

1. Synergies between Sustainability and Regeneration services and Health and Wellbeing

Physical Environments – open spaces, allotments, parks

- Access to green, open spaces can have both physical health and psychological and mental health benefits, including reductions in stress levels.

Spatial planning

- Health improvement requires a two-pronged approach; i.e., creating a built environment that offers healthy options, to enable individuals to take responsibility for their own lifestyle choices.
- Spatial planning issues that impact on health include transportation, buildings and communities, building healthy homes and flooding.
- Spatial planning has significant links to health through creation of a built environment that offers healthy options to fast food, alcohol and betting shop outlets, for example.

Transport

The links between transport and health include

- Road safety and accidents
- Promotion of physical activities by providing opportunities for walking and cycling

Regeneration and economic development

- Socio-economic deprivation, along with education, are the two major influences on health. Regeneration programmes that address these inequalities will generate health improvement. Positive health outcomes include increases in self reported health, mental health and improvements in mortality rates. Health impact assessments of these plans will help point out where they have potential harmful effects for example, on existing residents who may be displaced.

2. Achievements and current activities

LBM Public Health now works across Council influences on health, including

- A Responsible Authorities Group established by Public Health to develop strategic responses and to identify common areas of interest, including
 - responding regularly to licensing and planning using relevant public health data
 - support the statement of licensing policy refresh
 - working with local and national planning colleagues to develop a 'best practice' guide setting out key points in the planning process where Public Health can add value, and identification of potential to work across planning and licensing functions
- Health impact assessments – although agreement to embed this across the Council did not move forward, HIAs are now underway with the regeneration team for three estate regeneration schemes. A quantitative HIA has also been commissioned on the cost to the NHS and wider society of private sector housing hazards in Merton.

- Work with Sports and Leisure through additional green gyms; a scheme to train physical activity champions is being designed
- Agreement to work with litter enforcement officers to offer cancellation of litter fines for smokers who attend Stop Smoking services and quit smoking
- Work with Sustainable Communities and Transport through the work agenda (discussed below under Pollards Hill pilot) and the Sustainable Merton partnership through DigMerton support to Healthy Schools
- A pilot of the refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Merton the Place for a Good Life -- is being designed for Pollards Hill, in collaboration with Commonsense Community Development Trust, Phoenix residents association and residents. Starting with a Living Street Audit to identify assets and issues, efforts are now ongoing to seek support/interest from local residents to guide further development

Planned work

- We are bringing together work across lifestyle behaviours, including diet, exercise, smoking, and alcohol to create coordinated pathways that address not only individual lifestyle behaviours, but also enablers in our high streets and in the wider built environment to make the healthy option the easy choice.
- Our food work adopts a broad approach, starting with a Merton Food Summit in April to bring together organisations that deliver some aspect of the food agenda to discuss how we could do more by working more effectively together. Public Health will support a healthy catering officer in Environmental Health, to support this work and other work across the food environment.
- We are exploring how Public Health can best work with Council officers who deliver services that influence health. For example, we are undertaking an audit of physical activity provision in Merton against Public Health England's 'Everybody Active, Every Day' best practice guidelines, to see how we can better integrate services commissioned across the council, and ensure we are effectively targeting and supporting those in the borough who are least physically active.
- The DPH is the London DsPH lead for alcohol and works with the London Healthy High Street group to commission support to this agenda, as well as to identify areas of common interest across our boroughs, and to develop effective advocacy at the national level. We are awaiting feedback from a list of 'asks' sought by the group on increased control over their local high streets and are beginning to examine potential for a London pilot for alcohol minimum unit pricing for interested boroughs.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-18

This portfolio specifically links to two themes of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Theme 3 Life skills, lifelong learning and good work

Theme 5 A good natural and built environment

A summary page of all five themes with key outcomes is included in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy that can be found at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/health-social-care/publichealth.htm>.

This page is intentionally left blank