

# Goal B: A Healthier Environment Report

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Health & Wellbeing Strategy Thurrock



## **GOAL B: A healthier environment**

1. Create outdoor places that make it easy to exercise and to be active
2. Develop homes that keep people well and independent
3. Building strong, well-connected communities
4. Improve air quality in Thurrock

To engage with Thurrock residents on Goal B we conducted a survey to gather views on the objectives of Goal B. We took the survey out to a number of events and activities over a 2 month period. Between July and September 2016, we spoke to 53 people about Goal B and its objectives; we were able to capture people's views on this by use of a paper survey (Goal B Survey 1). We also spoke to 126 people (Goal B Survey 2) using our shorter version survey asking people only 4 questions which comprised of mostly closed questions. We asked Thurrock residents what they would like to see in green and open spaces, whether they use the green spaces in Thurrock (and if not, why not), whether they are aware of the air quality conditions in Thurrock and whether they believe this has impacted on their health.

Outlined below is, what we asked, what we found and examples of what people said to us around Goal B.

### **B1: Create outdoor places that make it easy to exercise and to be active**

#### **We asked:**

- Do you use green spaces in Thurrock?
- Is it easy to exercise or be active in Thurrock?
- What would help you to answer yes to the questions above?

#### **We found:**

In both surveys we asked whether they used parks and/or green spaces in Thurrock. Of the total number of people we spoke to (n=179), 60% of people said *yes* they use Thurrock green spaces and 40% said *no* they don't use Thurrock Green spaces.

We found that of the 53 people we asked regarding ease of activity and exercise in Thurrock 83% said *yes* it is easy and 17% said *no* it's not easy to exercise or be active in Thurrock.

The themes which emerged when people were asked what would help you to answer yes to the questions above are as follows:

- Access for those with mobility issues

- Cost
- Maintenance and cleanliness in parks
- None local, nearby
- Not enough to do there eg. Groups, equipment, things to see
- Preference
- Raising awareness
- Safety (personal safety such as not wanting to walk alone, or fears of being mugged)

### What people said:

*“Better publication on where to exercise in Thurrock. Better Provision of pavements for jogging. More notices/signs about different parks/green spaces in Thurrock.”*

*“We need more seating and Tea room in the Park.”*

*“Not appealing and often rubbish in the parks or antisocial behaviour.”*

*“Would be easier to use green spaces if they cut the grass regularly and maintain foot paths (cut the bushes back) in parks.”*

*“The outdoor space could be kept cleaner making it easier to take children and exercise and not have to worry about rubbish and your kids being safe.”*

*“Better parks and parks that are maintained. For example in East Tilbury the park equipment seems to be removed and nothing has been put back in its place. It is not looked after. Litter picks are being done by the local residents once a week. Yesterday, my child got glass in her shoe and it cut her foot. It puts me off using the space. An outdoor gym would also be good. Frome Park and Colne Park are a waste of space.”*

### Community recommendations:

1. Community to set up groups to support parks and upkeep.
2. Use time banking services to increase volunteering to maintain parks and green spaces.
3. Look at ways to increase safety in parks and green spaces such as lighting, and CCTV.
4. Offer more within parks and green spaces such as voluntary run tea rooms, food outlets, gym sessions ect.

## B2: Develop homes that keep people well and independent

### We asked:

We need to be able to carry out normal tasks easily within our own home, staying as independent as possible in our homes is important. Are you able to do basic everyday tasks in your home such as:

- Get up and down the stairs?
- Lock up the house and leave?
- Move around your home?

And, what would help you to answer yes to the questions above?

**We found:**

Many of the people we spoke to (n=53) felt they were able to do the above tasks with an average 95% saying yes to all three questions. Those who said no, themes emerged around mobility issues and accessible transport.

**What people said:**

*“I live in a flat (7th floor), but we do have lifts. I walk with a stick but can manage some stairs.”*

*“I live independently but I know of those that don’t. More efficient home help better transport links. More frequent buses, make busses more accessible to the elderly/disabled I find busses difficult to get on.”*

*“I am not very mobile, I’d like help with this and help with pain. Getting out would give me a better mind set.”*

*“Lots of the doors of council properties are not wide enough for wheelchairs.”*

*“I experience lots of problems within the home which I have difficulties constantly, my bathroom has been adapted to assist but this is the room where I still experience lots of problems ie. Trips and falls.”*

*“The wheelie bins can be difficult to move. I had one of the bathrooms in the house made into a wet room with a seat for me and my husband in case we ever need a wheelchair. It is now more accessible.”*

**Community recommendations:**

1. Ensure home care services are to a good standard and are providing to the needs of the less mobile population in Thurrock.
2. To supply a list of services, equipment and support networks to those in sheltered accommodation or needing home care. Giving more choice and independence.
3. Liaise with local transport services and voluntary transport services to ensure good connections and routes which are accessible to those with mobility issues.

**B3: Building strong, well-connected communities**

**We asked:**

Are you an active member of your community?

Do you have a say in what happens in your neighbourhood?

Are you a member of any community groups in Thurrock?

Are you aware of the community hubs in Thurrock?

- If yes do you use them?

Have you ever volunteered in Thurrock?

- If no do you plan to volunteer at some point?

What would help to answer yes to more of the questions above?

### **We found:**

Of the 53 people we spoke to we found that:

- 55% of people said *yes* they are active member of their community.
- 32% of people said *yes* they do have a say in their neighbourhood.
- 26% of people said *yes* they were a member of a local community group.
- 57% of people said *yes* they were aware of the Community Hubs in Thurrock. But only 21% had actually used them.
- 42% of people said they had volunteered in Thurrock. And 26% of people plan to at some point.

The themes which emerged from the question asking what would help you to answer yes to more of the above centred on:

- Raising awareness of what is available locally
- Time constraints
- Accessible venues; times

### **What people said:**

*“More publicity about local community events, groups etc.”*

*“More publicity of community hubs and events. Better times for events that do take place. Events and hubs being held in central/clearly accessible areas.”*

*“Information on what’s happening in the area, better advertised.”*

*“I’m elderly now. But I am interested in joining Waterstones book club at Lakeside. It is just the getting there.”*

*“Being able to find out about activities and groups. I work so don’t have much time.”*

*“I am new to area. Accessing the groups etc. Working out the Borough so its hard to find out what is going on locally sometimes.”*

*“Being more aware of community groups and the hubs in Thurrock and ways to become more involved.”*

*“If information about community groups was put on notice boards - in the flats, in doctors surgeries etc.”*

*“More awareness of what’s going on and volunteering opportunities. If I had more time I would volunteer.”*

*“More time but I am a carer so have little spare time.”*

*“I haven’t got the time to volunteer but I might do in the future.”*

*“More time!”*

*“I don’t spend much time in Thurrock.”*

*“I would like to volunteer if I had more time.”*

*“I would use the hubs and I have planned to but not got round to it yet.”*

*“I work and the hubs are not open in the evening, therefore I have not visited my local hub.”*

*“I work 40 hours a week but do my best to be an active member through social media and always help out neighbours.”*

*“Now both my children are in full time education, I could help volunteer.”*  
*“I would try to get more involved in my neighbourhood groups in my community.”*

**Community recommendations:**

1. Publication/notification of local community activities. Many people in the community are not aware of everything that is going on.
2. Strengthen social relationships and opportunities for community connection for individuals and families, especially those in greatest need e.g. the most vulnerable and isolated.
3. Strengthen relationships between communities and health and social care agencies.

**B4: Improve air quality in Thurrock.**

**We asked:**

Are you aware of the air quality conditions in Thurrock?

Do you believe the air quality in Thurrock has had a direct effect on your health?

The air quality in Thurrock is poor what would help us to achieve better air quality in Thurrock/ and is there anything you think you could do?

**We found:**

Of the 53 people we spoke to we found that:

56% of people said they were aware and 44% said they weren't aware of the air quality conditions in Thurrock.

67% of people believe the air quality condition has had a direct effect on their health.

When we put the question to them about how we can achieve better air quality in Thurrock we found that these themes emerged:

- Directing traffic, traffic control measures
- Good planning for new housing which considers the air quality
- Industry changes
- Looking after your local environment
- Not having a new crossing in Thurrock
- Not using a car
- Planting trees/ plants
- Poor air quality due to road vehicles

## What people said:

*"Think they've improved over last 10 years because they've shut down oil refineries in Corringham."*

*"To improve air quality, industries in Thurrock should be levied to pay for infrastructures like parks etc."*

*"Had a cough for 6 weeks which after being treated is still there. There are too many cars on the road."*

*"They are building a wood burning energy plant very close to our flats, a school and a children's play area. We were not consulted on this beforehand (I belong to the residents group) but there is little we can do now that planning permission has been given."*  
*Walk/ cycle rather than drive.*

*"Ride bikes, walk more."*

*"The new proposed crossing to be away from Thurrock. HGVs not to use local roads."*

*"Cut down traffic jams when bridge is closed, standing traffic causes pollution."*

*"Impossible task to reduce traffic from M25 and local roads."*

*"Turn off my car engine when in traffic. Buy a cheaper car when I can afford it. Work more locally."*

*"Don't keep the car running in traffic. I'm also trying to give up smoking."*

*"Tackle pollution, train prices should be cheaper so people can drive less."*

*"Reduce the traffic and congestion."*

*"Small changes by everyone could help reduce strain on resources. Everyone needs to participate to make things happen. To care about how and where you live."*

*"Plant more trees ect that particularly help with clean oxygen. Promote the importance of using your garden to help this. Promote the importance of house plants in the home that promote clean air. Get Essex County Council/ Thurrock Council to clean up the rubbish along the main roads and tackle the lorries who deliver to the local dump to properly cover their lorries so rubbish does not fly off."*

*"Park and ride would keep some of the cars off the roads. Put back some trees to help oxygen back in the air as trees absorb congestion fumes."*

*"Improve public transport. Reduce congestion at Thames Crossing. Reduce congestion around lakeside shopping centre - improve road links to lakeside."*

*"More traffic control around Lakeside to prevent the constant jams."*

*"Stop cars speeding along small roads and 'jumping' over speed bumps (e.g. On Drake Road). More traffic control around Lakeside."*

*"Are the factories being encouraged to change their systems, or being monitored on their pollution, this is something that should be considered."*

*"Reduce congestion at various points in Thurrock."*

*"I think to improve the air quality is to try to deal with the constant traffic problems we experience in Thurrock."*

*"Fewer cars on the road, some sort of initiative to travel differently, e.g. reduce train/bus fares."*

*"I could ensure windows are left open on the vents for air circulation."*

*"Better and cheaper public transport so people use cars less. More options for shopping so people do not need to all travel to the same places (Lakeside). Limit factory opening times and emissions."*

*"Using the car less often. Easier access to facilities within the borough."*

*“School mums dropping their kids off who could walk to school rather than drive.”*  
*“Less congested housing. Decrease air pollution in every way.”*  
*“Use public transport more to use fewer cars.”*  
*“Park and ride options. Plant more trees.”*  
*“Less traffic - traffic calming measures are needed.”*  
*“Don’t build another bridge. Traffic is a real problem in Thurrock.”*  
*“Plant more trees and walk more. Increased bus services in some areas such as East “  
Tilbury.”*

**Community recommendations:**

1. To ensure the community are aware of progress made to improve Thurrock air pollution.
2. Promote the positive outcomes on better air quality and how we as a community can contribute.
3. Look at the current bus routes and where needs are unmet or routes are inadequate e.g. East Tilbury.
4. Consider park and ride options in Thurrock to reduce traffic congestion.