

EVIDENCE

3.0 POLICY AND GUIDANCE REVIEW

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3.1. OVERVIEW

3.1.1. To understand the policy context of LBN in relation to community facilities, Publica undertook a review of existing and emerging policies, strategic documents and studies. Key information and findings from the core documentation has been outlined on the following pages with a specific review of the Town Centre First approach which is referenced throughout the document. Several documents were also considered during the review and have also been set out in Table D opposite.

3.1.2. Meetings were also conducted with LBN officers to discuss established knowledge within the council about community facilities and needs additional information which may inform the study.

SOURCE	CORE DOCUMENTS
DLUHC	National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
GLA	London Plan (2021)
LBN	LBN Local Plan (2018): INF8 Community Facilities
LBN	LBN Local Plan Refresh – Issues and Options – Community Facilities 2021
LBN	Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2019)
LBN	Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2023 Part 1
LBN	Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2023 Part 2 Well Newham
LBN	Social Integration Strategy
LBN	LBN, Cabinet Report Nov 2019 – Community Centre Strategy
LBN	LBN, Community facilities audit (2021)
LBN	LBN, Cabinet Report Nov 2019 – Social Value Policy and Procedures
LBN	Strategic Leisure Facilities Needs Assessment (2017)
LBN	Volunteering Strategy
LBN	Community Wealth Building: For a Fair and Inclusive Newham
LBN	Towards a Better Newham: Covid-19 Recovery Strategy
SOURCE	OTHER DOCUMENTS
LBN	LBN, Resident Engagement and Participation Capital Strategy July 2021
LBN	LBN, Cabinet Report 7 Dec 2021 – Community Spaces Review
LBN	LBN, Asset Review Flow Chart
LBN	Citizen Assemblies – 2020
LBN	2021 – Newham Year of the Young Person
LBN	Newham, Places for All, A School Place Planning Strategy 2020-2025
LBN	Cultural Strategy
LBN	We Make Newham – Youth Assembly Event
LLDC	LLDC, Community Facilities mapping and data
Royal Docks	Royal Docks Cultural Placemaking Strategy March 2021
GLA	GGBD: Connective Social Infrastructure
DLUHC	The Use Class Order and Permitted Development Rights (amended 2020)
One Newham	Collected comments on Newham Local Plan Dec 2021
Compost	Newham: Key Statistics
Compost	Newham’s Voluntary, Community and Faith sectors during and beyond the pandemic: an impact survey
Compost	Newham’s Voluntary Community and Faith sector response during lock down
Crest/ LBN	We are Listening: We Are Newham - Brighter Futures: A Foundation for Change
Fluid	Join the Docks – Engagement Report OAPF
Department of Education	Community Use of School Premises: A Guidance Toolkit for Schools
Institute for Public Policy Research	Pubs and Places – The Social Value of Community Pubs
Public Health England	Spatial Planning for Health: An evidence resource for planning and designing healthier places
RTPI	Mental Health and Town Planning
The Health Foundation	The Covid-19 Marmot Review

Table D: List of policy and guidance taken into consideration for this study.

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3.2. POLICY AND GUIDANCE: TOWN CENTRE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

3.2.1. National Policy Planning Framework (2021):

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not have a definition for community facilities however makes references throughout the text to facilities included in this study.
- It states that strategic policies should be set out to provide an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development to make provision for community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure) to create sustainable communities and opportunities for social interaction. It emphasises the need for local plans to plan positively for provision of facilities and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services.
- The NPPF refers to pubs, arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls) as main town centre uses. In reference to these facility types, the document states that suitable and viable town centre sites should be used and where not available they should be allocated to edge of centre sites (up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area) that are well connected to the town centre. A sequential test should be used for planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan.

3.2.2. London Plan (2021):

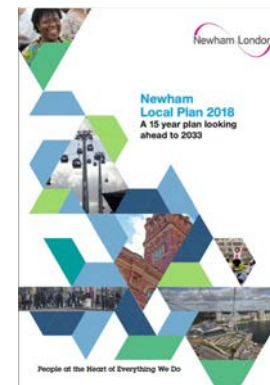
- The London Plan reference to community facilities as social infrastructure. The policy requires Local Plans to identify sites for future health, social care, education, sport and recreation facilities, as justified by the relevant needs assessment.
- It states that infrastructure should meet the needs of communities, new facilities should be easily accessible

by public transport, cycling and walking and should be encouraged in high streets and town centres – important sites for social integration and as a key driver of high street economies. Policy SD6 states that provision of social infrastructure should be enhanced to support identified need from town centre and local residents.

- Policy SD7 states boroughs should take a 'Town Centre First' approach. In accordance with the NPPF, the policy also references the sequential test for main town centre uses and or edge of centre if well integrated with the existing centre.
- The document supports the clustering of civic uses in and around well-connected areas, such as town centres, and parks and open spaces.
- The policy also suggests that local organisations and community groups should be involved in the co-design and governance of new facilities – particularly in areas undergoing significant levels of change.

3.2.2. INF8 Community Facilities: LBN Local Plan (2018):

- The Local Plan adopts a robust 'Town Centre First' approach for community facilities, ensuring these uses fall within the plan definition of town centre uses and only permitting out of centre development in very specific exceptions.
- Where in-centre locations are unavailable, due to high land prices or the unavailability of land, community facilities are encouraged to locate in Community Facility Opportunity Areas which provide accessible, visible spaces in non-residential areas on the outskirts of town centres.
- The policy covers a wide range of use classes and community facilities and only some of these are included in the social infrastructure chapters of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which identifies supply and projected future



LBN Local Plan 2018, INF8 Community Facilities



Local Plan Issues and Options Our Community Facilities, 2021

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need for these facilities.

- The policy seeks to support co-location and the intense use of spaces to address competing demands on land and improve the viability of community facilities.
- The Local Plan designates 28 site allocations where new, renovated or intensified community facilities could be delivered.
- On strategic sites delivering new community facilities, there is a presumption in favour of health, education and childcare facilities.

3.2.3. Local Plan Options Refresh (2021)

- The update to the policy proposes a new structure that differentiates between policies that apply to existing facilities (and their loss or intensification) and separate policies that apply to proposed new facilities.
- The options seek to strengthen and support the concept of 15-minute neighbourhoods to support the needs of hyper-local communities.
- There are opportunities to provide flexibility in the application of the town centre-first policy approach to better reflect specific neighbourhood needs.

3.2.3. PTAL Access levels

- The TfL PTAL are a detailed measure of the accessibility of a point to the public transport network. This measure includes walking times and service availability and provides a way of measuring the density of the public transport network within London. The levels are graded between 0 (poor access) to 6b (excellent). The extract of the London wide-map on this page shows the future PTAL levels (2031) for Newham whereby a large proportion of the borough is level 2. Good and excellent levels of public transport (5-6b) are predominantly in town centres. The PTAL level is an information requirement of Travel Plans for planning applications.

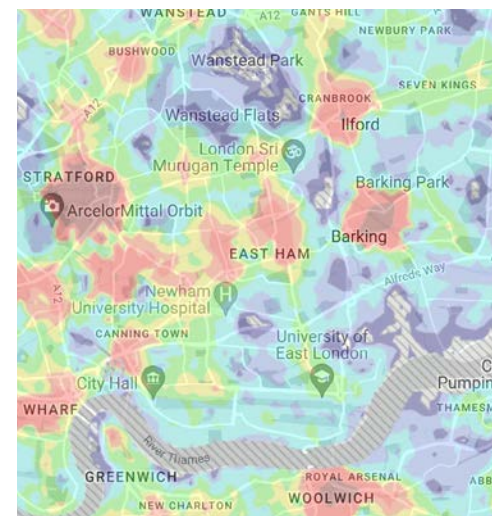
3.3. OTHER POLICY AND GUIDANCE

3.3.1. Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2019)

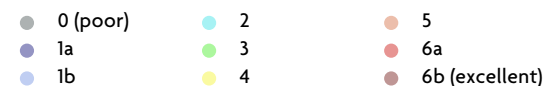
- The plan is updated annually to set out the quality and capacity of physical and social infrastructure across the borough and identify forecasted demand.
- The plan acts as a Material Consideration in determining planning applications and can be used to evidence need for a community facility.
- The plan justifies and outlines CIL spending for strategic infrastructure rather than the site-specific mitigations which are determined by s106 on a case-by-case, discretionary basis.
- There are a number of community facility land uses, as defined in policy INF8 that do not fall within IDP assessment of social infrastructure.
- It is difficult to find new standalone sites for community centres and libraries and the council will have to work with developers of new strategic sites, as well as maximising the use of their existing estate, to meet future needs.

3.3.2. 50 Steps to a Healthier Newham and public health strategy 2020-2023

- The policy sets out 50 steps the council will take to promote public health. A number of these directly or indirectly impact community facilities, their users and operators including:
 - Step 14 – Support residents to age well and maximise quality of life.
 - Step 16 – Develop health promoting services.
 - Step 20 – High standards of access and inclusivity to promote health and wellbeing of all.
 - Step 28 – Prioritise active travel and encourage the use of green spaces.
 - Step 36 – Support place shaping for physical activity.



TfL PTAL future access levels 2031²



² TfL.gov.uk/info-for/urban-planning-and-construction/planning-with-webcat/webcat

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- Step 37 – Promote and increase opportunities for social connectedness to improve health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation and loneliness.
- Step 38 – Increase levels of volunteering.
- Step 39 – Develop strong relationships with VCS and faith sector.

3.3.3. Social Integration Strategy

- The strategy seeks to address discrimination and disproportionality while fostering robust and resilient social networks and communities.
- With this aim in mind, the strategy specifically supports faith institutions as critical organisations that respond to local needs as well as the important role of arts, culture and heritage organisations and spaces that provide opportunities for people to build meaningful connections, empathy and dialogue within and between communities.
- The strategy seeks to strengthen and improve partnership working with the voluntary and community sector.
- Another key objective is to connect disadvantaged communities to shared spaces, meeting places and social infrastructure.

3.3.4. Community Centre Strategy and Review

- The council has recently developed a new methodology to manage its community centre estate to support the voluntary and community sector and ensure assets are maximised.
- The introduction of Social Value leases seeks to reward and incentivise occupiers that deliver additional and wider benefits to the local community.
- Community centres are assessed for their potential to be redeveloped which includes exploring opportunities to re-provide community space with housing on site.

- The core purpose of community centres is to promote social integration, not only as venues where residents of different backgrounds can come together, engage in shared experiences, interact and build meaningful relationships, but also by as places that provide a range of services to tackle a range of inequalities that residents face through the provision of advice, support and workshops. The spaces also tackle loneliness and social isolation.
- The strategy seeks to provide a standard approach, enhancing both the transparency and consistency of the management of the Council's Community Centre portfolio.
- Community centres serve a variety of functions but ultimately they provide a space for residents to come together and to form support networks; contributing to an integrated and cohesive society.
- A large number of community centres are owned by the Housing Revenue Account and have a role to play in providing space for civic engagement work with tenants.
- Community provision can be a key place-maker in new housing developments improving the quality of life of the residents of that area.
- The Council aims to have a minimum of one Council run community centre in each neighbourhood or where that is not possible to provide some community space through libraries, Town Halls and partnerships with VCS run community centres.
- Ideally, every resident would be able to walk to a council run community centre comfortably within 15 minutes. When community centres are a greater distance apart than this, people are less likely to be meeting residents from their own hyper-local community and they are also more likely to take some form of transport. Dependent on a variety of factors (personal to the individual and to the

location) a 15-minute walk is likely to be between a 0.5 and 1 mile walk.

3.3.5. Social Value Strategy

- The policy, first established in 2019, recognises the social value delivered by organisations leasing council assets. It applies to micro, small and medium registered charities, CICs, co-ops or suitable alternatives.
- By measuring and quantifying the social value that is delivered, the policy outlines the mechanisms through which subsidies, in the form of rent reductions, will be allocated and scaled to organisations depending on the level of social value they deliver.
- Measurement needs to be transparent, objective and simple, without being too onerous for voluntary and community organisations to undertake.
- Social Value is recognised in buildings that: are well-maintained, open when people want to use them, well-used by the local community, and welcoming, offer quality employment and volunteering opportunities paying the London Living Wage, promote responsible attitudes to the environment, climate change and air quality, and deliver community activities for children and young people, events for vulnerable adults and the elderly, activities for combating social isolation/promoting social integration and programmes that improve physical and mental health and wellbeing.

3.3.6. Strategic Leisure Facility Needs Assessment (2017)

- The assessment evaluates the provision of indoor swimming pools, sports halls, health and fitness suites, athletics provision, lawn bowls and outdoor tennis courts across the borough. There is a separate playing pitch strategy.

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- Participation in physical activity and sport in Newham is below the London average, particularly for females and the white population and overall, 33.5% of the population have been identified as being inactive.
- There are 241 sports facilities in the borough, in addition to a number of strategic parks and open spaces, such as the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, West Ham Park and Wanstead Flats.
- Areas around East Ham, Beckton, Manor Park and Forest Gate are populated by residents who on average have the highest risk of inactivity across the borough. These residents are defined as typically have difficulty in committing to regular physical activity and are sensitive to barriers to entry such as cost and accessibility.

3.3.7. Volunteering Strategy

- The strategy will support the organisations that engage with volunteers, outlining the tools and resources that will be developed to support, recognise and encourage all types of volunteering activity.
- The act of volunteering is important for the development of skills, building relationships with a diverse range of people, and gaining a sense of belonging to the community. It increases confidence, mental health and wellbeing by providing a sense of achievement in helping and supporting others. The act of volunteering can also combat isolation and it strengthens links with others by helping to build feelings of social connectedness.
- The strategy's mission is to collaboratively develop and deliver volunteering opportunities across Newham that contribute to the positive outcomes felt by volunteers, communities, beneficiaries and organisations.

3.3.8. Community Wealth Building Strategy

- The strategy is based on three principles: Leading by Example, A Fair Deal for Newham Workers, and Inclusive economy.
- The inclusive economy strategy builds on 5 tactics:
 - Tactic 1: Place Newham's local centres at the heart of Community Wealth Building.
 - Tactic 2: Make best use of public sector assets.
 - Tactic 3: Reform Newham Workplace (Newham's job brokerage service).
 - Tactic 4: Support Newham's businesses and institutions to become more successful and responsible.
 - Tactic 5: Understand changes occurring in the local and regional economy better through ongoing evaluation so that the Council, working alongside its partners, businesses and residents, can adapt to seize the opportunities emerging and offset any negative impacts.

3.2.9. Towards a Better Newham Community Wealth Building Strategy

- The council's focus is shifting to quality of life and wellbeing, recognising that traditional economic approaches to growth have not worked well enough in Newham. Inclusive economy strategy sits at the heart of council policy. The policy addresses both recovery and reorientation – to address more fundamentally inequalities. There are 8 pillars to the strategy:
 - Measure of success will be health, happiness and wellbeing of residents.
 - Ensure every resident under 25 is safe, happy and cared for, with positive activity to secure their long-term wellbeing.

- Ensure all residents are supported and enabled to access work and other opportunities in the new economy.
- Make sure residents are healthy, happy, safe and cared for to enable them to thrive.
- Enable every resident to live in an accessible and inclusive neighbourhood which will provide all their social, civic and economic essentials.
- Become London's greenest local economy.
- Deliver genuinely high-quality and affordable homes for Newham.
- Only welcome investment that secures a Fair Deal and a Fair Economy for Newham.

