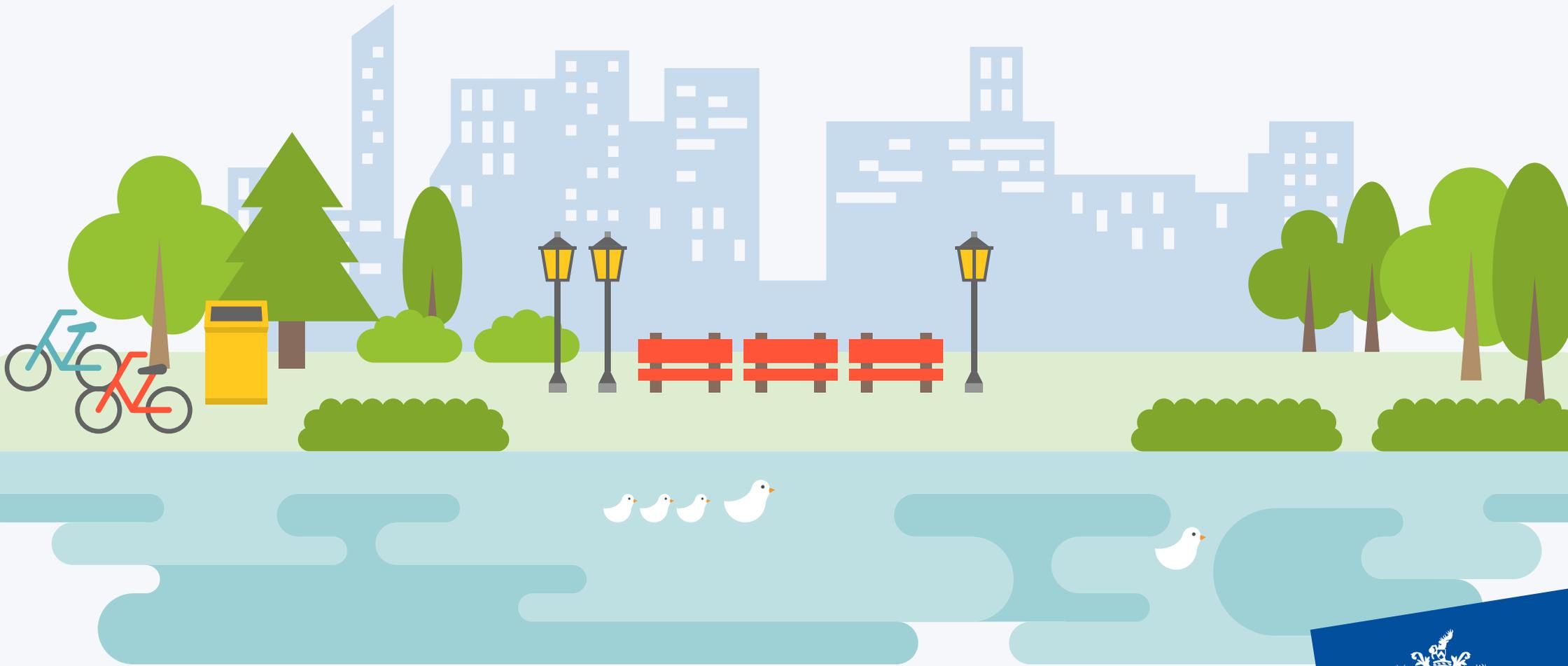


Location, Location, Location:

The importance of place in shaping health and wellbeing



The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Annual Public Health Report of the Director of Public Health, 2019





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Foreword



I am pleased to introduce my Annual Public Health Report as Director of Public Health for the Royal Borough of Kingston. My 2019 report focuses on the importance of place in shaping our health and wellbeing, and to reducing health inequalities in the borough.

By place we are referring to Kingston's:

- Surroundings - the buildings, streets, public spaces and natural spaces that make up the physical environment of our neighbourhoods
- Communities - the relationships, social contact and support networks that make up the social environment of our neighbourhoods.

The physical and social environment into which we are born, grow up, live and work has a bigger impact on our health than access to healthcare services. This has been acknowledged in the NHS Long Term plan and is embedded in Kingston's Health and Care Plan for 2019-21. The Plan sets out our local commitment to working together to tackle health inequalities, prevent ill health, and ensure access to services for those in need.

Research by Professor Sir Michael Marmot and colleagues over the past 40 years has investigated the role of social inequalities in health. In 2008, at the request of the British government, Marmot chaired an independent review to propose the most effective evidence-based strategies for reducing health inequalities in England. Fair Society, Healthy Lives ("The Marmot Review") was published in 2010 and set out key policy objectives, based around the social determinants of health, with the following 6 themes:

- 1. Give every child the best start in life**
- 2. Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives**
- 3. Create fair employment and good work for all**
- 4. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all**
- 5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities**
- 6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention**

My 2019 report features the fifth of the Marmot themes, and sets out some of the ways in which our homes and providing more housing for people, our streets, transport, and surroundings impact on our mental and physical health.

Air quality is a priority which Kingston Council are taking clear action on. This includes supporting sustainable transport through the delivery of the Go Cycle scheme to encourage more people to cycle rather than use motor vehicles. It is important that we provide the support community and environmental groups need to shape and grow our open spaces.

The value of our communities has also been reflected in this report. By engaging with local residents to address the issues that matter the most we can continue to work together to make our borough healthy and resilient. We are also working with our wonderful voluntary and community organisations across the borough, which in turn benefit the health and wellbeing of our residents. Our borough-wide social prescribing programme, Connected Kingston, supports connecting local people to opportunities in their area and also features in the report.

My report concludes by describing how we can consider health in all policies. It is only through a shared vision of a healthy and resilient borough that we can work consistently and collaboratively to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Kingston.

Iona Lidington, Director of Public Health

Introduction



Almost everything Kingston Council does has an impact on health. This goes well beyond specific public health and social care responsibilities to shaping a place (the physical and social environment) which supports and generates good health and prevents disease. This is acknowledged within council policy, reflected in our work with partners and included alongside other considerations such as economic, environmental and equalities impacts within local decision making.

Partners in the borough of Kingston have agreed that prevention is a cross cutting priority and we should create environments and enable communities and individuals to lead healthy lives and be confident in their ability to care for themselves and others

RBK Health and Care Plan 2019-21

Professor Sir Michael Marmot published 'Fair Society Healthy Lives' in February 2010. This was a seminal report on the most effective evidence-based strategies for reducing health inequalities in England. One of the themes highlighted was the importance of place. It is based on clear evidence that the links between individuals and their communities can provide a source of resilience against poor health and wellbeing. Marmot pointed to the need to create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities, through the following policy recommendations:

- Prioritise policies and interventions that reduce both health inequalities and mitigate climate change
- Integrate planning, transport, housing, environmental and health policies to address the social determinants of health
- Create and develop communities

Despite the publication of the Marmot review almost 10 years ago, health inequalities appear to be widening across the country.¹ It is therefore fundamental that there continues to be a focus on health inequalities, including the development of physical and social environments that promote good health for everyone. This report will explore how the physical and social environment in Kingston impacts the health of residents, through focusing on 5 key aspects of place:



Housing



Streets and transport



Surroundings



Access to services



Social connections and relationships

Housing



Where we live influences our lives in many ways. Housing influences both our physical health and our mental health, our sense of community and connectedness. This includes whether housing is warm and dry, there is enough space for everyone, that it feels safe, affordable and is connected to services and networks. Residents should live in housing that is of a decent standard, that meets the needs of all its occupants and supports both their physical and mental health.

Local Context

Housing costs are high in Kingston. Across England the cheapest house prices are 7 times what a worker in the lowest income bracket earns in a year; in Kingston this worsens to 14 times the lowest income bracket.² During the year to March 2019, the median price paid for a residential property in Kingston was £490,000, which was higher than in London (£468,330) and England (£240,000).³

As of March 2019, 789 households in Kingston were in 'temporary accommodation'. This is lower than in London but much higher compared to England (Kingston 11.38 per 1,000 households, London 16.02 and England 3.65).⁴ Between September 2018 and January 2019 Kingston's Winter Night Shelter was host to a total of 240 different guests.

In 2017, 10.9% of households in Kingston were impacted by 'fuel poverty', this ranged from 7.3% in Chessington South ward to 14.8% in Norbiton ward⁵.

To be healthy, a home should be:



Improvements to existing homes in the public and private sectors will positively impact on health and well being and serve to address inequalities in the health of the borough

Kingston Housing Strategy 2015-2020

Case Study

Cambridge Road Estate Regeneration



The Cambridge Road Estate in Norbiton was built in 1969. Today it is home to around 1,800 people living in 832 households, including 673 homes for social rent.

Overall, the Cambridge Road Estate is within the 20% most deprived small areas in the country, and is within the 20% most 'deprived for income deprivation affecting children' and within the 10% most 'deprived for income deprivation affecting older people'.²⁰ In the 2011 Census, 134 residents in the Cambridge Road Estate area reported their health to be bad or very bad. This equates to 7.7% of residents in this area, which is much higher than the figure for Kingston as a whole (3.6%).

The proposed regeneration of this estate aims to transform people's quality of life and deliver much needed new homes for residents of the Royal Borough of Kingston. This is the borough's largest regeneration programme aiming to deliver approximately 2,000 homes over a period of 10-15 years, including more social housing, better community facilities and outdoor spaces. It aims to offer residents an improved quality of life and a better, safer environment, tackling inequality and improving people's health and well-being.

The plans are being shaped directly by residents who have been widely involved in a consultation and engagement programme running throughout 2019. They have been providing their views on how to deliver warm, safe and secure new homes, healthy streets and new community facilities, alongside gardens and play spaces that promote walking and cycling and link the estate with the wider community, as well as creating spaces for people to meet and socialise in. We hope to provide health facilities and a community centre in the plans, as well as commercial space. The regeneration will provide training for local people, new jobs and local business opportunities.

By involving residents in the design and decision-making process, it will create a stronger sense of ownership and belonging. For example, we have ensured that young people have been actively engaged with through a local schools outreach programme and setting up a youth panel where a group of 14-20 year olds worked directly with architects drawing on their lived experience. The youth panel were given urban design training, equipping them with the tools and language to engage with this complex project. Using young people as experts provided powerful insights and ensured they had a meaningful impact on their future living environment.

Longer-term, the rebuilding of the Cambridge Road Estate can knit this community back into the fabric of the surrounding neighbourhood and offer residents of all ages the chance to live safely in a place that is both healthier and more sustainable.

Residents will be invited to vote in an independent ballot in early 2020 to decide whether or not regeneration as currently proposed goes ahead.

Streets and Transport



“ [The draft Kingston Sustainable Transport Strategy] is in line with the approach set out in Healthy Streets for London, the Mayor’s Transport Strategy and the new London Plan; these explain that for London to function well, the way people move around will need to change through investment in healthy streets, public transport and measures to reduce the reliance on cars. ”

Report to Kingston Environment and Sustainable Transport Committee on the Local Implementation Plan, Feb 2019

Transport for London analysis suggests that, every day, Londoners make around 1.5 million short trips by car, taxi or bus that could be walked instead. The Mayor of London launched his Transport Strategy in 2018 which uses the Healthy Streets approach. This takes thinking away from looking at single transport modes to taking a wider view of how streets are used. Healthy Streets are pleasant, safe and attractive, where noise, air pollution, accessibility and lack of seating and shelter are not barriers that prevent people from getting out and about.⁶ Active travel incorporates physical activity into everyday routine, which is good for health and wellbeing as well as the economy.⁷ It also reduces dependence on cars, which are a major contributor to air pollution in the UK.

Everybody should feel safe and be able to use streets and public transport. People, especially those with disabilities, can find it difficult to get out and about because of a lack of accessibility, suitable shelter and seating on our streets. Older people are more likely to walk outside if street furniture is well positioned (e.g. litter bins, lamp posts etc.). Restricted access to alternative modes of transport, alongside concerns about safety, can make people more likely to use cars.

Local Context:

Road transport is a major contributor to poor air quality. 95% of small areas in Kingston (93 out of 98 LSOAs) are in the bottom 30% in terms of air quality score in recent statistics looking at deprivation in England.⁸ 64% of emissions of one air pollutant (NOx) in Kingston come from road transport - nearly half of which (49%) is from cars.⁹ Poor air quality is a contributor to deaths from heart disease, stroke and lung cancer and is also linked to poor-health (including reduced lung function, coughs, wheezes and asthma).¹⁰

49% of people in Kingston (in 2016-17) cite fear of being involved in a collision as a reason why they do not cycle. This has reduced significantly from 62% in 2014-15. Other barriers to cycling include too much traffic (44%), preferring other modes of transport (30%) and not being confident in cycling (27%) (2016-17).¹¹

The Go Cycle Programme was developed in line with a Healthy Streets approach, to improve the experience of cycling in Kingston. Following development of the protected cycle lane on the Portsmouth Road, the proportion of users finding the environment enjoyable increased from 66% to 81%.¹²

To be healthy, streets and transport need to:



Case Study

Go Cycle 'Pedlet' - A Fully Mobile Parklet



Go Cycle is a scheme funded by Transport for London (TfL) to create a network of cycle routes, and to make cycling in Kingston safer and more convenient. Kingston's Go Cycle scheme has ambitions not only to increase levels of cycling, but also improve the public realm and provide facilities for pedestrians.

Parklets are miniature parks which are often temporarily positioned in parking spaces on roads. This then offers a place for people to stop, sit and rest whilst taking in the activities of the street. Parklets are a way of reclaiming road space in favour of people and help us to question the car's dominance of public space. In Kingston we have commissioned the world's first pedal-powered parklet or "Pedlet". The Go Cycle Pedlet is fully mobile, and can be collapsed into two trailers which are towed around by an electric cargo bike.

Parklets fall under key objectives of the Kingston Go Cycle programme, to "improve the quality of the public realm" and "support the vitality and viability of our town, district and local centres". Parklets also align closely with TfL's Healthy Streets agenda.

Parklets can encourage more people to visit an area by bike and on foot and to potentially visit the street for longer. In this way they can encourage active travel and exercise amongst those who currently do not regularly use sustainable transport. Feedback is being collected from visitors to the Go Cycle Pedlet and this will be used to help plan future interventions in Kingston, perhaps including permanent parklets appearing at the most popular locations if the support is there from the community.

In 2019 we have also used the Go Cycle Pedlet as an engagement platform at events organised by teams across Kingston. These include the Neighbourhood team, Achieving for Children for youth consultation events, the Go Cycle team for a variety of events and it will be used outside Lovelace Primary School to support the 'School Street' trial (road closures to encourage walking or cycling to and from school from October 2019).

Surroundings



The vision is to have good quality, accessible and attractive green spaces that bring major benefits for health and well being to Kingston's residents and visitors

Kingston's Green Spaces Strategy, 2015-21

Our surroundings can influence how we feel and what we do. Access to good quality green or 'blue' (eg riverside) or open spaces can help us to be physically active, socialise with others, and make use of nearby services. Being close by does not necessarily mean that green spaces are accessible. To encourage the use of green spaces they must be attractive and well-maintained, with safe and easy routes to get there.

Our surroundings also include the built environment. As well as impacting physical activity through streets and transport as discussed earlier in this report, the built environment can influence health in other ways. One example is how the type of food we buy and eat is influenced by surroundings, as the ease of access to healthy food versus unhealthy food will influence our habits. Public Health England's report on 'Planning Healthy-Weight Environments' suggest that Local authority planners potentially have a key role to play in shaping places that support people's ability to achieve and/or maintain a healthy weight: making healthier choices easier.¹³ The new London Plan, currently in draft consultation phase, says that new takeaways should not be permitted within 400 metres walking distance of a primary or secondary school and also recommends Boroughs consider whether it is appropriate to manage over-concentration of hot food takeaways in local centres.¹⁴

Local Context

There are 105 takeaway food shops and mobile food stands in Kingston as of 2018. This is up from 75 in 2001.¹⁷ Kingston's current Local Plan includes a policy to "resist concentrations of hot food take-aways close to schools".¹⁸

'Green spaces' doesn't mean only parks and gardens. In Kingston other spaces include the riverside, fields in the South of the Borough, as well as numerous cycle paths, playing fields and wayside gardens. As of 2018, Kingston had 52.4% green cover, which was the tenth highest percentage across all 33 London boroughs. Within Kingston, green cover ranged from 24.6% in Canbury ward to 78.4% in Chessington South ward.¹⁵

70% of people surveyed in the Annual Kingston Council Residents Survey 2019 were satisfied with parks, playgrounds and open spaces. The largest concern raised by residents was crime and antisocial behaviour (31%). There was a significant increase in the proportion of residents who felt that their local area had too much rubbish and litter lying around (from 26% in 2017 to 38% in 2019).¹⁶

To be healthy, our public spaces need to

Feel safe

Be attractive and well-maintained

Be accessible

Case Study Community Parks Programme



As our population density increases and residents have less access to private gardens, it is more important than ever to protect and enhance Kingston's parks and green open spaces.

The council has increased investment and focus on green spaces and we are the most improved Borough in The Good Parks for London Report 2019.

 *In just over a year, Kingston has climbed 14 places. This is a testament to the fantastic work taking place across the borough, by both the council and our wonderful community and voluntary groups, to protect and enhance our green spaces for everyone.* 

Deborah Flintoff, Assistant Director - Contracts and Commercial

We recognise that greenspaces can promote healthier living through outdoor recreation and physical activity opportunities, lessening the impacts of climate change, improving environmental quality and biodiversity and supporting local food growing. Vivid Economics were commissioned by the Greater London Authority, National Trust and Heritage Lottery Fund to estimate the economic value provided by London's public parks. It is estimated that publicly accessible greenspace for a Kingston resident, saves £37 in mental health costs and £70 in physical health costs each year.¹⁹

The Community Parks Programme will increase capital investment in the Borough's parks and green spaces. By 2021, RBK will have invested over £1.3 million to deliver a wide range of sustainable improvements for public health benefit.

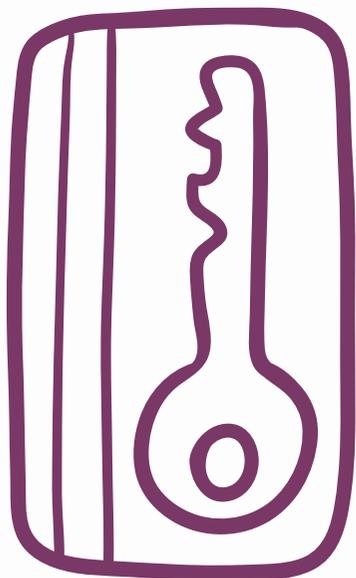
The engagement of local communities is absolutely essential if the true value of greenspace is to be realised. For each of the parks projects, residents have provided their views and suggestions on the plans and have been engaged in the whole process. For example, Victoria Recreation Ground has just been completed, incorporating requests for more imaginative play equipment for young children, a trampoline and a natural colour scheme.

Between April and August of 2019, 775 local volunteers spent a combined 4,068 hours helping with maintenance and nature conservation tasks in greenspaces across Kingston. Volunteering such as this not only benefits the users of greenspace but is also widely acknowledged to improve the health of volunteers themselves through activity and social interaction.

It is essential that we continue to support local communities, to design, and take leadership roles in the development of Kingston's greenspaces. We are just starting a comprehensive community engagement exercise for the review of the RBK Greenspaces Strategy to inform future priorities.



Access to Services



Health is influenced by many factors. These include fixed factors (like age, gender and genetics) but other factors we can change play a key role. These include individual behaviours, the environment and access to health and care services

**RBK Health and Care Plan
2019-21**

Services are part of a local place, but are often built in such a way that they can not be equally accessed by everyone. Services include health provision, education, community, cultural, play, youth, recreation, sports, faith, and emergency facilities. Someone's ability to access a service can be impacted by their location, circumstances, health needs or available resources. For example, those more likely to have issues accessing services include older people, people with disabilities, those with English as a second language and those from more deprived backgrounds.

The NHS has set out their plan to invest in social prescribing in their long term plan, and by doing so recognise the vital role community plays in maintaining people's wellbeing. As part of this, GP practices have begun working together and with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services in their local areas in 'Primary Care Networks' (PCNs). The aim of PCNs is to provide proactive, coordinated care to their local populations, with a strong focus on prevention and personalised care. Networks will also have a greater focus on population health and addressing health inequalities in their area.

Local Context

Despite being an Outer London borough, there is inequality in the proximity to local amenities. 2019 statistics on deprivation suggested 11 of the 98 small areas (LSOAs) in Kingston were in the 30% most deprived nationally in terms of proximity of local services (including post offices, primary schools, general stores or supermarkets, GP surgeries).²⁰

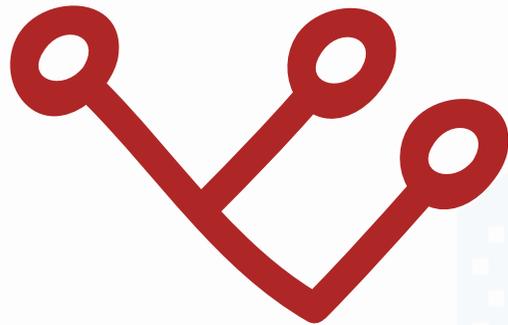
Language barriers are one reason someone may have limited access to a service. Kingston has an ethnically diverse population and has a significant Korean community. In a 2018 needs assessment both North and South Koreans reported difficulty accessing health care, partly due to the language barrier and also due to not being familiar with the system. In the 2011 Census, there was not a specific tick box for Korean ethnicity or language; however 3,493 of Kingston residents self-identified their ethnicity as Korean and 2,613 residents identified Korean as their main language. Korean Community Leaders estimate this figure to be much higher.²¹

Not being online or lacking digital literacy are some of the ways in which people are excluded from accessing services. This is particularly significant as many basic services are increasingly being moved online. There is an opportunity to increase the use of online services for both GPs and council services. Currently 30% of Kingston patients have used their GPs online services in the past 12 months.²² Kingston Voluntary Action's Superhighways project help local people, small businesses and organisations to gain the confidence to get online. Superhighways have helped learners enjoy and make use of being online in their daily lives.

To be healthy, local services need to be



Social connections and relationships



Kingston has a vibrant and engaged voluntary sector which creates opportunities to maximise community participation

**The Royal Borough of Kingston
Corporate Plan 2019 - 2023**

When people are more socially connected to friends, family or their community, they are happier, healthier, with fewer physical and mental health problems when compared to people who are less well connected. Happy and positive friendships and feeling part of community life protects people from the damaging health effects of social isolation and provides them with opportunities to develop healthy habits¹⁹. Furthermore community empowerment is increasingly being shown to be a route to address health inequalities.

A review of 148 studies (covering 308,849 participants) concluded that 'the influence of social relationships on the risk of death are comparable with well-established risk factors for mortality such as smoking and alcohol consumption and exceed the influence of other risk factors such as physical inactivity and obesity' and that 'physicians, health professionals, educators, and the media should [...] take social relationships as seriously as other risk factors that affect mortality.'²³

Local Context

Certain groups are more socially isolated than others, such as carers, older people, those with English as an additional language and people with disabilities.²⁴ In Kingston 46% of adult carers reported that they didn't have enough social contact with people and 20% had little social contact.²⁵ 51% of adult social care users in Kingston say they have as much social contact as they would like.²⁶

It is important that people feel valued and listened to, so that they are encouraged to participate in the local community. Only 28% of residents surveyed in the Kingston Annual Residents Survey 2019 agree that the Council seeks the views of residents before making decisions. 36% disagree with this statement.¹⁶

To be healthy, we need

Positive relationships to feel supported, develop skills and face new situations

Connections within and across communities to feel included and valued

To be able to engage and participate in local activities and groups

Case Study

Connected Kingston



Social Prescribing aims to address people's needs in a holistic way; recognising that an individual's health is determined by a range of conditions and circumstances in which they are born, grow, live and age. It is designed to support people with a wide range of social, emotional or practical needs through the access of non-medical referral options. In turn social prescribing is thought to empower residents to be more independent, more resilient, and to take greater control of their own health and wellbeing.

Kingston's social prescribing model, Connected Kingston (<https://www.connectedkingston.uk/>), is a collaborative effort between the Council, NHS and Voluntary Sector partners to deliver effective social prescribing across the borough. At its core, Connected Kingston is a digital tool, providing information and referral pathways to services and activities in the local area. As well as the website, the model also includes Connected Kingston 'Champions' and 'Community Connectors'. These individuals have been trained to have conversations that focus on people's strengths. They support residents who require additional help to access community activities.

In Kingston, we hope to replicate the evidence that shows social prescribing can lead to a number of beneficial health outcomes for people, and potentially alleviate pressure on NHS and Council services. We will continue to build on the social value that our model offers: the benefits of social activity and building relationships are fundamental to our health and wellbeing.



Case Study

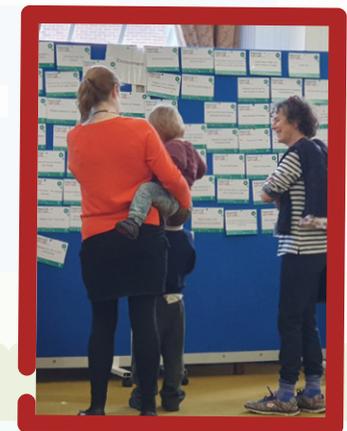
Community Plans



Kingston Neighbourhood Committees are made up of the councillors who represent the electoral wards in each of Kingston's four neighbourhoods. They are responsible for certain local development controls, highways, and some other place based functions. It is vital that matters of local importance (and evidence from data on health and other factors) help shape the priorities of each Neighbourhood Committee.

Because of this, Neighbourhood Committees are engaging with local residents, businesses, community groups and voluntary and community sector organisations, and obtaining feedback which can then be developed into a Community Plan. These Community Plans, to be published in early 2020, will provide a framework to guide decision making and generate local projects that will enhance the community.

In particular the plans will highlight ideas that community groups want to make happen. The plans will help prioritise work to build capacity in voluntary and community groups and work with neighbourhood partners such as the newly established Primary Care Networks. Related to this, the council has refreshed its community grants programme to enable and support local community groups to implement their ideas and continue to deliver innovative projects across our neighbourhoods.



Health in All Policies: Improvements to health through a place-based approach



Recommendation of the Director of Public Health

Every decision Kingston council makes can have an impact on health, be it positive or negative. The Council has a new Corporate Plan, 'Making Kingston Better, Together', with a vision of Kingston to "be a vibrant, diverse and inclusive borough, where residents are active, empowered, engaged and able to remain independent and resilient".

The corporate outcome included in the Corporate Plan of "Healthy, independent and resilient residents with effective support to those who need it most" will require the council to check whether major decisions it makes support our agreed health goals set out with partners in the Kingston Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Kingston Health and Care Plan. Thus, I recommend we take a 'health in all policies' approach in our work across the council to make the most of the resources that we have to support our health vision for Kingston residents."

'Health in all policies' is a collaborative approach to improving the health of all people by incorporating health considerations into decision-making across sectors and policy areas.²⁷ It is about ensuring that there is a common:

- understanding of population health needs and health inequalities
- understanding of the most effective interventions to improve population health
- commitment to maximising the positive health impact of all council functions.

Through this annual public health report I have highlighted examples of how place influences health, as well as examples of work already underway to consider health in all policies. Kingston Public Health are developing processes and procedures to encourage a more formal health in all policies approach. This should ensure health considerations are routinely embedded into all stages of local programme development, service planning and policy making.

I welcome views and ideas on how best to consider health in all policies and make Kingston a healthy place in which to grow up, work and live. To get in touch please email me: iona.lidington@kingston.gov.uk or katharine.dallas@kingston.gov.uk, our Health in All Policies Lead.

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To find a copy of this report and the accompanying demography report, please visit:
<https://data.kingston.gov.uk/jsna/annual-public-health-reports/>



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