

# Canonbury Ward Partnership Meeting

Location: Zoom Meeting  
Time: 7:00-8:30pm  
Date: Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
Chair(s): Cllr Clare Jeapes  
Councillors and Speakers: Cllr Clare Jeapes, Cllr John Woolf, Cllr Nick Wayne, Professor Sue Richards, Luke Buffery (Communications and Impact Manager, Health Watch Islington)

## 1. Welcome, introductions and housekeeping

Councillor Jeapes opened and chaired the meeting. In turn, they each introduced themselves and welcomed the attendees noting their various roles in the council:

- Cllr Jeapes: Chair of Health & Care Scrutiny Committee
- Cllr Wayne: Chair of Audit Committee and Vice Chair Licensing Committee
- Cllr Woolf: Committee Member Children's Services Scrutiny Committee & Deputy Whip

The councillors described how they were interested in supporting local projects, particularly through the Local Initiatives Fund. This is a small annual budget from which grants can be made for projects which deliver benefit to the residents of the ward. Councillor Woolf stressed how it was important to hear from local groups for suggestions on how this should be spent.

Residents were reminded that surgeries are held on the first Wednesday of the month at the Almorah Centre from 6:30pm- 7:15pm and on the third Saturday of the month at the Rose Bowl from 10:00am -11:00am. Councillor Woolf commented how health was a local issue coming up time and time again.

The councillors spoke of The Canonbury Community Plan, a plan which aims to look at improvement projects across the ward and which can be found using this link: [Canonbury Community Ward Plan](#)

## 2. Health Issues in Canonbury: A Presentation by Professor Sue Richards

Professor Sue Richards discussed the change in ownership of a Canonbury GP practice - Mitchison Road Surgery. Centene, an American company, now own the business.

Professor Richards presented and the following discussions and points were made:

- Privatisation of the NHS had been taking place over a number of years, but had gathered pace since 2014. Prior to this, contracts would be put out to tender with the expectation that the private sector would pick up multiple contracts.

- Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) were established as part of the Health and Social Care Act in 2012. The NHS Director at that time said the formation of CCGs was a colossal reform and resulted in many redundancies and rehire of NHS staff.
- CCGs were intended to be owned by local GPs. They were enablers allowing local providers to make decisions about local health issues.
- Alternative Provider Medical Services (APMS) contracts offered greater flexibility and allowed contracts with organisations (such as private companies or third sector providers) other than GPs to provide primary care services. They enabled health authorities to put out to tender where GP services had collapsed.
- When the NHS was created, all GPs practices were like small businesses based on the number of people signed up to the service. No dividend payments were made, apart from to the GP who owned the practice.
- As time has gone on, GP surgeries have faced more and more challenges. Young doctors are more attracted to being salaried GPs rather than partners, so APMS contracts are becoming less frequent.
- Six doctors training as GPs set up their own company which owned 44 contracts across London, including GP surgeries and other out of hours services. After some time, this became a Limited Company which was later sold to the UK subsidiary, Centene. It is unclear how much it was sold for.
- The CCG did not stop this takeover across North Central London. Centene has received much criticism of their services and Professor Richards is concerned about the level of service they will provide in Canonbury.
- Mitchison Road Surgery has been under Centene's control for six months and the campaign group 'Islington Keep Our NHS Public' will be running a survey of Islington patients to hear about their experiences.
- The survey will be online and its main aim is to discover if there have been any key changes to the service. The survey is important for informing the debate around the extension of contract with Centene.
- Councillors reminded residents this was an important issue for Canonbury, given that Mitchison Road Surgery is located within the ward.
- A resident registered at the surgery asked for advice on whether it was appropriate to stay registered at the practice. Residents were reminded to consider the type of treatment you were receiving, whether you had been happy with the experience so far, but were reminded that it was important to stay registered with a GP practice to ensure you were able to access services.

### **3. Health Issues in Canonbury: Healthwatch**

Luke Buffery presented an overview of Healthwatch services and reminded residents that they were a local health and social care champion. Their key areas of work are:

- Advice and information: Information about local services and assisting those who have difficulties accessing services
- Gathering views: Sharing local opinion with decision makers and using their influence to try to improve services for everyone
- Visiting health and care services to observe/speak to staff and patients and make statutory services observations
- Digital training: Digital Champions are there to support Islington residents to get online

The presentation then covered information about how to access Dental Services given the large number of backlogged dentist appointments. He asked that individuals share their experiences of dental services via a [survey on Healthwatch's website](#) or by calling Jennifer Kent on 07538 764 457.

Luke covered GP Access and requested that people share their experiences of GP services via a [survey on Healthwatch's website](#) or by calling Jennifer Kent on 07538 764 457.

Recovery from Covid/ Long Covid was also discussed, focusing on the fact that symptoms can fluctuate and change over time and can affect any system in the body. It was stressed that it was important to contact your GP and regardless of symptoms. Vaccinations were also discussed with COVID booster jabs now being offered to people aged 50+, and health / social care workers. If you qualify, you can book your booster jab here: [Book or manage your coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#). Flu vaccination was also raised as an important thing to consider given the winter months approaching.

The NHS request for GP patient data has now been delayed until 4 criteria have been met:

1. the ability to delete data if patients choose to opt-out of sharing their GP data with NHS Digital, even if this is after their data has been uploaded
2. the backlog of opt-outs has been fully cleared
3. a Trusted Research Environment has been developed and implemented in NHS Digital
4. patients have been made more aware of the scheme through a campaign of engagement and communication

Discussion followed the presentation with the point being raised that mental health was a big issue in Canonbury. Cllr Jeapes also raised the point that great health disparity existed amongst residents in the ward. Residents raised the issue that for future meetings it would be helpful to have more health specific Canonbury content. Councillors also requested if any Canonbury specific research could be commissioned to uncover more details about health issues in Canonbury.

## 4. Councillor Updates & Close

### Update from the Rose Bowl

Clive from the Rose Bowl gave an update on the service. He explained that the Rose Bowl caters for young people, provides an after school provision, helps people get into education and training, allows for a safe space and provides some targeted work. Regular school exclusion for people who use the Rose Bowl is an issue and is leaving the service concerned about the level of academic attainment. Clive discussed a new project: The Skills Gap Project. It allows young people to become informed about job shortages in the UK and provides information and training on how people can get into these industries given the job opportunities. Given some users come from families where there is a history of unemployment, it's a project that allows people to learn about industries where more jobs are available.

### **Crime & the Safer Neighbourhood Panel**

Cllr Nick Wayne reminded residents that the Safer Neighbourhood Panel met in August 2021 and multiple issues were raised. A holistic perspective will be taken when the council is considering what type of crime prevention methods can be used. Residents were encouraged to join the panel. Residents fed back that crime and youth crime didn't just affect estates, it affected the whole ward.

### **The future of ward partnership meetings**

Residents asked for further information on the purpose of ward partnerships. Cllr Woolf explained that they were an opportunity to share information, a space or forum for discussing issues and a vehicle for improving the ward. Councillors explained that in the past they held a specific ward partnership meeting surrounding consultation at Dover Court. On a separate occasion a meeting was held so that various stakeholders could come together to share work. This meeting was advertised via leafleting, posters and through social media. Residents were encouraged to send through suggestions on improving resident input and influencing the agenda. It is the intention to return to in-person ward partnership meetings, once confirmation is received that public meetings can recommence. Some residents were keen to meet again in person, whilst others expressed satisfaction with the online forum.

### **People Friendly Streets & Traffic**

Residents were reminded that the St Peter's monitoring report has been published. The Canonbury East and Canonbury West monitoring reports are yet to be published but Councillors explained that they expected this to be released in the next 28 days, with a formal consultation to follow. The Canonbury East consultation is expected to begin in early November and the Canonbury West consultation in late November 2021. The Councillors are in conversations with Council Officers about how best to engage with residents on these issues.

The work on improving Highbury Corner junction is ongoing. Transport for London and the Council are working to see what can be done to address the volume of traffic in this area.

Councillors reminded residents that they are there to represent as many as possible. Residents raised questions around accurate and independent monitoring, due diligence and the process of appointment for the agency who writes the report. Councillors reminded residents that it was important to raise concerns and asked people to get in touch directly to discuss issues further.