

# Promoting Successful Social Integration in London



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# 1. Foreword

There has never been a more important time to reflect on the work local authorities are doing to promote social integration.

There are unique challenges facing London, with more people living in the capital than ever before and its population projected to continue growing to more than 10 million by 2036. The pace and scale of London's growth places increasing pressure on public services, infrastructure and housing. This has been felt more acutely over the last five years; London is balancing increasing infrastructure and service demands at a time when local government funding continues to fall.

London is also one of the most diverse cities in the world, where differences are not just tolerated but celebrated. Over 300 languages are spoken in the capital, and one in every three Londoners was born outside the UK. London is home to some of the poorest and richest communities in the country. But diversity does not necessarily mean that communities are cohesive and integrated. Unfairness, inequality and injustice can undermine social integration and the less integrated we are as a city, the greater the economic and social costs we all face.

Local authorities also have a key role to play in defining the impact of Brexit on London's economy and communities. A safe and welcoming city better enables London's employers to recruit and retain international workers, to attract international investors, and enables all Londoners to share in the capital's growth. London is leading the way on work to promote socially integrated communities that will go some way in helping London define the pace of change and the consequences of uncertainty.

Councils across London have been leading commissions into fairness, cohesion, equality and integration that will shape local plans and priorities for years to come. London has recently welcomed Matthew Ryder as the Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement who is leading on work to establish the best methods for measuring social integration. And there is so much going on at the local level – including Hackney's work to improve outcomes for young black men; Hounslow's mapping of community connections to measure resilience; Westminster's commission on community cohesion. There are many great examples of local leaders bringing diverse communities together – and when social integration is done well, it is often by its very nature invisible.

This publication brings just some of that exciting work together and frames it with think pieces from experts in integration, so that London's councils can continue to lead this agenda locally.



**Councillor Sarah Hayward**  
**London Councils'**  
**Lead Member for Equalities**

# 2. Background

In July 2015 Louise Casey was asked by Prime Minister David Cameron to undertake a review into integration and opportunity in isolated and deprived communities as part of a broader effort to tackle extremism. Her final report, published in December 2016, considers immigration and patterns of resettlement; the extent to which people from different backgrounds mix and get on together; how different communities, ethnic and faith groups in particular, have fared economically and socially; and some of the issues driving inequality and division in society.

The review received a mixed reception from commentators. Most offered praise that the report has put community cohesion and integration back on the agenda, and see value in the national debate that is occurring as a result. Some have criticised the review's focus on British Muslim communities at the expense of viewing social integration as an issue for everybody. Other commentators criticised the recommendation of an oath to uphold British values for new arrivals and for holders of public office as failing to address the complex and underlying causes of inequality, social isolation and community tension which is explored elsewhere in the review.

Many have welcomed the review's recommendation for a new programme to help improve community cohesion, and the review's recommendations demonstrate the important role of local leaders in enabling social integration to happen. Local areas will want assurances that any such programme is adequately funded. The government needs to find the resources that will enable London to commission and

deliver projects that improve opportunity or drive aspiration across all parts of their communities. It will be critical that this funding doesn't come with burdensome restrictions. Boroughs need to be able to work with their partners to deliver projects that are flexible and designed around local needs. London also needs multi-year settlements to give projects enough time to invest long-term in their locality and be given the means to become self-sustaining and effectively address complex social problems.

It is also important that we see a cohesive approach across central government for such a programme, with clear, strategic direction and shared priorities across all central departments, in order to support and enable local government and communities to respond fully to the challenges set out in the review. The review draws attention to a number of significant policy areas, which need to be considered as part of a holistic approach to meeting the government's aspiration around cohesion and integration. This includes housing, education, skills and employment policy. London's boroughs are adept locally at joining up a myriad of central initiatives, but to be really effective, there needs to be a cohesive approach across government.

For example, the government's focus on driving up education standards through a rapid increase in the number of academies and free schools in London has restricted the means that councils have to be the agent of change when it comes to addressing segregation among school age children across a diverse and complex school estate. Louise Casey's review touches on this, and is particularly persuasive in

# 3. Social Integration in London

Matthew Ryder, Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement



On taking office last year, Sadiq Khan announced that he would appoint a Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility

and Community Engagement. The unprecedented priority he was giving social integration was prescient: over the last year income inequality, migrant integration, social justice and community cohesion have been consistently at the forefront of public, political and media attention in various ways. But while there is a growing consensus over the importance of social integration there is still some uncertainty as to what it means in practice, and what the GLA is doing to improve social integration across London.

The Mayor's vision is for a more socially integrated London and a more equal city where everyone's differences are not only accepted and respected but celebrated. London has always been a city of opportunity, but we must ensure that barriers of discrimination, and social and economic divisions are reduced so that those opportunities are available to all. Just as importantly, London must value its communities and enable people to participate in local life and influence the decisions that affect their everyday lives. The phenomenal diversity of London's residents is a huge strength, but only if we live in an integrated city where people from all backgrounds feel fully engaged.

But beyond the more general understanding of social integration are more difficult questions. How do we define

social integration? What are the tools and practical steps we can take to promote it? How will we recognise and measure successful social integration when we achieve it? What can be done at a city-wide level that enhances and builds on what is being done more locally? With those questions in mind, I would like to share some of the thinking we have developed over the last year and themes that will be an important part of my work on social integration moving forward.

First, my team has sought to develop a working definition of social integration which will guide the approach of all the teams in the GLA and our partners. It has three key components: reducing inequality and promoting fairness and opportunity for all; encouraging active citizenship and community participation; enabling empowerment through positive contact and strong relationships.

Second, I am publishing a new social integration strategy for London to explain our thinking and share what we have learned. At its core will be a dynamic and evolving 'social evidence base' we are developing in conjunction with academics and our data experts at the GLA. It will draw on a large range of available datasets that are vital to understanding London's activity and will help us meet the growing calls for an evidence based approach to social integration. Through the social evidence base we are developing specific measurements – quantitative and qualitative – that will help us understand how effective our policies and projects are in achieving social integration. A tool councils across London will be able to use to monitor the progress of their work.

its discussion of children in supplementary educational environments, but some will be concerned that the recommendations do not go far enough.

The review outlines some of the good examples of confident local services delivering Prevent in their local area, and supports the important work the programme does to keep us safe. It is important to tackle violent extremism directly and firmly. However, we must ensure that individuals and communities are not alienated in the process. Conflating integration with counter-terrorism can exacerbate division, and does little to promote social integration as an issue for everybody and as an agenda that permeates every part of a local authority's work.

It is with this in mind that this publication brings together the breadth of work going on across London local government. The terminology used in discussing this work includes cohesion, equalities,

resilience, safeguarding and isolation. These all contribute in some way towards the creation of socially integrated communities. Integration is not just about new communities, but about how people of different social backgrounds, generations, faiths, and ethnicities interact and build meaningful relationships.





Third, GLA's Sports and Volunteering teams have been integrated into my department because we see those areas as practical ways to coordinate activity across London that promotes social integration through active citizenship. Our new approach to community sports – focusing on how sports can be used to unite communities – draws on learning and experience from cities across the world. Team London is building on its huge success in enrolling volunteers for major events by developing more structured, data driven ways for volunteering to be part of everyday life, and to have employers support workplace volunteering more easily.

Fourth, my teams are working creatively with civil society because we realise that our work on social integration is fundamentally dependent on existing civil society organisations. This has included our ground breaking 'Citizenship and Integration Initiative' launched in April which allowed staff from civil society groups to be seconded into positions within City Hall to share learning and best practice and work with us on specific projects. You can read more about this ground-breaking initiative here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/communities/mayors-new-citizenship-initiative>. So far, this work includes:

- Supporting young Londoners to access their residency and citizenship rights.
- Increasing civic engagement and improving citizenship ceremonies.
- Celebrating our shared and diverse identities.

We are keen to work with London boroughs to achieve those aims, and have already been in discussion with some borough and

London Councils officials on range of areas including Syrian refugee resettlement. We think there is a real opportunity for London's boroughs, communities and businesses to help some of the most vulnerable refugees fleeing war and persecution in Syria. That's why in July 2017, the Mayor launched his ambition to bring Londoners together to support the resettlement of Syrian refugees through development of a new community sponsorship model. We'll look at how Londoners can work together to offer affordable accommodation, employment opportunities and support adapting to life in London. Local authorities will be key to developing a community sponsorship model that can work in London, and we have appointed a lead officer to work with local authorities, communities and other partners to develop this approach. You can read more about the scheme here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/communities/migrants-and-refugees/helping-resettlement-refugees>.

We know that realising the Mayor's vision will only be achieved by the Mayor's team working with local partners, civil society and London boroughs, who are already doing so much to promote social integration in their local areas. I have seen the value of this work first hand through visiting projects across 16 London boroughs over the summer, including meeting young people on a summer programme run by The Challenge in Wandsworth, visiting a local CVS in Redbridge and participating in a Polish Community roundtable in Hammersmith and Fulham. I also heard some powerful examples from local authority officers at the London Councils' Officer Network for Social Integration.

We have also worked with London Councils to publish research on the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) needs of Syrian refugees and ESOL training that is already provided in London, to support boroughs already participating in refugee resettlement.

We are keen to encourage improved share of learning, information and data. This will help us support and extend the excellent work many local authorities are carrying out to promote social integration. Many boroughs have taken innovative, evidence-based approaches to deliver change which could benefit the whole city. Hackney Council's programme with the local CVS works with young black boys and their parents to come up with community co-produced solutions to the systemic challenges and barriers that prevent them from achieving their full potential. The programme sets some clear ambitions to reduce disproportionality for black boys and young men living in the borough over the next decade.

Others such as Westminster, through their Community Cohesion Commission, are exploring what community cohesion means for residents, and what the council can do to strengthen it across the borough. Newham Council is bringing the local community together and preventing exclusion by awarding small grants to support residents in hosting their own inclusive community event

Most of all, listening to Londoners' priorities has provided us with focus. The need to address social isolation and London's more diverse ageing population has helped us understand that giving access to basic online skills for those unfamiliar

with the digital world, is crucial. Similarly, while we must address well recognised issues of discrimination, it is vital that we also give priority to reducing disadvantage through the barriers of social class.

At a time of rapid change and uncertainty for many Londoners, I look forward to continuing to work with London boroughs to advance social integration in London over the coming years, and creating a truly inclusive and interconnected city.

*Matthew Ryder grew up in London, the son of a Jamaican mother and English father. He attended his local comprehensive before studying law at Cambridge University and Columbia University in New York. He became a barrister in 1992.*

*He has sat on a number of influential panels and working parties assessing reform of the criminal justice system, including the 'Lammy Review' on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation in the criminal justice system commissioned by the Prime Minister.*

# 4. Westminster

Westminster City Council has established a cross-party Community Cohesion Commission to undertake a review of the social integration of its communities and strengthen its work on cohesion.

## Westminster and its Communities:

Westminster is one of the most diverse places in the world, with hundreds of thousands of people from different backgrounds living and working in the borough. It is home to just under a quarter of a million people, with thousands of families raising 42,600 children who live, learn and grow up here. Over 150 languages are spoken in the city's schools and 28,400 older people live in the borough. Westminster is also the UK's cultural, entertainment and entrepreneurial hub; a local economy with national clout, contributing over £55 billion to the country's economic output. Its shops alone generate £13.3 billion of revenue and attract over five million visitors a week.

Building a cohesive community has been a particular focus for Westminster City Council for over a decade. On 14 March 2006, the then Leader of the Council, Sir Simon Milton, launched a report entitled 'Creating the Blueprint for Community Cohesion' in response to the 7/7 bombings the previous July. The aim was to develop a better idea of what people thought was needed for a cohesive community and to set forth recommendations. In the report, Sir Simon Milton wrote:

*"Building a common sense of the way forward... establishing new relationships... connecting ourselves to*

*the heart of the decision making process. That is exactly what community cohesion should be about.... I now want...to deliver a city where people know what their council does and how they can make a difference....where elected councillors are leading their communities through new forms of neighbourhood engagement, where anyone can access council services, online at any time."*

While much of this is still as relevant today as it was in 2006, 10 years on a lot has changed – from the global economic recession to the decision to leave the European Union. When combined with continued rapid technological advancements, reducing public finances, increasing demands and expectations on services, policy developments, regeneration, and changes in demographics, this has all impacted the way in which people in Westminster work and live with one another.



Westminster Council Leader Cllr Nickie Aiken chairs the Community Cohesion Commission

## Westminster's Community Cohesion Commission

In order to respond to the above challenges and changes, in 2015, Cllr Nickie Aiken, the then Cabinet Member for Public Protection and now Leader of Westminster City Council, committed to conducting a review of policy and practice relating to community cohesion, with a focus on combating extremism and radicalisation in Westminster.

In order to undertake this review, a Community Cohesion Commission has been established. The Commission is chaired by Cllr Aiken and is represented by councillors from both Westminster's political parties including Cllr Adam Hug, the Leader of the Opposition party.

After considering various definitions of community cohesion, it was decided that it was most appropriate for the Commission to work to the definition offered by the Local Government Association as per the below:

*By community cohesion, the councils mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's background and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.*

The commission was convened to discuss cohesion, radicalisation and extremism in the round, as set out in its Terms of Reference. Its aim was to take an evidence based approach to understand any

barriers to cohesion within Westminster, engage with key stakeholders to inform recommendations and prepare a report for consideration. Its objectives were to:

- i) improve how the council engages with Westminster's communities;
- ii) empower and improve the opportunities for all of Westminster's diverse communities;
- iii) reduce the risks of harm to Westminster's communities; and,
- iv) enable communities to develop greater resilience.

It was decided that the commission would work under four broad themes – identity; faith and values; empowerment and opportunity; and safeguarding and community engagement.

The commission was launched in June 2016 at an event at Westminster's Porchester Hall. Guest speakers included Borough Commander for Westminster Peter Ayling and the then Youth MP for Westminster Hamza Taouzzale, who shared their reasons for wanting to aid the commission in their research and emphasised how a more cohesive society will impact both the Police and the youth of Westminster. At the event, Cllr Nickie Aiken, underlined her commitment to the project saying:

*"Westminster is at the heart of one of the most diverse cities in the world... We are incredibly proud of our diversity and consider it one of the city's key strengths. But we know there are still important challenges we need to address to make sure Westminster remains a place where everyone feels they belong and are safe."*

Cllr Adam Hug, Leader of the Opposition, Westminster City Council, added:

*“It is vital that the council digs deep into the social integration challenges right across our city. I hope the commission will give us the opportunity to do this and review what Westminster is doing. Most importantly, we must reach out to the communities that are most difficult to access.”*

## Evidence Gathering

The Commission has used a four tiered approach to gather information and evidence to inform their understanding of cohesion in Westminster.

### Tier 1: Reviewing national policy, literature and developments:

This included reviewing works by Ted Cattle but also evaluating the government’s position and responses following events such as the 2001 riots and disturbances, 2005 London Bombings and 2015 Charlie Hedbo attacks in Paris. The work has also



been undertaken alongside and in the context of the Louise Casey review.

### Tier 2: Local Data Analysis:

The commission sought to analyse local demographics by utilising information gathered in the council’s annual City Survey to gauge how residents feel about living in Westminster and get a sense of how far communities are gelling together at a rudimentary level.

Westminster’s City Survey asks a range of questions to gather information on how its residents feel about living in Westminster and understand their views on what the Council and its partners are doing well on and what they can improve on. However, the commission has focused on the below areas of interest:

- How well different communities in Westminster get on together.
- The depth of interaction between people in the community.
- Whether residents consider that they feel as if they are a part of their local community.

### Tier 3: Benchmarking best practise with neighbouring authorities:

Westminster engaged with other councils, including Hackney, Brent and Redbridge to find out what other local authorities are doing to address local challenges to community cohesion and how they are using their borough’s unique assets to address these challenges.

A key element of this part of the evidence gathering exercise was the commission’s

visit to Hackney Council on 19th December 2016 to meet with Cabinet Members, Policy Communications and Community Engagement officers. The commission were particularly interested in finding out about Hackney’s experiences and methods in approaching similar challenges around the affordability of housing and changing shape of neighbours, who share in the benefits of prosperity.

### Tier 4: Community Engagement:

The commission also launched an extensive engagement programme which included over 25 events (roundtables, evidence sessions, focus groups, attendances at partner forums and meetings) to further understand the barriers to community cohesion within Westminster.

In parallel, Westminster launched an online consultation page, inviting people to share their experiences and stories of community cohesion and a space for them to feed back to the Commission.

### Next Steps

The evidence gathering exercise has now been completed and the findings are currently being drawn out. The council will next produce a report laying out the findings of the evidence gathering and its recommendations. This report is currently being drafted.



# 5. Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets has the fastest growing population in the country and is home to one of the country's most diverse communities. The borough has always been a home to migrant communities beginning with the French Huguenots in the 16th Century, followed later by Jewish and Irish migrants. Bangladeshi residents began arriving in the borough during the 1970s. Somalian residents arrived as seamen and then later as a result of war in Somalia.

Tower Hamlets has a population of 284,000, and over the last decade the population has increased by 34.5 per cent, the largest increase of all the local authorities in England and Wales. Around 32 per cent of the borough's population increase has been due to 'natural growth' and the remaining 68 per cent a result of migration.

More than 43 per cent of the borough's residents were born outside the UK. This is the 9<sup>th</sup> highest percentage nationally (of 348 local authority areas).

The migrant population is hugely diverse and includes older residents who migrated to London decades ago, alongside more recent arrivals. Some 28 per cent of the migrant population are long established residents who arrived in the UK before 1991; 18 per cent arrived between 1991 and 2000, and over half (54 per cent) arrived between 2001 and 2011. The majority migrated to the UK as young adults and children.

The Census identified that Tower Hamlets residents were born in over 200 countries. First generation Bangladeshi residents make up nearly half of the borough's

'ethnically' Bangladeshi population. There are a further 20 migrant groups with significant populations of more than 1,000 and these include India, China, Italy, France, Somalia, Ireland, Poland, Australia, Germany, the US and Spain.

Tower Hamlets has the highest percentage of Muslim residents in England – 35 per cent compared with the national average of 5 per cent, and the lowest proportion of Christian residents, 27 per cent compared with the national average of 59 per cent.

74 per cent of the borough's population are aged 16-64, 8<sup>th</sup> highest in London. The average age of residents is 31.

There is a large disparity in wealth between the borough's richest and poorest residents. It has the highest rate of child poverty in the country and yet the average salary of those who work in the borough is £58,000, the second highest in the country after the City of London. Data from DCLG Indices of Deprivation 2015 revealed one quarter (25 per cent) of the Tower Hamlets population live in income deprivation – the 6<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all English local authority areas, and the highest in London; however it has an economy worth more than £6 billion a year. The construction of new developments across the borough, especially around Canary Wharf, is compounding the wealth divide as more affluent communities are moving in.

## Strategic Approach to Community Cohesion

Tower Hamlets sees social integration as part of community cohesion. The Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2015 outlines

the vision for the borough where people, regardless of their backgrounds, have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The Strategic Plan 17/18, sets out the council's aim to create more engaged, resilient and cohesive communities. One of the four key themes of the Tower Hamlets Community Plan, as part of its priority outcome to create and maintain a vibrant successful place, is to create a Safe and Cohesive Community and, as part of this, the plan highlights a commitment to promote community cohesion. A cohesive community enables all to have an equal stake and status in the community; where people have the same opportunities as their neighbours; and where people have a commitment and responsibility to contribute to the well-being of their communities.

Tower Hamlets is a highly diverse borough and its demography enables people of different backgrounds to understand one another and build positive relations. This is evidenced by the fact that, according to the borough's 2017 Annual Residents Survey, 92 per cent of its residents agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together; this is up five points from the year before (87 per cent) and a new historical high.

Diversity on the scale of Tower Hamlets presents countless opportunities for integration. To facilitate this, Tower Hamlets Council has funded numerous projects which strengthen community cohesion across the borough. The council has also provided grants to voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver small cohesion projects under its Mainstream Grants programme. It

specifically funded organisations to:

- Engage and promote greater involvement of local community groups, with residents taking ownership in response to local issues.
- Bring people of different backgrounds together to celebrate local identities and culture and develop strong and positive relationships through positive interactions.
- Ensure the sustainability of projects through developing new and emerging community leaders.
- Increase the sense of citizenship, and local identity based on common values, history and culture.

This programme is currently being commissioned as part of a co-production model where: *"Professionals and citizens share power to plan and deliver support together, recognising that both partners have vital contributions to make in order to improve quality of life for people and communities."*

In addition, the council funded projects which specifically promote the understanding and coming together of different faiths and beliefs. The latest Census results show that around two-thirds of the borough's residents ascribe to a faith or religion, therefore the Council recognises that this is one good way to strengthen community cohesion.

The council works through schools to increase the understanding of hate crime, equalities and community cohesion amongst young people. We have co-developed lesson plans with teachers and

1. National Co-Production Critical Friend

pupils and shared these with schools across the borough. Projects undertaken by schools focus on community activism and leadership amongst young people to instil a sense of belonging in the community they live in. (Further details are provided in the case study below)

Tower Hamlets commissions support, and co-ordination of, different borough-wide community engagement forums. Each forum meets on a quarterly basis (at least) to discuss issues that are important to them and to feed into the shaping of local services. The council commissions:

- Support and development of the Inter Faith Forum.
- Development and co-ordination of 'Local Voices', a forum for disabled people.
- Development and co-ordination of an LGBT Community Forum.
- Development and co-ordination of the New Residents and Refugees Forum.



## Examples of Social Integration projects in LB Tower Hamlets

### New Residents and Refugees Forum

Tower Hamlets Council has commissioned Praxis, a local organisation which specialises in working with newly arrived and longer-settled migrants to deliver a New Residents and Refugee Forum for the borough's migrant residents. As part of this service, the provider engages with migrants by holding a user group meeting on a specific theme, such as access to health services or hate crimes immediately after the EU Referendum, to identify needs or gaps in service and discuss ways in which this could be addressed. The provider uses this information to produce a briefing for stakeholders and hosts a meeting for relevant statutory and community service providers to come together and agree to address the issues identified by the migrants. Clear actions are identified and these issues are developed into an action plan which is delivered through the forum.

By way of an example, some of the issues raised by residents and refugees discussing hate crime and the EU Referendum were:

- Two thirds of the group felt less safe or comfortable than they had prior to the referendum.
- A number had experienced some levels of abuse, including people saying things such as; "your benefits are going to stop" and "you'll be told to go".
- People were very aware of press reports of serious racist incidents and this increased the sense of unease



and insecurity.

Some actions identified by stakeholders to address the issues were to:

- Hold a stall at Praxis offices during national hate crime week at one of their drop in sessions to promote local Hate Crime services and methods of reporting.

Both the user group and stakeholder meetings are usually well attended and have resulted in many positive outcomes for migrants: since the start of the current contract in June 2016, outcomes have included:

- A greater awareness amongst migrants of what constitutes a hate crime, the importance of reporting hate crimes and different methods in which they can be reported.
- A better understanding among migrants of the impact of the government's Right to Rent scheme and their rights in relation to this.
- Greater confidence amongst migrants when interacting with Immigration Officers and knowing their rights.
- A strong and united voice for migrants who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual.

### Creative Communities Project

Tower Hamlets Council delivers the 'Creative Communities' project through its school library service, which aims to promote cohesion in schools and the

wider community in Tower Hamlets. The project began in September 2016 and is working with seven student council groups based within schools in the borough; it is expected to conclude in summer 2017.

Each school agreed on a community issue which impacts negatively on community cohesion, then identified and worked with relevant community groups and organisations to address the issues on a local level.

The project provided a space for teachers to engage in thinking around community cohesion, student-led active citizenship and the Sustainable Development Goals before they took them to the classroom. The provider delivered a half-day CPD which:

- Introduced teachers to several tools to measure attitudes around 'community' and help learners develop empathy when faced with diverse people and views. These were 'take home' activities for teachers to use in their first session with student councils.
- Referred to the Tower Hamlets 'Getting along together' document to help teachers assess to what extent "projects improve community relations, trust and engagement, and develop active, empowered, and cohesive citizens and communities."
- Introduced teachers to 'Harts Ladder' as a means to gauge student involvement in school projects. This model was used to encourage teachers to consider how to move children from a charity mind-set to a social justice mind-set. The provider emphasised that this was about developing

community relationships rather than fund-raising for the community. It was important too that teachers were clear these were to be student-led projects, with teachers providing support. Developing student leadership and engagement was key to building sustainable community relationships.

The council ran three training sessions for pupils and staff to facilitate cohesion projects. The main aim of the workshops was to create a space for pupils to raise issues and deliver presentations on cohesion to their peers in student councils.

The council met with student council representatives and introduced them to a baseline audit which they later ran with their entire school council, back at school. It used a 'problem tree' and 'solution tree' model to start them thinking about community issues. Their teachers had prepared these on the Sustainable Development Goals' materials. Peer feedback was carried out through a 'wind-milling' activity and this created a real buzz in the room. It was evident they enjoyed sharing their opinions on others' ideas and listened thoughtfully to feedback. The Council also ran a competition to name the project, which generated some interesting entries. *'Creative Communities – Every Child Cares'*, was the winning entry.

The second session in January focused on sharing good practice in community cohesion projects from across the globe. These videos showed young people as active 'change-makers' and emphasised the idea 'Start small, think big.' The Council was aware of the pressures on the school timetable and was keen to keep the work load to a minimum, but with maximum

impact. It used SMART targets to encourage this thinking in project planning.

Following Session 1, an online survey was sent to all participating schools, and distributed to parents, students, staff and governors. The purpose of the survey was to generate ideas for community cohesion projects. The results identified the community's key concerns and indicated suggestions for how schools could promote cohesion in these areas. The survey enabled schools to create projects based on real time based issues, currently 'hot' in the local community, rather than only through the school council team.

Planning forms designed by the council highlighted how each school planned to target the local issue, while building on pupils' knowledge, skills and values as active citizens. These three areas were previously referred to in the teachers' session.

The final training session for schools was held in May 2017. The commitment, enthusiasm and level of organisation among the pupils, and the sense of ownership over it, were very impressive. For the session, each school designed a poster about their project and held a 'Show and Tell' where pupils presented their projects and gave their 'Story so far....' All presentations were filmed and snippets included in a short film shown at the celebration event in July.

A filmmaker was employed to create a video of the children's work. High resolution images and videos of each school's project will be passed onto the filmmaker for a video that can be embedded on the council's website as well as schools' websites as a legacy of the project. A durable handbook will be

produced by September 2017 and given to schools, as a resource for future school councils.

The project has achieved the following outputs:

1. Three 'Train the Trainer' training sessions provided to pupils and staff to facilitate cohesion projects in the first year. These were delivered as half-days on a term-by-term basis. Schools council representatives were invited to a Training Day that brought together the participating schools in one space. The focus of this training was on empowering school council representatives to:

- understand concepts around hate crime, cohesion and equalities
- conceive practical deliverable ideas of community projects (using the SMART model)
- steps taken to identify and build relationships with local community partners
- delivering projects and considering long-term goals and sustainable partnerships from the outset.

2. A system of ongoing support for schools that need extra guidance.

3. A final event is planned for July 6th on the Golden Hinde. This event will be centred on acknowledging the work of the schools, recognising those projects that went the extra mile, and nominating a 'Best Project' initiative. Rather than having a competitive 'Prize-giving' system, the idea will be to commend exceptional work and hard-working

individuals as 'community heroes'.

4. 'Train the Trainer' materials for School Councils in the form of a durable handbook which will be given to schools and used in all the training sessions. These guides will be left in schools as a resource for future school councils.

By half term 2018 the borough will also have achieved:

- Lesson plans for teachers, accompanied by guidance leaflets that invite teachers to do some adult level thinking around the concepts of cohesion and equalities. The deliverable lesson plans themselves include exercises around deeper-level thinking, influenced by Philosophy for Children approach and encouraging pupil voice.

## Approach going forward

### Development of a community cohesion strategy

The council is working with the Tower Hamlets Cohesion Working Group, the strategic group of community and statutory stakeholders which oversees the delivery of cohesion activities in the borough, to develop a community cohesion strategy for the borough. Some initial work has been to undertaken to prepare the ground to develop the strategy; this includes an exercise with partners and community groups to map all community cohesion initiatives across the borough and a discussion on community cohesion priorities with partners. It is envisaged that the strategy will be ready for launch in spring 2018.

# 6. Driving Integration Forward

Jill Rutter, Director of Strategy and Relationships, British Future



London is a city of confidence and success, but also of class, ethnic, faith and age divides. It has a long and proud history

of ethnic tolerance and its schools are an integration success story. But there are significant integration challenges in the capital – around population churn, English language fluency, unemployment in some communities, as well as social isolation and extremism. Local government, linked to city-wide and national government, has a key role in healing this divisions.

Integration is a contested term, and it is important to engage Londoners of all backgrounds in a conversation about what this means. British Future has been undertaking such an exercise in public engagement. We are a think tank that has unique expertise on public attitudes to immigration and integration. Our long term aim is a country where we are no longer ‘them’ and ‘us’, but a confident, inclusive country that is welcoming and fair to all.

At British Future we have been talking to members of the public, through the National Conversation on Immigration. People have told us that they see integration as a process of mutual accommodation between different sections of society. It involves fairness and equality, as well as social connectedness and participation.

At a time when immigration, ethnic and faith diversity are such high profile issues, integration matters more than

ever. Social contact enables bridges to be built between people of different backgrounds, for values to be shared and tensions to be resolved.

Despite its importance, the UK’s integration record is mixed. While there has been no shortage of rhetoric, there has never been a national strategy on integration that has committed the government to action. But opportunities have now opened up for real and lasting change. The EU referendum has focused attention on divisions in society and there is now commitment across government to address these. In December 2016, the independent Casey Review on Integration was published. The Government will respond to this later in 2017, and set out its direction of policy. Communities Secretary, Sajid Javid is taking forward this work and involving all government departments. In London, the Mayor has appointed Matthew Ryder as a deputy mayor for social integration.

For the first time in many years, we have a commitment to turn rhetoric about integration into policy reality. To deliver for London, it needs to involve everyone: national government, the mayor, local authorities, civil society organisations, business and communities themselves. In undertaking this work, we will need to balance programmes of work that focus on all Londoners and those that target specific groups or communities, as well as initiatives that celebrate integration and those that tackle difficult issues such as extremism.

So what should local authorities consider? First, they need to consult their local populations about the society that they want. Integration is an everyone issue, and

## Mainstreaming community cohesion

The council will be mainstreaming community cohesion in services across the organisation. Some of this work has already begun. The Housing Strategy 2016-21 recognises that a key role of the council is to foster community spirit and strengthen community cohesion, as the profile of the borough in terms of race, age and income is changing.

In April 2016, in recognition of the impact of new developments on cohesion, the Tower Hamlets Planning Contributions Overview Panel (PCOP) agreed to allocate Section 106 funding from two developments to fund the delivery of cohesion projects focusing on the Mile End and Aldgate East Master plan areas. Both projects are being commissioned using a co-production model and aim to increase participation in the local community, build local neighbourhood groups that bring people from different backgrounds together and hold events that increase cross-cultural understanding. The projects will be designed to support robust and sustainable outcomes, with continuing value.

## Co-production and outcomes-focussed commissioning

Tower Hamlets Council recognises that services are better delivered and are more ‘fit-for-purpose’ when stakeholders and services users are involved in the development and production of services. This is why it is piloting the co-production model of engagement with local stakeholders in commissioning community cohesion projects. The council worked with representatives of voluntary sector

organisations, local people and other stakeholders to co-develop a Cohesion Outcomes Framework and Specification for community-based projects which will work towards achieving the agreed outcomes.

This is a step away from having projects which have a focus on outputs and a step towards having projects which work to achieve an agreed outcome. To deliver a programme of services divided equally across the borough, it was decided to split the borough into four clusters of wards and two projects were allocated to each ward cluster. The projects will be commissioned in summer 2017 and will run from September 2017.



all sectors of society need to be involved.

Through their adult education services, they deliver much high quality English language provision. We all need a language in common, but the last Census showed that 320,000 Londoners could not speak English well or at all. Local authorities could play a role in driving innovation and improved language provision, particularly for those groups who find it difficult to get to college. Since many social relationships are forged in the workplace, English language provision needs to be linked to careers' advice and training for groups experiencing unemployment.

Local authorities have planning powers and drive through many new housing developments. The layout of the built environment affects social integration. We need to bring the planners into the integration debate, and protect our parks and town centres as sites of social interaction.

It is council registrars that officiate at citizenship ceremonies. In London we need to increase the uptake of British citizenship, embed voter registration and civic participation in the citizenship and celebrate our new Londoners by using iconic locations to hold the ceremonies.

Volunteering brings people together, enabling links to be forged across age, faith, ethnic and class divides. Local authorities are uniquely placed to promote volunteering and strengthen their many civil society organisations. It is not just about funding, but also about strategy, making sure that civil society organisations do not duplicate their work



and are more effective.

Already, as this publication shows, London's boroughs are taking forward work that brings their communities together. It is essential that this is shared and we learn from each other. Strong and confident local government is key to driving integration forward in a London we all want to call home.

## 7. Hackney

### Overview of Hackney

*Hackney is an inner London borough situated to the north east of the centre. It has an estimated population of 269,000, and this is set to exceed 300,000 by 2027.*

It is a relatively young borough, with 45 per cent of its population under 30. Hackney has seen many waves of immigration and is culturally diverse, with significant 'other white,' black and Turkish populations. There is a long established, and growing population of Charedi Jewish people to the north east of the borough in Stamford Hill. Most significant amongst recent arrivals are people from Western Europe, Australia and the United States.

Just over a third of residents are Christian and there are significant Jewish and Muslim populations, as well as a higher proportion of people with no religion than London or England overall.

There has been rapid economic growth over the last decade and the number of businesses has grown by 68 per cent since 2004. Housing affordability is a key concern, with average house prices just

below £600,000 (the London average is £500,000). Just over two fifths of housing is social rented, although the private rented sector is growing and represents nearly a third of all households.

### Social integration: strengths

From the perspective of social integration, Hackney's most recent residents' survey, conducted in December 2015 indicates some key strengths. Levels of community cohesion have remained very high since 2013, with nine in ten residents surveyed agreeing that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get along well with each other and the same proportion placing a strong value on social mixing. Residents are also more likely to agree than disagree that the demographic make-up of Hackney has changed for the better. There is also an interest in encouraging and supporting community projects. This was the fifth most frequent response to the question "What could we do differently" in the community conversation, "Hackney a Place for Everyone?" which the council ran during 2015.

### Social integration: challenges

Despite there being greater economic opportunity, a significant number of local people continue to face persistent inequalities and are disproportionately affected by poverty, unemployment, long term health conditions and welfare dependency. There are also groups who are in work but are struggling with the rising cost of living as well as job and wage insecurity. There is a marked difference



between the proportion of residents who feel people from different backgrounds get on well together (90 per cent) and the proportion who people from different socio-economic backgrounds get on well together (70 per cent). Some of the main challenges relate to the way the population and economy have grown and changed over the last decade, leading to social polarisation and social isolation for some groups. In a busy, congested and densely populated place, there are also tensions between different groups or between residents and businesses about the way spaces are used. The 2015 community conversation “Hackney a Place for Everyone?” explores these issues further. Some feel the borough is no longer “for them” as it looks and feels very different and people may have lost their social networks or spaces because people and businesses have been priced out. There is a perception that the features that make Hackney seem ‘special’ are at risk. There is also a feeling that some people need to be better neighbours, to show more consideration and to take greater care of the environment. Residents are split over whether or not they agree that jobs are accessible to them personally, and/ or to the population equally in Hackney.

### What is the local authority’s strategy for driving social integration?

Louise Casey defines integration as: *“Not just how well we get on with each other but how well we all do compared to each other...[considering] what divides communities and gives rise to anxiety, prejudice, alienation and a sense of grievance; and to look again at what could*



*be done to fight the injustice that where you are born or live in this country, your background or even your gender, can affect how you get on in modern Britain.”*

Hackney does not refer explicitly to social integration in its key policy documents. Hackney’s 2007 Cohesion Review examines whether Hackney’s communities are cohesive, defining this as: *“Where people from different backgrounds live and work comfortably alongside their neighbours”* and asks whether Hackney’s communities are resilient: *“Where people and communities are able to cope with changes in their lives and communities without blame or undue tension.”* However social integration is implicit in policy documents as there is a consistent focus on “opportunity and prosperity for all” and on narrowing the gap in outcomes between certain disadvantaged groups and the wider community. Framed by this policy position, many strategic programmes, developed by the council in recent years carefully consider how social integration is promoted. The year long “Hackney a Place for Everyone?” engagement and consultation begins to explore more explicitly with residents, the ways in which people are left behind, marginalised or excluded. In the initial

response to this engagement, the Mayor’s opening talks about how: *“Our sense of community remains strong, but there are people who feel increasingly excluded and left behind. Some of our long-standing communities feel they can’t access the new jobs and opportunities that are the result of Hackney’s economic growth, and I want to do more to assure this is addressed.”*

Where Hackney may differ from other areas is that ethnicity and faith are not seen by policy makers or residents as the main drivers of difference in communities, or of social exclusion or isolation. The way the borough’s economy and population have grown and changed are seen as greater risks to cohesion and exclusion and this is identified in the ten year community strategy adopted in 2008. This has framed Hackney’s response since then. Specific recommendations for cohesion were adopted by Cabinet in 2010 and these underpin Hackney’s approach today, which focuses on:

- Tackling persistent inequalities, focusing on opportunity, empowerment and prosperity.
- Considering the impact of cohesion arising from population and economic growth and identifying ways to mitigate this.
- Providing opportunities for residents to come together, whilst acknowledging these events can also impact on cohesion if they are not inclusive;
- Taking an evidence based approach, staying up to date with the changing profile of Hackney’s residents and of

residents’ views, and finding ways to hear the voice of newer or less heard communities and keeping the strains and tensions under review.

- Setting a clear vision for place and looking at the big picture when making decisions and the impact across the whole borough and on cohesion.
- Encouraging a diverse range of people to get involved in community and civic life –e.g. through investment in volunteering and grants programmes
- Creating diverse routes for residents to contribute their views, beyond traditional approaches to consultation and engagement.

During 2015-16, Hackney Council carried out a major borough-wide engagement exercise, asking residents for their views about the way Hackney had changed over the past decade. By doing this, they tapped into these ongoing conversations, as well as convening conversations and mediating different views. This wide ranging extensive campaign sought to engage with residents in a variety of ways through debates and deliberative events, face-to-face surveys at over 50 locations in the borough resulting in 2980 responses, video feedback via a specially modified ‘I Love Hackney’ black taxi cab and targeted focus groups. Ipsos MORI were also commissioned to run a repeat of a residents survey last undertaken in 2013 which provided responses from a representative sample of 1,002 residents aged 16+ as a comparator. Scrutiny Commissions carried out parallel reviews, for example one which engaged children and young people.

## Measuring social progress

There is no one measure of social progress which can usefully be adopted to understand if progress is being made on social integration. It is necessary to consider a suite of indicators which seek to:

- Examine outcomes for different groups over time, to see if the gap between these groups and the population overall is narrowing.
- Understand community tensions: Hackney has adopted a community tension log which collates insight from surveys, media coverage and stakeholder perspectives.
- Seek resident views on community relations and belonging, through formal household surveys and through other routes to reach newer or less heard communities.
- Seek resident views of the Council and statutory sector in terms of whether they are trusted and seen as responsive;
- Gauge levels of participation in community life through levels of volunteering and the diversity of residents reached through grant programmes.

## Developing responses

Programmes which promote social integration are developed through a regular review of these indicators when the Council reviews progress against the Community Strategy and against its equality objectives. Cabinet Members are closely involved in steering programmes and in presenting the work to residents. This is an important part of their community leadership role, giving assurance to residents that tackling inequalities and good community relations matter. There is also a local leadership role for backbench members. Ward forums have been set up to enable ward members to convene meetings about local issues; in many cases these have been about contentious or divisive issues and have been a way to mediate divergent views and perspectives, even if it is not possible to reach a consensus.

A strategic review of progress against the Community Strategy in 2013/14 identified growing concerns about economic and social polarisation. Following this review, the Council formally launched a ten year programme and partnership to improve outcomes for young black men which responded to the fact that young black men experience disproportionately worse outcomes across a range of areas. It was around the same time, in 2014, that the council and Peabody launched the Pembury Children's Community which aims to significantly improve the lives of the 1,000 children and young people living on and around the Pembury estate in Hackney. An evaluation will seek to understand at a more granular level the ways that both

better coordinated services and community led support improve individual outcomes and contribute to community cohesion.

## Pembury Children's Community

Pembury is a housing estate of approximately 3,500 people in the centre of Hackney that has a very diverse community with over 80 per cent of residents from BME groups. The estate has had significant investment in recent years, but despite this, children and young people growing up on Pembury still face many more challenges than their peers from less disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Pembury is also often viewed negatively by the outside world, a stigma exacerbated by the riots which occurred nearby in 2011. Some new thinking was needed to make a real difference in the lives of Pembury

young people. Inspired by the Harlem Children's Zone in New York, Peabody and Hackney Council are developing an approach that aims to ensure every child and young person has the support they need, when they need it, so they are able to thrive and get the best out of life. This involves:

- A long term focus on a specific neighbourhood.
- An in-depth understanding of the community, both its assets and needs.
- Partners working together to co-ordinate support from 'cradle to career', working across children's school, home and community lives.

The vision is that by 2025 Pembury will be:

- A neighbourhood where people are proud to live.
- A community where people from all backgrounds come together, where everyone matters and there are opportunities for all.
- A place where young people are encouraged, inspired and empowered to get the best out of life.

Partners include Hackney Council, Peabody, schools, health services and the voluntary sector. Together, we want to connect both children and their parents to the existing services in the borough, bringing services closer to the community when needed and exploring how they could be shaped and improved. Alongside this, we are working to build the capacity of the community and individuals to support one another and help themselves, drawing

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on the many talents and resourcefulness of Pembury residents. Pembury is one of three pilot Children's Communities in the UK that are being championed by Save the Children and evaluated by Sheffield Hallam University. The Children's Community was launched in 2015/16 and in the first two years engaged 659 children and 357 parents. All the community initiatives on the estate, led by residents, Peabody, and partners have operated out of temporary buildings in the past. From October 2015, all these projects moved into a new flagship Community Centre, serving the Pembury neighbourhood six days a week. The centre continues to grow: hosting the local children's centre, surgeries from community psychologists and midwives and a wide range of wellbeing activities delivered by the voluntary sector, alongside youth work, parents groups and activities for older people, with an average of 450 visitors each week.

Particularly relevant for this case study is the progress being made to reach and engage residents and offer new opportunities. For example:

The Pembury Pass project for 16 to 24 year-olds has provided 64 young people with intensive one to one support and coaching in the past two years. 12 of these have been supported out of a severe crisis situation and 35 have moved into education, training or employment.

Since April 2015, Peabody has supported 169 local people into jobs.

112 parents have regularly engaged in informal support networks including a Dads group, parents coffee mornings and Reading from the Start family learning sessions.

Together, Peabody and Hackney Learning Trust brought adult education assessments and courses onto the estate, supporting 22 parents to enrol on literacy, numeracy, IT and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses

45 per cent of the 24 parents that completed a Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities course said that it had improved how they felt about their relationship with their child. 69 per cent thought it had a positive impact on their child's self-esteem

The majority of residents (74 per cent) felt that Pembury is becoming a better place to live and 85 per cent were 'very positive' or 'positive' about being part of the Pembury community

### Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men

Hackney Council, the local umbrella for the voluntary and community sector, Hackney CVS (HCVS) and local partner agencies, have worked with young people and parents to launch an ambitious programme to improve outcomes for young black men. This responds to the fact that young black men (YBM) tend to fare worse than their peers in many ways, from poorer educational results to higher offending rates. This has been a problem for many years and there have been many responses from public bodies and from the community, but they have not had the impact needed. Rather than tackle individual problems, their approach involves local people, the voluntary and community sector and the statutory sector in shaping and delivering solutions, with young people at the heart of this.

The work is championed by Cllr Bramble, Deputy Mayor and lead Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, and steered by a multi-agency partnership that was set up in January 2015. The programme seeks to improve life chances for future generations of young men as well as co-ordinating support and opportunities for those who are 18- 25 now. There are many black boys, young black men and black families that are succeeding in Hackney and it is vitally important that this work does not stereotype or problematize black men or the black community; the focus of this programme is on harnessing the potential of successful young black men, increasing their visibility as well as tackling inequalities where they do exist. The programme sets some clear ambitions to reduce disproportionality over the next 10 years. In November 2015 partners agreed a Theory of Change setting out the assumptions for why outcomes for young black men were disproportionately worse than the wider population. Partners also identified a series of actions to consider. Since November 2015, a number of working groups were set up to further consider evidence and finalise a set of actions which are now in place, under the following workstreams:

### Improving Life Chances for Black Boys

- Role of schools
- Trust between parents and the statutory sector
- Family health and wellbeing

### Empowering the community

- Community leadership
- Improving outcomes for young black men
- Young men at risk and community safety
- Mental health
- Regeneration and opportunity

### Culture and Identity

- Valuing heritage and celebrating success
- Behaviour, lifestyles, culture and identity

### Headline summary of key achievements

- A programme led by head teachers has been established to address inequalities in exclusions, behaviour and achievement – recognising the impact that the individual actions of a school can have on the wider community.



- All members of the partnership have agreed to participate in a challenging programme of culture change.
- The local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have set up a Reach and Resilience Programme as part of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to address specific community issues and community solutions, focusing in year one on black communities.
- East London Foundation Trust are co-delivering workshops with HCVS with young black men to test different ways of supporting mental wellbeing based on a strengths based approach.
- Public Health have committed to run Mental Health First Aid training targeted at frontline workers to help your black men receive earlier help.
- HCVS has continued to run a holistic personalised programme aimed at getting 18-24 year old black men into work, with 40 per cent of young black men gaining employment.
- HCVS have continued to engage young people as inspirational leaders and developed a cohort of community organisations committed to the programme, particularly in relation to YBM parental engagement and support.

This is a wide ranging programme involving a range of partners. It is overseen by the Policy and Partnerships team at the council who undertake ongoing planning and programme management, underpinned by six weekly meetings with key officers

and the Cabinet lead and six monthly partnership meetings. University of East London were engaged to offer critical challenge to partners whilst they were developing the theory of change in 2015. Their feedback directly influenced the final theory of change. They have also developed an evaluation framework which will be used to assess robustness of design and impact.

Now key actions have been agreed, partners are turning their attention to:

- Working on strategic fundraising bids to secure resources to increase the level of community engagement.
- Developing the leadership role of the youth advisory group of young black men who steer and shape the programme and deliver engagement.
- Engaging partners who have not been involved to date such as the judiciary.
- Convening academics, think tanks, central and regional government and other local authorities to look at the issues identified through the programme, to share practice and identify common issues and shared agendas to progress together

### Conclusions and next steps for Hackney

Hackney Council is currently in the process of adopting a new ten year strategy, setting out a new vision for place, informed by the “Hackney a Place for Everyone” engagement along with an analysis of trends and issues. This will be an opportunity to refresh our approach to social integration, responding to new challenges identified through the

process. Some of these are:

- Concerns about some communities becoming more isolated and segregated and possibly holding negative views about the wider community, despite overall levels of cohesion and tolerance.
- The need to continue to build a strong sense of community by finding new ways to engage as wide a range of residents as possible, engaging with grassroots community networks and making it easier to volunteer.
- Tackling the borough’s growing inequality with a renewed approach to economic and community development that rethinks what we mean by prosperity and how we harness benefits for local people.
- Understanding the main lines of tension and develop different ways to promote tolerance and neighbourliness.
- Understanding how Brexit and recent terrorist attacks impact on Hackney’s population and on community cohesion and resilience.

LB Hounslow

# 8. Hounslow

For the last two years, the local strategic partnership, the Hounslow Together Board, has focused on the challenges of substantial population growth and churn, the resulting effects on social support and wellbeing, as well as increasing service demand at a time of heightened budgetary pressures. The Board has initiated two innovative projects to better understand 'community resilience'- the ability of a community and individuals within it to cope and support one another and develop new responses.

The first is a borough-level project to try and measure what we understand as the key aspects of community resilience. The second is a pilot project which looks at how we might intervene to change and develop networks at an individual level, in order to improve wellbeing and test whether this might reduce reliance on services.

## Background

The London Borough of Hounslow is an outer London Borough with a population of 253,957. The borough faces high levels of churn and change, as one of the most rapidly growing boroughs in London. Between 2001 and 2011 census, the population growth was 20 per cent which is predicted to increase further by 2020.

There is also significant population churn in Hounslow. The 2011 Census revealed that 15 per cent of residents lived at another address 12 months before Census. In some areas this is as high as 35 per cent.

Furthermore, there are relatively high rates of migration into Hounslow. In 2011, 43.3 per cent of the population was



born outside the UK. Migration tended to be concentrated in certain areas of the borough, but this is changing with higher rates of migration. A comparison of the 2001 and 2011 Census shows that there are significantly more areas with new migration.

Hounslow also has one of the most diverse populations in London. In 2011, the three most common ethnicities were white British, Indian and Pakistani. The borough has a number of recently emerging populations, including Afghan, Algerian, Bulgarian, Burmese, Romanian, Sri Lankan and Nepalese communities. Diversity is increasing: in 2011, 49 per cent of borough residents were from BAME backgrounds (ONS Census). As of 2016, this is now 51 per cent and projected to rise further (GLA).

More than half of Hounslow's population lives within the lower half of the national scale of deprivation. Overall levels of deprivation in the borough are close to

the England average (ranked 151 out of 326 England LAs in 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation), but severe relative deprivation seems to have worsened slightly. The proportion of children living in poverty ranges across Hounslow's wards, from 12 per cent (Hounslow South) to 40 per cent (Isleworth).

Generally, Hounslow is considered a welcoming borough with 87 per cent of residents across the borough agreeing that people from different backgrounds get on well together<sup>2</sup>. Around three fifths (58 per cent) of residents agree that people in their local area pull together to improve the local area. However some initial qualitative work conducted as part of our Community Resilience Measure suggested that there are challenges for areas that face new rapid change, churn and population growth for the first time.

## The local authority's strategy for driving social integration

In 2011, the Local Strategic Partnership Hounslow Together Board developed the [Future Borough Strategy](#). This sustainable community strategy provided the overarching strategy for the borough area.

Even though this strategy provided broad strategic direction and a long term vision for economic, social and environmental wellbeing, the board was keen to use the strategic space created to look at the challenges that churn, change and population growth might place on the borough and on communities. It was hypothesised that churn, change and growth may affect the resilience of

individuals and communities to cope with shocks.

The core of this notion of resilience, is the understanding that the connections and relationships between people at a neighbourhood level help people to manage and cope with change. This led the Board to initiate two innovative projects to test and develop the hypothesis and thinking.

The first project is the development of a tool to map and measure 'community resilience', which includes measures of 'neighbourhood support'. The second, Cranford Stronger Together, is a proof of concept project to look at whether we might support people to develop their own personal social networks as a means to improve their own wellbeing and develop their own personal resilience.

As discussed below, these projects on personal and community resilience aim to place relationships, social networks and neighbourhood support. Hence 'resilience' becomes a means to understand the workings of cohesion and social integration at a local level.

Hounslow deputy Leader Cllr Mann chairs the Hounslow Together Board which is made up of representatives from the council and local partners, including Hounslow Youth Council, Hounslow Economic Business Forum and Voluntary and Community Sector Representatives.

Cllr Mann writes of the board:

*"I have chaired the Hounslow Together board for two years. The nature of the board has evolved over time and it has taken the form of a 'think tank'-type space for strategic stakeholders to engage on the critical long term issues facing our borough. It is very rare opportunity to*

2. London Borough of Hounslow Resident Survey 2016 conducted by Opinion Research Services for London Borough of Hounslow

meet with local leaders in a dedicated space where we work in a collaborative manner to envision, test and trial innovation and different ways of working. In the context of funding cuts and increasing pressures on local authorities, the voluntary sector and our partners, these spaces are unusual but necessary if we are to proactively plan for the future.

“Considering the resilience of our communities to support each other and respond to change is a key area of focus for Hounslow, as it impacts on people’s wellbeing as well as future demands for services. The Hounslow Together Board have championed these projects to develop innovative ways of approaching and thinking about these issues. We want to ensure that the borough is a place where people enjoy living and choose to stay throughout their lives.”

## Project examples

### Community Resilience Measure

Under the guidance of the Local Strategic Partnership, Hounslow Together commissioned Social Life to develop a predictive mapping and insight tool to consider community resilience<sup>3</sup>.

This predictive tool uses data from the Understanding Society Survey to highlight areas where there may be challenges with wellbeing, neighbourhood support, isolation and competence. We have been testing this visual mapping tool and compared it to our own ‘hard data.’ We are increasingly confident of its ability to ‘red flag’ areas where resilience might be an issue.

The key working assumption is that

3. The Community Resilience Measure builds off the WARM (Wellbeing and Resilience Measure) framework developed by the Young Foundation. This has been reviewed and revised to take account of new data and Hounslow’s particular needs. Hounslow’s focus has been on community resilience and we have looked at four resilience clusters: Wellbeing, Competence, Neighbourhood Support, Isolation and Emotionally fragility. An outline of the methodology is available here. For an update of this work see this presentation on the Community Resilience Model

resilience - the ability of a community and individuals within it to cope and support one another - is central to dealing with changes at a local level, particularly in the context of significant reductions in public sector spending. However, the scale and nature of population growth, churn and change in Hounslow risks fragmenting communities and undermining their ability to cope.

The resilience measure developed for Hounslow has used WARM (Wellbeing and Resilience Measure) framework developed by the Young Foundation as the starting point. This was reviewed and revised to account for new data, particular needs in Hounslow, and to make the framework more streamlined and accessible.

The resilience measure developed for Hounslow draws on two types of data:

- Hard data, that describes the circumstances of small areas in terms of service use, or social needs. This is generally broken down to lower level super output areas (LSOA).
- Predictive data drawn from national surveys held by government or research councils. This has been modelled to predict key elements of resilience at the very local level. This is at output area (OA) level.

We have identified the six predictive “resilience clusters” - groupings of people likely to have similar characteristics indicating resilience - through a factor analysis. This offers a detailed analysis of the relationship between responses to different questions about how people feel about the places they, as live reported in the Understanding Society Survey (USS).

These “resilience clusters” describe key aspects of resilience;

- **Low wellbeing:** lower satisfaction with life overall, income, amount of leisure time, and concerns about managing financially.
- **High wellbeing:** higher satisfaction with life overall, income, amount of leisure time, and concerns about managing financially.
- **Neighbourhood support:** high social solidarity and high belonging
- **Isolation:** low levels of belonging and local levels of social solidarity
- **Competence:** high levels of capability and low levels of stress
- **Emotional fragility:** high levels of stress and low levels of capability

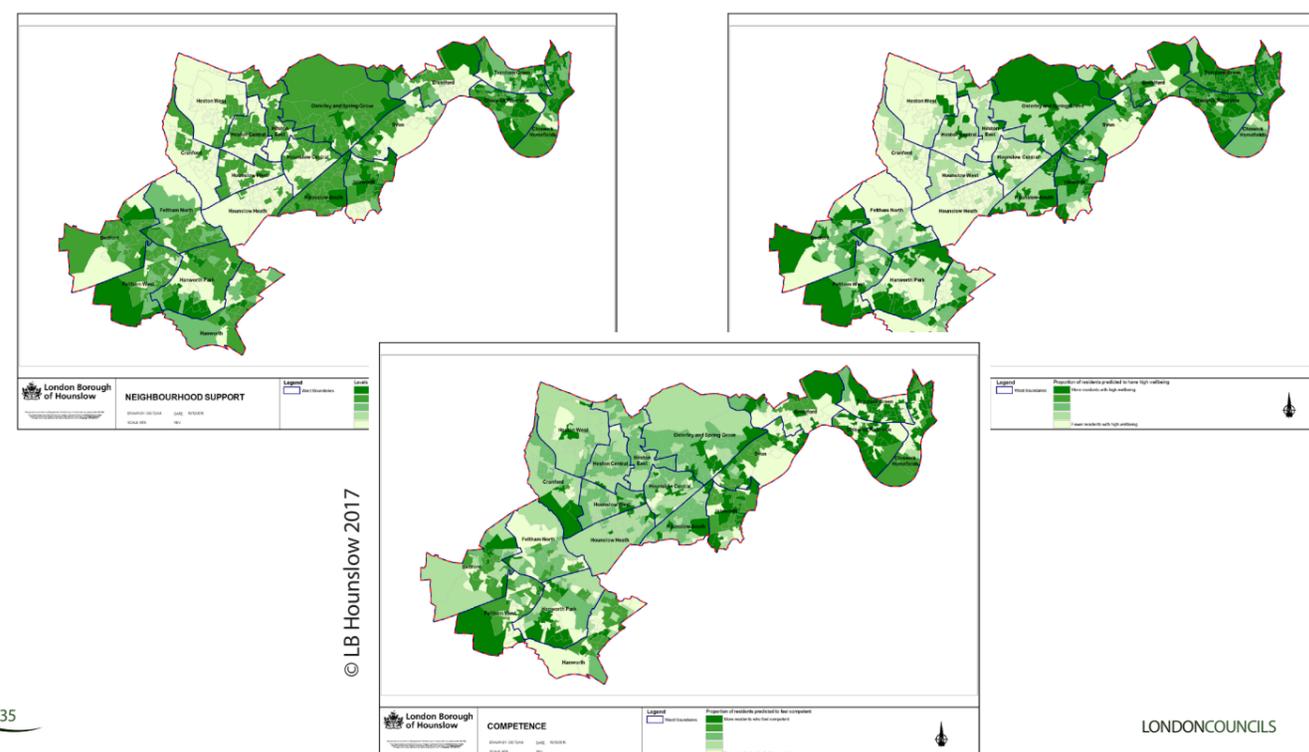
To create the resilience clusters, the Social Life team conducted a factor analysis to investigate how different USS questions relate to the core concepts of resilience

and to identify the questions that will make up the wellbeing and resilience measures. A cluster analysis was then performed to group the questions and factors together to develop clusters of respondents with different levels of resilience.

By analysing who lives in an area, the different clusters are represented within the population which enables a prediction of strengths and weaknesses of the area and paints a picture of its likely resilience. This is then tested against actual data about the place. This is exploratory and experimental work.

This report shows how the resilience assessment maps across Hounslow’s neighbourhoods, and discusses the detail of our approach to analysing the data.

These were mapped visually. The maps of most relevance in terms of social integration are Neighbourhood Support, Isolation and Competence which are below.



Based on an analysis of the hard and predictive data, areas were identified where information appeared to be contradictory. Using an asset mapping approach, Hounslow explored these areas to try and understand the local dynamics and test the model.

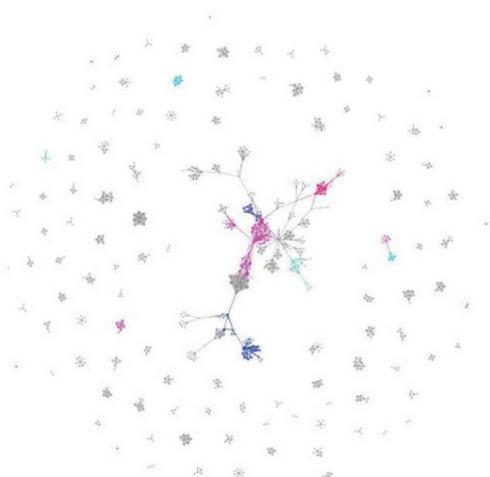
The qualitative validation process helped us to develop a 'rich picture' of the area and test hypothesis developed from the data. Initially the focus was on areas where there seemed to be a difference between the hard and predictive data, and this has been extended as we have looked at other areas and issues.

We have used the Community Resilience Tool on two levels, firstly as a borough-wide insight tool and secondly as a local level to understand a specific issue. We are becoming increasingly confident that this tool helps to flag and identify areas of where resilience might be an interest or concern and to provide us with a set of measures to better understand how communities might react to change.

## Cranford Stronger Together

The Cranford Stronger Together (CST) Project is an 18-month 'proof of concept' project to prove that by strengthening an individual's social networks, we can improve wellbeing and resilience, and reduce social isolation and reliance upon services. It focuses on the Meadows Estate (1,755 residents), one of the top 10 per cent most deprived in the country with high economic inactivity, children living in income-deprived households and high users of services.

In 2015, the RSA conducted network analysis and ethnographic research on the estate. 14 per cent of the population completed surveys on wellbeing, social networks and service use. The research revealed a highly fragmented and isolated community, illustrated in the social network map below:



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The research also concluded that low wellbeing correlated significantly with high public service use, as 'struggling' individuals often faced multiple, interrelated problems.

Based on this [research](#), the project will work with 50-60 very high service users referred from six service areas. A Networks Officer will engage one-on-one with individuals that have been identified as socially isolated and high service users by selected service providers. The Network Officer will help individuals to understand their social networks (how to build, make and keep close relationships and new connections) and levels of wellbeing. Support from the Network Officer will be tailored to each

*Social network map made up of answers to all social connections questions in the survey. The fragmented nature of the social network can be observed by the array of isolated small groups around the outskirts of the map: these are the unique social connections reported by different survey respondents that do not connect to other respondents' networks.*

person's needs and priorities.

Additionally the project will also help to link together various groups, centres and organisations in the area so that people can meet and get to know each other and undertake new activities as a community.

Quantitative and qualitative data will be collected and analysed throughout the intervention with each individual. In-depth analysis of the data and project design will be evaluated by a team at the University of Bradford.

## Conclusion

Both of these projects are exciting, innovative initiatives which draw on the strategic leadership of partners with a real desire to investigate how social networks, community support and relationships work together at a community level and how they might support and hinder community resilience.

Initial work in both these projects suggests that resilience is a complex interplay of personal, community and environmental factors. The connections between people have the potential to both promote and hinder neighbourhood cohesion and integration. We are hoping that by looking at how we might measure community resilience and help people to develop their social networks, we might develop a more nuanced understanding of relationships and how they underpin positive social integration and community cohesion. The rigorous approach discussed above in documenting, measuring and recording our findings shall enable the board to use this work to inform future policy development and thinking around communities, social cohesion and integration.

# 9. London is a Different Story

Jacqui Broadhead, Senior Researcher, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), University of Oxford



While promoting social integration and inclusion is often seen as a national policy debate, many of the interventions necessary

to promote the successful inclusion of newcomers actually sit at the local and regional level.

Cities in general, and London in particular, are well placed to view diversity as an opportunity to be realized and an asset to be harnessed. Many of the policy levers already sit within boroughs and many changes would require commitment and leadership to galvanise change rather than a significant commitment of additional resources. Local government is also where the consequences of social exclusion are most keenly felt and so have a direct incentive to take a leadership role in social inclusion. There is a significant opportunity for the GLA and London boroughs to step forward and provide energetic and proactive leadership on this agenda.

London's outlook of openness and welcoming, in common with many cities, creates a space for change. In terms of public attitudes, while national public opinion broadly favours reducing immigration, this is not the case in London<sup>4</sup> where residents are less likely to favour sharp reductions in migration than the rest of the country - and this holds true for UK born Londoners as well as other groups. London's different context means that there is space for a different conversation on inclusion and how London can be welcoming to its newest residents, while supporting and including all Londoners.

There are many existing positive local initiatives, both in the UK and overseas which demonstrate how London could lead the way as an inclusive city. For London, there are three areas which could be immediately drawn from and developed:

- Crafting a narrative of welcoming and inclusion which draws on the history and culture of the city to influence and shape both local authority provision and that of partners.
- Building on existing and emerging areas of good practice to grow the offer for newcomers - in particular in relation to the provision of advice and English language provision.
- Using the opportunities presented by devolution to act as a place shaper and draw in new partners - with a particular focus on how employers could help to lead and support an inclusive agenda.

New York offers a powerful example of how a city administration can offer leadership in the face of gridlock at the national level. The Mayor's Office for Immigrant Affairs offers both practical solutions to the everyday barriers to participation that newcomers face - such as their ID card scheme (ID NYC) and their network of free immigration advice delivered in community venues (Action NYC.) However, possibly their most valuable contribution to integration and inclusion is in crafting a narrative of welcoming which builds on the history of New York as a city built on migration and which links that history to a culture of pride and openness but also, crucially to tangible service delivery in relation to access to justice, citizenship and tackling child poverty. It is encouraging to see the recent developments in London



on this agenda - through the appointment of the Deputy Mayor for Social Inclusion, the Citizenship Initiative and the London is Open campaign. The next step for London will be to link these messages through to the day to day service provision within the GLA and individual boroughs.

Alongside developing the narrative of inclusion, there are a number of areas in which many London boroughs already operate and could build out their offer to match this culture of welcoming. Many children in care have uncertain immigration status - either as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASCs) or as the children of undocumented migrants. Ensuring that these children get the immigration advice that they need is one very direct way that boroughs could support children for whom they have a corporate parent responsibility to feel included in the societies that they will belong to on reaching adulthood. For

some children, this may mean supporting them to apply for the citizenship that they are entitled to, for others it may mean simply providing access to appropriate advice - either way it could use local authority practice to enfranchise and support young people in London.

Similarly, many boroughs have already participated in the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and the lessons from resettlement have thrown up areas where provision could be improved in order to facilitate inclusion, both for resettled refugees but also for the wider population. For example, learning English provides a gateway to integration - but the current provision does not allow for the intensive ESOL provision that would make a real difference to integrating all newcomers as quickly as possible, including within the labour market. Relatively small changes to front line practices and provision have a

4. [www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Briefing-Public\\_Opinion\\_Immigration\\_Attitudes\\_Concern.pdf](http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Briefing-Public_Opinion_Immigration_Attitudes_Concern.pdf)

# 10. Lewisham

value, not only in and of themselves, but as a wider signal of intent as a practical commitment to being welcoming and inclusive across the board.

Beyond these specific policy levers relating to existing local authority practice, devolution and the role of boroughs and City Hall as place shapers offers a wider role to facilitate a broader city wide conversation on inclusion, bringing in new and different voices. Newcomers contribute hugely to the economic prosperity of London and employers across the private and public sector benefit from the prosperity driven by growth. Employers could have a more central role in the inclusion debate - both in creating the inclusive society that will continue to attract the best global talent to London, but also in ensuring that growth is inclusive by encouraging routes into employment and progression for all Londoners. Local authorities and the GLA have a real role to play in convening and shaping this increased engagement. One example from the US is from Walmart Foundation which identified a problem with its rates of internal promotion due to low levels of English Language proficiency within its frontline staff. It worked with the National Immigration Foundation to develop an English Language course grounded in the workplace in order to address this - reducing its own recruitment costs whilst creating pathways of opportunity.

London does not need to wait for central government to put its integration agenda into place. Many of the tools and policy levers are already in place at the local level and could be developed further to bring to life the *London is Open* slogan, making

it meaningful for the day to day life of Londoners and harnessing the full potential of the city's diversity.

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## Social integration and refugees

A surge in migration from war-torn regions in Middle East, particularly from Syria in 2015, captured the UK public's attention and many Lewisham citizens had lobbied the Mayor to offer a way to support Syrian refugees. A town-twinning event held in Lewisham in January 2016 saw the Mayor of Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, a municipality in Berlin with a similar population to Lewisham, explain to the Mayor of Lewisham, Sir Steve Bullock, and others present including community groups, that they had taken in approximately 5000 Syrian refugees at this point.

The UK national government agreed to formally resettle 20,000 Syrians in the UK through two formal schemes, through which it would work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to resettle those families who were found to be particularly vulnerable: the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement (SVPR) Programme and the Vulnerable Children Resettlement (VCR) Scheme. Lewisham agreed to resettle 10 Syrian families in the first instance through the SVPR programme in September 2016, with the first family arriving in February 2017. Later, the council also agreed to accept households of any nationality through the VCR scheme, with the first family arriving in May 2017.

## Policy Context

One aim of Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020 is to have citizens who are 'Empowered and Responsible'. This means that people are actively involved in their local area and

contributing to supportive communities, with opportunities for volunteerism and philanthropy to empower citizens to be involved in their local area and responsive to the needs of those who live there. The two government schemes – the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme (SVPR) and the Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme (VCR) - were used as a way to promote volunteering and the activity of voluntary and community organisations. The resettlement of the refugee families also championed diversity and the contributions of different communities.

As a result of the council's proactive approach, the council's corporate policy of developing opportunities for the active participation and engagement of people in the life of the community ('Community Leadership and Empowerment') has been strengthened. The arrival of families has inspired volunteerism and philanthropy in various community groups and individuals ranging from donation of goods and furniture, through to intensive ESOL lessons, and invitations to community choirs and offers of music lessons.

The five objectives of Lewisham's Comprehensive Equalities Scheme also reflect our need to actively increase the participation of our communities through tackling victimisation, discrimination and harassment; improving access to services; closing the gap in outcomes for all residents; increasing mutual understanding and respect within and between communities; increasing citizen participation and engagement.

## Challenges

### Housing

In order to resettle families, appropriate housing was required. Lewisham already had a considerable waiting list for social housing, and a severe shortage of suitable self-contained available properties at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate on the private rented sector marketplace.

### Language

English language acquisition would also prove a priority, and although various ESOL classes run by community groups and Adult Learning Lewisham existed in the borough, the potential of accessing these were limited by physical mobility issues of some of the vulnerable persons resettled.

### Additional support

The SVPR and VCR programmes both include specific financial restrictions and guidelines. Government guidelines clearly lay out that Home Office funding provided may not be used on 'luxury' goods for the families, these include televisions and computers which might otherwise help with English language acquisition.

## Solutions

### Housing

A communications plan was devised to encourage local Lewisham residents to rent out properties to refugee families that would otherwise be unavailable on the private rented sector. This included an event co-hosted by the Lewisham branch of Citizens UK, which included participation from a local school who had been learning about migration.

### Language

The Lewisham branch of Citizens UK have been in regular contact with both Lewisham Council and the SHP caseworkers



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*Lewisham branch of Citizens UK and local schools join Lewisham Council for an event to encourage local residents to offer housing for refugees*

in order to help provide support with language acquisition. After discussion with the council, they held a pre-arrival fundraising drive and set up a 'welcome committee' including ESOL tutors.

### Additional support

The Council sought advice from other local authorities participating in the scheme. Many had tried to directly coordinate donations and ended up with many unsuitable items and limited storage space.

To this end, in order to encourage and monitor donation of goods and services, the specification used in the Lewisham tender to commission caseworkers specifically included wording on this. Weight was given to 'Partnership Working and Community Involvement' and those applying for the tender were asked to describe how they would work closely with local services, including Local Authority teams and third sector organisations, to deliver the service specified.

The wording explicitly stated: *'There are likely to be range of external interested parties, including individual members of the public, who may wish to volunteer, donate or in some way provide support or resources. Outline how you will use this support to add value to the service delivered for service users. Please draw reference on your previous experience in developing these partnerships.'*

## Outcomes

### Housing

All families have been resettled in properties offered at the Local Housing Allowance rate, with the majority of the families resettled in community-offered properties. One large property was offered by the Diocese of Southwark that was able to hold two families ie grandparents, as well as their parents and children. A property of this size would have been very difficult to find in the private rented sector.

Another unexpected advantage of community-offered properties has been that landlords have been willing to provide goods free of charge that the Council is unable to due to funding restrictions: one private landlord gave the family a laptop for example, another liaised with the family via commissioned caseworkers (from the charity SHP) for the first few weeks after their arrival to find out whether they needed anything to help them settle in and buying small items that they might like, from extra seating to a fruit bowl. These 'community landlords' have helped with integration aside from mere practicalities. One landlord has been helping the family with the garden, teaching them about English vegetation and climate, and another has introduced them to the neighbours including those with children of a similar age.

### Language

The Lewisham branch of Citizens UK have funded an ESOL tutor who visits

several families – especially those with ill or elderly members – to provide ESOL classes directly in their homes, ‘bridging’ their immediate need for fast language acquisition until they are able to access alternative provision. This has been especially useful for elderly residents who have been reluctant or physically unable to join ESOL classes.

An unexpected outcome of this has been that one of these families had a secondary-aged child who did not settle into school-life well, constantly asking the teacher to phone home, etc. As a result, the school agreed to have the Citizens UK tutor join the student for a few weeks’ sessions at school in order to help him access the curriculum and act as a means of integration support. The Council was able to cover the cost for these hours from the Educational funding provided by the Home Office directly, and the process was far quicker and more convenient than seeking additional help might have been otherwise. Since the student had already built a relationship of trust with the tutor, his nervous behaviour in school quickly improved as a result.

### Additional support

Since Lewisham Council had specifically asked the service provider SHP to outline how they agreed to work with the community, they themselves proactively did research on local community groups who worked with refugee groups and migrant communities, and reached out to them to find out how they might be able to work together to support the

integration of the resettled refugee families, drawing up lists of existing local classes and workshops which they were able to signpost families to, for example women’s groups. The support provider also set up a specific email account to handle all enquiries and offers of help from the community, and the Council was able to signpost potential volunteers directly to them. This has worked very well and SHP have coordinated donations of furniture in accordance with the families’ needs.



Lewisham Citizens bring in a welcome hamper to present to a new refugee family, at Lewisham Civic Suite with Mayor Sir Steve Bullock and local Lewisham Councillor

With encouragement from a local councillor, 10 local Halal restaurants also agreed to offer the families a free ‘welcome’ meal, and the SHP caseworkers were able to liaise with the restaurant owners to make sure these offers were taken up. SHP also used these meals as a way for resettled families to come together in a safe and informal space and meet other. One such restaurant, run by a Syrian chef, was featured in local press.

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**“I was struck by the crucial role played by civic society and how the public officials were able to accept and encourage this, how everyone seemed willing to accept the chaos of the emergency and work within it, doing what was immediately necessary and letting the structure and order develop as the needs were being met. It seemed a mixture of ‘top down’, ‘bottom up’ at the same time, each appreciating the particular qualities of the other”**

**– Cristine Smalligan,  
Lewisham Citizens**

To gain insight into some ‘best practice’ on how to work better with local groups in order to foster better coordination on work with refugees and migrant communities, the council leveraged its international partnerships. To this end, it was awarded funding by the ‘Europe for Citizens’ programme to visit its twin-town of Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf in Berlin and learn about how they have been working with their community groups and local volunteers to assist with integration.

The trip took place on May 16-18 and included faith group members, charity workers, refugee shelter managers from Lewisham’s French twin town of Antony, Paris, as well as members from the Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network, Action for Refugees in Lewisham, the Afghan and Central Asian Association, the Point Community Centre, Fare Share, and the Diocese of Southwark. Council officers responsible for housing, education, children’s social care, community development and international partnerships also participated. The group heard about innovative work that volunteers do, for example refurbishing old buildings to use as community centres, as well as digital solutions used by refugees themselves to access support with education and employment. Lessons were learnt about how to leverage support for refugees during current times of war and political cooperation, to generally improve community cohesion and integration going forward.

### Next Steps

Working with the voluntary sector has been so successful that it is now always included as an option when considering provision for refugees and migrants. Our Summer plans are exemplary of this.

During the summer holidays, families who attend local college often have no ESOL sessions to attend. This is particularly difficult for families who arrive during the Summer period. SHP liaise directly with community groups to find out which courses continue over the period, but many adults remain unable to go because schools are shut and there is a lack of childcare. To this end, the council are running two special projects over the Summer.

The first, to be completely facilitated by a local community organisation known as Pepys Community Forum, will give the families a chance to meet together but also connect with local linguistically-similar networks and settled diaspora. By connecting with other settled diaspora the traditional idea of integration is perhaps somewhat disrupted, but the importance of these groups – especially those who share a language - has been shown both through academic literature and learned from the council’s own visit to Berlin. In this case, the families may work with local Somali residents, some of whom speak Arabic. They will be having sessions on financial awareness and community business start-up and trading. The hope is that this might build on their knowledge and skills in a friendly and relaxed environment to lead to volunteering or employment

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opportunities. The local group will also offer informal engagement within the Lewisham community and wider environment by taking them to visit local markets, gardens and places of interest, in order to build awareness, increase confidence and opportunities for social interaction.

The second, hosted in a local community centre, will involve local ESOL teachers hired for the 6 week period only, one for families who is known to the families and can support their ongoing development, and other to work with complete beginners. This pooling of funds gives the families the opportunity to come together to socialise over Summer, as well as to use the garden and use the onsite kitchen facilities to cook and prepare food together, for which they are provided a lunch budget. They will also have crèche workers specifically for their families. It is hoped that some of the time will be set aside for the families to teach each other skills in a safe space, such as crocheting and floristry, thus increasing their confidence and moving them from feeling less like beneficiaries and more like empowered members of the community. At the council we see our new residents as assets not burdens, and we wish them to feel the same way. This is reflected in the wording from our Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020:

*“Lewisham’s vitality and dynamism stem from the energy of its citizens and diverse communities. Lewisham’s people have a long history of welcoming and championing new communities, valuing*

*diverse viewpoints and recognising the contribution that different cultures can make to the quality of life in the borough”*



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Lewisham Councillor Damien Egan (right) with local ‘Damascus Chef’ team Abdullah Alawayed and his wife Fabienne de Blois, who offered a free meal to Syrian refugees

***“It would be an honour for me to help feed the new arrivals. I don’t see them as refugees – they are my people. I know they will need someone who understands them, and is already settled here to help them. When I first came to Lewisham in 2012 I was shy at first, but I found people very friendly – south east London people are very welcoming. I’m sure they will share this experience”***

**Local Syrian restaurant owner and Lewisham resident, Abdullah Alawayed**

**The Challenge is a social integration charity that works closely with policy-makers and politicians, including as secretariat for the APPG on Social Integration, currently chaired by Chuka Umunna MP**

*“We design and deliver programmes that bring different people together to develop their confidence and skills in understanding and connecting with others. The first programme we designed was the National Citizen Service and today we are a major provider of the programme. To date, 120,000 young people have taken part in the National Citizen Service with The Challenge.*

*We define social integration as the extent to which people conform to shared norms and values and lead shared lives.*

*The make-up of society in the UK is changing with greater ethnic diversity (38 per cent of residents predicted to be BAME by 2050), more people with no religion but some minority religions growing, a greater proportion of older people (23 per cent of the population predicted to be over 65 by 2033) and historically high levels of inequality with a falling share of people in medium-skilled jobs.*

*But despite our growing diversity, many of us spend relatively little time with people from different walks of life. We think this matters. We believe these divisions make it harder to understand how others tick, harder for those on lower incomes to build the networks they need to get good jobs, harder to stop prejudice from sneaking in, harder to feel at home in our neighbourhoods, harder to remain connected to the community around us as we get older, and harder to vote for the common good. We also know that, when*

*we do meet people who are different from us, we tend to enjoy it. That’s why we work hard to bring people from different backgrounds together on our programmes, and in doing so, increase understanding and connection across our communities.*

*As diversity increases, The Challenge believes it is of critical importance that we steer the UK towards greater integration.*

*Our research and others have shown that social integration brings about:*

- Improved economic growth, along with improved education and skill levels.
- A wider talent pool from which businesses can recruit, given that around 40 per cent of jobs are found through social contacts.
- Higher levels of trust, particularly in a multi-ethnic society and reduced prejudice. Recent analysis shows that spending significant time with cross-group friends and having significant in-depth communication with those friends were the two strongest predictors of change in positive attitudes and prejudice reduction.
- Improved health and reduced anxiety.
- Reduced isolation, particularly among both elderly and vulnerable adults
- Increased community resilience in the wake of catastrophic events.

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*At The Challenge, we believe that we are likely to form more integrated friendships - or friendships with people from different backgrounds to us - when we are in a moment of transition. Starting school, becoming a young adult, starting your first job, settling in a new area, becoming a parent, retraining or retiring - it is during these moments of transition that we most want a new support group around us and when our identities are most in flux and open to new alliances.*

*We argue that we must ensure these moments of common life are intense and significant enough to create a shared identity. The focus on moments of transition will help: citizens training or retraining together, experiencing being a parent together or considering retirement together will bring its own intensity. But we must look to use other methods that have always created shared identity - sport, music and art."*



## Background

Newham is one of the most diverse local authorities in the country. The council actively promotes social integration, and communicates a clear message that Newham is one community shared by people with different backgrounds, experiences, and identities. While it is important to celebrate this diversity, it is also important to emphasise what people have in common and their responsibilities to one another.

Newham's approach to building social integration focuses on:

- **Building common ground:** helping to overcome barriers to integration, including encouraging people to speak English and only supporting groups and events that are inclusive of the whole community.
- **Bringing people together:** investing in community infrastructure and helping to build an active and connected community, where people from different backgrounds interact regularly.
- **Promoting fairness:** preventing tensions from building by promoting fairness, enforcing minimum standards, and making sure everyone plays by the same rules.

## Introduction to Newham

Newham is a large East London borough, with a young, vibrant, and diverse population. The borough is changing rapidly, with significant investment and regeneration underway linked, in part, to the 2012 Olympic legacy. While the area has a long history of welcoming new residents from across the world, immigration has contributed to significant demographic changes in recent decades: Newham had the highest growth in the non-UK born population in London between the 2001 and 2011 census (72,285 additional residents), with the proportion of residents from the UK falling from 62 per cent to 46 per cent over the same period.

Net international migration is currently estimated at 14,000 per year, and is a significant contributor to rapid population growth in the Borough. In 10 years from 2005 – 2015, Newham's population grew from 258,000 to 334,000, and it is projected to reach over 400,000 by 2030.

The area is extremely diverse, with no single ethnic group in the majority. Mid-year population projections for 2017 suggest the largest single group is Indian, representing just 15 per cent. The next highest are White British (13 per cent); Bangladeshi (12.8 per cent); White Other (12.7 per cent); Black African (11.1 per cent) and Pakistani (10.4 per cent).

This diversity is one of the borough's greatest strengths. However, it can also raise challenges to community cohesion and integration. Newham experiences high levels of population churn, with one in five residents having lived in the borough for less than two years.<sup>5</sup> The borough is also on the frontline of London's housing crisis, and while deprivation is falling the pressures that immigration can bring are felt more acutely in poorer areas like Newham. Residents face international competition for low-skilled jobs, massive demand for rental properties at the bottom end of the market, and additional pressures on local services.

In this context, the council has an active role to play in promoting social integration, and ensuring a fair deal for all residents.

### Newham's approach

The political leadership of the council has set out a clear message that social integration is a priority. Mayor of Newham Sir Robin Wales states that:

*"In a diverse place like Newham, it is our job in local government to help bring people together. We want to build a strong, resilient and cohesive community, and you cannot do that if you separate people into different groups and everyone is living separate lives. That is why our commitment to social integration runs through all of the work that the Council*

*does and every penny that we spend."*

The social integration agenda in Newham cuts across a range of policy and service areas, and is grounded in a wider strategy to build the resilience of Newham's residents, economy, and community<sup>6</sup>. Having strong networks as part of a cohesive community is an important foundation of people's resilience, and the council's resilience framework sets out clear aspirations to be a borough where:

- People are active locally and take part in the community and civic life more broadly.
- People engage with the democratic process and believe they can influence the decisions which affect them and local priorities generally.
- People have both broad and diverse networks locally (family, friends, groups and organisations) that offer them support.
- Residents respect and look after each other and contribute their time to the community.

The council has an important role to play in achieving this. However, social integration cannot be implemented in a 'top down' way through a particular policy or programme. Rather the council's role is about helping to build capacity in the community, and creating an environment that encourages people from all backgrounds to come together naturally as part of their every

5. London Borough of Newham (2016) Understanding Newham 2015: Findings from Wave 8 of the Newham Household Panel Surveys.

6. <https://www.newham.gov.uk/pages/services/resilience.aspx>

day life.

Newham's approach is embedded across the organisation, and can be summarised in three broad themes: building common ground; bringing people together; and promoting fairness.

### 1. Building common ground

Newham Council plays an active role in helping to build common ground and challenge barriers to integration. The Council celebrates residents' different cultures and backgrounds, both in our community events and by raising the national flag of the countries that many residents come from on their national day. However, this is done in an inclusive way, encouraging the whole community to get involved. There is a clear policy in Newham that council assets or funding will only support inclusive groups and events that are open to all, and not restricted to a

particular part of the community.

It is also important to encourage people to speak English, so that they can play a full and active part in the community and the employment market. The Council has made a deliberate choice to reduce spending on translation services and removed foreign language newspapers from libraries, instead continuing to fund free English Language tuition that is open to all despite cuts in government resources. Around three-fifths (61 per cent) of Newham residents do not speak English as their first language, however 88 per cent of this group report being able to speak English well or very well.<sup>7</sup>

Beyond this, the council's community neighbourhoods approach encourages people to come together around a shared, place-based interest to make a difference in their community, as set out below.

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7. London Borough of Newham (2016) Understanding Newham 2015: Findings from Wave 8 of the Newham Household Panel Surveys

### Example 1: Community Neighbourhoods

Community Neighbourhoods are at the centre of Newham's approach to building an active and connected community, where people from all backgrounds feel a sense of belonging and stewardship for their neighbourhood, turn to each other for support, and come together to bring about changes and improvements in their local area.

The council has created eight Community Neighbourhoods. Lead Councillors in each neighbourhood play an important role, providing local leadership to shape and deliver local priorities. The council's 10 libraries and eight community centres are also run through this model with a dedicated team of officers in each neighbourhood. By taking on an enabling and facilitating role, the neighbourhood teams are pioneering a new way of getting people active, building networks, engaging with partners and community groups, and harnessing the power of the community.

#### Key activities include:

- **Community events:** the neighbourhood teams run, host, and support residents to develop events and initiatives in their neighbourhood – with over 500 events on average now held every week. Getting people involved in local groups, clubs and projects helps them meet new people and build a real community spirit.

- **Volunteering:** Newham's Community Builders initiative is recruiting and training local volunteers as community ambassadors, engaging directly with their local neighbourhood by facilitating events, starting initiatives and advocating for their local community. A key aim of the initiative is to promote people's participation and inclusion in their community by building trust, resourcefulness, respect and connectedness. In 2016/17 there were more than 1000 active volunteers.

- **Community activity:** encouraging people to take responsibility and get involved in improving their local area. With leadership from local councillors, activities have ranged from hosting community clean up days to fundraising events for Syrian refugees, where people from all backgrounds come together to make a difference in their area.

For further information, visit:

[www.newham.gov.uk/Pages/Services/Community-neighbourhoods.aspx](http://www.newham.gov.uk/Pages/Services/Community-neighbourhoods.aspx)

### Example 2: Newham's Faith conference

Since 2014, Newham has hosted an annual faith conference bringing together representatives of different community and faith groups in the borough with Councillors and Neighbourhood Managers. The conference aims to recognise the contribution faith groups make to the community, to consider how different groups can work together and with the council and to develop shared responses to some of the most important issues affecting the community.

The Council's third faith conference in April 2017 was attended by over 250 people, with a focus on empowering women and promoting positive social action. The conferences have been designed to encourage networking amongst Newham's many and diverse faith groups, supporting them to build meaningful relationships.

At the 2017 conference 71 per cent of attendees reported that the conference was an excellent or very good opportunity to form useful links with people from other faiths. The success of these conferences have led to the establishment of neighbourhood faith forums linked to community neighbourhoods. These forums aim to continue interfaith collaboration and encourage different groups to come together and improve their local area.

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## 2: Bringing people together

The council also works proactively to bring people together, acknowledging that regular social contact between people from different backgrounds helps to reduce prejudice, provide a sense of community, and prevent social exclusion. This includes hosting a programme free community events, with the Mayor's Newham Show and the Under the Stars festival attended by around 100,000 people every year. The council's 'Let's Get the Party Started' small grants scheme also provides funding for residents to host their own community events, provided they are inclusive and open to all, and has supported almost 350 events in 2016/17.<sup>8</sup>

Beyond this, the events and classes hosted through the community neighbourhoods (see above) provide opportunities to volunteer; learn new skills; or simply attend one of coffee mornings, tea dances, or other social activities on offer. The Council are also investing in community infrastructure and public spaces, bucking the national trend by modernising libraries, extending opening hours, and increasing footfall by turning them into thriving, multi-purpose community hubs.

## 3: Promoting fairness

While immigration and diversity brings a range of benefits, it can also bring challenges in poorer areas like Newham. In order to avoid suspicions and tension from building, it is important that the council is seen to be acting fairly at all times. That means ensuring fair access to under-pressure services, which is why Newham's housing allocations criteria is based on a clear first-come, first-served principle and rewards contribution, with a residence criteria and people in work or caring prioritised.

However, the best way to avoid tensions is to help the whole community to thrive. The council aims to create a convergence of life chances through the resilience agenda, investing in services such as Workplace to help residents into employment. The council's mainstream approach to service provision ensures that services are open to everyone, rather than targeting resources for particular parts of the community. Fairness also means investing in enforcement to make sure everyone plays by the rules. This includes targeting rogue landlords and employers who undercut standards and undermine community cohesion by exploiting migrants illegally for profit. Through landlord licensing, backed by robust multi-agency enforcement, Newham has prosecuted over 1,100 criminal landlords since 2013, and accounted for over 70 per cent of all

London's prosecutions in 2015/16.

## Progress and next steps

Newham monitors progress on this agenda regularly through our extensive resident surveys, and recent findings reveal a positive picture of social cohesion in the borough<sup>1</sup>:

Nine out of ten residents (89 per cent) agree that people from different background get on well together in Newham – above the national average.

Around three-fifths (57 per cent) of residents agree that if they needed advice, they could go to someone in their neighbourhood – an important factor for instilling a sense of community cohesion.

Almost half of residents (42 per cent) say that at least half of their friends come from a different ethnic background. In a diverse area like Newham these are positive results. However, significant challenges remain and there is further to go. The Council will continue to stand up against those who seek to sow hatred and division in the community, and focus on building community resilience by expanding our Community Neighbourhoods approach – pushing more power down to the local level, bringing people together, and building the capacity of the community shape their local area.

<sup>1</sup> London Borough of Newham (2016) Understanding Newham 2015: Findings from Wave 8 of the Newham Household Panel Surveys



8. <https://www.newham.gov.uk/Pages/Services/Lets-get-the-party-started.aspx?l1=100003&l2=200047>

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Publication date: October 2017