

# **Draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2024-2029)**

Consultation pack

## Foreword

As the chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, I am delighted to launch the consultation for our Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2024-2029. This five-year strategy reflects our collective commitment to building a healthier, happier Croydon where everyone has an equal chance of achieving good health and wellbeing.

Croydon's Health and Wellbeing Board was established following the Health and Care Act 2012 as a statutory board of the Council. It brings together partners across the health, social care and voluntary and community sectors to work together to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets out how we will do this.

Much has changed since the publication of our last strategy. Croydon now stands as the most populous borough in London, with our health and social care sector facing substantial challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on, and at times widened, the health inequalities within our borough. The ongoing cost-of-living crisis continues to pose a challenge to the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Against the backdrop of these challenges, the Health and Care Act 2022 introduced Integrated Care Systems, where Croydon is now an integral part of the South West London Integrated Care System. This presents real opportunities for

integrated, partnership working at both Croydon- and South West London-level to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our residents. However, Croydon is unique—we have the largest population within South West London, with some of the most deprived areas and widest inequalities in our health outcomes.

Addressing these challenges, improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and tackling inequalities requires unified, collaborative efforts. This draft strategy sets out how Croydon's Health and Wellbeing Board will advocate for and enable joined-up working across health and social care and lead improvements in the health and wellbeing of our residents. It reaffirms our commitment to tackle inequalities and support our residents. In doing so, we aspire to make Croydon a healthier, happier and safer place for all.

Thank you for taking the time to review our draft Strategy and participate in this consultation. Your thoughts and feedback will help shape the final strategy which will be approved by the Council in 2024.



**Councillor Yvette Hopley**

**Chair of the Croydon Health and Wellbeing Board**

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## **Introduction to the consultation pack**

This consultation pack introduces the draft vision, guiding principles and priority areas of focus for Croydon's Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Board for the next five years. The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy is our roadmap to create a healthier and happier Croydon, where everybody, regardless of their background has an equal opportunity to achieve good health and wellbeing.

Thank you for taking the time to review this pack. Your views are vital in shaping this strategy to meet the unique needs and challenges of our community.

## **Background**

### **Croydon's Health and Wellbeing Board**

Croydon's [Health and Wellbeing Board](#) is a statutory board of the Council made up of representatives from the local authority, the NHS, Healthwatch Croydon, our Voluntary and Community Sector, and other key stakeholders. The Board's mission is to ensure that everyone in Croydon, regardless of their background, has an equal opportunity to live a healthy and happy life.

As mandated by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Health and Wellbeing Board plays a central role in enabling integrated working across the health and social care sector to improve the health and wellbeing and tackle health inequalities in Croydon. To meet this goal, the Board has the following two core responsibilities:

(1) To assess the health and wellbeing needs of the local population in Croydon through what is known as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and

(2) To produce a Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy that jointly agrees the areas of focus for improving the health and wellbeing of the local population in Croydon.

### **The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS) sets out how the Health and Wellbeing Board will work together as a partnership, along with residents, to improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities. It is informed by local needs, as identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), and the views of partners and our local communities.

### **Why are we revising the strategy?**

Croydon's current JLHWS was published in 2019. Since then, the health and wellbeing and the health and care system in Croydon, like many other places, have seen important changes.

One of these key changes in the health and care system is the implementation of the Health and Care Act 2022 and the subsequent creation of Integrated Care Systems. Integrated Care Systems are partnerships of organisations that bring together local authorities, NHS organisations and other system partners to plan and deliver joined-up health and care services within a geographical area. Croydon is now a part of the South West London Integrated Care System, which is made up of a total of six local authorities. The other local

authorities in South West London Integrated Care System include Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth.

With the Health and Social Care Act 2022, Croydon’s Health and Wellbeing Board continues to be responsible for the creation of the JLHWS. However, there is now a need to coordinate the JLHWS and the Integrated Care Strategy so that initiatives within Croydon and South West London can have the greatest possible positive impact on our health and wellbeing.

In addition to these changes in the health and care system, the COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on existing, and in some cases widening, health inequalities in Croydon. The cost-of-living crisis continues to pose significant challenges not only to the health and social care services but also to our health and wellbeing.

We are committed to keeping our strategy relevant, effective, and responsive to these changes. By reviewing and revising the JLHWS, we want to make sure it stays on track to address the evolving health needs and inequalities in Croydon.

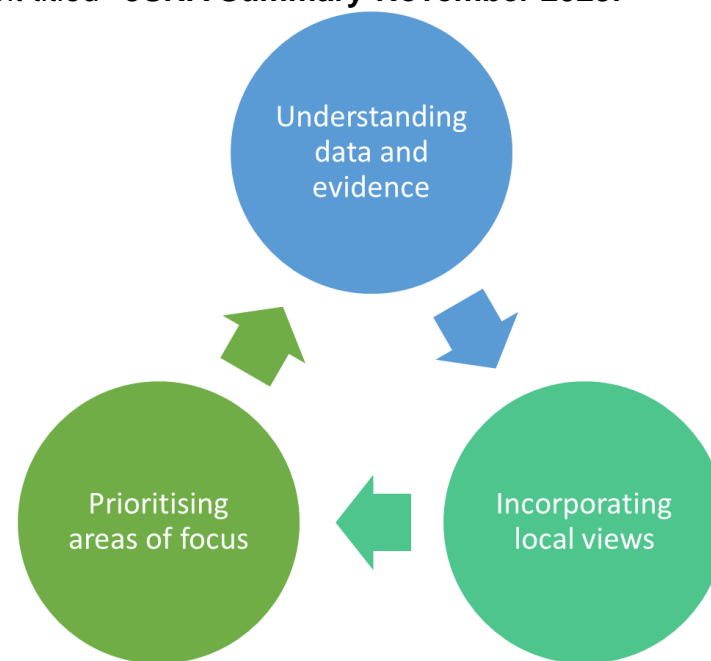
### How was the draft JLHWS developed?

#### Understanding what data and evidence tells us

Our health is shaped by various factors, including the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age. These wider conditions, including our housing, education and skills, work, economic opportunities, the healthcare we receive, our social and community networks and surroundings

form the building blocks of health. To create thriving communities, we need the right building blocks in place.

Our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), published at <https://www.croydonobservatory.org/jsna>, provides up-to-date data, intelligence and insights on our health and wellbeing alongside these building blocks. As a first step, we reviewed the JSNA to understand various health and wellbeing needs in Croydon. You can find a summary of this in the supporting document titled “**JSNA Summary-November 2023.**”



#### Incorporating local views

In Croydon, we believe improving our health and wellbeing is everybody’s business. To ensure the draft strategy reflected

the diverse needs and aspirations of our local residents and communities, we took the following steps:

- We reviewed insights gathered from community engagement activities in Croydon since 2018, incorporating input from more than 100 local community engagement events and hearing from more than 3,700 voices.
- Croydon boasts a vibrant community spirit and a longstanding tradition of partnership working with residents. A key example of this is the six Local Community Partnerships working across the borough, as part of the Healthy Communities Together Programme. Each Local Community Partnership has developed its own Community Plan, identifying priority themes for their neighbourhoods to improve health and wellbeing and tackle health inequalities. These priorities informed the draft strategy presented in this consultation pack.
- Lastly, in collaboration with Healthwatch Croydon, we undertook a community engagement session in November 2023. The insights and feedback gathered from this session were integrated into this consultation pack.

### **Prioritising areas of focus for the next five years**

Our review highlighted various needs across our community, acknowledging the diverse challenges our local people face.

To refine our focus for the next five years, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Health and Care Board collaborated in a joint workshop in November 2023, resulting in the five draft priority areas outlined in this consultation pack. These priorities were carefully chosen based on:

- Data and evidence from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Alignment with key strategies including the Mayor's Business Plan and the South West London Integrated Care Partnership Strategy.
- Input from community events in the Borough and the Community Plans of six Local Community Partnerships.
- How much positive impact each priority can make on individuals and communities.

We shared and discussed these draft priority areas at the Healthwatch Community Engagement event in November 2023. It is important to note that the purpose of the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy is not about taking action on everything at once, but about setting a small number of strategic priorities for action, that will make a real impact on people's lives. While many areas did not make it to this consultation pack, this does not mean that we will not work to address them over the next five years.

## The draft Strategy for 2024-2029:

### Recognising our health and wellbeing as an asset

Our health and wellbeing is shaped by almost everything around us, such as our homes, access to education, quality of jobs and working conditions, strength of our social connections or whether we experience poverty and discrimination. These building blocks are often referred to as ‘wider determinants of health.’ Existing research shows that healthcare itself contributes to between **15-25%** of our health and wellbeing, while the wider determinants of health shape between **45-65%** of our health and wellbeing ([The King’s Fund, 2013](#)).

In Croydon, we know that our health and wellbeing is an invaluable asset. It is both vital for our individual wellbeing, enabling us to lead happy and fulfilling lives, and forms the basis for thriving communities. In 2021-22, just under **4 in 5** Croydon residents reported a good life satisfaction score ([Office for National Statistics, 2022](#)).

### Understanding current challenges and tackling health inequalities

With a population of **390,719** Croydon stands as the largest borough in London. Our population includes a substantial number of both younger and older residents, with around **1 in 4** people **under 18 years** of age and **1 in 7** people **over 65 years** old. The borough’s population is projected to reach **408,271 by 2043**, with a smaller proportion of younger and larger proportion of older people, emphasising our changing population structure.

Croydon has a vibrant and diverse population. Around **52%** of the people in Croydon are from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic groups. Around **84%** of our residents speak English as their main language. After English, the most common main languages are South Asian languages (4.8%), Other European (EU) languages (4.7%), Portuguese (1.3%), Spanish (1.0%), and East Asian languages (0.8%).



Despite our diversity, not everyone in Croydon has the same opportunities to lead a healthy life. This is known as **health inequalities**, which are unfair and avoidable differences in health between different groups of people ([Kings Fund, 2022](#)).

The latest data shows that during 2018-2020, the average life expectancy in Croydon stood at **79.7 years** for men (19<sup>th</sup> in London), and **83.7 years** for women (25<sup>th</sup> in London). However, men residing in the most deprived areas in Croydon were expected to live **9.2 years** less than their counterparts living in the least deprived areas. Similarly, women in the most deprived areas were expected to live **6.5 years** less than those living in the least deprived areas.

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*“Health inequalities are unfair and avoidable differences in health between different groups of people.”*

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The COVID-19 pandemic has further increased these health inequalities within our borough. We know that the COVID-19 pandemic did not impact everyone equally: specific groups, particularly those with the lowest incomes and our Black, Asian and Minority ethnic communities have borne the brunt of its impact. Current economic challenges, such as the rising cost of living, place a growing strain to the lives of our residents, impacting their ability to meet basic needs and lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

These pressing challenges underscore our commitment to achieving a Croydon, where every resident, regardless of background, has equitable opportunities for a healthy and fulfilling life. At the heart of the JLHWS is the recognition that health and wellbeing is everybody's business. By working together and using our resources efficiently, we can make a meaningful difference in the health and wellbeing of our residents.



## Our vision

Our vision for health and wellbeing in Croydon sets out what we want to achieve in the long term.

In Croydon, everybody is enabled to lead a healthy, happy and fulfilling life supported by safe, healthy and thriving communities and neighbourhoods. We work together and build on our strengths to actively tackle inequalities and improve our health and wellbeing.

## Our guiding principles

Our guiding principles will underpin our actions over the next five years.

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### 1. Tackling health inequalities

We will aim to reduce, and where possible prevent, health inequalities. In addition to taking action to improve the health and wellbeing of everybody in Croydon, we will take action to:

- Improve the health of the most disadvantaged groups, and
- Reduce the gap between the best and the worst off.

This includes building on our commitments stated in **Croydon's Equality Strategy** and our adoption of the borough-wide **Equalities Pledge** and **George Floyd Race Matters Pledge** to positively promote the equality of opportunity for individuals of all characteristics, with a specific focus on underserved groups such as minoritised ethnic groups, LGBTQ+ communities, refugees, asylum seekers, homeless people, and people with disabilities including those with communication impairments.

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### 2. Prevention across the life course

We will take a prevention-first approach to prevent ill health from happening in the first place. We will embed principles of prevention across the life course, ensuring that our residents have the necessary tools and support, especially during key transition stages, to lead healthy and independent lives. We will aim to identify and tackle issues at the earliest possible opportunity to prevent them from getting worse.

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### **3. Integrated partnership working**

We will continue to improve integrated partnership working across health and social care at the local level, capitalising on the accomplishments of the One Croydon Alliance. We will actively engage in integrated partnership initiatives throughout South West London. We will endeavour to use our collective resources effectively, efficiently and sustainably, enabling our residents to find the right support, at the right time and at the right place.



### **4. Community focus and co-production**

We are committed to taking a community-centric approach striving to shift more services to community settings, enabling community-led support to improve health and wellbeing. We will work in partnership with our residents and communities, recognising and building on their strengths.



### **5. Evidence-informed decisions and actions**

We will base our strategic decisions and actions, including our commissioning, on the best available evidence. This principle ensures that our actions are effective, efficient, and aligned with the evolving needs of our communities. We will establish clear oversight and monitoring processes to assess the impact of our strategies and actions.

## Draft priority 1: Good mental health and wellbeing for all

Mental health is a ‘state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community’ (World Health Organisation, 2022). In Croydon, we recognise that there is **no good health without good mental health** and **promoting and protecting good mental health is everybody’s business**.

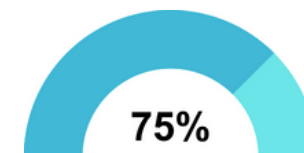
Our mental health is shaped by many factors, some of which start before the time we are born. While individual factors such as our genetics and health-related behaviours do impact our mental health, wider determinants of health such as our housing and work conditions, income, education, families, communities and neighbourhoods act as crucial foundations for our mental wellbeing. Our mental and physical health are connected. While physical health problems could increase our risk of developing mental health problems, mental health problems could put us in a higher risk of physical health issues.

Building on the success of the ongoing **Mental Health Transformation Programme**, which aims to deliver preventative and person-centred mental health care to our residents, we will continue to work to ensure our residents can get the help and support they need at the place and the time they need it.

We will continue to focus on promoting mental wellbeing, preventing mental health conditions, and preventing self-harm and suicide. Working as a whole system and across organisational boundaries, we will take action to ensure our residents have access to the tools they need to achieve and maintain good health and wellbeing throughout their lives. We will support the development of **Croydon’s Multiagency Self-harm and Suicide Prevention Action Plan**, as well as supporting the development of **Croydon’s Dementia Strategic Plan and Action Plan and Autism Strategy**. In line with the **South West London Mental Health Strategy**, we will work with our partners, to promote positive mental health promotion and prevent ill-mental health across our borough.



**1 in 4** people expected to have a mental health problem at some point in their life.



Of mental health problems develop by the age of 24.

**Around 56,852**

adults over 16 years in Croydon could be currently experiencing a common mental health problem (estimates based on 2017 data).

**Around 10,000**

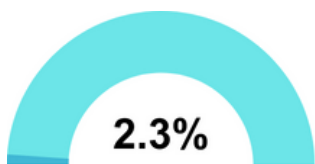
children and young people aged 6-16 years estimated to have a probable mental disorder in Croydon.

## Draft priority 2: Cost of living: supporting our residents to ‘eat, sleep and have heat’

Access to quality housing, that is warm, secure and can support independent living, as well as adequate healthy food are important for our health and wellbeing. To effectively tackle health inequalities, we need to ensure all residents have access to affordable quality housing and healthy food.

Croydon has some of the most deprived areas in London and England. While the recent cost-of-living crisis has affected almost everyone in the UK, the rising prices have most severely impacted those on the lowest incomes. We have already heard from our residents that many on lower incomes are struggling to afford paying for food and energy bills with some having to choose between eating and heating. The lasting consequences of the rising cost of living have the potential to impact many generations and worsen health inequalities.

We will work across organisational boundaries to mitigate the impacts of the cost of living and where possible prevent people from slipping into poverty. To support our residents with challenges of cost of living, we will establish a multiagency **Cost of Living Action Group**. Through this group, we will bring together new and existing support available locally and nationally in one place to make it easier for our communities to access the support they need when they need it and where they need it. To do this, we will build upon existing partnerships and initiatives in the borough, including **Community Hubs** and the **Croydon Food and Healthy Weight Partnership**. Working with our partners and communities with lived experience of poverty, we will develop solutions that provide immediate emergency and welfare support while fostering resilience within our communities.



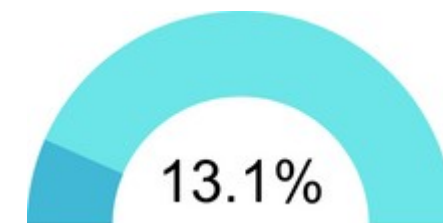
Of small areas in Croydon are among the most 10% deprived areas in England.



Around **3 in 5** people living in the most deprived areas in Great Britain were buying less food in 2022 compared with 2021.



Around **1 in 3** children under 16 years experience poverty (Child poverty rates, 2021/22).



**21,165 households** in Croydon were experiencing **fuel poverty** (2021).

### Draft priority 3: Healthy, safe and well-connected neighbourhoods and communities

Our health and wellbeing is shaped by the places in which we live, play, work and socialise in addition to the relationships and resources we have in our communities. Recognising this, our strategy puts an important focus on cultivating healthy, safe and well-connected neighbourhoods and communities, where healthy choice becomes the easy choice.

We will work to make our neighbourhoods healthy and safe, where our residents can easily access affordable, healthy food and enjoy clean air. We would like our neighbourhoods to have increased opportunities for active travel and physical activity, to make it easier for our residents to attain and maintain healthier lifestyles.

Croydon boasts vibrant and diverse communities, and a strong Voluntary and Community Sector. We will build on our close relationships with our Voluntary and Community Sector and our local community to establish community-led initiatives that aim to foster a strong sense of belonging and help our communities thrive. We want to ensure our services are **culturally competent** and be a leader for South West London around establishing the use of an **anti-racism framework**. This includes building on our commitments stated in **Croydon's Equality Strategy** and our adoption of the borough-wide **Equalities Pledge** and **George Floyd Race Matters Pledge** to positively promote the equality of opportunity for individuals of all characteristics, with a specific focus on underserved groups such as minoritised ethnic groups, LGBTQ+ population, refugees, asylum seekers, homeless people, and people with disabilities including those with communication impairments.

Our **Healthy Communities Together Programme**, a partnership programme between the Voluntary and Community Sector, the NHS and Croydon Council works to improve health and wellbeing, reduce health inequalities and empower communities across our six localities.

Our **Community Hubs** offer holistic support to our communities, covering advice on housing, benefits and health checks. They see over 2,000 people each year and are a place for our residents to meet and connect with others.



Just over **3 in 5 (62.0%)** adults are overweight or obese (2021/22).



Just over **3 in 5 (61.9%)** physically active adults in Croydon (2021/22).



Just under **1 in 7 (13.5%)** adults over 18 are estimated to be smoking in Croydon.

**40,437**

Offences in Croydon in the rolling months to September 2022 (15<sup>th</sup> highest rate in London out of 32 boroughs).

## Draft priority 4: Supporting our children, young people and families

Croydon has the largest population of children and young people in London. In 2021, **90,241** individuals in Croydon were under 18 years old, and just over a third (33.8%) of our households had dependent children. Detailed data on Croydon's children, young people and families can be found at our [children, young people and families JSNA](#).



**1 in 4** people in Croydon is under 18 years old.

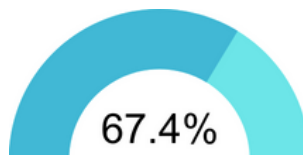
Our first 1,001 days in life, covering the period from pregnancy to the age of 2, set the foundations for our lifelong health and wellbeing. Health inequalities that affect us throughout our lives can start before we are born. To tackle health inequalities and set the stage for a lasting healthy life, we need to prioritise our early years and ensure our babies get a good start in life. This involves providing parents and carers with access to high-quality, joined-up primary care, antenatal, maternity, children and family services.

We will support our parents, carers and families in their communities, addressing both health and social care needs, including any pregnancy concerns. We will promote the mental health and emotional wellbeing of parents and carers as well as all children and young people in Croydon. We will take a **whole-family approach** and take action from before and during pregnancy through to childbirth and throughout childhood to enable our children and young people to thrive in life and create a positive impact for generations to come. We will support the implementation of **Croydon's Partnership Early Years Strategy**. Building on our **Family Hubs and Start for Life Transformation Programme**, we will work to ensure our families have access to the information and tools they need to support their babies and children, and to look after their own wellbeing.

Childhood vaccination rates in Croydon **fall below** the 95% target levels.

**310**

Hospital admissions were recorded for dental caries among 0- to-5 year olds in Croydon between 2018-2021.



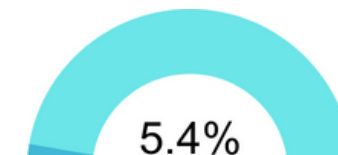
**67.4%**  
School readiness at the end of reception (2021/22, similar to London).



Just over **1 in 5** (22%) children in reception years (4-5 years old) were overweight or obese (2021/22, similar to London).

**9,041**

7-to-16 year olds estimated to have a probable mental disorder in Croydon (Mental Health of Children and Young People in England Survey).



**5.4%**  
16 year olds were not in Education, Employment or Training (2021, higher than London).

## Draft priority 5: Supporting our older population to live healthy, independent and fulfilling lives

By 2041, just over 1 in 5 people in Croydon are expected to be over 65 years old. Our older residents are more likely to experience complex, long-term health conditions, and are at increased risk of falls and frailty. They are also likely to experience mental health issues due to factors such as loneliness and social isolation.

Our older residents have told us that to remain healthy and happy and live fulfilling lives:

- They would like to be able to self-care and live independently.
- They would like to have strong community connections and take part in physical and social activities, for example through dedicated physical exercise classes for older people or cultural celebrations.
- They would like to have accessible health and care services and have the information they need in a clear and understandable language.

We want to enable our older residents to stay physically and mentally well and maintain independence for as long as possible. We would like them to have long and fulfilling lives, be treated with dignity and respect, including at the end of their lives, focusing on both living well and dying well at the end of life.

To do this, we will support our residents with long-term conditions, helping them to manage their own conditions and improving the care they receive through **Croydon's Proactive and Preventative Care Model**. We will use innovative, data-driven methods, through our **Population Health Management Programme**, to identify and support residents to manage their frailty and prevent their frailty from deteriorating. We will continue to focus on frailty through our **ICN+ Programme** to ensure people who have been identified as frail are supported in a holistic way. We will support the delivery of **Croydon's Dementia Strategic Plan** and work with our partners to ensure Croydon progresses as a **dementia-friendly borough**. Building on our strong Voluntary and Community Sector, we will work with our older people, to **tackle loneliness and social isolation** and **increase opportunities for physical and social activities**.



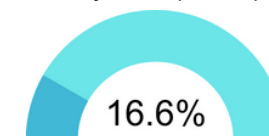
In 2021, **1 in 7** people in Croydon is over 65 years old.

**1,908 per 100,000**

emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65 and over (2021/22, better than England).

**2,669**

people aged 65 and older estimated to have dementia in Croydon (2023).



Adults (18+ years) who feel lonely at least some of the time (2019/2020, better than London).



Just over **1 in 3** (33.7%) adult social carers over 65+ years feel they have as much social contact as they would like (2021/22, similar to London).

## Next steps:

### Finalising the strategy

Your views will be incorporated into the final strategy scheduled to be published in 2024.

### Delivering the strategy

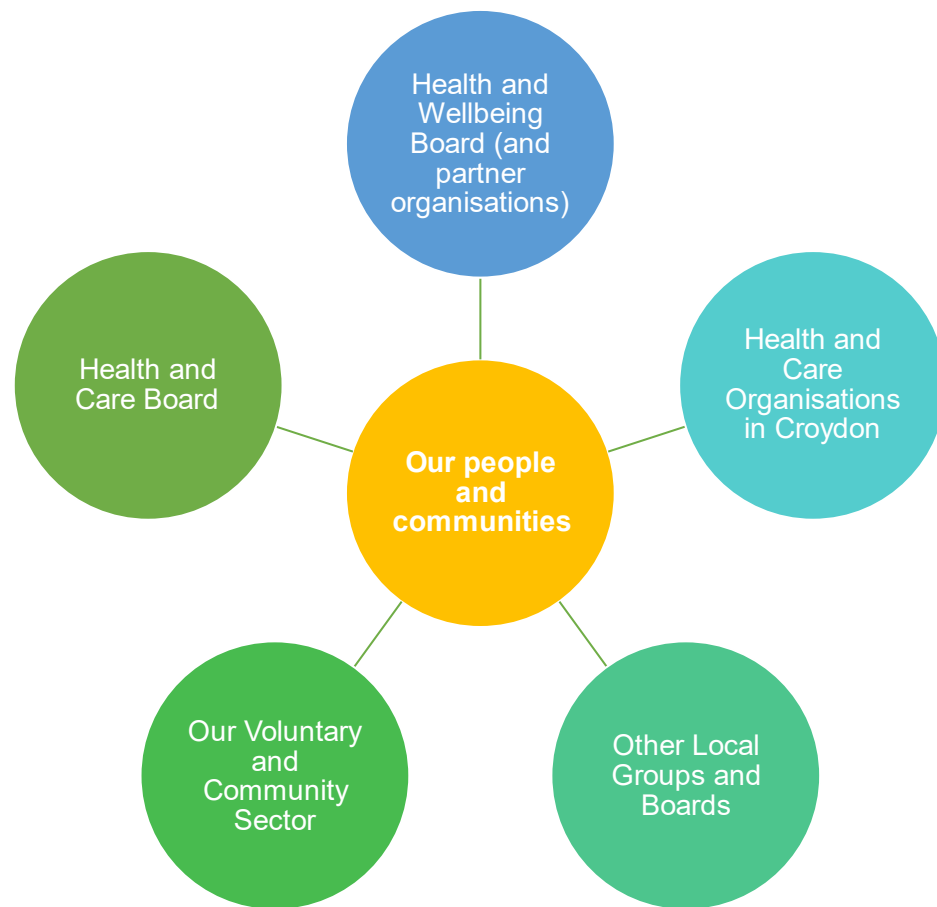
Our strategy is not a standalone effort for improving our health and wellbeing and tackling inequalities in the borough. It is aligned with key initiatives such as the [Mayor's Business Plan](#) and the [South West London Integrated Care Strategy](#).

The strategy will be delivered through coordinated, partnership efforts of organisations represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board as well as others. The Health and Wellbeing Board will provide leadership in addressing the priority areas set in the strategy. The Health and Care Board, and their affiliated groups and boards, will support the Health and Wellbeing Board in delivering the ambitions set out in this strategy.

We will set up partnership working groups for each priority area to co-produce action plans with measurable outcomes. We recognise that the priorities set in our strategy are interconnected and actions in one area can significantly impact others. Therefore, these working groups will ensure a cohesive approach, fostering collaboration across different areas to maximise our impact.

### Monitoring success

We will develop an outcomes and monitoring framework with key performance indicators to track progress towards our goals. Through this monitoring framework, we will remain responsive to our communities' evolving needs, and adjust our strategy and action plans as necessary.





## Draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2024-2029) on a page

The draft Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets out our shared vision for a healthier, happier and safer Croydon. Over the next five years, we will focus our collective efforts in five key areas to make meaningful strides towards this vision. Our guiding principles will steer every decision and action we take in these areas.



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The Health and Wellbeing Board, a statutory board of Croydon Council, is made up of the following partners:

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Representing the Community and Voluntary Sector on the Board:

