

Thurrock Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 - 2026

Levelling the Playing Field in Thurrock



EasyRead Version



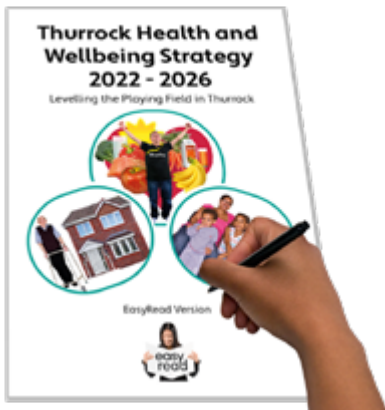
Executive Summary



This document has been written by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

“We” in this document means the Health and Wellbeing Board.

“You” in this document means people who live in Thurrock.



The law says that we must write a Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the people in our community.



This document is our strategy. It is called **Levelling the Playing Field**.

It tells you how we plan to improve health and wellbeing for the people of Thurrock.

Levelling the Playing Field means that we will make sure that everyone has access to the same opportunities and support.

We know that people in poorer communities have more health problems than people in richer communities.

This is because of things like:

- lifestyle, for example smoking or drinking too much.
- the quality of medical care they receive.
- fewer job opportunities.
- poor quality housing.
- less access to leisure activities.





We asked you what is most important to you and what you think our priorities should be.



You told us that there are 6 main areas that affect health and wellbeing.

We think that by focusing on these 6 areas we will level the playing field.

These are:



1. Staying healthier for longer



2. Building strong and inclusive communities.



3. Person-led care.



4. Opportunity for all.



5. Housing and environment.



6. Community safety.



By levelling the playing field in these areas we think people will live healthier for longer.



We think it will also narrow the gap in life expectancy between areas where people die youngest and where people live longest.



We will make sure that we include health and wellbeing in planning for all of these areas.

Our health and Wellbeing Board



Our Health and Wellbeing Board is made up of people from 10 different organisations.

These are:



1. Thurrock Council.

You voted for these people to be Councillors.



They manage Public Health, Social Care services and Housing.



2. NHS England.

These people are in charge of buying healthcare services, including doctors, pharmacies, dentists and opticians.



3. Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Partnership.



These people are in charge of buying healthcare services from hospitals, community services and mental health trusts.



4. Thurrock Council for Voluntary Services

These people provide care coordination, support and advocacy.



5. Healthwatch Thurrock

These people make sure that your views are taken into account when healthcare services are planned.



6. Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals.

These people help to run the main hospital for Thurrock.



7. North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT)

These people are in charge of community services like health visitors, school nurses and sexual health services.



8. Essex Partnerships University Trust (EPUT)

These people are in charge of mental health services.



9. Thurrock Community Safety Partnership

These people help to reduce crime and make our communities safer.



10. Thurrock Safeguarding Boards

These people are responsible for keeping vulnerable adults and children safe from harm.

About Thurrock



Thurrock is a borough in the Thames Gateway. It is close to east London.



It has busy towns like Grays, Tilbury and Purfleet in the south.



It also rural villages and open countryside in the north.



175,000 people live in Thurrock and we think that this increase by 9.2% by 2030.



The population of Thurrock is quite young.

The average age is 37 years old, but we think that this will increase in the next few years.



The population is varied and 130 languages are used by children as their main language.



Some areas in Thurrock are among the poorest in the country.

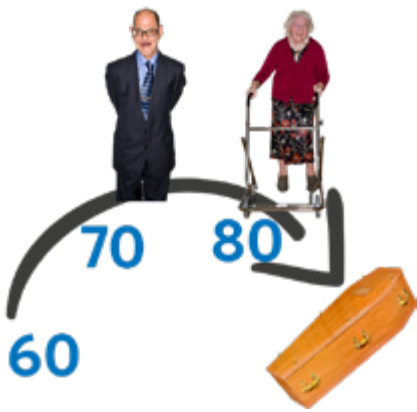
These are mainly around the Tllbury area.



But some areas are among the richest in the country.

These are around the South Chafford area.

Health and Wellbeing in Thurrock



In Thurrock the average age that people is younger than in the rest of England.

The average age for men is 78.3 years.

The average age for women is 82.6 years.



Illnesses caused by smoking are the main reason why people die too young.

In Thurrock more people smoke than in the rest of England.



69% of people in Thurrock are overweight or obese. This is much higher than in the rest of England.



More people in Thurrock have illnesses like, heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes than in the rest of England.



Other things that can affect health and wellbeing are:

- Employment.

In Thurrock slightly more people have a job than in the rest of England.



- Housing.

In Thurrock there are more homeless people than in the rest of England.



- Crime.

In Thurrock there is more violent crime than in the rest of England.

Levelling the Playing Field



The government has written a document called **Levelling Up**.

This document looks at **inequalities** in local communities.

Inequality means unfair - it is where some people have better opportunities than others.



This 'Levelling Up' document looks at **Healthy Life Expectancy**.

Healthy Life Expectancy is how long you live in good health.



In Thurrock, people who live in richer communities live a healthy life for 8 more years than people in poorer communities.

Women in our poorest communities live for 22 years in poor health.

Our vision to Level the Playing Field follows government aims to reduce the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy between people in richer and poorer communities.



It also aims to reduce inequality for:

- people of different ethnic backgrounds.
- people who have physical disabilities or learning disabilities.
- people living with long-term mental health conditions.



Our Strategies



Our 3 main priorities are:

- People



- Place



- Prosperity



This strategy tells you how we plan to level the playing field across these priority areas.



The NHS Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership is working in partnership towards goals that link into our priorities.

These goals are:



- to create opportunities in education, employment and housing.



- to support health and wellbeing by promoting healthy lifestyles and focusing on stopping unhealthy behaviours.



- to improve our services by working with you and bringing care closer to home.

What Levelling the Playing Field means for our priorities - People, Place and Prosperity



We will know that we have achieved our goal when people are healthier for longer and when everyone has equal opportunities and access to:



- a good education.



- good healthcare.



- a job.



- safe and warm housing.



- public transport.



- green spaces.



- leisure activities

How our strategies fit together



Our Health and Wellbeing Strategy is our main plan to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Thurrock.

But our other strategies link into this to help achieve its goals.

These include:

- Brighter Futures Strategy.

This focuses on improving services for children and young people.



- Adults Place Based Strategy.

This focuses on supporting health services and voluntary organisations to work together.



- Other strategies that focus on particular things that affect health and wellbeing, like:

- Violence and Vulnerability
- Housing
- Addictions
- Obesity



Where the playing field is not level in Thurrock



In Thurrock there are many areas where the playing field is not level.

These all affect our main **People**, **Place** and **Prosperity** priorities and include:



- smoking and obesity.

These are the main causes of poor health outcomes.



- undiagnosed health conditions.

2 in 3 people with long-term health conditions, like high blood pressure or mental ill health are not diagnosed and do not receive support.



- isolation and loneliness.

These have increased since lockdown and particularly affect people who:

- live on their own
- are out of work
- have a mental illness.



- not being able to see a doctor.

We know it is more difficult in some areas to get an appointment.

We know that care in some areas is not as good as in others.



- increasing the crime rate in many communities.

The number of violent crimes reported in Thurrock is higher than in the rest of England.



- the cost of housing

More than half of families cannot afford to buy a house in Thurrock.



- education achievement.

Education is generally good but children in certain groups do not do so well. These include:

- Children Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)



- Children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities (SEND)



- Children from ethnic minority groups.





- unemployment.

Some groups of people find it more difficult to get a job. These include:



- young adults aged 18 - 24



- people with physical or learning disabilities



- people with long-term conditions like mental illness

How do we level the playing field?



For our strategy to work we need to focus on the following outcomes.



- Income and employment



- Education.



- Housing that is safe and warm.

8. How do we Level the Playing Field?



- A safe community.



- A healthy environment.



- Good transport.



- Accessible leisure.



- Reducing crime.



Local authorities and the NHS need to work together make living in Thurrock fair for everyone.

Stakeholder engagement



Between October and December 2021 we ran a consultation to ask you what you thought of our plans.



1,300 people answered our questions.

Most people agreed that our 6 Domains are the areas that affect their health and wellbeing most.



Based on what you told us, we have made some changes to the goals for each domain.



As part of this consultation you told us about the things that worry you the most.

We have already covered most of these worries in our **People, Place** and **Prosperity** priorities.

Community priorities



Below are some of the things you are most worried about, and what we will do to make things better.



You said:

“It is difficult to get face to face support, including making an appointment to see your doctor.”



We will:

Make more face to face support available from appropriate professionals.



You said:

“Some people cannot access services because they cannot use the internet.”



We will:

Make sure that you can access services in different ways, not just online.



You said:

“Some people have difficulty accessing services because it is too far to travel, or because public transport costs too much.”



We will:

Make sure support is available in local communities.



You said:

“We do not know what is available in our community.”



We will:

Provide accessible information about what support is available.



We will:

Help to build stonger communities.



You said:

“We are worried about the impact of building new houses and new businesses has on the environment.”



We will:

Include roads and services in plans for building new houses and businesses.



We will:

Make sure that you can access access green spaces across Thurrock.



We will:

Make sure you can access public transport across Thurrock.



We will:

Make sure that you can exercise and meet people in safe places.



We will:

Help to improve air quality across Thurrock.



You said:

“Social isolation and loneliness have got worse because of Covid-19”



We will:

Improve support for people with mental illness.



You said:

“Not having a job for a long time can cause mental health difficulties.”

We will:

Help people to find work.



Our principles for action to Level the Playing Field



Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board have agreed that our actions to Level the Playing Field will be based on the following principles.



Reducing inequality in health and wellbeing

We want everyone to have access to the same opportunities.



Prevention is better than cure

Support will be available before you need help so that you stay healthy for as long as possible.



Empowering people and communities

We will help you to solve your own problems and make healthy choices.



Person-led and strengths-based approach

We will plan support for you around your needs.



Making good health and wellbeing everyone's responsibility

We will work to make health and care services fairer, and promote good health for all.



Retain the positives from Covid-19 and address the challenges

During Covid-19 communities worked together to make things better.

We will build on these partnerships to continue working on shared priorities.

6 Domains of Health and Wellbeing



Our strategy focuses on 6 domains. We think these are the main things that affect good health.

These domains link into our priorities of **People**, **Place** and **Prosperity**, they are:



1. Staying healthier for longer
2. Building strong communities
3. Person-led health and care
4. Opportunity for all
5. Housing and environment
6. Community safety



Based on what you have told us, we have written 3 or 4 goals for each domain.

Achieving these goals will help to Level the Playing Field in Thurrock.

What do we want to do?

We want to improve how we prevent and treat physical and mental health conditions, to make sure people have good health for as long as possible.



We want to reduce the amount of people who smoke or who are **obese** in Thurrock.



Obese is when a person is very overweight and has a lot of body fat.

We want to help people have good mental health and reduce poor mental health.



We want to reduce substance misuse in Thurrock.



Substance misuse is when people:

- drink too much alcohol,
- take illegal drugs
- take medicines in a way that they are not meant to be used.



Improve how we diagnose and manage Long Term Conditions (LTCs) to improve physical and mental health.



We want to make Thurrock a fair, inclusive, and accessible place to live.

We want you to have opportunities and feel your voice is heard.

We will encourage communities to lead on decisions about their areas.



We will improve how we talk to you to make sure that your voice is heard.



We will make sure that people have the right training and skills so they can be involved with co-production and co design of services.



We will make more opportunities for communities and people to come together.

For example, community events in libraries and using existing community hubs and groups.



We will make sure that you have better health, care and treatment that is close to home.

We will make the better use of the health and care services we have locally.



We will improve our integrated services.

This means health and care services working closely together.



There will be 4 new Integrated Medical Centres (IMCs) in Thurrock.

These will contain mental health services, GP services, blood testing and outpatients.



We will buy services that can help you as an individual. These services will work across health and social care and have shared budgets.

A shared budget means Health and Social Care both pay for services. This means that services can be delivered from the one place.



We want companies to come to Thurrock and invest in the area.

We will renew the area and you will have a say and benefit from the improvements.



We want people to be able to get a good education, get training, and skills so they can get good jobs and be successful in life.



We want all children in Thurrock to be the best they can.

We will make sure there is nothing to stop them being the best they can be.



We will build a new technical university.

This will provide training and qualifications for people so they will have the right skills for new jobs at Thames Freeport.



We will support local businesses to create new jobs.



We will have people to start their own businesses.



We want everyone in Thurrock to have access to a good quality, affordable home.

Homes will be places you can feel safe, healthy, part of your community, and proud of where you live.



We want fewer people to be at risk of being homeless.



We new home are built we want at least 35% of them to be affordable.

Affordable means that the price is low enough for most people to pay for it.



We will make sure key-workers, first time buyers and local people have the opportunity to get these homes first.



We will make sure that current housing is looked after better.

For example, using Green Technology like solar power, or fixing problems like damp.



We will make sure that new houses have green spaces, are connected to public transport and are healthy places for people to live.

We will use the design of places to help make them safe and to reduce crime.



We want everyone who lives, works, or visits Thurrock to feel and be safe.

We will make sure anyone who has been a victim of crime has help and support if they need it.



We will make sure all children can live safely in their community.



We will all work together to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

This includes local councils, the community, police and health.



We will make sure there is better support for victims of violence.



We will protect people from becoming victims of crime.

Especially those who are vulnerable, young people and older people.

Impact of Covid-19 on health and wellbeing



We are still gathering information about the long-term effects of Covid-19.

But what we know so far is that Covid-19 has caused difficulties for people across all of our Domains in this strategy.



We know that more people were ill and died during the pandemic.

We know that people from certain backgrounds were more at risk than others.



We know that it was more difficult to see a doctor during the pandemic.

This means that people did not get the treatment they needed and more people died from their condition.



We know that Covid-19 has made some people and communities even more vulnerable than they were before.

Children and families with young children have found it particularly difficult.



This strategy aims to tackle some of the problems caused by Covid-19. This includes:

- Obesity

The number of children who are obese when they start school has risen.



- Loneliness and isolation

40% of people said that they were lonely during lockdown.

The people affected most were people who:

- live on their own
- are out of work
- have a mental illness



- Access to health services

Only 40% of doctor's surgeries are offering same day face to face appointments with a doctor.



- Educational Achievement

Because schools were closed during lockdown some children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, have fallen behind in their education.



- Unemployment

Because of covid businesses are making less money. this means some people will lose their job, so they will have less money.



- Violence against women and girls

During lockdown violence against women increased.

Women who were already being abused before lockdown said that the violence had got worse and it was harder to escape.