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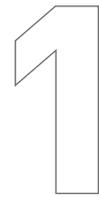
# TOWER HAMLETS SUBSTANCE MISUSE STRATEGY



2016-2019

DRAFT

# INTRODUCTION



The misuse of drugs and alcohol presents a wide range of social and health issues. It can have serious consequences for individuals, their family members and whole communities including crime, domestic abuse, child abuse and neglect, family breakdown, homelessness, physical and mental health problems.

In 2012 the first partnership substance misuse strategy for Tower Hamlets was published. Building on the successes and learning lessons from the previous strategy this new Partnership substance misuse strategy 2016-2019 has been developed by analysing local need, reviewing the evidence base for effective intervention, and by listening to local stakeholders, service users and residents of Tower Hamlets.

Considerable progress has been made in Tower Hamlets in reducing the harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse. Together across the Council, NHS, police, probation services and voluntary sector we have worked successfully to support people to improve their health and wellbeing, provided high quality treatment and support and effectively tackled antisocial behaviour and crime associated with drugs and alcohol. The commitment of our partners across health, education, youth services, police, probation services and voluntary and community sector is strong and we are resolved to reduce the negative impacts of drug and alcohol misuse in the borough.

Tower Hamlets' Health and Wellbeing Board and supporting strategy provides an excellent platform to strengthen the

Partnership's joined up approach in addressing the wide ranging individual and societal harms caused by drug and alcohol misuse.

The strategic approach set out in this strategy supports the delivery of the borough's Community Plan. The Strategy will help deliver the Partnership's stated ambition to support a community which is both 'healthy and supportive' and 'safe and cohesive'.

This strategy outlines Tower Hamlets Partnership's approach to tackling the problems associated with drug and alcohol misuse in the borough. It presents the key commitments over the next three years from 2016 to 2019. The commitments and actions are a response to the identified needs of the borough in relation to substance misuse as well as a direct reflection of the priorities expressed by stakeholders, residents and service users via widespread consultation.

This strategy builds on the existing 'three strands' approach to tackling drugs and alcohol in Tower Hamlets through; 'Prevention and behaviour change', 'Treatment', and 'Enforcement and regulation' as well as recognising the importance of the wider determinants of health such as education, employment and environmental factors essential as the foundations of health and wellbeing.

## Some successes to date

During 2014/15, there were 2,274 adults, resident in Tower Hamlets, in specialist drug and alcohol treatment, the highest in London, with the people accessing our treatment services reflecting the borough's diverse communities.

Over the same period, around 49,995 adults (16+) were supported through Identification and Brief Advice for alcohol use.

In 2014/15 school year over 6,530 young people received substance misuse education.

A rolling programme of targeted and whole population alcohol awareness campaigns has been implemented to educate, raise awareness and signpost support services.

More young people are accessing specialist treatment for drug and alcohol use. Last year there were 202 young people aged under 18 in treatment. Over this period 8 out of 10 young people left treatment successfully.

Over the three years between 2012 and 2015, there were 1,306 arrests of dealers of Class A and Class B drugs in the borough, on average 402 arrests per year.

There have been many initiatives to tackle the harms caused by alcohol use including the borough wide controlled drinking zone and an award winning Community Alcohol Partnership in Tower Hamlets.

Protecting children and young people affected by parental substance misuse remains a local priority. Throughout the last strategy we ensured hidden harm and safeguarding children underpinned and strengthened the strategic response across the full range of services to target effectively the problems that families face.



# KEY FACTS ABOUT THE CURRENT POSITION ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL IN TOWER HAMLETS

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We have updated the information available regarding the nature and scale of drug and alcohol misuse in the borough, and the effects on individuals and the local community.

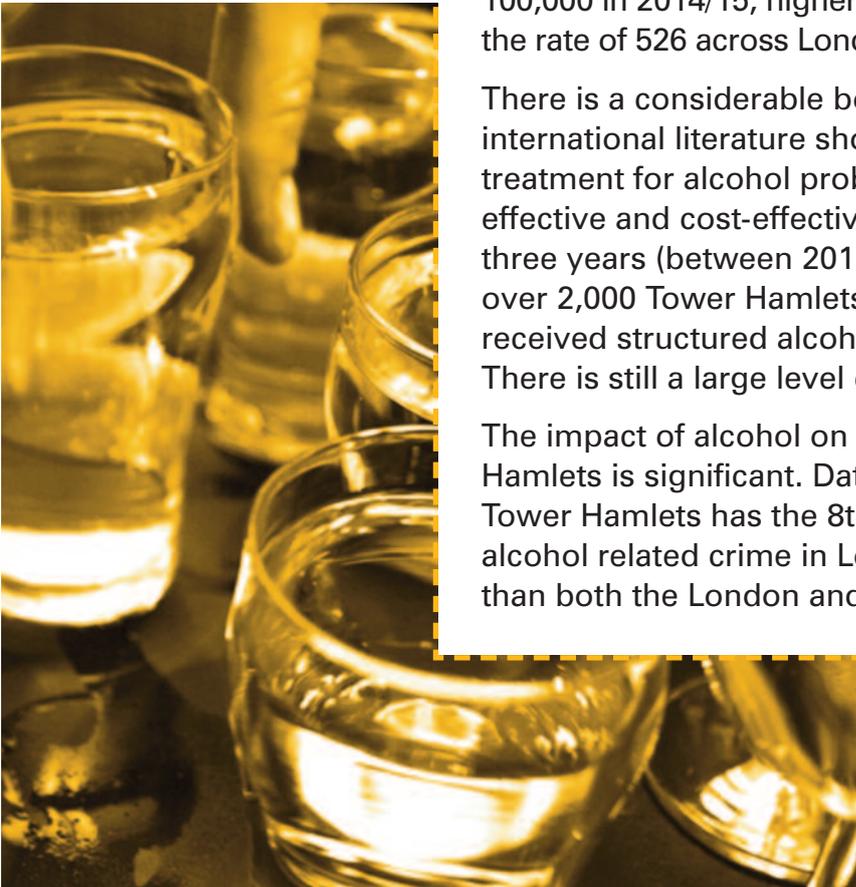
## Key local facts: alcohol

There remain a large proportion of specific communities who do not drink due to cultural or religious reasons. Latest estimates (2012/13) suggest 29% of residents in Tower Hamlets do not drink, compared with 17% across England but of those who do drink 27% drink at levels likely to cause harm to their health.

Since 2011 alcohol related hospital admissions in Tower Hamlets have been falling, however still remain above the London average, with a rate of 552 per 100,000 in 2014/15, higher in comparison to the rate of 526 across London.

There is a considerable body of international literature showing that treatment for alcohol problems is both effective and cost-effective. Over the past three years (between 2013 and 2015) just over 2,000 Tower Hamlets residents received structured alcohol treatment. There is still a large level of unmet need.

The impact of alcohol on crime in Tower Hamlets is significant. Data shows that Tower Hamlets has the 8th highest rate of alcohol related crime in London, higher than both the London and England average.



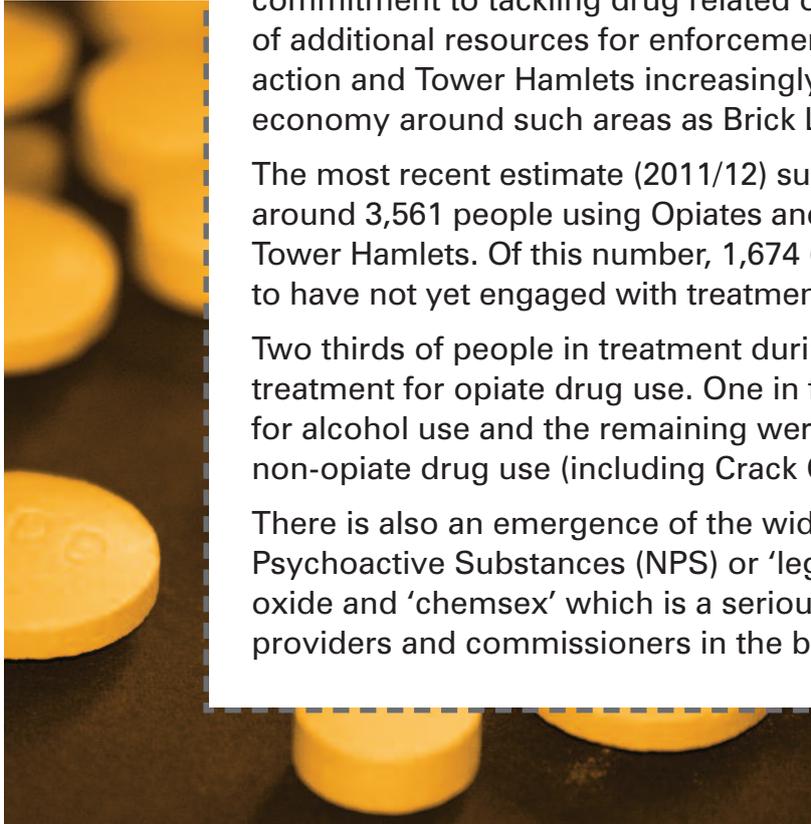
### Key local facts: drugs

During 2014/15 there were 2,172 drug related offences (dealing and possession) in Tower Hamlets, an average of 181 offences per month. In comparison to other London boroughs Tower Hamlets has the fifth highest rate, a reflection of a combination of factors including the police commitment to tackling drug related offending, provision of additional resources for enforcement, targeted police action and Tower Hamlets increasingly popular night time economy around such areas as Brick Lane.

The most recent estimate (2011/12) suggests that there are around 3,561 people using Opiates and/or Crack Cocaine in Tower Hamlets. Of this number, 1,674 (47%) are estimated to have not yet engaged with treatment.

Two thirds of people in treatment during 2014/15 were in treatment for opiate drug use. One in five were in treatment for alcohol use and the remaining were in treatment for non-opiate drug use (including Crack Cocaine).

There is also an emergence of the wider use of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) or 'legal highs', nitrous oxide and 'chemsex' which is a serious concern for service providers and commissioners in the borough.



### What local residents feel

Key findings from residents who responded to the Annual Residents Survey 2014/15:

- 54% felt people using or dealing drugs was a very, or fairly big problem
- 45% felt people being drunk or rowdy was a problem.

Key findings from residents who were consulted on the development of this strategy (General Population Survey, November 2015):

- 67% felt drug and alcohol misuse was a concern where they lived. The main concerns were around antisocial behaviour, drug dealing or drug taking in streets and empty bottles and cans littering the streets.
- 59% felt not enough was being done to address drug and alcohol concerns.

# THE TOWER HAMLETS APPROACH

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## Our Partnership Vision

In Tower Hamlets, we will support children, young people, adults and their families to maximise their health and wellbeing whilst reducing the negative impact of drugs and alcohol. We will strengthen protective factors for those at risk, and empower those who are addicted or dependent to recover whilst reducing harm from continued use. We will bear down on the crime and anti-social behaviour associated with drug and alcohol misuse that impacts on our communities.

The commitments contained in this strategy are the commitments of the local partnership, across health, education, youth services, police, probation services, fire service and the voluntary and community sector.

The Partnership aims to promote resilience, educate and raise awareness of the harms caused by drug and alcohol misuse by ensuring people have access to the right information and key health messages to support people to make more informed choices.

The Partnership aims to help people who are affected or dependent to recover, by enabling, empowering and supporting them to progress along a journey of sustainable improvement to their health, well-being and independence.

The Partnership is very aware of the serious social, psychological and physical complications of drug and alcohol misuse, as well as combined substance misuse and mental health problems (known as dual

diagnosis). We will continue to develop our services so that they are attuned to the needs of our residents, some of whom have complex needs, and ensure that Tower Hamlets services continue to develop to effectively meet their needs against a backdrop of reduced funding provided by central government.

Carers and family members of substance misusers can become isolated and feel stigmatised. We will review the existing provision of mainstream support to carers of people with substance misuse issues and seek to better address their needs.

Alcohol, drug misuse and domestic violence are also strongly linked. The Partnership is committed to reducing domestic violence and places safeguarding of both children and vulnerable adults at the heart of its work to identify and address substance misuse in the family.

Through the consultation process of this strategy, partners agreed to continue in the approach and commitment to address the three crosscutting strands of 'prevention and behaviour change', 'treatment', and 'enforcement and regulation'.

Tower Hamlets has been successful in meeting the needs of many communities, especially BME communities and there is still more work to be done to address the needs of groups underrepresented in treatment services e.g. people with disabilities and LGBT clients.

## Prevention and Behaviour Change

Prevention and behaviour change includes the actions we will take to address the wider determinants of health and factors which we know increase vulnerability to drug and alcohol misuse.

We will ensure that accurate information is available on drugs and alcohol, to raise awareness of harms and to support people to make informed decisions to protect their health and wellbeing from substance misuse.

Prevention and behaviour change also includes the advice and initial support that is available to people who might have early stage problems with drugs and alcohol.

### Treatment

Treatment includes the actions we will take to improve the access to and uptake of effective treatment options for people who are dependent on, or who have problems with, drugs and alcohol. Treatment seeks to provide a recovery focused integrated drug and alcohol response to people's different needs whilst supporting harm reduction.

We will ensure our treatment services are available to the wide and diverse communities that make up our local

residents throughout the lifecycle, for children and young people, adults and from prenatal to end of life care.

### Enforcement and Regulation

Enforcement and regulation includes the actions we will take to enforce the law as it relates to drugs and alcohol, and tackle the anti-social behaviour and crime associated with drug and alcohol misuse.

We will ensure we make full use of the enforcement and regulatory powers available across the partnership targeting those people who profit from the harms associated with substance misuse.

A significant proportion of acquisitive crime is committed in order to provide funds to support drug use. We will continue to ensure that people arrested for serious acquisitive crime are tested for substance misuse and provided both robust enforcement interventions alongside effective treatment for their substance misuse issues.

## THREE STRAND APPROACH

### Prevention and Behaviour Change

Including:

- Information and awareness
- Engagement
- Education
- Support for substance misusing population
- Prevention campaigns
- Health messages
- Communications
- Addressing hidden harm and safeguarding vulnerable young people and adults

### Treatment

Including:

- Service engagement of those in need
- Accessible provision available to all
- Screening and identification
- Assessment and recovery planning
- Recovery orientated treatment
- Maintaining recovery support, aftercare and re-integration
- Support needs throughout the lifecycle
- Peer mentoring and self help

### Enforcement and Regulation

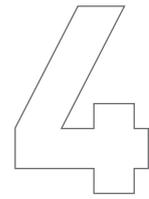
Including:

- Integrated Offender Management (IOM)
- Licencing and regulatory enforcement
- Dedicated and targeted operations
- Enforcement of controlled drinking zone
- Make full use of the range of enforcement and regulation powers available

### Setting the Foundations for Effective Impact

- Build an innovative and creative partnership approach to tackling drugs and alcohol misuse
- Develop effective use of gathered and analysed data and intelligence
- Set the right governance mechanisms
- Safeguarding resources to sustain local provision
- Engage in national policy consultation

## OUR COMMITMENTS



The alcohol-related element of our strategy seeks to improve the quality of life for both Tower Hamlets residents and visitors. We seek to encourage and promote a culture of responsible drinking coupled with responsible management of licensed premises.

The drugs element of our strategy seeks to reduce the demand for drugs through effective education and prevention, to increase the number of people entering services, reducing harm, engaging with and completing treatment in order to recover from drug misuse and to bear down on the crime associated with drugs.

This strategy sets out our priorities for addressing drug and alcohol misuse and how we intend to coordinate and deliver them, with key areas set out below.

### **ACTION: PREVENTION AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE**

We are committed to reducing the number of individuals in Tower Hamlets impacted by addiction to drugs and/or alcohol. We will achieve this by; increasing the delivery of screening and brief interventions, co-ordinating consistent information campaigns, providing high quality education and working with families experiencing substance misuse.

- We will ensure that our drug and alcohol information and prevention activity is integrated within our broader health promotion and prevention programmes, to ensure that we offer helpful and accessible information consistently across agencies, and that front-line staff in all relevant settings have the right skills and knowledge to provide information and support, including mental health and wellbeing.
- We will develop a multi-agency communications plan for young people and adults with a focus on harm reduction, safer drinking levels whilst targeting communities with high level of alcohol related harm.
- We will continue to ensure identification and brief advice and, where appropriate, ensure referrals on to other agencies is routinely undertaken for people attending key frontline services across health and social care.
- We will work with universal services to ensure that the partnerships drugs and alcohol messages are consistent and supportive of our aim, to make people better informed and able to make healthier choices to access services.
- We will support people to maximise their health and wellbeing by providing targeted communication and community education about alcohol and substance misuse including information about the support services available alongside targeted support for those who are at risk.



- We will address hidden harm whilst safeguarding children and vulnerable adults through effective practices with integrated approaches to address the welfare of children of drug or alcohol misusing parents and vulnerable adults.
- We will work in partnership with schools to provide good quality drug and alcohol education, particularly around new psychoactive substances 'legal highs' and support schools to develop effective policies through a "whole schools approach".
- We will target universal prevention activity with young people at risk of drug misuse.
- We will support treatment that is recovery orientated and will work with established users to maintain their health and well-being and to reduce harm.
- We will support our adult and young people's treatment services to improve their response to the needs of children of drug and or alcohol misusers. We will embed good practice and develop a protocol between children's services (including safeguarding) and treatment providers, train workers and support staff to identify and respond to drug and/or alcohol using parents and their children.

## **ACTION: TREATMENT SUMMARY**

We are committed to helping young people and adults overcome addiction to drugs / alcohol. We will achieve this by; increasing the number of individuals accessing treatment and improving the outcomes of treatment programmes (reduction in drug / alcohol use, improved mental and physical health, engagement in employment / training / education, secure accommodation) enabling more people to recover from their addictions.

- We have redesigned our treatment services and in 2016/17 we will commission an integrated drug and alcohol treatment system that is recovery focused, helping adults who are addicted or dependent to recover, by enabling, empowering and supporting them to progress along a journey of sustainable improvement to their health, well-being and independence. The treatment system will have strong service user involvement and peer led recovery outcomes.
- We will work across our partnership to develop services that address the wider social determinants of health and wellbeing, such as access to accommodation, employment support, economic wellbeing and educational achievement.
- We will strengthen our approach to actively encourage 'hard to reach' and difficult to engage people, such as homeless people, hostel residents, street drinkers and drug and or alcohol misusing offenders, in order to motivate them towards engaging in treatment and progress towards recovery.
- We will continue to increase access and uptake and improve outcomes from services across primary care, secondary care and specialist services.
- We will develop expertise within substance misuse treatment services to respond to the needs of drug and/or alcohol users with mental health needs and support the dual diagnosis pathways between substance misuse and mental health services.

- We will ensure our treatment services are available to people throughout the lifecycle, to support prenatal, postnatal, childhood, youth and the transition to adulthood and to end of life care.
- We will further ensure that access to our services is equitable for all of our local communities.
- We will ensure that family based interventions are integral to treatment provision.
- We will ensure that there is rapid access to intensive specialist support for those young people whose drug and alcohol misuse is already starting to cause harm and to support these young people in their transition to adult services where appropriate.

## **ACTION: ENFORCEMENT AND REGULATION**

We are committed to reducing levels of crime and anti-social behaviour associated with alcohol and drugs. We will achieve this by; targeting enforcement teams, utilising powers to disrupt the supply of drugs and underage sales of alcohol and reducing the offending behaviour of prolific offenders who are addicted to drugs.

- We will maintain and enforce a borough wide alcohol control zone to reduce anti-social behaviour.
- We will actively enforce an environment where anybody under the legal drinking age is restricted from obtaining alcohol through working with licensed premises to ensure responsible alcohol sales, enforcement of any minimum alcohol pricing, and promotion of the available treatment services.
- We will continue to improve the management and planning of the night time economy through strengthening

the role of local residents in regulating the environments where alcohol can be obtained through utilisation of licensing, planning and other regulatory powers.

- We will continue to disrupt the supply of drugs through effective enforcement.
- We will review and develop the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) programme to ensure drug misusing offenders receive a holistic support package aimed at stopping offending and drug dependence.
- We will implement conditional cautioning for people whose offending is related to substance misuse (not just class A drugs), actively encouraging and monitoring their engagement with treatment services.
- We will also work with young offenders, with a commitment to support them into treatment and to oversee them both as young people and through their transition to adulthood.
- We will address community concerns about drug use and drug dealing through on-going dialogue and effective communication with the general public.



## SETTING THE FOUNDATIONS OF ACHIEVING SUCCESS

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We believe it is critical to the effectiveness of this strategy to have firm foundations to underpin the three strands. To this end, we wish to improve our understanding of the needs of our local population in the context of new emergent trends in drug and alcohol use, and to ensure that our responses to drugs and alcohol misuse lead to effective outcomes for the whole community. To this end:

- We will develop and build an innovative and creative partnership approach to tackling drug and alcohol misuse.
- We will ensure effective use of gathered and analysed data and intelligence across the partnership, to better understand and address the harms caused by drug and alcohol misuse. We will utilise national and local information on drugs and alcohol to create and monitor a performance dashboard that combines prevention, treatment and offending data.
- We will set the right governance mechanisms to ensure the priority actions are reported through the DAAT Board and to both the Health and Wellbeing Board and Community Safety Partnership Board.
- We will constantly review the impact of our services on underserved communities through a commitment to monitor uptake and access to treatments ensuring services are accessible.
- From an intelligence perspective we wish to continue to build an understanding of:
  - The impact on our population of the use of new drugs such as “legal highs”, steroids, and over the counter and prescribed medicines, and will ensure that these areas are considered in future needs assessments.
  - Drug markets, distribution and trafficking, to inform our approach to enforcement and community development.
  - Treatment outcomes in other areas with similar treatment populations, to measure how effective our services are, and to help us to further improve them.
  - Drug and alcohol data and intelligence through developing a drug and alcohol related dashboard bringing together prevention, offending and treatment data.
  - Monitor and review cases of drug and alcohol related deaths and implement harm reduction strategies.
- We will work with partners in commissioning, primary and secondary care to prove the value of our drug and alcohol recovery services to safeguard the resources for this important work.



## NEXT STEPS



The DAAT Board will oversee the implementation of the strategy.

We will develop an annual action plan which will provide the performance management framework against which we will measure our success. These action plans will be monitored and reviewed through the course of this strategy and we will drive delivery against set targets. We will be regularly communicating our achievements through our websites and newsletters.

As drug and alcohol misuse affects many of the partnership's strategic priority areas, reports on progress will also be provided for other relevant boards such as the 'Safe and Cohesive', 'Healthy Communities' and 'Health and Wellbeing' Boards as appropriate.

We intend to ensure that our analysis of need and demand is carried out in a structured and ongoing manner, informed by, and in the context of, a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

We will strengthen our cross partnership work by designating within each organisation a senior champion to own, and contribute to the effective delivery of this strategy and who will be responsible for tasks in our action plan.

We believe that service users and carers have a uniquely valuable contribution to make in the development, improvement and monitoring of services. We will, therefore, further develop mechanisms for effective service user engagement, including developing and implementing a Service User and Carer Charter and

supporting the development of peer support/mentors and service user recovery champions. We will also ensure that support is available for carers or significant others who are affected by someone else's drug or alcohol misuse.

Operationally we will continue to ensure that our services and interventions are meeting the needs of the entire Tower Hamlets community, regardless of age, disability, gender assignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation, and will therefore work with our commissioned providers to monitor equity of access through audits.

