



**Lambeth
together**

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COVID-19

Health and Care Recovery Plan – Review

Foreword

The Covid-19 global pandemic has presented extraordinary and far-reaching challenges over the past two years. Lambeth residents have experienced great pain, hardship and isolation, and many have suffered ill-health as a result of the virus.

Over 640 deaths from Covid-19 have been recorded in Lambeth since March 2020¹. Clinically vulnerable people, those from a Black, Asian and/or Multi Ethnic background, older people, people living in deprived areas and those living with a disability have been disproportionately impacted². The pandemic has thrown a spotlight on many of the existing inequalities in the health outcomes of Lambeth's population, in access to care and in the experiences of individuals, carers and communities.

Our *Lambeth Together Covid-19 Health and Care Recovery Plan* was developed by Lambeth Together partners to help guide our response to the pandemic, outline our priorities and actions in recovering, and drive change and improvement for health and wellbeing in the borough. The plan drew on the learning and experience of staff, of voluntary sector providers and community groups, and our diverse resident and community voices.

Reading the original plan reminds us all how much has changed in such a short period of time. What it means to 'recover' from Covid-19 has also changed; the vaccination programme, the availability of testing, new clinical treatments and new variants, have all changed the context of the pandemic we are dealing with today. Given this, Lambeth Together partners have reviewed this plan, to reflect on the progress we have made so far, in our path to recovery.

Health and care services, and our communities have responded at pace and with a clear focus and drive during this time. Many have gone above and beyond since the start of the pandemic and have adapted at speed to both minor and significant changes. This has challenged all of us to continually understand where risks and needs have changed, have our priorities and resources focussed on the right places and review where we are and what our next steps should be.

Lambeth Together is an integrated local care partnership supporting Lambeth residents to have better access to health and care so they can lead happier, healthier lives.



Dr Dianne Aitken

GP, North Wood Group Practice at Crowndale and Co-Chair of Lambeth Together Care Partnership



Cllr Jim Dickson

Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care (job share), Lambeth Council and Co-Chair of Lambeth Together Care Partnership

1. [Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) in Lambeth - Key Information](#) Jan 5th 2022

2. [Disparities in the risk and outcomes of Covid-19](#) (publishing.service.gov.uk) Aug 2020

Addressing Health Inequalities

To ensure that Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) is at the heart of everything we do, we formed a specialist team to provide the Lambeth Together partnership with leadership and internal challenge.

At the start of 2022, with the [Lambeth Together Pledge](#), all our partners publicly committed to prioritising rapidly improving the health of our residents that most need our support, and to addressing inequalities in health and care.

The team has used [recommendations](#) made by Public Health England in June 2020 to guide its progress. These recommendations join up with the ongoing local work we know we need to do in Lambeth.

Throughout this review there are examples of our work within the community. The types of locations where these services are offered and how they are accessed have been designed specifically with the aim of making them as easy to engage with as possible, by those who need them the most. Thinking in this way has already provided significant results, with events attracting hundreds of residents, leading to ongoing support where needed.

Whenever we provide a service in the community, we also listen to what people tell us. This information, alongside what residents tell us at our

public forums, helps us to understand what people need. More recently, we have held focus groups to hear directly from people affected by chronic pain, and we hope to continue this approach using community research to inform our service design and delivery, and to improve outcomes. Crucially, we can then make confident, inclusive decisions based on what residents have told us. We want to thank everyone who has given us feedback, and please, continue to give us more!

Within London and nationally our EDI team have collaborated, influenced, and learned from specialists. We support the desire to address health inequalities in a sustained way. Now, alongside further projects, we will focus attention on the recent report by [NHS Race Observatory](#) on the extent of race/ethnicity health inequalities. We will guide all partners in ensuring that their plans to consult with residents are viewed and improved through an EDI lens, and we will continue to create more trusting relationships with health and care services.





We committed to a series of actions and areas of focus in preventing, predicting and managing a “Second Wave” of Covid-19; including using and sharing data to help us predict and manage further waves, identifying and tracking cases, responding to surges, ensuring residents had the information they needed and pressures to services were managed to minimise disruption. Alongside this we committed to

The Covid-19 Health and Care Recovery Plan

In producing our Covid-19 Health and Care Recovery Plan we reviewed the health profile in Lambeth before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was clear that the impact of the pandemic had increased risk and exacerbated existing health inequalities. It showed we needed to do much more to engage with those who suffer the worst health outcomes.

preventative steps we could take to reduce pressure in key parts of the system in the event of a second wave with a focus on wider health and wellbeing, mental health support and reducing isolation.

We set out that our Recovery Plan would directly inform our Lambeth Together response and provided clear examples of the value, and strength, of our collaborative partnership approach. It set out our shared key priorities, risks and a core work programme that together we would address during the 18-month period from October 2020 to March 2022: recognising that this was both a plan to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic and to further progress our integration and system-wide working within the borough, and beyond.

This review has specifically focused on our progress against what we set out to achieve to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic in our original plan.

We have found that the level of challenge Lambeth is facing in terms of the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, is similar now to September 2020, but the challenges themselves have changed and evolved. We have delivered the priority actions in the original plan as well as many other significant activities, that were not. Supporting the vaccination programme has been a major task of the health and care sector in 2021, and yet wasn't referenced in the recovery plan, when no vaccine had yet been approved. Partners are clear: the environment that our residents, patients and workforce are living in has changed, much has been achieved and the position now is one of springing forward at pace and working together to achieve our goals. Whilst many challenges remain, Lambeth's resolve is stronger than ever.



Our priorities for keeping our communities safe

We committed to a series of actions and areas of focus in preventing, predicting and managing a “Second Wave” of Covid-19, including:

Promoting the importance of **Test and Trace** to identify and track cases

Lambeth has been operating a Local Contact Tracing (LLCT) service 7 days a week since November 2020. Lambeth Council became the first London borough to bring all Covid-19 contact tracing of positive cases inhouse in a new pilot scheme, ‘Local 0’, launched on the 1 March 2021. Since then, Lambeth has had one of the highest rates of people engaging with contact tracing in London. By having a Local Contact Tracing service, Lambeth has been able to utilise contacts to collect information on outbreaks at an early stage, signpost residents to services local to them and ensure they are aware of our self-isolation support offers.

Lambeth has offered three types of support to residents who have tested positive for or have been in close contact with someone with Covid-19

– financial support, practical and emotional support and accommodation support. These offers include:

- An enhanced financial offer with broader criteria than the government’s financial support to ensure all residents can effectively self-isolate.
- A commissioned service, ‘Stay Home Safely’, run by Age UK Lambeth providing a support line, food and medication deliveries and pet care for residents needing to self-isolate.
- An accommodation offer for residents living in Houses of Multiple Occupation or with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals, who can be moved to prevent the spread of coronavirus to the rest of their household.



In 2021, 2,289 Lambeth residents received assistance as part of our local self-isolation support offers and Lambeth was recognised by HM Government as having provided robust self-isolation support. These offers have enabled residents to make informed choices about how best to limit their exposure to the virus, whilst being aware of how they can support themselves and their families by accessing both new and existing services.



LLCT received a call from a resident who had tested positive for Covid-19 and disclosed their partner has cancer. The resident was naturally concerned about the potential transmission of the virus to their partner. Upon hearing the situation, LLCT offered accommodation to the resident for the duration of their self-isolation and transportation for the resident. A referral was also made to Lambeth's 'Stay Home Safely' service to provide food during the isolation period. The resident since contacted Lambeth Council again to say...



“Thank you for all your help. The team have been amazing and helped me to protect my partner and family from catching [coronavirus]. I will always appreciate what you and Lambeth council have done.”



Responding in the event of a **surge** in local Covid-19 cases.

Alongside Public Health England and NHS Test and Trace at regional and national levels, we had a key role to play in the investigation, management and control of Covid-19 variants designated as ‘Variants of Concern’ (VOC). Lambeth Together have undertaken three VOC surge testing exercises. The first two surge testing operations were in specific parts of the borough, and the third was borough wide. At the peak, 12 mobile testing units were dispatched, and door-door testing was delivered. The third operation alone led to an extra 50,000 Covid-19 tests being taken locally. This focus on testing was combined with an increase in communications and engagement with residents through trusted community groups and a dedicated helpline.

We have learnt from these experiences, and have a process in place should further exercises be required. This has formed part of our [outbreak management plan](#), overseen by the borough’s [Health and Wellbeing Board](#).

In December 2021 the Omicron variant brought an unprecedented level of demand with the amount of positive cases being recorded in Lambeth more than three times the previous high-point in January 2021. As a result of the increase in cases, and multiple changes to policy and guidance, demand for the range of Covid response services rapidly increased. At both national and local levels triage approaches were put into place to ensure that available resources were prioritised to support the most vulnerable and/or essential workers.



Sharing intelligence and data to alert us quickly to spikes in demand

Across all partners of Lambeth Together, we set up a response group that maintained a focus on prevention, as well as responding to any current position. This weekly meeting ensured that connections across the system could be made, and that warning indicators could be shared (e.g. testing positivity rate) and linked to hospital data and locations of local outbreaks. This data sharing enabled us to understand priorities and the largest pressures at any point.

The communications and engagement team also extensively liaised with our residents and community groups to not only share information with residents, but also to understand what barriers people faced that may inhibit them from being safe. These conversations led to the support offers outlined in 'Promoting the importance of Test and Trace' section.

We collaborated with providers to enable them to manage pressures and any service disruption, by regularly refreshing and updating Business Continuity Plans and Winter Plans. These plans fed into wider system plans to enable a clear view on what we would stop and start, as necessary, dependent on the situation. These plans are being kept 'live' as the environment of the pandemic changes.



Shared leadership arrangements across health and care organisations

Oversight of our Recovery Plan was through the Lambeth Together Strategic Alliance, overseen by our Strategic Board. The Board brings together Lambeth Council and CCG leaders along with local NHS Trusts, primary care and other Lambeth partners. The Strategic Board met regularly throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and held meetings in public six times a year. Residents attended these meetings and had an opportunity to engage with board members. This ethos of working across organisations, is reflected throughout the partnership.

The outcome of this is to gather a wider range of perspectives, creating healthy debates and ultimately leading to better decision making. This has been particularly important in recent months, where resources and learnings have been shared at length to help support staff with the planned legislation on staff vaccination. This integrated way of working, both at a strategic and operational level, is now embedded in the culture of Lambeth Together Partners.





Delivery and promotion of preventative services in the community to support people's health and prevent hospitalisation

Alongside preventing and managing Covid-19, we have continued to deliver and promote services to help and support residents to adopt and maintain healthy behaviours such as healthy eating, physical activity, smoking cessation and positive wellbeing.

Since December 2020, Lambeth has been delivering the Covid-19 vaccine to its communities through a variety of outlets, including Local Vaccination Sites, Pharmacies, Hospitals, GP Practices, the Civic Centre and other 'pop-up' community locations (e.g. mosques and libraries).

We knew that to reach everyone and every community, we needed to be closer to them, in visible, trusted locations. Therefore, in June 2021, Lambeth launched the Health and Wellbeing Bus. Initially the bus offered vaccines and Covid tests, but by mid-October the range of services available had diversified to include wider health and wellbeing provision (including mental health). We use the bus flexibly to suit the needs of residents, and adapt it at each visit, but it always offers an informal opportunity for residents to ask questions about what matters to them. In February 2022, the bus had delivered over 1,800 vaccines, handed out 7,800 Covid-19 home test kits, and had an estimated 17,500 further interactions with people about their health needs.



Support within the community to help people with mental health issues

Within our Living Well Centres, the Living Well Network Alliance (LWNA) have seen an increase of introductions through the ‘Single Point of Access’ delivery model, and in partnership with Black Thrive have developed a new Culturally Appropriate Peer Support and Advocacy service, co-designed and co-produced with the community. The Alliance’s key objectives are to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Black communities by increasing access to mental health services and improving individuals’ recovery journeys. In the last year, the average number of in-patient beds used per month reduced from 86 to 75, and the percentage of people recovering through talking therapies increased from 52% to 57%. Read more about the work of the LWNA in their latest [progress report](#).

Reaching out to those most isolated and experiencing loneliness

The Neighbourhood and Wellbeing Delivery Alliance (NWDA) delivered, through their Thriving Communities model, support to local communities by launching a project focussing on loneliness, and this has been scaled up at pace to be able to support more residents. Those most in need have been provided with individual support plans, and wider community events have also been held. The information gathered from this project will be fed into the creation of a new loneliness strategy for Lambeth. Read more about the work of the NWDA in their latest [progress report](#).

Supporting rough sleepers

During the first wave of the pandemic, Lambeth offered every known eligible rough-sleeper an offer of accommodation as part of the ‘everyone in’ initiative to avoid transmissions of Covid-19 in this vulnerable group. Research published in May 2021³ noted far higher numbers of rough sleepers were supported than expected as the pandemic had pushed many people to become first time rough sleepers in late 2020 and through 2021. Residents were then offered places in more stable and permanent accommodation.

This was achieved through the knowledge and skills of many partners, who have since worked together to offer vaccinations to all residents in our homeless hostels and hotels through dedicated in-reach programmes.

They were even able to re-unite family members who hadn’t seen each other in many years. The team have presented these successes to the strategic board and strengthened links across the partnership on how they can provide further health and care services into the future. Lambeth has continued to provide hotel accommodation for rough sleepers during Winter 2021 and also utilise these hotel ‘beds’ to relocate clinically vulnerable homeless hostel residents in the event of outbreaks.

3. [LSE research](#)



Our actions and risks

We set out how we would tackle the challenge of recovery, including by working through our three Lambeth Together Delivery Alliances, across seven key areas of focus;

- Staying Healthy
- Sexual Health
- Children and young people
- Adult Mental Health
- Joining up care within and across neighbourhoods and identifying and supporting residents with the most needs
- Homeless People and Rough Sleepers
- People with learning disabilities and autism and people with continuing complex needs

All the actions we set out have been completed, are in progress or have become part of our day-to-day work.

Most notably, a third of the actions focused on getting service delivery ‘back to normal’ such as restarting face to face services, reopening ‘closed’ services and rebuilding capacity where it was needed the most. Not only has this been achieved, but in doing so, service improvements have been seen far and wide; we have found new ways to support residents and patients, that work for them, are flexible and adapt to changing circumstances. The use of digital and remote support has worked better for many groups and individuals, being convenient, easy and quick ways to engage with support. Communication and partnership working has been a key tool for services throughout the pandemic, and as such has become embedded in standard practice. What we must ensure now, is that the positive changes and learning that has come from the pandemic, is not lost.

63% of the risks identified in the recovery plan have been closed, with the vast majority mitigated against, and a small number that are no longer relevant. We have plans in place and are closely monitoring the remaining risks. Partners have been through three lockdowns, and have become experienced at making quick adaptations, and planning for an uncertain future. This was shown clearly through the public health response to the surge testing operations and to the vaccination response after the Omicron variant outbreak. Though it was not referenced in the original plan, through conversations with partners it became clear that workforce is a significant current risk, due to the demands on staff over the last 18 months, staff sickness absence and the needs for self-isolation periods. Partners are aware of this and ensuring staff welfare and retention will be of significant importance in the coming months and years.



Our **NHS Trusts** – pioneering Covid-19 research and treatment, and delivering high quality care

Throughout the pandemic, King's College Hospital and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trusts have continued to provide care for as many people as safely as possible. This has involved both responding to the ongoing operational challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic whilst also providing services for patients without Covid-19.

Both Trusts were involved in leading global clinical trials to learn about the virus so that new treatments could be discovered. These successes meant that new treatments were available very early on to some of the most vulnerable patients in our area, bringing significant benefits to those who were very unwell and enabling many to avoid the need for hospital admission altogether.

In December 2021, both King's and Guy's and St Thomas' remained central to the vaccination effort. With the help of redeployed staff, volunteers and partnerships with colleagues from across the NHS, both Trusts extended Covid-19 vaccinations and boosters to as many patients, staff and local people as possible.

As the impact of the Omicron variant eases and society transitions to living with Covid-19, health services are moving into what is hoped will be a

sustained period of recovery.

Clinicians and their teams are committed to safely and effectively reducing waiting lists so that people who have had their procedures affected or delayed due to the pandemic, can be treated. We understand though that our Trusts, like other areas of the healthcare system, will still be required to treat residents for Covid-19, and these patients will continue to receive high quality care.

Clinical staff within Trusts have shown unstinting professionalism and agility to meet and overcome the challenges posed by Covid-19 and continue to do everything they can to provide the best outcomes for patients. We are immensely grateful to staff for their flexibility and resilience, including their willingness to redeploy to areas under greatest pressure.



Engaging our communities

In September 2020, we had a fantastic community event where nearly 100 residents shared their views and experiences of the pandemic. This input provided us a greater understanding of the community's thoughts and priorities, and directly informed our Covid Recovery Plan.

Two successful events designed by, and for, our black community were held in October 2021, staffed by black professionals, focussing on health and wellbeing. These were both attended by hundreds of residents, with the aim of fostering conversations about health in a relaxed, but crucially a trusted setting.

Our residents have attended the Lambeth Together public forum, asked questions and given feedback to the members of our Strategic Board, engaged with services and even designed the Lambeth Together Health and Wellbeing Bus. As we progress towards our next steps we are keen to hear what has changed for our residents and for our communities, and this will be the foundation for developing our new strategic approach and plans.

Our residents have been the backbone of the borough throughout the pandemic. They have worked in front-line roles that have kept our schools, healthcare settings, businesses, services and transport systems operational. They stayed home during restrictions and came forward to get tested. Many volunteered in their communities and beyond, checked in on neighbours, and showed compassion and support to others. Actions such as these have helped all of us, and for that we want to say, “thank you”.

To all colleagues in health and social care, we want to acknowledge your continuing efforts, going above and beyond to help residents in whatever way you can. Care workers, pharmacists, doctors and nurses, and everyone else, you are all amazing.



Where we are going and next steps

In Lambeth we will continue to carefully monitor Covid-19 cases and utilise our outbreak management plan to manage the virus in our community and minimise its spread and the impacts it has on our residents and our services.

We will do this by:

- Building our defences through pharmaceutical interventions: including vaccination uptake and the roll-out of the flu and booster campaigns
- Identifying and isolating positive cases to limit transmission: Test, Trace and Self-Isolation
- Further support to partners who are providing health and social care services
- Advising people on how to protect themselves and others with clear guidance and communications

Having reviewed our Lambeth Together Covid-19 Health and Care Recovery Plan, we are confident that our goals and priorities are still relevant within the current environment. Over the next year we will continue to refresh our approaches as we experience and reflect on the wider impacts of the pandemic. We are clear that the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted existing disparities as well as creating new challenges for our health and social care system, and these must be at the forefront in our minds on our path to recovery and in our planning for the future.

In 2022, the new Health and Care Bill will become law, setting out key reforms for the delivery and organisation of health services in England, to promote joined-up services and to ensure more of a focus on improving health rather than simply providing health care services. A key premise of these reforms is that much of the activity to integrate care and improve population health will be driven by collaboration locally, and in Lambeth we are well-placed and ready to utilise all this has to offer for the benefits of our communities and neighbourhoods. Alongside this, our communities will develop our new Lambeth Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as a statement about what health and well-being means and how it impacts on individuals and families in our borough. This will be the basis for our long-term direction as the Lambeth Together Care Partnership and will form our Health and Care plans.





Lambeth Together at its heart remains very much our focus; a cooperative partnership that will strive to improve the outcomes for all, with a focus on those who experience inequity the most.

In February 2021, the Association for Directors in Public Health released a [position statement](#) in supporting Black, Asian and Multi Ethnic communities during and beyond the Covid-19 pandemic, and in Lambeth, the resulting actions will play a significant role in our responses and plans. We want our new strategy to push us to go even further and faster in improving health and wellbeing in Lambeth, by residents, services and businesses all working together in an equal and reciprocal partnership to address the wider determinants of health.

One of the opportunities that the pandemic has provided is the chance to improve service design and to embrace innovation. Lambeth Together partners are sharing their learning so that we can understand what has worked and how to continue improvements for the future.

Though the fundamentals of our approach will not change, it is important we take time to

- understand and respond to the current context, with Covid-19 still here and with continued variants posing changes to our responses,
- continue our Covid-19 pandemic recovery,
- further strengthen our Lambeth Together Care Partnership
- and ensure our new Health and Wellbeing Strategy underpins our future direction.

From what we have learnt throughout the pandemic, we know that our long term plans will need to prioritise reducing inequalities in health and care. As a local care partnership, we will need to build resilience, focus on prevention, engage with all our residents and enable the health and care system to deliver.

