

Black, Asian, and minority ethnic voices

Communication, engagement and participation overview

29 June 2020

A shared endeavour

- There is growing evidence that Covid-19 is disproportionately affecting Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities in the UK. This is true in London and Camden.
- Covid-19 is exacerbating existing structural inequalities and Camden is stepping up to tackle this issue. Camden is now preparing for **recovery and renewal** and has set up a member & officer working group to develop an action plan for addressing the disproportionate impact of the outbreak on Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities. The group is using a sprint methodology to provide a plan of actions.
- Addressing this disproportionate impact is a shared endeavour and we want our residents, particularly our Black, Asian, and minority ethnic residents, to play an active role in our response. We will support them to do so by:
 - Using **cross-channel communications tactics** and reaching out to all Camden residents to make sure everyone is informed and given the opportunity to engage;
 - Encouraging residents to share their **lived experience** of Covid-19 and help us garner the evidence we need to take action;
 - Encouraging residents to work with us and our partners to **shape and deliver the actions** in our plan and act as a **critical friend** to make sure we stay true to our objectives and deliver the change we are promising.

Informing and giving the opportunity to engage

We want to make sure that all our residents, even those who are deemed to be ‘hard to reach’, are informed and given the opportunity to engage with us. In order to do so, we will use cross-channel communications tactics based on existing and emerging evidence:

- We will continue to create **bespoke communications** to ensure all of our communities – particularly our Bangladeshi and Somali communities – are kept up-to-date with the latest public health advice and information about how to access support in Camden, and feel reassured and safe.
- We are making translated materials accessible, including in **Bengali, Somali and Arabic**. Where needed, we will ensure we are translating advice on the issues that are the most prevalent among our Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities – e.g. accessing mental health support and staying active at home.
- We will **communicate our findings** and explain that they come from a wealth of evidence including the government inquiry and Healthwatch survey, and through partnership with our VCS, and we want to hear our residents’ feedback on these findings and our proposed actions

The channels we will use

Internally:

We will work with our staff, and particularly our staff who are residents and Black, Asian, and minority ethnic, to champion our campaign and play an active role in tackling disproportionality.

We will use:

- Essentials
- Cascading messages to frontline staff
- Email to all

Externally

We will work with our businesses, community organisations (established VCS partners but also informal groups like Mutual Aid), trade unions, schools, our local NHS CCG, Met Police, TfL, Veolia and other big local employers with high proportion of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic staff to share information and encourage engagement.

We will use:

- News item
- Camden website
- Camden New Journal pull out
- Social media – Twitter, Facebook, Nextdoor
- Coronavirus e-newsletter
- Email/direct engagement
- Partners' internal channels
- Leaflets
- Community leaders' networks e.g. WhatsApp groups

The evidence we need

- We have started to collate evidence to identify how our Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities are being impacted based on information we already have. We recognise however that current local data is limited and at a time when we need to save lives and ensure no one is left behind, it is vital that we hear from our residents, VCS and businesses.
- Therefore, we will be asking our residents to share their experiences with us so that we can build a more robust bank of evidence, which we can use to inform our future work and how we lobby the government.
- The new evidence will complement evidence already being collated by partners like Healthwatch and data we have already on inequalities and Black, Asian, and minority ethnic residents.

A series of focus groups

Public Health will be holding focus groups with Camden residents, in partnership with Healthwatch and VCS organisations to supplement Healthwatch's survey.

These will be targeted at all vulnerable groups, including carers, LGBTQ, residents with disabilities, older people, children and young people, and of course, Black, Asian, and minority ethnic residents.

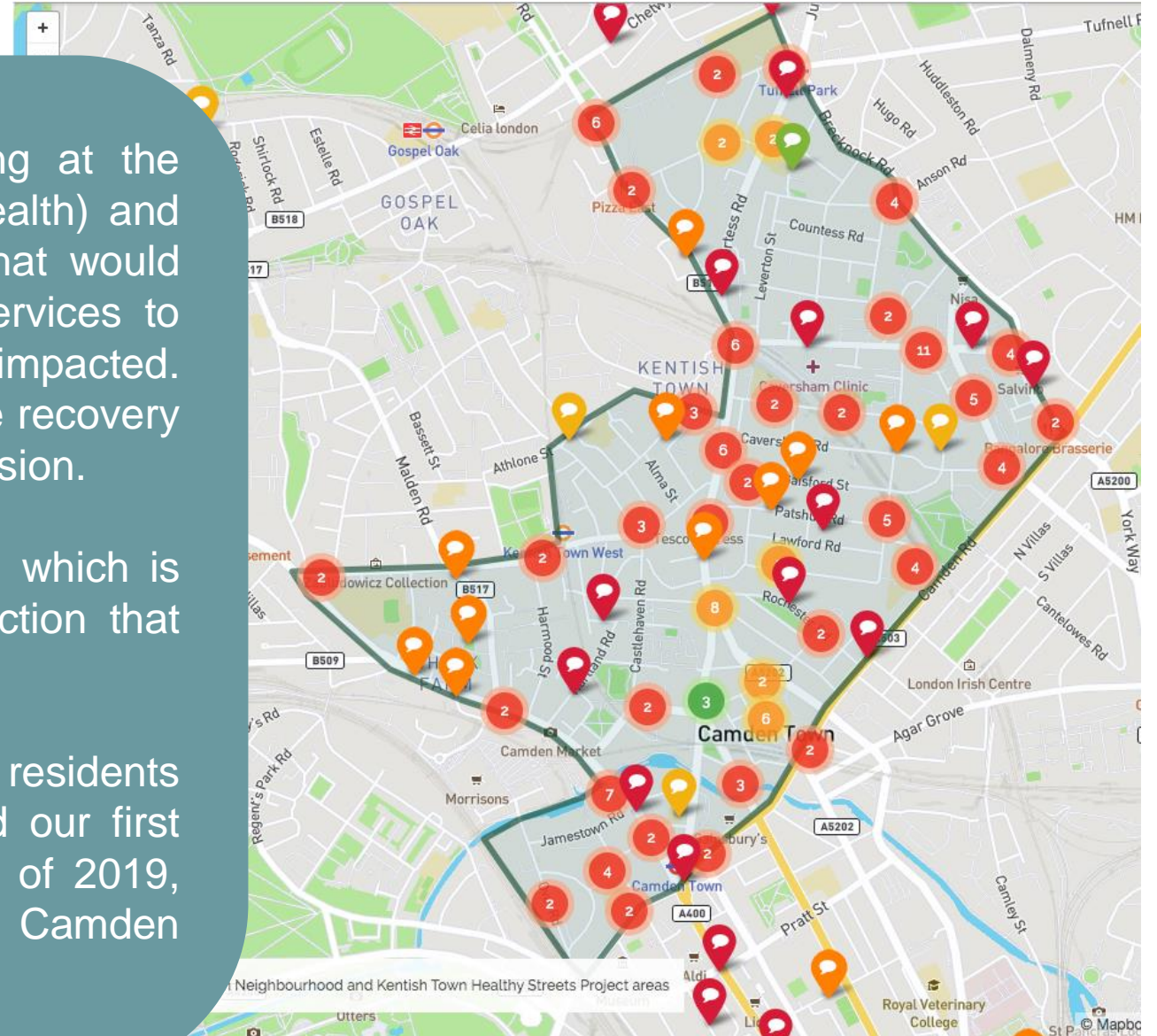
The aim is to get a better understanding of what people's main concerns and priorities are and what support they want, as well as what strengths we have in our communities and what assets people are using.

A shared Commonplace platform for residents to share their stories and lived experience of Covid-19

Other services and directorates are also looking at the impact of Covid-19 on residents (ASC, Public Health) and we have an opportunity here to launch a tool that would allow residents to share their stories and our services to understand how different groups have been impacted. Digital stories will also play an important part in the recovery and renewal programme and the Renewal Commission.

Commonplace is an online engagement platform, which is interactive and dynamic and, notably, has a function that allows users to provide comments on a map.

Commonplace has good awareness amongst our residents and councillors. To date, and since we launched our first engagement through the platform in the summer of 2019, almost 19,000 unique visitors have visited Camden Commonplaces, making over 13,000 contributions.



Giving our residents the opportunity to play an active role

A representative panel of residents will be recruited through community groups and organisers as well as VCS partners working with Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities in the borough. We would work with these across social networks to be able to reach voices that are not normally heard.

In a spirit of co-production, the panel will be tasked with working with services and directorates to shape the actions and their delivery.

Additionally, the panel would be acting as a critical friend on our path to delivering change.

Practicalities need to be worked out and confirmed (number of members, meeting frequency, terms of reference, length of mandate, remuneration, etc.) but various models will be explored and adapted, such as:

- Camden's Data Charter Citizens' Panel
- Camden's Climate Citizen's Panel
- Hammersmith & Fulham's [Disabled People Commission](#)