



Newham London

# Newham's Sustainable Community Strategy for 2010–2030

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## Newham at a glance

Newham is an ambitious and exciting place to live:

- We're the most diverse place in the country with over 200 languages and dialects spoken in the borough.
- We're the youngest community in the country with one in four residents aged 15 or under.
- 85 per cent of residents say people from different backgrounds get on well in their local community.
- We've undergone unprecedented economic regeneration in recent years, and this goes well beyond the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We have Westfield Stratford City, the largest indoor urban shopping centre in Europe; the Siemens Crystal, showcasing sustainable technology and soon to be the flagship of a new Green Enterprise District; and the Royal Docks Enterprise Zone, the centre for London's growth in the future.

As a community, however, we face significant challenges:

- Newham is the second most deprived local authority area in the country.
- Our employment rate is the lowest in the country – only 55 per cent of working age adults have a job.
- Over 50 per cent of children are living in poverty.
- Life expectancy is two years younger than the national average.

As a partnership we are committed to addressing these challenges and helping people in Newham achieve their potential.



## Introduction

Newham is a place of great potential, but which also faces significant challenges. In our Sustainable Community Strategy published in 2010 we set out an ambitious 20 year vision to make Newham a ‘place where people choose to live, work and stay’.

We are also committed to delivering convergence. This aims to close the gap between east London and the rest of the city, with the final aim that “within 20 years the communities that host the 2012 Games will have the same social and economic chances as their neighbours across London”. This is part of a convergence framework supported by the Mayor of London.

We have made significant progress towards delivering our vision to make Newham a place where people choose to live, work and stay. Since the Sustainable Community Strategy was launched the hard work of schools and pupils has meant educational attainment in both primary and secondary schools has continued to rise.

Major development in Stratford has led to the opening of Westfield and the creation of 8,800 jobs, 2,000 of which have been filled by local residents as a result of work by partners in public, private and voluntary sectors.

In healthcare, Newham University Hospital has merged with Barts and The London and Whipps Cross Hospital NHS trusts, this will help to create the world class healthcare provider our residents deserve.

The last two years have also been a time of great change both in funding and in the structure of services, with major changes in the health sector in particular. The requirements on local partnerships to agree a Local Area Agreement with national Government have also ended. It is therefore timely to review progress, reaffirm our commitment to delivering the vision we set out and ensure we have plans in place to deliver that vision.





## Building Resilience

In doing so we must acknowledge that successive generations have attempted to tackle deprivation and poverty in the East End, but in terms of income and life chances East Enders remain worse off than their counterparts in other parts of London. The welfare state in its broadest sense has been tremendously successful in alleviating some of the worst health and social problems and tackling poverty. Significant investment in the area over the past 20 years has helped to deliver further improvements. But areas which were poor a generation ago – like Newham – largely remain poor and disadvantaged today. People living and growing up in Newham lack the opportunities that their counterparts in other parts of the capital enjoy.

This has led us to develop a new approach to tackling deprivation. Our approach builds both on the collective experience of our partners and on what residents tell us are their priorities. In summer 2011 we undertook a wide-ranging process of consultation – with residents, with staff and with partners – that has informed our approach, building on the ongoing and significant consultation through major surveys like the Annual Residents Survey and Liveability Survey which engage with the local community and have informed our original vision.

This approach is based on tackling the underlying causes of problems and giving Newham residents the skills, attributes and connections they need to succeed. We call this building resilience. Resilience is more than just the ability to overcome challenges, it's about having the things you need to reach your potential and to thrive. It looks both at the individual characteristics, such as personal skills and attributes, and the wider societal and economic factors that are so important to success.

We believe that it is a lack of resilience that keeps our residents poor and our community disadvantaged. Our focus as a partnership will be on building resilience in Newham so that residents are more able to take advantage of the myriad of opportunities coming our way and improve their lives.

Resilience has three key elements: community, economic and personal. These three elements interact and reinforce each other to give people better life chances. The action we are taking in each area forms the basis of our Sustainable Community Strategy, against which we will measure our progress in building resilience in Newham.



## Community Resilience

The community in which you live has a significant effect on your life.

We know that the relationships and connections between people are absolutely vital. This is not just about the strong and close bonds you have with family and friends but the wider connections you have that create a sense of community. A resilient community is a strong and cohesive community where people from different backgrounds are bound together by a common sense of belonging.

In addition to being well connected, a resilient community is an active community. This means residents from different backgrounds coming together to make a difference locally, to celebrate or just to have fun.

At a local level, residents can rely on Councillors. They encourage volunteering, strengthen networks and put people in contact with each other. Newham's Community Hubs will provide a base for the community to come together and take collective action on the issues that are important to them.

We believe that a strong community is built on trust, fairness and reciprocity. People should be able to access help when they need it, but they should also be expected to contribute to the community in whatever way they can.

Beyond the relationships between people, a resilient community is one where people share positive behaviours, knowledge and social norms. Residents must feel safe and be able to go about their daily lives free from the fear of crime. The quality of the environment is also vital to community resilience – both in terms of high-quality public space and decent affordable housing.



## Economic Resilience

Employment is absolutely crucial to resilience. It is the only sustainable route out of poverty, it helps people broaden their horizons and it brings people together. This is why we will continue to drive up employment in Newham, helping to create a more resilient community.

The foundation of economic resilience is a strong, diverse and vibrant local economy. For a local economy to be independent and strong, it must not be too reliant on one sector or industry. Crucially, it must provide a wide variety of employment opportunities for the local population. We've been successful in making Newham a major business location and we will continue to attract jobs and investment here to benefit local people.

However, it's not enough simply to focus on creating jobs. We need to ensure that local people are able to access the opportunities locally and build lasting careers. This means helping residents get the skills and qualifications that employers need, as well as driving aspiration and ambition.

Finally, economic resilience is about being free from poverty and deprivation and having the resources to make genuine choices about your life. We know that too many people in work still struggle to get by. We want to enable people to achieve financial security

through achieving good quality work so they can progress in their career and make real choices about work. Alongside sustainable employment, to achieve economic resilience residents should be able to access good quality financial products and make well informed decisions about their finances.



## Personal Resilience

Of course resilience isn't just about the external social and economic factors that affect people. It's about those key qualities and characteristics that allow people to overcome their challenges and succeed. Personal resilience can be about successfully managing relationships, getting the best from the education system or finding and succeeding in work.

The early years of a child's development are crucial. So much of a person's potential is decided in the first five years of their life. All children should have the best possible start in life so they can achieve their full potential.

Building on that good start, people need to be able to develop the skills, abilities and qualifications that employers want. This is about educational achievement but also the broader life skills that allow people to make the most of their opportunities. We must encourage building the kinds of skills that reduce dependency and improve life chances.

Finally, health and wellbeing are essential to resilience as they enable you to live a fulfilling life and make the most of your opportunities. This means that active and healthy lifestyles are vital at all stages of a person's life. When people do need support (for example when a person has had a spell in hospital) we want to help them rebuild the daily skills they need

to live as independently as possible so they can have a satisfying life.

## Building Resilience

This strategy sets out 24 aspirations that we share as a partnership and which we will work together to deliver. These come under the three key elements community, economic and personal resilience.





## Community Resilience

### *A strong and cohesive community*

Resilience requires having extensive networks and connections within a community. Close, supportive relationships help increase wellbeing and help people overcome adversity. Broad and diverse networks on the other hand give people access to a wide range of resources and support. When people know those around them, there tend to be lower levels of crime. Having connections and interaction between people is also important for cohesion. In addition to the networks in a local area, community groups and volunteering are important parts of the community infrastructure that help strengthen resilience.

Our approach to building community resilience is a mainstream one. Across all our services we will not support engagement on the basis of faith or ethnicity alone. We recognise the contribution that faith and ethnic community groups make to Newham and we are keen to work with them on activity that will engage and benefit the community as a whole but will not support an approach which emphasises difference or exclusivity between groups.

Our aspirations are that:

- 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.

### *An active and connected community*

We want residents to be active and engaged locally and to feel that they can influence the decisions and services that affect them. When people come together locally to celebrate or to address a shared issue, it strengthens the community and builds on the things people have in common. In a democratic community, there must also be mass participation with people voicing their opinions and priorities through voting and through other means. If people feel ignored and marginalised from decision-making, it can breed discontent and resentment.

Our aspirations are that:

- 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.



### *A high quality physical environment*

The quality of the local environment impacts residents' quality of life. When places are well designed and well looked after they encourage people to get out and about and engage with others in the community. Improving the look and feel of a place is everyone's responsibility and it's a great opportunity for local people to volunteer and participate in community led initiatives designed to enhance their area. A well maintained public realm can also help discourage crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB). The quality of the local environment shapes perceptions of an area and can affect people's choices about whether to invest in an area or to stay and put down roots.

Our aspirations are that:

- People act in a way which respects and looks after the local environment.
- There is a well maintained public realm with accessible facilities and quality public space that encourages people both to get active and stay in the borough through choice.

### *A community that is safe and feels safe*

Crime and ASB can have a devastating impact on both individuals and the community as a whole. Victims of crime can suffer severely damaged confidence, wellbeing and mental health. Fear of crime can isolate people and trap them in their homes, making them afraid to go out and engage

with the community. For older people in particular it can lead to isolation and poorer levels of health and wellbeing. Lower-level offending and ASB can also undermine people's quality of life and damage community relations. Finally, levels of crime and ASB can affect perceptions of an area, making people and businesses unwilling to invest in an area or to stay in the long term. Safety is a priority for local residents so it is right that it should be our priority too.

Our aspirations are that:

- Fear of crime and ASB is low, enabling people to live their lives freely and engage locally.
- People and businesses are safe and experience low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.

### *Genuine housing options for the community*

Good quality affordable housing is the foundation of a strong community. Housing has a significant impact on family life and on health. High housing costs can exacerbate poverty by putting pressure on family income; can lead to over crowding and can force people to move out of the area, undermining community. In order for there to be strong communities, local neighbourhoods need to be mixed so that different people live side by side and have genuine interactions with each other.



Our aspirations are that:

- Good quality housing across all sectors contributes to people choosing to stay in the borough.
- The housing offer meets legitimate need and encourages aspiration, employment and contribution to the community.

### *Enabling public services*

Trust in public services is essential if they are to be effective. Our services must listen and respond to residents and be seen to deliver high quality services efficiently. However, services must also build resilience by strengthening people's capacity, skills and motivation to live independently wherever possible and not allow unnecessary dependence on services to build up. That includes being innovative, using appropriate technology and the support of volunteers to help people build and rebuild the skills they need to live a fulfilling life.

Our aspirations are that:

- Residents feel the council and other services are on their side, responsive to their views and delivering effective services they value.

## **Economic Resilience**

### *A strong local economy*

Employment is at the heart of resilience and our

resident's employment prospects depend on the strength of the local and regional economy. By attracting investment to the area, we can improve those prospects. Having a strong private sector enables an area to be more independent and dynamic, generating growth and jobs independently. As well as improving employment opportunities, a thriving economy improves perceptions of a place and local satisfaction creating a virtuous circle as people choose to put down roots in the area.

Our aspiration is that:

- The local economy is diverse and thriving providing a variety of employment opportunities for local people.

### *Local people in work*

We are committed to increasing levels of employment in Newham so that more of our residents can achieve economic independence and prosperity.

Employment is absolutely central to resilience. Work is important not just for personal resilience but also for the strength of the local community and economy. Worklessness causes poverty and it corrodes aspiration. Inter-generational worklessness can pass on negative behaviours from parents to children and lead to worse outcomes on a variety of social indicators from poor health to low educational attainment.



Employment is the only sustainable route out of poverty and it allows people to achieve independence and to fulfil their potential. Good work helps preserve good physical and mental health and it allows people to develop their networks. Employment is also vital for a local economy – high levels of worklessness can reduce demand and can make local economies weak and dependent.

Our aspiration is that:

- People are economically active and achieve independence through employment.

### *Residents in financial control*

All residents should have a decent, liveable and reliable source of income and be able to manage their personal finances. Poverty can cause considerable harm to individuals, families and the community and can have a negative impact on health and wellbeing. Living on a low and insecure income means people are more at risk of financial hardships. Poverty reduces a person's capacity to choose, including about where they live. However, when someone has a decent and reliable income, they are able to live independently, escape poverty and plan for the future through saving and building up assets. As well as having a decent income, people also need 'financial literacy' – the ability to make informed, positive and long-term decisions about their personal finances.

Our aspiration is that:

- Residents make positive financial decisions on debt and savings and are financially better off (economic independence and prosperity).

## **Personal Resilience**

### *Children get the best start in life*

We want to work with families to ensure that all of our children get off to a good start in life and are able to progress well into adulthood. Experiences in the early years have a decisive impact on a person's later outcomes, setting the trajectory for the rest of their life. Children who grow up in poorer households tend to experience worse outcomes in health and education than those from better off families. These gaps develop early on – largely as a result of the quality of the home learning environment and the quality and style of parenting – and they only widen as the child grows. The soft emotional and social skills correlated with success in education and employment is built in the early years. Intervening early during the formative years is far more effective and indeed far cheaper than intervening later down the line when problems have developed.

Our aspirations are that:

- Young children thrive in a positive home environment that supports their educational development and gives them the personal and social skills they need to succeed.





- Parents feel supported to give their child the best start during the early years of their life.

### *People realise their potential*

Building people's skills early on so they can reach their potential secures the foundation for improved outcomes in later life. The labour market is increasingly competitive and demands higher levels of skills. People with a decent education are more likely to be in employment and to earn a better wage. Fairly paid work allows people to overcome poverty; it strengthens their connections; and it enables them to contribute to the local community. We will work with residents to foster ambition and help them achieve their goals.

We and local schools have made considerable progress in increasing educational outcomes for young people. This includes working with local employers to support learning through the use of mentors in schools. We will maintain this progress by investing in schools to improve infrastructure and ensure that there are enough places for young people in our schools.

Our aspirations are that:

- People are ambitious to achieve in education and secure the qualifications that help them access work and progress in their careers.
- People have the skills and competencies that make them highly employable, including softer skills.

- Young people can access a broad range of cultural, sporting and educational experiences which help them to develop their skills and competencies.

### *People are healthy*

Good mental health and well-being are fundamental to the good life, enabling people to build relationships with others, take part in their community and hold down a job. Physical health is also vital as long-term conditions can limit your opportunities, independence and life expectancy. Preventing the development of physical or mental health conditions through early intervention can significantly reduce the cost of treating symptoms and allow people to remain healthier and independent for longer. In addition, secondary preventative services are also vital for people who have already developed health problems to keep them as healthy and independent as possible.

When improving health outcomes it's vital to take into account and help tackle the wider determinants of health like socio-economic and environmental factors. Residents should be guided to take ownership and control of their own health and be active decision-makers on health choices with health professionals. Helping people maintain good health forms a major part of our wider ambition to reduce health inequality between our residents and those of other London boroughs.



Our aspirations are that:

- People aspire to good health throughout their lives and make positive choices to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing.
- The wider determinants of health - including socio economic and environmental factors - promote good health.
- We will reduce health inequalities – both within Newham and with other areas – so that our residents' health is as good as anywhere else.

### *People are in control and independent*

We want our residents to feel in control of their lives and to have access to good quality information to guide their decisions.

Our services play a positive role in the lives of residents, but services must not dis-empower residents. Services that encourage dependence can de-skill residents, leaving them reliant on the state. People should be able to make decisions themselves – whether that be in their education and careers, or in the services they receive – but they often need quality information, advice and guidance to make decisions. One-size fits all services can be inappropriate and inefficient, denying people the ability to choose what suits them. Good quality advice and guidance can help people make positive choices at key transition points in their lives and it can help people address the underlying cause of a specific problem improving their overall wellbeing.

Our aspirations are that:

- People take ownership of their challenges within a supportive community environment and make informed, positive and long-term decisions.
- People who are vulnerable and do need support are protected and are supported to make their own decisions and remain independent.

### *People are safe*

To get the best start in life, we want all children to feel and be safe. We are committed to preventing abuse and neglect where ever possible through early intervention at the first sign of problems. Where children have faced neglect or abuse we will ensure that their wellbeing is secured and focus one to one and group support to build parenting capacity and community networks around the family. Young people should be able to make healthy lifestyle choices, achieve positive educational outcomes and move into a stable and productive career.

We want Newham to be a safe place for vulnerable adults to live and work, without fear of abuse or harm. We will continue to work in partnership with a range of organisations to achieve this and are implementing the pan London procedures for adult safeguarding to ensure that each adult at risk is safe, maintains choice and control, health, quality of life, dignity and respect.

Our aspirations are that:

- People whose circumstances make them vulnerable feel safe and are protected from avoidable harm.



*The Resilience Performance Framework*

Resilience is much more than just a theme. Building resilience in Newham will be the priority of the partnership going forward.

The Resilience Performance Framework will allow us to target our actions and measure our progress as a partnership in building resilience. The council and partnership will annually review the aspirations and performance measures set out in the framework to ensure they fit with current priorities.

**Community Resilience**

**Commissioning strand**

**Aspiration**

A strong and cohesive community

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.

An active and connected community

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.

A high quality physical environment

People act in a way which respects and looks after the local environment.

There is a well maintained public realm with accessible facilities and quality public space that encourages people both to get active and stay in the borough through choice.



## Community Resilience

### Commissioning strand

### Aspiration

A community that is safe and feels safe

Fear of crime and ASB is low, enabling people to live their lives freely and engage locally.

People and businesses are safe and experience low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Genuine housing options for the community

Good quality housing across all sectors contributes to people choosing to stay in the borough.

The housing offer meets legitimate need and encourages aspiration, employment and contribution to the community.

The council is efficient and trusted

Residents feel the council is on their side, responsive to their views and delivering effective services they value.

## Personal Resilience

### Commissioning strand

### Aspiration

Young people get the best start in life

Young children thrive in a positive environment that supports their educational development and gives them the personal and social skills they need to succeed.

Parents feel supported to give their child the best start during the early years of their life.





## Personal Resilience

### Commissioning strand

### Aspiration

People achieve their potential

People are ambitious to achieve in education and secure the qualifications that help them access work and progress in their careers.

People have the skills and competencies that make them highly employable, including softer skills.

Young people can access a broad range of cultural, sporting and educational experiences which help them to develop their skills and competencies.

People are healthy

People aspire to good health throughout their lives and make positive choices to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing.

The wider determinants of health – including socio-economic and environmental factors – promote good health.

We will reduce health inequalities – both within Newham and with other areas – so that our residents' health is as good as anywhere else.

People are in control and independent

People whose circumstances make them vulnerable and do need support are supported to make their own decisions and remain independent.

People take ownership of their challenges within a supportive community environment and make informed, positive and long-term decisions.

People are safe

People whose circumstances make them vulnerable feel safe and are protected from avoidable harm.



## Economic Resilience

### Commissioning strand

### Aspiration

A strong local economy

The local economy is diverse and thriving providing a variety of employment opportunities for local people.

Local people in work

People are economically active and achieve independence through employment.

Residents in financial control

Residents make positive financial decisions on debt and savings and are financially better off (economic independence and prosperity).

