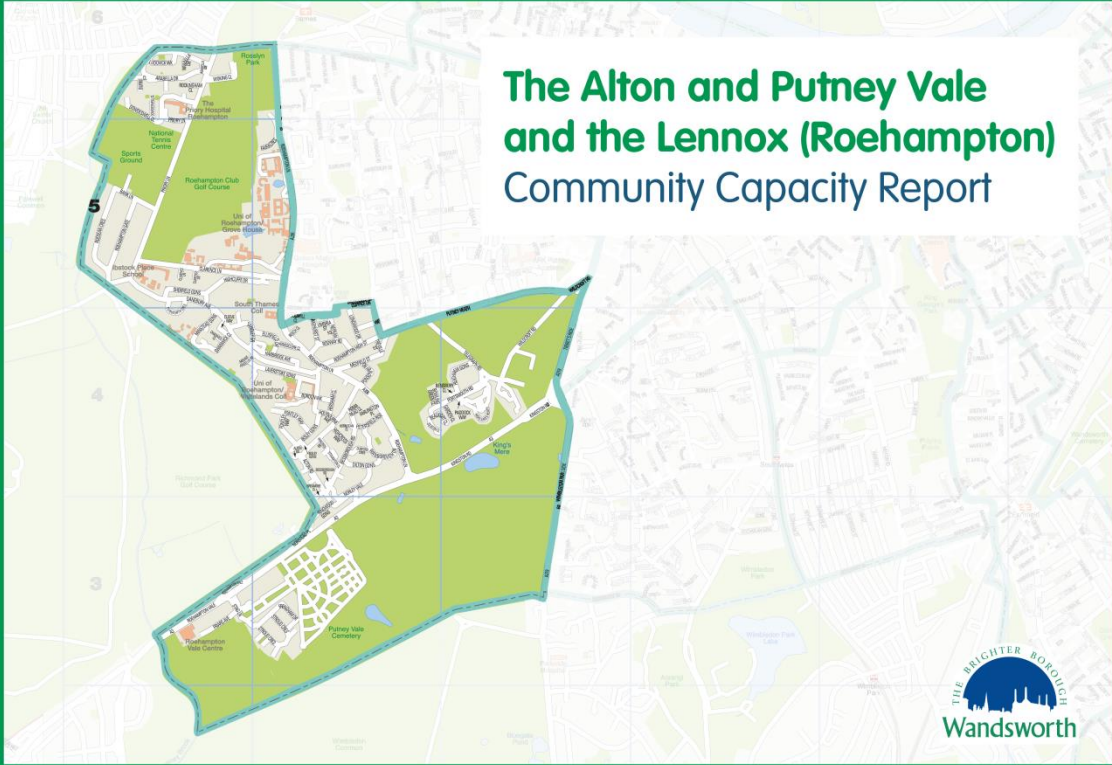


# The Alton and Putney Vale and the Lennox (Roehampton) Community Capacity Report



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# Overview

The aim of the Alton, Putney Vale and Lennox community capacity report is to provide an overview of some of the communities that exist within these localities as well as local organisations and groups to assess current levels of community capacity and cohesion. There have been significant changes in the three areas over recent decades some that have been positive and others that have been negative in nature. How the communities develop and work together to maximise a sustainable, strong and cohesive locality will be a key driver in enabling and exploiting opportunities in the future, this includes the regeneration programme in Roehampton.

## Method

This report provides a brief assessment of current circumstances and dynamics within the Alton, Putney Vale and Lennox localities; however, it is not comprehensive in its perspective. It draws on the findings from interviews with a range of community organisations, groups and representatives over a limited period during 2017 (see Appendix 1). The objective of the report is not to provide a detailed in-depth analysis but provide a brief contextual insight. This report should be read in conjunction with the Alton and Putney Vale Health Profile report to consider issues arising including that linked to health and wellbeing.

## Local residents

The population and related characteristics of the Alton and allied areas of the Lennox and Putney Vale are different to what they were in the 1960s when these areas experienced significant inflows of new residents resulting from the development of the estates. Now established residents whose parents or grandparents arrived from West or East London as part of the post-war rehousing programme live alongside more recent arrivals and students temporarily passing through. Cumulative changes both social and economic have occurred overtime which has impacted on how the communities function as well as how services are delivered as opposed to how they were originally configured around neighbourhood units with self-sufficient centres at the core.

While post-war housing contained a diversity of workers from those engaged in manual work to semi-skilled work, in more recent years social housing has predominately been linked to needs-based housing and low income or no income households, while at the same the right to buy has contributed towards an expanded private rented sector accommodating students, temporary residents from abroad passing through or professionals who work in the city who have limited time to be part of the local community.

From engaging with various people within the three localities, references were made regarding the 'village feel' of their area with good community spirit and people generally being friendly. A key issue mentioned by many was that although there was good spirit there



was however a lack of community involvement in local initiatives and secondly that a diversity of community representation was lacking. For example, within Alton there were significant numbers of people from BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) backgrounds, however, they were less prominent within community organisations and structures. The reasons given for this differed depending on the various people consulted but mainly due to limited capacity to engage, this included factors attributed to the age profile of the population as well as cultural and language barriers especially women born abroad and older or first-generation residents.

The engagement process in Roehampton has been traditional in approach focusing on community representatives, this approach, however, works less well in the context of 'hidden' or 'hard to reach' groups. Apart from the BAME community, more recent arrivals included those from Eastern Europe many of whom were often in transit living in rented accommodation within the area, these included those from Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, with perceived smaller numbers from the Baltic States. Residents from Poland were considered to be more settled especially in Putney Vale in Council accommodation, with some being involved in local community organisations. Less visible were those people with disabilities and mental health conditions, as they were not a cohesive group, those interviewed with disabilities stated that they often felt left out or not engaged, contributing to their feeling of isolation. They felt excluded from the community in terms of their access to resources including support, faced physical barriers with regards to facilities and faced attitudinal barriers that limited their civic participation. In this regard, they did not feel as if Roehampton was an 'inclusive' community.

## Provision of services

In terms of services, like elsewhere across the borough and London, the level of provision that has existed in the past are either no longer around or have been reduced due to funding constraints. A key issue relates to population density which is low within Roehampton and the allied areas of the Lennox and Putney Vale compared to other parts of the borough. This makes it difficult to rationalise provision of certain services financially when numbers and take-up are low and costs are high relative to more urbanised and dense areas. Questions raised by residents related to their perception around the provision of services and facilities not being at the same level as in places such as Battersea or Tooting nor did they adequately reflect changes in terms of needs that have occurred over time. It is important therefore that where services continue to exist within Roehampton that they are optimised and linked cohesively to create critical mass.

## Regeneration

The issue of regeneration in context of Roehampton has been on-going for the last decade, with earlier attempts unable to be realised, contributing towards uncertainties within the area. Views on regeneration differed depending on how directly affected residents, organisations and businesses were in terms of impact. The current proposal with Redrow Homes is at an advanced stage with a planning application due to be submitted during 2018. The proposal includes 1109 new and replacement homes in total, consisting of 853 for private sale and



256 affordable; in addition there will be around 20 new homes on satellite sites as well as the refurbishment of the existing bungalows at Minstead Gardens. There will also be a new village square, retail parade north and south of Danebury Avenue plus a social hub containing a new library, GP surgery and community facility. At Portswood Place there will be a new nursery and children's centre along with a new health surgery and community facility. Cumulatively, a key objective of the regeneration proposal is to enhance and make Roehampton more vibrant and sustainable, the benefits of the project will extend towards the residents of Putney Vale and the Lennox in terms of available facilities.

## Local groups and organisations

In reviewing the various community groups and organisations across the three distinctive localities, it was interesting to observe the range of activities undertaken in these areas and targeting of specific population groups. The degree to which these groups and organisations were visible on the ground varied with some being more active than others. Levels of activity were dependent on a number of factors including resources, volunteers and active organisers with in-depth knowledge of their communities. There were various interest groups arising sporadically linked to a particular issue or problem and then disappearing once resolved or no longer of interest. Those engaged with the community over a period of years outlined the impact of working within a deprived area and implications for what they did particularly within the framework of reduced funding. Those heavily engaged in community activity and in the delivery of initiatives felt that there was a lack of motivation and practical support in the community. Further, there were generational differences, with young people (20 to 40) less interested or engaged in the running of community groups and low levels of social entrepreneurship. A key reason behind the lack of involvement in community affairs was the perception that collective/community initiatives would not benefit community members individually. Further factors for a lack of involvement in community affairs included limited availability of time, family priorities, and modern lifestyles or how they might be viewed or judged by others in the community. There were also issues around geographical separateness, especially for communities in Putney Vale and the Lennox who often complained about being left out of activities and decisions.

The local churches have played a significant role in the local community, with both Holy Trinity (Church of England) and the Methodist Church have worked together for a number of years. This has contributed towards the support of local organisations such as the Over 60 café and projects such as the Men's Shed. In addition, through Churches Together initiative there has been joint working with St. Joseph (the local Roman Catholic) Church. However, not all the parishioners were local, with many coming from outside the parish boundaries stretching beyond the immediate locality of Roehampton. The Kairos Centre (a retreat and conference centre under the Archdiocese of Southwark) has also played a positive role in helping to facilitate local community meetings. Apart from the established local churches other faith groups such as the local Muslim or Ahmadiyya community were less prominent or as visible with some using informal venues for weekly services such as the Dara Club or Alton Community Hall for Friday prayers with some traveling to Wimbledon, Southfields, and Morden to worship. Some residents as part of the engagement process thought that having some sort of multi-use space for different faith groups within Roehampton would help to bring different communities together and highlight the area's rich diversity.



Groups and organisations engaged with elderly residents felt that they were under-resourced, this also contributed towards missed opportunities to work with others in the area as well as pursue funding. The majority of groups and organisations engaged highlighted the challenges faced in delivering services within the current economic climate and the need to re-configure what they did, and how they did things. Those working with youths and children as well as families referred to difficulties around maintaining current levels of service provision as well as a lack of capacity to work jointly with others to address common issues. Interestingly, due to resource constraints including personnel and lack of expertise, a number of voluntary organisations and groups failed to apply for grants which ineligibility terms they would have had a good chance of getting. Most were put off by the quantum of form filling and associated documentation required including delivery strategies, monitoring, business plans etc., as a result, community opportunities were missed, not explored or maximised.

## Challenges for the community

Collectively across the three areas, there were people with good knowledge and expertise both from the third sector and professional backgrounds with the potential to assist groups and organisations to develop and evolve. However, 'silo' working prevented information and knowledge flows within the wider area contributing towards a lack of trust or confidence in others. Local groups and organisations currently were limited in their ability to work collaboratively together. A further interesting observation was how local groups and organisations were limited by their localised networks, this restricted their ability to engage with other organisations and groups across the borough and region in terms of skills, knowledge and information exchange, potentially contributing towards a re-enforced sense of isolation. Finally, a key and critical challenge for all of those engaged was finding time to do anything else against the background of their struggle to deliver their core activities as well as lack of a joint strategy or vision for the area.

Communities including those in Roehampton face increasingly complex challenges, their ability to respond and adapt is critical to ensure long-term survivability and sustainability. Addressing these challenges, however, cannot be undertaken within individual contexts but rather jointly. Collectively it is important that local groups and organisations that engage with local residents at a locality level work together to maximise community opportunities, direct change and develop social capital. In Roehampton, where a culture of joint working is limited it is important that any small opportunities for this are exploited and small steps are taken to demonstrate benefits to individual organisations and groups to develop trust and bonding (even if this is at a basic level through sharing of information or particular resources). In order to bring across benefits to groups and organisations as well as the local community, it is important that any initiatives are led by the various groups and organisations themselves. It may be the case that not all would wish to take part for various reasons, for those willing to engage there are potential long-term benefits, efforts, however, will be required in terms of time, resources, alignment, and engagement.



# 1. Background

## Location

Roehampton is the most westerly ward in the London Borough of Wandsworth, with much of its southern part comprising of, or bounded by green space (Richmond Park, Wimbledon and Putney Common). It sits on the southern edge of an affluent suburban area with Barnes and Putney to the north. Geographically it is cut off from other parts of the borough and neighbouring boroughs by physical barriers including open spaces and roads notably Roehampton Lane, the South Circular Road and to the south the A3. The built environment in the area is mainly residential, with concentrations of small local shops.<sup>1</sup> Compared to other parts of London, Roehampton has a lower density of people, roughly about 90 people per hectare which is the lowest within the borough, the second lowest is Southfields at 140, on the other side of the Thames is Fulham which has 210 people per hectare.<sup>2</sup>

Putney Vale Estate sits to the south of Roehampton off the A3 (a busy major road linking London to Portsmouth), it is also bounded by Putney Vale Cemetery and Wimbledon Common. The Lennox Estate, on the other hand, is located at the top of Roehampton off the South Circular Road next to East Sheen and opposite to Barnes Station in Richmond. Whilst the history of Roehampton goes back to the fourteenth century, the histories of Putney Vale and the Lennox are more recent. Roehampton was first known as East Hampton and then Rokehampton, by 1498 it was a functional hamlet with an inn, by the 1850s it had grand houses and encompassed a fully functioning village focused on Medfield Street and Roehampton High Street.<sup>3</sup>

## Development of estates in the area

The most dramatic change in Roehampton occurred during the post-war period with the development of the Alton Estate from 1951 by the London County Council (LCC), with Alton East being developed during 1952 to 1955 and Alton West during 1953-1961. These estates were developed to accommodate people displaced by the slum clearances which had taken place in the west and east of London (in areas such as Hammersmith and Bethnal Green) as well as general post-war housing need requirements of Londoners. For the LCC it meant re-housing people from crowded locations whilst at the same time improving their living conditions, this meant decreasing the population density at the centre by relocating people further out of London to places such as the Alton. These 'neighbourhood units' of between 6,000 to 10,000 people were planned to be self-sufficient centres containing their own schools, local shops, community buildings and amenity spaces (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1: London social and functional analysis map from County of London Plan 1943 by Abercrombie and Forshaw**



Source: Alamy

While the LCC Plan highlighted the need for community buildings and services to be delivered together (in terms of development) with housing at the same time this was rarely achieved.<sup>4</sup> A local resident who has lived in Roehampton from 1954 when Alton East was developed, recalls that: “Roehampton Lane was a very thin, tiny road, if you had one bus going up you couldn’t get another one going down, that’s how narrow it was. We had one red bus an hour, one green bus an hour. There were very few shops in the village if you wanted to go shopping you had to walk to Putney, and there were a few shops down the bottom of Dover House Road. There was a furniture shop because you had everyone moving in at the same time and they needed furniture. On Roehampton High Street there was a baker, a hardware shop, and White’s newspaper shop”.

Putney Vale has been associated with the Cemetery which was opened in 1891 by the Wandsworth District Board of Works, it is laid out on land belonging to Newlands Farm which itself was established during the medieval period. It was also for many years associated with the KLG (Kenelm Lee Guinness) factory which was established in 1912 by its Irish born racing driver founder in the manufacture of spark plugs. The factory was closed and demolished in 1989 and replaced by the Asda Supermarket. A residential community only emerged in the 1950s, this was due to the development of an estate by the Council (on land previously held for the possible extension of the cemetery) as part of the post-war rebuild

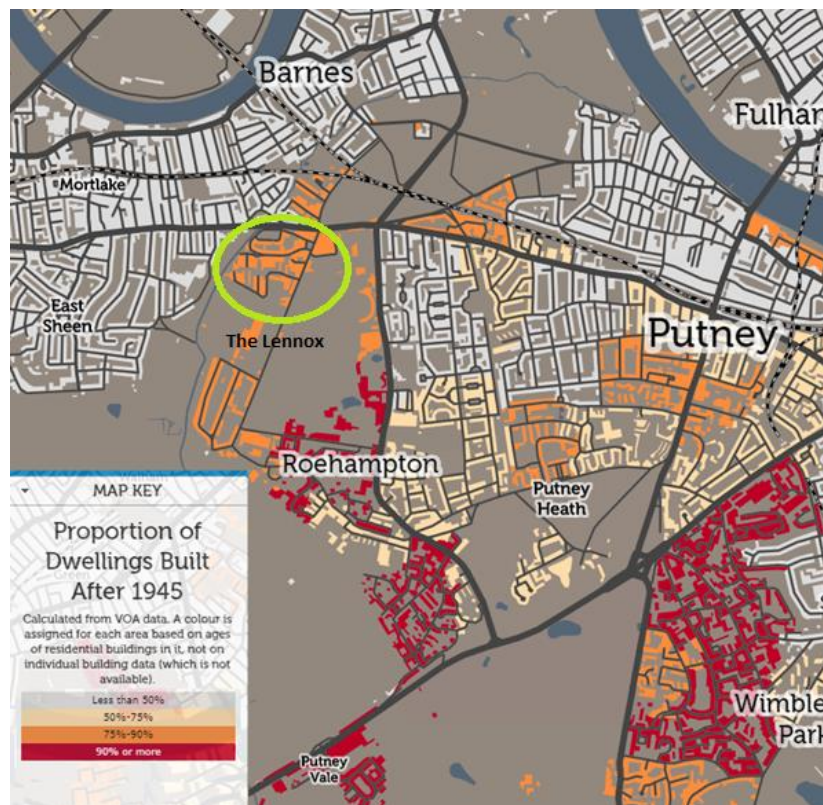


programme to meet housing needs. The estate contained 370 dwellings mainly composed of maisonettes with a few local facilities and was formally opened in 1953 by Harold Macmillan. The emergence of the Alton Estate had significant impacts on nearby communities including Roehampton Village and Putney Vale Estate where some local community facilities were closed and residents had to access services in Roehampton including doctors and the library. The Lennox Estate is the most recent of the three areas to be developed, it was built in 1972 for the Greater London Council (GLC). The land was originally owned by the Lennox family (associated with the Dukes of Richmond) who were aristocrats in the Georgian period dating back to 1740-1832. The most prominent features of the estate are the three high rise blocks: Esme, Louisa, and Sara, named after the daughters of the second Duke of Richmond.

## Dwellings

Both the Lennox and Roehampton especially the Alton share similar dwelling type characteristics with high-rise blocks interspersed with low blocks and maisonettes. Putney Vale, on the other hand, is predominately low-rise with maisonettes and terraced housing within a cul-de-sac setting. The majority of the built fabric of the three areas was constructed after 1945 (see below).

**Figure 2: Map of dwellings built after 1945**



Data: Valuation Office Agency. Source: <https://maps.cdrc.ac.uk>

The Alton Estate is by far the biggest estate in the area with approximately 3400 dwellings, this is followed by the Ashburton Estate which is on the Putney side of the Ward with 1400 dwellings, in contrast, both the Lennox and Putney Vale have a couple of hundred dwellings. Roehampton still has a district housing office (Western Area) which until now has been located at Holybourne Avenue. The office is unique in that whilst there were other district housing offices in the past within the borough this is no longer the case, as a consequence, the Roehampton office retains good localised links with its tenants and leaseholders, this includes having a tenant participation officer. Social housing makes up 41.5 percent of housing stock in Roehampton and Putney Heath, this is the highest in the borough. Like elsewhere in London average property prices have increased substantially over the years, which have made it more difficult for those on low or moderate income within the locality to be able to purchase their own home including the children or grandchildren of existing residents.

Until recently properties were less expensive than other parts of the borough encouraging an inflow of buy-to-let investors seeking profitable rental investments, in addition, Roehampton University and the student population provided an added safety net in terms of demand. Negative views expressed by established residents include buy-to-let landlords not looking after their properties and the estates (in particular the Alton) becoming more transient with perceptions that “nobody seems to know one another anymore because people come and go more frequently than ever before”. There has also been an inflow of professionals both in terms of renting and homeownership into Roehampton over the last two decades. Most of these professionals according to residents work in the City, Central or West London including places such as Hammersmith, Shepherd's Bush or Heathrow Airport and have little time for community activities, going early to work and returning late in the evening while at the weekends spending time geographically outside of Roehampton.

## Local institutions

Within the wider area are prominent institutions which have either developed within the area or transferred from elsewhere. The most notable institution is the Roehampton University with its four constituent colleges which were all established in the nineteenth century as teacher training establishments. These colleges have their on-campus accommodation blocks for students within the area. Another institution which residents often interact with is the Queen Mary's Hospital; this was established in 1915 to care for wounded soldiers from the First World War, it was subsequently altered and extended over time until 2006 when the site was redeveloped. Both the university and hospital have in the past employed a large number of local people from the Roehampton area however for various reasons numbers have decreased over the years. Other institutions based within the locality along Priory Lane include the Priory Clinic, the Bank of England Sports Centre, the International Tennis Federation, the Lawn Tennis Association, the National Tennis Centre, Rosslyn Park Rugby Football Club and the Roehampton Club. In the context of these latter entities along Priory Lane, there is little interaction with the local community except for the Roehampton Club. The latter is involved in the Roehampton Partnership and its charitable arm does outreach work with three local primary schools through its 'Rackets Cubed' initiative which involves an integrated squash, tennis, education (maths) and nutrition programme focusing on physical activity and wellbeing.



## 2. People living in the area

### Population

The majority of the people who settled in the Alton, Putney Vale and the Lennox soon after the estates were developed came from fairly traditional white and working-class manual backgrounds. Over time there have been shifts, the majority of the older generation who occupied the then-new estates have now passed away leaving some of their children and grandchildren who still reside within these areas and who consider it their home or patch. However, since the 1980s, there has been a gradual inflow of residents from other parts of London and abroad leading to a population which is more diverse in terms of backgrounds and ethnicity. In terms of demographics, a brief overview is outlined below in Table 1. For a more detailed exploration of the locality refer to the Roehampton Health Profile Report (2018) produced by the Council.

Generally, the people engaged as part of this study liked living or working in the area in particular for its greenery and village type feel, its location next to Richmond Park, access to the road network, access to Central London and cost of housing compared to other parts of London. Residents engaged in all three localities commented on there being a sense of community spirit however within the same context they also acknowledged there was a lack or desire of residents to get involved in community development work. Some in social housing (whose first choice was not Roehampton or were in temporary accommodation) commented on feeling isolated from other parts of the borough, missing the urban feel of places such as Battersea or Tooting or not having family members' nearby as well as lack of transport connectivity. Nobody thought that it was a horrible place to live, however, they did comment on the negative perceptions of people from outside the area in particular in relation to the Alton Estate. However as a number of people pointed out during the engagement process Roehampton is more than the Alton Estate alone, the focus on the estate has created and continues to create a one-dimensional narrative which has "boxed the wider area in".

Informal conversations with residents who had lived in the area for a number of decades identified two prominent impacts on the community. Firstly increased the share of needs-based housing over the last twenty to thirty years adding to what they saw as an unbalanced community, and secondly the effects of Right to Buy. In the 1970s and 1980s the nature of Council housing changed with levels of house building declining, it acquired a more residual role focusing on welfare issues. This was accompanied by general subsidies being withdrawn and replaced by housing benefit. Roehampton became more polarised influenced by its large single-tenure estates and the way allocations were made within social housing. In the context of RTB, it made a significant impact on the estates in the area contributing towards long-established residents buying their council homes and becoming leaseholders, with some selling on or renting their properties and moving away. The perception amongst some residents is that a significant proportion of RTB stock has now been 'recycled' into the private rented sector especially in recent years allied to the growth of private renting generally. RTB impacts on the community have been contentious.



**Table 1: Population and community characteristics**

<b>Population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the Census (2011) the population of the Ward was 16,132 (46 percent males' vs 54 percent females). GLA mid-year (2015) estimate based on SHLAA data is 17,550 which makes it the second biggest Ward in the Borough.</li> <li>The Alton and Putney Vale Health Profile Report (2018) identifies appropriately 8,057 people on the Alton and 1,720 in the Putney Vale areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Age profile</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roehampton and Putney Heath Ward as a whole have greater levels of younger people than the borough average, with fewer people of working age (25 to 64). Levels of older residents (65 plus) are roughly the same as the borough average but with slightly more residents over 85.</li> <li>The Alton and Putney Vale Health Profile (Health Profile) identifies more 16 to 29-year-olds living on the Alton than the Wandsworth average whereas in Putney Vale there are fewer 30 to 44-year-olds but considerably more 45-64-year-olds compared to the Wandsworth average. Additionally, children and young people aged under 15 living in the Alton and Putney Vale area represent 21 percent of the local population.</li> </ul>
<b>Ethnic background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From 2011 Census data, 59.1 percent of people within the Ward were born in England, 1.6 percent from Ireland and 1.1 percent from Scotland, the rest were born abroad. The black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) population in Roehampton is significantly higher than the Wandsworth average and has increased since 2001.</li> <li>The Health Profile identifies nearly 40 percent of Alton residents from BAME groups compared to 31 percent in Putney Vale and 30 percent across Wandsworth. A higher proportion of the community in Putney Vale are from White ethnic groups (69 percent) than the Alton (60 percent), and a higher proportion are from Other White ethnic groups (26 percent compared to 18% on the Alton).</li> </ul>
<b>Religious backgrounds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The largest faith grouping continues to be those from a Christian background followed by those with no religion and then those from the Muslim faith.</li> </ul>
<b>Household composition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to the Census 27.1 per cent of people were married, 9.1 per cent cohabited with a member of the opposite sex, 1.4 per cent lived with a partner of the same sex, 43.9 per cent were single and had never married or been in a registered same-sex partnership, 10.4 per cent were separated or divorced. There were 846 widowed people living in the Ward.</li> <li>The Health Profile identifies 15 percent of households in the Alton as lone-parent households, which is more than double the Wandsworth average of 6 percent whilst there was 9 percent in Putney Vale.</li> </ul>
<b>Household tenure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to the Census, the Ward has the highest percentage of people living in social housing in the borough at 41.5 percent.</li> <li>The Health Profile identified more than half of housing on the Alton as social housing (52.2 percent) compared to 20 percent in the Putney Vale area.</li> </ul>
<b>Deprivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The area is significantly more deprived than Wandsworth averages this includes income deprivation. The area has significant numbers of people living in social housing and lowest number of vacant properties or second homes in the borough. With regards to economic activity, there are high levels of unemployment with significant numbers of households having no adults in work with dependent children.</li> <li>The Health Profile points out that in the Alton that 55 percent of lone parent households were not in employment, whilst it was 50 percent for Putney Vale.</li> </ul>

## BAME population

While the BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) population is significant, they are less prominent within community organisational structures; the reasons behind this differ depending on the various people consulted. Aspects relating to culture and language alongside religion have a bearing on how cohesive communities can be. Whilst the BAME community has increased in recent decades, it is important to acknowledge that there are various communities within this community. The observed lack of BAME engagement was due to a number of reasons including how long residents had been in the area, language and cultural barriers which limit confidence as well as factors linked to family and modern life. Devoting time to community activities takes time and effort which many people found difficult to justify given the need to earn a living and support their families. There are two prominent BAME communities within Roehampton and the Lennox, these include the Somali and Ahmadiyya communities; they are less prominent in Putney Vale which is perceived to have a higher percentage of people from Eastern Europe. Other communities who also have a presence in the area include those from other parts of East Africa, the Philippines and South America including Columbia and Brazil.

The Somali community have established themselves over the last twenty-five years or so, most having arrived in the 1990s as a result of the civil war in Somalia either directly or indirectly via other European countries. For some families, there are strong links to Battersea due to ties to friends and family or to the fact that they may have been previously settled there and re-located to Roehampton. The reasons for this may have been linked to overcrowding and the availability of larger family housing units as well as temporary accommodation. For those who arrived in the 1990s, some referred to their experiences as being difficult: “when we came in to Roehampton, it was a big negative people did not like us, because we were Somali, because we were black, because we were Muslim, because we had children, because we spoke little English and were new”.

As Roehampton changed the challenges faced began to disappear and now most are settled making connections and enjoying living in the area. The best known local Somali organisation is the Parents in Action Group (see Appendix 5 for background information), they do not have an established base however in the past they have used the Alton Activity Centre for various functions and festivals such as Eid as well as the Dara Centre for Friday prayers. They are now intermittently active due to varying membership levels, lack of resources, members leading busy lives who have to balance work, with parenting and home life, further some former members have left Roehampton and moved elsewhere due to housing needs. The Group still continues to have significant members (200 plus although not all are local) who are active in terms of interaction although this is through things such as Whatsapp, a key priority for the group is to re-establish themselves physically although finding a space that is free for them to use in the area has been difficult.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been established for quite some time in Roehampton, since the 1980s. The local community have held informal prayers at the Alton Community Hall on Fridays and undertaken occasional community work such as litter picking. The community has a long association with South West London, the first Ahmediyya mosque was established in Southfields nearly a hundred years ago. Currently, the Baitul



Futuh Mosque in Morden (built in 2003) is one of the largest mosques in Britain and serves as the community's international headquarters.

When asked, members of the community were happy to live in Roehampton and the general view was that they felt safe, people were generally friendly and welcoming whilst the environment was pleasant, quiet and green unlike other parts of South London. Some of the shortcomings were related to the availability of social housing for large families, limited space to hold community events or religious functions as well as lack of the availability of ethnic foods including halal products. There were some options at Asda's in Putney Vale but most travelled to Tooting for their grocery needs. Whilst the Putney and Roehampton Boxing Club may not necessarily be a BAME specific group, it nonetheless encompassed a high percentage of people from an ethnic minority background including students from the University. A key reason as to why it attracted a high percentage of people from BAME backgrounds was that its membership was diverse and the founder was herself from an African-Caribbean background.

With regards to other ethnicities, residents from Eastern Europe were mentioned and their presence highlighted by the establishment of relevant grocery shops in Medfield Street in Roehampton and in Putney Vale. Residents commented on a steady inflow over the last decade from countries including Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia (with perceived smaller numbers from the Baltic States) before subsequently moving on to other parts of London or England depending on job opportunities. Residents in Putney Vale also commented on the problems related to the significant numbers of streets drinkers from Eastern Europe ten years ago with a proportion living rough or camping in the parks, this resulted in police action including removal and deportation. More recent comments suggested that most of the Eastern Europeans lived in shared rented accommodation with the majority being temporary residents living within Roehampton and Putney Vale, with lower numbers in the Lennox.

Residents from Poland were considered to be the most established, especially in Putney Vale, having arrived earlier to the UK than others from Eastern Europe as a result of early accession into the European Union. Most now have a permanent residence within the area with some living in Council housing, with a number of Poles becoming increasingly involved in local community activities where they feel welcomed. Data from the 2011 census showed that 5.6 percent of the population of the Ward spoke Polish. The Health Profile (2018) which also uses the 2011 Census identified 18 percent in the Alton and 26 percent in Putney Vale as from 'Other White' backgrounds which would include people from Eastern Europe.

## Residents with disabilities

There are many differences amongst disabled people in terms of impairment and disability with differing sets of needs, in the same context people with mental health conditions also differ with regards to severity and their need for support. These elements are further impacted by factors such as race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and religion. In Roehampton, people with disabilities and mental health issues were often not visible within the community. As a result, one disabled person stated that they felt left out or not engaged, contributing to their feeling of isolation, lack of representation and social exclusion. Sometimes this social exclusion is non-intentional, as demonstrated by community activities or meetings in



Roehampton for example organised in buildings that were not able to be accessed by wheelchair users. Some of those interviewed felt that mental health, on the other hand, continues to be viewed as a stigma with perceptions linked to the extreme end of the spectrum and conditions such as schizophrenia. As stated by one person with severe depression, the majority of the people he encountered had a poor understanding with negative views of people with mental health conditions. Many failed to understand that some people could get better or be able to operate or manage normally day to day through the provision of support or medication. Such perspectives forced people with mental health issues in Roehampton to hide their condition and be negatively impacted by their inability to engage positively with the wider community.

## Student population

The perceived impacts of the student population and the locality's association with Roehampton University were seen in differing contexts by local residents being favourable or unfavourable depending on the level of contact they had with the university, staff, and students. The majority of residents interviewed considered the University in a negative light, many questioning the level of contribution the colleges made to their local community; this was further compounded by perceived negative impacts of the student population. Registered students at the University were around 10,000 in 2017 undertaking degree and post-graduate courses on a full-time or part-time basis. The majority of full-time students not living in London or within commuting distance either rented privately or lived in student accommodation across the area. The on-campus accommodation sites include Digby Stuart College (with 5 buildings), Froebel College (9), Southlands College (3) and Whitelands College (4), in total, there were over 2000 rooms some with multiple occupants linked to the University with rents ranging from £114 to £169 per week. Further, there were students who rented from private landlords in Roehampton including ex-Council flats. For many, the 'studentification' of Roehampton had provided limited or possibly negative benefits, some felt that the space occupied by the student accommodation buildings could be better devoted to new homes and new residents thereby enlivening the local area.

The direct economic benefits were also questioned, the number of local people employed (in support services linked to the University) was considered to be low compared to previous decades. Students were also more likely to access Putney, Hammersmith and Central London for shopping, entertainment and leisure activities rather than Roehampton itself. As a counterpoint, others highlighted the limited facilities within the area which meant students did not have an option but to go elsewhere, in this context people pointed towards the planned regeneration and delivery of new facilities which could perhaps better engage the local student population in the future. The Roehampton Students Union is a member of the Roehampton Partnership, with the former Head of Estates at the University a regular attendee in the past. The Students Union has been active in the community through initiatives such as Growhampton. This supports local people to grow fruit and vegetables; it also helps to deliver food education sessions to local primary schools. In addition the Union has helped to provide student volunteers for Citizens Advice Wandsworth. The University for example provides some limited services for local residents, this includes The Centre for Research in Social and Psychological Transformation (CREST) in terms of therapy for depression which is provided as part of a research study, this service along with others



however have not been well publicised within the local community. There is potential for greater partnership working between the local community and the Students Union and the University itself (including the constituent colleges), however this should be undertaken in a more systematic rather than a piecemeal way as is currently the case.





# 3. Community groups and local organisations

## Review

A mapping exercise was conducted by Public Health in 2015, this process reviewed community, faith, and public service facilities within the area as used by residents in the Alton, Putney Vale and Lennox estates (this was updated in early 2018, see Appendix 2). Previously a social audit by a voluntary sector consultant was carried out in 2010 which was commissioned by the Holy Trinity Church in Roehampton. Both these mapping exercises focused on the use of local facilities by the community. A key focus of the approach adopted in this paper relates to reviewing existing groups and organisations within the area with a key focus on those engaged with the local community in the context of Roehampton, Putney Vale, and Lennox estates.

In reviewing the various community groups and organisations, it was interesting to note the range of activities undertaken in the area and targeting of specific population groups. Some groups and organisations were more active than others but this was mainly down to the quantum of people involved, times of activity as well as resources that they had available. Further, there were various forums which have not been listed but play an important role in the community via engagement and dissemination of information and awareness raising. These include the Safer Neighbourhood Ward Panel (which works with the local police and community safety team) and Western Area Housing Panel (in context of the various housing residents associations in the locality).

Overall the three localities collectively had a number of community groups and organisations within their areas some had been established for a number of years whilst others were more recent. The priorities of these groups and organisations were often fixed on their day to day functions and activities, their services often interacted with each other through intersection i.e. targeting of specific groups or through providing support to the community at large. From a sustainability point of view there were issues around critical mass in the targeting of certain groups for example the elderly which could be undertaken much more collectively if there were the desire and capacity within these groups and organisations to work jointly, in a similar context those targeting youths could work much more cohesively together than is currently the case.

There were significant differences between community groups and organisations in Roehampton compared for example to Latchmere, the groups in the latter tended to be more entrepreneurial and in recent years have started to work more closely together in light of reduced funding and to pursue joint opportunities. In contrast, those in Roehampton tended to work more often on their own due to a number of reasons including past history, geographical location, and capacity. For Roehampton, there was limited social entrepreneurship, issues around sustainability and a desperate need for the younger



generation to get involved in community development as the older generation retire or pass away. Critically for Roehampton in order to self-generate i.e. to sustain itself into the future there is a need at a very basic level to have positive engagement, co-operative learning, and development as well as the need to have the capacity to carry out necessary activities.

## Activities of local groups and organisations

Some groups and organisations were better known to residents than others. Prominent organisations include Regenerate (a youth-based charity) who help lead on the Roehampton Festival (Appendix 5, which outlines how the organisation was established), the Over 60s Café based at the Methodist Church which supports the elderly and helps to tackle loneliness, the DARA Club via sports and social activities and ROAM (Roehampton Outdoor Arts Movement) in terms of art activities including festivals. In addition, there is Roehampton ROCKS which is a non-profit arts and social activity related project, focusing on engaging children and young families. Both ROAM and Roehampton ROCKS use arts, food, and creativity to interact with the community and bring people together.<sup>5</sup>

Another notable local charity is Small Steps; it was founded in 1998 to provide free specialist help and support to parents with physically disabled children (e.g. cerebral palsy, other forms of motor impairment, syndromes or sensory impairment). Its clients come from across Wandsworth and further afield in London, the charity does not receive any statutory funding and is solely dependent on grants, donations and fundraising in order to operate. In looking at the various groups and organisations within the locality, common threads as to why particular organisations or groups arose within the area were either linked to a perceived need or personal objectives formed by lack of opportunities within the locality.

In getting advice and help on matters which they did not have knowledge of or required assistance, many residents referred to the Citizens Advice Wandsworth (it has a physical presence in the locality) in particular for older residents, those from BAME communities as well as residents with complex needs or disabilities. They appreciated the ability to talk to someone face-to-face in context of getting advice related to benefits, debt, and legal matters as well as other services. Data from Citizens Advice showed that 52 percent of their workload in the area were related to benefits and taxation advice, the second biggest issue was housing whilst half of the clients supported by the Advice Centre had a disability or long-term health condition.

The local churches were also mentioned as providing support for the local community, this included the Methodist Church which provided accommodation for the Over 60s Café as well as other groups including toddlers and the Men's Shed (a skills swapping project for men with spare time). Holy Trinity Church and St Joseph Catholic Church in Roehampton were referred to for their outreach work and referral advice. Collectively all three are also involved in the Churches Together initiative which focuses on joint work with regards to communities and localities. Due to constrained physical layout and the need to carry-out daily church services both Holy Trinity and St Joseph were limited in regards to accommodating various groups and organisations. The Methodist Church, on the other hand, had a building which was in heavy demand by local groups (mainly due to it being disability friendly and free to use), but had limited space and was to a certain extent become outdated in terms of its



building structure and fabric. Also mentioned was the Kairos Centre, a former Convent built in 1913/14, now a Christian retreat and conference facility run by the Archdiocese of Southwark. In particular for allowing free use of its meeting rooms (most of which were disabled friendly) for local community organisations including the Roehampton Forum.

Other local entities include the Roehampton Partnership (a council constituted body) and the Roehampton Forum (originally set up by residents). Both these entities serve different functions, however, they do contain some of the same people due to the fact that they may be local residents and/or stakeholders. The Partnership provides a forum for consultation, in particular, the regeneration of Roehampton and acts in an advisory capacity. Partnership members are appointed and are usually representatives of local organisations, local businesses or other stakeholders such as the university or students union. The Roehampton Forum has now been established for nearly twenty years, it meets regularly at least six times a year to discuss issues affecting local people. The Forum invites guest speakers as well as Council representatives and plays a role in disseminating local information to both members and non-members.

Along with the Roehampton Partnership and the Roehampton Forum is the Roehampton Trust which has been established for a number of years. Its primary role over recent years has been to give out small grants to local groups and assist local initiatives including the Roehampton Voice (a newsletter for people living in Roehampton which is published and distributed four times a year). A key problem for the Trust has been to get active members as well as find funders to enable it to continue its activities.

For both the Lennox and Putney Vale estates which are more geographically isolated than Roehampton, the resident's associations along with their respective community centres are highlighted by residents as playing a key role in supporting activities within their area. Apart from these two, there are a number of other associations in Roehampton, some are more active than others and involved in a wide range of activities, these include Manresa and Minstead, Cadnam Point, Stoughton Close/Greatham Walk and Ryefield Park, Hersham Close and Kimpton House. Due to the level of effort and hours of input required it has often been difficult to firstly establish and secondly maintain such associations within Roehampton, the key driver being residents coming together to address a specific problem or issues and then subsequently becoming disengaged.

Often external help and assistance are required to enable an association to be established, this includes filling-in documents, organising, getting people to sign-up etc. For example, the Chair of the Lennox Sheltered Housing Residents' Association highlighted the fact that without external help (in the form of a volunteer who lived outside the borough) they would not have been able to apply or organise themselves. The benefits for the association in becoming formally established has been that they have been able to tap into small grants (predominately from the Housing Revenue Account) and resources to benefit their members and people within their immediate locality.

Working alongside groups such as the Over 60s Café, the Methodist Church, Putney Vale Residents Association and others have been two community development workers (part-time) employed by Supported Housing in the Council. Their initiatives have focused on mainly (but not exclusively) on sheltered housing and other older/elderly residents in Roehampton focusing on their health and wellbeing needs. They have led on and organised



activities (utilising local assets such as the Minstead Gardens and Manresa Sheltered Housing Clubrooms, the Methodist Church, Newlands Hall and others) to deliver a range of projects e.g. reminiscence for older residence, the over 50s choir called 'An A-Chaired Taste', line dancing classes involving a wide range of participants, bell ringing etc. They also organise and lead on the Older People's Task Force for Roehampton which provides a forum for information sharing and delivery of initiatives linked to vulnerable elderly residents in the area.

Both workers have been involved in Roehampton for over two decades, previously they were employed by Public Health in the Primary Care Trust (PCT) before it was transferred to the Council in 2013 as outreach and health promotion workers and were involved in various projects not only in Roehampton but in other localities within the borough. Additionally, as there were no community development workers within the Council at that time, they picked-up housing, safety and environmental problems during their day-to-day work which they tried to help to resolve. At the time they also recognised the need for a 'whole community approach' but were unable to advance this due to the limited involvement of the Council at that time. The work of Elaine and Simone were specifically mentioned during the engagement process with Pam Harris of the Over 60's Café and Shirley Price of the Putney Vale Residents Association in terms of provision of support In context of Putney Vale (see Appendix 5), they were heavily involved in a Department of Health funded initiative called HELP (health empowerment leverage project) in 2010 which focused on an outcome-orientated model of community development referred to as 'Listening to Putney Vale'

With regards to health and wellbeing conditions within Roehampton, many of the groups and organisations such as the Over 60s Café and Citizens Advice interacted with people with complex needs and often gave advice or referred onwards to specialist advisors. There were two or three groups within the locality led by members who had physical disabilities or mental health conditions; they were strong advocates for their group either in terms of disabilities and/or mental health attending meetings or forums to highlight issues within their community. Challenges for these groups included a lack of active members, practical problems such as travel and accessibility as well as localised service provision including support.

Within the locality, were also a number of Patient Participation Groups (PPG) linked to the various GP surgeries in Roehampton such as the Mayfield, Alton and Danebury Avenue practices. Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has a duty to involve patients and carers in commissioning healthcare services in the area. Most meet on a regular basis and have individual representatives from differing backgrounds and ages, although parents with younger children have often been hard to engage. Some surgeries also have attached staff who provide additional support to local residents these include community district nurses, psychologists, smoking cessation counsellors etc. Roehampton also has a health visiting and school nursing team based within the locality, enabling these health professionals to have good links with the local population.



## 4. Levels of community capacity

### Gathering views

Public Health with the Community and Partnerships team gauged the views of local representatives and service providers as part of an engagement process to get a brief overview of community capacity within the three localities in Roehampton during the summer of 2017. The people interviewed are listed in Appendix 1, a key part of the focus of the review was to identify barriers to community development, assess capacity levels as well as get views on community cohesion. This process of engagement was supplemented by opportunistic discussions with local residents at meetings and events including those at the Roehampton Festival. In engaging with various people, each had their own perspectives on working or living in the three areas, some focused on needs whilst others focused on aspirations. Perspectives were influenced by a range of factors in terms of their day-to-day functions or responsibilities as well as their personal opinions.

### Community engagement

When talking to local residents who lived in the area for numerous years a key concern was the lack of community engagement. Increasingly they saw a 'hollowing out' effect, those who were active having either passed away, moved away or retired and were not being replaced. People's linkage to the locality had weakened their levels of engagement with community activities and interactions had decreased. A number of factors were mentioned as possibly contributing towards this. These included increased community fragmentation, high levels of temporary residents, newly retired residents selling their properties and moving out, modern lifestyles, parenting pressures, access to the internet, work and education destinations being less localised than before, as well as a lessening of extended family ties. Local residents felt that without people who actively engaged and did things for and on behalf of local residents and themselves, it would increasingly be difficult to have a vibrant and cohesive community in the future.

The word 'community' was mentioned a number of times and mostly linked to a locality but people tended to have slightly different ideas as to what it meant. This was perhaps not a surprise as even professionals have had difficulties in pinning the term down. For example, sociologists and geographers often use it to refer to small groups in the context of neighbourhoods, small towns or other spatially bounded localities in exploring disadvantaged communities. Cultural anthropologists, on the other hand, apply the term to ideas of belonging and differences around issues such as identity and emotional attachment. The concept of a community is therefore to a certain extent nebulous, it encapsulates issues of



identity and belonging, similarity and difference, inclusion and exclusion as well as being linked to place and time (this is explored later in this paper).

For the three localities, the communities who originally settled in the 1960s and 1970s have diminished and established residents expressed a sense of loss when comparing the 'old' and 'new' in terms of belonging. Some people expressed their feelings of isolation, not knowing who their neighbours were or being left out of what was happening in the community. In contrast newer residents were often pre-occupied with work, studies, family life and had little time to engage with others in the community. Views on co-operative community activities differed depending on which of the three areas they were located within, especially for those in Putney Vale and the Lennox who often felt that they had to work on their own and received limited help from others in Roehampton.

## Local needs

Another perception was that in trying to address local needs it was often people and groups with the loudest voices who were heard whilst those with more difficult or complex needs were often ignored. Community groups and organisations also talked about issues around reduced revenue and grant funding streams which made it hard for them to keep functioning and delivering services alongside serving a population with a high degree of complex needs. Some of these challenges were demonstrated in particular by the number of people accessing the Citizens Advice service. Problems included the need to access benefits and complexities associated in terms of paperwork, the rise of personal debts, overcrowding issues, rent arrears, difficulties around finding work etc. These problems were often compounded by people suffering from illiteracy, general ill-health, family problems and breakdowns, mental health problems and newly arrived residents from abroad not knowing the system. There were also a large number of hard to reach groups within the estates. The health visitors commented on how difficult it was to access some families due to family and circumstantial problems and wider mistrust issues with statutory services, this included fears around being reported and concerns around social services potentially taking away their children. This made the need to develop trust and personalised relationships even more important and critical to the work that they did.

Those involved in youth activities commented on the potential for better joint working with other groups and organisations in the area but also acknowledged that a bit like their parents, children, and youths tended to stick to their own localities. For instance, children in the Lennox tended to avoid going to the Alton, whilst those in the Alton were apprehensive about going to Putney Vale. The positive impacts that interacting with local organisations such as Regenerate and service providers such as the BASE have had on children and youths was acknowledged by young adults engaged not just in terms keeping them 'out of trouble' but also in terms of their educational outcomes, and chosen career paths. Youths talked about peer pressures, safety concerns including knife crime, gang culture, bullying (including bullying behaviour with a sexual element) both physical and non-physical for instance via apps, problems at home related to parents and family as well as caring responsibilities. They talked about the importance of having supportive friends, places that they could go to socialise and feel safe locally. Service providers also talked about children



excluded from school, spending time unproductively and having limited support and contributing towards negative outcomes e.g. offending.

Those catering to older residents talked about the impacts of reduced funding in general from the public sector and the need to reconfigure what they did and how they did things. Although the levels or quantum of elderly people (i.e. those over 70) in the area were considered to have reduced from the 2001 Needs Assessment (mainly due to the quantum of elderly residents passing away), there still remained a critical need for services in supporting the elderly at a vulnerable time in their lives. Loneliness and being housebound was identified as a particular issue not just in terms of social isolation but also in the context of its impact on the health of the elderly including physical inactivity and depression. A key part of the support provided by the Sheltered Residents Associations and Over 60's Café related to shared activities. The elderly valued contact derived from attending, meeting with others including friends, volunteers, and support staff, undertaking joint activities, talking and having a meal together. Many of the older people talked about their health problems including arthritis, poor mobility, deafness, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, skin or dermatological issues, memory loss as well as general age-related deterioration of health. They also pointed to the connection between mental health and physical health while others stated the negative impacts of physical ill-health on mental health including depression.

The Health Profile (2018) indicates that there are around 900 older people living on the Alton and in Putney Vale areas with many of them living alone. Nearly a quarter of the households where an older person lives alone is part of the sheltered housing scheme. The resident's associations linked to some of these housing schemes talked about the need to better link-in with others in particular joint activities (such as day trips), access to collective resources (e.g. equipment) and service provision (e.g. podiatry services), better information flows between various organisations and groups in the area. Home visits were also mentioned with possibilities in terms of working with district nurses to identify and support elderly residents who may be suffering from ill-health, impairment, and chronic illnesses. As a consequence, it was acknowledged that there were potential opportunities (dependent on resources and information flows) to better link-up with other service providers such as district nurses, GP services and social care in the context of older people.

Those working with children and young families including the health visitors talked about the difficulties faced by parents in terms of finding affordable toddler groups and meeting with other mums and dads on a regular basis. The Alton Activity Centre and playgroup at the Lennox Community Centre were highlighted as places which parents valued in fulfilling a need in the community. The problems faced by single parents (without family support) were also raised in terms of child care; they wanted to go out and work but could not afford expensive childcare provision.

Generally, there were issues around work and worklessness. For parents there were tensions between the need to work and parenting, including the inability of low-paid work to support childcare costs and the lack of flexibility within jobs to fulfil parenting responsibilities (the latter also restricted opportunities for training, education as well as capitalising on newly acquired skills). There were also a number of families with debt problems as well as having one or more parents dependent on drugs or alcohol. The latter was considered to be a hidden problem within Roehampton, with people for instance abusing alcohol at home.



Those working in the community in terms of providing employment support commented that a significant proportion of people who they encountered in Roehampton were not work ready. They needed significant one to one support not only in context of employment opportunities but also other critical areas in their lives; this included tackling substance misuse, mental health and medical support issues.

## Capacity levels

With regards to organisational capacity, nearly all of the organisations and groups interviewed were operating in a very 'lean' manner and had cut down on non-essential activities, some however acknowledged that there were some areas where different groups could work together particularly in terms of targeted groups e.g. elderly residents and youths in particular. A key barrier was their ability to business plan in the medium to long term; their focus was generally on surviving from year to year. This contributed towards a focus on essential deliverables as well as contributing towards greater 'silo' working. There was also a lack of skills and knowledge exchange within the area, some groups lacking certain expertise which if supported could be provided by others in the area. Within the locality, there were no 'lead' voluntary organisations, unlike Latchmere with the Katherine Low Settlement or Providence House for example which have historically been active and led on area-based initiatives. In recent years, these and other groups have sought to organise themselves including driving new initiatives such as the Big Local (SW11).

How community groups and organisations could be brought together was not highlighted as an immediate concern for those interviewed in Roehampton. Nonetheless, they acknowledged the Roehampton Festival as a good example where different local organisations came together to undertake a joint endeavour to benefit the local community. In talking to representatives of the Big Local in Latchmere it was critical for them to work together in light of changes in the funding climate and also to maximise the collective resources that they had or could tap into. In order to work jointly together, entities in Roehampton, Putney Vale, and the Lennox acknowledged that long-term planning would be required but a key question was who would lead this work. This was a critical point that was emphasised by a range of people engaged, they pointed out that there were very few people who actually got involved, delivered initiatives or projects on a sustained basis within the locality.

Volunteers were highlighted as important assets within the community for a number of local groups and organisations. Finding and keeping volunteers has proven to be a struggle for many for a number of reasons. For example, Regenerate found that local youths were more willing to do volunteering in other parts of the world where it had projects (Kenya and Romania) than locally due to a lack of interest. While the University and local students were mentioned as providing some assistance others emphasised the need for long-term committed volunteers. An example of where tapping into the student population has proven to be beneficial includes the local Citizens Advice Bureau where students studying legal degrees have helped residents with legal matters. Others, for example, have utilised students in ad hoc ways such as writing newsletters, updating community websites or undertaking one-off events. For those dealing with older residents and children with families, they found it difficult to get volunteers who were local or lived nearby, available during the





daytime or throughout the year, students, for example, had exams, were likely to be off during the holiday periods and then at the end of the three years they would leave taking with them the knowledge and skills they had gained.

When asked, volunteers who were involved in the area had different opinions as to why they volunteered. Essentially there were three types of volunteers with some overlap. These included those who wanted to get something out of the experience in order to develop prospects, those who wanted to give something back to the wider community as well as those who had some spare time and wanted to meet new people. For the first, it was the desire to get basic or transferable skills, for those who were unemployed it was a practical way of getting upskilled as well as a way of getting a reference at the end to enable them to apply for paid jobs. For the latter two, their involvement was around making a difference and gaining positive life experiences including making friends. Critical feedback from volunteers interviewed was that organisations and groups needed to be clear as to what was being asked of them, the level of commitment required including quantum of time, being kept updated on information relevant to activities and changes as well as receiving a basic level of training including that linked to health and safety. Critically to address these issues it would require significant work to be undertaken by individual groups and organisations which most in Roehampton are ill-equipped to do. In addition for the majority of organisations, volunteers although welcomed, could not replace or negate the need for permanent and dedicated staff.



# 5. Community involvement

## Sense of community

Getting people to be active in the community and taking a lead has been identified as a key problem for all three localities. The perception is that people are not interested or enthused, as one person highlighted: “people here in Roehampton like to moan a lot but when you ask them to get involved to address the issues or problems identified (even if that is to attend a meeting) they may say yes but you don’t see them again or they may find some excuse to hide”. There were differing views as to the level of involvement expected from the community, some for example, pointed towards the low quantum of people and lack of skills and knowledge mix within the localities, while others stated that it was unfair to expect people to be involved when they had other priorities and responsibilities in their lives. This contributed towards questions around social capital and why it appears to be relatively weak within the locality.

For years, researchers have been attempting to define what it means to have a sense of community. Early researchers in psychology asserted that a sense of community is the basis for a sense of self-identity (Sarason, 1974). A sense of community can impact an individual in a multitude of ways. If a person has a strong sense of community, he or she may be more willing to persist at a difficult task, take risks for the benefit of the community, and be a contributing participant in the growth and well-being of other members of the community (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). McMillan and Chavis provided a simple definition of sense of community:

“sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (ibid,p.9)

McMillan and Chavis went on to develop a Sense of Community Index (SCI) via a questionnaire to gauge a sense of community in particular localities, it identified four elements: membership, influence, meeting needs, and a shared emotional connection (see Appendix 3)

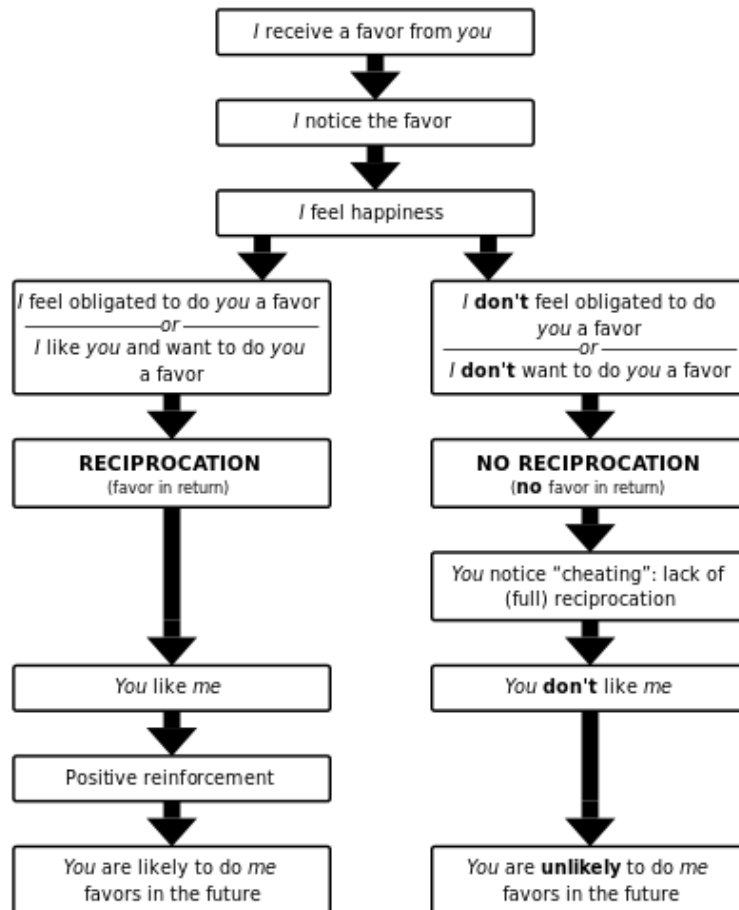
## Pro-social behaviour and community development

A number of those who have established local organisations or groups in Roehampton have a family history of civic engagement either here or abroad. For such people being involved in the community was rewarding in their ability to address needs and help people. Such behaviour is embedded, psychologists call this ‘prosocial behaviour’, it influences people in making charitable contributions, volunteering one’s time etc.<sup>6</sup> In many cases, such behaviours are fostered during childhood and adolescence as adults encourage children to share, act kindly and help others.



Helping others can make people happy in terms of mental wellbeing but the effect is relatively modest.<sup>7</sup> Reciprocal altruism is a mechanism to explain the occurrence of providing aid to nonrelatives. Altruism in people is often sensitive and unstable, it is regulated by a complex psychology in each individual influenced by social structures and cultural traditions as well as obligation (see Figure 3 below).

**Figure 3: Altruism- reciprocation**



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reciprocal\\_altruism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reciprocal_altruism)

## Capacity building as a complex process

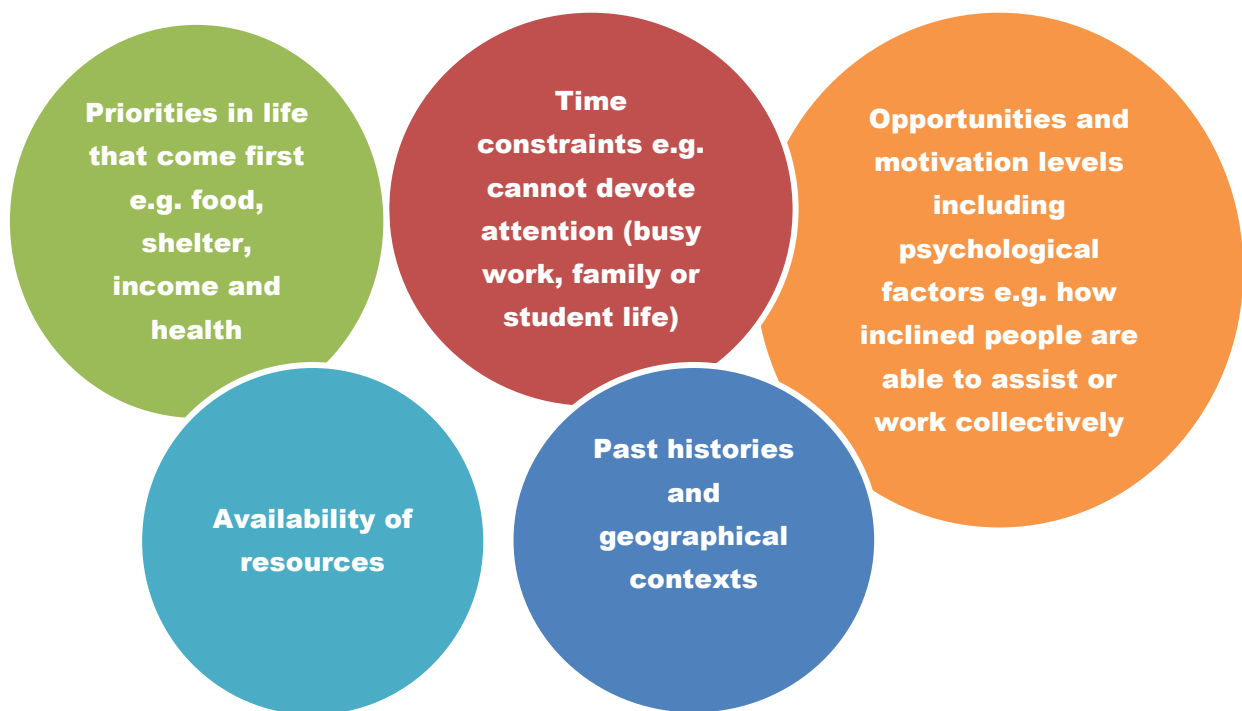
The above three approaches (i.e. social capital, sense of community and pro-social behaviour) provide a theoretical perspective in explaining some of the rationale behind why people might or might not want to get involved in community activities, capacity build or work with others. In reviewing examples from elsewhere it has been very difficult to pinpoint good practice whilst systematic reviews have also been lacking. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance endorses community engagement as a strategy for health improvement. Whilst cost-effectiveness evidence is still limited, research suggests

that community capacity building and volunteering, can contribute towards a positive return on investment.<sup>8</sup>

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) via the School for Public Health Research is investigating health and wellbeing outcomes linked to around 20 Big Local areas as part of their Communities in Control programme (independently funded by NIHR).<sup>9</sup> The research is in its early stages and the research group is developing ways to evaluate outcomes. Early findings from Phase 2 of the study (undertaken between 2015 and 2017) from compiled interviews, surveys and observational data highlighted how social relationships were being strengthened through the delivery or setting up of activities and people working together. A report commissioned by the Local Trust in 2016 to capture learning from established Big Local areas found a number of factors that contributed towards positive or negative processes (see Appendix 4).

In considering the above and findings from the engagement process it is essential to understand that capacity building is a complex process in terms of dynamics (see Figure 4). There are no perfect examples with conditions and relationships differing from one place to another. While there are underlying issues in the three localities i.e. the Alton, the Lennox, and Putney Vale, including low levels of social capital which has been highlighted, it is important to acknowledge the initiatives and activities that have happened and are happening in the area. The scale of change needed to shift perceived deficits will take considerable efforts over a number of years, however, it is important that the community leads on these changes whilst also taking on responsibility and ownership of the process.

**Figure 4: Complexities related to capacity building at locality levels**



## 6. Conclusion

From the review process and looking at the various community organisations and groups within the three localities it was interesting to note the level of activity undertaken within these areas, and also the kinds of key challenges that they faced including people with complex problems and higher levels of deprivation than the borough average. Additionally, as socio-economic changes have occurred over the years since the late 1960s the ability of the communities within the three localities to respond and adjust has been limited due to a number of circumstances including internal and external dynamics.

Community capacity was limited within all three localities, nearly all of the organisations and groups interviewed were operating in 'lean' ways due to resource limitations whilst community volunteers were thin on the ground. All of these factors were contributing towards a perceived lack of social capital and concerns around community cohesiveness and sustainability. A key finding from the engagement process was how community groups and organisations worked in isolation.

A cohesive community approach is required to maximise opportunities in the long-term (this includes the regeneration programme in Roehampton). The findings from engaging with groups, organisations and local representatives identified the need for:

- Community groups to work together even at an incremental level to develop trust, bonds, and bridging. Currently they have no incentive to do so, further, most are in survival mode focusing on day-to-day activities.
- Capacity and expertise for local groups including business planning support. Many do not have time or resources to plan ahead nor have awareness of potential opportunities.
- Delivery and coordination of activities and resources, there are levels of duplication at a locality level which waste resources that could be better redirected to key outcomes.
- Development of infrastructure and support services for local groups and organisations including volunteering and capacity building.
- An area-based strategy that fully utilises community resources to maximise community potential.
- Tapping into knowledge and skills across the borough and wider afield to learn and innovate including widening aspirations as to what is possible rather than solely focusing on localised needs.
- Community participation via engaging and understanding local communities within the three localities.

Critically in order to progress some of the above, local groups and organisations (including community, voluntary, public and commercial sectors) need to work together as a first step



towards realising concrete outcomes. In order to survive and prosper communities need to adapt and utilise effectively the resources that they have including local people at their disposal. To foster capacity it is also important that there is conscious effort to tap into the knowledge, skills, and personalities available and synthesize these collectively to influence progress and change. Developing a collaborative approach that is truly responsive and inclusive of local needs will be a tricky and time consuming process, it will require a substantial shift from prevailing practices in Roehampton, the Lennox and Putney Vale. It may be the case that not all community groups or organisations would wish to be part of the process for various reasons however it should not deter those that wish to collaborate.

It is important to develop an organic approach that is suited to the particular circumstances of the three localities, driven by realistic objectives and goals that are incremental in nature to counteract possible negative and sceptical views that currently exists within the community. Securing the buy-in and the participation of the various groups and organisations with competing interests, different organisational cultures or stakeholders, priorities, starting points, level of knowledge, expectations, and practices as well as resources will be challenging. Working in partnership to move to a collective focus for community organisations and groups across the localities to support community capacity building needs careful joint endeavours that may need to be incremental in nature to build trust and demonstrate achievable outcomes even if they are small in scale.



# Appendix 1

Interviews (2017)			
Sue McKinney (Ward Councillor)	15 August	Ali Stacey-Chapman (Methodist Church)	11 July
Jeremy Ambache (Ward Councillor)	15 August	Pam Harris (Over 60s Café)	11 July
Peter Carpenter (Ward Councillor)	22 August	Charles Einloth (Cadnam Point Residents Association)	17 July
Rev Jim McKinney (Holy Trinity)	17 August	Pam Ingram (the Base)	29 August
Vicky Piggot (Health Visitor)	9 August	Liaquat Shamsi (representative of the local Ahmadiyya community)	4 August
Ms. Zahra Ali (Somali Parents in Action)	5 August	Tim Morris (Roehampton Trust)	29 August
Karen Horsford (Putney and Roehampton Boxing Club)	10 July	Kate Edwards (Service Manager, Citizens Advice Wandsworth, Roehampton)	13 September
Andy Smith (Regenerate)	29 July	Ruth McKinney (Engagement Officer, Roehampton Forum)	17 July
Fr Michael Negusse (St Joseph Church, Roehampton)	11 July	Elaine Curley (Community Development, Sheltered Housing, WBC)	16 August
Bernie Brennan (Resident Participation Officer, Housing, and Regeneration, WBC)	10 July	Sarah Foster (Children's Commissioner, WBC)	16 August
Hannah Marquand and Jennie Ramsey (Granard and Eastwood Children's Centre)	17 July	Danny Edwards (Area Housing Manager, Housing and Regeneration, WBC)	17 July
Shirley Price (Putney Vale Residents Association)	20 July	John Bradbury (Chair of the Lennox Sheltered Housing Residents Association)	28 September



## Appendix 2

**Table 1. Community Groups and Organisations**

Regenerate	6 Portswood Place, SW15 4ED	A Charity focused on activities linked to youth work
Base/Connexions *	33-35 Danebury Avenue,  SW15 4DQ	Council youth service for children/young people aged 13-19 or to 25 for those with disabilities. It also provides career advice and guidance to younger people, as a well as education-related support.
Parents in action (Somali Group)	Events - Alton community hall	A support organisation for Somali mothers in Roehampton
Ahmadiyya Muslim community organisation	Putney mosque/ Alton Community Hall	A religious organisation mainly catering to the Ahmadiyya community in Roehampton and Putney
Manresa & Minstead Gardens Sheltered housing Residents Association	Fontley Way, Alton Court/ 25 Minstead Gardens	Sheltered housing residents association. Members are over the 60s
Cadnam Point Residents Association	Dilton Garden,  SW15 4BY	An active residents association compassing a range of age groups, tenants, and leaseholders
Putney Vale Residents Association	226 Stroud Crescent,  SW15 3EP	An active residents association compassing a range of age groups, tenants, and leaseholders
60+ Café	Methodist Church, Minstead Gardens,  SW15 4EB	A drop in café for people aged 60 plus in Roehampton. A joint partnership involving a number of organisations
Roehampton Outdoor Art Movement (R.O.A.M)	Formerly hosted by Emergency Exit Arts, SE10 0EF	A voluntary organisation which supports, devises and produces creative activities and outdoor events in Roehampton
Roehampton ROCKS	Alton Activity Centre, Ellisfield Drive, SW15 4DR	A voluntary organisation which supports young children and families via arts and activities.





Roehampton Forum	Meetings – various venues	A forum which seeks to represent the views of residents within the area.
Roehampton Trust	Park House, 233, SW15 4LB	A charitable organisation which has provided grants in the past
Roehampton Islamic Centre	4 Devereux House Aubyn Square, Roehampton, London, SW15 5NP	Established over the last 18 months. Responsible for Friday prayers and Saturday classes at the Dara Centre.
Roehampton Partnership *	The Cornerstone/Parish Hall, SW15 4LE	A formally constituted sub-community of the Council focused on Roehampton and acts as a forum for consultation
Small Steps	166 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4HR	A small charity helping children with disabilities and their families.
Putney and Roehampton Boxing Club	Minstead Gardens, SW15 4EB	A local amateur boxing club which trains children (from age 10 upwards) and adults
DARA Football Club	Minstead Gardens, SW15 4EB	An FA Charter Standard football club which is primarily involved with local youths
DARA Social Club	Minstead Gardens, SW15 4EB	Danebury Alton Residents Association (DARA) manages Focus Hall. Engages with a wide range of residents and is a traditional social club
Paddock School Café	3 Priory Lane, SW15	This cafe provides work experience for post-16 students at the Paddock School, a special school for students with severe learning difficulties
Dover House Lions	Activities - Roehampton playing fields	A football club with an academy for kids aged 4 to 6 and teams who play in competition from under 8 to under 18. It also involves those with disabilities.
Citizens Advice Wandsworth *	166 Roehampton Lane SW15 4HR	Provides advice free independent and impartial advice and information on a range of areas including welfare benefits, debt, money, legal, tax etc. CAB also works with the food bank and Fuel Poverty Group.

Regenerate RISE	The Platt Christian Centre, 22 Felsham Road, SW15 1DA	Provides lunches, activities, and outings for the over 60s, including a visiting and support programme
Enable*	Staff Yard, Battersea Park. SW11 4NJ	Delivers the Get Out Get Active Programme which is targeted at Roehampton to get people who are inactive active to some degree.
Lennox Estate Sheltered Housing Residents Association	Lennox Community Centre, Ludovick Walk, SW15 5LE	Part of the sheltered housing scheme provides a range of activities mainly for the over 60s.
Eastwood Children's Centre *	166 Roehampton Lane SW15 4HR	Eastwood comprises a maintained nursery school (a Council-run school for children under the age of 5); a not-for-profit private day nursery and a Children's Centre.
Granard Children's Centre *	Cortis Road, W15 6XA	Children's Centre linked to the primary school. Provides a range of activities for families with young children under the age of 5.
Roehampton Students Union	Students' Union, Froebel College Roehampton, Roehampton Lane, SW15 5PJ	Member of the Roehampton Partnership and also involved in a number of local initiatives such as 'growhampton'.
Roehampton Club	Roehampton Lane, SW15 5LR	Member of the Roehampton Partnership, a well-established private sports club which also has a charity arm called Rackets Cubed providing sports coaching for disadvantaged children including those from Roehampton
*Council run and/or partly funded		

**Table 2. Local Schools**

Heathmere Primary School	Alton Road, SW15 4LJ	The school is a community primary school and provides education for around 300 children. The school is located in the Roehampton area. This school caters for boys and girls aged between 3-11 years old.
Mosaic Jewish Primary School	170 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4EU	The Mosaic Jewish Primary School is a cross-communal, mixed school. It opened in 2013 with a reception class. When the first children reach Year 6 in 2019 there will be up to 360 children in the school. The school welcomes pupils of all denominations but has a focus on Judaism.
The Alton Primary School	Danebury Avenue, SW15 4PD	The school is part of the Quality First Education Trust and is an academy status primary school with a nursery provision and a specialist resource base for students with a statement of educational needs or an educational health care plan.
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	Roehampton Lane, SW15 5NX	This is a voluntary aided primary school linked to the Diocese of Southwark. The school exists primarily to serve the Catholic community. It is a single form entry school, it covers nursery ages, Reception to Year 6, it has around 60 pupils.
Roehampton Church of England School	245 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4AA	One form entry, voluntary aided school which has been established in Roehampton since 1828. They have 225 children on roll, from 3 to 11, Nursery to Year 6.
Ibstock Place School	Clarence Lane, SW15 5PY	Ibstock Place School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged 4 -18. The School was founded in 1894 as the Froebel Demonstration School and connected to the Froebel Institute.
Granard Primary School	Cortis Rd, London SW15 6XA	The school was established in 1953 and was built on the site of Granard



		House. The school provides education for pupils within the age ranges of 3 – 11 years (Early Years to Year 6). It has a three form entry in Reception and Key Stage 1 and two form throughout the rest of the school.
Paddock Secondary School	Priory Lane, SW15 5RT	Paddock School is a Wandsworth maintained a special school for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and moderate to severe learning difficulties and children with severe or complex learning difficulties.
Paddock Primary School	St Margaret's Crescent, SW15 6HL	Paddock Primary School is a Wandsworth maintained a special school for pupils aged 4 - 11 years old (Nursery to Year 6) with autistic spectrum disorders and moderate to severe learning difficulties and children with severe or complex learning difficulties. The school has two sites: Little Paddock caters for children in Nursery, Reception or Year 1 with moderate to severe learning difficulties with a diagnosis of autism.
Priory Lodge School	Priory Lane, SW15 5JJ	Part of the Priory Group and an independent establishment. It is a co-educational, purpose-built day school for young people aged 11 to 19 with mild to moderate autism, Asperger syndrome and associated learning difficulties including ADHD, ODD, OCD and clinical anxiety/depression.
Ark Putney Academy	Pullman Gardens, London SW15 3DG	Ark Putney Academy is a co-educational secondary school and sixth form with academy status. It is part of the Ark network of schools across the country. It caters for children aged 11 to 18. It was first established as Southfields School in 1904 on Merton Road
Hall School Wimbledon	Stroud Crescent, London SW15 3EQ	Hall School Wimbledon is a co-educational independent school located in Putney Vale, for children aged 4 to 16. The school was founded



		in 1990
The Falcons School for Girls	11 Woodborough Road, SW15 6PY	The school provides independent education for girls from 3 to 11 years. The school is part of the Alpha Plus Group. The school was originally based in Ealing, the school moved to new premises in Putney in September 2014.

**Table 3. Community Facilities**

Putney Vale - Newlands Hall	226 Stroud Crescent, Putney Vale, SW15 3EP
Cadnam Point Meeting Room	Dilton Garden, SW15 4BY
Manresa Sheltered Scheme Clubroom	Fontley Way, SW15 4LY
Minstead Sheltered Scheme Clubroom	2B Minstead Gardens, SW15 4EB
Boyd Court Clubroom (supported housing, Ashburton Estate)	101-103 Carslake Road, SW15 3DD
Alton Community Hall	1, Petersfield Rise, Alton Estate, SW15 4AE
Focus Hall Clubroom	Minstead Gardens, SW15 4EB
Aubyn Square clubroom (Eastwood North)	Eastwood North Estate, SW15 5NQ
Toland Square Clubroom (Eastwood South)	Eastwood South Estate, SW15 5PF
St Margaret's (Dover House Road, residents only)	42-61 St Margaret's Court, The Pleasance, SW15 5HB
Glenthorpe (Supported Housing, residents only)	Putney Park Avenue, Putney, London, SW15 3QH
Lennox Community Centre	42-59 Ludovick Walk, SW15 5LE
Holy Trinity Church	Ponsonby Road, SW15 4LA
Roehampton Methodist Church	Minstead Gardens, SW15 4EB
St Joseph's Catholic Church	218 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4LE
Roehampton Library	2 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4HD
Kairos Centre	Mount Angelus Road, SW15 4JA



Roehampton Sport & Fitness Centre	Laverstoke Gardens, SW15 4JB
Roehampton playing fields	Dover House Road, SW15 5BP
The Cornerstone/Parish Hall	Alton Road, SW15 4LG
Roehampton University	Erasmus House, Roehampton Lane, SW15 5PU
The Parish Hall (Cornerstone)	235 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4LB
Alton Community Hall	1 Petersfield Rise, SW15 4AE

**Table 4. Activity Centres**

Base/Connexions (Youth club)	33-35 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DQ
Regenerate (Juice Bar)	6 Portswood Place, SW15 4ED
Eastwood children's centre and nursery	166 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4HR
Roehampton Youth Centre	36 Holybourne Avenue, SW15 4JE
Ashburton Youth Club	Westleigh Avenue, SW15
Alton Activity Centre	Ellisfield Drive, SW15 4DR
Lennox Youth Club	Arabella Drive, SW15 5LW

**Table 5. Local enterprises (private and social)**

Hive café (Students Union)	Digby Square - Roehampton University campus
Growhampton (Students Union)	Digby Square - Roehampton University campus
Swojska Chatka (Polish Grocer)	2a Medfield St, SW15 4JZ
Roehampton Supermarket	4 Medfield St, SW15 4JZ
Ricky's Hair Salon	6 Medfield St, SW15 4JZ
Kateys Nursery and pre-school	5 Medfield St, SW15 4JY
T. H. Sanders and Sons Funeral Directors (Branch)	2/14 Medfield St, SW15 4JZ
Waitrose mini (linked to Shell Station)	237-239 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4LB



King's Head Pub	1 Kings Head, SW15 4HL
The Village Café	17A Roehampton High Street, SW15 4HL
The Angel Pub	11 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HL
Roehampton Sub-Post Office	35 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HL
Roehampton Dry Cleaners	33 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HL
Koi Sushi	40, 38 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HL
A3 Carpets	19 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HL
Red's hairdressers	36 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
Jerk Shack - Caribbean restaurant	34 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
New Dong Phuong Chinese	2 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
The Village Hairdressers	30 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
The Village Cafe	17A Roehampton High St, SW15 4HL
William Hill betting shop	15/15B Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
Elis Kebab shop	26 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
Roehampton Tandoori Grill	24 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
Ginger and Garlic Chinese takeaway	22 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
Smith and Knight Property Consultants	14 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
Marjan hair saloon	12A Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
Cancer Prevention Research Trust Charity Shop	2 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ
The Studio Hair Salon	1 Medfield Street, SW15 4JY
Lloyds Local Convenience Store	3 Medfield Street, SW15 4JY
Majestic Wines	221 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4LB
Favorite Chicken and Chips	215 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4LD
Hungerford Motors	13 Medfield Street, SW15 4JY
Mayday Motors	228 Roehampton Lane, London SW15 4LE
Co-operative	1 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DG
WH Smith Local and Post Office	1A Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DG



Greggs Bakers	37 Danebury Ave, SW15 4DQ
Former Mind Charity Shop	41 Danebury Ave, SW15 4DQ
Roehampton Domestic Store	47 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DQ
Café Joy	49 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DQ
Super Clean Launderette	51 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DQ
SUBWAY (submarine sandwiches) part of the Convenience Store	53-57 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DQ
Danebury Convenience Store	3-57 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DQ
The Right Plaice (Fish and Chips)	59 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DQ
King General Store and Off Licence	7 Portswood Place, SW15 4ED
New Tasty House (Chinese Take Away)	5 Portswood Place, SW15 4ED
Regenerate Offices	6 Portswood Place, SW15 4ED
Londis Convenience Store (Roshni News)	2 Portswood Place, SW15 4ED
AAA Convenience Store	9-11 Petersfield Rise, London SW15 4AE
Heanen Wholesale Meats	1-7 Petersfield Rise, London SW15 4AE
Asda Super Store (Putney Vale)	1 Roehampton Vale, SW15 3DT
Stag News (News Agents)	2a Frensham Drive, SW15 3EA
Milestone Memorials Ltd	4A Frensham Drive, SW15 3EA
Sarmata Deli Organic Food (Polish Food)	6a, Frensham Drive, SW15 3EA
Yogo Express (General Store and Off Licence)	10a Frensham Drive, SW15 3EA
Simson Chicken and Ribs (Chicken and Chips)	12a Frensham Drive, SW15 3EA
Feel Good Bakery (Regenerate)	Westleigh Avenue, SW15
Rockingham Food and Wine	5 Rockingham Cl, Roehampton, London SW15 5RW
St Marcus Fine Foods Ltd	1-3 Rockingham Close Priory Lane, London SW15 5RW





Paddock School Café (Social linked to the School)	3 Priory Lane, London SW15
Londis Roehampton	1 Aubyn Square, London SW15 5NT

Table 6. Health Related Services		List size
Queen Mary's Hospital (St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)	Roehampton Lane, SW15 5PN	N/A
Alton Surgery	208-210 Roehampton Lane, London SW15 4LE	3856
The Roehampton Surgery	191 Roehampton Lane, London SW15 4HN	5872
Mayfield Surgery	246 Roehampton Lane, London SW15 4AA	6319
The Danebury Avenue Surgery	351 Danebury Avenue, London SW15 4DU	3115
Student Medical Centre	Old Court, Froebel College, Roehampton Lane, SW15 5JP	26372
Westmoor Community Clinic	248 Roehampton Ln, London SW15 4AA	N/A
Alcohol treatment and support services	6-8 Roehampton High Street Roehampton London, SW15 4HJ	N/A
The Huntercombe Hospital (secure mental health in-patient unit)	Holybourne Ave, Roehampton, London SW15 4JD	N/A
East Chemist	16 Roehampton High St, SW15 4HJ	N/A
Well Pharmacy	3 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DG	N/A
Care Chemists	43 Danebury Avenue, SW15 4DQ	N/A

Focal Point Opticians (main branch is in Barnes)	5 Danebury Avenue SW15 4DQ	N/A
Maple Dental Centre	238 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4LE	N/A
Roehampton Dental Care	229 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4LB	N/A
Asda Pharmacy	31 Roehampton Vale, SW15 3DT	N/A
R. Walji Dispensing Chemist	6 Rockingham Cl, Roehampton, London SW15 5RW	N/A



## Appendix 3

Social capital is often broken down into different sub-constructs; it includes things like shared norms and values, connectedness, networks and groups, reciprocity, exchange, trust etc. The most notable work associated with social capital is that of Robert Putnam (1993).<sup>10</sup> His contribution in shaping the discussions associated with the concept, however a clear understanding of how social capital is created is still lacking.<sup>11</sup> Social capital is difficult to measure with no universally agreed template. Approaches to measuring social capital have ranged from using a singular indicator e.g. crime to groups of indexes. The general trend is to use a number of indicators to give depth of perspective depending on the level of analysis required e.g. individual, groups, organisational. The diagram in Figure 1 gives a dimensional perspective based on three relational areas: structural, relational and cognitive. In identifying a 'sense of community' McMillan and Chavis (1986) identify four elements underpinned by a hypothesised relationship outlined in Figure 2.<sup>12</sup> McMillan and Chavis went on to develop a Sense of Community Index (SCI-1) based on the conceptual model outlined above. SCI has been one of the most frequently used quantitative tool to consider the sense of community in the social sciences (see Figure 3). The original index has been updated and revised due to various criticisms. SCI in its updated form continues to be widely used due to its accessibility, reliability compared to other methods and simplicity.<sup>13</sup>

There is an extensive literature across the humanities and social sciences on reciprocity as a fundamental driver of human behaviour.<sup>14</sup> The norm of reciprocity suggests that when people do something helpful for someone else, that person feels compelled to help out in return. This norm developed evolutionary psychologists suggest because people understood that helping others might lead to reciprocal kindness and they were more likely to survive and reproduce. Pro-social behaviours are often seen as being compelled by a number of factors including:

- Egoistic reasons (doing things to improve one's self-image or self-worth)
- Reciprocal benefits (doing something nice for someone so that they may one day return the favour); and
- Altruistic reasons (performing actions purely out of empathy for another individual).<sup>15</sup>

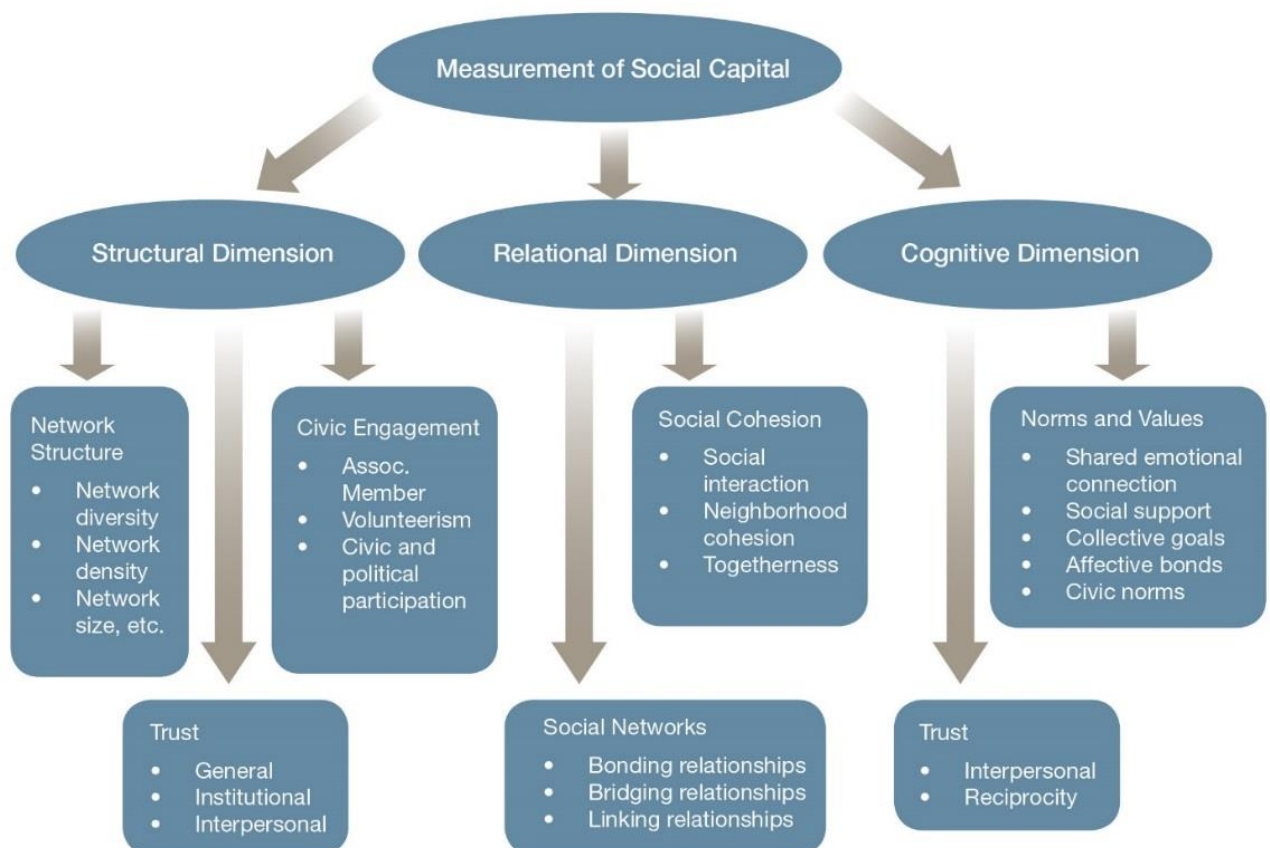
Reciprocal altruism can be viewed as delayed cooperation and it is a form of individual selection. Over time, both participants (the recipient and donor) can benefit from the interaction with the donor potentially benefiting in the future. However, reciprocal altruism breaks down if the original recipient cheats and does not reciprocate. The tendency to give, to cheat and the response to other's act of giving and cheating is regulated by a complex psychology in each individual. Individuals differ in the degree of these tendencies and responses.



According to Trivers (2002), the following emotional disposition and their evolution can be understood in terms of the regulation of altruism:<sup>16</sup>

- Friendship and emotions of liking and disliking.
- Moralistic aggression. A protection mechanism from cheaters which can act to regulate their advantage. The moralistic altruist may want to educate or even punish a cheater.
- Gratitude and sympathy. A fine regulation of altruism can be associated with gratitude and sympathy in terms of cost/benefit and the level in which the beneficiary will reciprocate.
- Guilt and reparative altruism. Prevents the cheater from cheating again. The cheater shows regret to avoid paying too dearly for past acts.
- Subtle cheating. A stable evolutionary equilibrium could include a low percentage of mimics in controversial support of adaptive sociopathy.
- Trust and suspicion. These are regulators for cheating and subtle cheating.
- Partnerships. Altruism to create friendships.

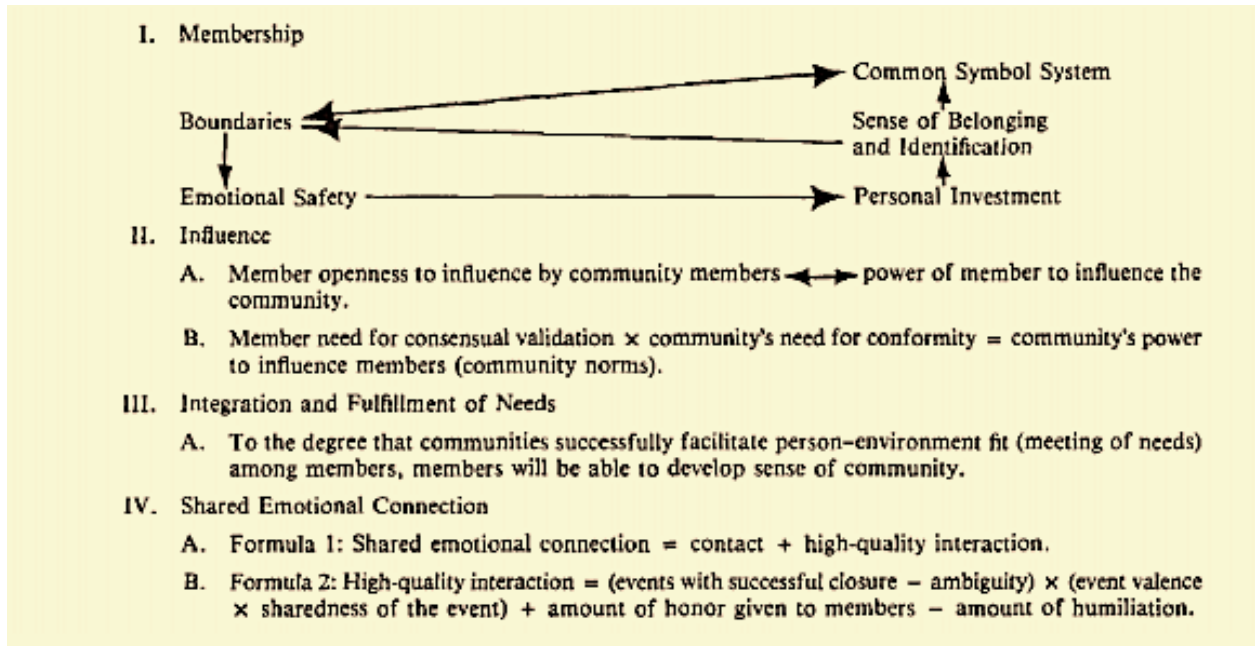
**Figure 1: Measuring Social Capital**



Source: [www.socialcapitalresearch.com/measure-social-capital](http://www.socialcapitalresearch.com/measure-social-capital)



**Figure 2: Elements of a sense of community and their hypothesized relationships**



Source: McMillan and D.M. Chavis (1986) p. 10.

**Figure 3: Example of SCI Questionnaire on how residents feel about the community that they live within**

		Not at All	Somewhat	Mostly	Completely
1.	I get important needs of mine met because I am part of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Community members and I value the same things.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	This community has been successful in getting the needs of its members met.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Being a member of this community makes me feel good.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	When I have a problem, I can talk about it with members of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	People in this community have similar needs, priorities, and goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	I can trust people in this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	I can recognize most of the members of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	Most community members know me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10.	This community has symbols and expressions of membership such as clothes, signs, art, architecture, logos, landmarks, and flags that people can recognize.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11.	I put a lot of time and effort into being part of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12.	Being a member of this community is a part of my identity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.	Fitting into this community is important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14.	This community can influence other communities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15.	I care about what other community members think of me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16.	I have influence over what this community is like.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17.	If there is a problem in this community, members can get it solved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18.	This community has good leaders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19.	It is very important to me to be a part of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20.	I am with other community members a lot and enjoy being with them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21.	I expect to be a part of this community for a long time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22.	Members of this community have shared important events together, such as holidays, celebrations, or disasters.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23.	I feel hopeful about the future of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24.	Members of this community care about each other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Source: SenseofCommunity.com



# Appendix 4

The Big Local was established in 2012 (coordinated by the Local Trust with a National Lottery grant of nearly £200 million) it contributed towards the establishment of 150 Big Local partnerships to enable communities to identify what matters most to them and address relevant issues. The majority of partnerships are located in deprived urban and rural communities; each has received at least £1 million to cover a ten year period of activity. The Big Local partnerships are led by residents who in turn have responsibilities for spending the funds, taking charge and prioritising activities. A report commissioned by the Local Trust in 2016 to capture learning from established Big Local areas found a number of factors that contributed towards positive or negative processes, these are outlined below.<sup>17</sup>

**Table 1: Big Local – Factors contributing towards outcomes**

Helping factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stability via the Big Local partnerships through engagement and having hands-on members</li> <li>• Skills via knowledge and experience of partnership members</li> <li>• Partnership working including with local organisations and public sector bodies including schools</li> <li>• Ongoing engagement and communications, including consultation about priorities and engaging people through outreach and using different ways to communicate</li> <li>• Having clear understanding and consensus, especially what is needed and what is realistic</li> <li>• Planning for activities and gathering support for the delivery of activities including local traders, partners, and public bodies</li> <li>• The availability of staff time to provide advice, plan, organise and help with the delivery, and support volunteers</li> <li>• Time to build networks and relationships with a variety of individuals and organisations, making it possible to gain in-depth knowledge and open doors to other people and organisations</li> <li>• The community itself, including willing and active groups and individuals</li> <li>• Regular monitoring so that impacts are measured and opportunities assessed</li> </ul>

### Hindering factors

- Difficulties of engaging people, in some cases this related to the context and history of areas as well as commitment to the partnership
- Time and capacity issues including time needed to establish local credibility and unexpected delays in the delivery of projects
- Community-related issues including community boundaries, patchy public sector support, reticence from some local established groups to work with Big Local partnerships lack of community spirit as well as the complexities of reaching out to an ethnically diverse community
- Internal Big Local issues, including turnover of development workers, the inexperience of partnership members as well as partner or volunteer time to take an idea forwards

Some of the impacts mentioned by various Big Local partnerships in terms of benefits to individuals and communities included the following:

- Individual impacts:
  - Skills development and learning
  - Confidence development
  - Involvement in the community
  - Effective preparation for, and getting into, employment and self-employment
  - Social and inter-personal benefits
- Collective/community impact:
  - New services being available or being made use of
  - Organisational benefits
  - Improving community spirit
  - Making the areas nicer and people's improved perceptions about the area
  - Having a voice





# Appendix 5

## 5.1. Andy Smith, Co-founder of Regenerate (a local youth based charity) explaining how the organisation was established:

“When we started in 1999, we had this vision to do something for both the elderly and for young people in the area as there was a need in the community, I literally phoned the Council which was the Social Services Department then, and outlined what we wanted to do. There was a lunch club for elderly people on the estate, it was closing and I heard that they did not have anyone to run it. At that time I worked at an older peoples’ day centre in Putney as a care assistant, my mother (Mo Smith) at the time was the manager of the centre. We promised that we would setup a charity and we would keep the lunch club going on the estate, in addition that we would start a youth project for the area.

They (the Social Service Department) asked us to put a proposal together, we wrote this and gave it to the Council. They called us in for a meeting and we met with some of the officers and councillors, it was an opportunity for them to quiz us about the whole project. They agreed to fund the project on the condition that we setup a charity to oversee the project, we received around £30k per year and it was committed funding for five years. Once we became a charity (we registered in 2001) we received funding (actual monies) from the Council we then started to fund raise and apply for more grants.

I remember how naïve we were at that time, when we got the money from the Council we then employed a cook, paid the building rental out of the funds, we also then recruited a youth worker for three days a week. I phoned the Council to help us with funding for his salary, obviously they couldn’t as it wasn’t part of the original agreement. I had just employed someone without any funding! We managed to pay his salary through small donations here and there, which was the exact money that we needed. I never had funds for his position but every month we’d managed somehow to pay his salary. That was a massive lesson in terms of growth, taking risks and making it work. Later on we got funding from various places such as Children in Need, the Youth Justice Board, and others to employ some people full time.

As people got to know us, some have contributed significant amounts individually. For instance, when we established the Feel Good Bakery a few years ago, to support local youths including ex-offenders to get skills and to get a job, we needed £30k to get started. All of the contributions for that project came from one single individual donor. He came to see us and got to know us, he liked the project and asked to see the business plan for reassurance and then contributed the full amount. More recently we have received contributions from well-known banks, national charities and have also raised funds locally especially from wealthy residents living in Barnes, Putney and East Sheen. All of the money we have raised goes back into the projects we have, most need staffing to deliver, we currently have around 20 people, most of whom are employed on a part-time basis.”



## **5.2. Shirley Price, Chair of the Putney Vale Residents Association, and her involvement in the area and how the Association was established:**

“My mum has lived on the estate since 1958; someone was already in the property before we were re-housed. My mum and dad were from Wandsworth, there were a lot of people re-housed here. You had to have so many children to get so many points, and you either had to be in the forces or worked in civil defence, so my mum and dad had been in the fire service. They had been bombed out, were in rented accommodation and were on the housing list. They were first offered a property in Battersea but it was too impractical for my mum because she had had Polio and been in a wheelchair, the flat offered was in a building which had so many floors although it had lifts my mum felt that she could be stranded if the lift wasn't working. Eventually they were offered a property here, it was like coming out to the countryside for my mum and dad.

When I grew up, I went away from my parents. I moved back into the estate in 1993 before that I had a house in Merton Park. My dad had just been diagnosed with Parkinson's and my mum had post-polio, so I decided to sell up my three bed and then downsize myself here. My dad found the property for me, I moved back into the estate which is good because I was near to my mum and dad, eventually I along with my parents brought a house within the estate. My mum now lives in a house now, on the ground floor with an extension.

When we moved here, I was a little girl from Putney Vale, went to the little primary /junior school on the estate, (Beavers Holt) there are now second and third generation of people who live estate now. The secondary school I went to is now the ADT College (it was called the Mayfield, an all-girls comprehensive), and then I went off to college to train as a teacher, I taught for while in Shepherd's Bush, then I went into youth work and went down to Kingston, I was a youth officer for a while and then I was head hunted for national youth charity and worked with Duke of Edinburgh's Award for 28 years until I retired.

My mum has been active in the community for a long time. She has been disabled since she was 25, she had polio and now she has post-polio syndrome and has now been in a wheelchair for the last 20 plus years. She lives independently on her own, it has advantages and disadvantages for us. My mum and my dad had always been active in Wandsworth, she was on the Independent Living Board, she used to be on the Wandsworth Community Transport committee, part of the Wandsworth Access Association, they were involved in a wide range of associations such as Post-Polio Group, Parkinson's' Society, Clinical Commissioning Group etc.

I got involved in the community after I retired. Just as I retired, my mother had a stroke the year after, I got this strange email from a lady from I didn't know from a person called Simone, saying that she was sorry to hear about my mum that she only realised that my mum had a stroke when she hadn't come to a meeting of their Reminiscence Group that my mum attended. Simone (Farr) and Elaine (Curley) are Community Development Workers (originally in Health Promotion in the old Primary Care Trust, but now in Housing support services at the Council) a lot of what we have achieved has been down to them two. It was really when they were at the PCT that they met up with my mum, my mother is now 94 and



she does not do so much now as she used to, and I am her primary carer now. Before her stroke my mum had also been involved in improving the estate.

In about 2007 when everything was virtually closed in this estate, in particular for some reason, the Education Department got hold of the old youth club and spent money on it and put in it a private commercial play group which had moved from somewhere else. But nobody (from the council) talked to the residents, there was no deal for the residents and the residents had lost some car parking, There were new people using the building which had been closed and which some local kids on the estate had wanted to use. Other people's kids were now using it. That is how your residents associations get started, it's usually some form of adversity. Residents Associations come and go, the last one on Putney Vale was probably around in the early 1990s when I was working.

When the fight to keep the school on the estate open (Beaver's Holt) was lost, it was then leased to a private school (The Hall Preparatory School) and then subsequently the private school was able to purchase the freehold from the council, which everyone now says was a mistake because they need a school now in the area. The old Residents Association lost interest after that, they had lost the youth club which went to a private commercial playgroup, the community clubroom known as Newlands Hall was closed and subsequently vandalised, and then they lost the school. In addition more and more of the properties in the estate were sold off under the right-to-buy, there wasn't the same continuity due to uncertainties especially difficulties around whether residents were social tenants or private tenants within a sub-let for instance, whether to keep going with the tenants association or form a residents association.

During this period of change and about the same time I asked Simone what she was doing for the people on the estate (there was quite a lot for the elderly residents on the estate then). She subsequently asked the commercial play group at the old youth club if they could use the reception area one afternoon a month for an older peoples' drop-in, we also used in the evening to help re-form a residents association, because there was nowhere to go because all the buildings as other public buildings has been closed. Residents Association started in 2007, and we have been going on for decade now. I have not always been the chair, we have had different chairs over that period as well as different committee members. I think there is a group of us now who have been on the committee since 2012, and we are fairly constant currently we have around 7, we have had up to 9. We have always had Council tenants, sub-lets, freeholders and leaseholders, that's good because we tick boxes with various organisations. We also now have a Polish person on our Committee she does the newsletter, this is quite good because we now have quite a number of Eastern Europeans on the estate, we even have a Polish deli. It is a real mixed bag on the estate; it is very different to what it was a few decades ago.

The first win for the Association was probably getting Newlands Hall reopened, the second was probably the Phase 2 environmental improvement works and the third is the improved paving on the estate. The first initiative we did as an association was about signage. Delivery drivers were constantly getting lost, the way in which the estate was built the odd and even numbers did not make any sense, we complained to the Council a number times. This confusion was dramatically illustrated when the letters for the local elections were all delivered to the wrong addresses, these then had to be retrieved. This was relied back to



the Chief Executive of the Council and changes were approved through the appropriate committees and a month later we had signage up.

Then the next big initiative was working with Simone and Elaine, they suggested we should have a 'make a difference day' because everyone was so fed-up about the pavements, the roads, the state of the green space etc. So we had a 'Make a Difference Day', a good percentage of the estate turned up. The outcome of that day became the business plan for the residents association. And the first thing that people highlighted was that there was nowhere to meet and nowhere to do anything, the community had lost the school, the youth club and the Hall (based on this we did a petition to get Newlands Hall back).

We did the business plan, we had a solicitor, a publicist and others - we used all the skills of the committee. We asked if we could have the keys for Newlands Hall, by then a contractor was already in the Hall, he was using it for a base while the council were replacing the windows of properties in the estate. We came in and measured the building (we did the same for Stag House which the Council would have preferred us to occupy because Newlands Hall had been closed for some time and vandalised) and then later produced a business plan that proved, that it would be more advantageous for the Council to invest in the refurbishment of this building (Newlands Hall) and run this building on the estate than be stuck with Stag House. The disadvantages of Stag House included the fact that it was on three levels which was no good for the elderly, it had three electrical meters which meant that you spent more paying the electricity, it was easily vandalised because of access from the Common at the back, it wasn't in the middle of the estate etc.

We also managed to find an older resident in the estate who used to be part of the past Tenants Association who used the Newlands as a club room, and she had the old accounts so we could see what it cost to run in terms of the heating and lighting, and then we found out what it cost to run the other building, we did the comparisons and we made our recommendations that it was more advantageous have Newlands Hall running than Stag House. What we also knew was that the Council needed to have one building on the estate, because they needed a polling station in the area.

When the report went to Council committee, who then asked the appropriate department in the Council what it would cost to put Newlands Hall back in good order. Subsequently works were done, and we moved back into the Hall in May 2012, to refurbish it according to the Council's account it cost around £150K, it was the Council's building, they did everything including roofing, glazing, heating, electrics etc. Then we took on the tenancy for it, we could take this on because we identified we would have enough income through our business plan. As the Residents Association we pay for the maintenance. We recently refurbished the building because we have had it since 2012, our accounts saw that we have an income from this last year of around £6,000, but we actually spent £8,500 but this was over one and half years, so roughly now we have around £2,000. In total we have had a total of 195 bookings over the year, 19 residents also hired the hall, we don't do any external advertising expect for the Council websites. Some of the bookings are related to the Cemetery and wakes in particularly people with a connection to the estate. In the hall we have a regular Zumba classes provided by Enable, we have Stay and Play session provided by Eastwood and local health visitors and then we have a kick boxing sessions two or three a week, we have other things such as the South West London post-polio fellowship (there's a link with my mum) they meet six times a year because the Newlands Hall has disabled car parking



and is disabled access friendly. All of this was done during the refurbishment. We charge £25 per hour for use of the hall (its £35 for the first two hours for hirers not from Putney Vale) priority use is for residents of the estate, it has been the same hire fees since 2012 but if you are a regular hirer, we would charge £15-£20 that is because we can schedule that into our costs. When we first got the Hall, we had to attract people to run activities, we asked for some funding from the Communities Programme so that we could get people to do keep fit classes, instead of charging the full amount for hall hire we charged them £5 an hour for six weeks, and then charge the full amount. That is how we got them all in. In first initial stages, you don't know if you will have enough residents turning-up to cover costs.

The second big win for the Association was the Phase 2 environmental improvements on the estate. The Council a long time ago received funds from Central Government for improvements on the estate, due to the size of the estate they couldn't do it in one financial year it needed to be done over two or more years. One side of the estate, Phase 1, was completed fairly quickly in 2007 however it was nine years later that they did the other part of the estate under Phase 2. The latter was unlikely to have been done, as the money had been diverted to fund the Better Homes initiative, we never thought that we would get Phase 2. We raised it at the area housing forum, with local councillors latter we also talked to the Leader of the Council and the Mayor and showed her around the estate to highlight the difference between the area that had been done up and the other area which had not. A visit by the Leader to the reopening of Newlands hall in May, and then in August we got a letter through to state that the works would be carried out in the following financial year.

The third big win for the Association was the improved paving on the estate. Nothing had been done on the estate for years. The estate was built in the early 1950s; the roads had not been properly re-surfaced since then. Issues with broken pavements and pot holes were identified when we undertook the 'make a difference' day. It was not a particularly brilliant report we did but it did identify around 600 plus broken pavement slabs, potholes etc. We did get a guy from Highways to come down and Cllr Peter Carpenter was initially involved, we talked to the Highways persons and he said it was bad but not bad enough. This was in 2009 and he said that they might do pavement renewal in 2018. Later on we did a more detailed report on the pavements and potholes as well as lighting on the estate. I found a good guide from the Highways Agency website for us to use in terms of required standards. We had around 50 to 60 questionnaires, these highlighted issues for the elderly in terms of the broken pavements while lighting was identified as quite good on the estate. We wrote up the report and sent it to various people including the Ward Councillors. A guy from Highways turned up as part of the Estates Inspection Team, I asked him about what he was going to do about the pavement, and he said that they had no money. Later on that year at the Roehampton Festival I met Councillor Cooper and Justine Greening MP who talked about the pavements and potholes, and whether it might be possible through London Assembly or if that was not possible through the Community Infrastructure Funding (CIL) and for us to provide a letter and evidence via the report. Luckily in November we got the funding for the improvements through the CIL funding, however it was slightly grey as technically funding was coming from Putney, however we are in the Roehampton and Putney Ward, I was not bothered as long as the money came. It was April of this year 2017 that they finally finished the roads, it took them 12 months to do. We now have good relations with Highways. It was nearly £700,000 in total spent on the works, we don't see the money obviously, Highways got a company to come and do it.



We are currently focusing on a key issue for the community; we are trying to get the pedestrian islands near the Asda supermarket (on a site at the entrance to the Putney Vale estate) redesigned to make it safer for the children to cross the road to gain access to the bus stops. It is so busy for example in the morning that it's not wide enough for more than one or two people. If you try to get bus then you realise what an issue it is. We put in a petition in 2012 and is ongoing, a key issue is that it is the responsibility of TfL. They did a report however their research was carried out during the school holidays, which meant that it did not highlight key issues. However eventually, whether it was Justine Greening or via the woman on the Assembly, we got a full report for proposals. There were three proposals, to extend, to make the island bigger and another option. It ranged from £75k to £275k. We reckoned the £175K was enough for the works. We got a note from TfL to state that works were going to start in the autumn of 2016, however a new Mayor was elected and his priority is cyclists, he cut funding for road improvement for pedestrians. So, we are now back to where we were and having a re-think about our approach.”

### **5.3. Ms Zahra Ali, Co-founder of the Somali Parents in Action Group, explaining how she became involved in the community:**

“I have lived in Wandsworth for the past twenty years and have worked as a community nurse and a district nurse, before that I worked as a translator and bilingual teaching assistant. Localities where I have worked include the Westmoor Community Clinic in Roehampton (for twelve years) and Brocklebank Clinic in Southfields as a district nurse. I did my nursing degree at the South Bank University, I then returned to do a Masters in 2014 for district nursing. Now I am working with a private company and do intravenous therapy in the community for those people who are not sick but need medication, I also work with the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital Trust.

I was a teacher in Yemen and my husband was studying in India. When the first Gulf War started, the school in Yemen no longer wanted foreign teachers, so I joined my husband and later came to the UK when the fighting in Somalia started. Before Roehampton, I was in Barnes, before that I was in Southcroft Road in Tooting. Before Wandsworth we were in Harrow when we came to London and then moved to Manchester for five years, so that my husband could do his masters at the University. When I came to this country all of a sudden I saw unmet needs everywhere especially for those in the Somali community. I started to get involved, for example most had limited English proficiency so I started to help by translating, I used to go to hospitals, council offices and other places to translate I even did a video for example telling Somali speakers how and when to dial 999 for emergency services. I also used to work in a Section 11 project, a then Government funded scheme which helped ethnic minorities with English-language teaching, housing and work opportunities. In Manchester there was a big Somali community, most came from Somaliland and it was hard for them to welcome me because I was not from their region and their dialect was different. It was one of the reasons why we moved back to London.

While I was in hospital and translating for people I realised there was a critical need for a Somali staff member to support people from our community, as a consequence I trained to become a nurse. Similarly when I sent my children off to the local school at the Alton I realised that there was a lack of people like me and my culture so that is why I later became



a school governor for a while until my children moved on. I was even involved in the Roehampton Forum for a while however I could not continue due to my work commitments. My involvement in the community is inherently linked to my own family background. Growing up in Somalia, I always had the idea of doing something in the community. My father was a doctor (he studied medicine in the 1960s in Russia) and he helped his local community (this included providing free medicine for those who couldn't afford it out of his own pocket) because of this he was highly respected. His contribution was later repaid by the community when the war broke out as people returned the favour and assisted him in terms of providing transport, directing him to safe places etc. As I teenager I was influenced by him, he along with my mother currently live in Columbus Ohio (America), where my older sister lives, she has been there for over thirty five years, I visit them all occasionally.

When I first came to Roehampton (November 18, 1998) there were only two Somali families - now we have more than 40 plus that I know of. The Parent in Action Group was established for us mums to get together, we met monthly and paid for space at the Alton Activity Centre. We used to lay on food with expenses from our own pockets to bring people from the community together, we had over 100 plus members. We had people not only from Roehampton but also others from Brixton, Battersea and all corners of Wandsworth, it was great for us to socialise and talk about problems we were facing as a community. We would invite a wide range of representatives to come to our meetings such as from the education department, social services, the police, the Home Office and the local doctor's surgery for example. At the end of each month we would vote on as to what issues we would be discussing at the next meeting and who we would invite (the last meeting we had was held before Ramadan just gone). We felt that people were really appreciative of what we were doing however most did not contribute towards the expenses or practical support required to facilitate the meetings. It placed significant burdens of organising and delivering the meetings on a limited number of people which could not be sustained over time, in total we did a year and half of activities which subsequently tapered off. The group still exists however we mainly interact through WhatsApp.

I fought hard for the Alton Activity Centre for it not to be closed down. We have been using the Centre in one way or another for the past 19 years, it was clean, safe and free. The children also liked it, I used to use the after schools club every day, I don't need it so much now because my son is now 12 years old. We would also organise Eid celebrations at the Centre every year, we not only had fellow Somalis but also other Muslims from other cultures such as those from India and Arabia, each would bring food and we would eat together, we also did evening prayers there. When it closed we rented space at the Dara Club every Friday so the Somali and Muslim community can do Friday prayers, the Dara Club charges us £15 per hour for which we use parts of the ground floor, this is really important for us as there are no mosques in Roehampton. We used to have a madrassa (religious classes) at the Alton School for five years and would open every Saturday, Wandsworth Council used to pay towards the rent for accommodation and we would only pay for the teacher. As I was in charge, I would ask parents to help me clean after the classes finished but most would grab their child and run, I was left on my own often to clean the place up. I used to get angry, the parents probably thought I would continue to do this forever however increasingly the amount of time I could devote became limited due to work and other commitments and I stopped, later the madrassa also stopped. For religious classes my son subsequently had to go to Wimbledon mosque.



During Ramadan at the Dara Club we had men, women and children come and it created closeness within the community. A lot of people live in isolation and during Ramadan it created an opportunity for us to come together. I would like to re-start the Parents in Action Group because it was such a success. People have asked why we have stopped of course we haven't in a sense but it would be good to find somewhere in Roehampton we could use as a facility and potentially get some grant funding. I have enjoyed my time living in Roehampton; it is such a green and quiet place. Due to being involved in the Parent in Action Group I am well known in the Somali community here and have had other Somali people phone me up when they are allocated housing in the area to ask if Roehampton is ok to live in, and of course I say it's a great place to live having been here for more than 20 years now without any problems."





# References

<sup>1</sup> For Roehampton this is mainly on or near Danebury Avenue, Roehampton High Street and Medfield Street. For the Lennox Estate it is Rockingham Close. In Putney Vale retail provision is dominated by the Asda superstore with some shops on Stag Lane. The Asda superstore is used by not only Putney Vale residents but also a number of residents from the Alton, the Lennox as well as the Ashburton Estate.

<sup>2</sup> Data from the 2011 Census

<sup>3</sup> Source: <http://hidden-london.com/gazetteer/roehampton/>

<sup>4</sup> Source: <https://municipaldreams.wordpress.com/2016/09/>

<sup>5</sup> Roehampton ROCKS: the latter is an acronym for Responsibility, Ownership, Confidence, Knowledge, Self

<sup>6</sup> Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prosocial\\_behavior](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prosocial_behavior)

<sup>7</sup> Source: <http://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/30561/1/1-s2.0-S0022103117303451-main.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Optimity Advisors for the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2015), Community Engagement – approaches to improve health and reduce health inequalities: Rapid Review of Economic Evidence (<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng44/documents/health-economic-analysis-2>)

<sup>9</sup> Refer to: <http://sphr.nihr.ac.uk/health-inequalities/about-the-communities-in-control-study/>

<sup>10</sup> Putnam, R. D. (1993), *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press.

<sup>11</sup> Putnam looked at differences in civil society between Northern-Central Italy and Southern Italy in terms of economic differences i.e. reasons why the North ended up being more prosperous than the South. Putnam concludes that long-standing differences in terms of civic society versus a feudal society helped to explain North-South differences in governance and economic prosperity many centuries later. People in North Central Italy had a direct stake in civic society via a democratic-type system whereas Southern Italy had a feudal and autocratic system which prevented people from being part of a civic society.

<sup>12</sup> Mcmillan, D. W, and Chavis, D (1986; January), Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory, *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14(1),

<sup>13</sup> Chavis, D.M., Lee, K.S., & Acosta J.D. (2008), *The Sense of Community (SCI) Revised: The Reliability and Validity of the SCI-2*. Paper presented at the 2nd International Community Psychology Conference, Lisboa, Portugal.

<sup>14</sup> Batson, C.D. Altruism and prosocial behaviour (2003), In G. Lindzey, D. Gilbert, & S.T. Fiske, *The Handbook of Social Psychology*. New York: McGraw Hill.

<sup>15</sup> Source: <https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/francis-flynn-what-makes-people-want-help-others>

<sup>16</sup> Trivers, R. L. (2002) *Natural Selection and Social Theory: Selected Papers of Robert L. Trivers*. (*Evolution and Cognition Series*) Oxford University Press, Oxford.

<sup>17</sup> Resources for Change (2016) Research into the impact of Big Local: Impacts Found, (<http://localtrust.org.uk/assets/downloads/documents/Resources%20for%20Change%20Research%20into%20the%20impact%20of%20Big%20Local%20May%202016.pdf>)

