

No one left behind: we all belong.

A cohesion and integration strategy for
Barking and Dagenham

Draft– May 2019

Vision

Our ambition for cohesion and integration in the years 2019 - 2024 is to lay the foundation *'to make Barking and Dagenham a friendly and welcoming borough with strong community spirit'* – the vision set out in the Borough Manifesto for 2037. At the heart of this vision is the need to reinforce the links that keep and bring people together, across opinions and beliefs, culture, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and gender, and to ensure that no one is left behind.

Integration, for us, means *the process of developing equality, participation and belonging to achieve cohesion in a community*. This suggests that cohesion is not a fixed state of affairs and needs constant nurturing through integration, particularly in a rapidly changing and diversifying community like Barking and Dagenham.

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A cohesion and integration strategy for Barking and Dagenham

Priority 1
Increase the opportunities for people from different background to meet and interact

Priority 2
Celebrate our culture, heritage and cultural diversity

Priority 3
Help all residents integrate in our community

Priority 4
Listen better

Priority 5
Create new and better jobs accessible to all and ensure a fair distribution of the benefits of regeneration across the borough

Theme 1: Relationships and Culture
Cohesion and integration does not mean everybody doing the same thing, thinking the same, dressing the same, or eating the same food. Nor does it only fall on one specific group of people.
No matter our background, we all have a part to play to make Barking and Dagenham a friendly and inclusive borough.

Theme 2: Inclusion and Participation
Being a member of our community comes with certain responsibilities, i.e. towards our friends, family, neighbours and our environment, and to be proud stewards of the place we call home.
We want everyone to be given a chance to succeed, and to become a full and active member in our community.

Theme 3: Equality of Opportunities
Regeneration is about so much more than bricks and mortar. It is about hearts and minds, it is about people. We need to use regeneration to shape great places and support strong communities.
Our approach to inclusive growth is absolutely driven by the idea of fairness and equality of opportunity.

VISION: WE ALL BELONG
Reinforce the links that keep and bring people together, across opinions and beliefs, culture, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and gender, and to ensure that no one is left behind

Foreword

My Story by Cllr Saima Ashraf, Cabinet Member for Community Leadership & Engagement

When I moved to the UK from France, 15 years ago, I did not know any English. I had initially followed my ex-husband here and after just a few days, my three daughters and I were placed into a homeless unit hostel in Barking. At the time, I was going through domestic violence and the police were quite involved.

I didn't know about the system, the country or people. The language barrier was huge and I felt helpless at times. The hostel manager insisted that I should put my daughters in school, but I was reluctant. I felt isolated and did not want to go out.

I finally accepted for fear that social services might take my children away from me, and I began venturing outside. One day, as I walked back from school, I saw a note outside a charity shop asking for volunteers. I applied and joined the shop as a floor assistant where I worked for nine months. Although I wasn't paid, this job really helped me build my confidence in engaging with people and feeling less scared.

After staying in the hostel for a while I moved to a council flat. My life was finally starting to turn. I got a divorce and decided I would do whatever it took to sustain my family. I did not want to be dependent anymore, I wanted to work.

I joined the Metropolitan Police and volunteered there for two and half years. During those years, I very much grew as a person, improved my English and started learning about the laws and the country. I got into the habit of helping my African neighbours to translate documents, so I later decided to pursue an interpretation diploma. I also met the Member of Parliament for Barking and Dagenham, who helped me with some of my domestic issues as well as casework from my neighbours. I really wanted to give back and started to attend coffee mornings with her, doing leafletting and helping where I could.

I enjoyed seeing all the activism that she was doing, especially against the BNP and that made me want to join the Labour party. After joining in 2006, I campaigned for a few years with her and stood in the local election in 2010 for the first time. I loved being a Councillor. So, I ran again and successfully got re-elected in 2014 and 2018 and appointed as Deputy Leader.

Today, I feel like I belong to a place, a family, a community in Barking and Dagenham. I cherish my multiple identities and the blend of cultures that makes me the person I am, but I also feel extremely grateful to call this place home. When my eldest daughter did her first year as a paramedic at Becontree ambulance station, I was the proudest mum I could be: this was her giving back to the community!

Looking back, I have a hard time recognising the person I was when I first arrived in Barking and Dagenham, but I do recognise the journey I took, and all the people that helped me along the way. Each and every one of them, in their own way, has made me the person I am today. They made me feel like I belonged here, and for that, I will always be grateful.

This isn't just my story, but the story of many people who have moved in our borough, through hardship and good fortune, and who now call this place home. And I believe it is our responsibility, as a community, to look after each other. We all have a part to play and make sure that no one is left behind.

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1. Introduction

Barking and Dagenham has been on a significant journey. Connected to the sea via the Thames river, and formerly an industrial hotbed of the car industry, this has always been a borough of change. Working people from near and far came to the borough to improve their lives and to build a better future for themselves and their family. In the 20th century, these were families from the old East End, moving from Bow to the Becontree. In recent times, these movements have shifted and become more diverse, reaching further across the globe (Appendix 1). Links extend from Europe as far as China and Africa. Our place and people are now richly connected to the rest of the world.

Our history is one of incredible developments, of new wealth and opportunities, as well as of rapid industrial decline. But despite uncertainty, our community spirit remains, pushing back against those who would seek to divide us, and sticking up for the values that we hold dear. Our community has always fought for equality and fairness. These values drove 187 sewing machinists to walk out of the Ford Car Plant in Dagenham in 1968, to ask for equal pay for men and women. This incredible act of courage was instrumental in achieving the 1970's Equal Pay Rights Act.

Today, as more people come to the borough from a wide range of backgrounds, bringing an even richer mix of personal stories, we must keep the spirit of belonging alive, and talk with pride about the values that define our borough.

Cohesion and integration, in Barking and Dagenham, does not mean everybody doing the same thing, thinking the same, dressing the same, eating the same. Nor does it only fall on one specific group of people. No matter what our background is, we all have a part to play to make Barking and Dagenham a friendly and inclusive borough (figure 1).

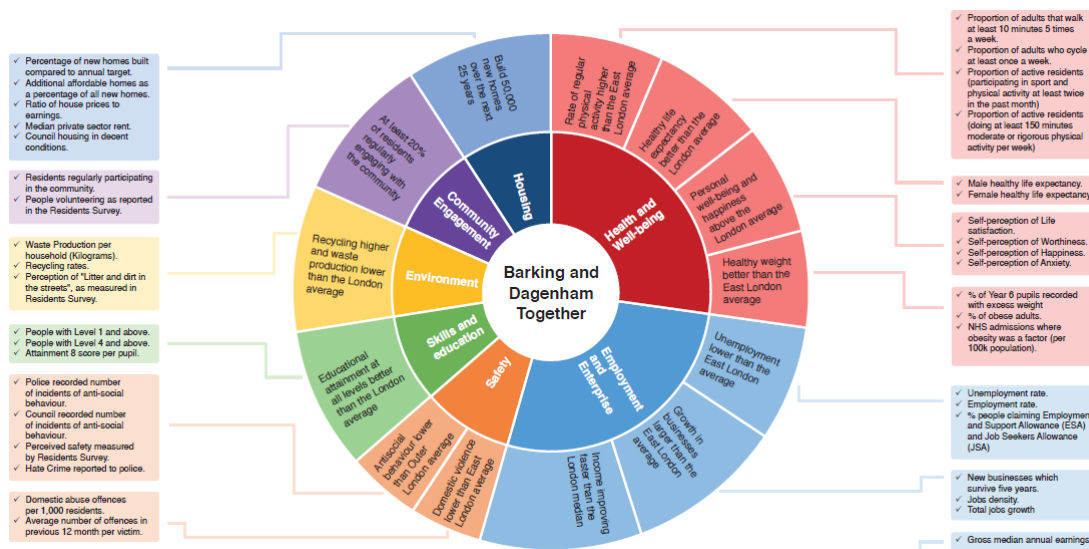


Figure 1 - Borough Manifesto goals and outcomes

This demands more listening from all of us. More shared experiences. More play. More laughter. To put a stop to loneliness. And hate. And indifference to one another. Because, regardless of our origins, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation, we all came to belong, and we all aspire to lead happy and fulfilling lives for ourselves and our families.

2. The Case for Cohesion and Integration

2.1 Our diversity and changing identities

Our borough and the context within which the Council operates has changed radically over the last decade and will continue to change for the foreseeable future. The population of the borough is larger and more transient than ever before. Overall population figures show a 25% increase between 2001 and 2016. Over the past five years, our borough has attracted nearly 11,000 more residents than have left over the same period. In Abbey and Thames ward, the population increased by 33% and 36% respectively between 2011 and 2018. Population growth is also projected to continue and reach an estimated 290,000 people by 2050.

Barking and Dagenham is also growing much more diverse. The borough has had the fifth largest growth in residents born outside the UK and Ireland between 2001 and 2011, compared with other local authorities in England and Wales. The diversity of our community has increased by over 30%. Today, there are as many as 72 different non-English languages being spoken in households across the borough. Evidence shows that Barking and Dagenham is one of the fastest changing boroughs in the country when it comes to the proportion of the population that is non-white British (Appendix 1). This diversification is however not uniform across the borough. Whilst there are pockets of very high diversity closer to inner London, other areas bordering with Havering are less diverse.

There are many reasons why people choose to move to Barking and Dagenham, from the affordability of homes to the borough's attractive environment for entrepreneurs and artists. Newcomers who have chosen to make Barking and Dagenham their home contribute to our borough in many ways, bringing economic and cultural benefits, as well as enriching our communities and our shared way of life. But the pace of population growth also brings new challenges and can add more pressure on both housing availability and access to services.

2.2 Neighbourhood deprivation and housing challenges

These are challenging times for many residents, with sustained austerity, coupled with population changes, rising demand, government policy changes and, for too many years, stubbornly poor outcomes across a number of key wellbeing indicators, which in a nutshell means their quality of life is not improving. Our unacceptably high levels of domestic abuse, for instance, have severe long-lasting and wide-ranging social, health and economic impacts in Barking and Dagenham. Substance misuse, joblessness and poor housing conditions can all be among the root causes.

Many residents, old and new, find it increasingly difficult to find decent homes for themselves and their families. The borough has seen the largest proportional increase in the private rented sector compared with the rest of London. In the past 15 years, the number of homes rented privately has grown from 5% to about 25% of total housing stock. At the same time, LBB's affordable housing stock has almost been halved through the Government's Right to Buy scheme. Currently, several thousand households are on the housing register. In response to this, the Council has launched an ambitious plan to develop 50,000 new homes by 2037, aided by 'Be First' our council-owned housing development and regeneration company.

Evidence demonstrates that many people moving to the borough privately rent their homes. In the worst cases, socially and economically vulnerable newcomers can find themselves exposed to rogue

landlords and poor housing conditions. This is particularly true for those who are in low paid, and more insecure work; who depend on immigration status, which can take a long time to resolve; those who do not have the right to rent or work, and or are legally prevented from having a UK bank account; and those unfamiliar with the legal rights of tenants and the responsibilities of landlords. All these factors can be further worsened by language barriers.

Poorly maintained and overcrowded homes are not only unacceptable for those renting them, they also have a wider impact on the community. Where these properties exist, people move on quickly (Appendix 1), anti-social behaviour tends to be higher, and the ingredients that make strong communities tend to be missing.

Therefore, it is essential that this sector provides good quality housing, which is maintained well, not overcrowded, and doesn't financially exploit people. But as we build new homes, we mustn't ignore the plea of our most established communities either, those born and bred in Barking and Dagenham who are still awaiting the positive effects of regeneration and economic growth, and who live in ageing or decaying homes. Looking after all residents faced with situations of deprivation is the only way to ensure that no one is left behind.

2.3 Why we need a cohesion and integration strategy

Despite the borough's diversity, many of us spend little time with people from other walks of life. This problem is not specific to Barking and Dagenham. According to The Challenge, this lack of connectedness affects us all, whatever our background. It magnifies divisions and contributes to problems, such as the rise in extremism and the disillusion among sections of society (The Challenge, 2018).

Isolation and division make it more difficult for us to understand other people, and more difficult to connect with the community and to stop prejudice. Surveys carried out since 2008 have ranked LBBDD below the national average on questions related to community cohesion in the borough. The 2018 Resident's Survey found that 27% residents disagree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, compared with a national average of 11% (2017). Overall, 1 in 7 residents have no intention of staying in the borough which means they feel less invested in their community and the people and place around them.

There is a difference of perception between residents who have moved to the borough recently, who tend to be more open to diversity, and those who have been settled here for several generations, who feel more affected by the change brought about. For some residents, newcomers are perceived as directly responsible for their growing difficulty to access affordable housing and for their children's inability to set up home near where they live. There is a perception that resources – or services – are distributed to the advantage of specific people in our community. Whilst this is not true in practice, we cannot be blind to the underlying, socio-economic causes which enable such perceptions to take root in our communities.

Crime and anti-social behaviour are more likely to be reported in more deprived areas, where there is a high proportion of poorly maintained and overcrowded private rented properties. In a context of economic uncertainty and unsatisfactory outcomes for established communities, this can create or reinforce the perception of a migrant population that will not integrate with the rest of the community, and that does not have pride in the borough or the place they live in.

We know that perception plays a major role in how people feel in B&D. Whilst crime is a serious issue in our borough, the perception of crime and its association with certain ethnic groups has more impact on people's behaviours than actual, personally-experienced violence, which is fortunately rarer. Perception needs to be taken seriously as it can create self-fulfilling prophecies, where people avoid contact with others, and this, in itself, creates greater divides and isolation.

Significant steps have been taken in the last few years to address some of these challenges. In 2014, the Council adopted a 5-year, Private Rented Property Licensing ('PRPL') scheme – to run alongside a statutory scheme for the mandatory licensing of houses in multiple occupation ('HMOs') – which meant private landlords had to take more responsibility for their properties and their tenants. The PRPL aims to address a number of challenges associated with the PRS, including crime and anti-social behaviour. The scheme has led to us taking more legal action against rogue landlords with an increase in the number of cases from 11% to 31% between 2014 and 2017.

A particular highlight of the last four years has been our efforts to connect and reconnect with residents and actively listen to all parts of our community. In the last two years we engaged with an unprecedented 6,000 residents, through consultation and engagement work to find out what they care about and what they want for the borough.

3,000 of our residents came together to produce the Borough Manifesto, a vision for the future of the Borough which forms the top-level strategy for the Council and partners, to deliver the aspirations of our residents. They have also come together to develop the Good Neighbour Guide, a shared understanding of what being a resident means in Barking and Dagenham. Meanwhile, The BAD Youth Forum continues to give children and young people a voice and influence over decision-making.

More recently, the Council has worked with VCSE organisations on a wide range of engagement activities across the community including 'Big Conversation' events and focus groups, 'Human Library', and the first community cohesion hackathon, 'Belief in Barking and Dagenham'. These are a small part of an array of initiatives aimed at giving residents a say in their borough, and at improving cohesion.

3. Vision and Priorities

3.1 Vision

Our ambition for cohesion and integration in the years 2019 - 2024 is to lay the foundation '*to make Barking and Dagenham a friendly and welcoming borough with strong community spirit*' – the vision set out in the Borough Manifesto for 2037. At the heart of this vision is the need to reinforce the links that keep and bring people together, across opinions and beliefs, culture, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and gender, and to ensure that no one is left behind. We all have a part to play.

Integration, for us, means *the process of developing equality, participation and belonging to achieve cohesion in a community*. This suggests that cohesion is not a fixed state of affairs and needs constant nurturing through integration, particularly in a rapidly changing and diversifying community like Barking and Dagenham.

Recognising the importance of building shared values and celebrating our cultural diversity, our approach also recognises the role of inclusion and participation, as well as equality of opportunities on cohesion and integration. For instance, areas where there are lack of opportunities and high inequality also tend to be hotspots for fly-tipping and other antisocial behaviour, which have a negative impact on cohesion in the borough. In this context, a joint approach is needed, which builds on the relationships between the socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions of cohesion (Figure 1).

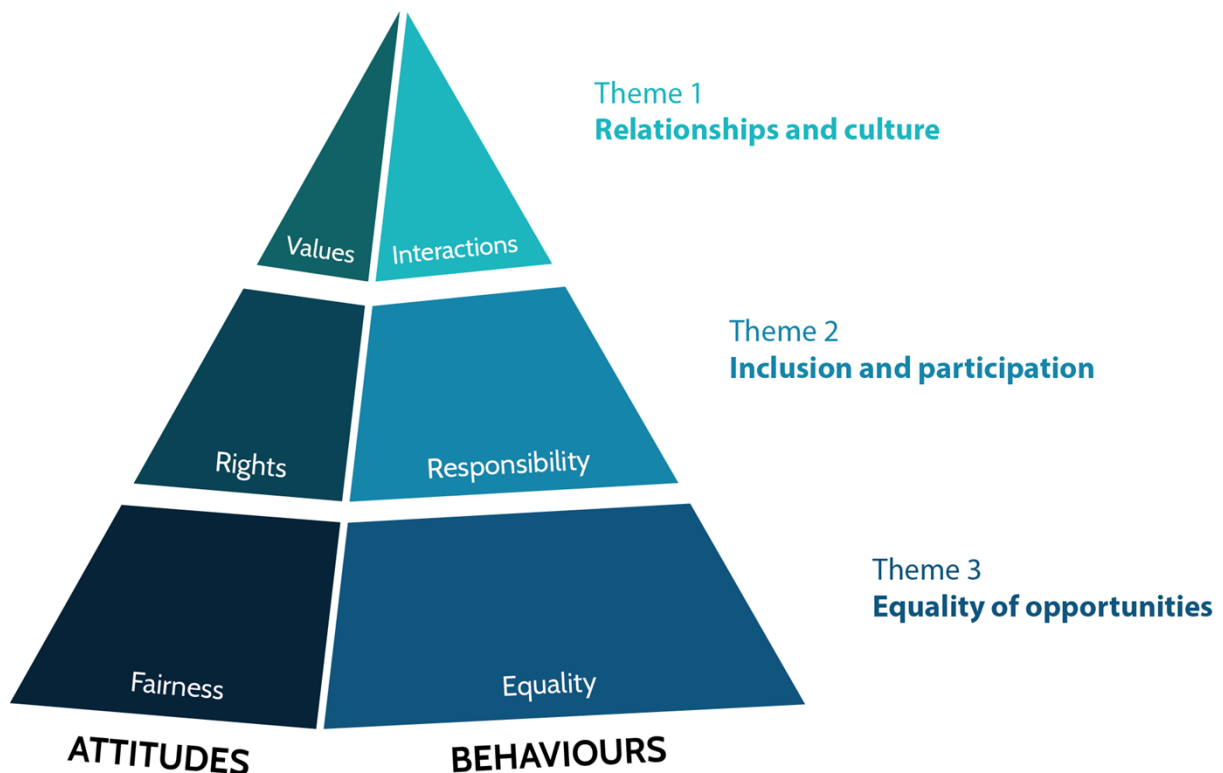


Figure 1 - Cohesion and integration approach in Barking and Dagenham

This isn't a strategy that tries to do everything; its primary focus is on the top two layers (relationships and culture, inclusion and participation). But it does suggest that what happens in the equality dimension - whether we succeed in our approach and manage to leave no one behind - will have implications on integration and ultimately cohesion in the borough. That is why this strategy needs to be informed by and in turn help shape what is done in our approach to inclusive growth.

The strategy proposes five priorities, each of which has a specific action plan. However, this is not a static document. Many actions are currently ongoing and, as our borough keeps changing in the years ahead and new challenges and opportunities develop, more actions will be added to support the development of a strong community spirit where it is needed most.

3.2 Theme 1: Relationships and culture

Fundamentally, the council's Cohesion and Integration strategy aims to inspire a sense of belonging in our community by encouraging people and groups to interact more, whatever their background, faith or cultural identity. This will be done by focusing on the following two priorities:

- **Priority 1: to increase the opportunities for people from different backgrounds to meet and interact**
- **Priority 2: to celebrate our culture, heritage and cultural diversity**

Priority 1: to increase the opportunities for people from different background to meet and interact

Evidence suggests that cohesion between individuals and groups increases when people have opportunities to meet and engage with each other in a meaningful way. Meaningful interactions enable people to learn about each other’s lives, backgrounds, cultures and faith, to develop empathy and trust, and to grow their sense of belonging to the community. This is why we need to increase the opportunities for people from different backgrounds to meet and interact.

To achieve this, the Council has launched a number of well-attended initiatives and events, e.g. Summer of Festivals, Every One Every Day, and further aims to build on and amplify existing structures and initiatives happening in the borough. This means working with partners, including statutory and non-statutory institutions and bodies, schools, voluntary and community organisations, faith organisations and businesses to create these opportunities for people to interact and for increasing mutual understanding and respect.

OVERARCHING PROGRAMMES	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
Work with Barking and Dagenham Faith Forum to support interfaith activity and engagement	Participation and Engagement	Ongoing
Continue to promote events favouring interactions between residents (e.g. Summer of festivals, VCS initiatives)	Communications and Policy; Leisure, Parks and Heritage	Ongoing
Continue to support practical participation initiatives, e.g. Every One Every Day, as a way to bring people together	Participation and Engagement	Ongoing
Strengthen the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in line with the ambition laid out in the VCSE strategy	All services	Ongoing
Work with partners to better harness the potential of sports to build tolerance, cohesion and integration	Community Solutions; Participation and Engagement; Leisure, Parks and Heritage	Ongoing
KEY AND ONGOING ACTIONS	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
Use festivals as a vehicle to engage with the	All services	Ongoing

community		
Produce a Faith Policy for the borough	Participation and Engagement	July 2019
Continue to use volunteering as a way to build relationships between people	Participation and Engagement; Leisure, Parks and Heritage; with the social infrastructure support partner	Ongoing
Develop a Sports and Physical activity strategy that supports cohesion in the borough	Leisure, Parks and Heritage	September 2019

Priority 2: to celebrate our culture, heritage and cultural diversity

Culture has a social value. It can support learning and is a vital aspect of the education of all young people in formal education. It can support social networks and create social cohesion, help people to be healthier and more socially and physically active and encourage people to take care of places and take ownership.

The Council has stated its ambition to commission culture across all services and sectors in order to build our reputation as a borough that really explores the social value of culture for all. We should continue to be ground-breaking in how we support local people to lead and collaborate on culture in the Borough. Flag raising ceremonies outside the Town Hall and the celebration of St George's day are also important ways to celebrate diversity in this regard.

The Heritage Strategy highlights the rich history of the borough and sets out measures to ensure the promotion of our heritage and that the physical and intellectual history of place is conserved. Our heritage is a precious asset which makes an important contribution to people's quality of life, their sense of identity and to a successful and sustainable economy.

Other important cultural initiatives include Creative Barking and Dagenham and the Cultural Connectors, Pen to Print, and the Cultural Education Partnerships (CEP). CEP was established in 2013-14 as one of three pilots formed by Arts Council England to enable young people to participate, shape and take pride in creative and cultural opportunities in the borough. The CEP is built on three priorities to support youth cultural leadership, celebrating achievements, and to help young people access jobs in the cultural sector.

The Cohesion and Integration strategy aims to build on these initiatives and focus on the way new stories can be added to the rich texture of place locally.

OVERARCHING PROGRAMMES	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
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Work with initiatives like the Cultural Education Partnership to enable young people to participate, shape and take pride in creative and cultural opportunities and making their voice heard	Leisure, Parks and Heritage, Culture	Ongoing
Use heritage assets to encourage interactions between people and increase pride in the borough, e.g. Valence Museum and the Local Studies Archive, Eastbury Manor House	Leisure, Parks and Heritage; Culture	Ongoing
Build on the cultural strategy to continue to support culture and creativity as a means of bringing people together	Leisure, Parks and Heritage; Culture	Ongoing
KEY AND ONGOING ACTIONS	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
Continue to encourage flag raising ceremonies to reflect and celebrate diversity in our borough	Leader's office; Communications and Policy	Ongoing
Support arts and culture in the public realm	Leisure, Parks and Heritage; Culture	Ongoing
Continuing to support local arts and culture organisations, e.g. through asset transfer, and to increase the offer across the borough	Leisure, Parks and Heritage; Culture	Ongoing
Celebrate St George's Day as part of the wider cultural programme of events	Communications and Policy; Culture	Ongoing
Support youth arts projects around cohesion in the borough	Participation and Engagement; Engagement and Opportunity; Leisure, Parks and Heritage; Culture	Fall/Winter 2019

3.3 Theme 2: Inclusion and civic participation

Being a member of our community comes with certain responsibilities, i.e. towards our friends, family, neighbours and our environment to be proud stewards of the place we call home, and to be part of the changes we want to see in our borough. The Council has launched a number of initiatives to support this vision. This includes the Parks and Open Spaces strategy, the Good Neighbour Guide, as well as recycling campaigns.

Civic pride in the place and in the community is a fundamental value that guides us together as one community, with all its cultural diversity. We want to share this value with everyone that comes to live or work here. We want it to show in everything that we do, in how we treat one another and our borough– from our parks to our streets and our homes. This will be done by focusing on the following two priorities:

- **Priority 3: To help all residents integrate in our community**
- **Priority 4: To listen better**

Priority 3: To help all residents to integrate in our community

We want everyone to be given a chance to succeed, and to become a full and active member in our community. This means helping residents integrate in our community, and know their rights and responsibilities, including the right to grow and thrive and to find help and support when need arises. This also means encouraging behaviours that contribute positively to our community and help us make Barking and Dagenham the greatest borough in London.

As a community, we have a responsibility to ensure that the integration of all residents in our community takes the best possible course. This includes new residents, who are moving to our community as well as residents who are born and bred in Barking and Dagenham, and who struggle in the face of adversity, deprivation and loneliness. We can't do this alone, we need to work hand in hand with partners, local organisations and businesses, as well as established residents to make this process both inclusive and participatory.

OVERARCHING PROGRAMMES	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
Work with partners to mitigate the impact of rogue landlords on marginalised families and individuals	Regulatory Services	Ongoing
Better use of data to help identify and predict needs cohesion issues and/or risks for the protection of people's rights	Insights and Innovation	Ongoing
Explore what 'no one left behind' means in the context of a highly changing population	Participation and Engagement	March 2020
KEY AND ONGOING ACTIONS	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
Launch <i>This Is Me</i> – a campaign to celebrate people's individual stories about what makes them who they are	Communications and Policy	Autumn 2019
Create a Wall of Fame (#ThisIsMe) to promote residents that support cohesion in the borough	Communications and Policy	Autumn 2019

Explore how citizenship ceremonies can be improved, building on our participation to the Mayor of London Pilot	Participation and Engagement; Registration and Citizenship Services	Spring 2020
Commission a group of students to produce a version of this cohesion and integration strategy for youth and distributed it in schools across the borough	Culture; Leisure, Parks and Heritage	Subject to funding
Continue to implement and expand the Votes for Schools programme to promote dialogue and understanding around PSHE and Citizenship	BD School Improvement Partnership	September 2019
Coproduce the implementation of the Good Neighbour Guide with the community, and link with the schools programmes on citizenship	Transformation; Participation and Engagement; Communications and Policy	Winter 2019
Encourage more volunteering to support residents experiencing social isolation and social anxiety	Culture; Leisure, Parks and Heritage	Ongoing
Work with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector to deliver better advice to migrants	All services	Ongoing
Reinstate the Hate Incident Panel and work with partners towards an agreed approach to tackling hate crime in the borough, with reference to the LGBT+ action plan	Community Safety	Ongoing
Support residents to access appropriate English language and vocational skills and qualifications.	Adult College; Community Solutions	Ongoing
Increase the support offer for migrants in hostels (e.g. trainings, Creative English...)	Community Solutions	Ongoing
Work with the voluntary sector, day services and people with a learning disability to increase social opportunities in the evening and weekends	All services	Ongoing
Explore the possibility of running Cultural Cafes in collaboration with partners	Culture; Leisure, Parks and Heritage	Spring 2020

Work with internal and external partners and landlords to co-produce welcome options for new residents (e.g. settling in visit, Welcome Pack, neighbourhood guides)

All services

Subject to funding

Priority 4: To listen better

Too often social media channels serve to amplify negative and pessimistic voices, and miss out on the incredible personal stories and acts of many residents who selflessly give to their community. We can't let pessimism dictate our vision, our sense of community and our lives. If we are to succeed in our ambition, we have to listen to each other more, and to engage in respectful dialogue, even when we disagree with each other.

As a local authority, we also need to become really good at listening to the community. Over the past couple of years, the Council has significantly improved its approach to communication, moving from a broadcasting approach to one that makes more use of the conversational possibilities offered by social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, and increasingly, one which favours resident participation and engagement. We now need to embed this new approach across council services, and to ensure that when residents take the time to talk to us we follow up and respond in a timely manner, and in a way that makes sense to them.

In order to spread this new relationship with residents across the borough we must build the social infrastructure that facilitates residents to connect with one another, engage with the Council and participate in the community on their own terms and in their own way. The introduction of a *Citizens Alliance Network* will enable the Council to play its role as connector and facilitator within the community. An important focus will be to reach out to the residents that do not usually engage and enable residents to be more involved in the decisions on related issues impacting on their neighbourhood.

Many residents care deeply for their neighbourhood, and quite rightfully, refuse to accept seeing litter pile up on street corners, and abandoned mattresses in alley ways. As a community, we must do better in changing our behaviour to make this borough cleaner and greener. This includes reducing the quantity of litter produced, recycling more, and aiming towards an improved bin collection service to make Barking and Dagenham a friendly and welcoming place. We all need to take pride in our community.

OVERARCHING PROGRAMMES	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
Deploy the new Citizens Alliance Network engagement platform to enable renewed dialogue between residents and the Council, with a particular focus on residents that do not usually engage	Communications and Policy, Participation and Engagement	Spring 2019
Design a training strategy and delivery plan to increase staff's understanding of issues that affect cohesion in the borough and how these can be better addressed	Human Resources; Participation and Engagement; Public Realm	Summer 2019

Co-produce a story of the borough with residents	Inclusive Growth	Ongoing
Bring together professionals and residents to discuss challenges of crime and safety and what can be done in partnership to support long term and positive change	Community Safety	Ongoing
KEY AND ONGOING ACTIONS	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
Devise a process to render public consultations more transparent by publishing the Council's response	Participation and Engagement, Communications and Policy	Winter 2019
Amplify marginalised voices across the borough, share stories, and design and implement local cohesion interventions	Participation and Engagement	Ongoing
Adopt a targeted approach to corporate communication to better deliver the Council's messages	Communications and Policy	Autumn 2019
Improve collaboration between national providers and local VCSE actors in tackling complex issues through commissioning, e.g. domestic violence	All commissioning services	Ongoing
Support behaviour change initiatives to reduce the amount of litter produced	Participation and Engagement; Insight and Innovation; Public Realm, Communications and Policy	Ongoing
Work with Waste Services and Landlord Services Officers to continue to improve bin collection services	My Place	Ongoing
Where possible, use customer complains as opportunities for engagement and the search for coproduced solutions	My Place	Ongoing
Reinstate the Tension Monitoring Meetings	Community Safety	Ongoing
Roll out Trauma Informed trainings to provide delegates with the confidence to understand the	Community Safety	Ongoing

3.4 Theme 3: Equality of opportunities

In its Equality and Diversity Strategy for 2017-2021, the Council has adopted a vision to create a place where people understand, respect and celebrate each other's differences. A place where tolerance, understanding and a sense of responsibility can grow and all people can enjoy full equality and fulfil their potential. Part of the efforts to achieve this vision include improving outcomes for all and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Recent developments point to the huge progress we have made over the past couple of years when it comes to the physical regeneration of the Borough. We are actively demonstrating that Barking and Dagenham is 'London's Growth Opportunity' by delivering ground breaking developments, attracting major investment into new homes, industry, and infrastructure, and linking these to the aspirations of our residents set out in the Borough Manifesto. These developments include:

- A new film studio in Dagenham East rivalling Pinewood – bringing jobs and investment as well as a huge boost to London's creative industries and film and TV production in the UK;
- London's first Youth Zone, a state-of-the-art youth facility providing year-round youth services for 250 young people every day, with ongoing funding from the private and voluntary sectors;
- A £70 million deal agreed for new railway line to Barking Riverside;
- £350 million committed to modernise council housing;
- New cultural quarter at the Roding Riverside with the new Boathouse;
- A raising of the higher education offer in the borough with the attraction of Coventry University to Dagenham Civic Centre;
- The construction of 50,000 new homes by 2037.

Regeneration is about so much more than bricks and mortar. It is about hearts and minds, it is about people. We need to make sure that regeneration plans continue to shape great places and support strong communities, making Barking and Dagenham a great place to live, work and visit; and renewing the borough for the 21st century. We know that without empowered and involved communities, our approach to regeneration could equally translate into growing inequality, social exclusion and division.

We need to link these developments to the aspirations of our residents set out in the Borough Manifesto to ensure that no one is left behind. That is why we are developing an Inclusive Growth strategy to complement our work on cohesion. This strategy will organise and coordinate all inclusive activity in the Borough. It will also describe our unique approach to inclusive growth that prioritises the people of Barking and Dagenham alongside the physical regeneration of the place. At root, a coherent and effective approach must attend to three key dimensions: the material, the social and the democratic. In other words, it must make people financially better off, in particular those on low to middle incomes; it must improve people's well-being and quality of life, through good public services, social infrastructure and a sense of community; and it must increase people's sense of agency and control over their life, through mechanisms that give people a stake and say in the changes taking place around them.

In addition, we will work with local residents to develop a long-term plan for the future of the Becontree estate, to coincide with its 100th anniversary in 2021. Combined with celebrations to mark the history of the estate and the people who have lived there, this plan will look at improvements to public realm, street scape, walking and cycling routes, housing conditions, parks and open spaces, as well as opportunities to reduce the estate’s carbon footprint and to generate renewable sources of energy. This plan will be designed and delivered with local residents, so that development and behaviour seek to recapture some of the bonds of responsibility, civic pride and neighbourliness on which the social fabric of the estate was originally built.

Priority 5: To create new and better jobs accessible to all and ensure a fair distribution of the benefits of regeneration across the borough

OVERARCHING PROGRAMMES	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
Build cohesion into the inclusive growth strategy	Inclusive Growth	Late 2019
Develop a long-term plan for the future of the Becontree estate, involving local residents, to coincide with its centenary	Inclusive Growth	2021
Build citizen participation into regeneration (work with Be First)	Inclusive Growth	Ongoing
KEY AND ONGOING ACTIONS	LEAD TEAM	DELIVERY DATE
Further utilise community locations and increase stakeholder integration to maximise job training opportunities in the more isolated and under-presented areas of the borough	Community Solutions	Ongoing
Use volunteering as a gateway to increasing qualifications and employment outcomes	Community Solutions	Ongoing
Support the development of sustainable modern and creative industries in the borough (film studio, data centre...)	Inclusive Growth	Ongoing
Expand the lifelong learning offer to raise people’s aspirations and incomes	Inclusive Growth	Ongoing
Communicate aspirational journeys through the Borough and Me campaign	Communications and Policy; Inclusive Growth	Ongoing

Bring people together to deliberate on and allocate the spending of money from developers' contribution to community initiatives	Participation and Engagement	Ongoing
Raise awareness on the Apprenticeship Levy as an opportunity for cohesion and integration	Human Resources; Communications and Policy	Spring 2019
Develop systems to create a collaborative employment offers across Community Solutions	Community Solutions	September 2019
Encourage the Council and partners to consider how buildings and public spaces can best be used to build community cohesion	Participation and Engagement, Inclusive Growth	June 2020
Ensure that the social value policy features a strong cohesion component	Procurement; Participation and Engagement; Insight and Innovation; Inclusive Growth	Autumn 2019
Develop an asset policy that includes community facilities	Participation and Engagement	Autumn 2019

4. How will we know if we are successful?

As discussed in this strategy, cohesion in the borough can be affected by decisions taken in many areas, from the way we build our homes to the behaviours that people choose to adopt in their community. Some aspects of this strategy are designed to achieve direct outcomes relating to these priorities (such as improved English language competency). As such, they can be easily measured. Other cohesion needs are about things that cannot be easily measured – empathy, understanding, trust and acceptance. These emotions are shaped by many factors, which may or may not be in the control of the Council.

We will continue to work with residents to monitor general cohesion across the borough whilst exploring ways to deepen our understanding of local cohesion issues through a better use of data and the mobilisation of the Citizens Alliance Network. We will also monitor the implementation plan annually and report progress to partners. In doing so, our approach to measuring success will take into consideration the need to evolve and to adapt to changing circumstances. Importantly, we will seek to work collectively and to strengthen relationships with all who can help bring this change about and help us make Barking and Dagenham the friendly and welcoming borough that we all want to see, and where no one is left behind.

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Appendix 1 – Facts and Figures

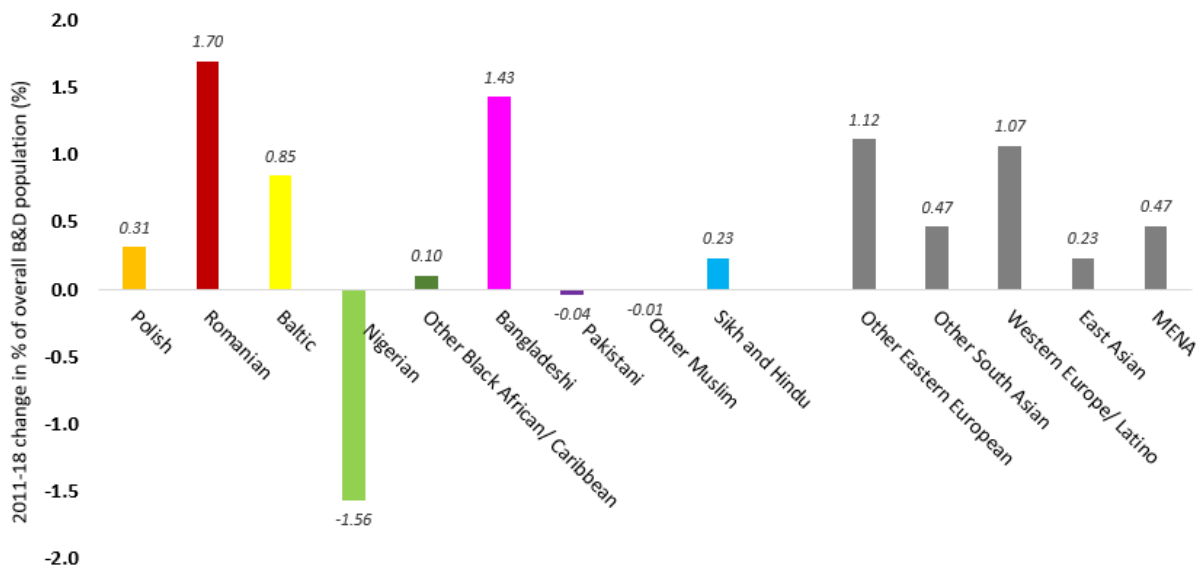


Figure 2 - Proportion of the borough made up by different groups (Source: Campaign Company)

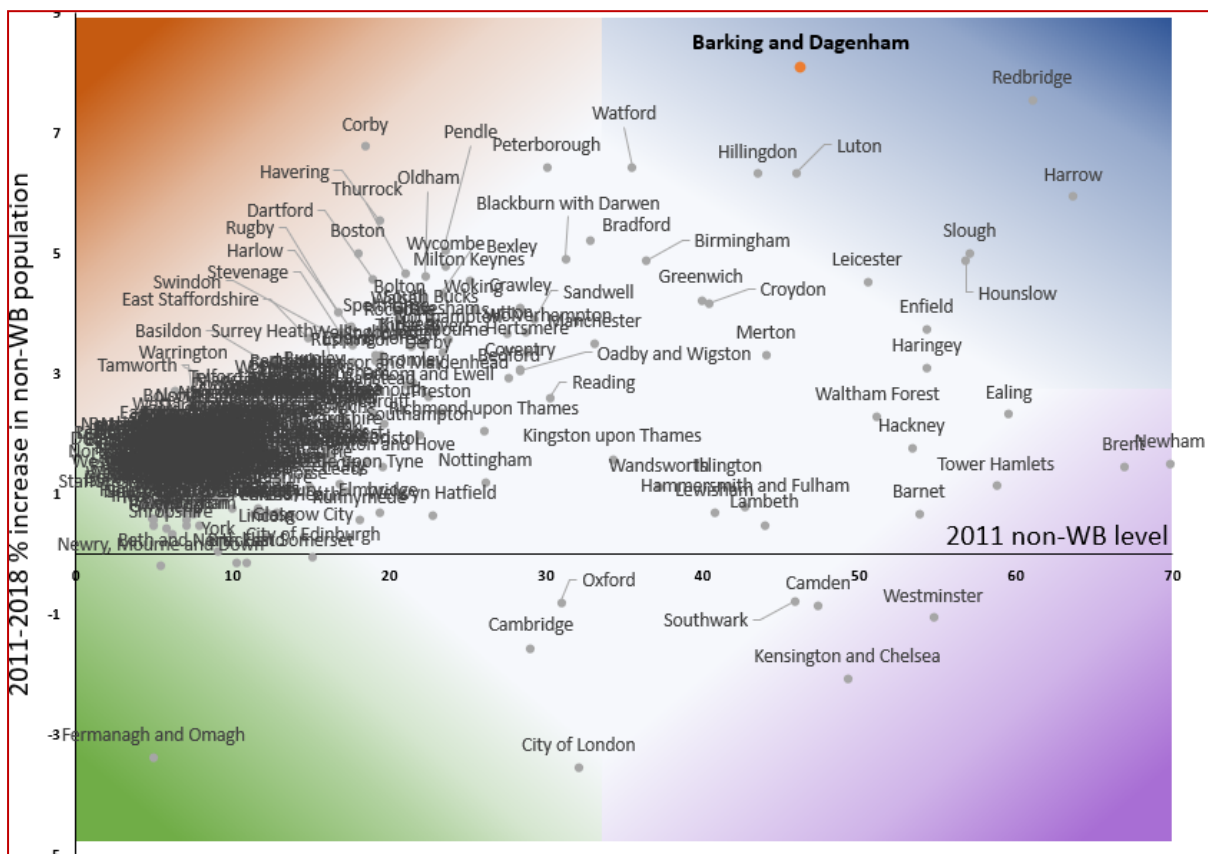


Figure 3 - Chart of UK authorities, non-White British level versus change (Source: Campaign Company)

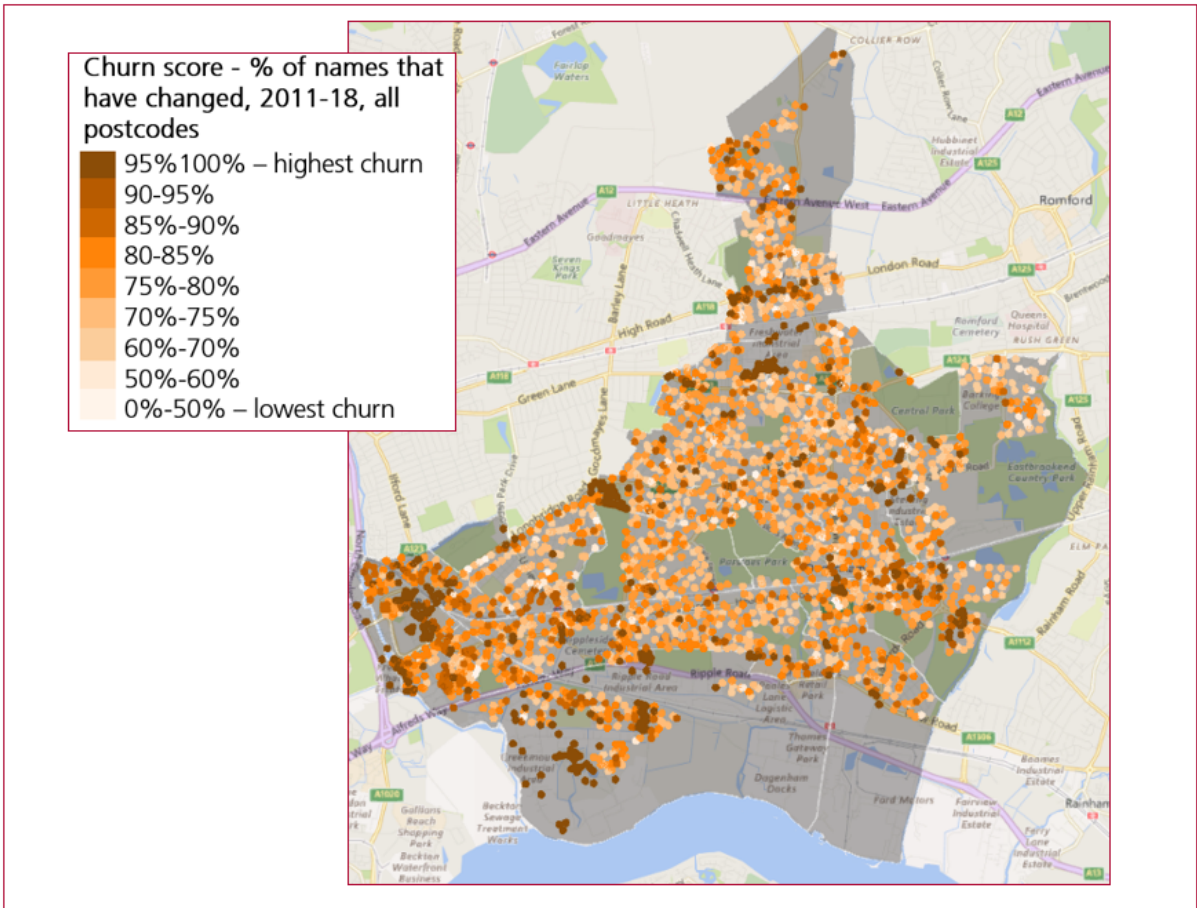


Figure 4 - Level of churn by postcode (Source: Campaign Company)

Appendix 2 - Strategic Framework

There are several initiatives and activities that sit within the Council's remit which impact on cohesion in Barking and Dagenham. Some of these are being developed in parallel to this strategy (e.g. the Partnerships and Participation Strategy, the Faith Policy, the Loneliness Strategy). Existing frameworks include:

<p>Equality and Diversity Strategy</p>	<p>The Equality and Diversity Strategy sets out a number of measures to ensure the nine protected characteristics, and additional issues of poverty inequalities are taken account in council decision making. This includes ensuring that physical regeneration supports employment and skills outcomes through planning obligations; ensuring regeneration works with local communities to ensure proposed developments preserve or enhance local social, historical, cultural, environmental, and economic characteristics; supporting social entrepreneurs in the borough to set up and grow where they can contribute to equalities outcomes, and ensuring commissioning reflects the needs of service users. This strategy will support these objectives through encouraging meaningful interactions between people from different backgrounds, as well as through supporting increased equality of opportunity in the borough.</p>
<p>Prevention: a local framework</p>	<p>The prevention framework recognises that life events may impact very differently on each individual, and that some communities and individuals may have different levels of capabilities to sustain their wellbeing. It therefore sets out a flexible, diverse response to individual need setting out a borough wide approach to prevention. By creating more cohesive communities, this strategy helps support a community owned approach to prevention that act as an additional safety net for individuals who are affected by life events.</p>
<p>Children's Care and Support Market Position Statement and the Adults' Care and Support Market Position Statement 2019.</p>	<p>The market position statements for Adults and Children promote greater market diversity in the health and social care landscape. As age is such an important index of integration, finding ways to promote greater intergenerational integration is important.</p>
<p>Culture Everywhere</p>	<p>The culture everywhere framework recognises that much of the strength of our community is borne from its diversity. It identifies that culture has a social value, as well as intrinsic value in shaping ideas and ways of seeing. It recognises the continued importance of participatory projects to improving cultural participation and development and sets out that new cultural activity should be led by residents, building confidence and expertise. It highlights the need to build capacity of cultural organisations in the borough, often part of the social sector, with a focus on collaboration partnerships, and information sharing. The Cohesion and Integration Strategy identifies the role of culture, heritage and cultural</p>

	diversity as a key priority with associated action.
Commissioning for better outcomes framework	This framework sets out several principles for commissioned services. It places using evidence of what works and measuring outcomes; taking a whole system approach (in partnership with communities, businesses and residents); taking a person centred approach; co-producing with communities; and developing the marketplace. The framework can be used to ensure that Cohesion and Integration are considered within procurement processes, and the Cohesion and Integration Strategy will provide a template to guide what good outcomes look like in this space.
Growth Commission and Stocktake	A team of independent experts were commissioned to review our ambition to be London's growth opportunity and make recommendations how to maximise the contribution of the Borough to the London economy; generating growth in Barking and Dagenham in a way that benefits all residents. A stocktake of the situation, two years on, suggests focusing on three themes, i.e. articulated around people as beneficiaries, and the structural conditions (environment) that influence their wellbeing. A third theme is concerned with participation as a way to increase transparency in the inclusive growth agenda, as well as to enable a sense of ownership, i.e. to enable people to get involved in decision-making.
Borough Manifesto	The Borough Manifesto is a collaborative, place-based, resident-led vision of the future of Barking and Dagenham. It is a set of aspirations and targets, jointly owned by public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations, setting out how the Borough should move forward over the next 20 years. It is therefore a steer for all local partners who, like us, are determined to make Barking and Dagenham a friendly and welcoming borough with strong community spirit . The Borough Manifesto suggests the need to support the community to celebrate our history and heritage, through events and activities; to tackle extremism and hate crime wherever it occurs; and to help different groups within our community to come together and integrate, understanding that diversity is a strength and we can all learn from one another. This strategy outlines how we will work towards the Borough Manifesto ambition over the next five years.
Transformation programmes	Ambition 2020 was the Council's wholesale transformation plan to create a sustainable organisation that can live within its means; tackle the challenges the borough faces; respond to the Growth Commission findings and deliver the Council's vision. Ambition 2020 triggered significant re-configurations of services and functions through several transformation programmes which have moved into implementation. Managing change and transitioning to new service delivery models will require a continued, learning based approach which puts participation

	and engagement, people and resilience, and inclusive growth at its core.
Community Solutions	A flagship transformation programme is Community Solutions. The purpose of this new service will be early resolution and problem-solving to help residents to become more self-sufficient and resilient. It will tackle the multiple needs of households in a joined-up way and at an early stage. It will comprise multi-disciplinary and multi-agency teams that will collaborate closely with the voluntary and community sector and others to deliver early intervention and preventative support and help build community cohesion across the borough.
Equalities events and Summer of Festivals	The Council uses its events programme to build community cohesion and bring different groups through community and cultural events. Within this programme are a series of VCSE related events including LGBT History Month, Black History Month, and Women’s Empowerment Month. The Council also facilitates community-led ‘donate a flag’ event to celebrate different groups and cultures within the borough.
Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Worklessness is an important cohesion issue. There is strong evidence that shows that for most of the population, being in ‘good’ work is better for residents’ mental and physical health, than being out of work. The income from work also allows residents to meet their basic needs and withstand financial shocks. Within the borough, 6.9% of working age people are unemployed, higher than the London average of 5.7%. We also know that 32% of working people who live in the borough are paid below the London living wage. 15% of residents are estimated to be in elementary occupations, compared to the London average of 9%.
Housing Service Anti-Social Behaviour Policy (Neighbour Nuisance)	This policy, and the accompanying strategy promote listening to residents to improve community outcomes, particularly cohesion. By addressing some of the behaviours which can drive division within communities and setting out which behaviours are unacceptable, this policy provides a baseline for behavioural change in support of cohesion outcomes.
Community Safety Plan (2014-2017)	The Community Safety Plan outlines ways in which the Community Safety Partnership can address crime and anti-social behaviour; domestic violence and sexual violence; gang and youth violence; reoffending and substance misuse; hate crime. It does this through integrated offender

	management; integrated victim management; and building confidence in reporting, via the Safety Partnership Board; Community Safety Partnership Sub- groups; and Local Policies and Strategies.
Customer Access Strategy: Delivering Excellent Customer Services	This strategy creates a vision for the customer experience of Barking and Dagenham. It aspires to more innovative and efficient services which are more accessible and continue to deliver improved user ratings. As we realise that sense of fairness often relates to the quality of customer experience of public services this strategy has a core relationship to delivering cohesion.
Barking Town Centre Strategy 2014/2018	Barking Town Centre is one of five growth hubs which will help to deliver a wide range of new jobs, housing across the borough and make a significant impact to the Council's vision because of its high accessibility to Central London; offer as a cultural hub for the borough and more widely. The Strategy sets out how Barking's potential can be realised to deliver jobs, homes, a wide range of uses which attract visitors and fulfil residents needs with a strong identity and sense of place.
Heritage Strategy 2016-2020	The heritage strategy highlights the rich history of the borough, celebrating this and setting out a set of measures, in line with Ambition 2020 and the Growth Commission, to ensure the better promotion of heritage culture in the borough to ensure the physical and intellectual history of place is conserved. This marries with the Cohesion and Integration Strategy, which focuses on the way new stories can be added to the rich texture of place locally.
Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021	As fairness is at the heart of cohesion, so is an effective homelessness strategy. Homelessness can result from domestic violence, addiction, debt, worklessness, poor health and wellbeing and sometimes through no fault of their own. This leads to isolation and a disconnection from pathways to essential support which help identify and break a downward cycle. The Homelessness Strategy identifies mechanisms to prevent this.

In addition, it links to several national and regional strategies, policies and reports, including:

- The Home Office's Counter-Extremism Strategy, which set out the government's strategy to counter extremism in all its forms. The Strategy seeks to improve our understanding of the causes and impacts of extremism and do more to: (1) counter the extremist ideology; (2) build a partnership with all those opposed to extremism; (3) disrupt extremists, and; (4) build more cohesive communities.
- The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) provides support to those areas experiencing pressure from migration. The Fund is available until 2020 and focuses on responding to issues caused by high migration into

localities as identified by local authorities with the aim of delivering benefits to the established resident population. The fund has two parts: an envelope of £100m to ease pressure on local services and an enforcement part worth £40m to direct enforcement action against people who are in the UK illegally in order to reduce the pressure on local areas.

- The All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration which, since August 2016, brings together Parliamentarians from all political parties with an interest in the issue. Its mission is to drive forward a cross-party conversation on policy solutions to break down barriers to integration and create opportunities for people from all walks of life to build bonds of trust. In August 2017, the Group published an inquiry on the integration of immigrants into British society and the UK economy, formulating 56 policy recommendations under 4 main headlines: (1) Designing a regionally-led immigration system; (2) Adopting a strategic and proactive approach to the integration of immigrants; (3) Promoting and reforming British citizenship, and; (4) Building a Britain in which everyone can speak English.
- In March 2018, the Mayor's strategy for social integration titled 'All of Us' was published. This strategy focuses on relationships, participation, equality and evidence.
- The publication, in September 2018 of the final report of the National Conversation on Immigration by British Future and HOPE not hate. This is the biggest-ever consultation on immigration and integration.
- In March 2018, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published an 'Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper' in which the government outlines its vision for increasing cohesion and key policy proposals, and invited comments. The response to this consultation was published in February 2019 and an Action Plan was subsequently issued.
- In March 2019, the Local Government Association issued a guide on how to build cohesive communities. This guide mentions several initiatives that are taking place in Barking and Dagenham, including the Connected Communities programme, Creative Barking and Dagenham, DagFest, and Votes for Schools.

Appendix 3 - Equality and Diversity

Potential impacts	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?
Local communities in general	X			The strategy aims to generate a more equal distribution of the benefits of regeneration in the borough, and create more opportunities for people from different backgrounds, age, faith, ethnicity to meet and interact. This will benefit all communities	These benefits will be enhanced by embedding the cohesion priorities across council services and upcoming strategies, e.g. in the inclusive growth strategy, sport strategy
Age	X				A number of actions are aimed at supporting young people, including youth arts projects, the development of a sports and physical activity strategy, Votes for Schools, as well as the proposal to commission a group of students to produce a youth-friendly version of the cohesion strategy and distribute it in schools in the borough.
Disability	X				Activities proposed by Every One Every Day are scattered across the borough, ensuring that elderly people, as well as people with reduced mobility are able to attend and link up with others.
Gender reassignment		X			
Marriage and civil partnership		X			
Pregnancy and maternity		X			
Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)	X			The strategy aims to generate a more equal distribution of the benefits of regeneration in the borough, and create many	Specific actions are aimed at migrant populations, including immigration advice, English language support, as well as an increase in the support for migrants in hostels
Religion or belief	X				These benefits are enhanced through the current engagement with faith communities and the ongoing development of a Faith Policy for the

				more opportunities for people from different backgrounds, age, faith, ethnicity to meet and interact. This will benefit all communities	borough
Sex	X				
Sexual orientation	X				
Any community issues identified for this location?		X			

Appendix 4 - Engagement, Consultation and Co-production

The development of this strategy has undergone several phases. The starting point was the Borough Manifesto consultation, which involved over 3000 residents who identified community cohesion as a key priority and aspiration for the future. Following this, we carried out an extensive review of the academic and policy literature to provide a snapshot on what is being done around cohesion nationally and in other localities. We have then engaged in a listening exercise locally, during the Summer of Festivals and through a series of world-café style events, e.g. The Big Conversation and focus groups with residents, using pictures of places and situations in the borough as triggers for conversation. These exercises have sought to open the floor to residents to tell us about how they feel living in Barking and Dagenham, what are the borough's challenges and opportunities, but also what people's aspirations are as individuals and as a community. Beyond talking about cohesion, these dialogues have also served as vehicles for cohesion themselves, bringing people together in meaningful exchanges.

We have embedded the principle of co-production within the development of the strategy itself, e.g. through co-design workshops with partners and residents.

The consultation, engagement and co-production have included the following:

- Engagement as part of a consultation to design the Good Neighbour Guide during the Summer of Festivals of 2017
- Sep-Dec 2017: One to one conversations with VCS organisations (BDCVS, CAB, BDSWA, Digilab, Lifeline, Studio3Arts, Integrated youth Services (LBBD))
- Nov 2017 – Mar 2018: Two Big Conversation events involving over 100 residents from Barking and Dagenham
- Jan-May 2018: 6 focus groups with residents, in partnership with local organisations (Gascoigne Children's Centre, Young Carers of Barking and Dagenham, Osbourne Partnership, Gascoigne Primary School, Chadwell Heath Tenants and Residents Association). A total of 93 residents, including adults and children, participated.
- 13 Jun 2018: Workshop at the Barking and Dagenham Delivery Partnership
- August 2018: Feedback to all participants on progress to date, lessons learnt and invitation to September co-production sessions
- Sep 2018: Co-production sessions (x2) featuring 13 participants from the voluntary and community sector, and residents.

Lastly, the public was consulted on the draft strategy in the period between 5 February and 11 March 2019, providing over 50 responses on the Council's portal, and a lot of social media engagement (Facebook and Twitter). These responses were taken into account in finalising the strategy's vision and themes.