

Adverse Weather Preparedness & Response

Lambeth Council

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Outline

- Purpose
- Methodology
- Lessons learnt
- Conclusion and recommendations

Purpose

Lambeth is a densely populated urban borough, which puts our residents at high risk of exposure to heat and the Urban Heat Island effect.

Our aim today is:

- To share Lambeth experience in engaging and communicating with residents who are more vulnerable to extreme weather events, ensuring preparedness to protect against the health risks of extreme weather, and gain insight into what else can be done or ways of tackling issues locally.

Key steps & actions

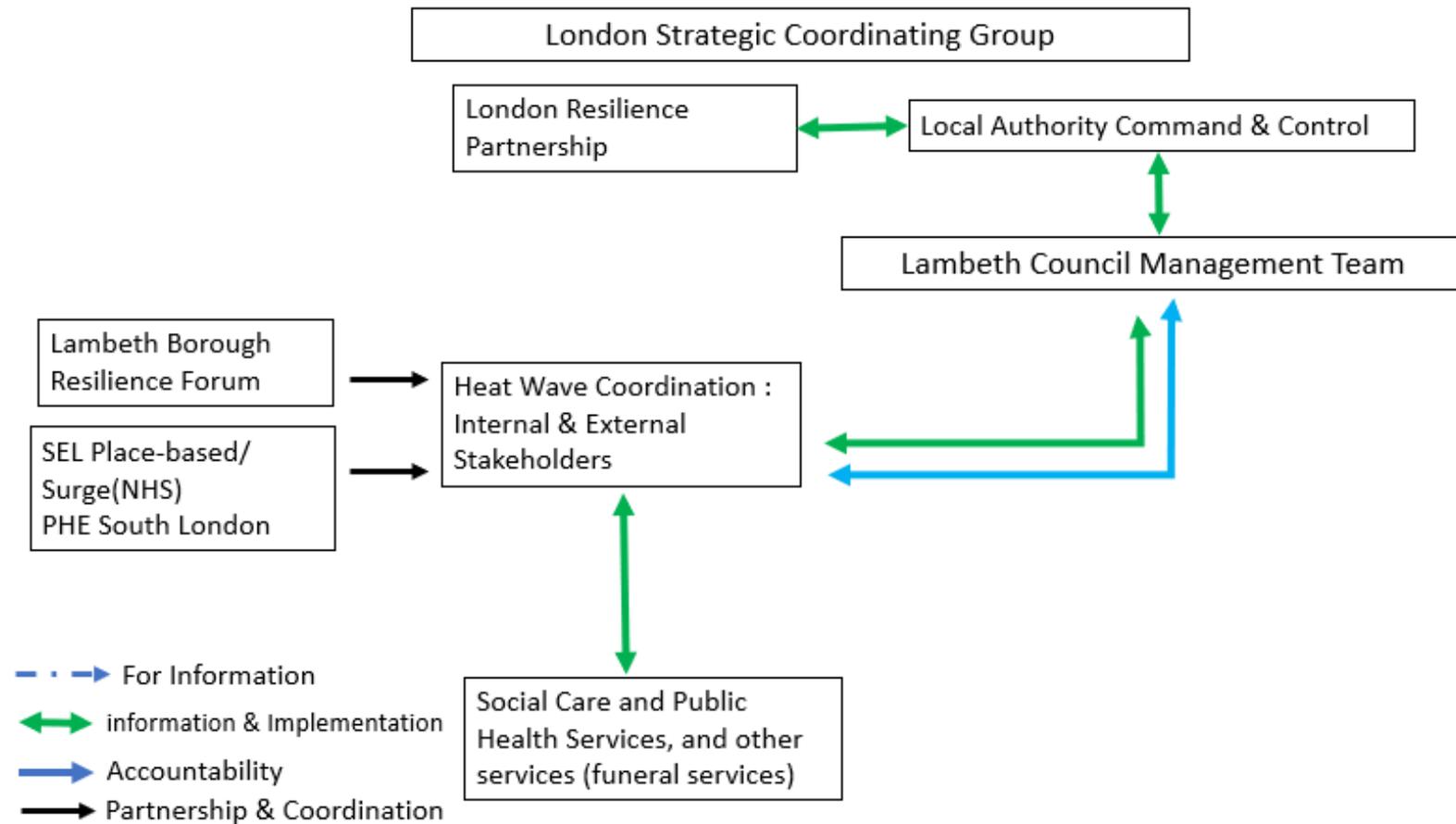
Annually

- Access, interpret and localise national adverse weather plans
 - Develop simple and easy to use materials based on national plan and in consultation with local partners – checklists, action cards, etc.
- Map and engage with (through all available channels, including dialogues at Providers' forums) local partners – highlight national adverse weather warning systems and triggers
- Share both local action cards and national plan with stakeholders
 - Ensure to share preparedness checklists with providers beforehand
- Monitor and interpret alerts issued by the MET Office and the severe weather service.
 - Map cool spots and engage with local partners in preparedness for heat waves
- Notify/Mobilise key partners, including council officers, when alert levels 2 and 3 are triggered – ensuring that relevant actions are implemented when necessary.

Covid and Heatwave 2020

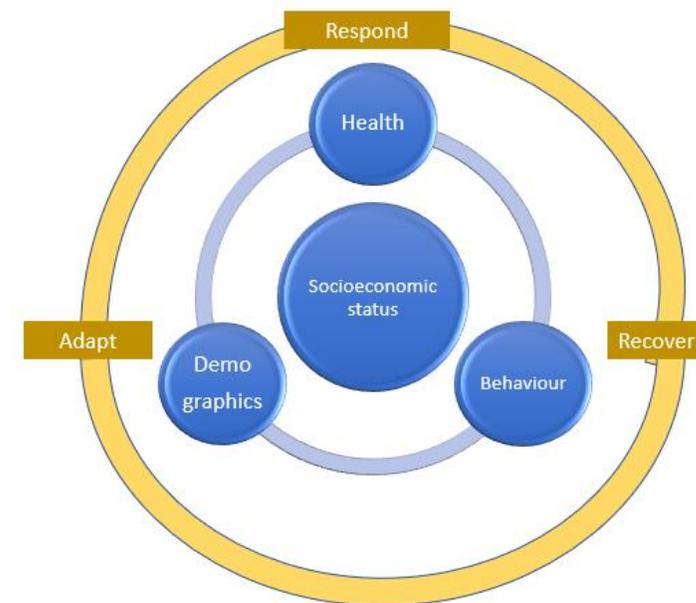
- Local heatwave plan adapted to COVID-19, identifying additional and amplified risks
 - Assess effects of heat wave on Covid control measures – e.g. need to change sessional-use PPE more frequently
 - Vulnerability to heat wave increases while capacity to cope with it decrease
- Heatwave 'Action cards' for different settings updated in light of COVID-19
- PHE guidance on heatwave and COVID-19 presented at Learning Disability providers forum to spark discussion
- Key preparedness measures from PHE heatwave guidance:
 - Review who may be at high risk
 - Surge capacity
 - Fans
 - PPE and staff wellbeing

Governance



Identifying vulnerable groups who are more likely to experience the worst health impacts of rising temperatures

- Individuals will experience different challenges in how they prevent and prepare for climate events, and how they respond and recover.
- Our ability to prepare for and respond to rising temperatures and heat waves depends on our physical and mental capabilities, where we live and work, and the resources available to us .
- Our most vulnerable residents are those less able to mitigate the impact due to existing health problems, extremes of age, and social deprivation.
- These factors are interconnected, and anyone with multiple vulnerabilities is more likely to experience worse health impacts.
- For example, anyone on a low income may have fewer opportunities and resources to adapt their housing to cope with high temperatures. Low income is often linked to poor physical and mental health, disability, isolation, and poor quality housing, which make people more vulnerable to the impact of rising temperature.
- Climate events such as heat waves are therefore likely to worsen existing inequalities across our Borough.



Examples of materials used – checklists, action cards, etc.

Heatwave and Covid Action Card – Care homes

Checklist items	Yes/No	Notes
General		
Policy Policy and procedures for heatwave conditions? Policy updated to reflect new COVID-19 demands?		
Monitoring local weather Responsible individual identified to monitor local water and receive Met Office alerts for heatwave alert?		
Preparation before a heatwave		
Identifying residents vulnerable to heatwave: Review of care plans		
Adjusting care plans: Adjust care plans to ensure safety and wellbeing of high risk residents		
Review PPE requirements: PPE plan reviewed for potential increased requirements in heat		
Ventilation systems: Review completed? Upgraded if faults/ deficits identified?		
Air conditioning: In good condition and functioning well? Regularly serviced by competent engineers, as required by law? Portable units and fans available and functioning? Alternative solutions been identified to keep residents with COVID-19 cool? (fans not suitable)		
Windows Checked to ensure they can be opened Checked to ensure appropriate shade (curtains, shutters, blinds especially if south facing)		
Fridges and freezers Working effectively? Catering staff to monitor the fridge temperatures		
Kitchens Can residents meals be adapted to include more chilled fluids/ cold meals?		
Cool areas Room(s) identified to act as 'cool area', with extra ventilation/ air condition or fans for high risk residents? Separate 'cool areas' for COVID-19 patients (one room per patient?)		
First Aid First aid provision is prepared and will be able to cope throughout any possible heatwave?		

Staff trained to know what to do in the event of a heatwave and how to recognise and treat a person suspected of suffering from heatstroke or heat exhaustion?		
Staff wellbeing Policies and procedures in place to ensure staff can protect themselves from the heat, including staying hydrated, wearing cool clothes/ uniforms, adjusting work patterns where possible to avoid exposure to sun and perform these tasks at cooler times? Recognise challenges of using PPE in heatwave (dehydration, discomfort)		
During a heatwave		
Stay out of the sun Plans in place for vulnerable residents (including those over 75, those with chronic illness and those on certain types of medication such as diuretics) to be advised to stay out of the sun wherever possible Plans for additional support from staff?		
Late night visits Care options include late night visits to check on vulnerable residents, check hydration, that rooms are cool, that windows are open.		
Cool rooms Plans in place to make cool rooms available for any resident self-isolating due to COVID-19?		
Staying hydrated Plans for extra supplies of fresh, cool drinking water and ice, for both staff and service user use Residents' fluid intake monitored and recorded, especially if not able to drink unaided		
Room temperatures Plans to keep curtains/blinds closed at windows while temperature outside is higher than it is inside; open curtains/ blinds again once outside temperature is cooler Staff to monitor the temperature in different parts of the premises Fans/ air conditioning units used to keep temperatures down Temperatures in the 'cool room' to be kept low throughout the heatwave. If necessary, move vulnerable residents into the cool area.		
Keeping residents comfortable Residents advised to wear light, loose, cotton clothes, to wear hats outside and to avoid drinking alcohol and caffeine		
After heatwave Plans to improve existing policies/ plans?		

Feedback from LD Forum

- What are the best ways to keep cool in shared accommodation?
 - PHE advised no fans if COVID-19 positive.
 - Are individual air conditioning units a better option?
 - What about dehumidifiers?
- If a service user/resident tests positive and is required to self-isolate (cannot go out), critical to cool the room as heat exacerbate behaviour...
- Impact on use of PPE
- Need to work with Park and leisure to ensure access to green spaces for vulnerable people including establishing specific areas for the vulnerable to self distance in cooling spaces, encouraging care homes to use their out door space.

Heat & COVID-19: Potential Risks



Potential increase in adverse outcomes amongst the same population groups affected by both high temperatures and COVID-19 For example, older people and those with comorbidities such as cardio-respiratory diseases



Reduced access to cool public spaces for respite due to COVID-19 restrictions



Increase in exposure to indoor overheating due to COVID-19 restrictions. For example, people who have been advised to stay at home



System-level risks related to concurrency of impacts For example, increased demand on social care services to prevent both heat and COVID-19 related harms

Food for thought...

- What would work well to address these challenges?
- What is feasible in COVID-19 pandemic?
 - What can we improve?
 - What would be useful?
- How do we focus on getting residents prepared to manage heat waves, linking with house adaptation?

