



# Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2021

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Report on the Views of the Refreshed Health & Wellbeing Strategy for  
Thurrock

March 2016

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## Section 1: Introduction

# Healthwatch Thurrock sits on the Health & Wellbeing Board in Thurrock.

The Health & Wellbeing Board are responsible for making sure that the health of Thurrock Citizens is improving and that the health and wellbeing priorities are being delivered by a various partner organisations. The first Health & Wellbeing Strategy by the Board was agreed in 2013 and expired this year (2016) <sup>1</sup>. The refreshed Health & Wellbeing Strategy has been co-created through effective engagement with providers and the community; driven by data from the Joint Strategic Needs assessment (JSNA) <sup>2</sup>. The board began to look what areas to focus on in order to make further improvements to health and wellbeing of those living in Thurrock.

Thurrock is a unique area as we are a unitary Borough within the County of Essex. Like many parts of the UK, Thurrock has clear evidential health inequalities. Differences in the health and wellbeing of different communities is great, for example a boy born in Tilbury today is predicted to live for ten years less than a boy born in Orsett <sup>2</sup>. The Borough has a population of 160,000 people of which 19% are from a black or minority ethnicity (BME) community. Thurrock also has a relatively young population compared to England, but as people live longer, the proportion of our population aged over 65 is predicted to grow faster than the general population. Thurrock has a diverse and multi-cultural community including many of which are classed as 'hard to reach'. Healthwatch Thurrock believe it is an integral part of our service to ensure that we reach as many of these groups as possible within our community.

The Health & Wellbeing board highlighted how the plan should be created in partnership with local citizens. Initially five priority areas were identified as being areas that would make the most impact in improving the health and wellbeing of Thurrock people. These are:

1. Preventing ill-health and taking early action - doing things that stop people becoming ill or taking early action when people do become ill. For example reducing levels of smoking, improving diet and physical activity levels, delivering health and care services closer to home, identifying people who are at risk of becoming ill, helping people to better manage their health conditions.
2. Ensuring that all agencies work together to deliver services that collectively improve the lives of all children and young people, ensuring that every child in Thurrock regardless of their circumstances has access to the best services and outcomes - taking action to reduce childhood inequalities such as child poverty, attainment, neglect, and physical and emotional/mental health, services that are focused on early help to prevent difficulties becoming so great that specialist help is required.

3. Building strong and resilient communities - focusing on the factors (determinants) within communities that influence good health and wellbeing such as the physical environment (e.g. Housing, green space), local networks, communities that support people as they grow older.
4. Strengthen the mental health and emotional wellbeing of people in Thurrock - reducing loneliness and isolation, focusing on the relationship between physical and mental health, promoting early action, ensuring the appropriate services are in place for both children and adults.
5. Transforming services and solutions to focus on preventing ill-health and taking early action - looking at how we integrate certain health and care services, ensuring all partner organisations have the same goal of improving health and wellbeing and preventing ill-health, redesigning services and solutions that focus on keeping people well and identifying people at risk of becoming ill, enhancing the role of individuals and communities in improving health and wellbeing and preventing ill-health.

## Section 2: Methods

### What we did

Over a 6 week period, between 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015 till 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2016, Healthwatch Thurrock delivered a comprehensive engagement plan which involved visiting members of the local community to gather their views on the new Health & Wellbeing Strategy. A survey was created by Thurrock Council as a means of getting the public view of the new Health & Wellbeing Strategy and what the priorities should be.

We took the survey forms out to different groups in the community over this period see page for data of places we visited. The survey was also available online and we promoted this using the Healthwatch Thurrock website and social media: Facebook page and Twitter page. Once the surveys were completed and collated we provided all data to Thurrock Council. There were a total of 539 completed surveys, of which 250 were gathered by the team at Healthwatch Thurrock.

Alongside, the survey, Healthwatch Thurrock also did a piece of work to gather the views of respondents on their thoughts about the survey format and wording of the priorities. This short questionnaire was done both verbally (where we would take notes) and by the individual themselves filling out a short feedback form. Questions asked included:

- how easy the survey forms were to fill in
- how easy the forms were to understand
- whether an easy read version of the form is preferable

Out of the 250 completed surveys Healthwatch Thurrock collected, 50 respondents gave feedback on the survey itself, including the wording and their understanding of each priority.

## Where we went

Organisation type	Name
Community Centre	Aveley Youth & Community Centre
Church Group	Gates of Praise
Church Group	St Peter & Paul coffee morning
Children's Centre	Aveley Children's Centre
Children's Centre	Chadwell Children's Centre
Library	Chadwell Information Centre and Library
Children's Centre	Beacon Centre - All Saints Church,
Community Organisation	Spring House Guild
Community Forum	Corringham Community Forum
Library	East Tilbury Library
Children's Centre	East Tilbury Children's Centre
College	Thurrock Learning Campus in Grays
Library	Blackshots Library
Community Organisation	Ngage in Grays
Children's Centre	Thameside Children's Centre in Grays
Resource Centre	Beehive Reception in Grays
College	South Essex College in Grays
Grays Market	Grays Town Square
Community Forum	TLS Advocacy Group BATIAS
Community Organisation	Breathe Easy
Children's Centre	Purfleet/West Thurrock Children's Centre
Community Forum	Purfleet Forum
Community Centre	South Ockenden Centre
Children's Centre	South Ockenden Children's Centre
Community Organisation	Pally Club St Margaret's Church Hall
Community Hub	Stifford Clays Acorn Hub
Community Organisation	Stifford Clays Over 60s Club Thurrock
Community Centre	Tilbury One Community
Community Hub	Tilbury Hub
Children's Centre	Tilbury Children's Centre
Community Organisation	Cowdray Hall
Assisted Living	Kynoch Court

## Section 3: Report Results

### Do you find the priorities easy to understand?

1 <sup>st</sup> Draft Priority		2 <sup>nd</sup> Draft Priority		3 <sup>rd</sup> Draft Priority		4 <sup>th</sup> Draft Priority		5 <sup>th</sup> Draft Priority	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
35	15	34	16	38	12	27	23	33	17
70%	30%	68%	32%	76%	24%	54%	46%	66%	34%

Even though a larger percentage of respondents answered yes that they found each draft priority area of the survey easy to understand, a significant number found them difficult to engage with and had difficulty understanding the meaning of the priority.

To support the evidence that a significant number of respondents found the survey difficult to engage with, these extra comments were made in response to how the survey could have been drafted to make it easier.

#### Extra Comments Made

“Make it shorter, the 2nd sentence has 37 words the recommended readability level is 8-12 words per sentence”

“Much easier questions could be answered with tick boxes with a comment space”

“These could be done in other formats to include people who have e.g. visual impairments”

“Small print, academic, not easy to understand for older people or impaired”

“These could be done in other formats to include people who have e.g. visual impairments”

“Jargon and non-specific into jargon”

“Write them in a way the elderly will understand. Easy read version needed”

“Explanation misleading, too wordy”

“Too long, too many words”

“Should be in simpler terms for the lay man to interpret it”

“Unclear what agencies & support this is very vague”

“Difficult to understand”

“In my opinion the question about disability is a tad ambiguous”

“Clients gave up trying to fill out the forms as they felt they were too conflicting.”

“I believe the last part of the title should be in the body of the text”

“Too broad, Boggles the mind, needs a lot of thought and time to engage with form”

“A lot of reading which can put you off”

“Easy read format preferable”

“I have not seen the first strategy so I don’t know what has been achieved?”

## Section 4: Summary

The new Health & Wellbeing Strategy was co-created through effective engagement with providers and the community; driven by data from the Joint Strategic Needs assessment <sup>2</sup>. Healthwatch Thurrock carried out engagement with the local population to ensure that the refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy reflected the views of the community. The Health & Wellbeing Board informed us that through the engagement activity, a number of key themes emerged which have shaped the final Strategy. Engagement also led to the Strategy itself being presented in a more accessible way than previous versions.

### Our Initial Recommendations to the Board

Healthwatch Thurrock made recommendations to the Board from the evidence gathered:

1. A more accessible and simplified version of the Health & Wellbeing strategy be made available
2. That future surveys be kept short, sharp and simple as suggested by the feedback respondents

The refreshed Health & Wellbeing Strategy for 2016-2021 has since been and the five ‘priorities’ have now been changed to five ‘goals’:

### Refreshed Goals

A. Opportunity for All

B. Healthier Environments

C. Better Emotional Health and Wellbeing

D. Quality Care Centered around the Person

E. Healthier for Longer

These goals are easier to understand, sharper and apply to the broad and diverse community in Thurrock. The Health & Wellbeing Board listened and took into consideration the responses made in the main survey and also considered the extra work we did which highlighted the importance of having jargon free text that is relevant and accessible. We provided this information over a series of meetings with Thurrock council and also at the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2016.

*‘This has been a valuable engagement process as the views of the residents have been listened to and the changes were actually made to the document, in relation to wording and priorities set.’*

Kim James, Chief Operating officer at Healthwatch Thurrock <sup>3</sup>



## References

<sup>1</sup> Thurrock Council (2013) Health and Well-Being Strategy 2013-2016 part 1 - Improving the Health and Well-Being of Adults in Thurrock: [www.thurrock.gov.uk/strategies/health-and-well-being-strategy](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/strategies/health-and-well-being-strategy)

<sup>2</sup> Thurrock Council (2015) Thurrock Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: Demographics and Population Change: <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/healthy-living/joint-strategic-needs-assessment>

<sup>3</sup> Health & wellbeing Board (2016) Public Minutes of the meeting Health & Wellbeing Board held 10th March 2016:  
<http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/documents/s7999/HWBB%20Notes%20100316.pdf>