

# *Consultation and engagement on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy*

# Overview of activity

Consultation and engagement on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy took part in two main phases:

- 1) *Engagement* with residents and professionals to imagine and inform the strategy & its priorities.
- 1) *Consultation* with residents and professionals on a set of principles and ambitions on which to base the strategy.

# How have we done this?

## Developing the Strategy

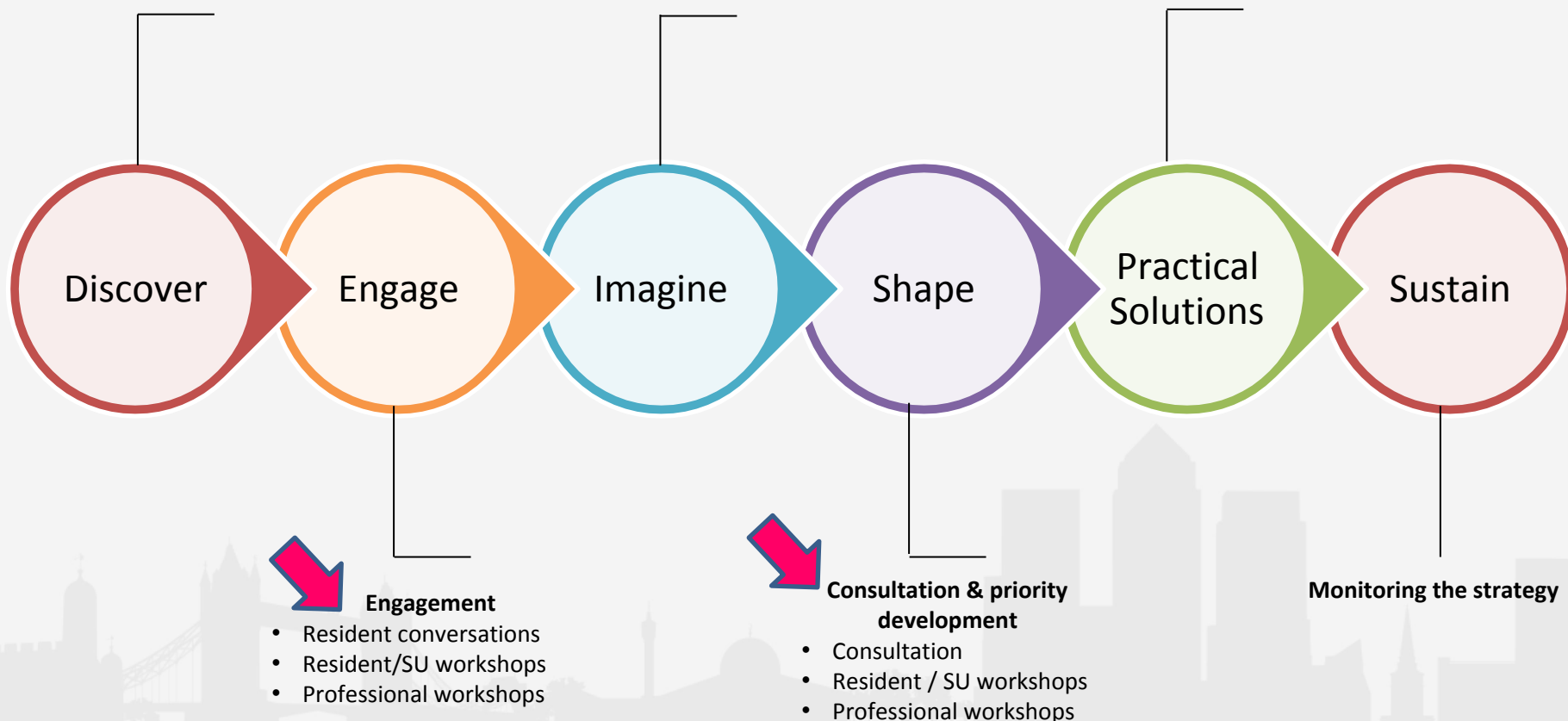
### Baseline Analysis

- Public Health Annual Report
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessments
- Existing feedback & insights
- Interdependent strategies

### What can we do?

- Engagement analysis
- Opportunity identification

### Producing the strategy



# Engagement – overview of activity

## Residents

- Face-to-face ‘neighbourhood conversations’ in December 2019 with **240** residents, carried out with Healthwatch Tower Hamlets
- Phone and online ‘Covid-19 engagement’ survey with **354** people between March and June 2020, carried out by Healthwatch Tower Hamlets
- Carer’s Centre meeting
- Create Day Centre (service users with learning disabilities) meeting
- Local voices (service users with physical disabilities) meeting
- Swan Housing Tenants and Residents Association meeting
- Older People’s Reference Group meeting
- Macmillan Cancer Support Group meeting
- DeafPlus meeting
- Look Ahead (service users with learning disabilities) meeting
- Positive East (services users who are HIV positive) meeting
- Youth Council meeting
- Youth SEND Forum meeting

## Professionals

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Safeguarding Adults Board
- Children and Families Partnership Board
- North East Health and Wellbeing Locality Committee
- South West Health and Wellbeing Locality Committee
- South East Health and Wellbeing Locality Committee
- Tower Hamlets Homes Housing Management subgroup
- Housing Management Forum
- Tackling Poverty Reference Group
- Pan-Provider Forum in health and care
- Born Well and Growing Well Workstream
- Living Well Workstream
- Promoting Independence Workstream
- Learning Disability Partnership Board

*All meetings and workshops were held face-to-face, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic at the end of 2019 and start of 2020*

# Engagement – main messages from Healthwatch Tower Hamlets



## Local people's vision for a

Good environment

Good community

Material security

Access to services

Children/  
young people

## Assets

- Parks and open spaces
- Open markets
- Leisure centres
- Faith groups
- Community, volunteer organisations
- Self-organised Covid-19 mutual support groups
- Local businesses, job creators
- Schools, professional training
- Housing associations
- Part-own part-rent housing schemes
- Advice charities (debt, employability)
- NHS services
- Social care services
- Local and national health and advocacy charities
- Digital access tools
- Youth clubs, sports clubs
- Children's centres
- Schools, libraries
- Exercising facilities

## Obstacles, risks

- Air pollution- heavy road traffic
- Poor hygiene and safety- public spaces
- Restrictions to use of parks- Covid-19 lockdown
- Population churn, gentrification
- Perception of poor safety, antisocial behaviour
- Cancellation of events/ closure of socialising spaces- Covid-19 lockdown
- High cost of housing, esp. private renters and first time buyers
- Loss of jobs, difficulty finding work in the Covid-19 pandemic
- General economic recession in the Covid-19 pandemic
- Difficulties getting specialist appointments promptly; 'over-stretched services'
- Cuts to social care services; gatekeeping evaluation process
- Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on services.
- Air pollution, poor access to nature
- Gang crime, drug dealing, poor safety
- Social isolation and lack of opportunities to play/ socialise/take part in activities due to Covid-19.

## Inequalities

- Younger people and those in precarious housing find it harder to eat healthy and keep healthy lifestyles.
- People in the borough's poorest wards experience more air pollution.
- Younger people and private renters feel less connected to their local area.
- Women and people living in housing association estates feel less safe.
- People with poor mental health are at higher risk of social isolation.
- Women, people from BAME backgrounds, younger people and parents of disabled children felt less able to support themselves and their families financially.
- Renters were less happy with their homes than homeowners; adults living with their parents were the least happy with where they lived.
- People from BAME backgrounds, older people and those with more complex medical needs (particularly those with mental health issues) were less satisfied with services.
- In the pandemic, those who are digitally excluded find it harder to access services.
- Younger people (under 24), White respondents and parents of special needs children were less likely to think children get the best start in life.
- Children in overcrowded, deprived or digitally excluded households are more affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

# Engagement – main messages from workshops

## I am supported to live the life I want

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Relationships with friends & family are very important to health & wellbeing
- Places to meet with others help connect those with similar experiences.
- There could be increased specific local support for deaf people and LGBT people
- Assistive equipment is important.
- Carers often feel unheard and unsupported.
- There could be improvements to the taxi card service and more free exercise options

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Look at interventions for health promotion and support for patients' goals provided by GPs
- Offer more advice & support for people with long term health conditions
- Support with healthy meals such as cooking lessons
- Support with culture, language and faith
- Increase legal and housing advice
- Improve physical environment – greater access to green spaces and allotments, disability access within the built environment, town planning to enable cycling, and better waste management services.

## I play an active role in my community

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Services valued for the opportunity to connect with others as well as practical support provided.
- Going to hubs, faith, volunteering roles, part of LGBT community & having a purpose - important to feel part of community.
- Can be difficult to make friends & social connections
- Feeling that community & people can be judgemental
- Social media & online networking important to some. Both positive and negative for health & wellbeing
- Look at increased offer of activities for young people & people with mobility issues
- More services and facilities could be LGBT friendly & promoted as such.

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Can tackle loneliness through community hubs & pharmacies
- Increase social prescribing
- Encourage residents to increase their participation in organisations and services such as gyms, Healthwatch.
- Increase opportunities and awareness for volunteering, e.g. via time-banking schemes.

## My children get the best start in life

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Some felt there are a wide range of opportunities for young people in LBTH, others did not.
- Creative opportunities for young people could be increased.
- School is both a positive and negative for young people's health & wellbeing
- Pressure put on young people by schools has a negative impact on mental health
- Lack of sleep, low self-esteem, lack of liberties at home, romantic relationship problems - negative factors in health & wellbeing, only discussed by young people
- Need for more affordable activities for children and young people
- Lack of acceptance of LBGT people within the borough.

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Need increased focus on public health issues, e.g. childhood obesity.
- Look at increasing services & support for early years, e.g. about healthy routines.
- Increased preconception, antenatal & postnatal care.
- Target schools in deprived areas.
- Develop exercise programmes for children and mothers.

# Engagement – main messages from workshops

## I have a good level of happiness & wellbeing

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Ensure wider determinants of health are addressed
- Increase support for groups who may find things harder, e.g. if vulnerable, lower levels of English language or digital access
- Prevent loneliness and social isolation, e.g. via better ways of linking people together
- Develop a comprehensive directory of supportive provisions and local assets
- Develop a listening culture in services and a corporate culture of joy across all TH partners
- Increase the roll-out of programmes which develop children and young people's wellbeing and emotional skills.

## Regardless of who I am, I am able to access care services for my physical and mental health

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Alternatives to online access should always be offered
- Accessibility including transport and disabled toilet facilities, is important for people with disability issues
- There are a lack of services which offer an interpreter
- Carers felt there is a lack of personalisation and “seeing the whole picture” by services.
- Public health offer is too generic and does not reflect diverse needs.
- There could be better monitoring of data on sexual orientation and the use of services.

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Improve the channels through which people get and information about services
- Improve online access to services, but also maintain non-internet access to services
- Improve access to mental health services
- Improve access and services for those with language difficulties, housebound patients and 16-25 year olds.
- Help people overcome fears of accessing health services.

## I am able to access safe and high quality services when I need them

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Positive experiences of health services include care is personal and staff are kind
- Care packages and in-home support and equipment are important
- Knowing where to go to access healthcare is important
- The difficulty in getting support could be improved - better after-care, joining up services in one place, and providing tailored talking therapies

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Deliver services in a ways which are tailored to residents needs - phone, online, in person
- Improved ability to get an appointment with services
- Flexible appointment times to suit more people
- Appropriate referrals and communications between services, including better co-ordination between primary and secondary care, better integration of mental health services and increased understanding of referral criteria and pathways.

# Engagement – main messages from workshops

## I have a positive experience of service I use, overall

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Adopt a person-centred approach to care in places which feel most comfortable to the service user.
- Use relational based continuity of care, such as a named GP
- Ensure high-quality customer service.
- Ensure patients' expectations are managed and every contact counts
- Ensure consistency in domiciliary care across the borough
- Embed improvement through customer feedback in services' culture.
- TH partnership could gain a clearer overview of the system and of residents' needs.

## I am confident that those providing my care are competent, happy and kind

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Positive comments focused on care feeling personal. Negative experiences involved rude or uncaring health staff
- Concerns raised over some staff lacking skills and expertise – suggest training on role of carers, autism, LGBT
- Carers felt unheard, particularly as often health staff would not discuss matters about the person they care for. Campaigns to encourage more empathy and decrease stigma of Bengali LGBT community members.

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Ensure health & wellbeing of staff members
- Train and develop staff, as well as increase supervision and staff ownership.
- Conduct further training in personality disorder and encouraging children to discuss mental health and wellbeing.
- Ensure staff have consistent and appropriate levels of knowledge, including of other services.

## I understand the ways to live a healthy life

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- People understand things like healthy food and exercise, but it isn't always practical
- Challenge for many to stick to a healthy diet - eating unhealthy food presented as a positive & negative
- Cost, speed, ease and advertisement of unhealthy food are barriers to reducing how much people ate it
- Suggestions include better education about healthy eating, portion sizes and the importance of drinking water

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Should improve communications on impact of making unhealthy choices on Introduce initiatives such as promotion of active travel to reduce dependence on cars
- Focus on early prevention, education and a range of community activities for different groups
- Explore peer-to-peer support
- life expectancy & quality of life



# Engagement – main messages from workshops

## I am supported to make healthy choices

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- There are a wide range of local exercise facilities that support health and wellbeing
- Accessible exercise facilities are important.
- Cycling was identified as a healthy choice, but safety, price & lack of bike facilities are barriers
- People felt they could access healthy, fresh and cheap food
- Could introduce health coaches, incentives for buying healthy food, greater fast food regulation, safe spaces to cycle and cycling safely training.

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- A wide variety of services exist to support healthy choices
- Look at reinforcing positive choices & behaviours, increasing early prevention programmes
- Identify what motivates children and young people to make healthy choices
- Enable healthy choices, e.g. via water fountains, cycle lanes, free gym access
- Campaign to remove unhealthy food outlets and increase healthier food outlets
- Increase partnership work with organisations offering healthy choices

## I feel safe from harm in my community

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Feedback from some that they feel safe with good community cohesion & neighbours
- Drug dealing and ASB are barriers to feeling safe, and there are hotspots in public transport hubs & estates
- Feeling unsafe created feelings of anxiety and fear of being followed, may have to alter behaviour to stay safe.
- Insufficient responses to crime and ASB & insufficient lighting are barriers to wellbeing
- Look at greater police presence, lighting, cleaner streets, better CCTV, “Good Night Out Campaign”
- Traffic makes some feel unsafe walking & cycling.

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Increase safety for children and young people, e.g. safe spaces for young people
- Support schools to increase safety
- Increase promotion of services available and how people can report concerns
- Consider how to address the perception that there is high crime levels
- Increase community events to increase community cohesion and tackle loneliness
- Increase visibility & numbers enforcement officers

## I am satisfied with my home and where I live

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Local parks, green spaces & nature are positive but could be increased
- Idea stores, cinemas, pubs, museums, community centres and shops are positive
- Need more spaces for young people to socialise
- Housing secure and close to friends is positive. Concerns on housing quality.
- Negatives: poor pavements, lack of public seating & toilets, litter, dog fouling & fly tipping, overcrowding on transport & street.
- Suggest more recycling bins, better pavements, more plants, flowers & art.

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Increase availability of housing options: More affordable housing, use vacant space for supported accommodation, promote home swaps
- More holistic and personalised approach to housing, e.g. child-friendly and accessible
- Flexible & integrated partnership approach between LBTH and housing
- Improving conditions in which residents live by: tackling overcrowding, ASB, domestic abuse, swift repairs, licensing scheme.

# Engagement – main messages from workshops

## I am able to support myself and my family financially

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Being employed supports health and wellbeing. Unemployment is a barrier
- There is a lack of employment opportunities for people who are deaf
- High cost of living & low incomes is a barrier to financial security
- Poverty, deprivation, injustice & inequality are barriers to health & wellbeing
- Suggestions included jobs listed in youth clubs & paid work experience in year 12
- Could be subsidies and free activities for certain groups

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Financial health centres, access to benefit entitlements, financial advice, advocacy & employment advice could support people to maximise their income
- Support for people into employment through education and training
- Ensure services are affordable and residents can access transport
- Develop understanding and consideration of financial circumstances whilst delivering services

## I am able to breathe cleaner air in the place I live

### Resident ideas & feedback:

- Parks and green spaces valued because they improve the local area & feeling that can breathe cleaner air there
- Pollution and poor air quality can be a barrier to health & wellbeing
- More greenspaces and making it easier to cycle were suggested

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Tower Hamlets partnership could lead through changes in staff travel to and during work
- Encourage residents use of greenspaces and to quit smoking
- Ensuring services are close to residents live so that active transport can be used
- Encourage residents to campaign and lobby about issues
- More campaigning by celebrities and ambassadors
- Putting on a wide range of events (e.g. buggy runs, car free days, junior park runs)
- Considering the built environment including: building designs as carbon neutral, increasing planting in open spaces, zero parking provision at new developments.

## I feel like services work together to provide me with good care

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Improve the links between services and partnership working, e.g. housing & health
- Improve handovers between services
- Improve knowledge of care services available across the borough
- Develop a centralised online directory
- Better communication across sectors
- Develop shared health priorities, better understanding of how organisations contribute to common priorities
- Assess staff on their level of integrated working

# Engagement – main messages from workshops

## I want to see money being spent in the best way to deliver local services

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Consideration of the way services are commissioned
- Joint initiatives and resources to support health choices
- Health services that promote options
- Targeting resources for residents' needs
- Resources for community groups and the voluntary sector

## I believe the trust, confidence and relationships are in place to work together with services to decide the right steps for us as a whole community

### Professional ideas & feedback:

- Co-production of services and solutions from the start of projects
- Sharing co-production opportunities across the TH partnership
- Ensuring consultation is accessible for all local residents and not solely displayed online



# Shaping the priorities

Analysis of  
engagement &  
findings

## Principles

1. Better targeting
2. Stronger networks
3. Equalities & anti-racism
4. Communications
5. Community first
6. Using what we have

## Future ambitions

Tower Hamlets in 2025 is a borough where...

1. We can all access safe, social spaces near our homes, so that we can live active, healthy lives as a community
2. Children and families are healthy, happy, and confident
3. Young adults have the opportunities, connections and local support they need to live mentally and physically healthy lives
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
5. Anyone needing help knows where to get it, and is supported to find the right help

# Consultation – overview of activity

*The consultation was launched on 16 April 2021 and ended on 9 July 2021*

## Public online survey

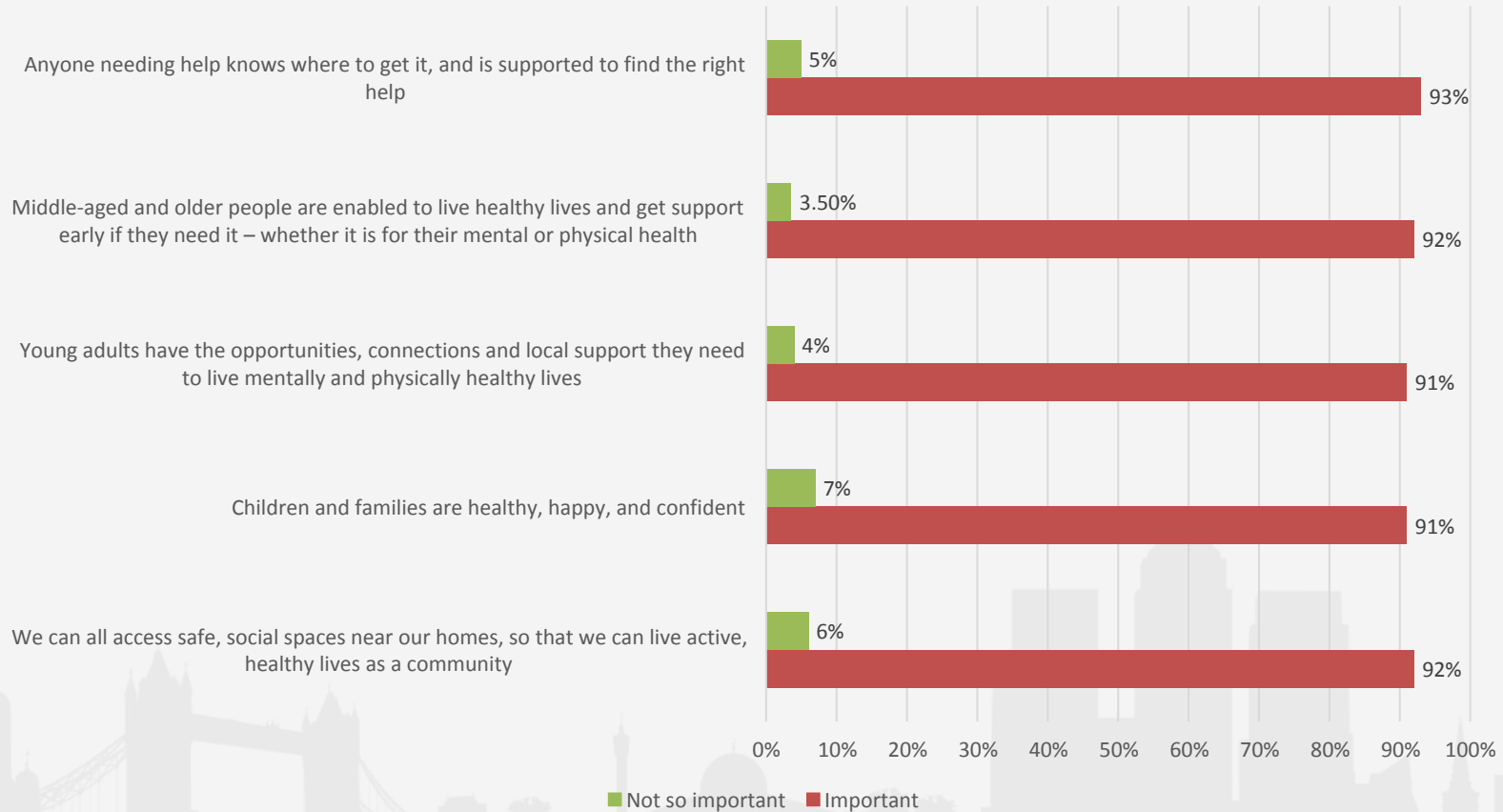
- 144 responses
- Age of respondents: 81% 25 to 64 years old, 13.4% over 65 years old, 1.4% under 25 years old
- 25% respondents have day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months
- 58% female, 26% male
- 58% women, 27% men
- 85% have a gender identity that is the same as the sex assigned at birth, 2% do not
- 70% heterosexual/straight, 7% day/lesbian, 3.5% bisexual
- 36% married, 43% not married
- 3.5% pregnant or gave birth in the last 12 months
- 44% White British ethnic background, 18% 'White other', 8% Bangladeshi, other groups all below 3% per group
- 29% Christian, 10% Muslim, 27% no religion or belief
- 43% have caring or parenting responsibilities

## Meetings with professionals and residents

- Children and Families Partnership Board
- Tower Hamlets Housing Forum
- Health and Adults Scrutiny sub-committee
- South East Health and Wellbeing Locality Committee
- North West Health and Wellbeing Locality Committee
- South West Health and Wellbeing Locality Committee
- Covid Champions meeting
- Communities Driving Change Programme Leads
- Communities Driving Change Network & residents meeting
- Real Local Voices (two-part session)
- Carer Forum
- Place Directorate Leadership Team
- Health, Adult & Community Directorate Leadership team
- Children & Culture Directorate Leadership team
- Living Well Workstream
- Promoting Independence Workstream
- Safeguarding Adults Board

# Online consultation – main messages

To what extent, do you agree that we have chosen the right ambitions to focus on for the next 5 years?



# Online consultation – main messages

*Ambition 1: We can all access safe, social spaces near our homes, so that we can live active, healthy lives as a community*

**To what extent do you agree with the initial actions for this ambition?**

74% agree, 9% disagree, 17% not sure

**What actions can you, your families and your local networks take to support the priority areas?**

- Drive less, walk and cycle more
- Recycle more, don't drop litter
- Make use of open and green spaces, and create more by planting, forming & joining gardening clubs
- Volunteer and be active in things like Police ward meetings, responding to planning applications
- Report and work together to tackle crime and ASB

**Is there anything else the Health & Wellbeing Board should consider?**

- Protect existing spaces and facilities
- Do more to tackle traffic levels, car use, climate change, car idling and air pollution. Mixed views on Liveable Streets initiatives.
- Make it easier and safer to walk and cycle
- Tackle noise pollution
- Do more to tackle knife crime and ASB
- Utilise local creative and arts charities
- Have a more accessible borough for people with a disability
- Have targeted interventions for women as more impacted by health inequality
- Do more on outdoor play.

# Online consultation – main messages

## *Ambition 2: children and families are healthy, happy and confident*

### **To what extent do you agree with the initial actions for this ambition?**

73% agree, 10% disagree, 17% not sure

### **What actions can you, your families and your local networks take to support the priority areas?**

- Push for healthier school meals
- Teach cooking and life skills to children and young people, and provide cooking kitchens & space to help this
- Teach kindness, empathy and anti-discrimination to children and young people
- Help maintain green spaces
- Join in with community activities
- Walk children to school

### **Is there anything else the Health & Wellbeing Board should consider?**

- Provide more classes & education on cooking, nutrition and exercise
- Look at free meal provision in early year settings
- Look at healthy food provision in all settings including food banks
- Tackle the number of fast-food outlets
- Provide more education and access to support in relation to children and young people's mental health
- Protect and expand green spaces, play spaces, sports facilities and youth clubs
- Bigger emphasis on tackling child poverty
- Teach more parenting skills
- Have clear, accessible messaging on health
- Target interventions at vulnerable groups.



# Online consultation – main messages

***Ambition 3: Young adults have the opportunities, connections and local support they need to live mentally and physically healthy lives***

## **To what extent do you agree with the initial actions for this ambition?**

68% agree, 12% disagree, 19% not sure

## **What actions can you, your families and your local networks take to support the priority areas?**

- Provide and/or take part in mentoring, coaching and providing guidance to young people
- Encourage young people to take up training, employment or apprenticeship opportunities
- Provide volunteering opportunities
- Provide employment opportunities, paying young people a fair wage
- Support businesses that employ young people
- Fight racism

## **Is there anything else the Health & Wellbeing Board should consider?**

- Have a bigger focus on mental health in terms of raising awareness and access to support
- Create more & more accessible training and employment opportunities
- Have targeted interventions aimed at: women and girls, homeless, LGBT, victims of domestic abuse, young people excluded from school, those who are neurodiverse.
- Take a public health approach to tackling serious youth violence
- Help young adults feel part of their communities
- Protect 'safe spaces' and enable people to come together.
- Work more closely with universities.

# Online consultation – main messages

***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***

**To what extent do you agree with the initial actions for this ambition?**

72.5% agree, 9% disagree, 19% not sure

**What actions can you, your families and your local networks take to support the priority areas?**

- Volunteer, take an active role in communities, and encourage others to do the same
- Reach out to and support those who are housebound or digitally excluded
- Reserve time and space in services for this age group
- Look out for neighbours
- Help use and protect safe spaces and places of natural beauty

**Is there anything else the Health & Wellbeing Board should consider?**

- Provide more & more accessible toilets
- Focus on mental health, including providing more arts and education opportunities
- Provide more targeted support at groups including those in care homes, those in deprived areas
- Put a bigger emphasis on unhealthy behaviours, e.g. substance misuse
- Put a bigger emphasis on the wider determinants of health, especially housing and loneliness
- Provide culturally sensitive services
- Protect safe and well-maintained spaces
- Go back to face-to-face service provision after Covid-19 and understand the impact of the digital divide

# Online consultation – main messages

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

**To what extent do you agree with the initial actions for this ambition?**

77% agree, 6% disagree, 16.5% not sure

**What actions can you, your families and your local networks take to support the priority areas?**

- Get to know neighbours so can help signpost them to support
- Share knowledge with each other
- Alert GPs to unpaid carers
- Help with voluntary leafleting of information
- Help connect up health and social care

**Is there anything else the Health & Wellbeing Board should consider?**

- Focus on recovery from Covid-19 pandemic
- Bigger focus on awareness & availability of support in relation to mental health
- Do more to support carers
- Tackle inequality facing those with a learning disability
- Engage with and hear from different communities
- Be clear where people should look to find information, being aware of the digital divide
- Integrate health and care systems, connect different departments
- Commit to concrete actions and be accountable for them.

# Consultation workshops – main messages

- Generally **supportive** of ambitions.
- **Make links** to other local strategies & programmes including poverty review
- Services should do more to **share good practice**.
- Have a bigger emphasis on ‘**safety and violence reduction**’.
- Need access to open space, but also need to **feel safe** in that space.
- Safe spaces ambition should include community use of buildings/facilities closed due to funding or Covid-19. Maximise **community ownership of unused spaces**.
- Better **joint working with housing**
- Should have an ambition on **cross-disability accessible access to spaces**.
- Should have a focus on and be clearer on intended outcomes for people with **mental health** issues , those with a **disability, unpaid carers**.
- Strengthen commitments on **mental health** given Covid-19 impact.
- More opportunities to **co-design** with communities in a more meaningful way. Learn from & build on good practice.
- Tackle **food poverty**
- **Air pollution** – consider sources other than cars
- Concerns about **impact on services** arising from Covid-19 and financial pressures facing public services, and what this means for health & wellbeing
- Support and activities are not always **culturally sensitive**
- Look at how to better facilitate connections and tackle loneliness for **older people**.