

Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25

Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board is a place where politicians, health and social care professionals and other leaders across the NHS, the Council and the voluntary sector to work together to solve problems and lead change to benefit our residents.

The partnership has developed a joint a draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2021-2025) for Tower Hamlets.

Developing the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy

There is a statutory duty on local Health and Wellbeing Boards to produce a strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of their populations. The strategy should inform work that is done to improve health and wellbeing in local areas.

Tower Hamlets previous strategy (2017-2020) is wide-ranging and provided a comprehensive overview of health and wellbeing matters in the borough. In refreshing this for 2021-2025, we are focusing on the relationships to other work in the borough, and on the areas of work that will have the highest impact in the context of the wider system.

We have sought to identify priorities based on the strong evidence we have about the dynamics of the borough and the huge range of stakeholder information and feedback that members of the Board have access to. We remain committed to the reduction of health inequalities, by improving outcomes for those in the worst position fastest. We recognise that inequalities can be identified according to where people live, and that this is particularly true in some areas where there are high levels of deprivation and need; but there are also inequalities between genders, ethnicities, ages and abilities that we need to tackle.

In developing the draft, we have taken account of:

- the most up to date evidence of what is happening around health and wellbeing outcomes in Tower Hamlets, as summarised in our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- an assessment of our progress against the previous strategy
- latest relevant national guidance, strategies and plans
- local strategies and plans
- extensive resident engagement and professional workshops to help gather insight of peoples lived experiences as well as understanding of what is most important to people and the community

The strategy will be a critical piece of documentation for:

- Underpinning commissioning decisions: setting a framework for commissioning plans across the NHS, local authority and other agencies in Tower Hamlets;
- Influencing decisions: providing a source of evidence and direction for policy and decision making in a wide range of areas across Tower Hamlets, such as development, community safety and education.
- Holding leaders of organisations across the borough to account for improving outcomes: the strategy will be reviewed each year and provide a basis for

conversations about where we are improving outcomes, and where more needs to be done.

This final consultation phase will give both residents and professionals, living and working in Tower Hamlets, the opportunity to review our draft strategy, shape the final document and consider how they can be part of its delivery.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy – ambitions for 2021-25

The past year has tested our borough to an extent we have not seen in decades. Our communities have lost friends and family, our health and social care staff have been tested to their limit, and we have seen close-up how an unequal society ends in unequal health outcomes.

We have known about the multiple pressures on health and wellbeing in Tower Hamlets for years: alarming rates of poverty, particularly for our children and pensioners who have poverty rates 3-4 times above the national average and the highest rates of poverty in London; toxic air pollution; poor diet and limited activity; multiple pressures on our mental health. The health toll from these pressures is dramatic, and particularly impacts girls and women in Tower Hamlets: girls born in Tower Hamlets have just 56.6 years of healthy life expectancy, which is 7.3 years less than the England average. By comparison boys born in Tower Hamlets have 60.5 years of healthy life expectancy, which is 2.9 years below the England average.

Organisations, resident groups and leaders in our communities have led impressive programmes to combat these issues. But we know we need to do more. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced a reckoning, and a recognition that we will not change health inequalities unless we work together with urgency. Many things we had thought weren't possible have been achieved this year, and especially when communities and organisations came together. When people needed food and medicines, volunteer groups sprang to action across Tower Hamlets. When we needed a swift rollout of new programmes like vaccination, food support systems, helplines, local contact tracing, our local services came together to deliver at pace. When we needed certainty on new rules, residents came together in forums like the Covid Community Champions to disseminate up to date information.

What are our ambitions?

As we look ahead to the next five years, we want to take forward the lessons of this year. First, that we will no longer accept poor health and health inequalities in Tower Hamlets. Second, that when we come together, we can do so much more than we thought, and be much more than the sum of our parts.

Ultimately, the thing driving this strategy is that we care deeply about the health and wellbeing of our friends, neighbours and family living in Tower Hamlets. Everyone in Tower Hamlets should be able to live fulfilling, connected and safe lives, free from pressures on our mental and physical health. We think that everyone in the community, every organisation, and every leader needs to be part of making that happen.

As we rebuild our lives and our communities after this pandemic, we need to remain ambitious and hold onto the partnerships that have brought us through the last year.

This is at the core of our ambition that in 5 years' time, we want Tower Hamlets to be a place where...

TH 2025 is a borough where....	How can we make this happen through partnership working?
Ambition 1: We can all access safe, social spaces near our homes, so that we can live active, healthy lives as a community	We will work with partners across the borough, including the Council's Public Realm team and housing associations, to reduce traffic levels and make the best use of our land/spaces. We want to ensure that all our residents are owning and using our open spaces to lead active, social lives – whatever their age, sex, ethnicity, health condition or locality.
Ambition 2: Children and families are healthy, happy, and confident	We will work with schools, voluntary and community groups, families and children themselves to ensure children are getting healthy food, plenty of activity, and learning the skills to manage their wellbeing as they grow up. We will also work to ensure parents and families as a whole have the support they need to lead active, healthy lives.
Ambition 3: Young adults have the opportunities, connections and local support they need to live mentally and physically healthy lives	We will work with employers across the borough to support a fair and thriving economy, and with community and voluntary groups to ensure young adults have strong networks of support, so that our young adults are leading healthy and fulfilling lives.
Ambition 4: Middle-aged and older people are enabled to live healthy lives and get support early if they need it – whether it is for their mental or physical health	We will work with the health and social care sector, and with community and voluntary groups, to ensure our borough and our services are age-friendly. We also want to ensure that those with a health condition are supported as early as possible so that they lead active and healthy lives for as long as possible.
Ambition 5: Anyone needing help knows where to get it, and is supported to find the right help	We will work with health, social care, and wider community services across the borough to improve join-up, create networks across organisations, and improve visibility and proactive communications between services and those who need them most.

How we will deliver – Partnerships

Partnership working is at the centre of the Health and Wellbeing Board's role: we bring together leaders across health and social care, we link together programmes and teams working towards these goals, and we support existing programmes by using the collective power and voice of senior leaders across health and care.

To deliver the strategy, we will use 'Action Groups' of professionals and residents with interest or expertise in the area, ideally using existing groups that already bring the right people together.

Along with the delivery of the strategy, these groups will inform what is happening already, identify opportunities where partners can add value, and develop future priority areas for action.

Principles

The Board has set out the following **principles** to guide how the Board will collaborate with partners and deliver its ambitions, using them to frame the actions in this strategy.

BETTER TARGETING

Risk dashboards and joint working will reveal people at the greatest risk of poor health and wellbeing, so we can target support upstream

STRONGER NETWORKS

We need to support open information (like service directories) and networks across our borough to ensure services work together to target their support

EQUALITIES & ANTI-RACISM

This principle should be at the heart of everything we do. All HWBB members should sign the Tower Hamlets anti-racism pledge

COMMUNICATIONS

We need invigorated approaches to communicating with residents, to make sure our most at risk residents know where to get help and what they are entitled to

COMMUNITY FIRST

Everything we do needs to be driven by community needs and have coproduction and codesign at its core, from designing outdoor spaces to prioritizing services

USING WHAT WE HAVE

We need to make the most of the assets we have, for example reviewing green spaces for community gardens

The draft strategy sets out the following priority areas and initial actions it will take to support delivery of its five ambitions.

1. Ambition: We can all access safe, social spaces near our homes

Priority areas:

- Reduce traffic, and with it sound and air pollution, across the borough;
- Make use of unused open spaces, such as small green spaces on estates, rooftops or unused land;
- Ensure that all open space is safe, accessible for all, and actively used by the communities in the vicinity.

Initial Actions: Safe Social Spaces:

BETTER TARGETING

Inform targeting of changes to our environment through research and evaluation on needs and impacts of major works like the Liveable Streets Programme

STRONGER NETWORKS

Strengthen the network of residents and organisations (such as housing providers) who can help transform our built environment

EQUALITIES & ANTI-RACISM

Develop a toolkit for embedding health impact assessments in key programmes, with independent experts advising on the impact to health equalities

COMMUNICATIONS

Strengthen communication and engagement with underserved communities, through health care and voluntary sector voices, as well as empowering the views of children and young people to create sustainable change to the environment.

COMMUNITY FIRST

Locality Health & Wellbeing Committees could help link developers and planners into communities to ensure a representative group of residents is involved in planning, design and development

USING WHAT WE HAVE

Create an interlinked network of high quality, multifunctional, accessible, green open spaces and waterways in Tower Hamlets that will encourage active lifestyles and improve quality of life as well as improve community safety and reduce environmental risk exposures

2. Ambition: Children, teenagers and families are healthy, happy, and confident

Priority areas:

- Support improvements in the food environment for children and families, including cooking together
- Enable improvements in the support offered to parents and families (e.g. unlocking more peer support through community networks)
- Drive increase in activity levels in children
- Support and align efforts to build life skills in children, particularly around managing their wellbeing

Initial Actions: Children, Young People and Families

BETTER TARGETING

A schools' health & wellbeing dashboard, developed jointly with schools across the borough, could set out key indicators on diet, activity and the overall health and wellbeing of children

STRONGER NETWORKS

Health & Wellbeing Board partners to join the LBTH Food Partnership to link with existing programmes and ensure alignment

EQUALITIES & ANTI-RACISM

Partners to work with existing programmes (such as adaptations to fast food outlets) to ensure they are addressing health inequalities rather than exacerbating them

COMMUNICATIONS

Work across the sector to ensure families know what support is available to them

COMMUNITY FIRST

Embed a Health & Wellbeing Champion from the local community in every school and support with training and accreditation

USING WHAT WE HAVE

An expansion of 'Play Streets', working with locality Health & Wellbeing Committees, so that all residents use the streets as a safe, social space

3. Ambition: Young adults have the opportunities, connections and local support they need to live healthy, fulfilling lives

Priority areas:

- Work with employers across the borough (particularly Small to Medium Enterprises) to improve the health of current employees and workplaces, and to advise on tackling health inequalities in recruitment;
- Work with community and voluntary groups to ensure young adults have strong networks of support and connection to their communities.

Initial Actions: Young Adults

BETTER TARGETING

Help employers target recruitment according to health inequalities, for example 'employment maps', to highlight groups with low important

STRONGER NETWORKS

Promote and support an upcoming mapping exercise (under the volunteering plan) to advertise local volunteering offers, with a focus on young adults

EQUALITIES & ANTI-RACISM

Create tools for employers to embed health equalities in existing jobs (especially small-medium size enterprises) and recruitment

COMMUNICATIONS

Work with employers, businesses and community groups to ensure young adults are linked to their communities and aware of the opportunities in their area

COMMUNITY FIRST

Promote peer-led and volunteer programmes among young adults

USING WHAT WE HAVE

As employers, Health and Wellbeing Board members to start change in their own organisations, for example, by becoming London Living Wage employers or leading by example (e.g. promoting regular breaks)

4. Ambition: Middle-aged and older people are enabled to live healthy lives and get support early if they need it

Priority areas:

- Ensure our borough and our services (including health, social care, voluntary sector and community support) are age friendly.
- Ensure that those with a health condition are supported as early as possible so that they lead active and healthy lives for as long as possible.

Initial Actions: Middle-Aged and Older People

BETTER TARGETING

Map risk pathways for those likely to develop a long-term condition, working with social prescribers, voluntary sector, primary care and community networks to ensure support is targeted early

STRONGER NETWORKS

Promote and support an upcoming mapping exercise (under the volunteering plan) to advertise local volunteering offers, with a focus on middle aged and older people

EQUALITIES & ANTI-RACISM

Run inclusive mass participation events that welcome people from different cultures, older people, and those often sidelined in public activities (such as people with a disability or health condition)

COMMUNICATIONS

Work with health and care services and community groups to tailor communications to older people's needs; Link to digital exclusion programmes (such as Digital Buddies)

COMMUNITY FIRST

Bring middle aged and older people into coproduction, ensuring that methods include all ages, cultures, and those with a disability or health condition

USING WHAT WE HAVE

Bring older people into peer support services and use faith and community networks to improve the health and wellbeing of older people

5. Ambition: Anyone needing help knows where to get it, and is supported to find the right help

Priority areas:

- Improve join-up across health, social care, VCS and wider community services,
- Create networks across organisations and improve visibility and proactive communications between services and those who need them most.

Initial Actions: Services Available and Known About

BETTER TARGETING

We will drive a 'no wrong door' policy across all health and social care services, so that people reach the right service faster

STRONGER NETWORKS

We will support the development of the new information and advice service commissioned by LBTH to link up services

EQUALITIES & ANTI-RACISM

We will continually challenge organisations, starting with our member organisations, to create more accessible and culturally competent services that everyone in our community feels comfortable accessing

COMMUNICATIONS

We will promote the new LBTH information and advice service, using its networks to ensure key services are aware and joining it

COMMUNITY FIRST

We will ensure that our residents are at the heart of decision-making at every level by ensure all member organisations have the training and systems to embed coproduction in everything that they do

USING WHAT WE HAVE

We will oversee a review of funding across our organisations to ensure we are aligning our efforts and focusing on prevention and addressing inequalities