

Our council narrative

Council story

Tower Hamlets is one of the UK's best local authorities.

Many of our services are award-winning and in 2022 we were shortlisted for MJ's Council of the Year.

This is the most exciting time in our history as we move into our new Town Hall at the Grade II-listed former Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel. A historic building that is once again at the heart of community life. And we are on course to be a carbon neutral council by 2025.

Our borough is one of the most popular places in the UK to live, work and visit. We provide the UK's third largest economic output, we are steeped in London's history and one of the most culturally diverse places in the world, are the fastest growing and most densely populated place in the UK and Tower Hamlets has a set of destinations that are the envy of any city. It is why we describe ourselves as **the best of London in one borough**. (see place narrative)

A Tower Hamlets for everyone

We are a borough of contrasts. There is extreme wealth and poverty, and it is our job to broker opportunities to create a Tower Hamlets for everyone.

We build more homes than any other London local authority, yet over 21,000 people are on our housing waiting list, and 70% of those in the top two tiers live in overcrowded conditions.

We have some of the best performing schools in the country, yet 48.7% of children live in poverty and by age 11 over half of our children are overweight or obese.

There are nearly 300,000 jobs in Tower Hamlets, yet our young people need more support to access further education, or training and job opportunities to start their careers.

We know the value that leisure, recreation and learning opportunities can provide our residents. Many of our 120 parks are award-winning including Victoria Park which has been voted among the 10 best parks in the country.

We are investing £28m into our leisure centres which includes five swimming pools, and our Idea Stores are hubs for community life, offering a place for families, students and adults to read, learn, use computers and take part in subsidised training courses.

Equalities and inclusion

Our council is a beacon for diversity and inclusion. It is ingrained in the history of Tower Hamlets from immigration at the docks, to the suffragette movement in Roman Road, or fighting fascists in Cable Street.

We want a borough where everyone feels valued and included, and we want a council that collaborates to deliver excellence. That's why we look for people with our TOWER values of Together, Open, Willing, Excellent and being Respectful.

We have set the goal of being an anti-racist borough and through activities including our staff networks we are creating a culture where everyone is treated well and where discrimination is not tolerated.

Smarter Together

We are a forward-thinking council. Our Smarter Together transformation programme has already delivered online services, our CRM system and hybrid working.

More and more residents are accessing our services online with 4.5 million website visits a year - a million more than four years ago.

Our service improvements are shaped by the three Smarter Together lenses of partnership, outcomes and digital:

- Using **partnership** working to share resources and become more than the sum of our parts
- Using an **outcomes** approach, we will design services and measure performance, so we are focused on improving more lives at a faster rate
- Using **digital**, we will explore opportunities to work more productively and deliver more reliable services

Our aim is to design everything from the user's perspective. Whether it is a resident, business or council officer, we will make it simple and quick to get things done.

While we will strive for the best online experience, we will also be there for residents who need to talk to us face-to-face.

We know the value of excellent customer service, and that we need greater consistency across the council to achieve it.

Our challenges

310,300
Total population (2021)



48.7% of children live in poverty



The most densely populated borough in England with **15,695** residents per square kilometre



45.8% of children at achieve GCSE Grade 5 or above in English and Maths



At an average age of 31, Tower Hamlets has the youngest population in London. Less than **6%** of residents are aged 65+



41.8% of children aged 10-11 are classified as overweight



14,100 people aged 16+ claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit



92% of residents have internet access



There are **16,855** businesses in Tower Hamlets



232,000 calls to our call centre in the last year, **78%** of total customer contact



In 2021 there were **139,540** domestic properties

