



Because growing  
up can be hard



CENTRE FOR  
**POPULATION  
HEALTH**

DEVELOPING LEADERS • IMPROVING LIVES • CREATING EQUITY

# POPULATION HEALTH: STRONGEST START

## 2025 National Conference

Our thanks to ...

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#CPHCNE25

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## Breakout session 2D: Transforming Funding and Commissioning

An update on current strategic commissioning  
frameworks in the NHS and learning  
from innovative practice in partnering with the NHS



# The Future of Strategic Commissioning in the NHS



England

Emily Wighton  
Regional Senior Pharmacy Integration Lead  
NHS England – London Region

# What Is Strategic Commissioning Today?

- Shift from transactional to outcomes-focused commissioning
- Whole-pathway and population-health approach
- Integration across NHS, local authority, VCSE
- Data-driven needs assessment
- Focus on prevention, early intervention, personalised care

# Key Drivers for National Direction

- NHS 10 Year Plan & ICS statutory duties
- Financial sustainability pressures
- Population health challenges & inequalities
- NHSE Operating Framework / Planning Guidance priorities
- Shift to blended/outcomes-based payment models

Drivers → Strategic  
Commissioning Reform

# Strategic Commissioning Framework Themes

- Outcomes-focused commissioning
- System stewardship by ICSs
- Collaborative planning & pooled resources

Needs  
Assessment

Planning

Commissioning

Impact and  
Outcomes

# Commissioning Intentions: Practical Implications

- Improving access to primary & community care
- Urgent & emergency care recovery
- Strengthening prevention & reducing inequalities
- Pharmacy integration & medicines optimisation
- Digital & data transformation
- Impact-based, long-term investment approaches

# Moving Toward Impact-Based Commissioning

- Shift investment to interventions that deliver measurable outcomes
- Align incentives across providers
- Reduce fragmentation—plan pathways end-to-end
- Use data to understand why, what and how (and what works)
- Build longer-term, trust-based partnerships with providers and communities
- Enable innovation from the VCSE and non-NHS partners

This is ultimately about designing commissioning around the **experience of people and communities**, not organisational structures, and **having impact**.



# Barking & Dagenham

**One** borough.

**One** community.

**Endless opportunities.**

Hiwot Ameneshoa (pronounced 'hee wot')

Strategic Lead for Youth Support and Participation | Education Commissioning





# A bit about us

**Youngest borough in England:** 25% of residents are under 16

**Child poverty:** 40–48% of children live in poverty (among highest in England)

**Ethnic diversity:** 81% of school children from minoritized backgrounds

**Deprivation:** 98% of areas among England's most deprived 50%; 45% in the worst 20%

**Social challenges:** 2nd highest unemployment rate, highest domestic abuse rate in London, 4th highest child obesity rate (Year 6)

Since 2017 we have faced **70% budget cuts**, shrinking Youth Services capacity

## Participation, Opportunity and Wellbeing as a Corporate Priority

As part of our statutory duty under **Section 507B of the Education Act 1996**, we are committed to developing a comprehensive Youth Offer

[Youth services | London Borough of Barking and Dagenham](#)

# Shaping commissions around young lives

Many young people in Barking & Dagenham **take on adult responsibilities** from a young age due to:

- Addressing language barriers; acting as interpreters for family
- Cultural expectations; supporting siblings, managing household tasks
- Living in poverty; experiencing financial hardship and food insecurity
- Familial breakdowns; navigating separation, loss, or instability
- Young carer roles for parents or siblings
- Care-experienced backgrounds
- Experiences of exploitation or abuse

**Many of our young people have complex relationships with services; with some having a mistrust in the systems and services around them**

# A dynamic Youth Offer

**Co-owned by young people and VCFS partners:**

**Youth voice** and **lived experience** shape every aspect of our offer, from design to delivery.

**Unflinching focus on real drivers:**

We examine the **root causes** of crime, **poor health outcomes**, and the **complex realities** facing young people today.

**Commissioning relationships, not just services.**

**Inclusive youth-led **events** and **summits** as catalysts for change.**

**Utilization of underspends and making every penny count:**

Paid, community-based project tackling **vaping**, **youth safety**, **literacy**, **employment pathways**, **financial literacy** and **healthy lifestyles**.

# School Health Survey Commission

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham have commissioned The School and Student Health Education Unit (SHEU) to conduct the Student Health and Wellbeing Survey 4 times of the last 8 years, building a concise picture of the changing impacts on young peoples health in that time.

## Primary Schools



COVID  
recovery  
year



one borough; one community; no one left behind

## Secondary Schools



COVID  
recovery  
year

**Barking &  
Dagenham**

## Year 8 Trends 2017 - 2024

|                                     | 2017<br>950 | 2019<br>1079 | 2022<br>1616 | 2024<br>1611 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Tried Illegal Drugs                 | 2           | 2            | 1            | 1            |
| No Exercise Last Week               | 28          | 28           | 23           | 23           |
| 5+ Days Hard Exercise Last Week     | 8           | 11           | 9            | 9            |
| At Least 8 Hours Sleep              | 70          | 65           | 66           | 41           |
| Med-Low WEMWBS Score (Less than 41) | 26          | 28           | 37           | 36           |
| Low Resilience Score (Less than 17) | 17          | 19           | 23           | 25           |
| Worry 'A Lot' About Something       | 59          | 63           | 62           | 61           |
| Satisfied with Life                 | 58          | 59           | 49           | 50           |
| At Least One Trusted Adult          | 94          | 94           | 93           | 91           |
| Past/Current date Bullying/Abuse    | 21          | 17           | 14           | 16           |

%



Year 10 National Comparisons 2024

|                                     | LBBD<br>2024 | National<br>2023 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| No Exercise Last Week               | 27           | 9                |
| 5+ Days Hard Exercise Last Week     | 10           | 12               |
| At Least 8 Hours Sleep              | 29           | 41               |
| Med-Low WEMWBS Score (Less than 41) | 34           | 45               |
| Low Resilience Score (Less than 17) | 51           | 44               |
| Worry 'A Lot' About Something       | 61           | 48               |
| Satisfied with Life                 | 46           | 47               |
| At Least One Trusted Adult          | 89           | 85               |
| Past/Current date Bullying/Abuse    | 24           | 31               |
| Sexual Activity                     | 5            | 8                |
| Unprotected Sex                     | 3            | 4                |

%

one borough; one community; no one left behind

# **NHS and Local Authority collaborations**

**BAD Youth Forum**

**Skittlz (Older and younger) Children in Care Councils**

**Young Inspectors (Health and Trading Standards)**

**C- Card Service top performing in London**

**Peer Support Group and Flipside Youth Group (LGBTQ+)**

## **NHS Youth Work in Acute Settings Pilots:**

- £80,000 NHS uplift, expanding youth worker pilots across two hospital sites.
- Youth workers embedded in clinical environments provide mentoring, safeguarding, and mental health support.

# Impactful Funds & Grants

## Household Support Fund Collaboration:

- Partnership with Welfare Services enabled deployment of **over £250,000** in Household Support Funding via VCFS partners; extending reach to families not engaged with local authority services.
- LBBD Youth support offer pot £75,000
- Flexible support to engage in youth activities including travel, digital support, emergency clothing, food and hygiene support.

## BBC Children in Need and McDonalds partnership:

- Youth workers in B&D McDonalds; training staff, leading drop ins
- Makin It Happen work experience
- Donations and sponsorship of local youth, community and sport clubs

**Successful funding application of 2million** of new Marks Gate youth centre

*'There was certain stuff I never knew about vaping. Different from the internet. It really made me think differently. I was going to the hub because I don't to school or college.*

*Box Up Participant, 14 years old, self referred via community hub*

*'These sessions were something to distract myself from staying at home all day. I really enjoyed being busy. Being paid was a bonus, I knew it would go straight to my mum. I have to help her out and it felt good to be able to. She is really proud of me for getting out of the house and doing something.'* **Box Up Participant , 15 year old referred via the YJS service**



*“6 months ago I never thought I would be able to do anything like this; I was on the wrong path but now I see how much potential I have”* **Safety Summit Facilitator**

*“Youth voices really do matter in building our future and I love hearing that people see and do care enough to allow us to shape and form our future”* **Safety Summit Facilitator and member of our BAD Youth Forum, aged 14 and in mainstream school**

# Networks driving Youth support and opportunity

**BD Collective networks:** offering community, trainings and support at times and locations that suit them through our **School Improvement Network, CYPN, Faith, SEND networks**

**Where we have grown and sustained our networks we see:**

- Increased take up of **youth** and **parental physical and mental health support**
- Increased **success with national and local funding bids** through consortiums
- **Reduction in duplication** and maximization of efficiency
- Increase in **youth leadership** and employment opportunities

# **Service design and delivery principles**

We commission partners and services that offer:

- **Flexible support that adapts to individual and family circumstances**
- **Trauma-informed, culturally sensitive, and non-judgemental practice**
- **Whole-family approaches**
- **Proactive identification of 'hidden' needs in every service**
- **Neighbourhood approach to delivery**
- **Listening to where young people tell us they feel safe**
- **Proactive and consistent approach to complaints and concerns**



# Investing in Community Partners

We invest in trusted community partners who **understand local needs and cultures** and are committed to **empowering the youth** through:

- Youth-led design and co-production
- Outreach in schools, community venues, and online platforms
- Peer mentoring, intergenerational mentoring, voluntary and paid roles
- Leadership pathways for residents
- Support to engage in mental and physical health support
- Collaboration with faith groups, cultural organisations, and specialist services
- Creative approaches to capturing thoughts and feelings through dance, music and videography







# A community connected by art

*Youth Unity Project Autumn Term*



# TOGETHER We Rise



A collection of writings and reflections by young storytellers from Marks Gate, created to mark the opening of The Rising Generation Youth Centre.

They raised the following 'hopes':

- More fields
- We'd like access to a borough city farm
- Someone to speak to their neighbours who let the dogs out to bark at 2am
- A local Tesco
- More bedrooms in the houses so they can accommodate larger families
- Lower house prices
- A gaming room in the TRG youth hub
- More gym equipment in the park
- Redesign the park, more slides and swings, an astro pitch
- Basketball court next to the football pitch to create a sports' space
- New nets on the football goals, they get stolen
- Fix the treehouse in the park as it's unsafe and people have written inappropriate things inside for younger kids to see

**'Our Future in Our Hands' artwork:**

***'My core memory is the neighbourhood. I love my neighbourhood.'***



# Stronger Starts Survey

143 secondary aged young people responded to our survey

## What does a strong start in life mean to you?

*Have a **platform to stand on** and have **support** from the people around you*

*Having **confidence** and a **healthy relationship** with the people around you*

*It means having a **strong foundation** at an **early age** with the correct supportive network and a variety of **opportunities** can aid you at having a better chance in life whether it is for school, work or your future.*

*having a **safe environment** where you feel protected from harm*

# How do you feel about your future—what excites you, and what worries you?

34 respondents (24%) answered job for this question.

A word cloud visualization of responses to the question 'How do you feel about your future—what excites you, and what worries you?'. The words are arranged in a circular pattern around a central white circle. The words are in various shades of blue and black. The most prominent words are 'worried', 'future', 'job', and 'Excited'. Other words include 'hopeful about my future', 'excited for the future', 'excited for my job', 'dream job', 'worried at the same time', 'future jobs', 'new things', 'new people', 'worried about my future', 'good job feel positively', 'excites', 'good about my future', 'Getting a job', 'worryes', 'able to do things', and 'hopeful about my future'.

hopeful about my future  
excited for the future  
excited for my job  
dream job  
worried at the same time  
future jobs  
new things  
new people  
worried about my future  
good job feel positively  
excites  
good about my future  
Getting a job  
worryes  
able to do things  
worried  
future  
job  
Excited

# What would make it easier for young people to stay physically healthy?

35 respondents (24%) answered sport for this question.



A word cloud visualization of responses to the question 'What would make it easier for young people to stay physically healthy?'. The words are arranged in a cloud shape, with 'sport' and 'healthy' being the most prominent. Other words include 'healthier meals', 'clubs in schools', 'food and sports', 'healthy eating', 'school or at home', 'DIET AND DOING SPORTS', 'schools and communities', 'healthier varieties', 'activities', 'healthy food', 'gym', 'schools', 'exercise', 'school clubs', 'healthy relationship', 'healthier benefits', 'young people', and 'healthy competition'.

healthier meals clubs in schools food and sports healthy eating school or at home  
healthy competition young people schools **sport** healthy DIET AND DOING SPORTS  
healthier benefits exercise gym healthy food activities schools and communities  
healthy relationship school clubs healthier varieties



# What helps your mental health—and what makes it harder?

*What makes my mental health harder is when I always think I'm gonna fail because there'll be situations when I **won't be able to get help** from anyone*

*What helps is my **youth group** that I go to*

***Prayer** in school*

*What helps my mental health is when I get to **talk to someone about my problems** and issues while they give me ways to solve my problems and issues and **support me**.*

*What helps is **the outdoors** and what makes it hard is **social anxiety***

***Supportive relationships** and **regular exercise** help mental health, while social media comparisons and academic pressure make it harder.*

**If you could change one thing to help young people, feel better and do better—what would it be?**

*Give young people a greater sense of agency and influence in decisions that affect their lives*

*I'd make sure every young person has **someone to talk to** and **proper support** for their mental health, so they don't feel alone or overwhelmed when things get tough.*

*Take them off the streets and educate them more*

*More places for young people to meet and make friends and **socialise**. The world can be a very lonely place without friends and people around you*

*I would focus on fundamentally changing the education system to **prioritize well-rounded development** over standardized testing.*

*A revised system would **integrate comprehensive mental health education**, practical life skills (like **financial literacy** and critical thinking), and opportunities for **social-emotional learning** into the core curriculum.*

*I would make sure the environment looked cleaner, like for example introduce **more green spaces** for cleaner air and for **more happiness and vibrancy**.*

*The area I live in is very grey and dull with barely any greenery so it would be nice to see more vegetation at least.*

## Links for more information on the work:

- [RECAP: OUR YOUTH SAFETY SUMMIT | #london #barking #dagenham](#)
- Youth Offer 'Where Do I Go?' <https://youtu.be/t-UwUQtaFn4>
- [Knife Crime Awareness Week in Barking and Dagenham - YouTube](#)
- [BARKING & DAGENHAM SUMMER JOBS PROGRAMME RECAP](#)
- [AGED 11-25? LIVE IN BARKING AND DAGENHAM? COME ALONG TO OUR EVENT](#) 2025  
promo video
- [🌟 National Youth Work Week recap 🌟 - YouTube](#) Youth work week 2024
- [MARKS GATE PUPILS WRITE BACK](#) 🖋️
- Better person SEND music video <https://youtu.be/m3xGtC5hHDg>
- [Vape short](#) Vaping Shorts





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## Q&A Session





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## Close and Thank You

