

Introduction

Gateway Housing Association, Spitalfields Housing Association and Tower Hamlets Community Housing have been working to bring our communities together. This plan builds on the existing work of the three associations. It represents our common priorities over and above our existing work, so it is not a comprehensive record of all we do, but our shared priorities for the year ahead. It focuses on supporting our residents into employment and training, creating more opportunities for young people and improving relations between different communities and younger and older residents and reducing anti-social behaviour (Community Cohesion).

Why have we chosen these areas?

This plan is part of our contribution to delivering the Tower Hamlets Community Plan. So we have used some of the evidence for that to inform our priorities. We have also used what each association already knows about our residents' needs from the profiling questionnaires you have completed in the past. We have also talked to partners and consulted residents to make sure that we have got the priorities right.

Bringing communities together

In Tower Hamlets, three quarters of residents feel that their local area is a place where different people get on well together. Anti-social behaviour is a top concern for residents. The most recent research shows that 58% feel that "teenagers hanging around the street" is a big problem but that has come down a little from previous years. Fear of young people is often reduced by activities which bring together young and old and allow them to get to know each other when they have something in common e.g. work on using computers.



The diversity of communities in Tower Hamlets is one of its key strengths and we have many established communities who have lived in the borough for generations. However, we also know that we have Eastern European and Chinese communities and that many of the new migrants are women.

Examples of the kind of actions we will deliver are:

- Running a STAR in the Community Awards scheme to recognise voluntary effort by residents in making their local areas better for local people
- Action to reduce anti social behaviour
- Bring together diverse communities to celebrate cultural events

SUPPORTING RESIDENTS INTO EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Supporting residents into employment and training

Unemployment in Tower Hamlets is over double the national rate. Child poverty is strongly linked with families being out of work and we know that poverty affects health, education and crime – so finding work is the key to positive results in a range of areas. Research shows that concern over lack of jobs has increased and is now the second most common concern for residents.

Examples of the kind of actions we will deliver are:

- Host a Skillsmatch advice session to help residents into work and training
- Work with the East London Business Alliance to bring jobs and training to our residents
- Attract one additional employment advisor/broker to deliver outreach advice sessions for residents from a local venue



Working with our younger residents

Tower Hamlets has a much younger population than many other boroughs - 28% of residents are under 19 years old. The percentage of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment and training is also high. But our commitments also extend to health and sports and other activities, not just a focus on employment.

Examples of the kind of actions we will deliver are:

- Work with our younger residents to design a programme of positive activities that meets their needs
- Work with the health authorities to provide health education sessions at youth activities which we support
- Attract more sports and physical activity sessions to be delivered for our young residents



WORKING WITH OUR YOUNGER RESIDENTS

Step Up is a joint strategy for empowering people and uniting people produced and funded by Gateway Housing, Spitalfields Housing and Tower Hamlets Community Housing. For further details please contact:

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Sharing resources

In order to improve our residents' access to services and facilities, we have agreed to share some existing resources across the residents of all three associations.

We will share:

- The activities delivered through Tower Hamlets Community Housing's community centres
- Health promotion advice
- Activities in Gateway's sheltered schemes
- Resident training and
- Community events/celebrations

Residents' role

There has been some consultation before this plan was agreed. We will now work with a small group of residents to influence how individual promises are delivered. In addition, residents will have an opportunity to help us monitor and evaluate the success of this plan and to think about priorities for the second year.

The full version of this plan is available on www.thch.org.uk, www.gatewayhousing.org.uk, www.spitalfieldsha.co.uk or by ringing 020 7780 2711.



STEP UP

a strategy for empowering people and uniting people



BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER