



TOWER HAMLETS

Improving care together

**Our vision and strategy for adult
social care in Tower Hamlets – a
summary**

2021



Introduction

What is adult social care?

Adult social care covers social work, personal care and practical support for younger and older adults over 18 with a physical disability, learning disability, physical or mental illness. It also includes safeguarding for those at risk of harm and abuse, drug or alcohol dependency, as well as support for unpaid carers.

When people think of social care they often think of things like home care, care homes and day centres. But adult social care is much more than that. Support can range from advice services designed to help people solve issues at an early stage, to employment support for people with a disability.

What is this strategy?

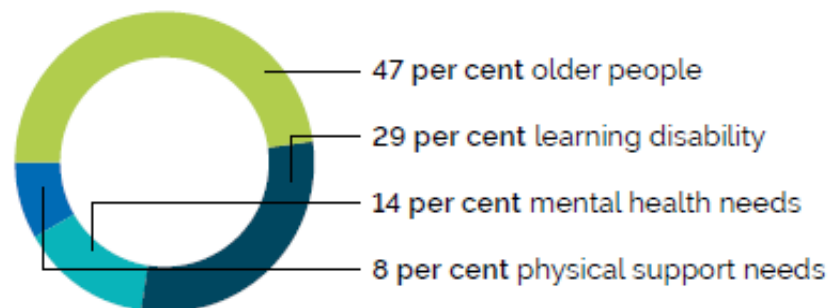
This strategy is our plan for adult social care in Tower Hamlets over the next 3-5 years. It explains our future 'vision' for social care and the action we will take to try and achieve that vision.

We have called our strategy 'improving care together' because everyone has a role to play in putting the plan into place.

The Tower Hamlets population in 2019 was estimated to be 325,000. The population is fast-growing, diverse and comparatively young.

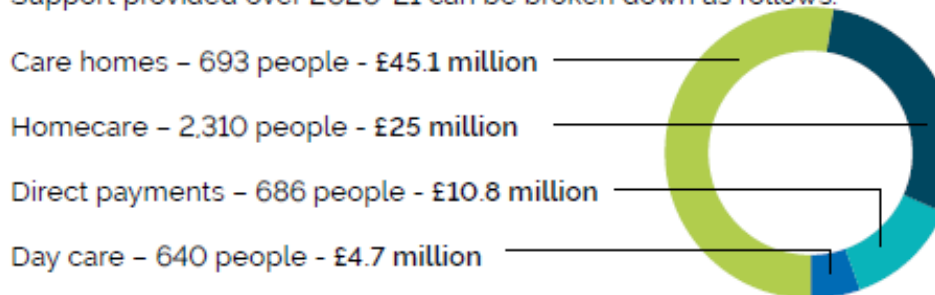
Over 2020-21, 3,974 people with support needs received long-term care from the council, while 440 people received short-term support.

Social care spend in 2020-21 can be broken down as follows:



Our budget is £117 million for 2021-22. We spent £118 million in 2020-21.

Support provided over 2020-21 can be broken down as follows:



The remainder was spent on staff costs and a wide variety of preventative support options to keep people as independent and well as possible.



2021 Improving Care Together: A summary



Our vision for adult social care in Tower Hamlets is:

We support you to meet your goals, be connected to others and be as independent as possible.

Our aims are:

Empower people to meet their own needs

Enable people to meet their own aspirations

Support that improves health, wellbeing and quality of life

Co-produce services and care with people who use them

Simplify the system, make it easier to understand and access

Ensure the right support, in the right place, at the right time – as close to home as possible

Be flexible and responsive to meet personal needs, wishes and outcomes

Deliver value for money, making best use of resources across the system and spending within our means

Develop self supporting, thriving communities

We will work on:

1. Information advice and early help

2. Our approach to supporting people

3. Care at home

4. Housing with care

5. Direct payments

6. Technology, innovation & care

7. Support outside the home

8. Working with others

9. Managing our budget

10. Getting the basics right with data & how we work



Why do we need a strategy?

We want to build on our strengths and what we do well:

Our diverse communities

- 16th most ethnically diverse local authority in England (2019)
- Bangladeshi community make up one third of the population.

Vibrant range of things to do in Tower Hamlets

- From Tower of London to Brick Lane, from Victoria Park to Canary Wharf, and from Roman Road market to Columbia Road Flower market

Track record of working closely with other organisations

- We work closely with the NHS and other organisations
- The partnership of health and care services is called 'Tower Hamlets Together'

Our approach to supporting people

- Social workers and staff focus on the things people can do, as well as what they need help with.
- Sometimes called 'strengths-based practice'

And we need to address the challenges we face:

Poverty

- 50th most deprived borough in England (2019)
- 44% of older people live in income deprived households – highest in England (2019)

Financial pressures

- We are spending more than we have in adult social care (2021-21)
- We must make more savings in coming years
- Demand for social care is set to grow.

Workforce pressures

- Across the UK, it can be difficult to recruit and retain social care staff.

Recovery from Covid-19

- The pandemic has had a negative impact on some people's mental health, on people's finances and on overall wellbeing.

Understanding social care

- Can be difficult to understand how social care works, what support is available and who can get it.





Information, advice and early help

We will work on this area so that:

- There is better information on what social care is and what support is available.
- Information and support is easy to find, easy to understand and simple to access.
- People are encouraged to get help at an early stage. This includes help to connect with others, help to stay as healthy and well as possible and help getting nutritional meals.
- People are empowered to meet their own needs wherever possible.

To do this we will:

Work with [Tower Hamlets Connect](#) – a service providing information & advice

Work with the [Carer Centre Tower Hamlets](#) – a service supporting unpaid carers

Work with [LinkAge Plus](#) – a service providing activities & support for older people

Work with reablement & rehabilitation – short-term support services



Our approach to supporting people

We will work on this area so that:

- We focus on people's strengths and what they can do for themselves, not just the things they need help with.
- We are clear on what people can expect from social care and the role that individuals, families and communities play.
- We want everyone working in social care to:

- Be kind and compassionate
- Treat people with dignity
- Be problem-solvers
- Positive risk-takers
- Be creative
- Be clear & realistic on what we can & cannot do
- Be diverse
- Be flexible
- Focus on the goals people want to achieve
- Focus on what people can do for themselves
- Be anti-racist and inclusive
- Work as one health and care system
- Understand how trauma affects people

To do this we will:

Focus on staff training and supervision

Focus on what we communicate to people who need social care & carers

Update policies and procedures





Care at home

We will work on this area so that:

- People have more choice and control over care provided at home.
- Support from care workers and care agencies is more focussed on the goals people want to achieve, helping people live independently at home for as long as possible.
- We work closely with the NHS so people get joined-up support.
- The social care workforce is well-trained and well-supported .

To do this we will:

Recommission homecare
– this means looking again at the agencies we fund and how they work

Offer more Individual Service Funds
- these give people a wider choice over who provides their care at home



Housing with care

We will work on this area so that:

- There is a range of options available to people who need housing with care, reflecting the different needs and preferences people have.
- People have a positive experience of moving into and living in a new home.
- The social care workforce is well-trained and well-supported .

To do this we will:

Research the type of housing with care that is needed over the next 5 years

Make sure the number of care homes, extra-care sheltered housing and extra-care sheltered housing matches what is needed.





Direct payments

We will work on this area so that:

- More adult social care users are encouraged to organise their care and support with a direct payment.
- The process of getting a direct payment is as simple as possible.
- Direct payments to become one of the first offers to everyone who is new to adult social care.
- People who organise their care with a direct payment feel safe and supported.

To do this we will:

Raise awareness of direct payments to staff and residents

Review the processes and support to set up a direct payment

Review the policy, practice and support for ongoing direct payment users



Technology, innovation & care

We will work on this area so that:

- Technology in care is used and offered more. It will not replace other forms of support that already work well: Our focus will be on improving what we do through technology.
- People who are new to technology will be supported to start using it.
- People have a bigger range of equipment and adaptations to choose from at home.

Examples of technology:

- Telecare
- Alarms
- Sensors
- Voice-activated tech (e.g. Alexa)
- Apps

To do this we will:

Review where we could do more with technology-enabled care.

Use more technology with people who need care, with staff and with other organisations.





Support outside the home

We will work on this area so that:

- People have more flexibility and choice over when where to get support in the daytime and evening.
- People are better supported to find out about and take part in activities in their local communities.
- Day centres will act as flexible base from which people can access activities in the borough, while also providing a safe and inclusive space to connect with others and get support.

To do this we will:

Work with day centres to make these changes
- includes Sonali Gardens, Create and Russia Lane services

Tackle the barriers that make it harder for people to get out and about



Working with others

We will work on this area so that:

- We continue to 'coproduce' adult social care – including carrying out this strategy - with people who use social care and carers.
- We work closely with health services so people get joined-up support.
- We work closely with housing services, including on equipment and adaptations..
- We continue to work closely with the organisations we fund, with other local organisations and with volunteers.
- Services communicate better with one another, with clearer roles and responsibilities

To do this we will:

Work through [Tower Hamlets Together](#)

Work with people who use social care and carers.

Work with Housing Forum.

Work with other organisations.





Managing our budget

We will work on this area so that:

- The financial pressures faced in adult social care are addressed.
- Managers and staff in social care closely monitor their budgets and the amount spent in their area.
- We spend money fairly effectively and wisely.
- We raise more income by improving how we collect any debt owed to us.

To do this we will:



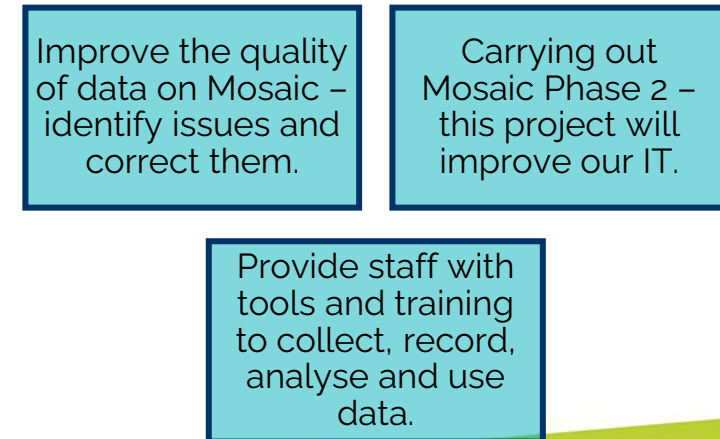
Getting the basics right with data & how we work

We will work on this area so that:

- There is good quality data recorded on our IT systems, giving a clear picture of what is happening in adult social care.
- Staff and managers are able to analyse clear and accurate data and use it to make better decisions.
- The step-by-step processes we take in social care are not be overly complicated.

Mosaic is the name of the IT system mainly used in social care.

To do this we will:



More information on the strategy



The strategy covers the next 3-5 years. Sitting alongside this strategy is an action plan, with detailed information on the actions we will carry out, who will do this and what difference it will make.

How was the strategy developed?

The strategy was coproduced with the people impacted by it over summer and autumn 2021, including:

- People who use social care and carers
- Social care staff
- Staff working in the NHS, health services and community and voluntary sector.

We are committed to working in partnership with adult social care users and carers to continue to carry out and 'co-produce' this strategy.

Equality, diversity and this strategy

This strategy is part of our commitment to tackle inequality and value diversity. The strategy takes into account the 2010 Equalities Act, protecting the rights of individuals and advancing equality of opportunity for people. This includes but is not limited to:

- People of Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- People with a disability or long-term health condition.
- Women.
- Older people.

- People who are LGBTQ+
- People who identify with a gender that is different to the one assigned to them at birth.
- People of different religions and beliefs.

How will we know it has been successful?

We will use the following 11 measures to understand what difference the strategy is making:

How much is being done

1. The number of people getting information, advice and early help.
2. The proportion of social care users and carers who get a direct payment.
3. The number of council and external staff trained on the topics in this strategy.
4. The proportion of social care users and carers using technology-enabled care.

How well are actions being carried out

5. The number of social care users who say they have meaningful choice over their support.
6. The number of social care users and carers who say they have had a positive and good quality experience of social care.
7. The number of people who say they have a good understanding of adult social care.

What difference it has made:

8. The number of social care users and carers who say support enables them to meet their

goals.

9. The number of social care users and carers who say they feel connected to others.
10. The number of social care users and carers who say support enables them to be as independent as possible.
11. Adult social care spends within its means.

How and where will progress be reported?

Every year we will produce the Local Account magazine called 'How are we doing?'. This is a resident-facing publication published on our website and printed out. We will include information on our progress in this.

How does this strategy fit in with other strategies and plans the Council has?

This strategy has been written to complement a number of other strategies and plans. The biggest links are with:

- The Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This describes our overall plan to improve health and wellbeing in Tower Hamlets.
- The Tower Hamlets Together Plan. This describes what health and social care will work together on in future.
- The Council's Strategic Plan. This describes the actions and aims of the Council over the next three years.

