

Future London Leaders 25 – Health and Wellbeing The Proposals in brief



Proposals for London - AM webinar

Alex Bailey – Growing for Gold: Securing Spaces for Green Fingers

The Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 laid the framework for plots of common land to be used by local people. Over the decades these have fallen out of fashion and often built upon. Meanwhile, many new developments have bland green spaces, often defensively planted with little community value. With a growing awareness of healthy eating, food miles, organic produce, and social isolation, this project seeks to provide access for local residents to a new era of communal growing facilities – no longer banished to the fringes of an estate but integrated into the areas around local homes.

Cat Janman – The public perception of affordable housing quality

Government must address the need for affordable housing with rising numbers of people in temporary accommodation and homeless. This accounts for around 17 of every 1,000 households in London, compared to just 1.5 per 1,000 in the rest of England (GLA, 2020). Covid-19 will worsen the affordable housing crisis. What is required from government is to address the negative perception of affordable housing. Affordable housing can help people in temporary accommodation, or people who are homeless.

Sarah Hall – Ageing in our capital – the key to independent living

Modern medicine has effectively resulted in us living twice as long in a little over a century. In London, the number of over-60s is predicted to increase to just under 2 million by 2035 and the over-70s are expected to rise by 70%. The Covid-19 pandemic presents a pivotal moment in transforming the way we look at supporting the ageing population in our capital. My proposal suggests how to maintain independent living later in life through making your home work smarter for you. It recognises the use of smart technology to support good physical and mental health & wellbeing of ageing Londoners and how to help create spaces tailored to our specific needs.

Ryan Stevenson – Health and wellbeing community hubs

In an effort to reduce the London housing crisis the design and build of new developments should shift from a focus on mass and density. Research shows that people living in large developments bereft of open space and natural light are more likely to be diagnosed with mental health issues. My proposal is to incorporate health and wellbeing community hubs into the design of every new tall building within London.

Cathy Molloy – Food banks and the use of education

There are now about 2,000 food banks across the UK with an increase in distribution of 73% over the past five years. Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, more than 700,000 three-day emergency food supplies went out to children. Pressure on food banks is likely to continue due to the long-term economic impacts of Covid-19. Whilst they're still needed, combining the popularity of growing food with a more focused provision of supplies, tailored recipes, education and other wider social benefits, food banks can become places of food education.

Alex Smith – Increasing biodiversity to improve people's health and wellbeing: Ecotherapy

Have you taken 10 minutes recently to slow down, take a step away from daily life and to reap the benefits of being close to nature? Research proves daily access to green space can significantly improve a person's health and wellbeing. However historically biodiversity has not been the first priority for planning in new developments. Learning from the past, living in the present and planning for the future wellbeing of society requires policies to focus on increasing access to nature. By doing so, these changes will have a critical role in maintaining our mental health.

Proposals for London - PM webinar

Clare Healy – Mini-Healthy Streets: parks for kids

Nearly 40 per cent of all London's children are overweight or obese: a huge health crisis. Physical activity is critical for children to be healthy as they grow, yet only three in ten school children reach minimum recommended activity levels. To tackle this the Mayor of London is promoting 'Healthy Streets' to encourage walking, cycling and playing outdoors. My proposal is to introduce miniature 'Healthy Streets' within local parks for children. These model streets, where kids can play and cycle on mini roads, also educates them about active travel and the environment. This combines play, activity, education and positive travel behaviours from a young age.

Sadia Nishu – Open space: delivering housing, health and happiness

Covid-19 has changed our way of living; it has made us realise the importance of physical and mental wellbeing. Studies demonstrate the positive health effects of access to open spaces. My proposal is a framework to re-think how we can use open spaces to enhance public health through more meaningful collaboration between planning and public health professionals. This will involve local people and local politicians. It is time for us to step up to our professional responsibility to existing and future communities and re-establish the relationship between planning and public health.

Tom Selby – THRIVE wellbeing platform

Currently, there does not exist a centralised place for public sector practitioners across London to find reflective case studies of projects to improve health and wellbeing. When knowledge is shared it is through long reports, momentary events, or personal networks. The THRIVE platform proposes to pool knowledge through a repository of summarised case studies, packaged in a clear and simple template which helps capture the story and evaluate the impact. These will be thematically organised to aid cross-discipline connections to be made. It will also provide forums for consensus building discussions and a library of licensed images. This platform aims to build a community within London's public sector practitioners to encourage story telling of innovation and greater reflective practice through reducing the friction of sharing knowledge.

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Antoinette Johnson – Promoting positive health and wellbeing for children aged 0-10 in London

London has the highest rate of child poverty in the United Kingdom: 43% of children in inner London and 34% of children in outer London are living in relative poverty. There are as many poor children in London as in all of Scotland and Wales. I propose a holistic early childhood intervention service that will improve children's emotional, social, mental and physical wellbeing. This preventative model will have a direct impact on the quality of life for children and reduce the roles of statutory agencies.

Kevin Munnely – New office formats to promote health and wellbeing

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on the service delivery of councils; remote working and online service delivery have become the new normal for many employees. The pandemic has supercharged change that was already evolving, driven in part by technology and a desire for a better work life balance with repeated requests for greater flexibility supported by new office layouts and working/booking arrangements that are Covid-compliant. The Royal Borough of Kingston has significant underutilised space available. There is an opportunity to create new office formats that meet the future needs of teams in safe conditions. With a greater focus on localism and the rise of the 15-minute city concept there may even be a commercial opportunity to let unallocated bookings to local businesses.

Katie Crosbie – 'Growing Spaces': A collaborative approach to identifying and securing temporary sites for local food growing

The benefits of gardening and food growing to the health and wellbeing of people and communities is widely recognised. However, in an urbanised and high-land value environment, many Londoners do not have access to land for growing. Local authorities, their planning departments and landowners are well-placed to identify opportunities to create innovative spaces for growing food and make it easier for people to participate in horticultural activities. My proposal surveys opportunities for vacant sites and land awaiting development to be re-purposed temporarily for growing food. It then sets out a strategy for how local authorities can proactively identify, help secure interim use, and connect landowners with prospective gardeners in the local community.

George Bennett – A Genuinely Affordable Housing Initiative

The difficulty experienced by young people today stepping onto the property ladder is an ever-growing problem – particularly in London. There is an all too familiar cycle of eat, work, sleep, repeat – at the mercy of a landlord in most cases – that is doing little to instil a positive mindset and support good mental health. While a percentage of affordable homes are a requirement on many new developments, the eligibility criteria make home-ownership unattainable for most. I propose a new tenure incorporating studio apartments, with shared work facilities, that like-minded young professionals are able to purchase as a way of stepping onto the property ladder and building equity at an early opportunity.