

Tower Hamlets newsletter



June 2023

Hello everyone,

Welcome to the June newsletter!

The Older People's Reference Group is a space to voice your experiences of living in Tower Hamlets, to share your insight and meet others that want to do the same.

You will hear from key speakers from your community about the work they are doing and how your feedback can positively contribute to decision making in key areas.

We can support you by offering information about services in the area and signpost you in the right direction.

We understand that issues around cost of living, energy, transport, healthcare and digitalisation (and more) cause worry and frustration, so come with your insight and experiences to help us tackle these issues. In the background, We're working with partner organisations in the community and the council to support Tower Hamlets residents.

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Safety in Tower Hamlets and Gender Inclusive Design

Joshuah Codjoe, Safer Communities Manager and Jennie Savage, Public Realm Project Officer spoke about safety and design in Tower Hamlets, they are interested in the experiences of residents in Tower Hamlets to help them shape a safer community.

Digital Walks in Tower Hamlets were conducted and the research showed:

Phone snatching, drug dealing, drug taking, and nitrous oxide contribute to continuous low- level feeling of threat.

Groups of young men colonise parks and public spaces making areas feel unwelcoming to all other groups.

Parks and outdoor spaces are a key issue for everyone. People see outdoor areas as social space.

New developments can feel unsafe and a target for crime.

Emerging Initial Design Principles:

Night time walking routes and way-finding: are different to day time routes. Way finding should be well-lit, legible at a glance with easily visible street and place names.

Active frontages are key to night time safety: Community centres and resources should be at street level to create activity and also encourage footfall. Shops, cafes and business should also be encouraged to open late. Corner shops and hyper local amenities on otherwise quiet streets should also be encouraged.

Lighting: Appropriate, well placed lighting is important to women.

Street trees: "Help an area feel safer and cared for" (Participant) As can tidy well maintained areas. Bio diversity is important.

Invest in teenage girls: To ensure parks and public spaces are places they feel welcome and able to spend time, with activities that interest them.

Invest in youth services and youth teams: Young men need to be supported, not demonised. ASB in parks and public spaces is a symptom, not a cause. Empty shops and high streets could prioritise access to youth services and social, career/ confidence building activities for teens.

Play Parks and play grounds: Places for kids and are also places where carers socialise and are therefore important places for women to meet and make friends and develop support networks and communities. Ensuring parks and play spaces have good amenities, places to sit, picnic, encounter others.

Pro-community design: design-in spaces for people to meet out-doors. Encourage intergenerational activity and encounter. Create meeting places with a feeling of shared ownership.

Maximise use of outdoor green space: Every area of grass is an opportunity to create green-outdoor spaces for the community. This is especially important for people in blocks and flats. Access to green space improves health and well being of residents.

Connect green walking routes: Women navigate the borough in the day time via green ways and pleasant, quiet streets- a connected network of green walking routes would boost happiness levels, improve mental health and physical fitness for women and girls.

Do you have any comments on the above? We have contact with both speakers and can invite them along to an OPRG meeting.

Linkage Plus and Community Centres

Linkage Plus is an innovative project for people over 50 living in Tower Hamlets.

Borough-wide, it is based out of five hubs – Age UK East London, Neighbours in Poplar, Peabody at Sundial, Sonali Gardens and Toynbee Hall.

Linkage Plus works with older people to improve their wellbeing and increase their social networks and tackle isolation. It is co-funded by Tower Hamlets Council and the Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group, aiming to help people stay active and make the most of life.

If you don't already access one of the hubs, why not give them a try? Or let your neighbours and friends know!

You can also access services at the Bromley By Bow, a health and community centre.

Bromley by Bow Health Centre

Address: St Leonards Street London, E3 3BT

Telephone: 020 3728 0980

Opening hours: Mon – Fri: 8.00am–6.30pm, closed at weekends

Tower Hamlets Connect



Delivered in partnership with:



Connecting Tower Hamlets residents with information and advice on health and social care, local events, and community services across the borough.

Providing free, independent, quality-assured information, advice and advocacy across health, social care and social welfare to resolve issues, Tower Hamlets Connect aims to prevent or delay any needs or problems from getting worse.

Tower Hamlets Connect operates as your access point to Adult Social Care services in the borough.

Telephone: 0300 303 6070

Email: enquiry@towerhamletsconnect.org

Opening hours: 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

New Town Hall



Residents' Hub

The Residents' Hub will offer residents free face to face (by appointment), over the phone or virtual advice across a range of services.

The council and the borough's Voluntary and Community Services are working together to support our most vulnerable residents.

What are we doing?

The aim of the Residents' Hub is to work with residents who find it difficult to access the support they need through other channels e.g online, telephone.

We are focused on supporting residents to empower themselves and help them to solve their problems.

We offer a wide range of services including

- Council Tax
- Debt Management
- Digital support
- Domestic abuse
- Employment and skills
- Hate crime
- Health and Wellbeing
- Housing
- Welfare Benefits

How can you access the Residents' Hub?

The Residents' Hub offers an appointment service, which can be arranged through one of our partners or by calling 020 7364 5055.

The service operates at the Tower Hamlets Town Hall, 160 Whitechapel Road E1 1BJ

Opening hours

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am to 4.30pm
- Wednesday from 10am-4.30pm

To access the Residents' Hub use the Main Entrance, on Whitechapel Road.

5 Steps to Mental Wellbeing

Evidence suggests there are 5 steps you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing. Trying these things could help you feel more positive and able to get the most out of life.

1. Connect with other people

Good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing. They can:

- help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth
- give you an opportunity to share positive experiences
- provide emotional support and allow you to support others

2. Be physically active

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness. Evidence also shows it can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- [raising your self-esteem](#)
- helping you to set goals or challenges and achieve them
- causing chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood

3. Learn new skills

Research shows that learning new skills can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- boosting self-confidence and [raising self-esteem](#)
- helping you to build a sense of purpose
- helping you to connect with others

Even if you feel like you do not have enough time, or you may not need to learn new things, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life.

4. Give to others

Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing by:

- creating positive feelings and a sense of reward
- giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth
- helping you connect with other people

It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, or larger ones like volunteering in your local community.

Some examples of the things you could try include:

- saying thank you to someone for something they have done for you
- asking friends, family or colleagues how they are and really listening to their answer
- spending time with friends or relatives who need support or company
- offering to help someone you know with DIY or a work project
- volunteering in your community, such as helping at a school, hospital or care home

5. Pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness)

Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing. This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

Read more about [mindfulness](#), including steps you can take to be more mindful in your everyday life.

Age UK East London Information & Advice



During the cost of living crisis our Information & Advice service is focusing on welfare benefits/income maximisation. Unfortunately, we cannot provide form filling for blue badges, dial-a-ride, taxi card etc. We are looking into other options for this. The service has up to 6 weeks wait for non-urgent referrals.

If you need urgent support, please get in touch.