

bromley by bow centre



# Addressing Health Inequalities in Tower Hamlets East London

Ms Vanessa Barker  
Social and Therapeutic Horticulture Project Manager

Miss Soraya El-Khazen  
Fresh Start Project Manager

# Bromley by Bow Centre

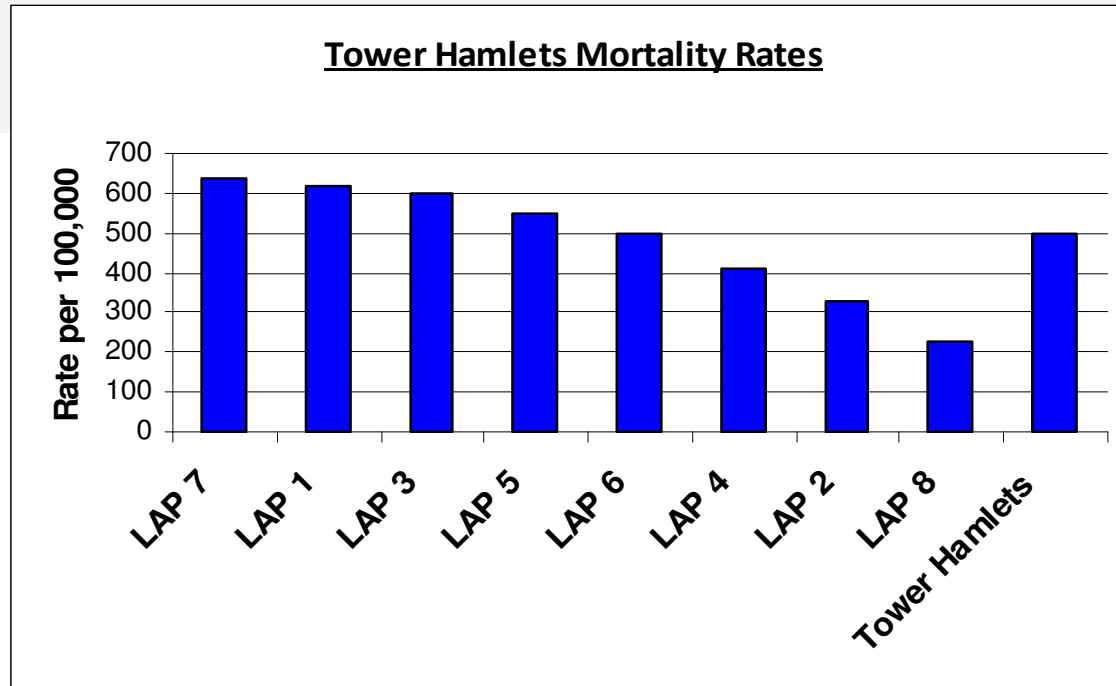
- Twenty-five years' experience of supporting local people.
- Integrated approach.
- Unified service delivery.





# Where we are

- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- One of the poorest and most densely populated boroughs in the country
- 43% Bangladeshi; 37% White
- 89 Languages spoken
- High levels of drug and alcohol misuse, crime, violence and anti-social behaviour



**pollen**  
people **Life** Landscape nature



- Social and therapeutic horticulture project for adults experiencing mental distress.
- 1 in 6 adults experience mental illness at any one time in Tower Hamlets.
- Admission rates for mental health problems are 80-90% higher in Tower Hamlets than the expected mental health rates for the rest of the country.



Pollen works closely with NHS Primary Care Trusts, Community Mental Health Teams, Health professionals and other voluntary and independent services for referrals into the project.

People can also self refer.



Pollen endeavours to halt the progression from mental distress to mental illness by promoting the restorative benefits of growing and increased activity through horticulture.

Pollen members are encouraged to use the wider services and support of the Centre, as are all Bromley by Bow projects, such as:

- Employment advice,
- Welfare and benefits advice
- Vocational courses (NVQ)
- *ESOL and Literacy classes*
- Legal advice
- Children's Centre
- Landscape related art projects  
– Pottery, Graphic Design



Pollen is a registered “Green Gym”.

In order to further support our members, we offer one-to-one motivational coaching to encourage members to aspire to their personal goals and achieve success.



We believe that our model of integrated working helps to reduce the stigma attached to mental health thereby building the confidence and self-esteem of our members, helping them to lead fulfilling lives.





# Fresh Start

- Weight management programme for Tower Hamlets residents with a BMI  $>25\text{kg}/\text{m}^2$  and over 18 years old.
- Objective: improve long-term health and wellbeing of beneficiaries using a “whole body” approach.
- Tailored dietary, exercise and motivational coaching to develop and sustain good health behaviours.



# Health Statistics

- Health of the community is poor with a high incidence of chronic health problems.
- Diabetes, COPD and cardiovascular disease most prevalent. Obesity is a high risk factor for these diseases.
- 10% of patients attending the GP Practice have a BMI>30kg/m<sup>2</sup>.
- Lowest “5-a-day” rates in Tower Hamlets with 90% of Bangladeshi community suffering from Iron or Vitamin D deficiency.
- 30% of Tower Hamlets residents take no exercise, levels of activity particularly low in Bangladeshi community.



# Programme Content



Week	Content
1	<b>Introduction to Fresh Start Programme</b>
2	<b>Basic nutrition</b> (e.g. portion size, 5-a-day, food triangle)
3	<b>Exercise</b> – Setting individual programmes
4	<b>Life coaching</b> - Target setting (SMART)
5	<b>Cooking</b> – Quick and healthy lunch ideas
6	<b>Food labelling</b> – Supermarket visit
7	<b>Life coaching</b> – Progress to date, behaviour change
8	<b>Cooking</b> – Multi-cultural cuisine
9	<b>Exercise</b> – How to exercise at home, incorporating exercise into daily life
10	<b>Cooking</b> - How to get 5-a-day into your diet
11	<b>Life Coaching</b> – Setting longer term goals and coping mechanisms
12	<b>Check out</b>



# Fresh Start Results



<b>Gender</b>	81% female
<b>Age</b>	23% aged 45-54 years old
<b>Ethnicity</b>	43% Bangladeshi and 28% White British
<b>Disability</b>	22% disability affecting mobility
<b>Co-morbidities</b>	27% with arthritis and 18% with high blood pressure
<b>Employment Status</b>	52% unemployed and 23% in full or part time employment
<b>Weight</b>	Average starting weight – 85kg Average weight improvement – 3.5kg
<b>BMI</b>	Average starting BMI – 33 Average final BMI - 31
<b>Heart Rate</b>	Average starting heart rate – 82bpm Average heart rate improvement - 5bpm (reduction)
<b>Waist</b>	Average starting waist measurement – 107cm Average waist improvement – 4.7cm
<b>Wellness</b>	Average starting wellness score – 41 Average final wellness score – 52

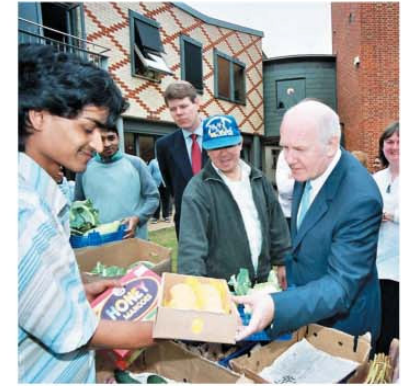
# Conclusion

The Bromley by Bow Centre acts to reduce poverty in a spectrum of ways.

“Give people the tools, not financial handouts.”

Tools to improve: education;  
: physical and mental health;  
: motivation for personal development.

The Centre actively encourages and supports the growth of an individual bringing them out of poverty and social exclusion.



bromley by bow centre

bromley by bow centre  
[www.bbbsc.org.uk](http://www.bbbsc.org.uk)