

# Thurrock Health And Wellbeing Strategy

2022-2026

Levelling the Playing Field  
in Thurrock



Created through the partnership of Thurrock Health and Wellbeing Board



Introduction and overview report to Thurrock Health and Wellbeing Board

Domain 2 - Building Strong and Cohesive Communities

# Domain 2 - Building Strong and Cohesive Communities

## Domain Aims and Ambitions

**We are committed to creating a fair, accessible and inclusive borough where everyone has a voice and an equal opportunity to succeed and thrive, and where community led ambitions are supported and actively encouraged.**

### What we want to achieve

This domain focuses on reducing inequality for everyone, but we are also committed to ensuring that the most marginalised and seldom heard communities enjoy the same levels of opportunity, health and wellbeing as the most affluent.

We want to use a Human Learning Systems approach within services and activities building on community strengths and increasing social value. We will build on the positives from COVID-19 such as community led support whilst seeking to mitigate the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and increased cost of living. In doing so, we will give people the opportunity to find their own solutions, make healthy choices and access support when needed.

### How this Domain levels the playing field

This will Level the Playing Field by:

- Improving resident satisfaction when engaging with Thurrock Council
- A greater proportion of residents feel that decisions taken that affect them are worthwhile.
- A greater percentage of Thurrock residents voting in local elections.
- Reduced digital exclusion.
- Residents will have improved access to information and support.
- A greater percentage of volunteer placements filled within the council.
- Fewer adults 16+ reporting they feel lonely 'often or all of the time'.
- A greater number of events and activities in hubs/libraries that support well-being and strengthen community connections.

### Domain Goals

- **2A. Improved engagement with our residents to ensure everyone can have their voice heard**
- **2B. Ensure people have the skills, confidence and ability to contribute as active citizens and are empowered to co-design the decisions that affect their lives.**
- **2C. Enhance equality and inclusiveness by promoting opportunities to bring different communities together to enhance shared experience and to embed a sense of belonging**



# Goal 2A. Improved engagement with our residents to ensure everyone can have their voice heard.



## What we want to achieve

Support the development of new approaches to engagement and co-design based on Primary Care Network areas. Supporting better use of resources to meet local priorities which are co-designed. Developing a single view on engagement outcomes, recognising a multitude of established and new engagement routes.

## Some key challenges

- Traditional methods of engagement such as consultation and surveys are not always effective and communities often complain of consultation fatigue.
- Respondents to the consultation exercise on the strategy identified that that digital exclusion is increasingly a barrier for some people. It was felt that alternatives routes to access information were still required and that services could not be completely digitally accessed as this would exclude some individuals.
- Engagement often appeals more to settled communities and we need to ensure marginalised groups and those at risk of digital exclusion have opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives.
- Low participation denies communities the opportunity to influence how plans are implemented meaning missed opportunities to meet local needs and to secure infrastructure funding.
- There is a correlation between someone feeling as if they cannot influence decisions, and how cohesive they feel their community is, a priority to improve in a growing borough.

# Goal 2A. Improve engagement with our residents to ensure everyone can have their voice heard



## How we will achieve this Goal

Implementing the Collaborative Communities Framework and Better Care Together Thurrock Strategy whilst exploring new opportunities to empower and involve all communities to participate as active citizens. Build on the community engagement already in place to help connect people around the issues they feel passionate about to make local improvements.

## What will we do differently under this strategy?

Embed the Collaborative Communities Framework **'engagement'** ambition to enable residents to access information and be involved in decisions that affect their lives, using co-design and co-production to generate solutions by:

- Establishing service user-led Communities of Practice for each Primary Care Network (PCN) area to improve communication with local residents.
- Making best use of our community anchors i.e. community hubs and libraries to support place based engagement using a strengths-based approach to provide services and activities to reduce digital exclusion, increase access to information and put communities in touch with local people and groups for support or social interaction.
- Ensuring the Stronger Together directory is used widely across partners as the 'one-stop shop' for residents to seek information about support available to them.
- Tackle digital exclusion using the Customer Experience and Digital Strategy.
- Working with Community Builders, Community Forums, Hubs and the wider voluntary sector to connect residents in their local areas, and maintain the Stronger Together directory.

# Goal 2B. Ensure people have the skills, confidence and ability to contribute as active citizens and are empowered to co-design the decisions that affect their lives

## What we want to achieve

We want to ensure people feel able and confident to take part as active citizens and influence the decisions that affect their lives from life choices through to the decisions taken by services. This means helping people have access to the information to make choices and feel able to contribute their voice through face to face or digital means. It also means encouraging community led action to support local improvements.

## Some key challenges

- The estimated prevalence of poor health literacy in working age adults (aged 16-64) in Thurrock is 44% (national average is 41%). This is worse than most of our region.
- Digital exclusion is increasingly a source of inequality. Digital inclusion is multi-faceted, and increasingly necessary for everyday living. In 2020, an estimated 4% of UK households did not have internet access and in 2021 an estimated 11.7 million people (~20% of the population) did not have the digital skills needed for extensive internet use.
- We need to improve how we communicate the evidence base that informs policy and the ability of residents to influence by sharing their concerns and experience in ways which are easy to access and facilitate.
- Supporting community led action requires a strong and thriving third sector at a time when funding opportunities are decreasing locally and nationally.



# Goal 2B. Ensure people have the skills, confidence and ability to contribute as active citizens and are empowered to co-design the decisions that affect their lives

## How we will achieve this Goal

Driving community resilience so that people feel secure and invested in their community provides the best foundation from which to encourage participation. We will encourage people to engage around the things that are important to them. We will support skills and opportunities for communities to find their own solutions to build stronger communities.

## What will we do differently under this strategy?

Embedding the Collaborative Communities Framework (CCF) '**empowerment**' ambition to empower and enable communities to champion change, for example by:

- Implementing a health literacy project through our libraries in Chadwell and Tilbury to understand more about the health inequalities that impact residents in these areas and empower people to feel confident about accessing information and seeking support to address concerns.
- Tackling digital exclusion – for example through Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASLEA) and Public Health working together to install Wi-Fi in all sheltered housing sites, and increasing skills and confidence.
- Working with Community Builders, Community Reference Boards and the Primary Care Networks (PCN) Communities of Practice to enable residents' views to influence local decision making.
- Supporting access to resources to invest in community led action such as Small Sparks.



# Goal 2C. Enhance equality and inclusiveness by promoting opportunities to bring different communities together to enhance shared experience and to embed a sense of belonging

## What we want to achieve

Ensure that services are accessible, free from prejudice and enable all to have equal opportunities to prosper and contribute to building a diverse and inclusive borough. Ensure that all citizens feel listened to and that they have a stake in their community where they can prosper. Ensure equalities are a 'real' consideration when forming policies. Support people to feel welcome and connected to where they live and to reduce loneliness.

## Some key challenges

- The impact of COVID-19 on social isolation and loneliness, and the adverse impact it has had on groups already marginalised, was acknowledged by respondents to the consultation on the strategy.
- Diversity is increasing in Thurrock, with over one third of residents being from a non-White British ethnic background. The Census 2021 showed that 78 languages are spoken in Thurrock with English, Romanian, Polish, and Lithuanian being the most common, however 4,227 households have no one who spoke English as a main language.
- The fear and risk of crime continues to be a challenge for many community groups. The rates of recorded violent offences in Thurrock (35.5 per 1,000) is significantly above the England rate (29.5 per 1,000 population) - this has risen sharply since 2013.
- Around two thirds of people with long-term health conditions including blood pressure and mental ill health are undiagnosed and not receiving support. There are higher rates for these conditions for people living in less affluent areas, men, people with learning disability, young people and older adults, unpaid carers, certain minority ethnic groups and LGBTQ+ people.



# Goal 2C Enhance equality and inclusiveness by promoting opportunities to bring different communities together to enhance shared experience and to embed a sense of belonging

## How we will achieve this Goal

Establish an Improving Equality Outcomes Board to drive improvement across all policies, strategies and service transformation. Work with the Community Safety Partnership to tackle hate crime and prevent extremism. Embed a workforce development and learning programme to ensure staff have the skills and capacity to deliver on this agenda.

## What will we do differently under this strategy?

We will embed the Collaborative Communities Framework (CCF) '**equality**' ambition for all to have equal opportunity to prosper in a connected community and contribute to a diverse and inclusive borough, for example by:

- Integrating health and equality impact assessment into a single Community Equality Impact Assessment model.
- Reviewing training and support for the preparation of Equality Impact Assessments.
- Strengthening community engagement opportunities for influencing Community Equality Impact Assessments.
- Improving the use of the data and intelligence we collect and hold concerning the diversity profile and experience of Thurrock residents using our services and use this to inform policy development to improve equality outcomes.
- Building on the legacy of TCCA and Our Road to encourage community led neighbourly help and support as seen during the lockdown, building connections across different communities
- Working with the Thurrock Community Safety Partnership to tackle hate crime and prevent extremism – we will work with communities to prevent hate incidents and crimes, encouraging reporting when incidents do happen.
- Preparing an annual calendar of events and activities to celebrate diversity with partners such as International Women's Day, Holocaust Memorial Day and Pride Month.



# Domain 2 - Building Strong and Cohesive Communities

## Key deliverables, commitments and milestones

### Year One (July 2022 - June 2023)



#### Goal 2A. Improved engagement with our residents to ensure everyone can have their voice heard

- A Community of Practice has been piloted helping to develop community links in Stanford le Hope and encouraging the hosting of Barclays Bank in Corringham Library when the bank decided to close its town branch.
- Focused mapping of assets by PCN area to include on the Stronger Together directory.
- 1,830 events in hubs and libraries between April - December '22 which bring people together and enable discussion to inform community led action.
- £100,000 investment into community grants to help recovery from Covid around agreed priorities.
- Community Builders have supported new connections, supporting local outcomes such as community pantries and warm spaces.

#### Goal 2B. Ensure people have the skills, confidence and ability to contribute as active citizens and are empowered to co-design the decisions that affect their lives.

- A Digital and Health Literacy pilot is being developed in Tilbury and Chadwell PCN to help residents to access information and raise awareness around health inequalities.
- Connecting all 29 sheltered housing sites to the Thurrock Council Network with Wi-Fi capability that will support public access, the Thurrock Corporate Network connecting staff and enabling Thurrock Council to have Gov Roam capability which could enable NHS staff to work remotely.
- We will pilot a new approach to developing capacity within a Community of Practice area in 2023.
- 95% of council volunteer placements were filled between April – December 2022. The number of placements increased from placement's available increased from 181 in April to 196 in December 2022.
- A learning programme to support the voluntary sector is being developed between CVS and TACC for delivery in 2023.

#### Goal 2C .Enhance equality and inclusiveness by promoting opportunities to bring different communities together to enhance shared experience and to embed a sense of belonging

- Establishing an Improving Equality Outcomes Board to support a pan Council approach to tackling inequality.
- Integration of Equality Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessments.
- Welcome events for Ukrainian refugees and support for all refugees to embed a sense of belonging with practical support.
- Review of communications with Forums, regular engagement with Hubs and development support from Community Builders for example, supporting the development of Purfleet Community Hub.
- A calendar of events that promote cohesion with annual events (Remembering Srebrenica, Holocaust Memorial Day and Pride) as well as enabling community led activity e.g. Jubilee Street Parties and Christmas events with small sparks investment.
- A successful Interfaith Week to engage diverse faiths with services and over 50 meetings between community groups, the Communities Portfolio Holder and officers at the Town Hall to hear about their work, aspirations and to help resolve barriers to working in Thurrock.