

Reducing health inequalities through council services and partner organisations.

Report of the Healthy Communities Scrutiny
Commission

April 2019

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This is the final report of the review into health inequities by the Healthy Communities Scrutiny Commission, who decided to conduct this review in the autumn of 2018. The aim of the review is to make recommendations to the Cabinet and partner agencies.
- 1.2 The review set out to ensure that the planning process, local estates management, and wider social regeneration agenda plays its part in improving the health of residents, particularly for those experiencing multiple social and economic disadvantages. It chose to focus on improving community cohesiveness and the uptake by disadvantaged communities of the following council and health services:
 - free swim and gym offer
 - parks and green spaces
 - walking and cycling routes and pathways
 - community activities
 - community activism
 - improved neighbourhood connections, relationships and mutual support
 - General Practice
- 1.3 The Commission chose this subject because Southwark has some very high levels of health inequalities. Whilst there has been significant regeneration in Southwark in recent years, the borough remains one of the most deprived in the country. Southwark is the 40th most deprived of 326 local authorities in England and ninth most deprived out of 32 local authorities in London. Two in five Southwark residents live in communities ranked in the 20% most deprived areas nationally. By contrast, only two in one hundred residents live in communities considered the least deprived nationally. There is also considerable disparity between people living in more affluent areas of Southwark and those in the most deprived: at age 55 44% of people with no qualifications will have a physically limiting health condition, but only 6% of people with a degree will do so.
- 1.4 As well as universal services the council and its partners have a number of important levers to improve health and wellbeing: the council has some innovative public health programmes that the council has pioneered, particularly Free Swim and Gym and Free Healthy School Meals. There is also an ambitious programme of regeneration, which is operating at both a large scale and also within estates to increase the social housing capacity via the recently initiated Great Estates programme. The borough also benefits from many parks, open spaces and has an active community and voluntary sector.
- 1.5 In order to focus the review it was decided to choose an estate to do a small piece of community research. Bells Garden Estate was chosen as a relatively deprived area but where there is good engagement through the Tenant and Residents Association (TRA) and local community

organisations, which might offer some examples of good practice in supporting people to engage with health and wellbeing opportunities. Fortuitously it is also undergoing a small regeneration programme, as part of the Great Estates programme, with the planned provision of more social housing and some private housing, which will enable the rebuilding of the existing community centre and multi use games area (MUGA). Bells Gardens Estate is located in Peckham, in the centre of the borough where there is a concentration of deprivation.

- 1.6 The review offered a timely opportunity to explore 'health and wellbeing' at a local estate level with the Great Estates work running parallel. The intention is to explore if this could be a possible template for replicating and developing the scheme elsewhere.

EVIDENCE CONSIDERED & METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 Officers from Southwark Council environment department gave an overview of parks and leisure, as well as of uptake on Free Swim and Gym (FSG) and how the related referral programme is targeted to those most in need
- 2.2 Public Health gave a comprehensive overview of health inequalities and the strategies and initiatives Southwark council and Southwark NHS has in place to reduce these. Many of these are joint initiatives and involve a range of outside partners, including schools.
- 2.3 Resident Involvement and Public Health assisted with conducting the community research on the Bell Gardens estate by :
 - Providing data on health check take ups and disease prevalence in the locality compared to national averages
 - Mapping the available air quality information
 - Undertaking research on use of liberates and leisure centers by residents of the estate
 - Identifying community groups operating in the area and seeking anecdotal evidence
 - Outlining food insecurity and poverty in the locality
 - Giving an overview of smoking cessation services
- 2.4 Engagement was a key approach. In addition to the above resident views were gathered by:
 - Holding a session with members TRA on how they would like to tackle public health, in conjunction with King's College London public health researcher based at Guys.
 - Asking residents about their health and wellbeing priorities during a consultation event on the proposed on estate regeneration
 - Considering the Bells Gardens midway consultation questionnaire results on proposed changes to the estate

2.5 The Commission considered three reports:

- A matter of justice: Local government's role in tackling health inequalities <https://www.local.gov.uk/matter-justice-local-governments-role-tackling-healthinequalities>
- Making Every Adult Matter MEAM <http://www.themeamapproach.org.uk/>
- Be Active Birmingham <https://theaws.co.uk/>

2.6 Academic research on the theme was also considered.

Encouraging social cohesion and combating isolation

3.1 Bell Gardens has good community facilities, including a purpose built community centre, and a multi use games area (MUGA). The TRA is active and effective, running social events and lobbying the council for improvements to the estate and local environment. The following community groups also use the facilities or have held events there:

- Southwark Law Centre
- Southwark Trade Union
- The Ernest Foundation
- Apostolic Church
- Learning Curve Group
- Ivoiriens Unis UK
- Southwark Trade council
- KIDS Southwark
- Cubs & Scouts youth groups
- Bags of Taste

3.2 Despite the above, TRA members interviewed said Bell Gardens is not a particularly close knit estate and they suspect there is an issue with loneliness. They thought a resource was needed to identify and help lonely people, which would ideally come from embedding health workers in the community center, but could also come from making better use of the estate officer who knew isolated residents.

3.3 Residents at the consultation event also said that they are keen for more opportunities to meet their neighbours. A number remarked on the importance of their current good neighbourly relationships. The current community services and TRA activities are valued. A few older people said that more activities geared to their age group would be welcome. The TRA wanted more funding for sustainable and consistent activities and advertising for neighbourhood events. They said over time events can reach more people if they occur regularly.

3.4 Social isolation and loneliness are increasingly being recognized as having a major impact on our health and wellbeing; both the quantity and quality of our interactions make a huge difference. 'Social Isolation' and 'Loneliness' are often used interchangeably, but they are different. It is possible for people who are not socially isolated to experience loneliness. Social isolation refers

to the inadequate quality and quantity of social relations with other people at the different levels where human interaction takes place (individual, group, community and the larger social environment). Loneliness is an emotional perception that can be experienced by individuals regardless of the breadth of their social networks. The Campaign to End Loneliness say that research indicates that lacking social connections is a comparable risk factor for early death as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and is worse for us than well-known risk factors such as obesity and physical inactivity. Southwark is developing a strategy to combat a social isolation.

- 3.5 The Commission received evidence from Public Health that the built environment can be a barrier to social connections, especially in deprived areas that may lack good public transport links and adequate provision of green and public spaces where people can socialise. Most Bell Gardens residents responding to the questionnaire on proposed changes to the estate considered that the present community centre, multi use games area (MUGA) were important for community events and the latter particularly for children. The green spaces were also particularly highly valued, both for the enjoyment of nature and perceived health benefits, as well as being space for people to come together. A few people thought pathways did not work well, lighting was inadequate and the *'present landscaping prevents people from coming together as a community'*.
- 3.6 There were a number of compliments on the present community centre flexibility and as well as suggestions for improvements when the community centre is re-provided. Anti Social Behaviour was mentioned, though not over emphasised. A few residents said that the presence of people provided a feeling of safety.

Recommendations:

1) When re-providing community centres, MUGA and building new housing through the Great Estates programme the council ought to:

- ***Ensure the architects use the Sport England active design guideline guild lines***

Active Design ¹ is a guidance document produced by sports England on how to encourage and promote sport and physical activity through the design and layout of the built environment. It is recommended that this guidance is considered by the architects when designing the new community centre. The guidance recommendations include:

- Manage facilities and open spaces to encourage a range of activities to allow all to take part, including activities for all genders, all ages and all cultures
- Opportunities should be explored to create public spaces that encourage users to interact including seating areas, multi-use landscaping and safe and attractive public spaces.

¹ Active Design ,Sports England 2015

Sports facilities should be located in prominent positions in the local community, raising awareness of their existence, inspiring people to use them and ensuring they can become focal points for the community and social interaction.

- ***Ensure the green and public space, including pathways, promotes and provides for social interaction and community gatherings , and the permeability of the estate is improved e.g. signage and wayfinding, lighting***
-
- ***Ensure that community centres cater to the needs of local residents, providing opportunities for healthy activities to take place which promote social cohesion.***

2) Explore how the council can further support and empower resident groups to organise activities & events to meet each other

3) Explore ways to communicate to residents what health and wellbeing services and activities are on offer.

4) Investigate the capacity to embed local health workers in local estates and for the housing estate officer to work to combat social isolation, given their local knowledge of residents who may be isolated and potential to signpost vulnerable residents to health & social provision

Estate maintenance: security, rubbish disposal, damp & mildew, noise

3.7 Residents said that present arrangements for disposing rubbish and recycling are not working for residents and that this was creating concerns over hygiene. The TRA members consider this was about education, but did not want to patronize people. Respondents to the survey identified problematic disposal arrangements.

3.8 Damp and mildew is a problem for some residents .TRA members said the process to report and tackle this is onerous for some people and support is needed. Residents responding to the consultation said they thought it was unfair that new homes were being built when current residents' housing conditions were poor.

3.9 There are some concerns with security and door arrangements.

3.10 Both TRA members and the respondents to the online survey remarked on the adverse impact of noise. This seemed to be mainly coming from the community centre activities, such as parties and other social gatherings and could be solved by introducing sound insulation in the re-provided hall, however there may be other sources. Noise is known to impact on people's

health and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) notes that late night time noise is particularly aggravating and can cause conflict and emotional stress. The Act associated with the HHSRS imposes a duty on local authorities to take appropriate action in relation to hazards causing most harm, and noise is considered to particularly harmful.

Recommendation:

5) Identify present estate problems that impact on health through the Great Estate programme (e.g. noise, security, rubbish disposal, damp & mildew) using the HHSRS and resident feedback to prioritise. If these are minor issues they can be dealt addressed through the repair programme, with the support of the estate officer. If these require major works then investment ought to be made available through the Great Estates programme.

Air quality

- 3.11 The Commission was very concerned about the impact of air quality on residents in Southwark. Members cited concerns about the impact of pollution on children and heard about the elevated risk of dementia for people living near a major road. The London Air Quality network state that children are more likely to be affected by air pollution due to relatively higher breathing and metabolic rates as well as a the immaturity of their lung and immune system. The elderly are also vulnerable due to the decline in organ function with age and an increase prevalence of age-related disease. In 2008, the UK's Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) reported that the burden of human-made particulate matter on the human population was approximately a loss of 340,000 years of life in 2008, and that this loss of life is equivalent to 29,000 deaths.
- 3.12 Air quality is worse for people living near busy roads, in the centre of the borough, where communities are most deprived. Bell Garden Estates is located in Peckham. Two major roads adjoin the estate and one road bisects the corner.
- 3.13 There are no air quality monitoring sites on the estate, the nearest site is at 88A Peckham Road. The Environmental Protection Team has provided an extract of information below from the London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (LAEI) 2013 update 2017. The estate is shown (in blue) with the local roads. The major roads can be identified to help navigate the LAEI map on air quality map. These abstracts do not provide detailed modelling information.



Further information is available here: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/london-atmospheric-emissions-inventory-2013>

- 3.14 Members and officers agreed that more accurate data on air pollution is needed.
- 3.15 The Commission discussed whether the council ought to be taking more radical steps to tackle air pollution, including charging for estate parking, gating some roads to reduce traffic, planting in roads so they become green walking and cycling routes.
- 3.16 No Bell Gardens residents mentioned this as a concern; however that could be awareness is low. Currently there are no government public awareness programmes, although the Public Health reported that they are educating residents.
- 3.17 Local monitoring would establish the air quality on the ground in Bells Garden.
- 3.18 Local solutions include gating roads to reduce traffic flow, and planting trees and bushes to reduce pollution.

Active play for children

- 3.19 The strategic director for public health and wellbeing said one of his top priorities was getting children moving, through the provision of better play facilities, such as play streets.
- 3.20 Rates of childhood obesity in Southwark are high. There is a significantly higher prevalence of excess weight in Peckham school children than the Southwark average at both Reception and Year 6. In Peckham 30.4% of Reception children have excess weight and 47.4% of Year 6 children have excess weight. As a borough the prevalence of excess weight is 26.3% and Reception and 43% for Year 6 children.

- 3.21 Alongside this most children do not get enough access to exercise. Nationally 23% of boys and 20% of girls met the activity guidelines in 2015². This may be worse in Peckham as activity levels are lower amongst deprived urban populations with less access to green space.

Cycling and walking

- 3.22 Six out of 10 Southwark residents do at least 2.5 hours of physical activity a week with much of this coming from transport alone. Exercise rates in Southwark therefore correlate highly with the mode of transport used, with people who walk and cycle much more likely to be meeting the exercise requirements.
- 3.23 Over the last several years walking rates have improved somewhat (from 31 - 37% of journeys), in Southwark however cycling has stayed static at 3%. People who cycle to in Southwark are usually located near cycle routes. It therefore makes sense to increase access to safe and attractive routes and promote cycling and walking to increase activity levels and reduce pollution.
- 3.24 Residents in Bell Gardens were most likely to mention walking as an activity, rather than cycling. Dog walking featured as a topic.

Green space

- 3.25 Estate regeneration will involve trade-offs as land will need to be found to build more housing. Though a small sample residents in Bell Garden priority was green space. If this is to be retained then other space and land will need to be found. From a health perspective roads and non disabled parking have the most adverse impact on wellbeing given the impact diesel and petrol has on air quality, the detrimental effect car driving has on health, when compared to more active forms of transport, and the long term impact driving has on fuelling climate change and environmental degradation. The council recently declared a climate emergency; and pledged to increase efforts to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 3.26 Only 2% of cars are used at anyone time. They are therefore an inefficient use of space. An alternative and more ecologically friendly solution, is car sharing. The council could promote the use of car sharing, particularly electric cars with zero emissions.
- 3.27 It is unclear how aware residents are of the negative impact air quality has on health, and how this could be contributing to the current high rates of diseases in certain parts of Southwark associated with air pollution: lung cancer, COPD, asthma, dementia. The results of the midway consultation show saving green space as the highest priority rating (13) with parking given rating towards the low end of the spectrum (8). If public awareness was higher on the impact of air pollution on health then willingness to build housing on space currently used for parking and roads, and turn streets in the pathways and play spaces, may rise even further.

² Statistics on Obesity, Physical Activity and Diet, England 2017

Recommendations:

6) Conduct detailed air quality monitoring of sites undergoing estate regeneration and share the information with residents so they are able to make informed decisions on retention / reduction to parking, gating access, and turning roads into play streets.

7) Conduct a public health awareness programme on air quality pollution aimed at informing residents of the risks and solutions

8) Explore introducing an emission free zone across an area of Southwark, such as Peckham while increasing cycling and walking provision.

9) Consider using the Great Estates programme to invest in electrical charging points for pooled cars, provide more cycle storage, and invest in walkways.

Poverty and Food insecurity

3.28 The indices of multiple deprivations (IMD) show that the Bells Garden is in an area that is within the 20% most deprived nationally. Splitting this down into the different domains of deprivation shows that the area is in the:

- 10% most deprived for Income
- 20% most deprived for Employment
- 40% least deprived for Education, Skills and Training
- 30% most deprived for Health and Disabilities
- 20% most deprived for Crime Rates
- 20% most deprived for Barriers to Housing
- 20% most deprived for Living Environment

3.29 Bell Gardens residents gave money and debt problems as one of the top issues at the consultation exercise at Bell Gardens. It is estimated that there are 53,600 people (aged 16+ years) in Southwark experiencing food insecurity at some level. Southwark's two largest foodbanks received 2613 referrals this year. Research has shown that only 20% of food insecure people will use a foodbank. Problems with benefits, due to delays or changes in the system, were the referral reason given in over 50% of cases. Residents at the consultation event said that delays to Universal Credit meant people were going hungry on the estate.

3.30 Locally, in Bells Garden estate, PECAN food bank have given us the number of referrals and visits they have had from residents on the estate. This data is only from one foodbank and does not establish the full extend of food insecurity on the estate.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Angelina House SE15 5UB | 1 |
| • Bunbury House SE15 1AA | 3 (one client) |
| • Edwin House SE15 5UD | 9 (3 clients) |
| • Hastings Close SE15 6TY | 0 |
| • Leontine Close SE15 1AA | in with Bunbury House |
| • Neville Close SE15 5UE | 0 |
| • Wentworth Crescent SE15 5UG | 4 (1 client) |
| • Wilmot Close SE15 6UA | 0 |

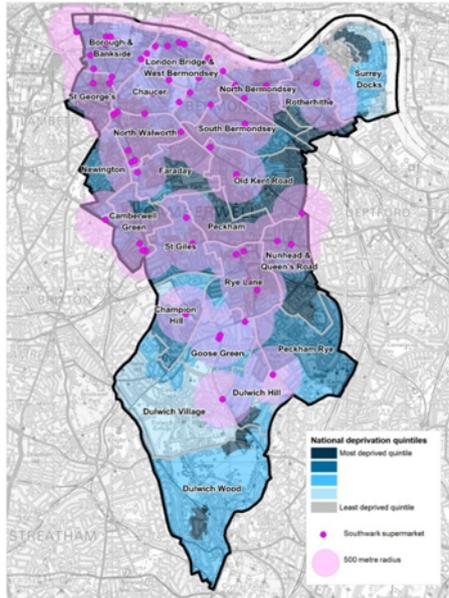
- 3.31 The Public Health presentation highlighted the significant levels of food insecurity in London and the impact on children's future health. Hunger in childhood increases the risk of developing asthma, depression and suicidal tendencies in adolescence and early adulthood.
- 3.32 A third of London children have problems concentrating at school due to hunger. A study conducted for the GLA on child hunger showed that among 8-16 year olds, 34% had problems concentrating at school due to hunger and 9% of children went to bed hungry. Applying these percentages at the borough level, could mean that:
- Over 9,600 Southwark children are having problems concentrating at school due to hunger
 - Over 2,500 Southwark children are going to bed hungry at night.
- 3.33 In Southwark a high percentage of foodbank recipients are children:
- 46% of those fed by the CSCH Foodbank in 2017/18 were children.
 - 38% of those fed by the Southwark Foodbank in 2017/18 were children
- 3.34 Southwark does provide Free Healthy School meals which are probably having a significant impact on reducing hunger in children. The Central Southwark Community Hub Foodbank saw 128 users in July 2017 and 198 in August 2017. This compared to a mean of 40 users during the months of April, May and June 2017. Southwark is planning to introduce more provision during school holidays.

Recommendation:

10) Prioritise food initiatives for children in the holidays as part of the food insecurity action plan, which is being drafted in collaboration with the Southwark Food Action Alliance.

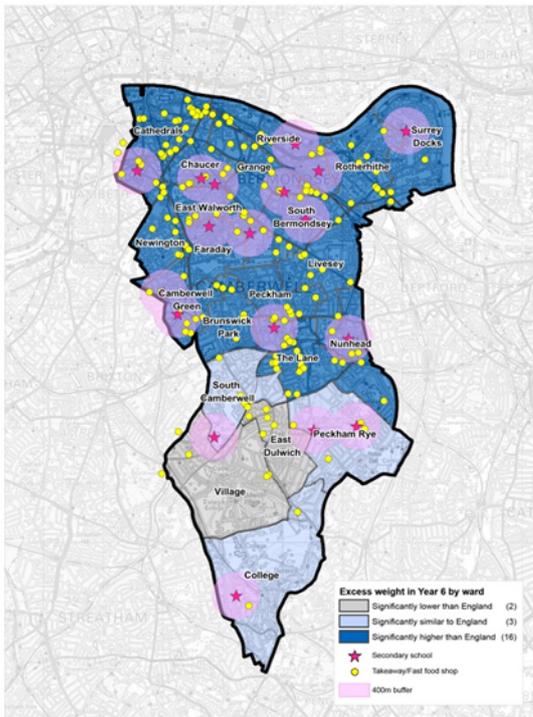
Healthy, nutritious and affordable food

- 3.35 As part of an initiative to improve food resilience Public Health have mapped out food deserts and food swamps. A 'food desert' is a geographical area where there is a lack of accessible options for buying fresh, nutritious, affordable food. Residents at risk of food insecurity are normally disproportionately hit by the effects of food deserts as they lack the funds for bus fares or cars to travel to competitively priced supermarkets and street markets further afield. The map below shows the food desert areas in the borough: Generally, people in 'food deserts' rely on convenience stores and corner shops where prices are higher than in competitively priced supermarket chains and market stalls and the range of fresh, healthy foods is less. This is known as the 'poverty premium' where the most socio-economically disadvantaged end up paying more for goods.
- 3.36 The dark blue areas on the map show where there are deprived parts of the borough which are potential food deserts. The north of the estate is in a food desert.



Southwark mainstream supermarkets with Indices of Deprivation
 Data source: Department for Communities & Local Government 2018, Southwark Regulatory Services
 Southwark Public Health Department | People & Health Intelligence | publichealth@southwark.gov.uk
 August 2018
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2018, Ordnance Survey (2)100019252

3.37 'Food swamps' are areas where there is a high density of establishments selling fast and junk food in relation to healthy options. The yellow dots on the map below are fast-food outlets. The map shows that there are a number of fast-food outlets surrounding the estate.



Proximity of takeaways to secondary schools with excess weight in Year 6
 Data source: Food Standards Agency, Public Health England
 Southwark Public Health Department | People & Health Intelligence | publichealth@southwark.gov.uk
 September 2018
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2018, Ordnance Survey (2)100019252

3.38 There are a number of food focused initiatives in Bell Gardens:

- Bags of taste (Cook and Eat) – have been operating from Bells Garden previously
- PECAN and Central Southwark Community Hub Food banks
- Holiday Hunger programme (CSCH)

- Garden Organic (Master gardeners programme)
- Food Action Alliance (39 organisations mostly grass roots) often meet at Bells garden and are working with Public Health to develop a Food Insecurity Action Plan

Case Study: CooksForce

- 3.39 In March 2018, Brixton People's Kitchen delivered Cooks Force – a three week cooking course at Bells Garden community centre. The aims of the course were to increase participant's general confidence and cookery skills and introduce a wide variety of healthy and affordable food. At the end of the course participants were given a recipe book packed full of cooking ideas including how to grow, source and store food. They were also given the opportunity to volunteer or attend our Be Enriched community canteens.

The participants

- 3.40 11 participants attended the course. All the participants were female from a wide range of backgrounds. 73% were renting social housing with 55% having had or were planning work on their kitchen as part of the Kitchen Regeneration Scheme. 64% answered yes to at least 2 of the poverty scale questions. This involved asking about dietary needs and whether they have access to food at home

The benefits

- 3.41 All participants agreed that: They had learnt something new about food safety and hygiene. They had discovered new types of food, improved their cooking skills and discovered cheaper ways to eat healthily. They course had helped them make new friends in the community.

Testimonial

- 3.42 'My daughter and I had an amazing time and enjoyed meeting other local residents. I can truly say it has been life changing for me. I have cooked and eaten vegetables that I've never cooked with before and every dish was so healthy and easy to make. I feel confident to make these dishes myself at home and be able to feed myself and children with healthy and delicious dishes'.

Community Gardens

- 3.43 The Commission were interested in the ability of Community Food gardens and growing initiatives to impact positively on food and community. Members suggested establishing a food growing culture and considered that community gardening could have a significant role in nurturing this, particularly as many people do not have the skills, or access to the land, to garden individually.
- 3.44 There is a local Community Garden located fairly close to Bells Garden: [Burgess Park Food Project at Glengall Wharf](#). This aims are to work with the local community to increase the understanding of healthy, local and fresh food. The project aims are to:

- Promote food growing, organic horticulture, permaculture and other ecological issues through skill sharing and volunteering.
- Bring people together, building links within the community for groups and individuals.
- Help improve the local green environment in Burgess Park and the surrounding area.
- Help regenerate the local community, contribute to sustainable development in London and enhance the life of the park.

3.45 The Commission thought there was a vital role for community and voluntary groups in delivering community food growing initiatives and other health and wellbeing initiatives. Officers said there is plan to create a network across the borough; these initiatives ought to link to the school garden programmes.

3.46 There is enthusiasm from community groups; however these do need to be well resourced. CGS (Cleaner, Greener, and Safer) could be used to promote this work.

Recommendations:

11) Map 'Food Oasis', like community gardens, so the council can build and amplify community assets to address food insecurity and nurture a healthy food culture.

12) Promote community gardens and food growing projects through Cleaner, Greener Safer, particularly targeting community engagement programmes working with economically deprived residents.

General practice, health checks, long term conditions

Disease & Poor Health

3.47 Peckham performs the same or better than England for coronary heart disease, stroke, heart attack. It is worse on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), lung cancer, and prostate cancer but better on breast cancer.

Smoking cessations services 2017/18

3.48 Across Southwark there were 949 initial contacts in 2017/18, with the highest number in January 2018. Of the 949 clients who accessed the Smoking Cessation Services 25 were in the ward of Peckham (2.6%). Smoking cessation services ought to ideally be seeing above 40 clients ³ from the Peckham ward.

Health checks

3.49 Across Southwark Health checks are being accessed by people who need it most. Within the estate, 55% are currently eligible for an NHS Health check, compared to 67% in other areas. The 'whole population' uptake of Health Checks in the estate is 27% compared to 32% outside the estate. The lower eligibility could be due to a younger population on the estate or due to more people being

³ There are 23 Wards in Southwark. Southwark has a population of approximately 256700 with 15010 people living in Peckham ward, making this ward larger than normal.

excluded due to pre-existing health conditions. A potential area to focus on is ways to improve uptake of the health checks offer.

3.50 The Commission heard evidence that men's mortality is lower than women's, in part because they do not access the NHS so regularly. Prostrate cancer is significantly higher in Southwark and Peckham is significantly higher than this .A focus on prostate cancer prevention in Bell Gardens could be worthwhile.

Peer Support for long term conditions

3.51 The TRA focus group suggested peer support for long term health conditions would be helpful to help navigate the system and optimise health. Research shows that peer support for conditions such as COPD, which is high locally, impact positively on health. There are voluntary groups that run these such as [Breath easy](#). Nesta says that an evaluation of the British Lung Foundation's volunteer-led Integrated Breathe Easy groups has shown that people with COPD who attend the groups will gain knowledge, skills and confidence that will help them to stay well. Being part of Breathe Easy increases wellbeing and reduces the likelihood of medical emergencies and crises. Peckham has 25% more hospital admissions for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) than England.

Recommendation:

13) Looking at hyper local health data and anecdotal evidence could be used to drive service provision and improve disease prevention and management of long term health conditions.

In Bells Garden ward of Peckham there is evidence that promoting health checks, prostate cancer awareness, smoking cessation courses, and encouraging local GP practices to start a Breath Easy peer support group would all be worthwhile.

Use of leisure centres and Free Swim and Gym

3.52 Bell Garden estate has a number of active members of the Leisure centre. Between 1 August and the 31 January 2019 125 residents used Southwark facilities, approximately 10 % of the population.

Usage by Specific Postcode (non-FSG)	Unique Members	Usage
Angelina House	14	143
Bunbury House	12	123
Edwin House	22	224
Hastings Close	12	225
Neville Close	20	369
Wentworth Crescent	30	244
Wilmot Close	15	228

3.53 Local figures on FSG were not provided, however data was given on Southwark usage. As of October 2018 there were 29,291 live members and nearly 600k visits since the schemes inception. As well as the standard offer of

Friday weekend afternoons there is also open access for disabled people and targeted programmes for older people and exercise on referral. Data is available sex, ethnicity, disability and age. However participants are not asked about income. The Commission discussed whether asking would help monitor and target the scheme at people experiencing most economic deprivation, and thus at one of the highest risk groups for poor health, however there were concerns about this being intrusive and off-putting .

Recommendation:

14) Explore asking about income at sign up for FSG in a non intrusive manner, perhaps by doing a pilot with Southwark employees, and seeking feedback.

GREAT ESTATE OPPORTUNITES

4.1 Last December's opening cabinet paper of our 'Great Estates' programme set out the council's fundamental approach to the long-term future of our council estates – to 'expand and enrich' our estates by a) identifying appropriate sites on our estates for building new council homes, and b) finding new ways of working with residents to improve the look, feel and lived experience of our estates.

4.2 The recent 'Estate Improvement Plans' March cabinet report focused on the 'enrich' part of the programme, setting out the principal routes towards improving the shared living experience of our estates, creating new opportunities for residents to come together, and to begin a process of upholding our estates as properly privileged parts of the city. The council has reoriented how the often challenging task of building new council homes on existing estates is approached ,by framing it as part of a wider 'estate improvement plan' approach. This means in practice that resident project groups and architects have a brief beyond the red line of the development plot, to think about how new homes can sit comfortably as part of the existing estate as well as how the process of development can capture wider visible improvements throughout the estate. The council is already starting to see some of the early fruits of this approach with residents' better welcoming development proposals that offer a more tangible account of what's in it for them.

4.3 The March cabinet initiated a series of Estate Improvement Plan pilot projects over the coming year, covering all parts of the borough, older and younger estates and estates with or without active resident associations. Via workshops, drop-ins, wish list ballots and other methods of engaging and involving residents, the opening year's pilots will trial different ways of devising and delivering improvement works on a range blocks and estates with residents at the centre of the process, and a license for creativity and risk-taking. The projects will also seek to maximise resources available by drawing on external funding and partnership opportunities, with a new advisory group helping to frame the process to ensure they have the greatest possible impact.

4.4 The pilots featured in the report place a great emphasis in food growing, gardening, lighting and using art to make the place more beautiful, and using the process to create social mobilisation and cohesion.

- 4.5 Scrutiny welcomes the above; the evidence from the review endorses this approach. In addition this review recommends that Public Health are explicitly involved in the process and that they contribute intelligent data (including additional air quality monitoring) help conduct community research and join relevant project groups to ensure that the opportunities for wellbeing realised.
- 4.6 As well as improvements to the physical infrastructure estate regeneration ought to be mindful of how the fabric of the estate can promote social integration, protect green space, promote active transport, and help tackle food insecurity, through food growing. The Great Estates work is an opportunity to focus on social regeneration alongside physically regeneration.
- 4.7 The community research work undertaken by the Commission has been limited due to the available resources and time constraints. No young people were contacted and the residents spoken to were already all somewhat engaged. The views will be informed by their engagement and representative role (e.g. TRA members), and useful, but the sample is not broad or diverse enough to truly represent the estate. A larger piece of work would need to take place to do this. Nevertheless this is a taster of what could be achieved and how coinciding community research with the Great Estate consultation work, when there are additional resources available, could amplify and mutually reinforce the achievable physical and social outcomes.

Case Study: Poplar HARCA

- 4.8 Possible further research could mirror that done by Poplar HARCA – a housing association in Poplar, Tower Hamlets. In 2017 they commissioned Kaizen to carry out a wide ranging community consultation in order to better understand community views and perspectives on health and happiness. This informed the development and implementation of a health strategy. They spoke to over 1000 people to ask those questions on their current health and happiness, what residents currently do to improve their health and happiness what more they would like to do, motivations and barriers to improved health and happiness, and health activities and interventions that residents would utilise if available. They found that isolation and loneliness are very important causes of poor health and happiness, the importance of social networks to health and happiness, the vital role that mothers have as an influence on their children, employment has a strong correlation with happiness and those aged 15-24 were most likely to be very unhappy.

Recommendation

15) Involve public health in Great Estates programme and as part of one of the pilots, ideally with a TMO; undertake a larger research project similar to Popular HARCA, supplemented by a community profile mapping out health data, local air quality, and current community assets, activities and gaps. The aim ought to be to work with residents and local community organisations to impact positively on social regeneration, alongside physical regeneration.

Funding from GSTT may be available for this : <https://www.gsttcharity.org.uk/>

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) When re-providing community centres, MUGA and building new housing through the Great Estates programme the council ought to:
 - Ensure the architects use the Sport England active design guideline guidelines
 - Ensure the green and public space, including pathways, promotes and provides for social interaction and community gatherings, and the permeability of the estate is improved e.g. signage and wayfinding, lighting
 - Ensure that community centres cater to the needs of local residents, providing opportunities for healthy activities to take place which promote social cohesion.
- 2) Explore how the council can further support and empower resident groups to organise activities & events to meet each other
- 3) Explore ways to communicate to residents what health and wellbeing services and activities are on offer.
- 4) Investigate the capacity to embed local health workers in local estates and for the housing estate officer to work to combat social isolation, given their local knowledge of residents who may be isolated and potential to signpost vulnerable residents to health & social provision
- 5) Identify present estate problems that impact on health through the Great Estate programme (e.g. noise, security, rubbish disposal, damp & mildew) using the HHSRS and resident feedback to prioritise. If these are minor issues they can be dealt addressed through the repair programme, with the support of the estate officer. If these require major works then investment ought to be made available through the Great Estates programme.
- 6) Conduct detailed air quality monitoring of sites undergoing estate regeneration and share the information with residents so they are able to make informed decisions on retention / reduction to parking, gating access, and turning roads into play streets.
- 7) Conduct a public health awareness programme on air quality pollution aimed at informing residents of the risks and solutions
- 8) Explore introducing an emission free zone across an area of Southwark, such as Peckham while increasing cycling and walking provision.
- 9) Consider using the Great Estates programme to invest in electrical charging points for pooled cars, provide more cycle storage, and invest in walkways

10) Prioritise food initiatives for children in the holidays as part of the food insecurity action plan, which is being drafted in collaboration with the Southwark Food Action Alliance.

11) Map 'Food Oasis', like community gardens, so the council can build and amplify community assets to address food insecurity and nurture a healthy food culture.

12) Promote community gardens and food growing projects through Cleaner, Greener Safer, particularly targeting community engagement programmes working with economically deprived residents.

13) Looking at hyper local health data and anecdotal evidence could be used to drive service provision and improve disease prevention and management of long term health conditions.

14) Explore asking about income at sign up for FSG in a non intrusive manner, perhaps by doing a pilot with Southwark employees, and seeking feedback.

15) Involve public health in Great Estates programme and as part of one of the pilots, ideally with a TMO; undertake a larger research project similar to Popular HARCA, supplemented by a community profile mapping out health data, local air quality, and current community assets, activities and gaps. The aim ought to be to work with residents and local community organisations to impact positively on social regeneration, alongside physical regeneration.

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APPENDICES

Notes of consultation events:

- Appendix 1 Bells Garden drop in consultation on health & wellbeing on the estate during the consultation on proposed changes to the estate
- Appendix 2 Notes of meeting with TRA members on Public Health, with Kings Collage London researcher and Public Health officers
- Appendix 3 Bells Gardens midway consultation questionnaire summary on proposed changes to the estate