

COMMUNITY



Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

Connecting our Community and Neighbourhoods

How it Started: The Information Ambassador's Network

The Tameside Information Ambassador's Network was created around 14 years ago with a focus on building a network of members to share information, support people to access consultations, and engage in ways that made sense to network members. Our membership includes local community groups, business owners, charity representatives, and TMBC colleagues in Adult and Children's Services, Policy, Communications and Libraries.

Most e-mail bulletins from the Information Ambassador's Network go to everyone, but some are tailored to professionals or to community groups representative of Tameside as a whole. For example, several bulletins have been coproduced for events such as Black History Month, South Asian Heritage Month, and Pride Month.

Our relationships with our Information Ambassadors have been built up over time, creating a range of opportunities to listen to people and build community capacity through project work. Bulletins currently go out to just over 500 e-mail addresses, representing contact with thousands of people, and we are committed to regularly reviewing and expanding the network where required.

Where it's Going: Community Resource

The success of the Tameside Information Ambassadors' Network has led us to take the next step by developing an up-to-date and internally accessible community resource spreadsheet, populated by the contact details, overview, eligibility and referral criteria for community groups that have expressed an interest in joining and the capacity to take on extra people. The content

and format were co-designed with assessors and social work colleagues to ensure it fit their needs as a working resource.

In addition to supporting community engagement, activities and signposting, the Community Resources is also a valuable tool to support our learning around gaps. Through cross-referencing the organisations hosted on the Community Resources with what practitioners are telling us that residents need we can more easily identify what groups and services we need to facilitate within Tameside.



"The Living Room" is a 1970's-themed community hub located in one of Tameside's local shopping centres.



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What?

The project seeks to engage people in a two-way conversation. Firstly, by letting them know what is available in our communities and neighbourhoods and how to access it, and then listening to their views about what they need that either doesn't currently exist or is in short supply. We also want to develop clear links to our communities by not only maintaining trust but broadening and deepening supportive relationships.

Why?

We know that having a varied and accessible community offer is empowering for people as individuals, supports the development of dynamic and engaged neighbourhoods, and gives our practitioner colleagues a wide range of resources to draw on to provide tailored care for people. When all put together, these also feed into our wider goal to prevent, delay or reduce the need of residents to draw on commissioned services.

Who?

Within the Commissioning Team, responsibility for VCFSE sector market development and contracts falls to the Commissioning and Contracts Officer, who was tasked with leading on the workstream to develop a universal pathway to the community and neighbourhood offer. They also worked closely with the Community Engagement Officer to ensure that the views of residents and communities were listened to and incorporated.

When?

While some elements have been well-established and ongoing for several years, a key element of the success of this programme has been the way in which it allows us to dovetail and integrate multiple streams of work, including collaborating with practitioner colleagues to support the "Three Conversations" approach to social work and the review of our direct payment offer.

Case Studies

All grant funding in the following case studies was provided through our Winter Community Support Grants.

Live Great Adventures CIC: Requested £3,000. Awarded £1,170. Supported 40+ residents.

Live Great Adventures was founded by a husband-and-wife duo, inspired by their own journeys through mental health challenges. The group offers robust support for mental health and everyday struggles, fostering a welcoming environment where people can forge new friendships, seek advice, and work on self-improvement. Tameside's Community Engagement Officer worked closely with Live Greater Adventures and local partners such as Academy HQ to stage a fully co-produced bereavement support event.

Silver Cord: Requested £2498.50. Awarded £2498.50. Supported 290 residents.

Silver Cord befriending service began in 2017 as a local church response to loneliness and isolation. The grant was used to deliver a Christmas Day Project in 2023, providing dinners and gift bags to people who would be on their own on Christmas Day, and to create "The Living Room".

Located in the centre of Hyde Shopping Mall, the Living Room is a 1970's-themed community hub serving cheap refreshments, offering connection and a warm space to hang out without expectation to buy anything.

We Shall Overcome: Requested £2498.50. Awarded £2498.50. Supported 500+ residents.

Set up by the landlady of a local pub, We Shall Overcome Tameside provides essential support to people struggling with homelessness. The funding ensured the continuation of a project to supply packed lunches for people experiencing homelessness, or as a stop gap for people moving on from homelessness or experiencing food poverty. Each packed lunch contained enough food to keep someone from hunger for a day and was made fresh daily.

For further information contact:

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