

November 2017  
Consultation Draft

# The Hackney Community Strategy 2018–2028



# Introduction



Hackney has changed enormously since our last Community Strategy in 2008, reaping the benefits of the London 2012 Olympics as well as thousands of new jobs, new homes, the best schools in the country and a revolution in transport infrastructure.

We know from our year-long consultation, *Hackney: A Place for Everyone*, that the people who live and work here recognise this change and the challenges and opportunities it presents for their lives.

The vast majority of residents say they feel overwhelmingly satisfied with their borough as a place to call home and a place where a diverse range of different communities get along well with each other.

Hackney has so much to be proud of. But what should our borough be like in ten years' time? At a time of unprecedented cuts to local government funding, how can we empower local communities and target diminishing resources at our most vulnerable residents? How can we make sure that economic growth benefits everyone? And crucially, how can we ensure that people from different backgrounds can continue to afford to live and work here and be able to take advantage of the opportunities that London's status as the world's greatest city brings?

These are some of the questions Hackney's Community Strategy seeks to answer, shaping the decisions of the years to come. We want to protect the unique, welcoming spirit of this corner of east London throughout the coming years of national and local change and local growth protecting and enhancing the very best of Hackney.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phillip Glanville". The script is fluid and cursive.

**Phillip Glanville**  
Mayor of Hackney

# How Hackney is changing



273,500 people live in Hackney. The population is projected to reach 300,000 by 2027.



The proportion of households who rent from a private landlord has more than doubled in the past 10 years. Nearly a third of all households are now private renters.



To tackle affordability issues, Hackney delivered over 1,600 units of new housing in 2015, of which over 30% was affordable housing.



Nearly 16,000 additional new homes are expected to be built in the borough in the next 10 years



Secondary school projections indicate that 12 additional Forms of Entry will be required by 2020.



Between 2010 and 2015, more than 9,800 square meters of additional employment floor space was created in Hackney.

# What is a community strategy?

This strategy sets out the Council's overarching vision for Hackney as it grows and changes over the next decade. It will provide a backdrop for all of our decision making throughout this period and a focus for working in partnership with residents, businesses, the voluntary and community sector, and statutory agencies.

Although we are no longer required to have a strategy of this kind, we feel it is important for us to have a clear, collective vision of how we want our borough to develop, based on what residents have told us and the evidence we have about how Hackney is likely to change over the coming years. The resident insight which underpins this strategy was gathered through a year-long conversation with residents. In 2015, the Council carried out a major engagement exercise, 'Hackney: A Place for Everyone', and heard from over 4,500 local residents and businesses on their views of how the borough has changed and the challenges and opportunities this presents to their day to day lives in Hackney.

We are not trying to predict the future, but we do want to take stock of what residents value in Hackney and their aspirations for the borough, as well as the opportunities and risks. This process helps us identify the actions needed to enhance and protect what is great about living and working in Hackney. Achieving these actions will require a collective effort from the Council, residents, businesses, other public sector agencies and all of our voluntary and community sector organisations.

The strategy sets out our overall aspirations for Hackney in 2028 and then breaks this down into five key, crosscutting themes. Under each of the themes is a set of commitments we are making to move us toward Hackney 2028. The strategy will help us respond to residents' lived experience of the borough, thinking about how we as a Council co-ordinate activity and collaborate with partners to think about the whole place, rather than just running individual services. This will help us put the needs, perspectives and feelings of the whole community at the heart of what we do, keeping us focused through a time of continued change and uncertainty.

Given the extremely challenging financial climate in which local government is operating, this strategy can help to target limited resources to ensure the most vulnerable in our communities are protected and supported in the coming years. Between 2010/11 to 2020/21, the government's annual grant to Hackney will have fallen by £139m – a cut of 45 % – and there continues to be uncertainty surrounding our major funding streams over the next few years. The Council wants to continue to deliver high-quality services that are important to residents but we have to be realistic that this will mean working in different ways, adopting more innovative approaches to service delivery and building on the very strong partnerships that already exist, to support residents and businesses to thrive in Hackney.

# Our vision for Hackney in 2028



We have protected and enhanced the unique, welcoming spirit of Hackney throughout a period of local and national change and local growth. Hackney is a place where everyone has had the opportunity to benefit from the growth the borough has seen and no sections of the community feel left behind. The impressive improvement in our schools and colleges has been maintained and they continue to meet our residents' high aspirations for education – valued as universal hubs for the community, promoting social inclusion and cohesion, contributing to health and wellbeing and helping to protect and improve outcomes for children and young people within our community. Residents have access to decent, stable and genuinely affordable housing that meets their needs. They are able to secure higher quality, more stable employment in a range of sectors across London.

The borough is a place where it is easy to get business done – we are home to a spectrum of businesses of different sizes. This includes small firms who provide local services to our diverse population, as well as start-ups and large companies at the forefront of the tech sector. There is a strong sense of community and of collaboration, with residents and businesses keen to share their time, knowledge and skills – and not just within their own local networks. The Council encourages active citizenship and inclusive decision making; it is honest and respectful with residents about the tough decisions that it has to take in a world where public finances continue to be stretched,

and core services must be delivered differently. Despite public resources being limited, there is a focus on keeping the most vulnerable residents in our communities safe and well, and on approaches which are preventative. Protecting and supporting the most vulnerable in our communities is seen as everyone's concern rather than just the role of the public sector.

Our creative, welcoming community continues to be recognised for the depth and breadth of its diversity, in terms of cultural background, experience, skills and perspectives. Hackney is an outward-looking and well-networked borough, working with partners across London's industries to contribute to and benefit from the capital's wider prosperity and innovation. The Council has put sustainability and quality of life at the heart of urban design. Local businesses and residents are equally concerned and committed to being environmentally sustainable with everyone taking pride in their local area and responsibility for taking care of it for the benefit of all. We have tackled institutional barriers to create healthy and safe streets and neighbourhoods, which are pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly and ensure fair and easy access to green spaces. People are living longer, healthier, happier and more independent lives. They take responsibility for maintaining their wellbeing throughout their lives, but when people do need support, it is joined up and appropriate, taking a view of all their needs in the round.



# Achieving this vision

## The context

Our vision for Hackney is ambitious – it is designed to underpin everything we do as a Council over the next decade and provide a framework to help shape the activity of other local organisations, residents and businesses. To explore the overall vision for Hackney in greater detail, we have established five broad, crosscutting themes which set out why these issues are important to Hackney and the challenges around delivering change. We have also included a set of broad commitments under each theme which explain specific activity that the Council is planning to help maintain Hackney as a borough that works for everyone over the next decade.

Achieving this vision will mean building on the excellent partnership working which is already in place, with the voluntary and community sector, public sector organisations and residents and local businesses. It will be challenging, given the financial constraints and the pressure we are all facing.

There are some specific constraints on the Council which we need to set out because they present considerable risks to us being able to work with partners to achieve this vision. Most critically, the financial environment that we operate in remains extremely challenging and we are faced with rapidly diminishing income from the Government and rising costs and demands for services. In the financial year 2010/11 the government gave Hackney a total of £310m of funding to support local services, but since then the amount given to Hackney by the government every year has fallen, so that by 2016/17 it was down to £200m. It is then projected to fall to £171m by 2019/20. This means that in the period 2010/11 to 2020/21 the government's annual grant to Hackney will have fallen by £139m – a cut of 45%. The environment is made even more challenging by the uncertainty surrounding our major funding streams in 2018/19 and 2019/20. In this context, Hackney faces severe limitations on what we can

do to mitigate the impact of change on the borough and meet the needs of local people. The scale of the financial challenge the Council is facing is unprecedented and we have to be realistic that current levels of service provision are not going to be sustainable over the next 10 years. In some cases this means that people who currently receive services from the Council will no longer be entitled to the same levels of service, or in some cases, any service at all. However, the Council is committed to stepping back and considering whether a new way of delivering a service could save money but still meet needs. We will also be continuing to focus on preventative approaches to try and reduce the need for long term services in future while improving quality of life for residents in the short term.

There are also limits to the Council's ability to influence population increases – the Council cannot control population growth, which is affecting all of London, and we cannot point blank refuse new development proposals on the grounds that we feel Hackney is already very densely populated. What we can do, is use planning policy to try to shape the nature and location of that development and maximise its benefit for the whole community. There are not enough new homes being built in London to meet growing housing demand and need. Housing associations are struggling to build new homes in expensive areas and are receiving less financial support from the Government. The Council is committed to building on the success of its estate regeneration programme to directly deliver new homes of all tenures, cross-subsidising the provision of new social and intermediate housing through the sale of private market homes. However, the raft of recent reforms to housing and welfare, introduced by the Government during the last parliamentary term, and the prioritisation of homes for private sale are all likely to adversely impact on the supply of truly affordable housing in the borough over the next decade.

When it comes to large scale transport infrastructure projects, the Council is in a strong position to lobby for improvements but is not the ultimate decision maker. Instead, we need to work proactively with the Greater London Authority (GLA), central Government and neighbouring boroughs to secure investment in projects like Crossrail 2 which has the potential to radically improve connectivity and transport capacity in Hackney. In terms of social infrastructure, such as schools and health facilities, the Council faces a funding gap; it is difficult to fully fund such projects through public finances and developers' contributions alone.

In terms of the environment, the Council is committed to leading by example in the way we manage our services and estates and invest, however, we cannot deliver positive change alone. For example, it is important for residents, local businesses and partner organisation to follow suit and embrace sustainable transport methods, increase recycling rates and reduce the amount of waste we produce.

Alongside these overarching limits to the impact the Council can have on certain issues, there are other challenges and circumstances which are specific to certain topics or themes and these are picked up throughout the strategy.





# 1. A borough where there is a good quality of life and the whole community can benefit from growth

## The challenge:

Hackney has experienced a huge amount of change over the last 15 years – Council services have improved and the population has increased by a third. House prices have also more than doubled over the last 10 years. The positive improvements of better schools, cleaner and greener open spaces and better transport links, mean Hackney is now a much more desirable place to live and the knock on effect of this has been a huge surge in demand for housing and spiralling house prices. The issue of housing affordability is particularly severe in Hackney, where house prices and private rents are amongst the highest in London and the country. At the same time, average incomes in the borough are relatively low, and most households on moderate incomes are unable to take a first step on to the housing ladder within the borough. Residents value the positive improvements in Hackney in recent years but people remain concerned about housing affordability and the impact of house prices on local communities. London's business leaders are also concerned and have highlighted the threat to the economy from a growing number of workers being deterred from coming to the capital or forced to leave because of the shortage of affordable housing; they have flagged that in future this might mean we won't be able to recruit or retain a diverse workforce with the right mix of skills. This is also a key concern for the public and voluntary and community sector.

Hackney has also seen growth and change in the number and type of businesses in the borough in recent years. However, residents have reported that they feel that some established businesses have been priced out and the types of shops and services they need locally, such as launderettes, are starting to disappear from some areas. This change may have been fuelled by rising commercial property values but also altering demand as the population has changed and with the shift to online retail.

London is one of the most vibrant and exciting cities in the world and despite national uncertainty as the UK leaves the EU, the population of London is still projected to rise over the next 20 years as more people, from the UK and the rest of the world, seek to make the capital their home. With population churn comes new industries, new technology and new opportunities all of which will

ensure that London never stands still and remains at the heart of UK culture and opportunity.

Inner London borough's such as Hackney will see a share of this growth locally: the population of Hackney is projected to rise by around 10% to 300,000 by 2027. Although there are some residents who feel Hackney is already too densely populated, given London's projected growth, trying to reduce growth and stop development is not really an option. By actively considering what growth means for Hackney and the best way of managing it, we have the opportunity to shape the change that is coming to maximise the benefits for everyone and address the key challenges. Delivering new homes which people can afford to rent or buy presents a major challenge. Ensuring there is the infrastructure in place to meet the needs of the growing population poses a further challenge, in terms of financing, delivering what is needed in time and finding suitable sites. However, it is an important challenge to meet - we need to protect the existing population from the impact of growth on current infrastructure by ensuring we invest to create additional capacity to support newer residents as the borough grows.

Hackney has a strong record of housing delivery and compares well with other inner and east London boroughs. However, local figures suggest Hackney's housing need is greater still – 1,750 homes are needed each year. Density has an important role in supporting London's growth in a range of ways. Higher densities can support mixed communities, enhance social capital and interaction, and reduce social isolation – as well as reducing development pressures on Hackney's valued open spaces. It can also support economic growth by delivering economies of scale in services and in marketplaces and support reduced carbon footprints. Hackney's focus is on how we can encourage well designed, high density mixed use schemes which provide the infrastructure needed to support our growing population and preserve our open spaces. Housing pressures and population growth are London wide issues and there are limits to how much the Council can influence this but we want to try and minimise any negative impacts on our communities and make sure there are not groups within the borough who feel marginalised or left behind as Hackney continues to grow and change.



Residents have told us that Hackney has felt safer over the last 5 years and crime rates have gone down but violent crime is on the rise, which is a concern for the community and for public services. Some fear this could be linked to growing social inequality across the borough. In focussed discussions with some younger residents there was a view that Hackney appeared safer, but that gang crime which used to be more visible had ‘gone underground’ and that there remained problems with violent and gang crime. If inequality polarises further there is a risk that crime could increase or that the perception that the borough is becoming more unsafe could pervade.

### **What is our vision for Hackney in 2028 in this area?**

By 2028 in Hackney, we want to see the whole community benefitting from the growth and change we have experienced across the borough, with no sections of the community left behind. We are a borough that has welcomed change and taken a managed approach to growth and have put in place a long-term approach to planning, with a focus on developing mixed use neighbourhoods which cater to all ages and to a household’s changing needs. Residents have access to decent homes that are stable, high quality and genuinely affordable through a variety of different home ownership and rental schemes. The mix of homes is balanced with affordable family homes on offer as well as flats suitable for single people, older people and couples. Hackney remains an attractive place in high demand – the community accepts change as people choose to move in and out with new residents encouraged to tap into the excellent, well-established community networks that exist across our borough. By being smart and creative with mixed use developments, we are able to deliver the facilities, such as schools, leisure centres and health centres, which the growing population needs, despite limited space and finances. Wherever people live or work, there is a good level of amenity and public service.

Everybody recognises the importance of businesses – particularly small firms who provide inclusive local services to our diverse population which mean they can buy the goods and services they need locally, as well as start-ups and large companies at the forefront of the tech sector. Hackney is an outward looking and collaborative borough

working with partners across industries in the capital to contribute to and benefit from London’s wider prosperity and innovation.

Our vibrant commercial realm offers a good mix of cultural and social offerings and a strong retail offer to both the people who live here and visitors to the borough. We have a vibrant but balanced evening and night time economy and there are pro-active partnerships in place to manage any noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour affecting local residents. The Council has put processes in place which make it easy for businesses to understand what they have to do to comply with regulations and to meet requirements.

The Council has worked with residents, businesses and statutory partners to tackle the underlying causes of crime, focusing on proactive crime prevention and on building a community which is resourceful, resilient and willing to help each other. As a result, residents and visitors to the borough feel safe and secure in Hackney and residents are able to play an active role in shaping approaches to community safety

### **Areas of focus:**

We want Hackney to be a community where everyone can benefit from the opportunities of our growing borough. To try and achieve this, we will focus on the following:

#### **Transport and infrastructure**

- Concentrate on providing well managed growth by delivering housing, transport, health and education infrastructure to meet the needs of both our established communities and new residents, as the borough grows.
- Support the best options for increasing public transport capacity and connectedness in the borough, through working collaboratively in a multi-disciplinary way in partnership with key stakeholders such as Public Health, TfL and neighbouring boroughs. This will allow us to progress ambitious, innovative and forward thinking ideas that recognise that technological advances are likely to change the way people work, commute and travel in future and will include campaigning for Crossrail 2 to progress as quickly as possible with a route that minimises construction disruption and maximises benefits for the borough.

- Promote the building of schools to meet the demand for school places our growing population presents, through new mixed use private developments with a focus on working with partners who wish to promote a strong communities and collaborate locally to improve outcomes for local children and young people.

## **Housing**

- Seek to increase the supply of genuinely affordable homes for rent and sale in the borough, including social housing, living rent and shared ownership. This will include a focus on building our own genuinely affordable homes for rent and low cost home ownership and on working with partners to increase the supply of new genuinely affordable homes available to local people.
- Consider innovative new models for delivering new homes; consider whether good quality, well-managed shared housing can help address affordability, especially for younger single people and couples. We will look at how Build to Rent could improve affordability and options for Hackney residents, whether in developments built by social housing providers and private developers or in the private rented sector and the Council's own housebuilding programmes – including some which are affordable at living rents.

## **Local economic development and prosperity**

- Adopt an approach to local economic development which focuses on inclusive economic growth, stimulating development when needed but also increasing local prosperity. The approach is outward facing, understanding the way that developments across the region and nationally affect the borough, and considering how we can secure benefits for local people and mitigate problems.
- We will involve and engage local residents in visions and plans for local areas, rather than imposing ideas on the local community

- Review our strategic approach to delivering affordable workspaces to support the creation of new space via new development to accommodate a growing business sector within the borough.
- Create an environment in the borough in which local business are able to thrive. We will make it easier for businesses to interact and work with the Council, whatever the service they are trying to access, making it easier for them to navigate our processes, do business online and comply with statutory requirements. We will also signpost them to expert support.
- Work proactively with businesses to help them operate as part of the local community, thinking about how they can make a positive impact while minimising any negative impacts on the local area for example, ensuring businesses are considerate to neighbouring residents, using our influence, leverage and regulatory powers when necessary.

## **Employment and skills**

- Through our employment and skills programme, make links across services and with external partners including businesses and the voluntary sector to ensure that more local people access jobs from Hackney's growing economy. We will also maximise the opportunities created by the new national Apprenticeship Levy for contractors working on housing estates or other new developments, to provide new training opportunities.

## **Community safety**

- Prioritise our community safety activities based on intelligence and resident insight. We will work in partnership to tackle persistent community safety problems and be transparent and open with residents about what has been done and the impact it has had.

## 2. A borough with residents who are ambitious, engaging and want to contribute to community life

### The challenge:

Hackney has a distinctive, inclusive identity and one that we know residents really value. Hackney is known as a borough with a well-established arts community and active local networks, exciting nightlife and an emerging tech sector. Supporting high levels of attainment, business growth, entrepreneurship and collaboration are key to sustaining this identity over the next decade.

Attainment in Hackney maintained schools is amongst the highest in the country – in 2016, Ofsted placed Hackney as the 6th highest performer out of 218 English Multi-Academy Trusts and Local Authorities in the country for GCSE performance and in 2015, we achieved the highest GCSE results in the country among looked after children. However, these excellent top line results do mask some variation – for example, black children have the poorest performance at GCSE in Hackney, and girls significantly outperform boys.

Current government policy supports the academisation of all schools which means that there would be less local accountability for schools and the Council would play less of a role in supporting schools. There is a risk that any national policy change of this kind could threaten the excellent standards of Hackney schools. Without any central oversight for schools improvement and with each school having a different admissions policy there is a risk of greater educational inequalities for children and young people, especially for those from poorer backgrounds or with special educational needs. It is important to remember that schools play an important role in shaping local areas – they contribute to cohesion, protect vulnerable children and influence the health and wellbeing of our young people. They have a role to play in improving long term outcomes for children but in the short term, they bring different communities together and foster inclusion and cohesion.

While attainment has risen, Hackney still has a markedly lower employment rate than London and a higher rate of economic inactivity (people looking after the home, retired or who want a job but are not actively looking but may want a job). Middle aged and older people are much more likely to have lower skills levels than young people in the borough and over 50s are disproportionately more likely to be claiming Job Seekers Allowance than other age groups and compared to London as a whole. This impacts on people in multiple ways, economically and socially and also in terms of their health and wellbeing. We are concerned that as this group grow older those who have been long term unemployed and are also inactive in their 40s and 50s may start to develop health problems.

There is also pressure on graduates looking for work in London with black male graduates nearly twice as likely to be unemployed as their white counterparts. More than 83,000 young men in London are from black and mixed black ethnic groups, making up about one in five of young men in the capital. As attainment has risen in Hackney schools more young people are going on to university than ever before but it is imperative that they have the support to make the most of their qualifications on graduating to allow them to reach their employment potential. Evidence shows that quality employment is good for people's long-term health and wellbeing, provides access to better living standards and social connections and contributes to a greater sense of self-worth.

Residents are already struggling with rising rents and property prices. If housing pressures continue unchecked, due to national policy decisions and market drivers this situation will only become more acute. We will do what we can to address the housing challenges, but we will also need to focus on supporting people to develop the skills that are required to find good quality and stable local employment. Assuming it will be more difficult for citizens from other EU countries to work in Britain after we leave the EU, we need to work with other local authorities to meet gaps in the labour market, by upskilling our residents.



Local employment opportunities are predicated on a thriving local economy with business growth. Business growth in Hackney since the financial crisis has been marked and has significantly outstripped growth in business stock across London and we know that a lot of these businesses are start-ups and small businesses. In the short term, the Business Rates Review could have a significant impact on local businesses. Looking at the impact technology has had on our daily lives over the last decade, we have to be mindful that increasingly sophisticated technology is likely to significantly impact the way we live, work and travel over the next 10 years. It is difficult to predict how this will impact on the borough but mechanisation and technology leaps across all industries could have an impact on employment levels and the skills our residents require to compete in a changing jobs market.

### **What is our vision for Hackney in 2028 in this area?**

The impressive improvement in our schools and colleges has been maintained and they continue to meet our residents' high aspirations for education and are valued as universal hubs for the community, promoting social inclusion and cohesion, contributing to health and wellbeing and helping to protect and improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people within our community. Those who live here are able to benefit from excellent education (both at school age and as adult learners) which helps them to secure higher quality, more stable employment in a range of sectors across London. Locally there is a focus on maximising good quality employment opportunities in the borough as we develop business relationships with new and existing employers. Residents are stepping up to exploit these opportunities which may require them to develop new skills and different ways of working but which offer the potential for career development and increased job

security. Despite a period of change for the economy and labour market as Britain leaves the EU, attainment, aspiration and employment levels are improving for everyone including groups that are more likely to be disadvantaged, and the gap between the highest achievers and those needing more support, is closing.

We are home to a spectrum of businesses of different sizes and types who are supported to remain and grow in Hackney and see themselves as part of the local community. Entrepreneurs and creatives remain in the borough and are continuing the tradition of creativity and enterprise in the borough, which has helped define Hackney for many years.

### **Areas of focus:**

We want our residents to be ambitious and engaging and to contribute to community life. To try and achieve this, we will focus on the following:

#### **Education**

- Continue to recognise and work to develop and strengthen the role of schools in our local communities, learning from the best schools in Hackney and using this to improve all schools in the borough. Our best schools will set the standard of expectation for all our schools.
- Explore the potential to better utilise the economic contribution the borough's 64 schools can make to local economic development directly as local employers and consumers of local services and also in supporting social enterprise and skills development amongst parents.
- Use any levers and influences we have to ensure that Hackney has an inclusive schools offer which promotes excellent educational opportunities for all children and young people.

## Employment and skills

- Develop and enhance the Council's employment and skills service, focusing on supporting a range of priority groups (including long-term unemployed, the underemployed and unemployed graduates) into sustainable, good quality employment including considering and addressing the link between long term unemployment and ill health.
- Collaborate with other local authorities and the GLA to address potential gaps in the labour market, including in the public sector workforce, working together to identify and address these skills gaps. This work will consider the potential impact of Britain leaving the EU and consider how technology and mechanisation may impact on the labour market in the coming years.

- Increase the number of apprenticeships across the public and private sector which provide high quality opportunities for young people including an expanded Council apprenticeship scheme. We will also be developing improved volunteering and work experience opportunities to provide local people with stepping stones into sustainable employment.

## Business workspace

- Consider the options for creating affordable workspaces on Council estates to help support new businesses to launch and thrive and embrace the latest technology to touch down and work in different spaces.



### 3. A green and environmentally sustainable borough

#### The challenge:

Hackney is the third most densely populated area in the country (after Islington and Kensington and Chelsea), and this can put pressure on the availability of green space, that residents use for leisure, relaxation and sports, all of which contributes to good emotional and physical wellbeing and opportunities for social interaction. Open spaces provide a valuable antidote to the stresses of urban life, especially for the many residents without gardens. Our parks and open spaces also play an important role as green infrastructure in the borough, which helps to mitigate the effects of climate change. Tree planting, for example, provides shade which helps to counter the urban heat island effect that sees artificially lifted temperatures in built up areas. Trees also help to clean the air and improve drainage in urban areas. Ensuring Hackney is a clean and green borough not only benefits residents but makes Hackney an attractive place to visit and do business.

Despite our population density, Hackney has a significant expanse of green space for an Inner London borough and residents have told us that the high standards of our parks and open spaces are one of the top improvements that they have seen in Hackney over the last 5 years. Innovative approaches to managing flows of traffic, improving cycle paths and pedestrian routes and increasing the number of drop kerbs, for example, can all contribute to improved spaces for people to enjoy and have a great benefit on the health and wellbeing of residents, improving quality of life.

We have had clear feedback from residents that maintaining our green spaces as clean and accessible open spaces is very important but many people feel that it could fall to the community to take greater responsibility for actively looking after these spaces for use by all and also for taking a more environmentally sustainable approach to their lives e.g. in recycling more. Similarly, residents have told us that they want to see all road and pavement users taking greater personal responsibility to be considerate to others whether they drive, cycle, walk or take public transport.

As London's road network continues to experience high levels of congestion with poor air quality on key routes, the value of open and green spaces becomes even more important. The health impact of poor air quality is significant, it is estimated that long term exposure to particulate matter alone is attributable to 6.3 % of mortality in the borough. This compares to only 4.7 % in England and ranks as the 6th poorest in London and 6th poorest in England overall. Children are one of the groups most vulnerable to the effects of air pollution and it is estimated that 443 schools in the capital are in areas exceeding safe air quality levels. Given Hackney's location and the amount of traffic that passes through the borough, we cannot act on air quality in isolation. Hackney will set a very high aspiration for improving air quality but recognising that policy powers also lie with others, we must work in close partnership with regional and local government to affect real improvements in the quality of London's air.

In Hackney, there are high levels of congestion and, although traffic levels have fallen in the borough over the last 20 years and there are low levels of car ownership, Hackney's location means there is a lot of traffic passing through which is a major contributor to poor air quality. This results in the lowest average speed per km and the second longest journey delay per km in the East London sub-region. There are already substantial pressures linked to overcrowding on the Underground, Overground and rail networks, with additional capacity beyond that delivered by Crossrail 1 and the proposed, but potentially delayed Crossrail 2 and the uncertainties about the Eastern Branch, required to meet growth demands as the population continues to grow – this is another area where close working with Transport for London, the GLA and national government will be required to deliver the change required.



## What is our vision for Hackney in 2028 in this area?

By 2028, we will have maintained and enhanced our long established parks and green spaces and have worked with residents, businesses and housing partners to enhance smaller open spaces and to make streets greener. The Council has reduced the environmental impact of all our activities from the use of more renewable energy and greener fuels in our Council fleet to the way we invest our pension fund. Everybody can enjoy the safe, clean, green spaces of Hackney and people around the borough are involved in greening projects. As well as enhancing the environment and contributing to the green infrastructure of the borough than reduces the impact on climate change, these greening projects help participants stay healthy and happy.

The Council has put sustainability and quality of life at the heart of the way it helps shape areas, and local businesses and residents are equally concerned and committed to being environmentally sustainable, with everyone taking pride in their local area and responsibility for taking care of it. We have created healthy streets and neighbourhoods that utilise all aspects of open space from streets to green spaces to improve quality of life for residents.

The impact of growth and development in Hackney is considered in the round – taking account of the knock on effects of concentrated development on air quality, recycling, cycling and walkways and general wellbeing. We are a borough whose reliance on car usage has fallen significantly and Hackney's transport system is seen as an exemplar of sustainable urban living in London. It provides fair, safe, access to transport that works for residents, visitors and businesses.

## Areas of focus:

We want Hackney to be a green and environmentally sustainable community. To try and achieve this, we will focus on the following:

### Policy and strategy

- Develop a comprehensive, overarching Sustainability Strategy providing a whole system approach to environmental sustainability across the borough in order to reduce the impacts of climate change. This will see us focus on how we manage our estates and Council business, to how we invest as an organisation and how we work with residents and businesses to change behaviours.
- Through focused leadership, work across services and with partners, to put environmental sustainability at the heart of policy, including all aspects of planning, transport, public realm and public health policy.

### Energy consumption

- Develop a considered approach to de-carbonise Council activities over the next decade, in the line with the Paris Climate Agreement and our commitment to the UK100.
- Cater for projected growth by securing high quality, lower carbon-intensive, sustainable urban design in new developments and in the Council's own housebuilding programme. This will ensure that high density developments offer sustainable, desirable accommodation and do not impact negatively on quality of life, including air quality. We will also explore how to improve the energy efficiency of existing Council homes, to reduce fuel poverty



## Parks and open spaces

- Protect the parks and green spaces we have and work with residents and grassroots groups to enhance these existing green spaces, improve their connection to the wider environment and make streets and other spaces greener through community greening projects which also encourage healthier lifestyles.
- Provide green infrastructure to link up our green spaces by creating attractive and safe pedestrian and cycling routes between them to provide sustainable improvements to our open spaces while also encouraging greater physical activity amongst residents and visitors to the borough.

## Transport and public realm

- Continue to work with residents to take greater responsibility for their waste - to reduce waste, increase recycling and to stop littering the streets and fly tipping.

- Improve access to clean, safe and affordable sustainable transport for our residents and businesses as our borough and the population's work and travel habits change, to reduce car dependency and improve the air quality and general health and wellbeing of our residents.

## Air quality

- Recognising that the borough cannot improve air quality in Hackney alone, we will focus on campaigning for the highest possible standards in urban design, car free development, emissions related parking approaches and wider transport policy to be mandated and embraced across the whole of London. We will work with the GLA, other London boroughs, other statutory agencies, businesses and residents to take a joined up approach on this to urgently tackle the issue of poor air quality throughout the borough and reduce the dominance of car usage in London.





## 4. An open, cohesive and supportive community

### The challenge:

Hackney has very high levels of cohesion – 9 in 10 residents agree that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get along well with each other. However, there are concerns about social mixing as well as neighbourliness and tolerance and a marked difference between the extent that people get on well together (90%) and the extent to which they actually mix with each other (70%).

Despite the majority of people who were involved in the recent Hackney: A Place for Everyone consultation exercise, feeling that Hackney's demographic mix had changed for the better, there was also a strong view that the borough was becoming more socially polarised and a concern that there was a loss of understanding of and value of Hackney's rich cultural heritage, as the population has changed. This is a phenomenon that has been seen in other boroughs that have experienced rapid demographic change. The UK is going through an unsettled time – political instability, the recent spate of terror attacks and the Grenfell tragedy have all raised social tensions and highlighted the need for a trusting relationship between the state and residents. Maintaining Hackney as a borough that is open to all regardless of their background and ensuring the Council and community are ready to respond together to such challenges, is even more important in this context.

Overall, Hackney has a reputation as an open and inclusive borough at the forefront of social movements to promote equality and tolerance. Although residents have noted the emergence of some social segregation between different communities there also seems to be a strong desire to take action which might build bridges with other residents, thus helping to protect Hackney's community spirit. Residents are keen to see more community events where different people can meet their neighbours and mix e.g. street parties, jumble trails, community festivals and larger borough wide events.

This is another area where residents seem keen to step up and take responsibility for encouraging neighbourliness and tolerance and there is a keen interest among many

people to give their time in their local community – for some this means helping out a neighbour and for others it means volunteering time at a local organisation. Volunteers are a really beneficial asset for a local community and help to promote cohesion and allow people to build wider social connections while boosting the self-esteem, physical and mental health, confidence and employability of the individual. We need to support those who wish to volunteer, to do so to maximise the benefits for the community and the individual.

Almost half of all residents surveyed think that Hackney has become a more unequal borough and we know that income inequality is a major contributor to overall inequality in the borough but the underlying factors that lead to people being on low incomes are complex and not easily resolved. Linked to inequality is the issue of social isolation – while around 3 in 4 residents say they have close bonds with other residents, 1 in 10 feel isolated and 1 in 4 know fewer people than before. Isolation is more likely to be experienced by semi-skilled, manual and very low income groups, social tenants, Muslim, and, Asian residents. Advances in technology can help tackle inequalities, making it easier for residents to access opportunities, get to know their neighbours and tap into support networks. However, for those who are not able to keep up with or use the latest technology because of barriers like cost, confidence and skills, there is a risk of a growing digital divide, making people more isolated or unable to prosper and progress.

If the borough is to work for everyone, we need to ensure that the most vulnerable feel safe and protected, especially as some people have lost the informal social networks which would have relied on in the past, such as friends, family, a neighbour or a local business. Children and young people may be vulnerable as a result of their home life or because of the way their peers influence them, including gang related activity. Young people behave differently at home, at school and with peers so it can be difficult for teachers and parents to pick up problems. Children's Social Care is increasingly alert to the potential for extra-familial contexts and peer relationships to pose risk of significant harm during



adolescence. Adults can also be vulnerable and socially isolated because, for example, they are older or disabled or do not speak English. We need to ensure that the whole community recognised their role in looking out for vulnerable people, spotting concerns or risks and keeping others safe.

### **What is our vision for Hackney in 2028 in this area?**

Our creative, welcoming community continues to be recognised for the depth and breadth of its diversity, in terms of cultural background, experience, skills and perspectives. Residents, businesses and the Council work together to protect the borough as an inclusive community and Hackney is at the forefront of movements which value openness and diversity. We welcome and celebrate everyone who chooses to live in Hackney. This is supported by a range of cross cutting initiatives to keep people safe and we are tackling inequalities across all aspects of life.

The Council encourages active citizenship and inclusive decision making and it is honest with residents about the tough decisions we have to take in a world where public finances continue to be stretched and the sustainability of core services must be protected, but must also be delivered differently. We genuinely engage residents as we review and change services to make sure everyone has a voice, particularly residents who are disadvantaged or feel left behind.

Where we are unable to offer formal support to a resident who is seeking it, we still treat them with respect and dignity, signposting them to help in the community where possible. The limited public resources which remain, are focused on keeping the most vulnerable residents in our communities' safe and well, and on approaches which are preventative. The Council continues to look for innovative ways to meet demand differently and manage the knock on impacts from national cuts to public sector budgets. We support residents to take greater responsibility for their own economic, health and family wellbeing and live independently wherever possible.

Our residents, including our most vulnerable residents, are able to live a life free from harm, in communities that are

tolerant and intolerant of abuse. Their mental wellbeing is as much of a priority as keeping them safe from physical harm. Everyone from public sector organisations to residents, think about how they create an inclusive and protective environment and works together to prevent abuse.

### **Areas of focus:**

We want Hackney to be an open, cohesive and supportive community. To try and achieve this, we will focus on the following:

#### **Promoting tolerance and cohesion**

- Use Hackney's Hate Crime Strategy to protect the open and inclusive society of the borough and promote grass roots led Community Safety initiatives working in partnership with the voluntary and community sector.
- Work with voluntary and community sector groups to develop approaches to maintaining and enhancing the places and spaces that allow the different communities in Hackney to connect with each other and improve opportunities for residents to get involved, engage in community life and to volunteer across the borough.
- Draw on intelligence and insight to understand the lines of community tension and difference, and taking targeted, proactive approaches to address these through community engagement and campaigns to promote greater tolerance and awareness of diversity.
- Develop a new overarching approach to culture – valuing and building on recent heritage and history

#### **Community activity and engagement**

- Review the formal and informal community networks that exist across the borough to understand their value and contribution and consider how, working with partners and community organisations, we can strengthen their activity and their interface with the Council.
- Develop a new approach to citizen engagement, through which residents can make a genuine contribution to local debate, to policy development, to service improvement, and possibly even to service delivery.

## Tackling inequalities

- Continue to tackle key inequalities by analysing and addressing the underlying issues which are driving disadvantage.
- Deliver the long term partnership programme to improve outcomes for young black men in Hackney with a focus on improving life chances for black boys, empowering young black men and the wider community and apply the learning to tackle other inequalities.

## Vulnerable and isolated residents

- Encourage community based activities which to reach more isolated or vulnerable residents, such as befriending schemes.

- We will work with local voluntary and community sector organisations to continue to promote digital inclusion, signposting residents to support and training that helps them get online to allow them to collaborate and build networks but also to ensure they have access to new opportunities that changes in technology will bring and do not feel left behind.
- Support the efforts of local safeguarding boards to deliver engagement activities and campaigns, which ensure every resident and business considers their role in making the borough safer for vulnerable adults and children.

## Collaboration

- Maximise the opportunities arising from devolution to ensure public services are designed and delivered locally to meet the needs of Hackney residents and to maintain local accountability.





## 5. A borough with healthy, active and independent residents

### The challenge:

Our health is significantly affected by the lifestyle choices we make, from our eating habits and how much exercise we do to whether we smoke. However, these behaviours are often not free choices, but shaped by the local environment in which we live and work for example, access to affordable healthy food options or streets which are conducive to walking and cycling. People who live in more socially deprived circumstances tend to experience more health problems and there are still large pockets of deprivation across the borough meaning Hackney faces key challenges in promoting healthier communities. For example, an estimated 47,000 adults in Hackney smoke which is comparably high and most children and young people in Hackney are failing to exercise at levels recommended by government guidelines. In addition, over 50,000 adults across Hackney are doing less than 30 minutes of moderate exercise a week. Childhood obesity is above the national average and Hackney's recorded prevalence of severe mental health conditions and depression is among the highest in London. Local surveys would suggest a quarter of Hackney residents are considered to be 'high risk' drinkers. This is a concern for us because of the links between excessive consumption of alcohol and certain diseases / mental health problems, ASB and violent crime, all of which have a negative impact on the person and put additional pressure on public services.

Local government has key levers it can use to influence the wider, social determinants of health for example, through education, housing services and shaping the built environment. These offer key opportunities to have an impact on people's lives across the spectrum from infants to older people, especially when it comes to the development of new housing and open spaces, transforming community facilities and influencing how our town centres develop to encouraging healthy behaviours.

Housing and housing conditions play a key role in the health of residents. There is evidence that good housing can improve health and wellbeing and prevent ill-health, enable people to manage their health and care needs, allow people to remain in their own home for as long as they choose and ensure positive care experiences. Good

quality and stable employment also has significant health and wellbeing benefits and is a major contributor to reducing inequality.

### What is our vision for Hackney in 2028 in this area?

People are living longer, healthier, happier and more independent lives and the gap between the richest and poorest has narrowed. There are a range of opportunities to participate in community life, from community gardening to befriending schemes which keep people active, connected and happy. There are fewer people out of work because of long term health conditions thanks to initiatives which help the workforce to stay well and thanks to tailored employment support. Streets are calmer, safer, cleaner and greener and, as a result, more people are choosing to walk or cycle, and reaping the health benefits from their choices.

People are supported to take responsibility for maintaining their wellbeing throughout their lives. When they do need support, it is joined up and appropriate, taking a view of all their needs in the round, because health and social care is integrated and shaped, designed and delivered locally and linked to wider preventative activities.

There is a focus across public sector organisations, the voluntary sector and local communities to work together to identify, protect and support the most vulnerable in our communities, sharing intelligence in order to get involved earlier when needed. There are a range of well used community spaces which serve as hubs for health, wellbeing and personal development and for developing skills and employability. These are accessible and used by all sections of the local community.

### Areas of focus:

We want Hackney to be a healthy, active and independent community. To try and achieve this, we will focus on the following:

### Joined up approaches

- Work with local public sector partners and providers to integrate health and social care, shaping, designing



and delivering services based in the City and Hackney, tailored to meet local residents' needs, and linking in to wider place based preventative strategies. This will include joint working with partners to address wider causes of health inequality including access to employment and skills, attainment, crime and housing options.

- Enable residents to live healthier more active lives, by looking at the whole system of influences on health and engaging people in a conversation about what could help them make healthier choices, rather than focusing only on delivering services to address health issues that have already emerged for example, to deal with high levels of childhood obesity or to encourage people to stop smoking.
- Work with housing providers and other partners to deliver services to help support older or vulnerable people to stay in their own homes for longer, as well as new Supported Housing in Hackney that addresses the borough's highest unmet needs. We want to ensure that design and quality standards help deliver new homes that meet the needs of people with disabilities, or can be easily adapted to do so.
- Build closer links between housing and health providers to:
  - improve services across the private and social housing sectors
  - promote health initiatives by working with social housing providers and wherever possible, help people in all tenures remain active, independent and healthy in their homes with flexible, affordable services
  - promote warm homes, specifically helping older and other vulnerable residents with support and advice.
- Work with partners to understand the links between health and wellbeing and community safety, for example understanding the links between alcohol and substance misuse and community safety and designing different interventions to deal with these issues.
- Identify opportunities to maximise the use of community spaces as hubs for health, wellbeing and personal development and for developing skills and employability, working with housing partners and residents.

- Continue to advocate for local control and accountability of Hackney's health and social care services and explore new ways to bring residents and health and social care services together around the common goal of improving health and wellbeing in Hackney. This could be to generate ideas for how services could work better, how people could lead healthier lives and how people could contribute their time and skills to making Hackney a healthier community.

### **Place based approaches**

- Co-ordinate the work of planning, housing and public realm to create healthy and safe streets and neighbourhoods, which are pedestrian and cyclist friendly and ensure fair and easy access to green spaces.
- Implement the 'Healthy Streets Approach' as an integral tenet of planning policy to create neighbourhoods that people of all ages and walks of life can enjoy – providing more space for walking and cycling, and better public spaces where people can congregate and interact to underpin a borough wide Obesity Strategy. This will also help contribute to community cohesion and collaboration and reduce social isolation as more people get out and about and build new networks.
- Identify and utilise any levers or influences to promote healthy communities, preventing a proliferation, for example, of betting shops or fast food outlets.

### **Helping people to live independently**

- Support the creation of dementia friendly communities to care for residents with dementia in the City and Hackney.
- Promoting Hackney as an accessible place for all residents to safely and fully enjoy. This will involve working with residents, such as disabled people, older people, families and children, to identify and remove the barriers that might limit mobility or deter people from getting out and about.
- Support people with long-term health problems and disabled people to find, stay in and return to quality work as quickly as possible, both as public sector employers and working with local businesses to support them to do the same.

# Delivering this strategy

This document has set out the high level vision for Hackney and some of the key commitments that are essential to delivering that vision. These are actions which the Council wants to work to deliver with residents, businesses, other public sector agencies and all of our voluntary and community sector organisations. We are confident that this collaboration will be possible because of the excellent partnership working that is already so embedded in Hackney's culture and the ambition that exists across the borough to protect and enhance Hackney as a place to live and work.

The detail of the work required to maintain Hackney as a great place to live will be shaped by the Community Strategy and set out in various, more detailed strategies over the coming months and years. We are currently developing a new Housing Strategy and refreshing our Local Plan which will both provide more detail about how we will be working towards delivering the aspirations for Hackney that are set out here.

The Community Strategy itself will be monitored by a new dynamic partnership board which will be focussed on setting the vision and direction for Hackney as a place over the coming years and agreeing collective goals that will help us achieve our ambitions. The new Community Strategy Board will meet annually and will bring key officers together from local partnership boards as well as businesses and the voluntary and community sector and will keep the Community Strategy under review, considering progress as well as new challenges and needs, and identifying new shared goals and how we can work collectively to deliver them.

You can find information about the Community Strategy at  [www.hackney.gov.uk/community-strategy](https://www.hackney.gov.uk/community-strategy)

You can find out more about ways you can get involved in the local community at

 <https://hackney.gov.uk/get-involved>

For more information about the work of the Council, who your elected representatives are and how you can get involved in local democracy and decision making visit the Council's website or follow us on social media.


 <https://hackney.gov.uk/council-and-elections>

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## Information that underpins this document


You can find out more about the information we gathered during the Hackney: A Place for Everyone consultation, including a summary of the overall findings and a detailed report from Ipsos Mori, at


 [www.hackney.gov.uk/hapfe](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/hapfe)

The Council maintains a detailed evidence base on our website – this includes information on how the population is changing, trends in the local economy and housing market and details of how outcomes vary for people depending on their gender, health or age. To look into the evidence base in more detail, visit

 [www.hackney.gov.uk/statistics-evidence-plans-and-strategies](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/statistics-evidence-plans-and-strategies)

Finally, the City and Hackney Wellbeing Profile provides a wealth of information on the health and wellbeing needs of the local population. It provides a 'big picture' of local needs, ranging from the social and environmental conditions which shape health and wellbeing through to the specific illnesses and conditions from which local people suffer. For more information, visit

 [www.hackney.gov.uk/JSNA](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/JSNA)

 If you have a query about the information that underpins this strategy, please contact [research@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:research@hackney.gov.uk)

# Hackney: A Place for Everyone

What residents told us:

# 88%

of Hackney residents are satisfied with the area as a place to live

“Much improved, especially in street and public space cleanliness and in primary and secondary education.”

When asked ‘what could we all do differently?’ one of the top responses from residents was for everyone to take responsibility and stop littering the streets and fly tipping



“Families that have lived here for generations have left the borough to be replaced by middle income and professional classes.”



90% of people feel it’s important for people from different backgrounds to mix with each other

High house prices and cost of living are overwhelmingly the biggest negative change noticed during the last 10 years or so



“The community spirit is on the up and there’s a lot to do around Hackney.”



People are concerned about growing inequality – almost half of residents (45%) think that Hackney has become a more unequal borough



The majority of residents (70%) are satisfied with how well Hackney Council runs things overall, and only one in seven (14%) are actively dissatisfied

“I think Hackney is a very diverse and fun place which has attracted a lot of young graduates and creatives in recent years.”



