

Strand 5: Building Resilient and Vibrant Communities and Neighbourhoods





Glossary

Mixed-use neighbourhoods

In a mixed-use neighbourhood, housing and residential areas are mixed in with restaurants, cafes, dry cleaners, supermarkets, corner shops, etc. – businesses that serve local people and support the daily needs of residents.

Gigabit broadband

Gigabit broadband is an internet connection that offers a speed of 1 gigabit per second (1Gbps/1Gb) or more. With a speed of 1Gb, you could potentially download a 5GB file in just 40 seconds. At present, these incredible speeds are only achievable with a fixed-line connection.

Real-time data

Real-time data is information that is delivered immediately after collection, for example when you withdraw money from your bank at an ATM, the amount in your bank account is immediately updated.

Zero carbon

Zero carbon means that the amount of greenhouse gases (like carbon dioxide) that the council adds to the atmosphere is no longer more than what they take out.

Internet of Things

'The internet of things' is the interconnection via the internet of computing devices embedded in everyday objects, enabling them to send and receive data. For example: a smart meter to monitor your electric usage.

Telehealth and telemedicine

Telehealth is the use of digital information and communication technologies, such as computers and mobile devices, to access healthcare services remotely to easily manage your own healthcare, whereas telemedicine is the practice of medicine using technology to deliver care to patients at a distance.

DG Cities

DG Cities Ltd is the commercial smart cities arm of the Royal Borough of Greenwich. It enables the organisation to work flexibly with external partners in research, local government, consultancy and other new business opportunities related to smart city development.

Integrated enforcement

Integrated enforcement is a joined-up approach to tackling issues of anti-social behaviour by working with various teams with the Royal Borough of Greenwich and our partners including the police. It recognises that all issues need to be resolved not just one type of issue.

Building Resilient and Vibrant Communities



Our Commitments

- Ensure that residents have a voice and are empowered and supported to help shape their local environment.
- Improve the safety and security of our neighbourhoods.
- Prioritise the design of mixed-use, high-quality neighbourhoods.
- Improve digital connectivity in homes across Royal Greenwich.

A good place to live is about more than just having a good home. It is about the local environment, safety, being close to shops, cafes and restaurants, and an attachment to the local area. Through the activities outlined in the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, we aim not only to improve people's homes and the services we provide, but also the area in which they live. We want to build local neighbourhoods that are vibrant, sustainable and resilient which meet the needs of residents today and in the future.

Our goal is to create neighbourhoods that can provide residents with what they need locally and improve their quality of life, while minimising the impact on the environment. Royal Greenwich spaces, buildings, transport, services and communities need to be inclusive, easy to access, and reflect the diversity and warmth which makes the borough such a great place to live.

We also want residents to be well-informed and for services to be responsive by allowing access to real time data and information. Responsiveness is becoming increasingly important, as it will allow us to anticipate and prevent problems. To enable this, we are committed in deploying robust digital connectivity and infrastructure.

Finally, given the environmental challenges we face, we are determined to make the most of the opportunities that data and technology provide to enable the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030.

This is a long-term vision which requires council-wide commitment and investment. We will work across many different departments within the council, as well as building on external partnerships, to achieve these goals.

Ensure that residents have a voice and are empowered and supported to help shape their local environment

- Develop an inclusive community engagement approach which ensures that we engage with all communities in the borough.
- Be an excellent landlord and lead by example to ensure that residents and their needs act as the 'guiding star' for our housing service delivery with services that are designed around resident needs.
- Conduct research with tenants, leaseholders and service users to review and refine the channels we use for engaging with them.
- Improve the council's data and evidence-base to improve service delivery and neighbourhood planning and management.
- Enable increased community participation in support of the Digital Inclusion strategy.

Building Resilient and Vibrant Communities and Neighbourhoods relies heavily on connecting and engaging with residents and communities, so that they can shape their local surroundings and environment.

A key priority is to facilitate improved community engagement on housing and neighbourhood matters. We recognise the complex barriers that many residents and communities face when trying to engage with the council. We need to understand these to make sure we are talking to everyone and that all residents feel represented and included in our plans.

The council is the largest landlord in the borough, owning and managing around 25% of all of homes in Royal Greenwich. It is important that the council leads by example in ensuring that all tenants and

leaseholders can help shape their local surroundings and environments.

As a landlord we will be guided by the UK Government's recent white paper – 'The charter for social housing tenants', to ensure that we listen to our tenants and their needs, responding quickly and comprehensively when issues do arise.

We will ensure that residents' needs are at the centre of our services, and that future services are designed around them. We will therefore begin a programme of research with our tenants and leaseholders to ensure that we are guided by them in delivering our services. To do this, we will work across the council to offer a more joined-up approach, generating a comprehensive understanding of residents' needs and experiences.

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We recognise that communication plays a vital role in enabling meaningful participation, and that effective communication is consistent and two-way. We will therefore work with our tenants and leaseholders to evaluate and improve our communication methods to ensure that no-one is excluded from being able to have their say.

We will look to apply practice standards to our data management processes and invest in building our

data and reporting capabilities, making them practical, accessible and useful for residents.

To enable supportive, participative communities, we are committed to working closely with other housing providers, landlords and private homeowners. Using our collective knowledge and experience, we will ensure that we have a real understanding of what we need to be doing to better support our local communities.



Improve the safety and security of our neighbourhoods

- Build on our integrated enforcement approach, both within and outside of the council, to tackle crime, disorder and broader community safety issues which impact on the quality of life of our residents.
- Increase enforcement and problem solving on our residential estates using our Safer Spaces service in conjunction with housing colleagues.
- Modernise our 24/7 CCTV capability across the borough and maximise the lawful and proportionate use of new technology to keep people and places safer.
- Introduce a new Community Protection Team to help provide a more integrated and cost-effective response to noise, nuisance and anti-social behaviour (ASB).

We believe that every resident has the right to feel safe in their home and in their neighbourhood. The council also has both a moral and a legal duty to work with others to reduce crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and re-offending.

Moving forward, the council intends to improve the visible enforcement and problem-solving activities already undertaken on our estates and in our neighbourhoods. This will see further expansion of our highly regarded Safer Spaces service. The Safer Spaces service is very much at the heart of the council's Integrated Enforcement (IE) approach and can call upon a dedicated team of local police officers who are part-funded by the council. This is in addition to working with all IE partners, including colleagues from Housing; Street Services; and Park, Estates & Open Spaces; as well as other partners such as London Fire Brigade.

The council has also committed investment to modernise its 24/7 CCTV capability. Currently, the Council has earmarked around £3.7m to upgrade and maintain our CCTV system over the next several years, which will see analogue technology replaced with digital. This will also enable the use of analytics

to help the council and emergency services better identify, respond to, and reduce incidents of crime and disorder.

As part of the modernisation programme, we aim to undertake a specific review of CCTV and associated technology on all our estates over the next 12-18 months, with a view of upgrading necessary equipment and infrastructure. Adding significant numbers of additional cameras is not financially viable or practical, so exploring more cost-effective solutions for tackling crime and anti-social behaviour is essential. For example: using mobile CCTV which can be moved around to respond to the need.

Striving for a more integrated approach to enforcement and community safety, the council is moving to a more effective and efficient model of tackling noise, statutory nuisance, and anti-social behaviour. This would take the form of a new Community Protection Team (CPT), bringing together the noise and anti-social behaviour services together as one team. The vision for the new CPT would be focused on earlier intervention, the use of a broader range of powers and proactive ways of working to better deal with complaints, as well as

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closer working with other council teams and partners to resolve more complex issues.

A proposed area of change is our out-of-hours community protection response. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, a noise-only service usually operated throughout the year, Monday to Sunday, and predominantly between 8pm and 1am. Although this is not a statutory requirement, the council is keen to keep an out-of-hours response to both noise but adding wider issues with anti-social behaviour. To deliver on our ambition and associated benefits, the council is looking to move permanently to a Thursday to Sunday provision, broadly operating between 4pm and 2am.

This reflects the current service maintained during the pandemic period and the actual demand; with 64% of calls being recorded on a Friday or Saturday. It is also less reliant on staff working overtime and financially more sustainable than previous operating hours.

The recently introduced 'Noise App' will be available to support residents to report issues and submit supporting recordings for service follow-up. The additional daytime capability at weekends will also enable the service to respond to other forms of statutory nuisance, such as odour and smoke related issues, as well as supporting wider joint priorities for IE.

As well as driving continuous improvement of our own enforcement and community safety teams, we will also continue to develop our broader strategic and partnership responses to things like violence against women and girls, modern slavery and serious youth violence. We will continue to engage and involve residents and businesses in our plans, listening and responding to concerns and working with community and voluntary groups. We want to bring about real change across our neighbourhoods and deliver a safer, cleaner and healthier Royal Greenwich for all.



Prioritise the design of mixed-use, high-quality

- Promote compact and mixed-use neighbourhoods to meet the needs residents of all age groups locally.
- Reduce the need to travel and promote active and sustainable transport options.
- Use influence to push for good transport infrastructure between neighbourhoods and town centres so they are all efficiently connected and part of a well-linked network.
- Explore how flexible building design in new developments could accommodate different uses, increasing the long-term resilience of local neighbourhoods to changing trends and requirements.
- Encourage the design of new homes which meet people's needs throughout their lifetime.
- Ensure the provision of good quality and diverse open spaces for the enjoyment of residents.
- Where possible, make buildings more inviting to add interest, life and vitality - this could mean helping promote and design vibrant shop fronts, or improving building facades to boost the neighbourhood's local economy, its liveability and safety.
- Embrace new technologies and digital infrastructure to gather information which will help us to build more efficient and better environments, as well as better management of our current buildings, spaces, resources and infrastructure.

The new Housing and Homelessness Strategy has been drafted against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to have a big impact on the way we live, work and interact with each other. It also comes at a time when our world is changing in many ways:

- The impact of, and response to the climate crisis.
- The impact of new technology and global economic trends.
- Increasing pressure on public infrastructure, services and finances.

These trends highlight the need to build resilience into our approach, to rethink how we plan our

environment, how we can ensure flexibility and meaningful engagement with our residents.

One of our key priorities is to promote active travel including walking and cycling, with the aim to tackle the high levels of congestion and pollution in some areas of the Borough, while improving people's health and tackling obesity.

We also want to create neighbourhoods that are self-sufficient and liveable by using compact, flexible and multi-use buildings. These buildings will be able to accommodate lots of different things including residential, commercial, retail, leisure and office spaces, which can be adapted as needs change.

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We aim to deliver neighbourhoods where people – of all ages – can live, work, socialise, shop and play locally, without routinely travelling long distances, which are easily accessible by walking or cycling. We will encourage inviting street fronts to accommodate businesses like cafes, restaurants, shops and workspaces of different sizes, etc., to increase social interaction and economic activities.

Alongside our compact and mixed-use neighbourhoods, we will create lovely, well-maintained open and green spaces designed to welcome a wide range of activities and people.

We will also seek to ensure that Greenwich's neighbourhoods are well connected with each other through green and sustainable infrastructure as part of a wider network of urban centres with excellent facilities and services.

Finally, we will embrace the potential of digital change and new technologies to help us achieve all the above.

We are committed to achieving our ambitious plans for building resilient and vibrant communities and neighbourhoods. We need feedback and support from residents who will play a part in delivering the strategy.



Improve digital connectivity in homes across Royal Greenwich

- Deliver full fibre connectivity to every property in the borough by 2025, giving residents and businesses future-proofed connectivity and enabling digital public services that help people to learn, work and live.
- Use *‘Internet of Things’ technologies including a range of smart sensors and building components in council homes. Use data analytics to improve, deliver and maintain buildings and services more efficiently for residents.
- Use ‘Internet of Things’ technologies, smart sensors and controls to support and enable energy efficiency and carbon reduction in people’s home.
- Enable resident discussion and suggestions through the use of open data on energy use, building maintenance and other services.
- Develop robust and comprehensive cyber security and privacy approaches to ensure that residents and their data remain safe and secure.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of access to fast and reliable digital connectivity and has meant more people are remote/home working, as well as using the internet for shopping, learning and accessing services.

Currently, approximately 20% of premises in Royal Greenwich have access to full fibre broadband (download speeds of at least one gigabit per second). We want to ensure that every place in the borough has access to full fibre connectivity by 2025. We will work with a wide range of commercial providers to deliver this connectivity, ensuring that residents benefit from choice, value for money, and early access to high internet speeds.

We will use the increased internet connectivity to directly improve the delivery of council and other public services, working with colleagues across the council, in schools, and with the NHS, police and other service providers (e.g. TFL). We will explore a local open data and community engagement

platform, allowing residents and businesses to easily understand what’s happening in their communities, e.g. monitor their energy use and engage with the council and each other to suggest improvements to their communities.

We will work with local health and education providers to pilot new telehealth and telemedicine approaches. We will also work with social care workers to help support residents and allow them to stay in their homes as long as possible through the use of a wide range of technologies.

We will take advantage of rapidly developing ‘Internet of Things’ technologies to deliver maintenance of council buildings which will be able to prevent and fix problems before they arise. We also want to pilot a range of devices (like smart energy meters) across at least 10% of the council’s properties by 2025, and will work directly with housing associations, private landlords and owner-occupiers to share the lessons learned.

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Achieving zero carbon requires new approaches that go beyond traditional energy efficiency and renewable energy measures. We need to look at energy systems as a whole, and how things like power, heating and storage work together to balance them and minimise carbon emissions. It is important to build on the lessons learned and the partnerships developed through the wide range of innovation

programmes delivered by the Royal Borough of Greenwich's innovation programme DG Cities.

While making sure that services are innovative and high quality, we will ensure that residents' personal data and information is secure and private, using appropriate technological standards to keep details safe and secure.

