



Open House

Strategic Plan 2025-2028

The Renewal Programme

Welcome to the Renewal Programme

Chair and CEO Welcome

When a charity has been around for 50 years and continues to thrive, it speaks to two things: first, the need for our work remains great; and second, as an organisation, we must be doing something right. Through our outgoing Double Down, Rise Up strategy, we deepened our commitment to Newham—responding to the aftermath of COVID-19, the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, and the growing challenges of social isolation and mental ill health. During this time, we expanded our reach, strengthened our sustainability, and made a tangible difference in people's lives. But there is still much to do. As the borough's needs grow more complex, we must evolve to meet them. That's why we are launching 'Open House', our strategic plan for 2025–2028 — a bold vision for a more connected, inclusive, and empowered Newham.

At its core, this strategy is driven by our belief in people as the primary agents of change—both in their own lives and in their communities.

Open House is our first thematically focused strategic plan, shaped by the principles of Advantaged Thinking. This approach challenges the deficit-based view

of people experiencing disadvantage and instead focuses on investing in their strengths, skills, and aspirations. It is about unlocking potential, strengthening resilience, and creating opportunities for people to take control of their lives, contribute to their communities, and shape the services they rely on.

The road ahead will have its challenges, but together, we can create vibrant, inclusive, and thriving communities in Newham.

As we step into this next chapter, we want to express our deepest gratitude to those who make our work possible. To our staff, trustees, and volunteers—your creativity, dedication, and passion drive everything we do. To our partners, funders, and supporters—your belief in our mission ensures we can continue moving forward.



Peter Laing
CEO



Dave Eldridge
Chair

Provision of high-quality housing management and support services for the benefit of Newham residents affected by, or at risk of homelessness. Helping to reduce incidences of homelessness to make their lives better.



WHAT

Provision of adult education & training services in order to offer local people the knowledge, skills and opportunities they need to reach their potential to continue learning through life.



Provision of services to support refugees, migrants and asylum seekers, including immigration advice and practical support services.



WE

DO

Provision of opportunities that bring people together, reduce isolation and build stronger communities.



Provision of high-quality youth services for Newham young people, supporting them to develop increased confidence, learning and skills.



Our vision, mission and values are the foundation of everything we do. They keep us focused on what matters most, guide how we work with others, and ensure that we remain true to our purpose

Mission, Vision and Values





Our Values

The following organisational values inspire us and guide our planning, our decision-making, and our daily work.

Dignity

Treating everyone with kindness and respect.

Inclusion

Beyond tolerance and towards a community where everyone truly belongs.

Collaboration

Working together to achieve more.

Empowerment

Supporting people to be the best versions of themselves.

Our Mission

is to stand alongside those who struggle, inspiring hope and offering opportunities for connection, growth and progress.

Our Vision

is of vibrant and integrated Newham communities where everyone has access to suitable jobs, homes, health and education.



The Renewal Programme

The Renewal Programme is a
free of charge service for
homeless people in
Birmingham and the
West Midlands. It provides
a range of support and
advice to help people
get back on their feet.



— “
**Without the Renewal
Programme, I don't think I
would be where I am today.**
— ” —

Our Strategic Objectives 2025 - 2028

Our ambition for the Renewal Programme over the next four years is to grow both the reach of our work and the depth of impact we have on individuals and communities living in Newham. We will focus on four key strategic themes during this period as follows:

Theme 1: Promoting Health and Wellbeing

Theme 2: Promoting Independence and Interdependence

Theme 3: Listening Louder, Shifting Power

Theme 4: Building a Just and Inclusive Society

Measuring our progress

Alongside “Open House”, we are adopting a new Objectives and Key Results (OKR) framework across all our projects. OKRs will help provide a clear direction by defining what needs to be achieved (Objectives) and how to measure progress (Key Results). This approach will help to ensure that all our efforts align with our strategic goals, with teams and individuals better aligned and understanding how their work contributes to the overall strategy. By setting ambitious but achievable objectives and linking them to clear, quantifiable key results, we can track progress, make data-driven decisions, and continuously adapt to the evolving needs of Newham’s communities. This outcome-focused approach will also allow us to demonstrate tangible impact to funders, partners, and the people we serve. Our OKRs will be documented and tracked as part of our annual operating plans.



Key Strategic Theme 1: Promoting Health and Wellbeing

- ✓ We believe that good health starts in the community. Health isn't just about medical care – it's shaped by where people live, their financial situations, their support networks, and their ability to access opportunities. We are committed to creating safe spaces, strengthening support networks, and tackling the everyday barriers that prevent people from living well. Through community-led initiatives, we will help reduce health inequalities, promote wellbeing, and empower people to take greater control of their health and futures.

Why it matters?

Newham experiences some of the deepest health inequalities in the UK, driven by poverty, unstable housing, food insecurity, and barriers to healthcare access. Many residents struggle with poor mental health, long-term conditions, and preventable illnesses, yet don't get the right support at the right time. To help people lead healthier, more fulfilling lives, we must go beyond traditional healthcare and focus on prevention, early intervention, and tackling the social factors that impact health.

Our Strategic Objectives 2025 - 2028

Key Strategic Theme 1: Promoting Health and Wellbeing

How will we achieve it?

1 By creating accessible, safe spaces for wellbeing – expanding initiatives like the RenewALL Hub, giving residents welcoming places to connect, seek support, and improve their wellbeing.

2 By prevention and early intervention – growing health and wellbeing programs, with a focus on mental health support, community-based health initiatives, and promoting healthy lifestyles.

3 By empowering communities – breaking down financial and digital barriers to healthcare, co-designing culturally responsive wellbeing initiatives, and making healthy activities accessible to all.

4 By supporting our housing residents – encouraging and equipping tenants to prioritise their wellbeing and take advantage of opportunities available to them.

5 By collaborating with health partners – working alongside local healthcare providers, other charities, and public health bodies to ensure services reach those most in need.

6 By providing practical health support – tackling the root causes of poor health through food security programs, digital skills training, and immigration advice.

By putting communities at the heart of solutions, we can reduce health inequalities and build a healthier, more connected Newham.



Key Strategic Theme 2: Promoting Independence and Interdependence

We believe in fostering communities where individuals are both empowered to live independently and are also connected through a strong sense of belonging. Our services help equip people with essential life skills, from digital and language skills to tenancy sustainment, while also nurturing a culture of mutual support and shared responsibility. Through practical support, skills training, and opportunities for meaningful engagement, we will help residents build resilience, unlock opportunities, and contribute to a stronger, more connected Newham.

Why it matters?

Many people in Newham face barriers to living independently, whether due to unemployment, language barriers, financial struggles, housing instability, or digital exclusion. While crisis support is vital, lasting change comes from giving people the tools and confidence to shape their own futures. At the same time, no one thrives in isolation. True independence is strengthened by interdependence—a culture of connection, shared responsibility, and mutual support. When people feel valued and part of something bigger, they're more likely to contribute, support others, and build a borough where everyone has the chance to succeed.

Key Strategic Theme 2: Promoting Independence and Interdependence

How will we achieve it?

1

By providing essential life skills and opportunities – delivering digital literacy training, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), and volunteering opportunities to equip residents with the tools to live independently.

2

By creating clear pathways to self-sufficiency – supporting people to move from crisis support to long-term stability through holistic interventions that address housing, income security, and access to essential services.

3

By encouraging co-production and community leadership – ensuring that residents have a say in shaping services and fostering a culture where people contribute their skills, knowledge, and lived experience to the wider community.

4

By fostering a ‘give and take’ culture – promoting volunteering, skills-sharing, and intergenerational connections, so that people don’t just receive support but also have opportunities to give back and actively shape their community.

5

By helping residents manage financial pressures – providing practical support through initiatives like the food club, foodbank, and energy advice services, helping people stretch their budgets and reduce financial stress. Volunteering can also help residents develop new skills, build confidence, and gain experience that may support future employment.

By empowering people with the right tools and networks, we will build a Newham where everyone can grow, contribute, and belong.



Key Strategic Theme 3: Listening Louder, Shifting Power

We believe that the people who use services should have a real say in shaping them. Too often, decisions are made for communities rather than with them—we want to change that. By working to embed co-production at every level, we will ensure our services truly reflect the needs, voices, and lived experiences of the people we support. This isn't just about listening—it's about redistributing power so that residents are active partners in designing a more just, inclusive, and responsive borough.

➤ Why it matters?

For too long, marginalised voices have gone unheard, leading to less than effective services, distrust, and missed opportunities for real change. In Newham, where many residents face poverty, migration challenges, housing insecurity, and social exclusion, it's vital that their experiences and insights help drive decision-making. Listening louder means creating genuine spaces where residents feel heard, valued, and empowered to shape the support they receive. It's about removing barriers to participation, giving people the confidence to speak up, and holding ourselves accountable to the communities we serve. Shifting power goes beyond consultation—it means ensuring communities have a real role in making decisions.

Our 2025 - 2028 Strategic Objectives

Key Strategic Theme 3: Listening Louder, Shifting Power

How will we achieve it?

1

By embedding co-production across all our services – moving beyond consultation to shared decision-making, ensuring residents help design, deliver, and evaluate the services they use.

2

By prioritising lived experience – creating opportunities for service users to join decision making groups and contribute to governance structures so that their voices shape our direction.

3

By improving accessibility and inclusivity – removing barriers to participation by using multilingual engagement, flexible meeting formats, and culturally relevant approaches, so that all voices — especially marginalised ones — are heard.

4

By developing clear accountability mechanisms – establishing transparent feedback loops as part of our objectives and key results (OKRs) so that residents can see how their input leads to real action, building trust and strengthening engagement.

By listening louder and shifting power, we will ensure Newham's communities don't just receive services — they help shape them.



Key Strategic Theme 4: Building a Just and Inclusive Society

We will work towards a Newham where everyone can access the support they need and have the opportunity to thrive. To make this a reality, we will play our part in challenging systemic inequalities, advocating for social justice, and promoting inclusion in everything we do. While we will continue to provide vital support services, we are also committed to tackling the root causes of poverty and discrimination. Our vision is not just about helping people navigate hardship—it's about changing the systems that keep people trapped in it.



Why it matters?

A just and inclusive society doesn't happen by accident — it requires intentional action to challenge deep-rooted inequalities and systems that exclude people from opportunities. In Newham, where diversity is one of our greatest strengths, too many people still face barriers that limit their ability to participate fully in society. Without more equitable access to education, housing, legal rights, and financial opportunities, many people are left struggling to cope or contribute. When communities feel powerless, unheard, or disconnected, talent is lost, divisions grow, and inequality persists. Building a fairer Newham isn't just about supporting individuals — it's about creating places where everyone has a stake and a voice.

Our 2025 – 2028 Strategic Objectives

Key Strategic Theme 4: Building a Just and Inclusive Society

How will we achieve it?

1

By tackling underlying causes of inequality – providing practical support that helps people navigate housing, immigration, and financial challenges, so they can move from crisis to stability.

2

By raising awareness and amplifying voices – sharing the experiences of those we support to highlight the realities of inequality, ensuring decision-makers and the wider community understand the challenges people face.

3

By embedding inclusion in everything we do – making sure our services are accessible, culturally responsive, and tailored to meet the diverse needs of Newham's residents.

4

By strengthening partnerships for greater impact – working with the local authority, other charities, and grassroots organisations to expand opportunities and improve access to vital services.

5

By empowering communities to lead change – creating opportunities for those with lived experience to help shape and improve our services, ensuring solutions come from within the community.

6

By fostering belonging and connection – bringing people together through inclusive spaces, cultural initiatives, and community projects that promote understanding and shared experiences.

By focusing on practical action, collaboration, and community leadership, we can help build a Newham where everyone feels valued, supported, and able to thrive.

Strategic Enablers: Foundations for Success

Delivering the ambitions of Open House requires more than just vision—it demands strong foundations, adaptability, and collective action. Our Strategic Enablers are the key factors that will support and sustain our work, ensuring we remain resilient, impactful, and responsive to the needs of Newham's communities.

Financial Sustainability and Growth

We recognise that sustained impact requires sustained investment.

To ensure financial resilience, we will:

- Diversify our income streams through grants, partnerships, social investment, and community fundraising.
- Strengthen relationships with funders and donors, demonstrating our impact and strategic value.
- Maximise operational efficiency, ensuring resources are directed where they are needed most.

Workforce Development and Wellbeing

Our staff and volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. To create a strong and motivated team, we will:

- Invest in professional development, providing training, leadership opportunities and career pathways.
- Prioritise staff and volunteer wellbeing, fostering a supportive and inclusive work culture.
- Attract and retain talent, ensuring we have the right skills to drive our strategic priorities forward.



Strategic Enablers: Foundations for success

Strong Partnerships and Collaboration

We cannot achieve our goals alone. By working in partnership, we will:

- Build cross-sector alliances, collaborating with statutory bodies, voluntary organisations, and businesses.
- Leverage shared expertise, learning from and contributing to collective impact initiatives.

Adaptive and Data-Driven Leadership

In a rapidly changing world, our ability to listen, learn, and adapt is key. To stay responsive, we will:

- Use data and insights to inform decision-making and improve service effectiveness.
- Monitor progress through our OKR framework, ensuring alignment with our strategic goals.
- Stay informed on policy and social trends, anticipating challenges and opportunities.

Digital Inclusion and Innovation

Technology plays an increasing role in how people access services, connect, and learn. To harness this potential, we will:

- Expand digital inclusion programs, ensuring no one is left behind due to lack of access or skills.
- Invest in secure and efficient IT infrastructure, supporting service delivery and data protection.
- Explore digital innovations, including AI, to improve efficiency, streamline administrative tasks, and enhance service delivery.

Environmental Responsibility and Sustainability

As an organisation committed to long-term community wellbeing, we must also consider our environmental impact. To integrate sustainability into our work, we will:

- Reduce our carbon footprint, implementing measures to minimise waste, energy use, and reliance on non-renewable resources.
- Encourage sustainable practices across our services, including eco-friendly procurement and green initiatives within our community spaces.
- Promote environmental awareness, incorporating sustainability into our education and engagement programs.



Our work across all projects and services is guided by our 4 E's theory of change—**Engage, Empathise, Enable, and Empower**—designed to relocate power within individuals and communities.

We approach our work by engaging through safe, inclusive spaces and activity programs, building trust and connection. This foundation allows us to empathise, listen deeply and provide personalised, trauma-informed support, including services like immigration advice and supported housing. We then work to enable individuals by equipping them with the tools, skills, and opportunities they need for self-sufficiency, such as language and digital skills development. Finally, we empower by nurturing leadership, amplifying voices, and creating pathways for community contribution, enabling individuals to shape their own lives and the services they use.

Theory of change



Engage

- 01** Meeting people where they are and responding to their unique needs.

Empathise


- 02** Building trust and understanding through meaningful relationships.

Enable

- 03** Providing the tools, skills, and support individuals need to progress.

Empower

- 04** Encouraging and supporting people to take ownership of their lives and futures.

A photograph showing three people in a community kitchen or food bank setting. In the foreground, a woman with glasses and a blue polka-dot sweater is smiling while sorting through various food cans on a table. Behind her, another woman in a dark beanie and jacket is looking towards the left. To the right, a man in a grey sweatshirt and blue gloves is also sorting through the cans. The background shows a green plastic crate and a bright, indoor environment.

— “ —
**The Renewal Programme
has set me in the right
direction. I am now able to
look towards a brighter
future for me and my family**
— ” —



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