



# Disabled People's Experience of Living in the London Borough Of Hackney

*April 2014*

Funded by Hackney Council for Voluntary Service



## **Our Vision**

*An inclusive society where disabled people are able to participate fully and equally*

### **Our Mission**

CHOICE IN HACKNEY is a user-led organisation controlled and led by disabled people. We work in Hackney and other London boroughs to:

- Build disabled people's knowledge and confidence about rights and opportunities so they can achieve independence, control and choice over how they live their lives.
- Create opportunities for disabled people to fulfil their ambitions and take an active part in their community.
- Ensure disabled people have a powerful collective voice to influence local and national decision making, and challenge discrimination.

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# Introduction

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*The aim of this survey is to find out how disabled people feel about living in Hackney and if they are able to participate in community life as much as they wish to.*

CHOICE in Hackney works to the social model of disability which says that the problem is not someone's impairment, illness, frailty or learning difficulty but instead, the problem is that they don't have the support, equipment or housing they need and they don't have choice and control over their daily lives. Although the social model of disability was initially developed by people with physical impairments, it is just as relevant to people with a learning difficulty, older people and people with mental health support needs.

This survey was developed and carried out by CHOICE IN HACKNEY in partnership with:

- The People's Network – the service user led forum for people who have experienced mental ill health
- Hackney People First - the service user led forum for Hackney residents with learning difficulties
- Disability Backup – the service user led forum for disabled people in Hackney.

The survey questions were developed with the above partner organisations and CHOICE IN HACKNEY wrote to 200 of their service users and phoned 150 to conduct telephone interviews.

Disability Backup emailed the survey to their members, the Peoples Network members contributed via online and paper surveys and we ran a group discussion with Hackney People First members.

66 people did the survey via the telephone/ online or a paper version and 15 people attended the group discussion at Hackney People First, therefore 81 people contributed their views.

# Main Findings

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**39%**

*of respondents don't feel part of their neighbourhood*

**73%**

*identified health issues as barriers to living the life they want to*

**65%**

*identified financial barriers to living the life they want to*

**69.5%**

*of people thought people in their neighbourhood got on across backgrounds*

- Parks are very important resource and many respondents would like to access the parks more.
- Many people are concerned about the effect of gentrification on both the community and on the cost of living
- Respondents want more signposting and information
- Respondents want more opportunities to socialise across communities

## **Recommendations:**

- An access forum made up of local disabled people is funded to look at access to buildings and services locally including:
- Accessibility of local exercise and adult education classes
- Accessibility of signposting and information
- Opportunities for low cost socialising
- Benefits advice and debt advice sessions
- Housing advice & housing planning
- Transport
- Planning
- Highway maintenance

A joint working group is set up made up of disabled Hackney residents, Local Authority & Voluntary sector representatives to develop strategies for mitigating the impact of national policies re: Social Security cuts on local disabled people.

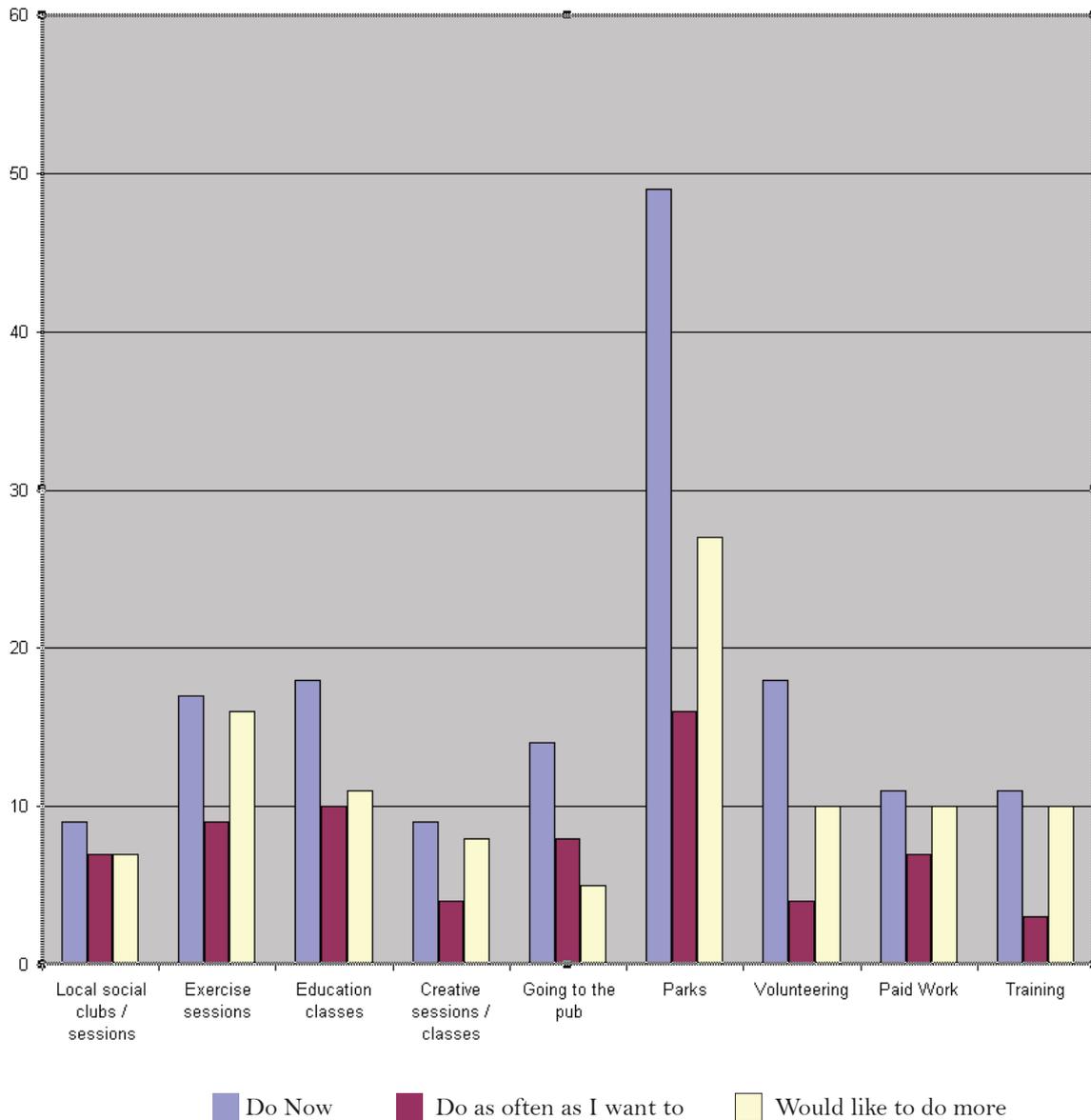
That disabled people are involved in drawing up the plans for integrated care to ensure they put people with long term health conditions in control of their own care and give equal weight to individuals' emotional and social needs as to their medical conditions.

That opportunities for free / low cost cross cultural socialising are developed in the borough for all residents utilising parks

# Main Report

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*Question 1: What work and fun activities do disabled people do in City & Hackney and what would they like to do more of?*



## Raw data

Activity	Do now –	Do as often as I want to	Would like to do more	Total Respondents
Local social clubs / sessions	56.25% 9	43.75% 7	43.75% 7	16
Exercise sessions	68.00% 17	36.00% 9	64.00% 16	25
Education classes	75.00% 18	41.67% 10	45.83% 11	24
Creative sessions / classes	60.00% 9	26.67% 4	53.33% 8	15
Going to the pub	87.50% 14	50.00% 8	31.25% 5	16
<b>Parks</b>	<b>94.23%</b> <b>49</b>	<b>30.77%</b> <b>16</b>	<b>51.92%</b> <b>27</b>	<b>52</b>
Volunteering	78.26% 18	17.39% 4	43.48% 10	23
Paid Work	57.89% 11	36.84% 7	52.63% 10	19
Training	64.71% 11	17.65% 3	58.82% 10	17

Over all the most popular activity people do from the list and would like to do more of, is going to the park, three people mentioned the need to have someone to go with them and one person would like more group activities in the park. This survey was carried out in April 2014 and supports the findings of a survey carried by Social Action for Health in summer of 2013 which also identified parks as a valued community resource.

Other than going to the park the things we identified that people would like to do more of is exercise sessions and education classes. One respondent mentioned that they had used City Lit a lot but felt there was only one limited venue in Hackney for adult education.

The City & Hackney Wellbeing profile identifies that rates of obesity are far higher amongst disabled people (using categories – ‘by care group – mental illness, learning difficulty, deaf, blind, unable to leave the house.’). Therefore there is a clear rationale for prioritising support to enable people to use mainstream facilities such as parks and leisure centres and ensuring that these are accessible to disabled people

## Question 2 Do you feel part of your neighbourhood?

**60.61%**

*of respondents feel part of their neighbourhood*

**39.3%**

*of respondents don't feel part of their neighbourhood.*

This is slightly higher than a comparable recent local survey re social isolation which found: 15.2% said they never felt a part of their neighbourhood and 16.7% said they hardly ever felt a part of their neighbourhood. 39.7% said they sometimes felt a part their neighbourhood and 28.4% said they often felt a part of their neighbourhood.'

And that

*'Those with a disability score higher on all three social isolation indicators.'* (Connect Hackney 2014)

Negative comments include

*'No one really talks anymore',*

*'I don't get out and do things'.*

People's circumstances make it hard to feel part of the neighbourhood

*'As much as I can be. A bit stuck in house. When out I feel included.'*

*'No time to be part of neighbourhood. Most of time am at work'.*

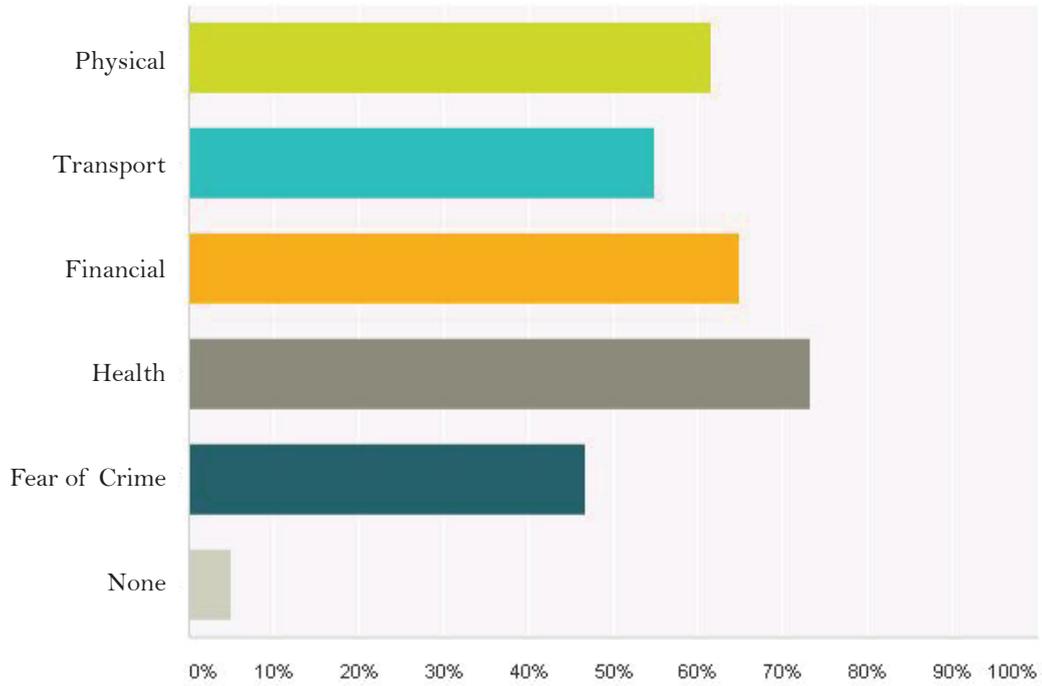
There were many positive comments re: good neighbours

*'I find people very friendly and there is a good sense of community in my neighbourhood. I know more of my neighbours than anywhere else I've lived.'*

Question 3: Barriers

**Are there any barriers that stop you living your life as you would like to in Hackney?**

Answered: 60 Skipped: 6



Physical (kerbs / inaccessible buildings please state examples using the "Other" box below)	61.67% 37
Transport	55.00% 33
Financial	65.00% 39
Health	73.33% 44
Fear of crime	46.67% 28
None	5.00% 3

*73% of respondents identified their health as a barrier to living their life as they would like to in Hackney.*

As summarised in the Department of Health's mental health strategy, launched in 2011, health and mental health are closely related:

- People with one long-term condition are two to three times more likely to develop depression than the rest of the population.
- People with three or more conditions are seven times more likely to have depression
- Having a mental health problem increases the risk of physical ill health. Co-morbid depression doubles the risk of coronary heart disease in adults and increases the risk of mortality by 50 per cent
- Mental health problems such as depression are much more common in people with physical illness. Having co-morbid physical and mental health problems delays recovery of both.
- Investing in Psychological and Emotional Wellbeing for patients with long term conditions makes a clear case for working collaboratively with 'patients' to case manage conditions, with holistic support including emotional.

### **Recommendation**

That plans for integrated care put people with long term health conditions in control of their own care and give equal weight to individual's emotional and social needs as to their medical conditions.

## *The next biggest barrier is financial*

*'Bedroom tax is causing problems.'*

*'I live on Carers Allowance'*

*'Not enough money to do what I want to do. Social time I can't do what I want.'*

Research by Demos/Scope show that by 2017-18 around 3.7-million disabled people will collectively lose £28-billion in benefits.

<b>Benefit change</b>	<b>Number of disabled people affected</b>	<b>Total financial loss up to 2018</b>
Incapacity benefit	608,000	£5.6 billion
1% cap on benefit rises	3.7 million	£9 billion
Time limitation of WRAG (employment and support allowance)	700,000	£4.4 billion
Bedroom tax	420,000	£1.1 billion
Freezing child benefit	1 million	£1.7 billion
Overall Benefit Cap	142,5000	£2 billion
Introduction of Personal Independent Payment	600,000	£2.62 billion
Universal Credit	446,000	£2.2 billion
Abolition of Independent Living Fund	21,000	£1.2 billion
Change to Local Housing Allowance	827,000	£2.43 billion*
Uprating and cuts to Tax Credits	545,300	£370 million
Localisation and 10% cut for Council Tax Benefit	1.38 million	£594.8 million
1% cap on various benefits and tax credits	475,900	£457 million*
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.7million</b>	<b>£28.3 billion</b>

*\*These two losses have been included in the total up rating loss calculation so are not double counted in the overall total*

Demos/Scope research: [http://www.demos.co.uk/press\\_releases/destinationunknownapril2013](http://www.demos.co.uk/press_releases/destinationunknownapril2013)

In Hackney, we have over 15,000 claiming disability living allowance and over 35,000 people with long term health conditions.

We need to develop a strategy that will support people already facing multiple challenges to financially and emotionally manage this situation.

### **Recommendation:**

A joint working group is set up made up of disabled Hackney residents, Local Authority & Voluntary sector representatives to develop strategies for mitigating the impact of national policies re: Social Security on local disabled people.

### *Environment:*

Most of the comments relate to the physical environment and transport.

*'Speed humps need to go'. 'Cracks in the pavement, trees fallen' 'Mare street has bad kerbs.' Slopes to access road are really high, which can feel dangerous.'*

*'Steps to services. More accessible community buildings/office space. Kingsland Road.'*

In terms of transport, buses and bus drivers attitudes got a mixed response

*'Buses are ok, but drivers' attitudes are bad. Won't make effort. Arriva particularly bad. 253, 254 and 29 routes.'*

*Bus stops made inaccessible by traffic*

*Bus drivers are all helpful.'*

The cost of insurance and difficulty parking was identified by car drivers *'is difficult to park where I live, always busy'*

The focus group at Hackney People First identified similar issues plus the lack of disabled toilets and the barriers of peoples attitudes towards people with learning difficulties, people not understanding them or being welcoming.'

### **Recommendation:**

An access forum made up of local disabled people is funded to look at access to buildings and services locally including:

- Accessibility of local exercise and adult education classes
- Accessibility of signposting and information
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- Benefits advice and debt advice sessions
- Housing advice
- Transport
- Planning
- Highway maintenance

There were thirteen comments re the fear of crime, one person reported being attacked 5 times, another reported feel more scared of crime since getting a walking stick

*'I have been afraid of crime only since I got a walking stick'*

*'The news is sensationalist. Hard to know how scared I should be.'*

Nationally Disabled people are more likely to experience crime

*'Over the baseline period 2007/8 to 2009/10, disabled people in all age groups in England and Wales were more likely than non - disabled people to have experienced a crime in the 12 months prior to interview. Differences were greatest in the younger age groups; for example, 42 per cent of disabled people aged 16-24 had been victims of crime in the preceding 12 months, compared with 33 per cent of their non-disabled counterparts.'*

Equality and Human Rights Commission, Briefing paper 3

Disabled people's experiences and concerns about crime

Analysis of the British Crime, Survey 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10

*Question 5. How do you feel about the changes in Hackney ie changes to: night life housing job opportunities local businesses and shops in your local neighbourhood and in the local community?*

This was an open question. We have grouped the results into

- Concern re changes, (26)
- Think it's an improvement (13)
- Cost of living and cuts. (6)
- No changes noticed (9)
- Other (7)

Overall 26 of the comments were concerned regarding the changes in Hackney. 4 of these related to nightlife and the noise from this

*'Night life' wakes me up at 3.00am and its denizens piss on my doorstep.'*

*About night life there is many pubs and gambling shops which is not good for young people.'*

21 comments are mainly concerned about gentrification and the effect this is having on both prices and inclusiveness of the community.

*'In some areas it's becoming trendier which is putting prices and rent up.'*

*'Gentrification of hackney. Lots of businesses are closing, with new posher places moving in. Doesn't feel part of the place anymore. Doesn't feel inclusive.'*

*'House prices have gone through the roof. Professionals moving in, detrimental to community. Not very communal. Pubs turned into gastro wine bars, catering for rich.'*

*'There is no community. Community is gone. If you're relatively fit then things are geared towards you. Disabled people are excluded.'*

There were 13 positive comments regarding changes

- More jobs
- I like that Hackney's identity is diversifying whilst maintaining its identity.
- Like the idea of Narrowway being pedestrianised. Potential for improvements there. Concerned by open spaces and the building of shopping centres and high rises. New library is very good.
- Regeneration is going in the right direction. Quite daunting at first but seems lessened now. Calmer ambience.

And 6 comments that relate to cuts and the cost of living

- Lots of building going on, but not really affecting me. Biggest change is the cuts to community care and benefits. Lack of support for self employed disabled people.
- It's a bit disadvantages. Not enough money to live. No surety.
- Housing has been terrible. Very vulnerable, living below means.
- Housing is a nightmare

No changes noticed

- 9 people have not noticed change in Hackney
- I don't notice any changes because I don't go out much

*'Haven't noticed. Tried to rehabilitate self but finances in the way.'*

*Chances for services for disabled people. Mobility issues, no accessibility'*

## Question 6: *What changes would you like to see in Hackney?*

We left this as an open question and have grouped the responses as follows

- Services and activities (41 comments)
- Physical Environment (8 comments)
- Housing/ support managing finances (6 comments)
- Inclusion/ Transport (6 comments)
- None happy as is (5 comments)
- More shops and business & community buildings (6)
- Other 3

### Services and activities

Seven comments related to the need for more signposting and information for disabled people on what is available locally.

- Who to contact especially when you have disability and could be limited, as you feel forgotten. Specially if group/Community area
- Places where people can meet and socialise or do activities were the second most popularly mentioned change
- More places for people to gather and access services. More hubs and opportunities to be part of the community. More training opportunities (much more), preferably for local people to open businesses.
- More social activities here for people to meet up. Needs more secular meeting points.
- Activities for young people were the third most mentioned thing
- More for younger generation. Nothing for them to do. Would help reduce crime and delinquency. Not enough youth clubs.

### Physical environment

Changes people would like to see range from clearing up of dog mess to road resurfacing. Less controlled parking / permits and cyclists on pavements to more ramps for wheelchair access and better street lighting.

### Housing / support managing finances:

The comments here relate to costs of housing and of living:

- Better support for people with housing issues. No Bedroom Tax. Feels no one cares about disabled people.
- More financial support, I mean manage the money in these difficulty time. Place to go to find this kind of support and advice for disabled people.
- Rent controls. Housing affordable to people earning below the average wage.

### Inclusion and Transport:

- Moving of bus stops and in accessibility of buses came up.
- Dalston Kingsland to be accessible (whole line should be accessible).
- Leisure centres should be accessible.

### Happy with the area:

*'No problem with Hackney.'* *'Not anything, done a lot.'*

*'Prefer it as it is.'*

### Shops and Businesses:

There was a comment re getting Community buildings used:

- Allow traditional pubs and communal buildings to prosper. Community centres aren't really community.

And four comments re supporting local businesses

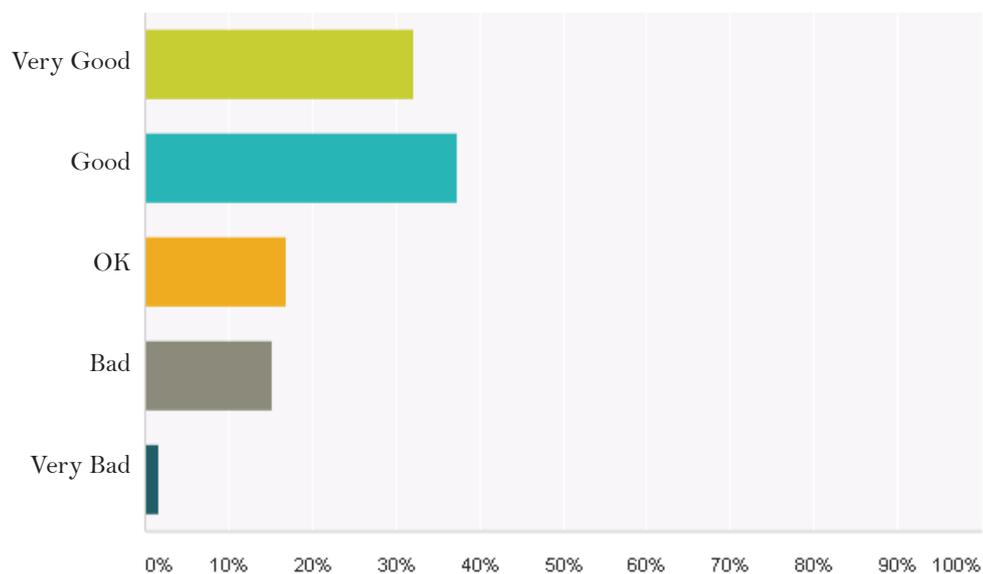
- 'They shouldn't be trying to get rid of residents who build Hackney and have lived here for most of their lives. Businesses should be available to all, not just new comers.'
- More opportunities to start their own business. Use empty buildings, provide more places to rent. Renovate empty buildings.
- Need more businesses. More choice regarding local shops.
- Everybody getting on, everybody having a part in life. Multicultural shops. More stores, but more tailored to local interests.

*Question 7. If you had a local problem or a situation that you were unhappy with and you wanted to change it, how would you go about doing this?*

- 13 respondents out of 66 did not have any idea where they could go for support to resolve a problem (excluding people who stated it depends on the problem)
- 23 respondents would contact the body they had the problem with.
- 14 people would go to a support advocacy organisation
- 16 people would go to their MP or Councillor to get the problem resolved (not all in the first instance).

**Hackney has people from lots of different backgrounds living in it. How do you think people get on together?**

Answered: 59 Skipped: 7



Very Well - people in my area mix together across all backgrounds	32.20% 19
Good - people in my area get along across all backgrounds	37.29% 22
OK - people in my area tolerate each other	16.95% 10
Bad - people of different backgrounds in my area do not get along together	15.25% 9
Very Bad - there are tensions between people of different backgrounds in my area	1.69% 1

In the IPSIO Mori 2013 residents' poll – they asked

*'To what extent do you agree that this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?'*  
90% of local residents tended to agree. In our survey 69.5% of people thought people in their neighbourhood got on across backgrounds. 17% felt people tolerate each other and 17% thought people in their neighbourhood did not get on.

**Positive comments include:**

*'People are open, and are more civilised.'*

*'Been in area for years, has seen community change. Never any problem, Muslims, Jews and Christians mix well.'*

Pretty decent. 42 years residency.

Considering huge differences, they get on well. Mosque and synagogues get on well.

**Neutral comments include:**

*'No tension, but not much mixing. Bit segregated into districted.'*

*'Everyone keeps to themselves.'*

**Negative comments include:**

Many communities are isolated from one another by language, culture and social class.

Not much integration. Not like how it used to be.

## Question 8. What do you think Hackney Council, or we as Hackney residents, can do to make everyone feel part of their local community?

This was an open question and we have grouped the answers into the following themes

- Positive about Hackney already (4)
- What we can do as residents (8)
- What the council can do (43)

### Positive about Hackney already:

- They have events and public holidays but many don't go or participate.
- I think they are doing a pretty good job
- Already a lot of creative events.

### What we can do as Hackney residents:

Most of the comments relate to us taking time to get to know each other.

- Neighbours should get to know each other. Down to individual. Can't think of anything Hackney could do.
- Listen more and take time to help people.
- Think, come together and share ideas

### What can Hackney Council do?:

Of the 43 comments 25 relate to the need for social cross cultural events where people can socialise together. Both ongoing opportunities and cross cultural festivals/ street parties.

*'More places to go in the morning where you can speak to others people with different disabilities'*

*'Place where people can meet up in the mornings'*

*'Used to have festivals and community based open sessions. Fun fairs, concerts for free, would bring people together.'*

*'More events and chances to mix together. Base around cooking to share food. Socialise with each other and learn about each other's cultures.'*

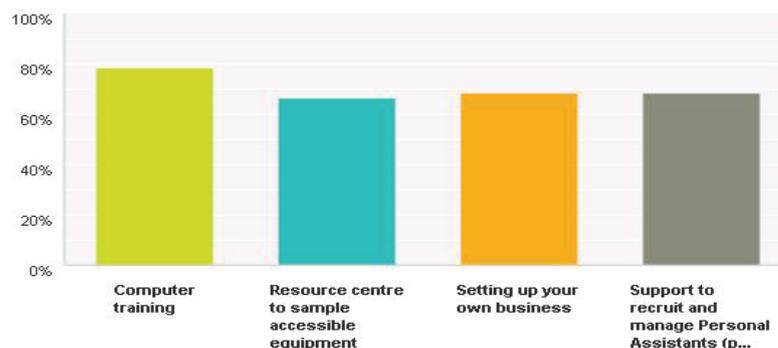
*'More events celebrating Hackneys diverse background, try to be inclusive to everyone.'*

*'More social events. Used to be functions in the park, whole wealth of people there. Free events. Paid events exclude people.'*

Housing and soundproofing, need for translated information and better signposting generally and teaching children and young people to understand different impairments and their effects on people at school was also mentioned.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY currently provides the following services: Advocacy Volunteering Advocacy Training & Employment Support Brokerage & Support Planning Active Lifestyle What other services would you like to see provided locally for disabled people, by CHOICE or by other disabled people's organisations.**

Answered: 51 Skipped: 15



	Responses
Computer training	78.43% 40
Resource centre to sample accessible equipment	66.67% 34
Setting up your own business	68.63% 35
Support to recruit and manage Personal Assistants (paid carers)	68.63% 35

**Other services respondents mentioned in order of frequency are are:**

- Better signposting between our services x4
- Social events/opportunities for disabled people x 4
- Advice in general regarding accessibility. Accessibility support group. x 3
- Cookery classes x 2
- Money management advice x 2
- Exercise service/ opportunities x 2
- Legal Advice x 2

**And the rest were mentioned once:**

- Emotional support for people with long term conditions which isn't covered by the NHS.
- Having alternative therapy centres to use and have training room
- Help soundproof houses.
- Looking for volunteer work.
- Accessible gardening
- More activities like music, singing, playing guitar kind of entertainment
- More events for children with autism/other disability.
- Had a lot of problem with direct payments.
- Dial a ride needs to be more accessible for the elderly
- Checking with people, opinion checking.