

YMCA ROMFORD

PART OF YMCA THAMES GATEWAY GROUP



Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you



Brief summary of the YMCA Romford redevelopment report



- YMCA Romford has delivered relevant programmes to the local community since 1906
- The YMCA serves (primarily) residents living in the London boroughs of Havering and Barking & Dagenham, and currently offers a range of inclusive activities in the following programme areas:
 - Health and Wellbeing (inclusive fitness classes, fitness centre, personal training, cancer and stroke rehabilitation)
 - Housing for 209 people total – supported housing for 148 people plus 61 move-on flats for independent living
 - Family and Youth work (pre-school, afterschool and holiday club, birthday party packages)
 - Support and Advice
 - Training and Education
- The current building was opened in 1969 and our goal is to redevelop the existing site into a new, vibrant YMCA community hub which will bring people together, deliver relevant and needed services, and continue to serve the local community for future generations
- Stakeholder groups throughout the local community have been engaged to ensure that the new YMCA community hub meets the needs of the local population.

KEY FINDINGS

Demographics and trends in our service area

- Havering - fourth fastest growth in 0-17 years; second fastest in 0-4 years in the country (336 municipalities)
- Barking & Dagenham has the highest % of under 16s in the country (26%)
- Havering has seen a 28% increase in families with dependent children from 2011-2021
- Over 65s - Havering has the second oldest population in London and Barking & Dagenham has the fifth lowest proportion of over 65
- Top health issues - high blood pressure, obesity, cancer and depression
- Obesity - Havering is the most obese borough in London (all ages) and Barking & Dagenham has third highest rate of Year 6 obesity in the country
- Barking & Dagenham has the lowest male life expectancy in London
- Havering: 1 in 6 people (both children and adults) have a mental health problem.

Common themes between stakeholder groups

- Child and family services which cater to the 4-10-year-old population are needed
- There are a lack of services, programmes and activities for the tween to young adult population (i.e. 11-16 year)
- Mental health issues are a significant challenge within the local community
- Money and the cost of living is a real problem for many
- Health and Wellbeing programmes are essential moving forward
- Continued health and wellness programmes for the 60+ population are needed
- Specialist classes (cancer and stroke rehab, and pain management) are both highly regarded and essential moving forward
- Access to housing is a major challenge
- Obesity and unhealthy lifestyle are a significant challenge in the communities we serve
- A lack of community-wide knowledge regarding the range of services and programmes YMCA provides – the common perception is that it is just housing

Top 5 **existing** YMCA programmes which are essential to deliver in the future based on feedback from all stakeholder groups including local residents:

- 60+ fitness
- Afterschool club
- Café / social space
- Fitness centre/gym
- Housing

Future programme and service considerations

Health and fitness – there is a need to offer programmes and activities which:

- cater to and manage the health risk of an ageing population
- address the four most prevalent health issues of high blood pressure, obesity, depression and cancer
- build and support good mental health
- promote and develop healthy lifestyle choices.

Housing and services for YMCA residents

- Continue to provide both supported housing for young people whilst also providing more move-on and independent living accommodation units
- Modernise the hostel accommodation so that all rooms have ensuite bathrooms and simultaneously build new, modern resident-kitchens along with other facilities/activity spaces which promote the path towards skill development and independent living.

Child and family services

There is a need to both continue and expand YMCA Romford's youth and family service offer through:

- an expanded preschool service, continued afterschool and holiday clubs
- new services and activities that appeal to the tween, teen and young adult populations
- programmes which contribute to improved mental health for children, youth and families.
- programmes which promote and teach a healthy lifestyle among young people and allow them to make informed lifestyle choices
- activities which bring together people from different generations.

Next steps and potential challenges

- Funding – as with all capital development projects, the available funding options need to be considered and potential partners secured
- The boundary between the London boroughs of Barking & Dagenham and Havering runs through the YMCA's site. Therefore, formal development proposals need to be delivered to, and planning permission secured from, both boroughs. The additional consideration here is that YMCA may have to pay the full costs associated with the planning process to EACH borough (i.e. double fees)
- Irrespective of the level of redevelopment undertaken, there is a need to educate the local community about the range of programmes and services that the YMCA offers – i.e. it is so much more than housing alone.

READ THE FULL REPORT ON OUR WEBSITE
ymcatg.org/romford-redevelopment/