



A Civic Strength Index for London

October 2021

SUPPORTED BY

MAYOR OF LONDON



Foreword by Cllr Ruth Dombey and Deputy Mayor Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard

In our roles in local government we have the pleasure of witnessing first-hand so much of the amazing work that happens in communities across our city. Covid-19 has brought into stark relief the ways in which individuals and communities are exposed to risk and are made vulnerable. At the same time, we have seen the power of individuals, communities and organisations coming together to support each other through the challenges that Covid-19 has posed.

We saw this in how local people stepped forward to make sure their neighbours had food; in how people of all faiths and none, volunteers, activists, carers, teachers, nurses and public servants worked together to provide communities with information about Covid and the vaccine. We witnessed the power of interdependence, with everyone connected to and dependent on each other.

We know that the work that communities do is incredibly valuable. But it is often incredibly difficult to ensure that contribution is effectively understood, measured and valued.

That is why we are pleased to introduce the first iteration of the London Civic Strength Index, a key pillar of the Building Strong Communities mission of the London Recovery Programme. The Index tries to make visible the complex factors that contribute to civic strength and supports a conversation about what makes communities strong. It offers a shared definition and a set of measurable factors that impact on civic strength in London. This helps us to start to look across London to measure the presence of these factors in different parts of the capital.

We are sharing this first edition of the index with an invitation for boroughs, communities, Londoners and other partners to work with us to improve data collection and quality, deepen our understanding of community strength and explore the many different ways the index can be used. The Civic Strength Index should be seen as a live resource that develops and grows. The report highlights the current gaps in the data needed to measure civic strength and how we can collectively develop solutions to fill those gaps and make this Index more robust.

It is important to acknowledge that different neighbourhoods and wards have different starting points. The aim of the Index is not to rank them, but to highlight the different mixes of civic strength that exist. The case studies provide tangible examples of the factors identified, and celebrate different examples of strength evident across the city, so that we can all share and learn from each other.

The Index is a tool. It should be the springboard for conversations about how we work together and learn from each other, across community boundaries, to build on our experiences and assets to strengthen our city.

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Executive Summary

The London Civic Strength Index and its underlying framework have been co-designed and co-created by Londoners to understand where civic strength exists; to make that strength visible; and to capture what makes it unique in communities across London. This first report sets out a clear framework for Civic Strength in London, aims to measure that strength, and offers clear recommendations for further actions to improve data quality and the index model to reach community members, policy makers, data scientists, third sector organisations, the funding sector and those working in local government across London.

Extensive research and engagement have led to defining civic strength as:

“Civic strength exists when communities are supported by robust public and social infrastructure to build strong relationships and feel able to meaningfully engage in the issues that matter to them.”

The Civic Strength Framework

Many complex factors contribute to how civic strength is distributed across London, and how it is perceived and understood in practice. In order to make visible the civic strength that exists, it was first important to establish what Londoners understood it to be. Importantly, this was done through a strengths-and-asset-based approach, focusing on what is strong where, and what can be shared and built upon. Through this, three themes and 12 underlying domains of civic strength were identified (see table 1, pg. 6).

Aims

Our intention was not to rank the wards of London from ‘civically strongest’ downward, but instead to better understand the components of civic strength, and uncover the complex interplay of factors that contribute to civic life. The deeper underlying reasons for why one place exhibits civic strength in a different way to somewhere else are not explored in this report, as we recognise the challenges of this endeavour and the fact that each ward of London has its own history and starting point. Instead, this report illustrates the different mixes of civic strength

that exist across the capital – where two areas may score similarly on the Index, but have entirely different strengths and areas for development.

For example, one place might have a good score overall, but that could come from being very strong in one area, such as community action, despite having a lower score in institutional trust; while another with the same score might be performing well based on completely different indicators, such as relationships and access to public services. The Index examines how these aspects of civic strength interact with one another, and the ways they are influenced by the greater context in an area to create a complex picture of civic strength that allows communities and stakeholders to take more directed action to address need. Alongside this, the specificity of the make-up can reveal how civic strength is both impacted by and can support policy such as health, resilience and economic prosperity.

Bringing together data on civic strength

Multiple quantitative indicators were identified that sit within each of these 12 domains. Where available, corresponding datasets were collected to construct the overall Civic Strength Index. Patterns of geographic distribution, shared in maps throughout the report and also available online, point to a complex patchwork of civic strength across the capital. Many wards with apparently similar levels of civic strength overall show entirely different mixes within their component domains. This reinforces the caution needed to avoid making simplistic ‘like-for-like’ comparisons between different parts of London.

Recommendations and calls to action

While the Civic Strength Framework and Index will both be iterative and built-upon, it is essential to begin using them both as a tool to understand what makes London and Londoners strong, and to help us act collectively to support thriving communities. Some ways the Framework and Index can be used are to:

Provide a new lens for local authorities and community organisations to understand the strengths of their communities and how best to build on them

Understand how levels of civic strength interact with other key indicators set out in existing datasets (e.g. [Index of Multiple Deprivation](#), [Living Costs and Food Survey](#))

Support local and pan-London organisations to identify areas of opportunity for sharing good practice, filling gaps in provision and responding to the needs of communities.

This project has demonstrated the feasibility and usefulness of a Civic Strength Index for London. With time it will serve as a resource for communities, civil society, policymakers, funders and commissioners to gain a deeper understanding of the unique way that civic strength exists in their community, and to take action to improve the lives of Londoners.

To move from concept to full implementation, more work needs to be done to improve the quality of the supporting datasets. Within the report we make a number of detailed recommendations to the GLA, London boroughs, civil society organisations and others to fill these data gaps. These are summarised in table 1 overleaf.

Table 1. Overview of the themes and domains within the Civic Strength Index, including key take-aways and calls to action.

Themes	Domains	Key Take-Aways	Calls to Action
Overall: The Mix of Civic Strength	All	<p>Different 'mixes' of civic strength exist across London. The Civic Strength Index allows us to 'zoom in' on these areas to explore differences and learn from diverse strengths</p> <p>Two areas might have similar overall strengths and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Areas with high levels of civic responsibility tend to have more vibrant community spaces.</p> <p>Community spaces are bolstered by the availability of financial resources and social support, allowing essential hubs to be maintained and remain accessible.</p> <p>Where levels of safety are low, institutional trust also tends to be low.</p>	<p>Explore and Build Out the Index</p> <p>Review and explore the Index! Look at your ward, what's missing?</p> <p>Submit case studies of civic strength from your communities! Help us build a richer picture of civic life across London.</p> <p>Improve Data Quality</p> <p>Identify and call out indicator gaps.</p> <p>Encourage open-data principles and collaborate with existing initiatives.</p> <p>Facilitate funding and capacity for local authorities, councils for voluntary service (CVS) and community organisations to embed data collection and collation processes as detailed in following calls to action.</p> <p>Convene a working group across 32 boroughs to collate local authorities' resident surveys.</p> <p>Further improve robustness of domain weighting by running a more expansive prioritisation exercise with Londoners in the YouGov poll, as well as with key stakeholders.</p>
	Theme 1: Relationships and Social Capital	<p>Opportunities for community life</p> <p>Social support</p> <p>Relationships</p> <p>Trust and social cohesion</p> <p>Community action</p>	<p>Domains within this theme are amongst the most challenging to capture in terms of data availability and quality.</p> <p>High densities of charities, community interest companies and formal volunteering opportunities contribute to higher social support.</p> <p>Relationships and social capital appear to be weaker in the northern fringes of London.</p>

Themes	Domains	Key Take-Aways	Calls to Action
Theme 2: Democratic Engagement	<p>Institutional trust</p> <p>Accessible democratic engagement</p> <p>Civic responsibility</p>	<p>Democratic engagement is very varied across the capital, with clusters of high or low engagement but few London-level patterns.</p> <p>Mutual aid groups that emerged during the pandemic contributed to areas' civic responsibility scores.</p> <p>Voter registration and turnout rates (which were included in 'institutional trust') are typically higher in outer areas.</p>	<p>Collect data on the levels of deliberative and participatory democracy practices and implement ways to collate the impact of such public engagement.</p> <p>Collate data on representation of elected officials by age, gender and ethnicity.</p> <p>Evaluate levels of democratic and civic education.</p>
Theme 3: Public and Social Infrastructure	<p>Access to public services</p> <p>Financial resources</p> <p>Community spaces</p> <p>Safety</p>	<p>Public and social infrastructure tends to be stronger in inner areas than the outer peripheries.</p> <p>Certain outer areas provide exceptions to this trend and some of the highest-scoring areas are immediately next to some of the lowest-scoring.</p> <p>Strong provision of public services often goes hand in hand with high availability of financial resources, above average job density and strong access to public transport.</p>	<p>Ensure grant information is shared using the 360giving data standard, and that geographic information is included. Funders across central and local government as well as other grant-making organisations should be encouraged and supported to adhere to the 360giving data standard.</p> <p>Collect data on the use of community space.</p>

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We would also like to extend a special thank you to the members of our steering group: Ed Anderton (Redbridge Council), Claudine Blamey (Argent), Martin Brookes (London Plus), Yolande Burgess (London Councils), Dr. Rod Dacombe (King's College London), Yvonne Field (Ubele), Barry Fong (Greater London Authority), Hannah Goulding (Greater London Authority), John Griffiths (Rocket Science), Zainab Gulamali (Faith and Communities Workstream Co-Chair, London Strategic Coordination Group), David Kane (Data Consultant and 360Giving), Anoushka Kenley (Pro Bono Economics), Laura Kerry (Artillery), Martin Karadzhev (Consortium), Helen Mathie (London Funders), Morag McGuire (Artillery), Monica Needs (Barking & Dagenham Council), Rob Parker (Guy's & St Thomas' Charity), Sian Penner (Consultant with specialist experience in Big Local areas), James Richardson (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport), Phil Tulba (Consultant with specialist experience in community spaces), and Max Williams (Pro Bono Economics).

Introduction

Civic strength exists when communities are supported by robust public and social infrastructure to build strong relationships and feel able to meaningfully engage in the issues that matter to them. The London Civic Strength Index and its underlying framework have been co-designed and co-created by Londoners to understand where civic strength exists, to make that strength visible, and to capture what makes it unique in communities across London.

The London Civic Strength Index has been developed as part of the Building Strong Communities Mission of the London Recovery Board for the Greater London Authority (GLA). This report shares the creation of the Civic Strength Framework, as defined by Londoners, alongside the initial Index itself. It includes a detailed methodology of both the Framework and the Index, as well as a deep dive into each of the themes, and the subsequent domains and indicators.

This work presents a unique opportunity to hone in on London as the focal point, rather than as an outlier to explore civic strength. The Index is fundamentally designed to sit alongside other key indices such as the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index, and to add to the overall understanding of London's communities. At this point, although the Index was intended to capture civic strength in both communities of place and communities of identity, the existing framework only focuses on communities of place due to data constraints. Specifically, it is focused at the level of London wards, of which there are 640 across the 33 boroughs.

Through an initial set of workshops with Londoners, and a rapid review of the literature, the framework was created under three overarching themes: **Relationships and Social Capital, Democratic Engagement and Public and Social Infrastructure**. Each theme is made up of key domains, as detailed in the figure below. As you will see as you move through the report, being strong in one domain, for example 'social support', does not necessarily translate into strength in another, such as 'community action'. Rather, each area has its own mix of strengths across the domains which provide opportunities to delve into what makes different areas of London unique. The goal of the Index is not to provide a ranked list of every ward in London, but rather to paint a picture of how these domains interact with one another, and what the particular make-ups of 'civic strength' are as we move around London.

The hope is that this will facilitate conversation about what is strong where, how to build on what's not, and where opportunities are to learn from one another.

At this point, we are confident about the framework and the participatory methods employed in its creation. As much as possible, data has been identified and fed into each indicator, but there remain key opportunities (as detailed in 'Calls to Action') to make what is there more robust. Including more data, as it emerges will support a more granular and accurate understanding of London's civic strength.

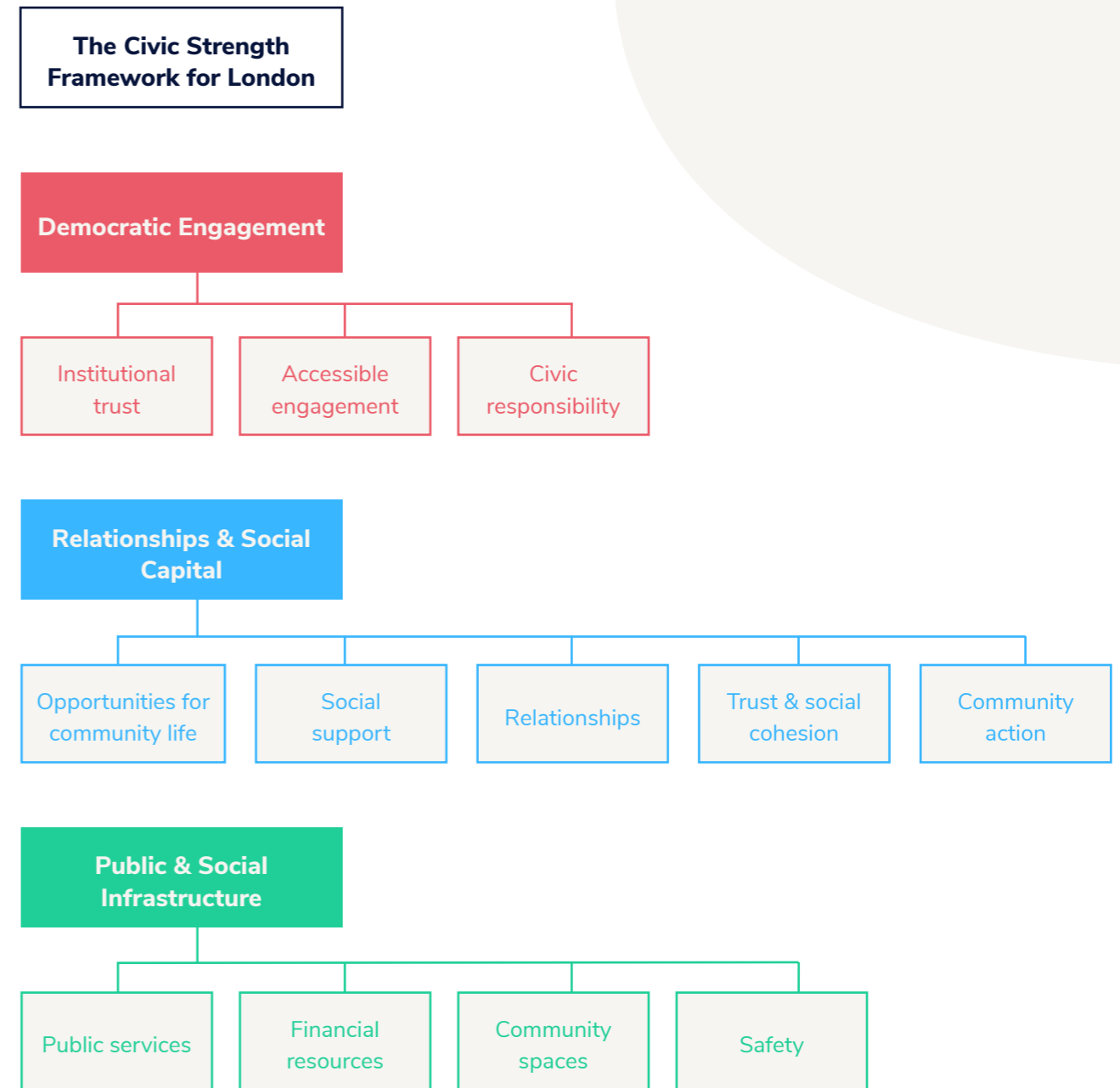


Figure 1. Hierarchy chart of the themes and domains in the Civic Strength Framework.

Methods

For full details about the methods please refer to appendices A-D.

Steering Group

Over the course of the development of the Index, there were three steering group meetings made up of 28 leaders from across sectors and from across London. They provided essential feedback which shaped the programme, and ensured it was in line with the wider mission of the London Recovery Board. Key insights were collected on usability, design, data gathering and future planning for the Index. Once the initial framework was created, this was also reviewed by the steering group on a theme by theme basis. This was done via Miro, an online visual whiteboard, and collaborative sessions in which there were breakout rooms to deep dive into each of the topics.

Literature Review

This review drew on the Young Foundation's existing knowledge and in particular from robust literature reviews undertaken during the creation of the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index and our own Index of Community Strength. It sought to understand existing research and evidence on civic strength in the literature, what indices already exist, what specifically they aim to capture, and their relevant domains. Building on this, we completed an analysis of the frequency of various domains in existing indices. This formed part of the basis for the second aspect of the definitional stage during which we undertook extensive engagement to recruit for two community workshops and two stakeholder workshops on defining civic strength.

Community and Stakeholder Research

The community research took place over four Zoom workshops, with up to 18 participants in each, using Miro (an online visual whiteboard) to support facilitation (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2). For details about the workshop tasks, please see Appendix A. For details about the geo-demographic distribution of participants, please see Appendix B. The workshops focused on facilitating a discussion initially about community strength, with an investigation of 'civic', followed by a discussion resulting in identifying components of civic strength based on the agreed upon definition of 'civic strength', and the relationships within and between the identified components. To reach digitally excluded Londoners who were not able to participate in the online workshops, The Young Foundation's Peer Research Network engaged a further 10 residents in 30-minute semi-structured interviews, taking them through the same questions that were asked during the workshops.

Domain Creation

Responses from across all community and stakeholder workshops were collated and coded by theme. The initial round of coding was close to the concepts and components mentioned by participants throughout the workshops. During the second round of coding, responses were sorted into preliminary domains. These were reviewed, adjusted and distilled during a final round to reach the domains and overarching themes of the framework.

Data Gathering and Analysis

The Index was then created based on the identified domains, built out with key indicators and data definitions. Data was collected from a variety of sources such as the Charity Commission, 360Giving and the Community Life survey. Data was collected at the lowest available geographic granularity. Most data covered either the financial year 2019-20 or the calendar year 2020, although some went as far back as 2016. Data was then inputted into an Excel version of the Index by domain and indicator. Further data opportunities emerged to plan for future data gathering in partnership with local authorities, and community organisations. For the full detail about data methods, please see Appendix C. The domains were then weighted according to relative prioritisation as determined by a representative sample of 649 Londoners (which will be expanded in the future).

Defining Civic Strength

Exploring 'Civic'

It is fundamental to understand what we mean by 'civic strength', including what makes it up, the ways existing indices understand civic strength, and how to bring both together to inform and determine the parameters for the Index and underlying framework. In our work with the steering group, the emphasis was focused on shaping the domains, based on what was identified during the community research stage as essential to constituting civic strength, rather than on what data was most readily available. As a result, we focused on parsing out the domains with definitions based on the evidence and research collected during the community research and rapid review processes.

A key question framing the initial stage of the research is how 'civic' is understood in the literature and by Londoners. A second guiding question at this stage, was how an index for civic strength for London is unique and distinct from similar measures of community strength. There were a wide range of responses to both questions at the community research stage. However, a cluster emerged across the community and stakeholder sessions on the importance of the relationships that make it possible. One Londoner pointed to the centrality of "a sense of reciprocity and mutual support" in a definition of civic strength, and another explained that a civically strong community is about "making sure no one, or no group within a community, gets left behind".

Building on that, there was a sense that civic strength is about a "responsibility towards each other", which "ensures all voices are heard, not the same [ones] over and over". As a result, it became clear that for community to be civically strong, each person must feel able to speak, and that meaningful democratic engagement must be possible. As one participant said, "[civic strength] is a group of survivors being able to talk to an MP to influence

a bill and be heard". This was reflected by others pointing to the importance that a definition of civic strength must include "government representatives that are approachable and accessible".

That being said, importantly it is not about the actions of local or national governments alone. During these discussions, one participant shared an example from their community: "[In Lambeth], there was no volunteer bureau, but people always do a lot to come together and support one another. The council saw this and responded during [Covid-19] to create one and now 2,000 volunteers (half under 35) are active in the borough." They further noted that while formal platforms, such as a volunteer bureau, are important, within the borough there are "some communities that trust Lambeth Council – but also ones that will not, so unofficial civic platforms exist too."

Underlying these conversations and interviews was a further appreciation of the 'structural' nature of civic strength, and that civic strength, as opposed to community strength, referred to the infrastructure and institutions that support communities as well as the strength of those communities themselves. In particular, they referenced "local infrastructure that speaks to local needs", while noting the need to expand existing infrastructure in their own communities to increase the possibility for civic strength to exist.

The diversity in this understanding of 'civic strength' was reflected in the literature. Lichterman and Eliasoph (2014) define 'civic' as necessarily non-unitary, but rather something found in everyday action. A definition of 'civic' must ground its theoretical basis in democracy, solidarity and participation while also highlighting the focus on action it invokes in everyday use. In this sense, Lichterman and Eliasoph advocate for a broad

concept of 'civic' that exists in widely varied sites, rather than a definition located solely in what's often considered the 'civic sector' (i.e. the charity and voluntary sector). Instead, it becomes fundamental that all civic actors imagine themselves acting on the same basis together, and not something for specific sectors or people.

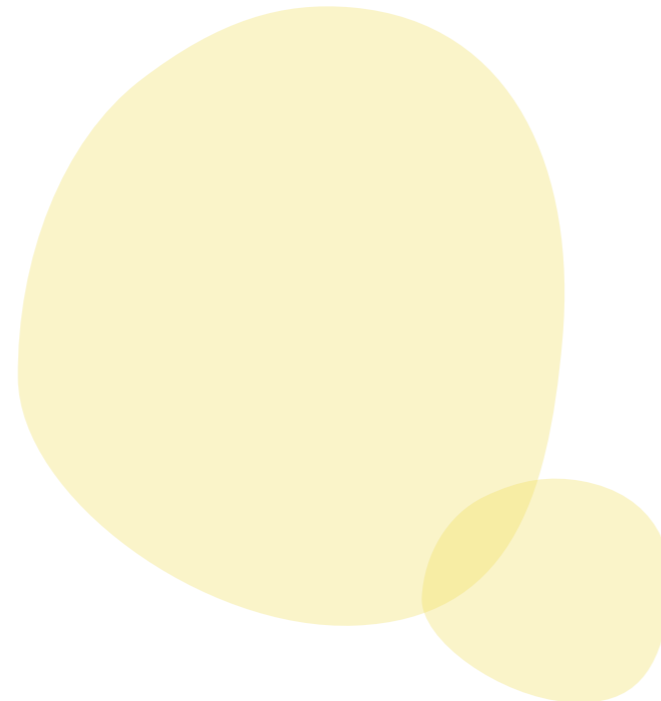
Similarly, the [2021 Civic Impact Framework](#) purposely avoids imposing a traditional particular model of 'civicness'. It again understands 'civic' as something that exists in activity, and as a result the question of how to measure it becomes one of how we can see this action of 'civicness' in tangible ways. To this end, this framework identifies its domains in terms of: health and wellbeing; economic impact; institutional strategy and leadership; cultural contribution; estates, facilities and placemaking; and environment, climate and biodiversity, highlighting structural elements that support what they call civic activity. Interestingly, a key locus of what is considered 'civic activity' in this sense comes from communities of identity, rather than communities of place.

Communities of Identity

This emphasis on identity was supported in the community research, in which participants noted that “[civic strength] is supported by existence of identity-based community groups”, and that particular types of civic activity – such as lobbying MPs, writing a petition or creating strong community groups – are especially undertaken by them. At the same time, it was acknowledged that when thinking of ‘civic’ it in many ways came back to an idea of place. Even so, the majority of participants felt communities of identity are essential aspects of civic strength even when thinking of place. It was said to be essential that we are “embracing the difference within a collective”, “supporting less heard communities to take part”, and that “everyone is sharing their part and what they bring to the table, [civic strength] is about being better together.” One participant felt that this was particularly true when thinking about the impact of structural inequality on civic strength, noting that “structural inequality underpins a lot of how community functions, and which communities are made as a response”, and building on that another participant reflected that, particularly in cases of increased structural inequality, “it’s important to be supporting one another and sharing how things intersect – especially if you’re from a ‘hard to reach’ community”.

In earlier work on community strength that now feeds into the ‘civic’ literature, Black and Hughes (2001) frame the measures in terms of natural, economic, human, social and institutional capital.

For these purposes they define community strength as “the extent to which resources and processes within a community maintain and enhance both individual and collective wellbeing in ways consistent with the principles of equity, comprehensiveness, participation, self-reliance and social responsibility”. Due to the reliance on resources and processes within participation and social responsibility as key concepts, this definition touches on what is now emerging to be what we might call ‘civic’. This work also acknowledges that most people identify with both place-based and identity-based communities. The detailed work on how to measure community strength relies on the variety of communities to understand strength via the ‘mosaic’ of communities that individuals identify with, and feel belonging to.



Communities of Place

Conversely, the [2020 Social Fabric Index](#) by Onward found that people across the UK view community as ‘entirely local and place-based’. It further found that the UK has suffered a ‘long-term and broad-based’ decline in networks and institutions that make up social fabric. The Index defines social fabric as being made up of five pillars: relationships, physical infrastructure, economic value, positive social norms and civic institutions. For their purposes, they define civic in a stricter sense as a measure of the health of democracy and governance.

In the OECD’s Better Life Index, the [Civic Engagement Measure](#) – which is one of the key domains – is similarly understood in this stricter sense, using only voter turnout and levels of formal stakeholder engagement during the development of regulations and laws as indicators. By contrast, work by the [Transparency Initiative](#) outlines the need for an index for ‘civic space’ internationally, which they define as “freedom and means to speak, access information, associate, organise, and participate in public decision-making”.

The recently developed [Community Needs Index](#), commissioned by Local Trust as part of its ‘left behind areas’ project, focuses on assessing community need in the UK at ward level. It has 19 indicators under three domains, one of which is ‘civic assets’. For their purposes, this means any “key community, civic, educational and cultural assets in close proximity of the area.”

In the [ONS Measures of National Wellbeing](#), the [Thriving Places Index](#), the [Canadian Wellbeing Index](#) and the [Australian Unity Wellbeing Index](#) the term ‘civic’ does not enter into the measure at all, with ‘governance’, ‘government’ and ‘democratic engagement’ being the closest proxy based on the indicators for those measures. Scotland’s [Place Standard Index](#), Bristol’s [Happy City Index](#) and the USA’s [Gallup-Sharecare Wellbeing Index](#) do not explicitly incorporate ‘civic’ as domains or key themes at all.

The GLA’s 2019 [Social Integration Measures](#) are broken down into three key areas (relationships, participation and equality), with a focus on political participation, civic participation and citizenship emerging as measures of participation. Recent work by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Civil Society and Youth Directorate (February 2021) highlights the limits of data and a lack of existing useful measures in its overview of measuring the strength of a community. Among wellbeing, access to public transport, access to green spaces and recreational sites, financial resilience, and employment levels, the overview also highlights access to the public realm, the strength of social capital, and civic participation as key areas. Civic participation here includes political voice, a sense of being able to shape local decisions, and accessibility of local politics. The DCMS report also highlights the importance of self-reporting combined with data sets among the best models.

Civic Strength in London

Mahali et al (2018) further highlight a challenge in current frameworks for community wellbeing more broadly, which is that too often they are non-specific, and intended to work across contexts. Their argument focuses in particular on the fact that the majority of the scholarship on wellbeing is generated by 'what can be called the global north', and that there is often an assumption that these generalised measures, and even the concept of 'wellbeing' itself, can be 'seamlessly' transported to the 'global south'. This pulls apart a gap in terms of both thinking about community strength beyond the concept of wellbeing, and calls for more context-specific understandings to emerge.

The Young Foundation's own work on the [Community Strength Index](#), [Patchwork Philanthropy](#) and the [Co-op Community Wellbeing Index](#) does not explicitly explore 'civic strength'. Rather, like other existing indices, it focuses on areas of community wellbeing and strength that this work builds on. Similarly, the opportunity to focus on one city is unique in the current landscape, barring the pilot programme in Bristol, 'Happy City', by the Centre for Thriving Places. As a result, it will create an important model for city-specific work in the future.

From our review and community research, the importance of creating a framework for civic strength itself, and for London in particular, became clear. As a result of this research, we have defined civic strength as communities supported by robust public and social infrastructure to build strong relationships, and to feel able to meaningfully engage in the issues that matter to them. This has been developed according to the following framework centred around the three key themes: Relationships and Social Capital, Democratic Engagement and Public and Social Infrastructure. This framework was established through an exploration of civic strength in terms of both communities of identity and communities of place. The Index, which was built based on this framework, is limited due to the unavailability of certain data. As a result, this initial iteration primarily reflects communities of place, but we have the ambition to explore how to build communities of identity into future iterations.



The Civic Strength Framework

Civic strength exists when communities are supported by robust public and social infrastructure to build strong relationships and feel able to meaningfully engage in the issues that matter to them. Within this definition, there are three key areas, or themes of civic strength. Each of the three themes serves a key purpose in creating a broader image of civic strength. The first theme, Relationships and Social Capital, encapsulates a lot of what is more difficult to measure but was consistently mentioned first by participants when thinking about what makes a community 'strong'. This includes feelings of belonging, and of strong ties, but also feeling that one is able to take action and have opportunities to lead the life they want to.

The second theme, Democratic Engagement, builds on this to include not only feeling supported to take action, but that this action can be meaningfully received, whether by local government, local services or fellow citizens. The third theme, Public and Social Infrastructure, captures all the services, spaces and support that ensures all else is possible, from community spaces to green space to funding opportunities. By framing the Index in terms of these thematic areas, the importance of each is highlighted, as well as how essential it is that they are understood in tandem. In practice, Public and Social Infrastructure has been the most measurable, and can serve as a model for data collection of the theme one and two moving forwards.

To build the evidence base for the Index, this framework was shared on Talk London where 649 Londoners prioritised the domains. When the domains were sorted back into their themes (and weighted to be representative of all Londoners) the spread across themes was almost equally balanced, with Relationships and Social Capital at 36.1 per cent, Democratic Engagement at 31.9 per cent, and Public and Social Infrastructure at 32 per cent.

There are 12 key domains that sit under the three themes. These domains by theme are:

Relationships & Social Capital

- Opportunities for community life
- Social support
- Relationships
- Trust & social cohesion
- Community action

Democratic Engagement

- Institutional trust
- Accessible engagement
- Civic responsibility

Public & Social Infrastructure

- Public services
- Financial resources
- Community spaces
- Safety

Relationships & Social Capital

Domains & Indicators

This theme is composed of five domains and 18 indicators.

Opportunities for community life:

The opportunities and perceptions for community life, as a result of meaningful opportunities for connection grounded in robust social and public infrastructure.

Social support:

The existence of formal voluntary and community structures, and the degree of collaboration and shared approaches to community needs between these.

Relationships:

The existence of social networks that work within and between groups to create a strong social fabric.

Trust and social cohesion:

The degree to which individuals trust others in their community and perceive interactions/relationships within the community to be cohesive.

Community action:

Individuals perceptions of being able to mobilise around shared causes and actual incidences of action (i.e. levels of informal activity)

Key Insights

With 1 being the bottom and 5 being the top quintile.

1.00  5.00

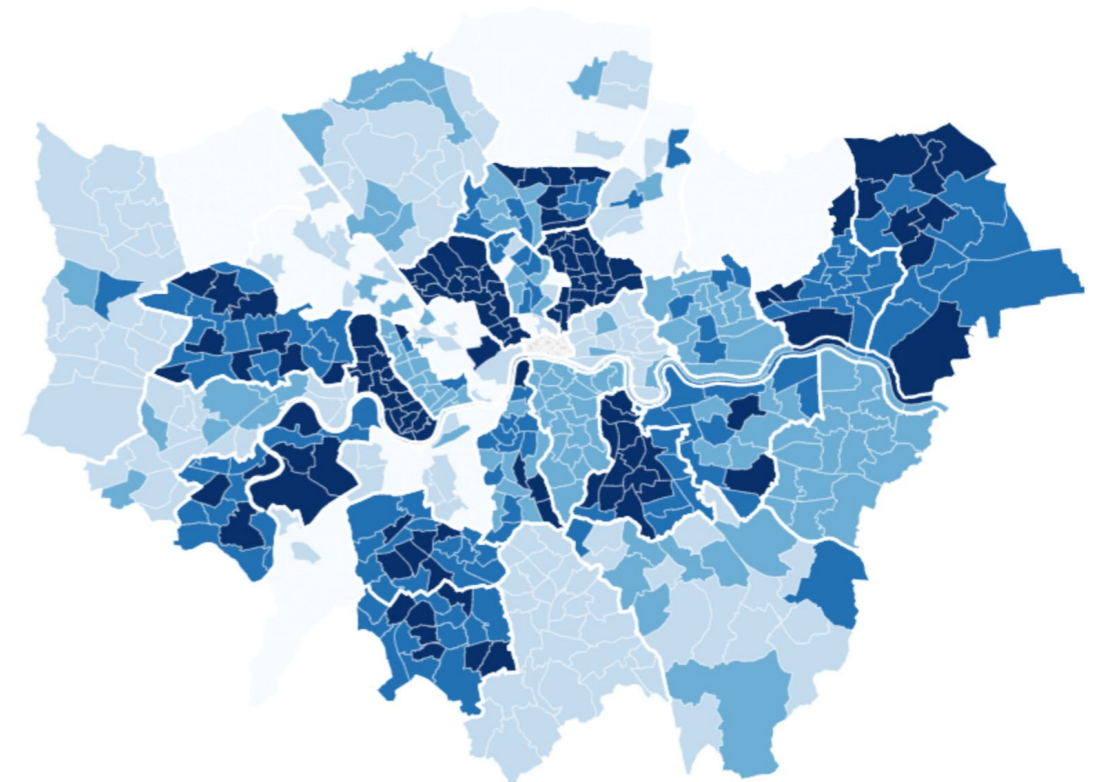


Figure 2. Ward-level map of Theme 1 of the Civic Strength Index: Relationships and Social Capital. For the interactive version [click here](#).

Relationships and social capital appear to be significantly weaker in the northern fringes of London compared to the rest of the capital. A patchwork of high-scoring areas in London's western areas (around Ealing, Hounslow and Richmond upon Thames) is mirrored by similarly strong areas in the east (Barking and Dagenham, and Havering).

Wallington South and Beddington South (Sutton), Camden Town with Primrose Hill (Camden) and White Hart Lane (Haringey) emerge as areas where relationships and social capital are amongst the strongest.

In Camden Town with Primrose Hill, we see high levels of formal volunteering, high density in charities as well as community interest companies and much grassroots activity (as evidenced by high levels of "below-the-radar" funding). White Hart Lane in Haringey shows similar patterns in high community interest company density and grassroots funding activity, whilst also hosting a high number of outdoor activities per capita.

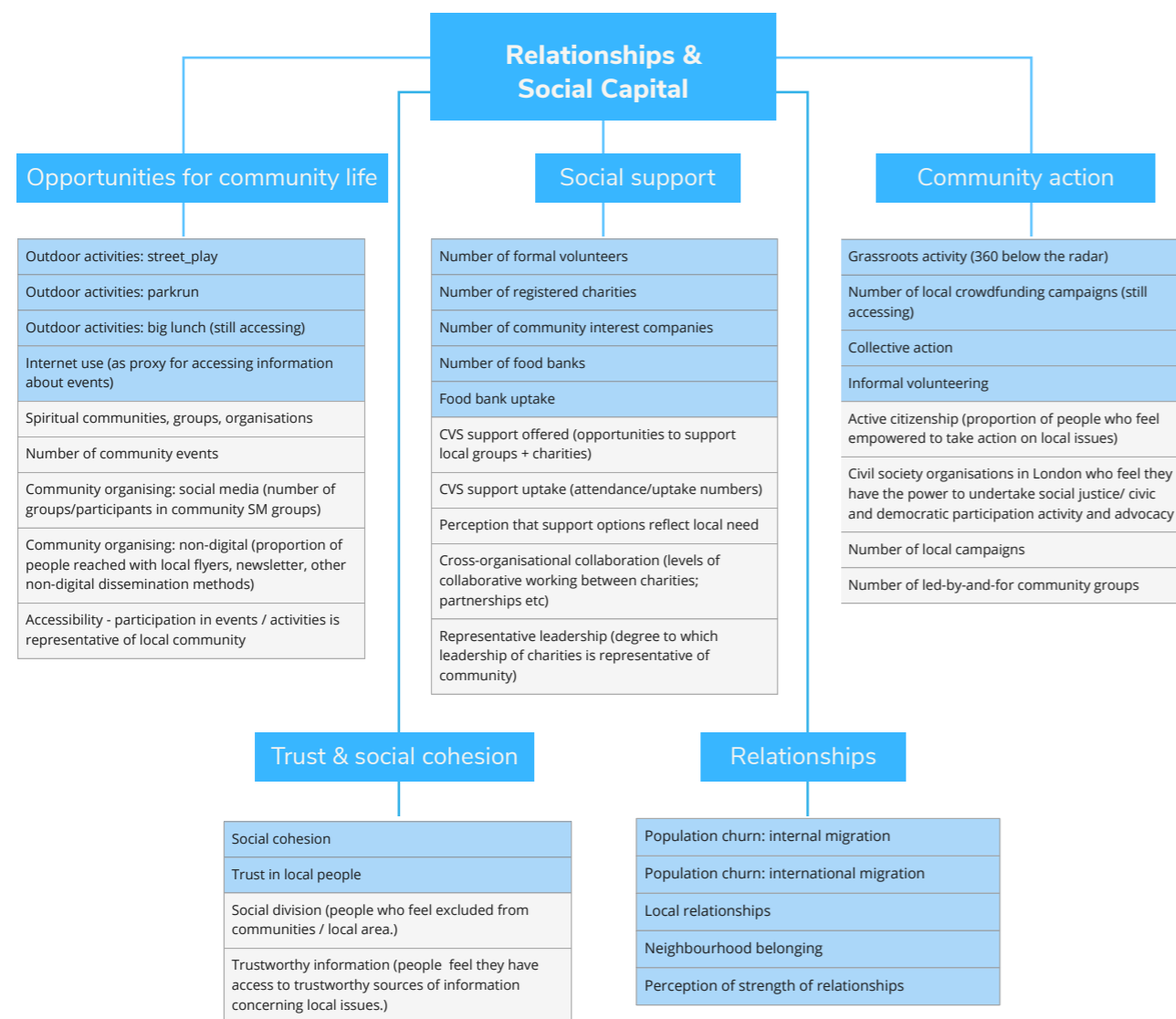


Figure 3. Hierarchy chart for Relationships and Social Capital theme. Blue = data for these indicators has been included in the Index. Grey = these indicators emerged as important for their respective domains during the defining phase; however, we were not able to access data to capture these. For detailed data definitions see appendix D.

It must be noted that, due to the current limitations of the data available – particularly for this theme – many wards within the same parent borough score similarly on relationships and social capital. The trust and social cohesion domain, for example, currently does not contribute to the final scores of wards for this theme, as data for these indicators was only accessed at regional level and therefore all wards across London received the same datapoint for this indicator. As such, differences in the data that are available, become amplified and inadvertently contribute more to Theme 1’s scores and the relative position of individual wards.

Case Study: Newham Food Banks

Newham is home to a food bank count well above the average for London, with slightly above-average food bank uptake. This contributes to 10 of Newham’s 20 wards being in the top two quintiles, and the remaining 10 being in the top three quintiles, for community action. However, food banks are an interesting and complex measure of civic strength. In general, numbers of food banks are particularly high where other forms of support are low, as there is an increased need to fill existing gaps. This holds true for areas within Newham which scores low in terms of social support and access to public services. While food banks are included as a key measure of community action in the Civic Strength Index because they capture a particular form of spontaneous community support, it is important to acknowledge the context in which they occur, and what they represent aside from a mobilised community – namely, increased needs alongside decreased support. This further highlights the need to underscore that while community food banks reveal a strong community in some senses, food banks should not be normalised or become a long term reality for individuals.

food security and a general ambition to create a healthier food environment into the council and broader borough architecture (see [steps 25-27](#) of Newham’s strategy). This has resulted in a Mayoral food security task force that has proven to be a brilliant way to get stakeholders from across the borough, members and officers working together on the 5A’s of food security: availability, accessibility, affordability, awareness and acceptance ([Newham Food Security Strategy](#)). Newham, of course, is just one example of how areas are thinking about food. Several boroughs have been adopting a cash first approach to food insecurity, providing straightforward resources (see example: [ifanuk.org/cashfirst](#)) on how to access advice and cash first support options, following the voices of those most implicated. Sitting in a somewhat different space, the [Capital Growth](#) programme - London’s largest community food growing network - hopes to achieve a healthy and resilient food system by providing people the opportunity to grow food in over 2700 spaces across the capital.

In the context of the Index, the decision was made to place food bank data in the community action domain to represent the community responsiveness necessary to support food banks, rather than in the social support domain, which would treat them as concrete and long-term aspects of civic strength. They should not become a permanent aspect of the social fabric as other aspects of social support are, instead they reveal the responsiveness of specific communities in times of crisis, and the capacity for bottom-up support which is a key element of the Index. In Newham, the high number of food banks importantly hard wires a focus on



Democratic Engagement

Domains & Indicators

This theme is composed of three domains and 12 indicators.

Institutional trust:

The degree to which individuals trust institutions (including schools, police, NHS, local authorities, government) and perceive them to be accessible and acting equitably, responsive and representative of diverse and changing community needs.

Civic responsibility:

The extent to which: individuals feel a sense of belonging to and ownership of their communities, and people take action and plan for the future of their communities.

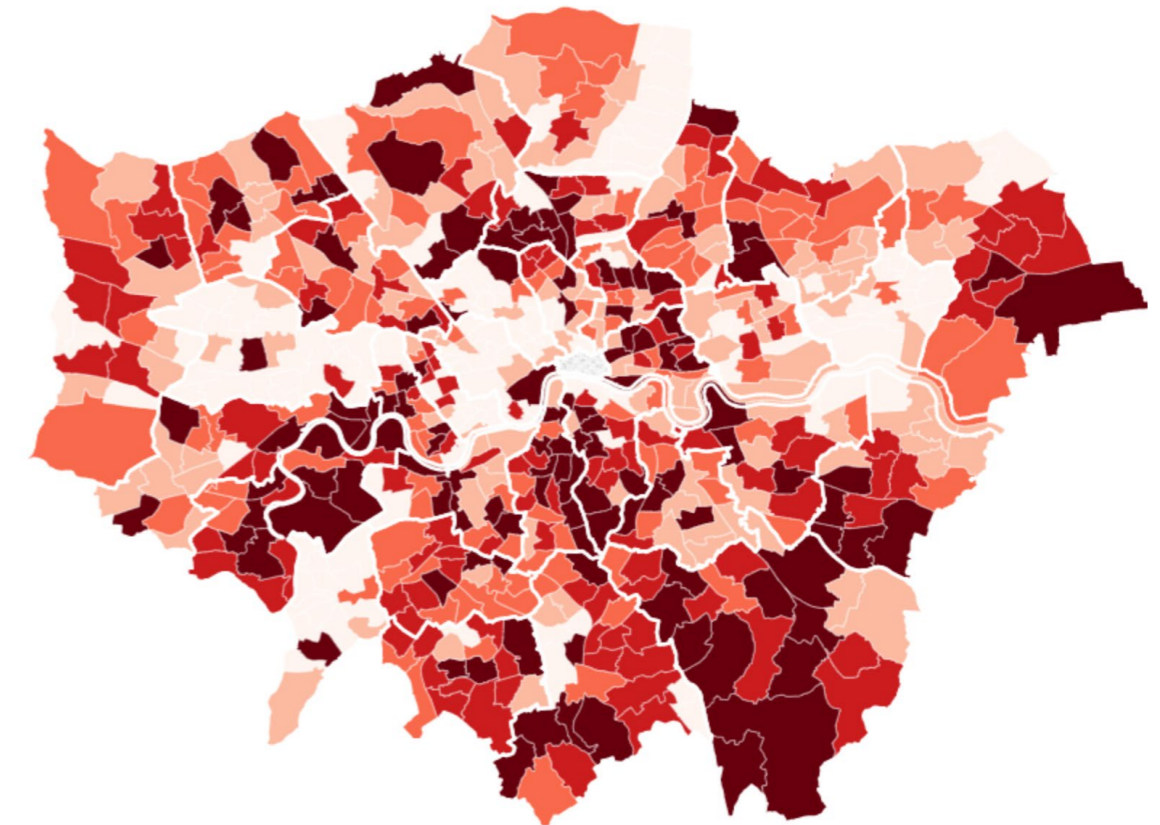
Accessible democratic engagement:

The extent to which: those in power are accountable to and representative of their communities; individuals can organise politically and see concrete change as a result; and meaningful opportunities for community voices to be included in shaping decision-making exist.

Key Insights

With 1 being the bottom and 5 being the top quintile.

1.00  5.00



Democratic engagement appears to be broadly mixed across the capital. However, it is important to note that both Electoral Commission and Cabinet Office research shows that overall, London has the lowest voter registration rates across the UK's regions and nations. Although there are certain clusters where democratic engagement is high or low across several wards, this theme shows fewer immediately obvious patterns on a London-wide level. Headstone South (Harrow), Notting Dale (Kensington and Chelsea), Dulwich Village (Southwark) and Graveney (Merton) are amongst the wards with the highest levels of democratic engagement.

Over the past year, a high number of mutual aid groups emerged in Headstone South in response to the pandemic, feeding heavily into its score for civic responsibility. A high proportion, relative to

Figure 4. Ward-level map of Theme 2 of the Civic Strength Index: Democratic Engagement. For the interactive version [click here](#).

the rest of London, of the population are on the electoral register and voter turnout for the Mayor of London elections in 2021 was also comparatively strong, contributing to its score on institutional trust. Graveney in Merton had a particularly high voter turnout, which contributed significantly to its democratic engagement score. Data from the Borough Electoral Services shows that as well as voter turnout, voter registration rates are typically higher in outer London boroughs, such as Merton, than in some inner London boroughs. This is in part due to higher numbers of the [most under-registered and under-represented](#) communities in inner London boroughs. Further, inner-city areas also typically have higher younger populations

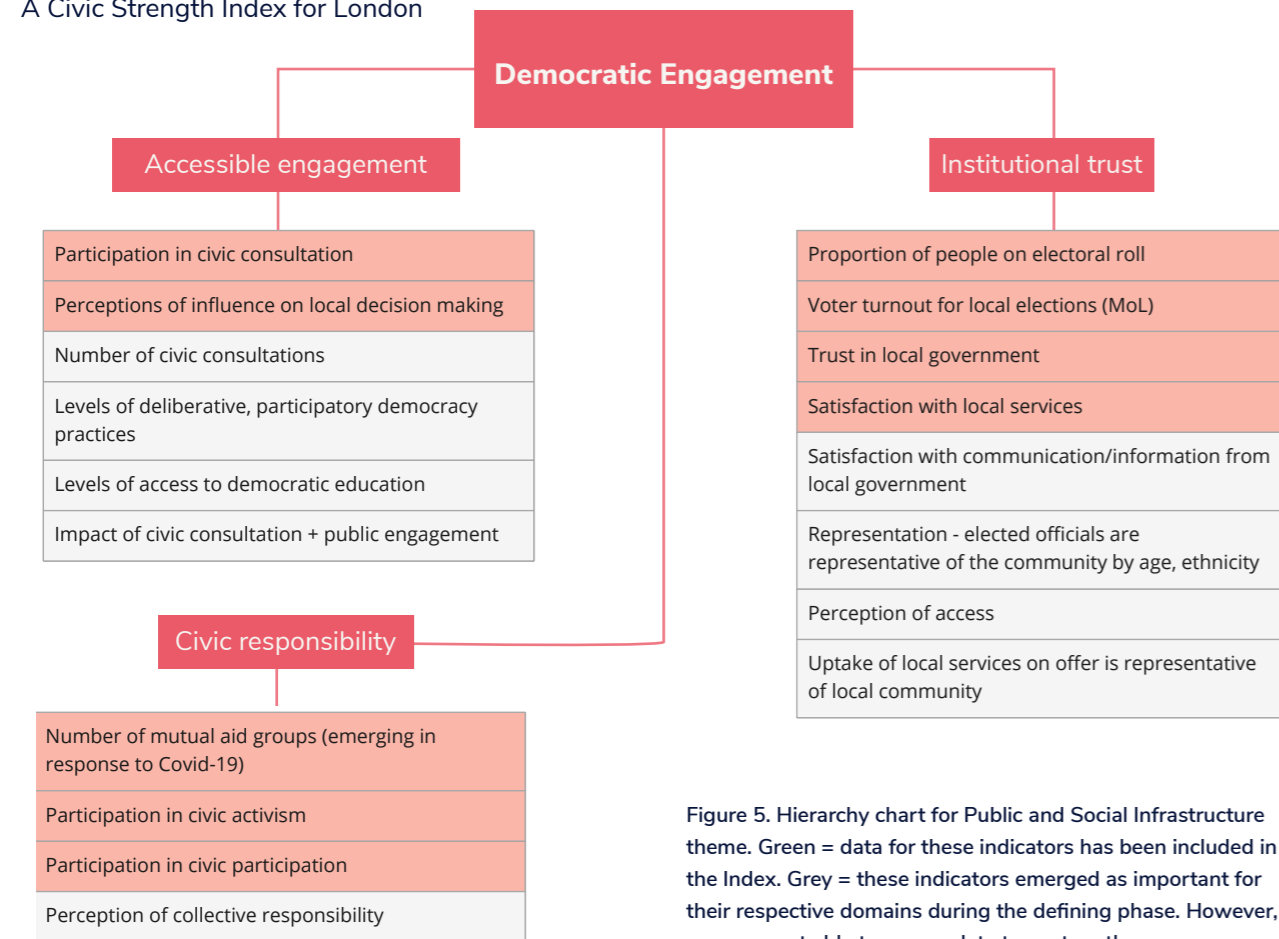


Figure 5. Hierarchy chart for Public and Social Infrastructure theme. Green = data for these indicators has been included in the Index. Grey = these indicators emerged as important for their respective domains during the defining phase. However, we were not able to access data to capture these.

and higher resident turnover rates, both factors contributing to low levels of registration. On-the-ground work aiming to increase voter registration is not captured in this indicator, but it is worth highlighting that electoral services in inner London areas are amongst the most active during initiatives such as [London Voter Registration Week](#) and beyond.

It is important to note that, within the theme, there are varied images of what a strong score in democratic engagement means. For example, in the boroughs mentioned above, there are high scores on institutional trust, while in other wards there is high civic responsibility (driven by mutual aid groups indicator) and low institutional trust (driven by voter registration and turnout); this is the case in wards such as Faraday in Southwark, Highgate in Camden, Childs Hill in Barnet, Abingdon in Kensington and Chelsea, and Tolworth and Hook Rise in Kingston upon Thames. All of these wards are in the bottom quintile for institutional trust,

but in the top quintile for civic responsibility. This highlights the fact that the framework is designed to create a complex image of what civic strength looks like, rather than to rank or score civic strength in a linear fashion. Rather, it is intended to highlight areas and opportunities for learning and support.

Although opinion polls on trust in and satisfaction with government exist (e.g. resident satisfaction surveys), limited sample sizes often hinder disaggregation attempts at a level lower than the local authority. The data points collected for these variables therefore did not contribute to the overall scores for this theme. Of course, democratic engagement extends residents' engagement with public institutions but also aims to capture more grassroots, informal incidences of civic participation in its final domain – civic responsibility. Whilst the collected data on mutual aid groups is a strong indicator for civic responsibility, more nuanced surveys on perceptions and self-reported behaviour (e.g. incidences of participation in civic activism, Community Life Survey) would help paint a clearer picture of democratic engagement and its contributions to civic strength.

Case Study:

Democratic Engagement in Inner London Boroughs

Democratic engagement has proved to be one of the hardest aspects of civic strength to capture due to many data points being limited to regional level. At an initial glance, inner-city areas emerge with lower voter registration and turnout, which consequently contribute to low scores of institutional trust. Examples of areas where this can be seen in particular are Stamford Hill West and Springfield in Hackney (the latter of which is explored as a complex picture of civic strength in a later case study) as well as Whitechapel in Tower Hamlets, and Thamesmead Moorings in Greenwich. Despite low numbers in many inner London wards, it is true that these electoral services actually are some of the most active during London Voters Registration Week and beyond, with extensive work happening on the ground. Work that is not being captured by the current indicators, and so, missing some of the progress and relationships being formed. Interestingly while in general the outer boroughs have higher levels of voter turnout and institutional trust, the odd inner-city area also emerges in the top quintile, such as Bromley North, Bow East, or Lansbury in Tower Hamlets. Currently, interesting work driven by the GLA and Trust for London focuses on capturing [London Voices](#) to share experiences of democratic participation, whilst questioning what an inclusive vision for civic and democratic engagement might look like.



Public & Social Infrastructure

Domains & Indicators

This theme is composed of four domains and 26 indicators.

Access to public services:

The availability and accessibility of public services (including council services, education, housing, health, and social care) that speak to local needs.

Financial resources:

The availability and accessibility of funding from public and philanthropic private sources, alongside the sustainability of local economies (including high streets and community businesses).

Community spaces:

The presence and accessibility of physical and online community spaces, to facilitate relationships and create opportunities for connection.

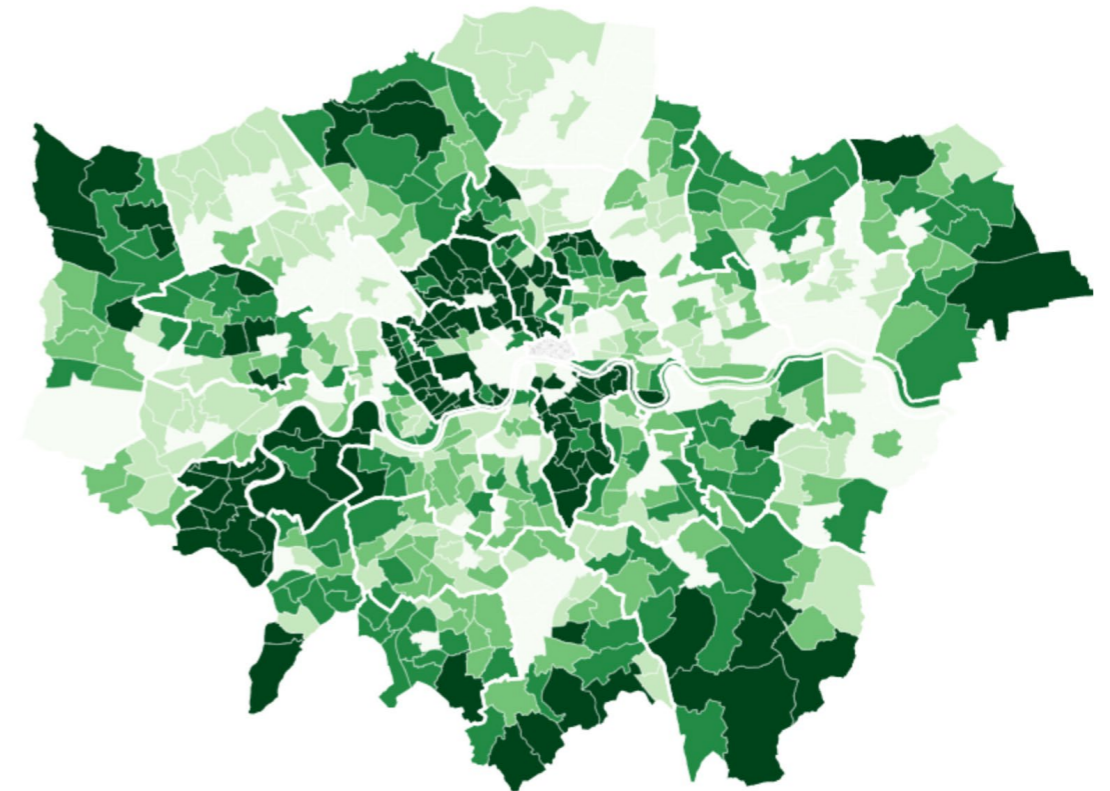
Safety:

The degree to which community members feel secure and happy with where they live.

Key Insights

With 1 being the bottom and 5 being the top quintile.

1.00  5.00



Public and social infrastructure appears to be stronger in the centre of the capital compared to the outer boroughs. However, this is not always the case – the map shows some very strong areas in outer boroughs as well. In some instances, areas scoring highest are immediately next door to those scoring the lowest.

Dulwich Village and Dulwich Wood in Southwark; Chelsea Riverside in Kensington and Chelsea; and Abbey Road in Westminster are amongst the wards with particularly high levels of public and social infrastructure. In Dulwich Village, this can be seen in its strong provision of public services, high levels of grants from funders across central government, and lottery distributors and other grant-making organisations, along with above-average job density and public transport accessibility levels. Low levels of crime, abundant access to parks and “healthy”

Figure 6. Ward level map of Theme 3: Public & Social Infrastructure. For the interactive version [click here](#).

streets further boost its score.

Wards in outer boroughs tend to have fewer community centres and cultural spaces per capita, as well as poorer means to access such hubs, where they do exist (as evidenced by low levels of public transport accessibility and low scores on the healthy streets scorecards). A further data point of interest to include in future iterations is that of [public markets](#), as their social value and unique contribution to civic strength has been [previously evidenced](#).

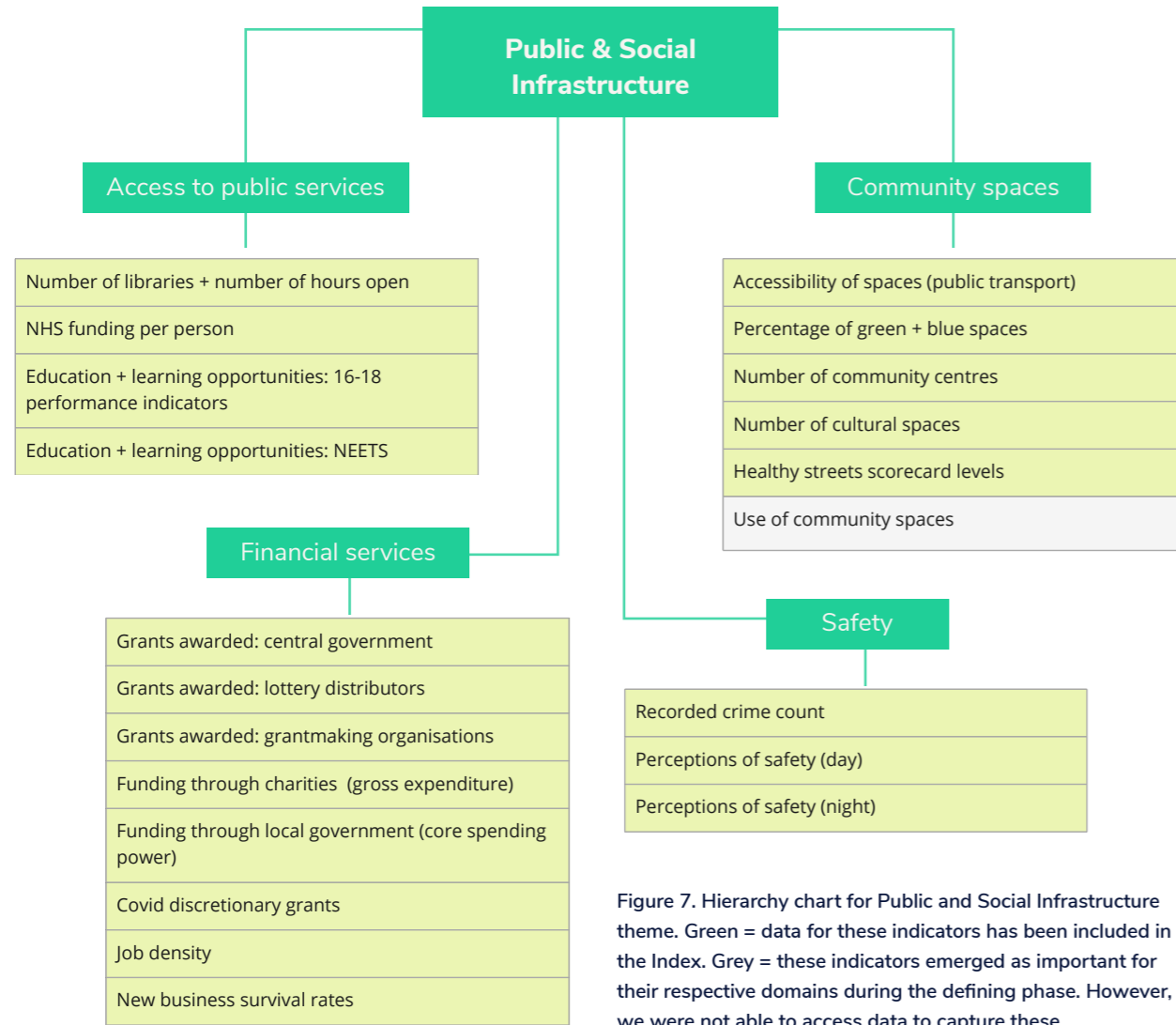
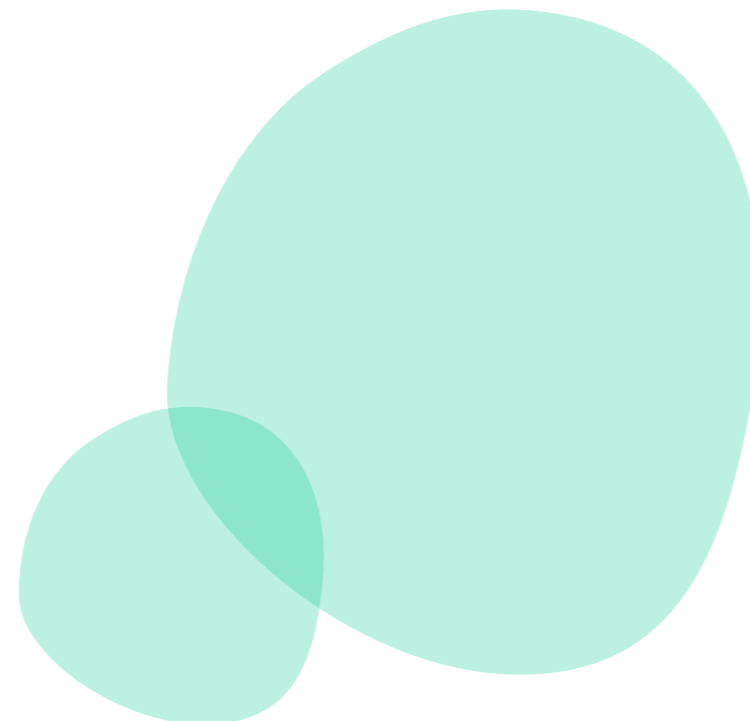


Figure 7. Hierarchy chart for Public and Social Infrastructure theme. Green = data for these indicators has been included in the Index. Grey = these indicators emerged as important for their respective domains during the defining phase. However, we were not able to access data to capture these.

The availability of data in this theme allows for a more granular view of pockets of civic strength, in terms of public and social infrastructure, across London. Where domains in relationships and social capital and democratic engagement themes rely more heavily on perception and behavioural indicators, the domains in public and social infrastructure – namely access to public services, financial resources, availability of community spaces and safety – are more easily quantifiable.

As such, future iterations should strive to collect data across all three themes at the level that has been attained for Theme 3. Specific calls to action on how to achieve this can be found in the Calls to Action section of the report.



Case Study:

Liberty Hall, Clapton Common

The Clapton Common area, adjacent to Springfield and Stamford Hill West in Hackney, scores highly on relationships and social capital, and social and public infrastructure themes, but ranks in the lowest quintile when it comes to democratic engagement. In particular, it has a very high score for opportunities for community life, with thriving social support and relationships. There is also a high availability of funding in the area, largely from charities and local government, with good access to community spaces. However, it has very low voter registration and turnout. This is a particularly diverse area with strongholds of the Orthodox Jewish and Muslim communities. This was especially made clear in the case of Liberty Hall, where after 30 years of sitting empty, the local community banded together with 245 backers, and the GLA pledging £25,000, to support the local people to transform the disused former toilet block into a flexible shared space, community kitchen and meeting place. The space can now be used to address social isolation and health inequalities in the neighbourhood.

Since opening in August 2020, Liberty Hall has offered a range of activities and services, including a community kitchen, a community-operated coffee kiosk, 85 litter picks, over 200 weekly bike repair clinics, and a flower stall. Volunteers also helped build a community garden. This example of civic strength demonstrates both a place-based and an identity-based community coming together to create a shared space to support civic activity, while engaging the local council and other key stakeholders to open a locked asset, gain sustainable funding, and shift how wellbeing is thought of in the area. It further opens an interesting look into different ways civic strength can exist so strongly, particularly when being driven by communities of identity often sidelined in mainstream images of what civic strength means in London.



Understanding Civic Strength

To better understand how different areas demonstrate varying mixes of civic strength and how this contributes to their overall scores, we look at how the domains of civic strength interact with one another – both within and across themes.

Social support, within the relationships and social capital theme, refers to support outside of government services, namely charities acting locally, levels of formal volunteering, community interest companies and food bank uptake. In places where social support is high, opportunities for community life as well as access to community spaces are more likely to be abundant. Interestingly, where levels of institutional trust are low, social support is often found to be high – which could point to the strength of non-governmental routes of support in areas which have been traditionally overlooked.

Areas with high levels of civic responsibility and community action tend to perform better in the community spaces domain. The latter also correlates with social support, suggesting that it is particularly in those areas where communities work together, and are supported by a vibrant charity and voluntary sector, that essential community spaces are maintained and remain accessible. Community spaces are further bolstered by strong levels of financial resources. The negative correlation between safety and community spaces results from higher levels of crime (specifically theft) in areas with a high density of cultural spaces and a thriving night economy. Including key data points specifically on perceptions of safety is essential for future iterations and would most likely remove this effect.

Interestingly, some areas that performed poorly on safety continued to do well on civic responsibility. One explanation could be that higher levels of crime, and (potentially) lower perceptions of safety, have meant that certain forms of community support, such as mutual aid groups, have become stronger in these areas. However, when looking at whether this civic responsibility translates into greater institutional trust, the opposite is found. Where levels of safety are low, levels of institutional trust also are more likely to remain low.

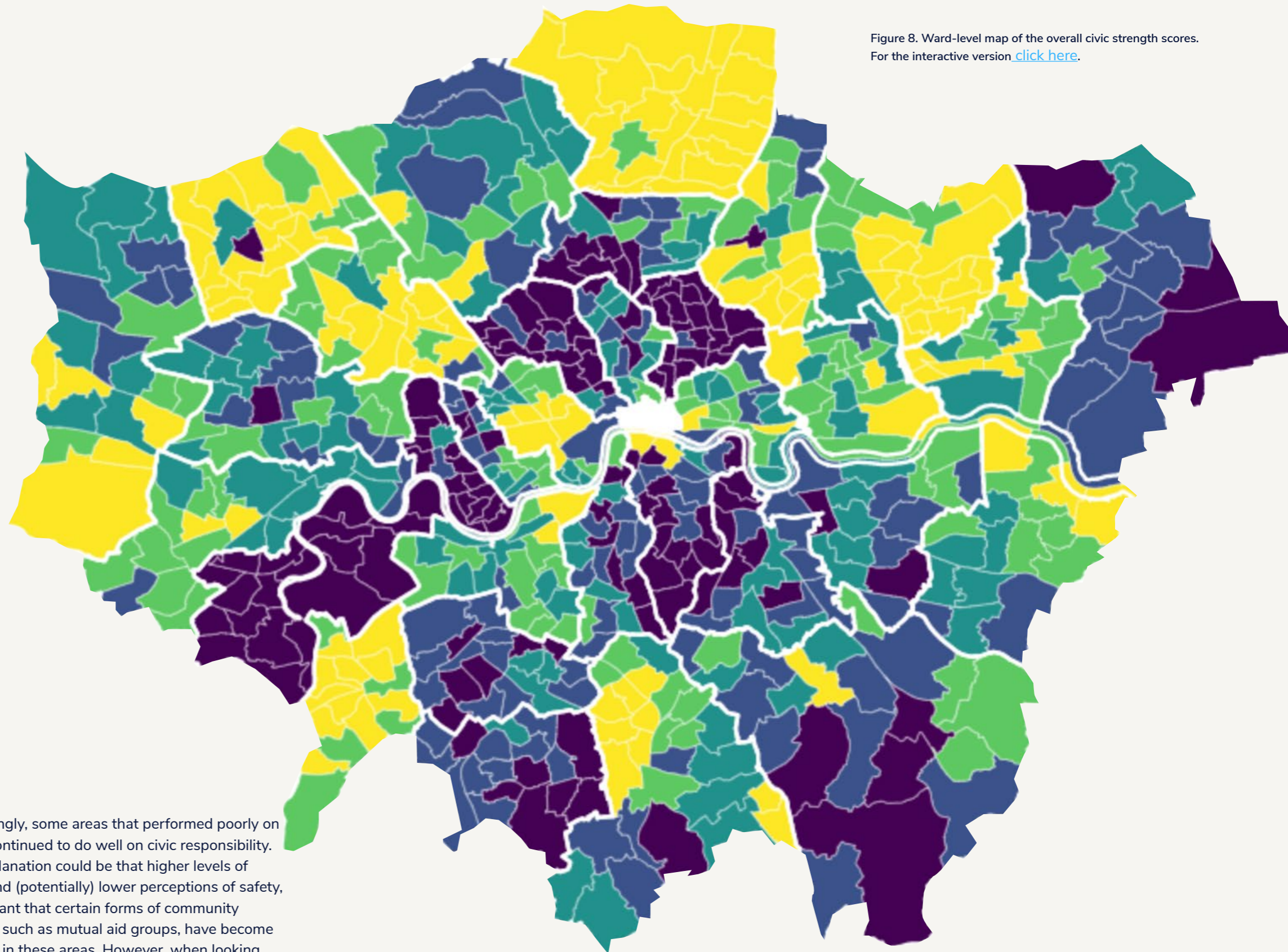


Figure 8. Ward-level map of the overall civic strength scores. For the interactive version [click here](#).

The Mix of Civic Strength

The Civic Strength Index allows us to 'zoom in' on areas to look more closely at the wards that make them up and demonstrate the different mixes of civic strength that exist across London.

For example, Barking and Dagenham on the whole has a slightly above-average measure for opportunities for community life and social support. The spread of financial resources is fairly consistent across the borough. Looking at community action however, a more varied image emerges. Chadwell Heath, Thames ward, Abbey and Longbridge are all very high as illustrated by [Below The Radar Grant Making](#), and Parsloes Park has the highest mutual aid groups per capita, whereas Goresbrook, Gascoigne and Whalebone are particularly low on community action measures.

Similarly, while there are below-average levels of institutional trust across the whole borough, they are lowest in Village ward and Gascoigne, whereas Longbridge and Chadwell Heath are higher.

Access to community spaces are also varied, with the lowest access in River ward, Whalebone and Becontree, whereas in Village ward and Thames ward there is comparatively high access to community spaces.

Understanding the variation of civic strength across wards within a borough provides an expanded understanding of how specific communities work, and also the amount of learning that can be done at the ward level. Each ward has its own 'mix' of civic strength. Take, for example, Chadwell Heath in Barking and Dagenham, which scores highest in the domains of community action, social Support, and opportunities for community life as its primary areas of civic strength. Looking to Parsloes Park in the same borough, we still see social Support and opportunities for community life having a presence

in the area, but civic responsibility rather than community action is a top area of civic strength in the ward.

Looking further afield we see more varied civic strength mixes when looking at the top three highest-scoring domains per ward:

Earl's Court (Kensington and Chelsea): public services, financial resources, social support

Fairfield (Croydon): institutional trust, financial resources, opportunities for community life

Stroud Green (Haringey): community action, institutional trust, safety

By understanding what's strong where and why, it becomes more possible to make visible the strengths of particular communities and to build on that strength and share it.

Case Study:

Wolves Lane, Haringey

Woodside in Haringey is in the top quintile of wards in terms of relationships, and institutional trust, while being in the second-highest quintile for community action and community spaces. It possesses a strong mix across several domains, particularly in relationships and social capital and democratic engagement. It also has average scores for the public and social infrastructure theme – so whilst not excelling in terms of access to public services and financial resources, it is not lacking in this area either.

Against this broader context, Wolves Lane is a three-acre site in Wood Green that has become an innovative food-growing hub led by and for local people over the last four years. Previously, it was home to a council-run plant nursery that was threatened with closure in 2017.

Community members in the area ran a successful Crowdfund London campaign, which was backed by 181 local people, including a donation from a famous local rapper, to transform the site into an expanded community market garden, delivery service, community space and education hub with a focus on providing affordable fresh food to the local community. The project subsequently received follow-on development funding from the GLA to develop plans and feasibility for the expansion of its operations which have come to be prized by the local community. It operates based on a consortium structure of a variety of organisations, including Crop Drop, Organiclea and Ubele Initiative, with distinct organisations coming together, and successfully raising a community share offer. To date, £2.44m of capital and revenue funding have been secured to pave the way for an ambitious [development plan](#).

There have been a number of impressive achievements – including the delivery of over 400kg of its produce to local schools, senior homes, local elderly and vulnerable residents in Haringey as part of #FoodforAll project during Covid. While basic infrastructure may be provided in this case, it is clear that it is maintained and made to prosper by communities themselves! This is further highlighted by high levels of community action in the relationships and social capital theme.

The London Civic Strength Index

Figure 9. Example of the postcode lookup in use.

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY
Civic Strength Index

Enter your postcode (without spaces):

Borough: Haringey
Ward: Woodside

	Score:	Quintile**:
Civic Strength Overall	63.3	4
Relationships & Social Capital	57.3	5
Opportunities for community life	54.1	3
Social support	16.9	2
Relationships	84.6	5
Trust + social cohesion*		
Community action	34.3	4
Democratic Engagement	47.2	4
Institutional trust	53.1	5
Accessible democratic engagement*		
Civic responsibility	8.5	3
Public & Social Infrastructure	61.7	2
Access to public services	28.7	3
Financial resources	8.0	3
Community spaces	34.2	4
Safety	75.9	2

What's included

Framing the Index are the three key themes: Relationships and Social Capital, Democratic Engagement and Public and Social Infrastructure. Within these are the specific domains of civic strength that were established during the definitional stage, indicators that serve as 'best measures' for these domains, and the data definitions that clarify their scope (see Appendix E). These have been compiled to form the Index, and create an image for civic strength across London at the ward level. This is currently being shared in the form of interactive maps, and as an Excel database.

Interactive Maps

Access the maps here:

[Overall CSI Scores](#)

[Theme 1: Relationships and Social Capital](#)

[Theme 2: Democratic Engagement](#)

[Theme 3: Public and Social Infrastructure](#)

How to use

Each score is from zero to 100, with zero being the lowest and 100 being the highest. Scores are given per domain and per theme, and have been calculated based on the respective wards' relative performance in that domain or theme. For a detailed explanation of how scores were calculated, please refer to Appendix C.

Postcode Look-up

You can easily find out the score of an area by inputting a postcode into the Civic Strength Look-up spreadsheet. Enter the postcode, hit enter and the function will return the ward's overall score, as well as a breakdown per theme and domain.

Underlying Data

To interrogate the underlying data and understand which variables contributed to a certain score, navigate to the "1a. Local Authority" and "2a. Ward" tabs in the Index spreadsheet. Depending on the geographic granularity of the data, you will be able to access underlying data at local authority or ward level. Use the drop-down filter in column A to select the area you are interested in. Scroll through columns H to BM to find the variable you are looking for.

Outliers

Data for the City of London were excluded entirely from the analysis because of its significant dissimilarity with the rest of the capital. Other outliers (defined as data points greater than five standard deviations from the normalised mean) were capped at a value equivalent to five standard deviations. These included:

Cultural Spaces and Community Centres

Bloomsbury in Camden, and St James's ward and the West End in Westminster, are outliers in their high number of cultural spaces per capita. A high density of archives (e.g. the Wellcome Collection, London University, the British Museum) can be found in Bloomsbury, along with a significant number of galleries, museums, music venues and pubs. Of course, the pubs, music venues and theatres across the West End and St James's ward all contribute to their high scores on this indicator.

Holborn and Covent Garden in Camden have significantly more community centres than most other London wards.

360Giving (central government, lottery distributors, grant-making organisations)

Several wards in Southwark are outliers in terms of funding data. However, at a closer look, this is more likely to be indicative of registered addresses of organisations and the presence of certain institutions rather than a direct indicator of disproportional activity in terms of civic strength. Borough and Bankside, Champion Hill, Dulwich Hill, Dulwich Village, Dulwich Wood, Peckham Rye, and St George's all receive higher levels of funding from lottery distributors and grant-making organisations than most other wards across London. The cultural strip on Southbank and the high density of universities, museums and hospitals in the area contribute to this. Ferndale in Lambeth, adjacent to Southwark, is a similar funding hotspot.

In Westminster, St James's ward and the West End receive high levels of central government funding and "below-the-radar" funding respectively. Peninsula in Greenwich also scores highly in terms of grants awarded from bodies in central government. Funding towards the National Maritime Museum contributes to this score considerably. Another outlier of note is Park Hill and Whitgift in Croydon, which scores particularly high on the number of grants coming from central government and lottery distributors, but not the total amount of money awarded, hinting at smaller-sized grants.

Limitations and Challenges

The Index was fundamentally led by the civic strength for London framework as defined by Londoners, rather than by what data was available most readily. While this means certain limitations arose at the data stage, the framework itself has been established as the result of robust methods creating clear ways to build it out in the future.

The framework for the Index was created using participatory methods over the course of several workshops and interviews. However, as with any participatory work, it is impossible to speak with everyone, as outlined in the 'Participant Breakdown', although there was a fairly diverse group. To account for the resulting limitations, the components of civic strength which emerged were then weighted according to Londoners' sense of what aspects of civic strength were most important. This was done from a sample of 649 via the Talk London platform, which was then adjusted to be representative of London.

Given the scope of the work, it has also provided an opportunity to combine varying data sources across sectors, and to facilitate sharing of data across public bodies and more local organisations. A further opportunity has been the unique focus of the Index on London. In other indices at the national level, London generally exists as an outlier. The chance to focus on London highlighted key gaps in data collection, particularly around the comparability of data available (i.e. between local authorities), but at the same time has highlighted opportunities for the facilitation of more standardised data collection of key measures in the future. This has been especially true concerning different geographic levels of data collection, as well as standardised time periods. In this initial rendering of the Index, while most data comes from the last two years, the range is larger than ideal, spanning 2014-21. In terms of geographic level, 15

indicators were collected at ward level, while the remaining indicators were captured at borough or regional level. As a result, for this iteration of the Index the variation between wards is not driven by all indicators, but only some. This is particularly true for relationships and social capital as well as democratic engagement. For a detailed data definitions (including time period and geography) for all indicators, please refer to appendix D.

As the Index itself was built out, challenges around capturing the civic strength of communities of interest and identity emerged. In much of the data, it is difficult to gauge where hubs are for these communities beyond physical locations that serve them – meaning, infrastructure is measurable but more work on capturing their real catchment areas is essential. This opportunity, however, is limited, as in many cases individuals belonging to these hubs travel far beyond their ward to participate. A priority for the future will be embedding questions that reveal more on this level, such as those from the Community Life Survey into Local Authority surveys legible at the ward or Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) level, which is more local than ward level (on average in [London](#) there are about 13,078 people per ward, while there are only 1,722 per LSOA area).

As this data is built out, there will also be opportunities for more techniques of data analysis. For example, each indicator is a proxy for their domain, but these domains – and as a result, indicators – particularly within themes are very interconnected. This means as more data is fed in, completing a factor analysis might be a useful technique that has not been completed at this stage of the Index.

Conclusion

“Civic strength exists when communities are supported by robust public and social infrastructure to build strong relationships and feel able to meaningfully engage in the issues that matter to them.”

The Civic Strength Index and Framework make visible a complex picture of civic strength across London. The Index clarifies what is strong where, and allows for building on the unique strengths of each ward. We hope this piece of work will be an iterative, embedded and long-standing tool to be used and built upon by Londoners, acting as a resource for communities, civil society, policymakers, funders and commissioners as they navigate building back after Covid-19 and beyond.

Ideally, this work will sit alongside existing indices (like the Indices of Multiple Deprivation or the Co-op Wellbeing Index) to broaden the lens on the picture of community life in London, and provide more opportunity to identify areas of growth, share good practice and respond to pressing needs. It is also important to acknowledge the unique opportunity it has provided to ‘zoom-in’ on London, and that the Civic Strength Framework is London-specific and shaped by what Londoners understand civic strength to be in their communities.

Domains within ‘Relationships and Social Capital’ proved particularly difficult to capture, as data on social support, trust, relationships or community action are often not captured or incomplete, when they are measured. For the indicators that we did

include, strong ties emerged in inner areas of the capital, with a weaker outer belt particularly in the Northern fringes. A patchwork of clustered hot and cold spots of civic strength in terms of ‘Democratic Engagement’ emerged across London, with fewer city-level patterns. Perhaps unsurprisingly, data on infrastructure, funding, public services and other assets a community might access were the most comprehensive, highlighting which communities across London have strong infrastructure foundations on which to build relationships and engagement, and which had more limited access to such assets and resources.

Our ask is that London’s leaders, funding sector, local governments and CVS take up this project, and work collaboratively towards the next steps for the Civic Strength Index, which centre around the following calls to action. These focus on shared actions to sustainably create data collection, collation and sharing methods to build out the indicators in the Index, as well as actions focused on engaging with the Index to test the framework and approach the inclusion of communities of identities more explicitly alongside the communities of place.

Explore and Build Out the Index

Review and explore the Index! Look at your ward, what’s missing?

For: Londoners

Indicator: All

Detail: To test, improve and develop this work, explore the framework, the definition of civic strength and the current Index scores and share any feedback with the GLA. Specifically, targeted engagement to fill in any previous gaps in the research engagement.

Submit case studies of civic strength from your communities! Help us build a richer picture of civic life across London.

For: Londoners

Indicator: All

Detail: To capture a more comprehensive view of civic strength and to share learnings from examples of best practice in particular domains as well as interactions between them. We are particularly looking for examples from communities of identity. This is to ensure that patterns of civic strength are captured beyond conceptualisations of place. Case studies will provide a deeper understanding of the different mixes of civic strength that exist across communities and highlight opportunities for how certain areas can be developed, where these might be low. To ensure the above can happen in an accessible and sustainable way, develop a form (or other method for collection) for Londoners and community organisations to submit stories and examples, collate and publish submissions alongside the Index.

Calls to Action

Improve Data Quality

Identify and call out indicator gaps.

For: GLA, civil society organisations, and local councils working in partnership
Indicator: Priority to indicators within Theme 1 (Relationships and Social Capital) and Theme 2 (Democratic Engagement)

Detail: To ensure future iterations of the Index include a broad range of indicators across the domains of civic strength (some of which might have been missed in this version), call out indicator gaps and share potential datasets that can fill these.

Encourage open data principles and collaborate with existing initiatives.

For: Civil society organisations
Domain: Various

Detail: To collaborate and align efforts with organisations such as the [Data Collective](#), [OpenReferral](#) and [OpenActive](#) to adopt open data practices.

Facilitate funding and capacity for local authorities, CVS and community organisations to embed data collection and collation processes as detailed in following calls to action.

For: GLA in partnership with the local authorities
Domain: All

Detail: To standardise data collection with a form that is easily usable and collated, while ensuring it is integrated into processes for the future. To set this up, there will need to be additional support to build capacity, fund, and train local authorities, and CVS and community organisations. This will be a drawn-out process, and will likely take three to five years to implement in a sustainable way.

Further improve robustness of domain weighting by running a more expansive prioritisation exercise with Londoners in the YouGov poll, as well as with key stakeholders.

For: GLA
Indicator: All

Detail: To ensure the sample of Londoners engaged is representative and that a wider experience/knowledge base is drawn upon (by engaging key stakeholders), when weighting the domains.

Calls to Action

Relationships and Social Capital

Collect data on number of active faith groups and organisations at ward level, and reach.

For: Potentially, Faith Forum
Domain: Opportunities for Community Life

Detail: To better establish how the incidence of faith groups and organisations increase entries into community life. The number of faith organisations in an area will act as a proxy for the levels of faith-related events and activities, as opportunities to participate in community life. Only aggregate data at ward level would be included in the Index, to ensure sensitive data is protected.

Collect data on support services offered locally.

For: CVS in each borough, Advice Service Alliance, Citizen's Advice Bureau
Domain: Social support

Detail: To have a better understanding of the local support offered and the uptake of these, as an indicator for the extent to which support offers match local needs.

Calls to Action

Democratic Engagement

Collect data on community events: total number; number of people reached through non-digital methods; number of people interacting with social media promotions; and accessibility of events.

For: Local authorities and/or CVS
Domain: Opportunities for community life

Detail: To have a better picture of community events as well as how people are finding out about opportunities on offer, collect and publish data on the number of events, and number of people reached through non-digital (e.g. local newsletters, community papers) and digital methods of event promotion (e.g. membership in Facebook groups, digital newsletter etc.).

Further, collect data on the accessibility levels of such events to assess inclusivity of these opportunities for community life. Potentially using platforms such as OpenReferral and OpenActive.

Collect data on the levels of deliberative and participatory democracy practices and implement ways to collate the impact of such public engagement.

For: Local authorities and London Councils
Domain: Accessible engagement

Detail: To capture the degree to which local government is incorporating methods and practices that allow for accessible engagement in local decision making (such as the number of civic consultations vs. the number of co-design sessions) as well as their impact.

Collate data on representation of elected officials by age, gender and ethnicity.

For: GLA and LGA
Domain: Institutional trust

Detail: To better understand the extent to which officials are representative of the wards they represent. This will indicate how Londoners feel able to interact with institutions and be represented by them.

Calls to Action

Public and Social Infrastructure

Collect data on the use of community spaces.

For: GLA Cultural and Community Spaces at Risk Programme
Domain: Community Spaces

Detail: To better understand who uses existing community infrastructure, by mapping out cultural spaces mapping to assess community hubs.

Ensure grant information is shared using the 360Giving data standard, and that geographic information is included. Funders across central and local government as well as other grant-making organisations should be encouraged and supported to adhere to the 360Giving data standard.

For: All grant-making and commissioning organisations
Indicator: Financial Resources

Detail: To build out a more comprehensive picture of financial resources available to different areas, funders across central and local government as well as other grant-making organisations should be encouraged to adhere to the 360Giving data standard. Grants from local government funders were excluded from this version of the Index to avoid skew, as only data from Barnet, Havering, Hounslow, Southwark and the GLA were available.

Calls to Action

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Appendix A Workshops

Community and Stakeholder Workshops

Participants were recruited for the workshops through the GLA, The Young Foundation and the Steering Group's networks. Community members and stakeholders both initially expressed interest through an online form asking basic questions about demographics (location, age, gender, area of work where relevant), and then recruited to reflect the demographic, socio-economic and geographic spectrum of Londoners. The workshops had up to 18 participants, and activities were carried out in groups of 3-5. They were hosted on Zoom and Miro (an online visual whiteboard).

During these workshops, we first asked participants to share which communities they felt they belonged to during the introduction. Then in the first activity, participants discussed the strengths of those respective communities. From this, facilitators asked participants to consider the term 'civic', and how it felt related or unrelated to a sense of community. Based on what they contributed, participants then went on to think about what civic strength means to them, and what makes it up. Facilitators recorded the identified components.

In the second activity, facilitators brought together components of civic strength identified by participants, and the top six components identified in other indices during the literature review. Participants were then asked to discuss, group and rank the components from 'Less important' to 'Very important'. Through the conversation, in each breakout room a consensus was achieved on the relative ranking of the components. Participants then returned to the main room and briefly discussed differences in the rankings between the breakout rooms and justifications for each.

For the third activity in the community workshops, participants then each chose one priority component in discussion with the wider group. In the stakeholder workshops for activity 3, participants were asked instead to reflect on how they would use the Index, what breakdowns they would like to see, and how it would be useful (or not useful in their work).

Through the process of identifying and prioritising domains, the importance of how we understood particular concepts came to the forefront. For example, when discussing 'volunteering' or 'political participation' answers changed drastically depending on whether these terms were meant to encapsulate just the formal (i.e. volunteering with specific organisations or political participation as voter turnout) as opposed to how they exist informally across London (i.e. mutual aid or local political organising). In both these cases, participants identified that this was in large part due to different lived experiences which led to varying levels of institutional trust.



Figure 1. Screen captures of workshop boards taken during the community and stakeholder engagement phase. The activities shown centred around defining civic strength and identifying its components.

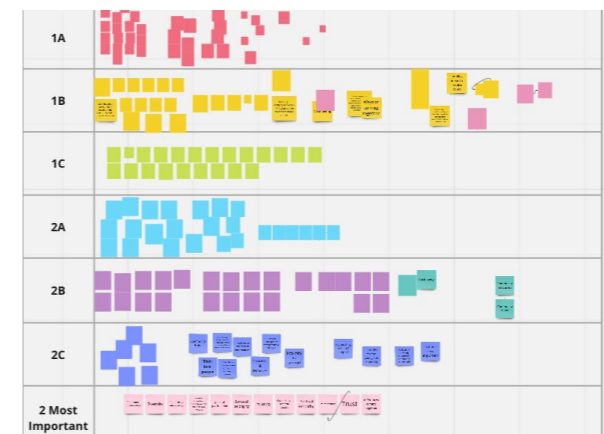
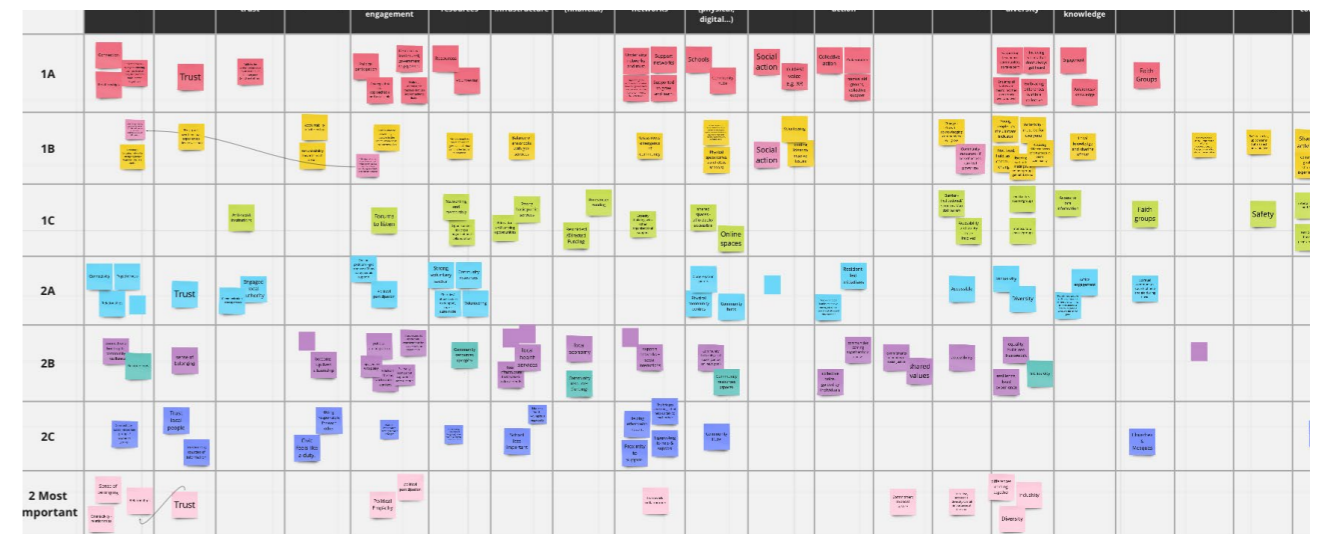


Figure 2. Participant responses were coded by theme and sorted into preliminary 'buckets'. This process was repeated for all contributions across all workshops to obtain the final domains and themes of civic strength.

Appendix B Participant Details

Participant Breakdowns

In the community workshops, participants lived in Barnet, Brent, Bromley, Camden, the City of London, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Havering, Lambeth, Lewisham, Redbridge, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Wandsworth. 24 per cent of participants identified as male, and 76 per cent as female. We endeavored to reach a cross section of Londoners, and were able to reach people from the majority of London boroughs, with a spread of North, East, South and West London represented. We were also able to reach a range of ages, although not those under 24, and only one person above 65. Of the participants, 14 per cent have a disability, and 41 per cent have caring responsibilities.

In the stakeholder workshops we had several participants who worked across all London boroughs, and those with specific focuses in Barnet, Brent, Bromley, Ealing, Hackney, Hounslow, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth, and Westminster. Nine of the organisations represented concentrated on supporting young people, eight on supporting minoritised ethnic groups, seven on supporting people with disabilities, seven on older people, six on LGBTQI+, six on carers, and four on supporting women.

When asked why they participated, participants explained that they were interested in how their communities could develop a stronger voice, invested in rebuilding resilience and civic strength following Covid-19, wanting to take part in conversations to help shape a more inclusive future, and a desire to strengthen the tools for the voluntary sector in London.

Individuals who attended self identified their ethnicity as:

African, Asian British, Asian British, Pakistani, Bangladeshi (x2), Bengali, British Asian, Black African, Black British (Caribbean), Black British (x2), British, Chinese (x2), Indian, Japanese and Indian, Mixed White Asian, Romanian, Somali, White (x2), White British (x3), White European (x3), White Irish, White other

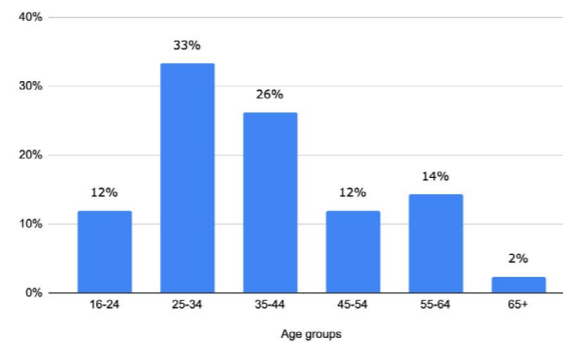


Figure 3. The age breakdown of participants in the community workshops.

Appendix C Data Gathering and Analysis

Data Gathering

Data were collected from a variety of sources, primarily the London Datastore but also the Charity Commission, Companies House, 360Giving and two national government surveys, the Community Life Survey and the Taking Part Survey. Different sources recorded data at different levels of geographical resolution from postcode and LSOA, to ward, borough and in some cases London-wide. In addition, most data covered either the financial year 2019/20 or the calendar year 2020; some went as far back as 2016. Further data opportunities emerged to plan for future data gathering in partnership with local authorities, and community organisations.

The data were recorded across three themes, 12 domains and 52 individual indicators. We encountered a specific issue around the ward boundary changes in 2014 (Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Kensington and Chelsea) and 2018 (Bexley, Croydon, Redbridge, and Southwark), where it appears that some data providers/collectors may have been using out-of-date ward codes.

Data Analysis

The data were inputted at lowest available geographic granularity and then:

Converted to a per capita figure where appropriate (i.e. excluding indicators already recorded as a ratio or percentage, or where there is no reason to think it varies with population size);

Normalized using the formula $(X_i - \mu) / \sigma$, (where X_i is the data value for borough i , μ is the mean across all boroughs and σ is the standard deviation);

A single composite indicator was constructed for each of the 12 domains by taking a simple average of the component variables in each indicator set. These indicators were then combined into an overall Index score using the weights shown in table 1 below. Finally scores were rescaled to be in the range of 0 to 100 for easier readability and comparability.

The domain weights were constructed from a prioritisation activity that had presented the various domains of civic strength to participants on the 'Talk London' platform, in line with the participatory approach used to develop the framework for civic strength. Respondents were asked to select the three components they felt were most important to the concept of civic strength. As the sample responding to this activity was not perfectly representative of the London population, participants' responses were reweighted according to several demographic dimensions. Of the 677 unique responses collected on Talk London, 29 participants withheld answers necessary to calculate appropriate weightings, and were therefore excluded from analysis, leaving our final sample at 649. For the remaining respondents, weights in tables 2a-e were calculated and applied in a multiplicative fashion.

Indicator Construction

As noted above, a single composite indicator was constructed for each of the 12 domains by taking a simple average of the component variables in each indicator set. This approach makes two implicit and untested assumptions: (i) that every variable is a partial proxy for the domain in question, and (ii) that each variable makes an equal contribution to the domain indicator (ie. that they are equally weighted).

A better approach would be to test these assumptions through some form of factor analysis, to determine the actual number of domain indicators for each of the three themes and the most appropriate set of weights to apply to the component variables to ensure each contributes the maximum amount of information. As with any statistical technique, factor analysis works best when the underlying data are sufficiently robust.

Theme	Combined Theme Weight	Domain	Individual Domain Weight
Relationships and Social Capital	36.1%	There are accessible community events and activities	5.3%
		There are active voluntary groups and charities	2.7%
		Strong relationships exist between people in the community	11.2%
		People come together to work toward shared causes	7.7%
		People trust one another	9.2%
Democratic Engagement	31.9%	People trust in and feel represented by institutions	7.8%
		There are opportunities for communities to be included in decision making	9.5%
		People feel a sense of responsibility towards improving their community	14.6%
Public and Social Infrastructure	32.0%	Public services respond to local needs	6.6%
		Funding from private and charitable sources is available and there is a sustainable local economy	2.3%
		Community spaces allow opportunities for connection	6.4%
		People feel secure and happy where they live	16.6%

Sensitivity Analysis

One way of determining the robustness of the Index is to test what happens when small changes are made to individual variables. This can help to identify which variables have the greatest impact on each of the domains and on the overall score. Greater care can then be taken to ensure the accuracy of the data for particularly sensitive variables. Due to data limitations this was not completed at this stage, but would be useful once more data has been gathered.

Age group weights applied to Talk London sample.

Age group	Count Talk London sample	% CSI	% London	Weight
0-15	-	-	0.21	-
16-24	20	0.03	0.13	4.22
25-34	80	0.12	0.22	1.79
35-44	88	0.14	0.20	1.50
45-54	143	0.22	0.16	0.74
55-64	144	0.22	0.13	0.58
65+	174	0.27	0.15	0.57

Gender weights applied to Talk London sample.

Gender	Count Talk London sample	% CSI	% London	Weight
Man	327	0.50	0.50	1.00
Woman	322	0.50	0.50	1.00

Ethnicity weights applied to Talk London sample.

Ethnicity	Count Talk London sample	% CSI	% London	Weight
Asian	51	0.08	0.18	2.34
Black	26	0.04	0.12	2.96
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups or Other	55	0.08	0.11	1.25
White	517	0.80	0.59	0.74

Housing weights applied to Talk London sample.

Housing	Count Talk London sample	% CSI	% London	Weight
Own Outright	233	0.36	0.244	0.68
Buying with mortgage	196	0.30	0.283	0.94
Rented from Local Authority or Housing Association	100	0.15	0.223	1.45
Rented from Private landlord	120	0.18	0.25	1.35

Employment weights applied to Talk London sample.

Employment	Count Talk London sample	% CSI	% London	Weight
In Employment	405	0.62	0.745	1.2
Unemployed	23	0.04	0.065	1.8
Economically Inactive	221	0.34	0.202	0.6

Appendix D Data Definitions, Methods

Domain 1a: Opportunities for Community Life

The opportunities and perceptions for community life, as a result of meaningful opportunities for connection grounded in robust social and public infrastructure.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
outdoor activities: street_play	The number of play streets per borough, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Borough	2019	Play Streets Map, Playing Out: https://playingout.net/nearby-you/near-you/
outdoor activities: parkrun	The number of park run events per borough, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Borough	2019	Park Run Map, parkrun UK: https://www.parkrun.org.uk/events/events/#geo=8.71/51.3923/-0.1795
outdoor activities: big_lunch	<i>(Tentative, still waiting to hear back from Eden Project)</i> The number of big lunch events per borough, expressed as a proportion of the local population.			
internet_ever_used_percentage	Percentage of the population who "ever used" the internet, responding to the question "when did you last use the internet?" (As a proxy for finding out about community events)	Borough	2018	Annual population Survey https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/internet-use-borough-and-population-sub-groups

Domain 1b: Social Support

The existence of formal voluntary and community structures, and the degree of collaboration and shared approaches to community needs between these.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
formal_volunteer_count	The sum of formal volunteers based on charity commission return, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Borough	01/01/19-31/12/20	Charity commission Full register download (charitycommission.gov.uk)
charity_count	The number of registered charities working at local authority level, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Borough	01/01/19-31/12/20	Charity commission Full register download (charitycommission.gov.uk)
CIC_count	The number of Community Interest Companies in an area, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Borough	2019	Companies House http://download.companieshouse.gov.uk/en_output.html

Domain 1c: Relationships

The existence of social networks that work within and between groups to create a strong social fabric.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
Internal_migration_net_19_20	Components of population change for local authorities in the UK, mid-2020.	Borough	mid-2020	ONS, https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland
International_migration_net_19_20				
local_relationships_19/20	Percentage of adults who chat to their neighbours at least once a month.	London	2019-20	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-2019-20
neighbourhood_belonging_19/20	Percentage of adults who feel they very or fairly strongly belong to their immediate neighbourhood.	London	2019-2020	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-2019-20

Domain 1d: Trust and Social Cohesion

The degree to which individuals trust others in their community and perceive interactions/relationships within the community to be cohesive.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
social_cohesion_19/20	Percentage of adults who agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.	London	2019-2020	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-201920
neighbourhood_trust_19/20	Percentage of adults who feel most or some of the people who live in their local neighbourhood can be trusted.	England (not included at this level)	2019-2020	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-201920

Domain 1e: Community Action

Individuals' perceptions of being able to mobilise around shared causes and actual incidences of action (i.e. levels of informal activity).

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
360_below_radar_16-19	Sum of 2016-19 below-the-radar grants, as proxy for grassroots activity. Expressed as a proportion of the local population. Where the recipient ward was available this was used, otherwise postcodes were converted to wards.	Ward	2016-2019	360Giving, Below The Radar, Local Trust, https://localtrust.org.uk/insights/research/below-the-radar/
food_bank_count	The number of food parcel distribution centres in an area, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Borough	01/04/20 - 31/03/21	The Trussell Trust https://www.trusselltrust.org/
food_bank_uptake	The total number of parcels distributed, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Borough	01/04/20 - 31/03/21	The Trussell Trust https://www.trusselltrust.org/
crowdfunder_ptth	<i>(Tentative, still waiting to hear back from Crowdfunder)</i> The number of crowdfunded projects in an area.			
collective_action_19/20	Percentage of adults who definitely agree or tend to agree that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the local area.	England (not included at this level)	2019-2020	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-201920
informal_volunteering_19/20	Percentage of adults who participate in informal volunteering at least once a month.	London	2019-2020	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-201920

Note on Charity Commission Data

We extracted charities with a financial year end-date between 01/01/19 and 31/12/2020. We referred to the area_of_benefit table and filtered charities according to their scale of geographic_area_type (local, regional, national etc.) and only included charities operating at one local authority (the lowest geographic level available to indicate). Parent_geographic_area_description was filtered for Greater London. Then using the list of charity numbers with an area_of_benefit in London, we calculated 3 variables:

Formal_volunteer_count
Charity_count
Charity_gross_expenditure

Note on Food Bank Data

The data included on food banks was shared with us from the Trussell Trust. The number of distribution centres and total number of food parcels distributed (to children, to adults) per borough was included in this dataset. Data for Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest was missing. As this gap was not down to an absence of distribution centres or a lack of uptake, we calculated placeholder values from neighbouring boroughs, matched in terms of whether an inner or outer borough and comparable scores on the IMD.

For Tower Hamlets – standard average of surrounding 3 boroughs (Hackney, Newham, Islington)
For Waltham Forest – standard average of surrounding 3 boroughs (Enfield, Haringey, Redbridge)

Domain 2a: Institutional Trust

The degree to which individuals trust institutions (incl. schools, police, NHS, local authority, government) and perceive them to be accessible and acting equitably, responsive and representative of diverse and changing community needs.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
electorate_20	Proportion of population on electoral roll.	Ward	2020	ONS https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/elections/electoralregistration
total_ballots_MoL_2021	Total number of constituency ballots cast in 2021 Mayor of London and London Assembly Election, as proportion of population.	Ward	2021	London Elects https://www.londonelects.org.uk/im-voter/election-results/results-2021
trust_local_council	Percentage of adults who trust their local council a great deal or a fair amount.	London	2020-2021	Question 6, Aggregate Tables, Resident Satisfaction Surveys, Local Government Association https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/research/research-publications/residents-satisfaction-surveys

satisfied_local_services_compil e: parks/green_spaces, children/young_people plder_people sports/leisure	Percentage of adults who are very or fairly satisfied with the different types of services that are provided by the council(s) in their area, specifically: - Parks and green spaces - Services and support for children and young people - Services and support for older people - Sport and leisure services	London	2020-2021	Question 10, Aggregate Tables, Resident Satisfaction Surveys, Local Government Association https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/research/research-publications/residents-satisfaction-surveys
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Domain 2b: Accessible Democratic Engagement

The extent to which those in power are accountable to and representative of their communities; individuals can organise politically and see concrete change as a result; meaningful opportunities for community voice to be included in shaping decision making.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
civic_consultation_19/20	Percentage of adults who have participated in civic consultation at least once in the last 12 months.	London	2019-20	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-201920
influence_decision_making_19/20	Percentage of adults agreeing that they personally can influence decisions affecting their local area.	London	2019-20	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-201920

Note on Resident Satisfaction Survey data

The Local Government Association conducts an opinion poll every four months, asking the same set of questions each round to track changes in perceptions of local government over time. The sample size in each wave does not allow for regional disaggregation of this data. However, by combining the samples of three waves (ie. over a period of 12 months), regional disaggregation becomes viable, bringing the annual sample size up to 3000. We have used the aggregate data for 2020-2021.

Domain 2c: Civic Responsibility

The degree to which individuals feel a sense of belonging to and ownership of their communities, and the extent to which people take action and plan for the future of their communities.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
number_of_mutual_aid_groups	The number of active Covid-19 mutual aid groups that emerged throughout the pandemic, expressed as a proportion of the local population.			Covid Mutual Aid Wiki https://github.com/Covid-Mutual-Aid/mutual-aid-wiki
civic_activism_19_20	Percentage of adults who have participated in civic activism at least once in the last year.	London	2019-20	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-201920
civic_participation_19/20	Percentage of adults who have participated in civic participation at least once in the last year.	London	2019-20	Community Life Survey https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-201920

Domain 3a: Public Services

The availability and accessibility of public services (including council services, education, housing, health, and social care) that speak to local needs.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
Libraries	Total number of libraries in an area, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Borough	2016	DCMS https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-libraries-in-england-basic-dataset
Libraries_hours_open	Number of hours libraries are open.	Borough	2016	DCMS https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-libraries-in-england-basic-dataset
CCG_allocations_per_patient_20_21	Clinical commissioning group funding allocations per registered patient in £.	Borough	2019-2020	House of Commons Library, NHS Funding: Clinical Commissioning Groups https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8399/
CCG_count_registered_patients_20_21	Total number of registered patients by Clinical Commissioning Group, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Borough	2019-2020	House of Commons Library, NHS Funding: Clinical Commissioning Groups https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8399/
%_students_achieving_grades_A*-C_English_Maths_GCSEs	16 to 18 performance measures. Percentage of pupils achieving grades A*-C in both English and mathematics GCSEs	Borough	2019-2020	Department for Education https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/school-and-college-performance-measures
Neets	Proportion of young people aged 18-24 who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) for boroughs. This variable is inverted (lower is better).	Region	2020	Department for Education https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/young-people-not-employment-education-or-training-borough

Domain 3b: Financial Resources

The availability and accessibility of funding from public and philanthropic private sources, alongside the sustainability of local economies (including high streets and community businesses).

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
360_central_gov_count	The number of grants awarded by funders in central government, expressed as a proportion of the local population. ⁷	Ward	01/01/2019-31/12/2020	360Giving https://grantnav.threesixtygiving.org/
360_central_gov_sum	The value of the grants awarded by funders in central government (in £), expressed as a proportion of the local population. ⁸	Ward	01/01/2019-31/12/2020	360Giving https://grantnav.threesixtygiving.org/
360_lottery_count	The number of grants awarded by lottery distributors, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Ward	01/01/2019-31/12/2020	360Giving https://grantnav.threesixtygiving.org/
360_lottery_sum	The value of the grants awarded by lottery distributors (in £), expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Ward	01/01/2019-31/12/2020	360Giving https://grantnav.threesixtygiving.org/
360_grantmaking_orgs_count	The number of grants awarded by grant-making organisations, expressed as a proportion of the local population.	Ward	01/01/2019-31/12/2020	360Giving https://grantnav.threesixtygiving.org/
360_grantmaking_orgs_sum	The value of the grants awarded by grant-making organisations (in £).	Ward	01/01/2019-31/12/2020	360Giving https://grantnav.threesixtygiving.org/
charity_gross_expenditure_20_21	The gross expenditure of charities working at local authority level. (See note on Charity Commission data in Theme 1)	Borough	01/01/19-31/12/20	Charity Commission Full register download (charitycommission.gov.uk)
core_spend_power_19_20	Core spending power of local authorities in £ millions.	Borough	2019-2020	House of Commons Library https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/local-authority-data-finances/
Jobs_density_19	The number of jobs per resident aged 16-64.	Borough	2019	Nomis https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/jd
New_businesses_survived_18	Percentage of new businesses that survive 1 year.	Borough	2018	ONS https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/business-demographics-and-survival-rate-s-borough

Domain 3c: Community Spaces

The presence and accessibility of physical and online community spaces, to facilitate relationships and create opportunities for connection.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
avg_public_transport_accessibility_15	Transport for London's (TfL's) Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs), taking into account walk access time and service availability (see note on PTAL below) – average score on Index (only this used in CSI).	Ward	2015	TfL https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/public-transport-accessibility-levels
Access_open_space	Percentage of households in a ward that have access to open space (as defined by the London Plan).	Ward	2014	Greenspace Information for Greater London, https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/access-public-open-space-and-nature-ward
Community_centres	The number of community centres in an area.	Ward	2018/19	Cultural Infrastructure Map, https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/cultural-infrastructure-map
Cultural_spaces	The number of cultural spaces (excluding community centres and libraries) in an area.			
Healthy_streets_score_21	Scores on Healthy Streets Scorecard, ranking boroughs on how healthy their streets are (based on nine indicators).	Borough	2021	Healthy Streets Scorecard https://www.healthystreetscorecard.london/results/

Domain 3d: Safety

The degree to which community members feel secure and happy with where they live.

Indicator	Data definition	Lowest Geography	Time period	Source
Recorded_crime	Crime count summed from MPS Ward Level Crime (most recent 12 months), all included. This variable is inverted (lower is better)	Ward	2020-21	Metropolitan Police Service, https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/recorded-crime-summary
proportion_feel_safe_day_20/21	Percentage of adults who feel very or fairly safe when outside in your local area during the day. (Local area was explained to be the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from their home.)	London	2020-21	Question 9, Aggregate Tables, Resident Satisfaction Surveys, Local Government Association https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/research/research-publications/residents-satisfaction-surveys
proportion_feel_safe_night_20/21	Percentage of adults who feel very or fairly safe when outside in your local area at night. (Local area was explained to be the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from their home.)	London	2020-21	Question 9, Aggregate Tables, Resident Satisfaction Surveys, Local Government Association https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/research/research-publications/residents-satisfaction-surveys

Note on 360Giving data

Data was extracted from 360Giving, filtering for London during the time period 01/01/19-31/12/20. Variables below were created based on recipient ward code data. Grants that did not include geodata were not included. In order to account for the large variation in values of grants awarded, we created variables according to three buckets of funders (aligned with the categories given on 360Giving), to ensure funding patterns amongst grant-making organisations was not suppressed by lottery distributors or government funders.

Central Government – included following funders:
 Cabinet Office
 Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
 Department for Education
 Department of Health and Social Care
 Department for International Development
 Department for International Trade
 Department for Transport
 Department for Work and Pensions
 Home Office
 HM Revenue and Customs
 Ministry of Defence
 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
 Ministry of Justice

Lottery Distributors – included following funders:
 The National Lottery Community Fund
 The National Lottery Heritage Fund
 Sport England

Other Grant-making Organisations – included following funders:
 The Wellcome Trust
 National Emergencies Trust
 City Bridge Trust
 Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
 Paul Hamlyn Foundation
 Comic Relief
 Pears Foundation
 Wolfson Foundation
 Lloyd’s Register Foundation
 Trust for London
 John Lyon’s Charity
 London Marathon Charitable Trust
 BBC Children in Need
 The Henry Smith Charity
 The Tudor Trust
 Nesta
 The London Community Foundation
 The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington
 Mercers’ Charitable Foundation
 The Clothworkers Foundation
 Maudsley Charity
 Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales
 The Rayne Foundation
 John Ellerman Foundation
 Nuffield Foundation
 Garfield Weston Foundation
 A B Charitable Trust
 Three Guineas Trust
 The Dulverton Trust
 Walcot Foundation

Camden Giving
 Access to Justice Foundation
 The Pilgrim Trust
 Samworth Foundation
 The Seafarers’ Charity
 Indigo Trust
 The Childhood Trust
 OVO Foundation
 Wales Council for Voluntary Action
 True Colours Trust
 United St Saviour’s Charity
 Barrow Cadbury Trust
 Co-operative Group
 Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust
 Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation
 CHK Foundation
 Gatsby Charitable Foundation
 Vision Foundation
 Guy’s and St Thomas’ Charity
 Tuixen Foundation
 The Segelman Trust
 The Fore
 the Trussell Trust
 Joseph Levy Foundation
 Coop Foundation
 CAF
 The AIM Foundation
 The Berkeley Foundation
 Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, UK Branch
 St Paul’s Schools Foundation
 Scottish Government
 The David & Elaine Potter Foundation
 The Blagrave Trust
 London Catalyst
 William Grant Foundation
 ZING
 Westminster Foundation
 Cripplegate Foundation
 The Joseph Rank Trust
 Friends Provident Foundation
 Community Foundation for Surrey
 Wates Family Enterprise Trust
 Alan & Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund
 Wates Foundation
 Power to Change Trust
 Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
 The Michael And Betty Little Trust
 Lankelly Chase Foundation
 The Earl of Northampton’s Charity
 R S Macdonald Charitable Trust
 Essex Community Foundation
 Rank Foundation
 Imperial Health Charity
 The Robertson Trust
 Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust

Youth Music
 National Churches Trust
 Leeds Community Foundation
 Cheshire Community Foundation
 Quartet Community Foundation
 Tedworth Charitable Trust
 The Baring Foundation
 Hammersmith United Charities
 Road Safety Trust
 The Badur Foundation
 Woodward Charitable Trust
 LandAid Charitable Trust
 Staples Trust
 Joffe Charitable Trust
 Harpur Trust
 Thrive LDN
 The Bishop Radford Trust
 Hazelhurst Trust
 The Grocers’ Charity
 The Funding Network
 Oxfordshire Community Foundation
 Heart Of England Community Foundation

JRSST-CT
 LGBT Consortium
 Halifax Foundation for Northern Ireland
 The EQ Foundation
 Sussex Community Foundation
 Suffolk Community Foundation
 Two Ridings Community Foundation
 Virgin Money Foundation
 Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland
 Hertfordshire Community Foundation
 Kingston Voluntary Action
 Mercers’ School Memorial Trust (Incorporating the Merrett Bequest)
 The Dunhill Medical Trust
 Sir George Martin Trust
 Community Foundation in Wales
 Culham St Gabriel’s Trust
 Fenton Arts Trust
 Somerset Community Foundation
 Thirty Percy Foundation
 Community Foundation for Northern Ireland

Note on Public Transport Accessibility Levels

TFL’s average public transport accessibility scores from 2015 were used. Whilst this is considerably older than many other data points, we felt this indicator was important to this domain of civic strength and was included in the hope that it can be updated with renewed values. Data was missing for wards (n=43) across four boroughs (due to ward boundary changes). For these, we calculated averages from the values for the other wards in their respective parent boroughs. As such following placeholders were applied, where data was missing:

- Wards in Bexley = 5.0
- Wards in Croydon = 10.6
- Wards in Redbridge = 7.1
- Wards in Southwark = 20.

Note on Community Centres and Cultural Spaces

Community centres were pulled out of the Cultural Infrastructure Map dataset into their own variable, due to their significance to this domain. Remaining cultural spaces were summed together into another variable, once libraries had been removed (as these had been accounted for in the public services domain).

Note on Access to Open Space




For the data on percentage of households within a ward that have adequate access to open space (as defined in the London Plan, giving a recommended maximum distances from open spaces of different sizes) a 2014 data set was used. Future iterations will incorporate more up-to-date data, as this is in existence and currently being updated by GiGL (who hold the data), however due to time constraints we were not able to access this. As this data remains relatively stable over time, we felt confident that including the 2014 data would still be a valuable contribution. As before, we encountered issues with outdated ward boundaries for the following 4 boroughs, and used borough-level averages as place-holders.

- Wards in Bexley = 49.7%
- Wards in Croydon = 17.9%
- Wards in Redbridge = 11.1%
- Wards in Southwark = 61.3%



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