



Thematic report: Lambeth First Borough Conference 2019

20/11/2019



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Lambeth First	3
The conference	3
This report	3
Opening Plenary	4
Welcome, Councillor Jacqui Dyer	4
Our Borough Plan, Councillor Jack Hopkins	4
How organisations in the borough centralise their information.....	4
How we develop the ways we interact and meet as organisations	4
How to think in a different way	5
Key speech, Adam Lent, New Local Government Network.....	5
Workshop 1: More than bricks and mortar – how can we increase and build strong communities?.....	6
Workshop overview	6
Context	6
Workshop aims	6
Workshop hosts and strategic context setting	7
Presenters	7
Workshop themes.....	7
1. Housing at the heart of community.....	7
2. Housing which is responsive to needs	8
3. Affordability and availability of housing.....	9
4. Getting the basics right	10
Workshop 2: It takes a village to raise a child: what role can all play in fostering resilience in our families, neighbourhoods and borough?	11
Workshop overview	11
Context	11
Workshop aims	11
Workshop host.....	11
Presenters	11
Workshop questions.....	12
1. What does resilience mean?	12
2. What does resilience not mean?	13

3. What could get in the way of resilience?	13
Ideas for a resilient borough going forward	14
Workshop 3: It's time to change - what can we do to support better wellbeing and mental health in Lambeth?	15
Workshop overview	15
Context	15
Workshop aims	15
Workshop host.....	15
Presenters	15
Workshop themes.....	16
1. Employer awareness.....	16
2. Community-led change	17
3. Connecting people to what exists locally	17
4. Looking and thinking beyond the focus of the service	18
5. Services being explicit about tackling inequality	18
Workshop 4: Lambeth has declared a climate emergency - how can become a zero-carbon borough?.....	19
Workshop overview	19
Context	19
Workshop aims	19
Workshop host.....	19
Presenters	19
Workshop themes.....	20
1. Education and behaviour change	20
2. Infrastructure.....	21
3. Prioritising the climate emergency.....	21
4. Connections and support	22
Closing Plenary: Working Together for Lambeth	23
Working Together for Lambeth, Andrew Travers	23
Looking forwards, Councillor Jim Dickson	23

Introduction

Lambeth First

Lambeth First is a borough wide partnership that brings together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, with the aim of working together to improve the quality of life for all who live in, work in and visit Lambeth. To ensure this, Lambeth First works with key partners to oversee the development and delivery of key strategies, including a shared set of goals and plan for the borough.

The conference

The Lambeth First Borough Conference 2019 was held on Wednesday 16 October from 1:00pm to 5:00pm at the Coin Street Neighbourhood Centre in Waterloo. There were 160 delegates from a range of organisations and sectors in attendance – with particularly strong representation from the voluntary and community sector.

The conference was chaired by Councillor Jacqui Dyer, with plenary presentations from Councillor Jack Hopkins, Councillor Jim Dickson, Adam Lent from the New Local Government Network and Andrew Travers, Chief Executive of Lambeth Council. There were also more than twenty presenters across four workshops who asked delegates to look at Lambeth through four lenses: housing and communities; children and young people's resilience; mental health and wellbeing and climate change.

The conference formally launched ['20 goals for Lambeth'](#) (as set out in the borough plan) and the workshops sought to catalyse conversation around these goals and highlight how organisations can work together to achieve them.

This report

This report outlines the key themes from the conference including plenary and workshop discussions. It reflects the presentations, discussions and post-it notes that came out of the day.

This report will be the foundation for a set of strategic conversations within the Lambeth First board and Lambeth Council, alongside engagement with wider partners and residents to inform shared decisions, activities and plans towards achieving the borough goals, with a particular focus on the goals explored through the workshops.

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Opening Plenary

Welcome, Councillor Jacqui Dyer

The conference was opened by the Chair, Councillor Jacqui Dyer, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Community Safety. After welcomes and introductions, the overarching conference question was presented to the audience: *'how can we work together to achieve the borough goals?'* Councillor Dyer made the case that we need to work together in one 'system' as no single organisation or project can achieve the borough goals on their own. She argued that if we do not start working together more, we risk getting stuck with the same old results. She also argued that we all need to be less fearful of one other and more open to collaborating.

To achieve these goals, Councillor Dyer highlighted the importance of having a diverse set of people involved in the implementation of solutions, as this is likely to create positive tensions which can drive creativity and create more effective solutions. Delegates were encouraged to think about the 'art of the possible' throughout the day.

Our Borough Plan, Councillor Jack Hopkins

Councillor Jack Hopkins, Leader of Lambeth Council, spoke about how the focus of the day should be on the people and organisations in the room, and maximising opportunities to connect and share with each other. Delegates were invited to think about challenges and opportunities in the borough with a new sense of vigour.

Councillor Hopkins outlined how Cabinet, officers in the council, local businesses and the voluntary and community sector are made up of a range of people with diverse skillsets. This means that there is an eclectic mix of people who can work together to overcome pressing issues – like Brexit and the future of work and employment.

He identified that many of the resources to realise the goals for the borough, such as money, skills, and people were in the room. To build on our strengths, Councillor Hopkins outlined three areas of focus for collaboration:

How organisations in the borough centralise their information

A huge amount of data – both quantitative and qualitative – is collected across the borough. There is a big opportunity to bring this data together to build a common understanding of the challenges we currently face. While it is important to use this data to create a borough-wide view, it is also essential to ensure that we analyse data at various sub levels because some problems are local and specific and should be tackled by approaches such as neighbourhood working.

How we develop the ways we interact and meet as organisations

The borough goals present an opportunity to develop new ways of working together. We often collaborate through large get-togethers akin to the Borough Conference, or through formal governance boards. However, there are also ways in which groups can connect in less formal ways. As well as connecting through the Lambeth Strategic Partnership - Lambeth First - delegates were encouraged to seek new ways of connecting with each other.

How to think in a different way

We recognise that to work together in this way will require a new way of thinking. To start with, there is a need for us to put residents at the heart of everything we do. We need to be bolder about what matters and ask for things directly. We need to broaden the range of voices around the table so we can think in a different way. The council recently demonstrated this through the recent appointment of its new senior management team which brings together individuals from the private sector, the NHS, local government and central government. This mix of expertise will help the council to think differently as an organisation.

Councillor Hopkins ended by reinforcing his message of thanks for the work that the delegates do for the borough and emphasising the opportunity to build new connections and partnerships at the conference.

Key speech, Adam Lent, New Local Government Network

Adam Lent, Director of the New Local Government Network, spoke about different ways of building partnerships across both the public sector and Voluntary and Community Sector to create change. He shared a story which provoked his own 'light bulb moment' on the topic of improved partnership working:

“A young mum from Wales with two young children was evicted from home. She went to her local council and ended up rehoused in Doncaster in an unfurnished flat at 5:00pm on a Friday night. A council worker from Doncaster saw this and got in touch with their local Councillor, who then went onto Facebook and put out a call to the local community. The community came forwards immediately with offers of furniture, food and toys for the children. If they had gone through the traditional council route they wouldn't have received as much thoughtful support, or connections in the local community.”

Adam shared examples of research that demonstrate the broader value of the community support mentioned in his story: The World Health Organisation has identified that being part of strong community is as good for one's physical health as giving up smoking. In his story, this young mum being part of the community meant she was less likely to have problems down the line which would require services and professionals in her life, and result in additional costs for the public purse. Having the support of the community meant that she received support that was holistic and included building relationships that would last beyond her difficult experience. This contrasts with a specific service that would only treat one problem in isolation and in the short term.

The key shift which puts communities at the heart of helping people is effective partnerships and working together to provide holistic approaches to tackling challenges. This involves having open conversations with people so that they can describe how they want to change their lives and how they want their area to be changed. This should be the starting point of thinking about how to transform services to transform people's lives.

Workshop 1: More than bricks and mortar – how can we increase and build strong communities?



Workshop overview

Context

Lambeth is a growing borough, with a changing population. Like all London boroughs, we need to increase the amount of housing available to address the housing crisis. In Lambeth, we already have over 30,000 people on the council's waiting list for a home, and 2,400 households living in temporary accommodation which is mostly out of the borough. In addition to this, our population is set to rise to 365,000 by 2035.

Faced with these significant issues, we need to consider not only how we can best create more houses in the borough, but how these houses will meet the needs of individuals living in them and promote strong, resilient communities. The quality and responsiveness of housing to people's needs is an integral factor in peoples' health and wellbeing, economic circumstances, opportunities, and social networks.

Workshop aims

This workshop sought to explore how increasing housing can build strong communities. During this workshop, delegates:

- Developed practical ideas to feed into the council's new housing strategy
- Heard from and connected with a range of organisations working to support housing and community development in Lambeth

- Explored what we wanted to do more of, do less of and do differently

Workshop hosts and strategic context setting

Councillor Paul Gadsby and Councillor Matthew Bennet hosted the workshop.

Eleanor Purser, Strategic Director for Sustainable Growth and Opportunity, Lambeth Council, provided the strategic context.

Presenters

High Trees Community Trust

High Trees Community Trust presented on how they integrate employment, education, training support and community learning into their work with residents. They are also a great example of an organisation being reflective of and responsive to residents' needs, through their Children, Young People and Family services, which works on the basis of early intervention and delivers youth clubs and forums, adventure play, wellbeing projects and mentoring, amongst other initiatives.

Metropolitan Thames Valley

Metropolitan Thames Valley housing association acquired 1,967 homes from Lambeth Council. As part of this transfer, a master plan was created in consultation with residents and community stakeholders. At the heart of this was a vision to create homes which were high quality, affordable, well-managed and well-maintained.

Work Wise

Workwise is a partnership between St Mungo's homelessness charity and Lambeth Housing Management. It supports tenants who risk losing their home through welfare reform. They provide 1-2-1 support that equips people with knowledge and confidence to find work and manage income gaps.

Homes for Lambeth

Homes for Lambeth is a Council-owned company whose aim is to deliver high-quality homes while also maximising the number of homes provided at genuinely affordable rents, which will work to create strong and sustainable communities. They take a commercial approach to house building, which sees the company reinvest all profits into building more homes and supporting communities.

Workshop themes

1. Housing at the heart of community

There was a focus in the workshop on the need for housing to play an integral role in supporting someone throughout their life, in part though it's role in creating a supportive community. This means not just looking at housing in terms of physical improvements, but also through a people-focused lens. It was suggested that housing should be integrated into the borough's Health and Social Care partnership, Lambeth Together because connecting housing and health initiatives would help tenants to stay well and in turn, out of arrears. As well as connecting housing to large scale programmes, there were several other ideas including developing a Shared Lives scheme within new developments to integrate health and social care; and maximising the amount of green space within new developments to help with health and wellbeing.

A connection was made between housing and employment. Delegates recognised that whilst this was partly about supporting people into work or education in the first place, there is also an important place for ensuring people have what they need to sustain but to ensure that they can sustain this in the long term. When considering young people's longer-term prospects, one delegate suggested there should be a better offer for young people in supported housing for helping them apply to college or university. This would also support those renting in the private sector who would benefit from good advice regarding sustaining tenancies.

Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing's (MTVH) Clapham Park Estate regeneration, they have created a community centre which will provide weekly employment and money advice sessions, a homework club and fitness activities. MTVH have committed to providing a tour of the Clapham Park estate regeneration to see what does and what doesn't work for this type of development in the future.

Both the health and employment examples highlight a broader recommendation to have a whole-council or whole-partnership approach to issues, rather than a narrow intervention that is disconnected and badly communicated or connected to other strands of work.

In relation to wider community impact, delegates highlighted the importance of successful and effective partnerships between voluntary and community sector groups, the council, businesses and developers in order to build trust with the community. One suggestion was for developers to engage with partners and residents to define what good "community impact" looks like. Linked to this, there was also a recommendation to have more transparency and clarity on Section 106 agreements, and how the money can be spent to ensure that the benefits to the community are maximised.

The key recommendations were to:

- Link housing strategy/development plans with health initiatives e.g. Lambeth Together
- Make more links between housing development and employment/low wage interventions
- Create a shared picture of good community impact/social value and a plan for achieving it

2. Housing which is responsive to needs

The need for housing which is responsive to and reflective of residents' needs was a theme which ran throughout the entire workshop. This included a focus on understanding the needs of different residents - such as older people, younger people, and those with disabilities – by involving them in the various design stages of housing and community development. It was highlighted that engaging residents would require a range of methods as not all communities and residents are able to participate equally in traditional consultation exercises.

Furthermore, it was highlighted that effective housing providers and the council should create more organised platforms to hear the community voice and at the same time publish 'good' data on existing initiatives so there is a transparent process of judging their success.

There were specific comments regarding the need to pay more attention to the needs of the Latin American community in Lambeth, as members of this community are often seen to live in poor-quality housing. Delegates suggested that through understanding the range of issues faced by residents, it would be possible to provide more bespoke responses. For example,

by understanding the need of disabled residents, it is understood that there should be free parking for disabled people and their carers near to their homes.

One idea was to work with people living on estates as part of the engagement process who could speak to their neighbours and gather feedback as these individuals are better placed to convey messages to residents than people who represent specific organisations.

More specifically, comments arose regarding the need for better methods of management and feedback from the council, including a less 'top-down' approach to housing building and management. There was also a call for there to be less of a 'red tape' and contract culture, so that both contractors and residents could have more independence in decision making in smaller scale sites.

Several ideas arose around this theme in the workshop, which all focus on the need for housing to be truly responsive to those individuals living there. Ideas included:

- Making it easier for families to stay near each other in terms of housing, including working to ensure older people can move near their children, even if this is out of borough
- Encouraging the effective scrutiny of plans by communities before they are enacted
- Balloting all estates threatened with regeneration so that existing residents have a say in its future
- Ensuring that housing providers meaningfully engage with communities to ensure the best outcomes for residents

As well as more frequent conversations with residents in terms of their housing needs, delegates made the case for more detailed and frequent conversations with developers regarding local jobs in the development's supply chain. In the workshop, *developers expressed their openness to discussions about this housing need going forward, as well as opportunities to better define "community impact" and to explore Social Value through procurement.* Further still, there was a suggestion that the council should integrate the Social Value Act into all commissioning, so that community groups can benefit from development in the borough.

The key recommendations were to:

- Understand the wide range of needs of the specific residents you are working with – whether that be relating to caring responsibilities, health requirements or language barriers
- Meaningfully involve (i.e. beyond traditional consultation) a range of people in designing homes, particularly those with specific needs so it's right for them first time
- Create opportunities for more local decision making by residents on issues that affect them

3. Affordability and availability of housing

Delegates were concerned that the regeneration of local areas has the result of pricing families out, and therefore, there is a desire to see more social housing at 'social' rent. To define 'social rent' (as opposed to 'affordable rent'), they want to see a better way of calculating 'affordable' rental calculations for the borough, because there is not currently a clear definition of 'affordable'.

Participants in the workshop commented that rents of 80% of full market rent are too high, and there was a mixed response to the suggestion that there should be no Right to Buy on the six regeneration estates in the borough, due to the possibility of this decreasing the already low housing stock in the borough. Other ideas which arose from the workshop were:

- Revising the council's rent calculation formula, so it is not linked to property value as this drives up the cost of Homes for Lambeth properties
- Increasing the amount of temporary accommodation and modular units
- Increasing the number of the shared ownership initiative properties
- Restricting Right to Buy rules, so that some local properties cannot be bought under this scheme

To help make this happen, delegates requested clearer communication about the role that housing revenue (and mixed-tenure housing) plays in supporting wider outcomes for the borough. It was also suggested that this work could be used to challenge and change the perception of people who live in social and council housing more widely.

The key recommendations were to:

- Develop a clearer and fairer definition/calculation of affordable or social rent
- Communicate the ways in which housing revenue and section 106 money is feeding back into the borough
- Broaden the mix of housing available, for example increase the amount of temporary accommodation and shared ownership properties available, and restrict the Right to Buy scheme

4. Getting the basics right

Good maintenance of housing – and its connection people's wellbeing – was a theme which arose frequently throughout this workshop. Workshop participants suggested that there should be better monitoring of contractors who are engaged in the maintenance and redevelopment of properties to ensure that maintenance work is done quickly, effectively and successfully. It was noted that poor repairs and maintenance (for example when scaffolding is left up for prolonged periods of time) can adversely impact a resident's mental health. There was a strong case made that housing providers and private landlords should prioritise maintenance at an early stage. From a council perspective, some delegates made the case for investing and refurbishing existing properties, instead of decanting residents from older properties and knocking them down; and to invest in higher quality refurbishment when this does happen. There was also a request to simplify the process of leaseholders obtaining the Right to Manage their properties.

It was also suggested that all properties should be properly insulated as part of this maintenance, which would keep fuel use and costs down and aid the borough's response to the climate emergency.

The key recommendations were to:

- Ensure housing providers (both public and private) use good quality of contractors
- Respond early with maintenance as poor housing has a knock-on effect on mental health
- Always aim to refurbish rather than decant residents from older properties and rebuild them

Workshop 2: It takes a village to raise a child: what role can all play in fostering resilience in our families, neighbourhoods and borough?

Workshop overview

Context

The ability of an individual to identify and connect to the appropriate resources needed to navigate, withstand and recover from challenging situations is an important part of developing and maintaining resilience. While we know that the energy and expertise of our diverse communities are a source of major strength, we recognise that some residents – notably our young people – are often denied opportunities and trapped in cycles which are counterproductive to their success and ability to make use of available resources. In the last three years, Lambeth has successfully developed the LEAP programme. This programme contributes to three key areas that play an important part in a child's early life development and has become Unicef baby friendly accredited. However, there is more that can be done to help young people across all age groups in Lambeth.

Workshop aims

This workshop sought to further explore what resilience looks like for young people, families and communities in the borough, and the role we can all play in realising the brightest possible future for children and young people in Lambeth.

During this workshop, delegates:

- Agreed a shared understanding of resilience – including what it is and what it isn't
- Developed practical ideas that will feed into the development of the Borough Plan
- Connected with a range of individuals and organisations working to support children and families across the borough
- Identified what needs to change and the contribution organisations in Lambeth can make towards this goal

Workshop host

Councillor Jim Dickson hosted this workshop.

Presenters

Early Help

The Early Help team is a family support service that works with families when they need help. Their role is to help families deal with their problems as soon as they arise and connect families to people/services within their local community who can help them. They work with the whole family and partners internally and externally (housing, community safety, voluntary and community sector, schools, health) to achieve this.

Lambeth Made

Lambeth Made is a unique campaign to make Lambeth one of the best places in the world for children and young people to grow up. They aim to mobilise all of Lambeth's resources, skills, and imagination to improve and create opportunities for all, making a marked difference for children and young people in the borough.

Iconic Steps

Iconic steps upskills young people in video production, photography, and editing services, amongst other creative skills. They aim to develop a growth mind set in young people so they can overcome barriers and take their first steps towards a fulfilling career in the creative industries.

Ebony Horse Club

Ebony Horse Club are a community riding centre in Brixton. They teach riding and horse care and take groups to outdoor events and on trips away. They believe that riding and horse care can have a transformative effect on young people growing up in South London's most disadvantaged communities. With the Club, young people learn new skills, develop aspirations and take on new responsibilities. Through their youth services work, they also mentor children, giving support to those that need it most.



Workshop questions

1. What does resilience mean?

Resilience was defined as something which is integral to young people's lives; it means social skills being taught to primary school-age children, listening to young people's voices in conversations about communities, and having faith in young people. However, throughout the conversation, there was also an overarching feeling that resilience is intrinsically linked to having dealt with hardships in life, which led to some discomfort about the connotations of using the word.

Some of the ideas that emerged in relation to increasing resilience were to create more ingrained links between what exists already. For example, developing more links between the council's Early Help team and community groups across the borough, as well as more facilitated connections between those in poverty and borough-wide opportunities which support young people, like Lambeth Made. There was a call in general for businesses within the borough to become more involved with community groups, as benefits potentially exist on both sides of the relationships, as well as for politicians to connect with individuals in the borough on a personal level.

Following on from this, there was the suggestion that resilience means making connections in general, as forging connections across the borough gives people the chance to interact with good role models; to be able to discuss their problems and be listened to; and to know who is out there in the community to help them at any given time. This could be taken further by creating a local volunteering platform, which could be used to educate individuals about how to create local networks and connect with their communities more.

The key recommendations were to:

- Recognise that resilience is integral to young people's lives and developed early on through the teaching of social skills, responsibility and listening to them in group and community discussions
- Understand that resilience is also intrinsically linked to having dealt with hardships
- Create more opportunities for connection at all levels – for young people, for services, across organisations and sectors

2. What does resilience not mean?

The workshop, in its efforts to define resilience as a term, sought to define what resilience did not mean. This exercise allowed people's challenges with the word itself to surface. Resilience was thought not to mean being an island, or being a 'tough' individual, which echoed the comments that resilience should mean 'being connected'. It was highlighted that encouraging resilience should not substitute money or responsibility in terms of service provision or mean that communities should focus on the bare minimum rather than aspiring to do more in their lives – 'it is not about just surviving'.

The key recommendations were to:

- Maintain the funding and delivery of services that support local people alongside the development of individual and community resilience
- Understand that resilience is a quality that is continually developed and involves the maximisation of one's potential at any given time

3. What could get in the way of resilience?

Within this workshop, delegates identified what could get in the way of resilience, both for individuals and collective barriers to resilience within a community or place. It was noted that these should be used to better understand resilience, not to 'blame' people for a lack of it.

Internal barriers to resilience: mind set; not learning from new experiences; not being imaginative in ways to tackle struggles; mental health challenges; fear and financial instability

External barriers to resilience: negative external pressure to conform to what your peers are doing; cuts to services; policies which are 'anti-resilience' and make it hard to get help when you need it

Collective barriers to resilience: wider prejudices in society creating barriers to people succeeding; a lack of community connections, role models or exposure to aspirational goals in communities.

The key recommendations were to:

- Acknowledge that the barriers to achieving resilience may be individually, externally or collectively created – for example, mental health challenges, cuts to services and a lack of community connections; and that these need to be addressed together

Ideas for a resilient borough going forward

To think about how communities can be resilient in the future, the workshop thought about what resilience should be. Delegates provided multiple answers to this question:

- Resilience is about critical thinking, determination underpinned by the right support networks.
- Resilience is about the importance of role models and inspirations.
- Resilience is about coming out of autopilot, taking control and having the skills to fly. To this you want a PhD: P for persistence, H for hungry to achieve, D for determination
- Resilience does not mean that we should focus on the bare minimum. We need to continue to aspire.
- The secret to resilience is communication and building meaningful partnerships.
- Resilience is about going beyond the minimum to survive, and offering tangible housing and financial support for people to thrive
- Resilience is about having supported families so that all generations can thrive
- Resilience is about supporting and educating people so they can contribute to change in their own lives
- Resilience is about working together and with other boroughs to combine efforts, including sharing data and knowledge, and showing the positive impacts being made

In this workshop, the use of the word 'resilient' itself was contested, and there was still a need to describe the qualities that will support communities to withstand adversities. It is recommended that the council reviews its definition of resilience and explores the complexities around this word.

The key recommendations were to:

- Educate people and connect them to good role models, so that they have the skills, determination and confidence to change their own lives
- Encourage the continued development of an individual's potential and not just the achievement of a 'bare minimum' targets
- Provide communities with good housing and adequate financial support, so that they have the right conditions to survive and thrive
- Work with other local authorities, share knowledge and celebrate positive outcomes
- Review the council's definition of resilience to ensure that it is relevant and developed with Lambeth First Partnership discussions in mind

Workshop 3: It's time to change - what can we do to support better wellbeing and mental health in Lambeth?

Workshop overview

Context

Lambeth has high levels of deprivation and this brings significant challenges in health, but for some residents, poor health outcomes are more prevalent. Locally, adults from a Black background are overrepresented in their use of secondary care mental health services (Lambeth First Mental Conference 2019).

Research shows that there are strong determinants for mental ill-health, and that people from Black backgrounds are more likely to experience risk factors associated with health inequalities, such as exclusion from school, being a looked after child, contact with the youth justice system, poverty and homelessness compared to White British peers (Department of Health 2011 and Black Thrive Shared Measurement 2019).

These findings suggest that the reduction in health inequalities cannot be achieved through the delivery of mental health services alone, and that a holistic approach must be taken to tackling mental ill health across the borough – especially if we want to reach people before their circumstances worsen.

Workshop aims

This workshop sought to explore mental health and wellbeing inequalities, possible interventions and ways of increasing mental health literacy across the borough. During this workshop, delegates:

- Explored the challenges and health inequalities in the borough
- Connected with a range of individuals and organisations working to improve wellbeing and mental health
- Identified what needs to change and the contribution that organisations can make

Workshop host

This workshop was hosted by Councillor Ed Davie.

Presenters

Time to Change

Time to Change is a growing movement of people changing how we all think and act about mental health problems. They support employers, schools and individuals change the way they support people with mental health problems through having individuals who have had lived experience of mental health problems acting as 'mental health champions' to end stigma.

Brockwell Park Community Green Houses

Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses help people grow through learning, and learn through growing, and aim to tackle mental health problems by helping people spend more time outdoors and acquainted with nature. They run a drop in-garden volunteering scheme, school visits, family events, courses and workshops all in a very friendly community spirit.

Project Smith

Project Smith a Lambeth based project, about residents working together with NHS Lambeth CCG and Lambeth Council, and recognising that the community and people are the assets and key to good health and wellbeing. Project Smith aims to support people to manage their own health and wellbeing (or condition) by having access to the right information and assistance; to help people avoid a crisis or minimise it (especially for those living independently); and to build stronger community ties.

Mosaic Clubhouse

Mosaic Clubhouse supports people who are living with a mental health condition in the London Borough of Lambeth. Mosaic's approach is built on the internationally recognised Clubhouse model, which embeds co-production between staff and members throughout all activities. The Clubhouse offers its members and visitors a wide range of volunteering opportunities, access to education & employment, crisis support, information and signposting to other local organisations.

Workshop themes

1. Employer awareness

The merits of increasing employer awareness of mental health and its effects was mentioned throughout the workshop. Multiple ideas related to this theme were discussed, including the possibility of incentivising local employers to consider a wider range of candidates when employing individuals to support more people successfully into work. There was also the suggestion that there should be the development of 'good' jobs for people with poor mental health, and that there should be more integrated support in workplaces, for example through mentors, or varied workplace opportunities. There was also the suggestion that individuals with mental health issues could assess or evaluate existing employer services, to influence the designing and delivery of these services in future.

To make this happen, there were suggestions that there could be employer-provided workshops in workplaces which could teach and support people to channel grief into power. These would be especially helpful for frontline workers or those who deal with the public and their wide range of trauma and challenges on a day to day basis. There was also the suggestion that to diversify the workforce, there must be a way to incentivise employers to consider the candidate who may be deemed 'unconventional' to allow them to succeed.

The key recommendations were to:

- Develop suitable jobs for people with poor mental health
- Incentivize employers to consider hiring people with a wide range of support needs
- Provide workshops which encourage employees to channel their grief into power
- Involve individuals with mental health issues in the delivery of workplace support

2. Community-led change

Within the workshop, the idea was also raised that change could not all be led by public sector institutions, but also by the community itself. One delegate made a strong case for community and voluntary organising workshops with local partners to develop solutions to their area's employment and mental health issues. Other delegates explored the different role that large institutions and organisations could play in supporting this type of activity such as alternative funding models like participatory budgeting. These large organisations were also identified as being able to offer different kinds of support, for example, providing space for people to meet and collaborate to produce their own initiatives. *Black Thrive offered to provide spaces for discussions such as these, and West London Mission St Luke's offered to be a single point of contact for those who want to come together and collaborate.* This would allow the mind-set around mental health to change and show that progress can be achieved outside of statutory service provisions.

The key recommendations were to:

- Community organisations to facilitate discussions about local solutions to employment and mental health issues
- Let local people to have a say in how public money is spent i.e. participatory budgeting
- Large institutions to offer spaces for the community to collaborate and to produce their own initiatives

3. Connecting people to what exists locally

A key challenge that was raised was how difficult it is for anyone to have up to date knowledge of what exists locally in terms of support, and the opportunities available to organise locally as discussed above. To enable this to happen, there was a recognised importance to be able to signpost those with mental ill-health to local opportunities, and this could happen through dedicated Community Connector roles. To aid this to happen, there should be additional community facilitation services, which would provide training for community leaders, such as the Community Connectors teams in Project Smith. There could also be 'Open Space Days' in communities whereby spaces, such as halls, are opened up for the community to use to collaborate around a topic.

There was a discussion about making it easy for residents or practitioners to access information. This could involve an accessible place to show where services are, including spaces where people can talk. There was also an idea to conduct better mapping, and the production of something akin to an on-line map with organisations in their locations with corresponding services, age groups and populations they work with and website links, amongst other things. **The Greater London Lieutenancy, which connects with thousands of local people and organisations, offered to act as 'sign posters' and 'connectors' to help people and resources come together. They also suggested they could link between other boroughs as they represent all of London.** This would facilitate both the connection of individuals to groups in their community, and the connection between groups themselves. A challenge raised was that many of these tools exist already that haven't been able to solve the issue.

The key recommendations were to:

- Continue to provide quality training for Community Connectors

- Enable those with mental health issues to access local resources more easily e.g. through dedicated Community Connectors or via a more visible and centralised help database

4. Looking and thinking beyond the focus of the service

There was a strong call for organisations to consider their role and impact from a wider lens. This means looking beyond the narrow focus of existing services and recognising that the challenges people face are often interconnected. *For example, Vauxhall City Farm have pledged to provide access to nature and animals and volunteering opportunities on the farm such as gardening with horses, in the café, on events and supporting educational workshops. They also look beyond the scope of their service and run supported employability programmes.* Suggestions of how to make this happen included that mental health awareness should be embedded in customer services staff training and that the Probations Service's Community Payback initiative could provide mentoring and support with mental health. There was also a call for the need for professionals who people can relate to, to be present in services who work with people as individuals rather than service users. To make this happen, there is an opportunity to look more closely at what other boroughs are doing, and how Lambeth could learn from this. *Colleagues in the Health sector pledged to raise this at the Lambeth Patient Participation Group Network.*

The key recommendations were to:

- Understand that the challenges that people face are often interconnected
- Embed mental health awareness into customer services training across a range of sectors
- Ensure mental health care professionals are diverse and relatable

5. Services being explicit about tackling inequality

As well as the need for professionals to look beyond their own roles or services scope, delegates highlighted the need for services to explicitly assess how they are tackling inequality through their services and identify improvements or redesign requirements as a result. There was a strong sense of agreement in the room that to achieve this, organisations should work with individuals who are affected by mental health and treat them as equals, valuing their input in the reassessing of existing services. Delegates highlighted that this would require changes in current engagement and consultation activities so that they were more inclusive, for example, allowing consultation with the non-English speaking community or those who are not digitally literate. It was suggested that it would be useful if Lambeth's senior leaders shared their own lived experience or significant understanding of the matter.

The key recommendations were to:

- Assess how mental health inequality is being tackled and identify service improvements
- Involve people with mental health issues in the assessment of services
- Facilitate honest conversations about mental health amongst seniors within the borough

Workshop 4: Lambeth has declared a climate emergency - how can become a zero-carbon borough?

Workshop overview

Context

Lambeth was the first borough in London – and one of the first local authorities in the UK – to declare a climate emergency. Tackling climate change and ending our contribution to the UK's carbon footprint is not only the right and essential thing to do for our planet, but it is also essential to ensuring that we reduce inequality right here in our borough. We know that our more disadvantaged communities are hit disproportionately harder by climate change through fuel poverty because of rising utility prices, increasing food prices as crops fail, or from prolonged exposure to extreme temperatures, amongst other things. Given that Lambeth is one of the most deprived areas of the country, we must address this issue. A joint effort is required as everyone has a role in bringing about change – individuals, organisations and the council must work together to tackle climate change.

Workshop aims

This workshop explored how Lambeth can lead the way in tackling climate change and its negative impacts across communities and heard from a range of existing initiatives that could inspire us to make plans. Through this workshop we:

- Developed practical ideas that will feed into the borough's climate change response
- Heard from and connected with a range of individuals and organisations working to tackle the climate emergency across the borough
- Identified what needs to change and the contribution individuals and organisations can make to this

Workshop host

This workshop was hosted by Councillor Claire Holland.

Presenters

Brixton Liveable Neighbourhood

Brixton Liveable Neighbourhood aim to reduce car dependency and make walking, cycling or public transport the natural choice for those in the borough. Consulting with residents of the communities is integral to their work, and they concentrate on developing a working relationship with the community to create a collaborative design project for each neighbourhood. For example, they work with community stakeholders such as the Brixton Society, local GPs, religious groups, Mums for Lungs, and Friends of the Earth before they develop any strategic plan.

Kings College London Sustainability Team

KCL are an organisation which has an ambitious sustainability agenda and have committed to be carbon neutral by 2025. They run an annual Sustainability Week, which aims to

educate people about the climate emergency and sustainability. They also have a dedicated website which teaches people how to eat, recycle and travel sustainably. They also contribute to these goals through their research and teaching.

RePowering Brixton

RePowering provide the tools and know-how to enable communities to develop and own their own renewable energy sources to save money and reduce their carbon emissions. This can be on housing blocks, schools, churches or other public buildings. Currently, one of their community-based projects, Lambeth Community Solar, is open to investors. The project will raise £137,000 to install 145 kWp of solar panels on two schools in Lambeth. These solar panels will save 31 tonnes of CO₂ a year and create a £33,000 community fund.

Transition Towns

Transition Towns Brixton work to ensure that climate change is at the forefront of minds in Brixton. They develop a vision of a better low energy/carbon future for Brixton and plan how to get there. They are a community-led initiative with several working groups in different areas of interest, working on different projects to plan a transition to a low-energy future, such as the Brixton Pound and Remade in Brixton.

Workshop themes

1. Education and behaviour change

Delegates identified that the need for successful education around climate change was a key component of changing behaviours. Participants in the workshop suggested that those who know about climate change and its risks could volunteer by going door to door, educating individuals on things such as how to recycle properly, which could create significant change. There was also a suggestion that all libraries in the borough should be fully staffed and offer accessible information on climate change to promote community involvement and buy-in. Participants agreed that an educational tool which was accessible user-friendly and explained how to monitor your own carbon usage would have the ability to impact on individual behaviour changes, and therefore effect larger-scale change. In terms of wider community initiatives, participants in workshops suggested that the council could do more to promote successful community initiatives in the borough to help them gain traction with the population, as well as doing more to educate businesses on how they could work positively within the climate emergency.

Delegates also discussed ideas for several behaviour change initiatives. For example, there was an idea to encourage more shared use of cars for those who choose to drive in the borough, whilst at the same time, other delegates highlighted that the focus should be on increased use of public transport rather than privately owned vehicles. Delegates explored opportunities to reduce the carbon footprint of the borough and recommended that residents should eat less food with a higher carbon footprint, such as red meat. Further ideas included encouraging individuals to shop local and eat locally grown, seasonal food, as well as the need for advertising to change to prompt these behaviours, such as encouraging advertising for 'greener' products. *Regarding community education, Transition Towns Brixton pledged to work with people to enable them to envision a low-carbon future, by providing community facilitator training, and hosting open space days in communities on key issues.*

When asked what was needed to help make these initiatives happen, some delegates suggested that the approach should be to start small and local, looking at individual choices,

and to tackle this firstly through the means of education, and then through enforcement through strategies and policies.

The key recommendations were to:

- Organise and equip volunteers with the resources needed to educate residents 'on the doorstep'
- Centralise information on climate change to promote community involvement and buy-in e.g. information at libraries or educational self-assessment tools
- Celebrate successful community initiatives more widely to influence individual behaviour
- Devise a range of behaviour change initiatives e.g. encouraging car sharing, promoting increased use of public transport, advertising 'greener' food products

2. Infrastructure

As well as individual behaviour changes, a further theme which arose in the workshop was infrastructure. This theme addresses significantly larger projects which are less about the individual and more about how we can change the borough structurally to address the climate emergency. Here, there were a few ideas and recommendations generated:

- More diverse sources of energy employed in the borough, through groups such as solar and energy co-ops
- Low-carbon delivery of services
- More green parking spaces in the borough
- More accessible and shared transport
- More local facilities for recycling and composting.
- More clean-air buses as well as pedestrian and cycle friendly streets
- Green screens around as many places in the borough as possible, not just schools.

There was also a suggestion for the council specifically – that the planning process should enable the enforcement of more stringent insulation standards.

The key recommendations were to:

- Implement more diverse sources of energy across the borough
- Provide more green parking spaces, recycling and composting facilities
- Introduce more 'green screens' around the borough
- Support more environmentally friendly modes of transport and movement e.g. clean-air buses, cycling and walking

3. Prioritising the climate emergency

Throughout the workshop, there was a strong call for the issue of climate change to become an issue of prioritisation and focus within businesses and public bodies. Part of this would involve identifying the biggest source of pollution or carbon emissions in the borough and using this to help prioritise carbon reduction strategies for the borough. *Considering this, Lambeth Council have pledged to be more transparent and open in their decisions regarding the climate emergency.*

In terms of what the borough should be doing differently, there was a push for organisations throughout the borough to put climate in first place on their agendas and treating it with the urgency due to any other emergency. This should include organisations considering how

they can have as local a supply chain as possible, and assessing their assets e.g. having whole life carbon assessments of their buildings.

Ideas of how to prioritise climate change in organisations were discussed in the room. Larger companies could consider how they can effectively divest from fossil fuel companies, instead investing pension funds locally, and to install Climate Change as an over-arching priority, encompassing all other goals. In terms of smaller and more local organisations ideas included considering using small, local companies for repairs as often as possible. As well, discussion included the recommendation for the council's Citizen's Assembly to effectively prioritise disadvantaged groups, children and young people, so that as many voices were heard as possible.

For these things to happen successfully, there was a recognition that the council should play an enabling and supportive role, and should look to its internal functions first; there should be the open sharing of data, knowledge, and successes regarding effective carbon reduction; there should be and that local plans and planning decisions must be made on firm carbon emissions data.

The key recommendations were to:

- Identify the biggest source of pollution and carbon emissions in the borough and use this information to inform strategies
- Consider how local supply chains and assets can be used more effectively
- Share data, knowledge and successes regarding carbon reduction

4. Connections and support

There was an understanding in the room that for people to best learn about effective responses to the climate emergency and enact these strategies, connections must be made for ideas to be exchanged. It was suggested that organisations in the Voluntary and Community Sector across the borough should work together to share ideas across the sector.

However, networks should also be made across sectors, for example, to ensure that properties work best to reduce carbon, voluntary organisations could connect with local social enterprises or construction companies to retrofit properties in the most responsible way possible. Similarly, the idea of the use of public buildings for multiple purposes should be explored to maximise their usage.

Throughout this workshop there also was a recognition that the climate emergency is a very complex issue, and that there should be more time and opportunity for people to co-produce and co-design solutions to these problems, including working with other boroughs as well as within the borough. To enable this collaboration to happen, there should be the sharing of data and knowledge across both organisations and sectors.

The key recommendations were to:

- Connect organisations across various sectors to ensure best practice and ideas are shared
- Allow people, local authorities and organisations to co-produce and co-design solutions to climate related problems

Closing Plenary: Working Together for Lambeth

Working Together for Lambeth, Andrew Travers

Andrew Travers, Chief Executive of Lambeth Council, began the final plenary by thanking the attendees for coming and reminded delegates of the workshops that had occurred. In the current climate of funding cuts due to continued austerity and little direction from central government, he reminded us that there are clear struggles. However, if we work in partnerships across the borough, and include the people of Lambeth, he was confident that we can stand up to the challenges we are facing and deliver on growth and reforming our services to ensure we have a great place to work and live in.

He highlighted his commitment to ensuring the council has the capacity to deliver what it needs to deliver:

- To make sure we are consistent with our message by sticking with and delivering on the Borough Plan
- To provide the infrastructure that our organisations need to make these relationships with one another and facilitating connections
- To link over-arching services to what we do at the neighbourhood level
- To provide and understand, on behalf of the partnerships, the data and analysis which underpins all our work
- To make our data and analysis available more widely, so that we can see the progress we are making and monitor continuing inequality in our communities

The room were then invited to share how important partnerships are to them in their day to day working, and unsurprisingly, most people felt that partnerships were vital. For the final interactive session, Councillor Jacqui Dyer invited delegates to take part in an open space activity to read and contribute to ideas generated through the different workshops.

Looking forwards, Councillor Jim Dickson

Councillor Jim Dickson, Cabinet member for the Voluntary Sector and Partnerships, closed the conference by reflecting on the day. He celebrated the rich conversations and ground covered over the course of the afternoon, which he highlighted as a sign of the appetite there is in the borough to solve problems. The day was recognised as a good foundation to build on, and the next steps for this work were identified as looking at how organisations in the borough are connected and how networks intersect, building on the visual mapping activity that the Social Change Agency completed at the event. He concluded with a reflection, that there needs to be increased partnership working across the borough goals, as this will reflect the richness of Lambeth's people, organisations and communities, and in turn mean that Lambeth can act as more than the sum of all its parts.