housing providers and the police, as well as the Council, have a role in addressing ASB.

Key actions for the year (14/15) are set out below:

Strategic Plan actions	Lead	Deadline
Improve the responsiveness and visibility of our ASB services	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Implement the new ASB 'Trigger' process in line with new legislation and MOPAC guidance	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/10/2014
Revise ASB Landlords' policy and procedures and present them to Members	Jackie Odunoye (D&R)	31/10/2014
Review and refresh ASB Strategy to take into account new ASB legislation	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/12/2014
Commence ASB procedures review	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/01/2015
Work with RSLs to develop and implement agreements for the provision of additional THEO resources to tackle estate based ASB	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Work with the Police and Mayor for London to maintain and improve enforcement, CCTV and deployment of local police to improve community safety, including deployment of a mobile police centre	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Implement and embed a new ASB tasking and coordination process with the police for assigning community safety resources	Andy Bamber (CLC)	30/04/2014
Continue the commitment to provide additional uniformed Police presence through the continuation of funding for Partnership Task Force resources and 20 additional officers; 1 per Ward, maintaining the focus on the Dealer a Day programme.	Andy Bamber (CLC)	30/09/2014
Launch a mobile Police centre so residents can report crimes and raise concerns face to face with police officers	Andy Bamber (CLC)	30/10/2014
Deliver 6 joint safer transport operations between April to December 2014	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/12/2014
Deliver 10 Joint Automatic Number Plate Recognition CCTV operations	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Develop an options paper for the implementation of Late Night Levies	Andy Bamber (CLC)	30/06/2014
Complete a detailed review of the costs and benefits of the adoption of early morning restriction orders	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Develop a community alcohol partnership scheme to reduce sales of high strength drinks	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
With our partners, deliver the Partnership Community Safety Plan	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Complete the strategic review and equality analysis of Crime and ASB	Andy Bamber (CLC)	28/02/2015

Annual review of the Community Safety Plan	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Ensure that the Integrated Offender Model is embedded within the Community Safety Partnership Plan	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Increase the number of hate crime pledges signed, and the number of reports made by hate crime third party reporting sites	Andy Bamber (CLC)	01/03/2015
Work with the Police and Mayor for London to maintain and improve enforcement, CCTV and deployment of local police to improve community safety, including deployment of a mobile police centre	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Implement and embed a new ASB tasking and coordination process with the police for assigning community safety resources	Andy Bamber (CLC)	30/04/2014
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Deliver 10 Joint Automatic Number Plate Recognition CCTV operations	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Additional actions	Lead	Deadline
Increase the number of THEOs; THEOs supporting the local ward forums and operating across the borough.	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Additional enforcement activities and patrols in Brick Lane by THEOs	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015
Further develop THEOs via generic working to improve the effectiveness of Police deployment	Andy Bamber (CLC)	31/03/2015

Collection of Council Tax

Resident satisfaction has deteriorated -9 (62% to 53%)

Lead Officer: Roger Jones (Resources)

53 percent of residents rated the collection of council tax as good, very good or excellent. Satisfaction is 9 percentage points lower than last year, despite the fact that concern with the *level* of council tax is at its lowest for 10 years.

The council tax collection rate has improved and is the highest it has ever been. It also compares favourably with surrounding and comparable boroughs in London.

This dip in relation to collection may reflect the change in survey timing – to June – which is shortly after the distribution of the annual council tax billing letter.

In addition, the Government abolished the national Council Tax benefit scheme – with effect from 1 April 2013 – and so the Council now operates its own local scheme, which is based on the previous national model. Whilst during 2013/14 households would not have experienced reductions in Council Tax support if their circumstances remained the same, households would have needed to complete a Tower Hamlets claim form.

The general economic climate, where many households are struggling to pay household bills, may also have contributed – although this is not reflected in the fall in concern over council tax levels found elsewhere in the survey.

Key actions for the year (14/15) are set out below:

Strategic Plan actions	Lead	Deadline
Implement the Optimisation Programme that will focus on improving collection of debt, data management and managing growth with improved yield from the rate base and tax base	Roger Jones (RES)	31/03/2015
Implement the Council Tax Discount award scheme, to support low income households who are entitled to partial council tax support	Roger Jones (RES)	31/05/2014

Difficult to get through to on the phone

Agreement with statement +6 (from 38% to 44%)

Lead Officer: Keith Paulin (Resources)

44 per cent of residents agreed that it was difficult to get through on the phone; performance has deteriorated by 6 percentage points since last year.

This finding is likely to reflect the impact of telephone self-service technologies on key services such as parking, refuse & recycling and housing benefits. The technology enables callers to get information and request services without lengthy queues to speak to an adviser. It also reduces call volumes, facilitates 24-hour service access and provides scope for future savings. However, there is likely to be resistance from some callers used to speaking to an adviser on all occasions. Scripts and menu options are being reviewed on a rolling programme to ensure that they are user-friendly and effective, and satisfaction monitoring arrangements are also now in place.

Strategic Plan actions	Lead	Deadline
Develop self-service online options to reduce demand and cost, including implementing an online process for housing benefits and parking permits	Keith Paulin (RES)	31/03/2015
Develop methods of measuring satisfaction with automated /online services	Keith Paulin (RES)	31/03/2015
Monitor how staff are dealing with customers and provide training where appropriate	Keith Paulin (RES)	31/03/2015
Additional actions	Lead	Deadline
Monitor customer satisfaction with automated telephone services and review scripts to improve ease of use and satisfaction scores	Keith Paulin (RES)	31/03/2015
Re-launch telephone Hot Line phone numbers card with updated contact details and circulate to all residents with EEL	Keith Paulin (RES)	31/10/2014
Monitor customer satisfaction with “finding right number to call” using responses to Contact Centre satisfaction survey	Keith Paulin (RES)	31/03/2015
Work with Agilisys to review and improve effectiveness of automated switchboard system to ensure accuracy of call routing and ease of use	Keith Paulin (RES)	31/03/2015

Keeps residents informed

Agreement with statement -4 (73% to 69%)

Lead Officers: Takki Sulaiman (LPG), Shazia Hussain (CLC)

69 per cent of residents agree that the council keeps residents informed. The percentage of residents agreeing with this statement has decreased by 4 percentage points since last year.

The Council and Partnership have developed clear mechanisms to listen to and respond to the concerns of local residents. The majority of wards in the borough have a Local Community Ward Forum to support the identification of local priorities and commission local projects to make improvements to the local area.

In the drive to introduce more localised mechanisms to engage with residents on a ward level, an outreach framework has been developed to guide and support the Community Champion Coordinators (CCC) when engaging with the local community. There are now more CCCs in each ward. A framework for setting up and delivering community budgets through the Local Community Ward Forums has been created with over 50 local projects commissioned. This work is continuing with further recruitment and training during 2014/15.

Tools such as MyTowerHamlets provide further avenues for the Council to listen to concerns of residents and respond to them. In addition, the Communications Service is looking to redesign the online consultation function and make it much easier to use, both for residents and those running the consultations. There is an expectation that consultations will be done in a way that show our residents that we take into account their opinion - a 'You said, we did' approach.

Work planned includes the development of campaign proposals to foster community engagement, which will build upon the significant Community Plan and Budget consultation already underway. The Communications Service is also looking to further widen the range of interactive Council news distribution tools.

East End Life remains a key source of information about the Council, 49 per cent read it regularly.

Key actions for the year (14/15) are set out below:

Strategic Plan actions	Lead	Deadline
Consult residents as part of the development of the Community Plan	Louise Russell (LPG)	31/12/2014
Hold an annual Mayor's Budget congress	Robin Beattie (CLC)	28/02/2015
Further develop and deliver a resident budget communications plan	Chris Holme (RES) / Takki Sulaiman (LPG)	28/02/2015
Establish and implement three additional Local Community Ward Forums following the implementation of ward boundary changes	Shazia Hussain (CLC)	31/03/2015
Implement a 3rd round of Community Champions recruitment with targeted recruitment of under-represented groups	Shazia Hussain (CLC)	31/03/2015
Develop a Community Champions Framework	Shazia Hussain (CLC)	31/03/2015
Additional actions	Lead	Deadline
Develop business case for East End Life online app and issue tender	Takki Sulaiman (LPG)	31/02/2015
Develop proposals to foster engagement and community engagement	Takki Sulaiman (LPG)	30/11/2014