Boundary Estate Community Launderette and Boundary Tenants and Residents Association

Response to the draft London Plan 2026

Evidence - items 1 to 8

ITEM	DOCUMENT	PAGES
1	Boundary Estate Community Launderette: Social Value Report *Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London, August 2025*	**2-49**
2	Boundary Estate Community Launderette *UCL Civic Design, May 2026*	**50-73**
3	Section 25 notice and schedule of proposed terms *London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 6 July 2023*	**74-79**
4	Royal Mail proof of delivery, tracking number NL166136338GB *Delivered 10:00, Saturday 8 July 2023*	**80**
5	Cabinet report, 24 March 2026, agenda item 6.2 *London Borough of Tower Hamlets*	**81-92**
6	Cabinet decisions, 24 March 2026, items 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 *London Borough of Tower Hamlets*	**93-112**
7	Save Our Launderette petition, 2024 *Including presentation to Full Council, 17 July 2024*	**113-118**
8	Community response to Tower Hamlets Council, March 2024	**119-142**

Page numbers refer to this combined file. Items 9 to 13 of the Evidence list are not documents attached here. Item 12, the Boundary Estate Community Launderette Archive, is available on request.

Boundary Estate Community Launderette
Social Value Report



I’m very pleased to have supported the Boundary Estate Community Launderette Social Value Report. The Bartlett Development Planning Unit (University College London) has a long-standing history of working alongside community groups in London and internationally, championing campaigns for advancing more equitable and inclusive cities.

This report clearly demonstrates how community-led solutions can generate local wealth. As such, we believe local authorities should actively support and invest in these initiatives.

We wish the Boundary Estate community the very best and look forward to seeing the launderette thrive.

Dr Alessio Kolioulis - Lecturer in Urban Economic Development at The Bartlett Development Planning Unit (University College London)

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Foreword

Boundary Estate residents

The Boundary Estate Community Launderette has served us, residents on our estate for more than 30 years. The Launderette is more than a place for us to to do our laundry, it is a space for us to meet our neighbours, a place where multi-generational families gather and recall their childhood, watching their parents do the family laundry and now as as parents continue to visit the the Launderette with their children for their weekly family wash. Particularly after the local school day ends, we see students helping their mothers collect the laundry. The Launderette was set up in 1992 as a result of the lack of washing and drying space within the flats. Since then , it has been in operation as a not-for-profit social enterprise for 33 years – a considerable achievement and testament to its need and importance to the community. This longevity is worthy of celebration and a credit to the users, staff and volunteer directors. It is recognised as an essential amenity and community hub, providing us with affordable means of maintaining our personal and family hygiene and keeping damp and mould from our flats. We love our Community Launderette and celebrate its more than 30 years on our estate.

History of the 125 years old Boundary Estate, the oldest council housing in UK, built with shared laundry services since 1890s.

The Boundary Estate arose from the clearance of the Old Nichol, London's most notorious Victorian slum. It was completed in 1900 by the London County Council as their first municipal housing project, with the aspiration of improving the living conditions of the working classes.

The buildings were constructed to accommodate around one thousand 2-room and 3- room tenements, housing about five thousand people. The estate was integrated with 77 workshops and 18 shops. It was a great improvement on the previous slums as the new flats had a cold water supply, communal sculleries and in-door sanitation. The scheme included a purpose built communal laundry building with public baths on Montclare Street. The original laundry provided hot water, sinks to hand wash laundry and drying space.

By the 1960's the whole estate needed full renovation. Flats were enlarged and the shared sculleries and toilets were replaced with individual kitchens and bathrooms. Hot air central heating replaced coal fires. The number of flats was reduced to 600. The old laundry was repurposed to become flats. The Greater London Council (GLC) installed drying rooms, recognising there was no place within or outside the flats to hang washing. As families grew, these drying rooms could not fulfil their function and were closed.

In the late 1980's The Tower Hamlets Environment Trust approached the Boundary Tenants and Residents Association offering to support the launch of a Community Enterprise. Residents were very keen on regaining a local launderette so after a full consultation and feasibility study an Enterprise Company was set up with interested

residents and in 1989 began applying for grants from charitable organisations and businesses to support the project.

Tower Hamlets' Weavers Ward with a high concentration of council housing was recognised as one of the poorest parts of the country: the launderette would offer an affordable laundry service at slightly below market rate to relieve poverty. Beneficiaries would include students, single parent families, large extended families, the elderly and the low paid. Laundry was a burden on overcrowded large families in the area so residents had to rely on local launderettes, often a bus ride away. Not all residents could afford a washing machine and the layout of some kitchens made it difficult to fit one. Even with a washing machine drying laundry was an issue as with only a partial hot air heating system damp and mould developed, especially in winter. The drying rooms introduced in the 1970s had now closed.

The launderette would be local and open to all, offer flexible employment and working hours especially those with families who wish to work part-time. It would be fully staffed, open seven days a week from 8am to 8pm. It would regenerate a commercially run down area, reduce levels of unemployment and be a not-for-profit enterprise that acted as a hub for social contact for isolated individuals. Any profit would be reinvested in the business with all proceeds benefiting the local community. The launderette would also provide service washes for small local businesses. For residents who became volunteer directors it would provide business experience and a chance to contribute to the community.

Fundraising took about two years. £70,000 was raised to purchase equipment and pay for set up costs. The council supported the project by granting the lease of a disused chemist shop at an affordable rent. The Boundary Estate Community Launderette opened its door to the public at 8am on the 14th September 1992 with the manageress Maire Glace.

Our beloved Launderette was thus set up and has been in operation since.

In 1994 the project was nominated and received a British Urban Regeneration Award for 'Best Practice' "It's a perfect example of free enterprise serving the community" (Sunday Express 13th March 1994 –*Their Beautiful Launderette*).





Recent forced closure



February 2024 - estate residents protesting the closure

On 8 February 2024, our Launderette was forcibly closed without any notice. We were devastated and many of us got together to try and find out the reasons. It came to light that there was an attempt to market the space commercially to secure premium Shoreditch-level rents.

Residents got together to launch our “Save Our Launderette” campaign. Our vigorous campaigning within the estate, local schools, churches, mosques and door to door conversations, resulted in more than 2500 petition signatures within two weeks and an outpour of support and appeals to reopen the Launderette. The campaign received widespread national and local press coverage. Residents provided testimonials of how the closing of the Launderette affected their lives.

Staff and Residents’ voices

Shah, a resident with protected characteristics:

I am a disabled person who lives near the laundrette and have been using their services for many years. I do not leave my house for anything apart from going to doctor appointments, shopping, or for the laundry of my clothes. The staff at the laundrette are like family to me and many others, they are always happy to see us and are friendly and very helpful. They are part of our community and help us more with our lives than the services of the laundrette. The unexpected seizure of the laundrette has caused myself and the local community a lot of unnecessary pain, stress & anxiety. I live with pain 24/7 and do not have the means to travel far. I implore you to see it in your heart and think of what this is doing to people like myself, and reopen the laundrette.

Tracey, Launderette staff

For me, it isn’t just a job, it is my Launderette Family. My partner died, I had to find work, the people here are like my family.



March 6 2024 - petition handed to Cllr Kabir Ahmed

The petition and generous media coverage locally and nationally led to a constructive meeting with the council's key decision makers. Following seven weeks of forced closure, we were handed back the keys and able to reopen. This was warmly welcomed by everyone, including our Mayor and several Tower Hamlets councillors.

Mr Mayor Rahman on Twitter

Great news that Boundary Estate Community Launderette reopened this week…Meanwhile, we are working on a long-term solution to ensure this valuable community asset can stay open.

Weavers Ward Cllr Kabir Ahmad on Twitter

We will keep listening and keep working to ensure this community asset is preserved

Cllr Abu Chowdhury on Twitter

Great to see progress on finding a long term fix so the people of Boundary Estate can keep this great community project

Cllr Iqbal Hossain on Twitter

Wonderful News!

Sian Berry, MP, BBC Radio London

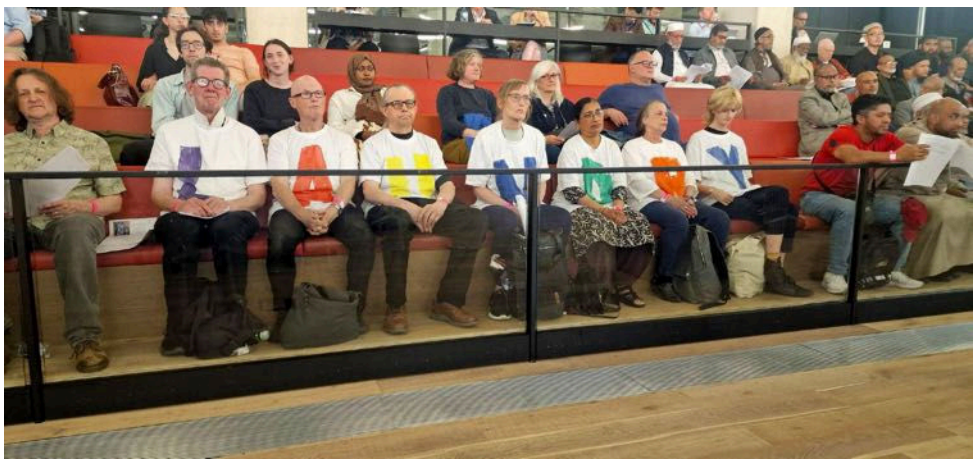
I am really shocked at this, the council is not making a rational decision: it is saving the council repairs. The different departments need to speak to each other. The commercial arm is doing this to increase revenue but the £10,000 gained does not justify the harm. They need to speak to the repairs department, listen to the residents and get a real idea of the money they are saving by not throwing out this vital community service. 1 in 13 in poorer places do not have access to washing machines. It is an error not to consult the residents and the TRA, it is not the right way to treat people trying to provide a service.

Where are we now?

We are now working with the council to list the Launderette as a community premise and to apply for a community benefit rent reduction. To support our efforts, University College London approached us to co-produce a social value report. This report draws from on-ground research, providing both quantitative and qualitative evidence which shows the Launderette's contribution to the community.

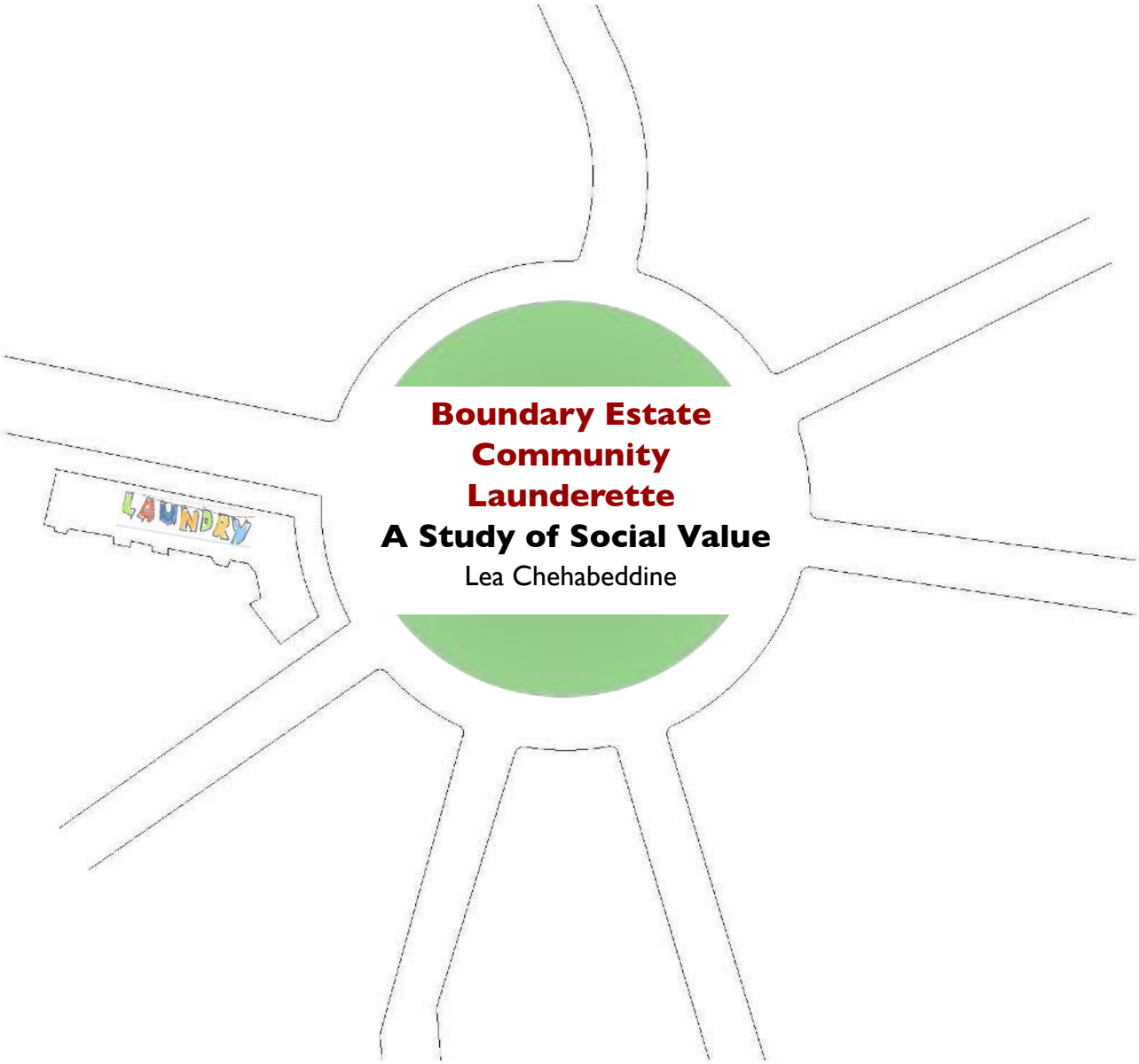
We thank Lea Chehabeddine and Alessio Koliulis from UCL for their support of our Community Laundrette!





July 17 2024 - Presenting and debate at a meeting of the Full Council





Boundary Estate Community Launderette

A Study of Social Value

Lea Chehabeddine

MSc Urban Economic Development Dissertation

Development Planning Unit
The Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment
UCL

Supervisor: Alessio Koliulis

April 2025

Executive summary

This paper evaluates and quantifies the social value of maintaining the Boundary Estate Community Laundrette, a vital community asset facing closure due to a local council decision. The laundrette not only provides essential laundry services but also functions as a community hub. This study explores its multifaceted impact on the local population, considering socio-economic dimensions.

The analysis uses a social value framework which focuses on key areas: Mental health, community, independence, health and hygiene, and good employment. Methodologically, the report includes a literature review on social value, qualitative data on resident needs, quantitative data to assess the impact of the launderette and an assessment of relevant local policies.

This report finds that for every £1 that is put into the launderette, £13.56 of social value is reinvested into the community.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the directors of the launderette, particularly Jonathan Moberly, who was always available to help me and who introduced me into the launderette family.

I would also like to thank my dissertation supervisor Dr Alessio Kolioulis, brought me into this project and supported and guided me throughout.

I would like to thank Nick Small, who took time to explain the SROI methodology to me and gave invaluable feedback on my initial calculations.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who took the time to be interviewed. Your insight was the foundation of this report and guided the findings.



Taken outside Whitechapel Town Hall before 17/07/2024 council meeting

1 Introduction

Built on the site of the Old Nichol Slum, one of London's most notorious slums, the Boundary Estate became London's first council estate. It was named after its location on the boundary between Tower Hamlets and Hackney. Designed to improve the dire living conditions of the area's poorest residents, the estate was conceived with an idealistic vision of integrated working-class housing. Officially opened in 1900 by the Prince of Wales, the estate was hailed as a significant improvement over the slum it replaced (Carroll, 2021).

The launderette was originally part of the estate's facilities when it was opened in 1900. However, the building was sold off in the 1960s, leading to its closure. Without access to the launderette, tenants were forced to air-dry clothes in their flats, contributing to rising damp and mould issues, which residents still face today. In response, a coalition of residents and parents founded the Boundary Estate Community Launderette in 1992, seeking to address the problems that arose from the lack of communal laundry services. In February 2024, the council made the decision to shut down the Laundrette.

In response to this, the local community rallied behind the business as an essential functional asset for local residents, as well as a hub for the local community. After being shut down for seven weeks, the council decided to temporarily reopen the facility amidst ongoing negotiations between the local council and the launderette's directors. This report will utilise the SROI framework to explore and quantify the social value of extending the tenancy of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette.

1.1 The Borough of Tower Hamlets

Historically, Tower Hamlets has been one of the most deprived local authority districts in England. However, deprivation has decreased in recent years, with the borough moving from the 3rd most deprived local authority district in 2007, to the 50th in 2019 (Tower Hamlets, 2011; Tower Hamlets, 2023).

The Tower Hamlets State of the Borough 2023 report suggests that the steady decline in deprivation can be attributed to direct interventions targeting lower-income households. The council has undertaken significant regeneration of its council housing stock, and housing associations also invested in improving social housing across the borough (Tower Hamlets Partnership, 2023). Additionally, the NHS has made substantial investments in local healthcare infrastructure, including the completion of the Royal London Hospital's reconstruction in 2016.

While many customers of the launderette travel in from different areas, as seen in Figure 1, they are largely concentrated to Weavers Ward.

The Boundary Community Launderette plays a key role in this broader support framework, acting as a vital community facility for residents, many of whom live in council housing. By providing accessible, affordable services, the launderette

contributes to the long-term infrastructure that helps uplift and sustain the local population.

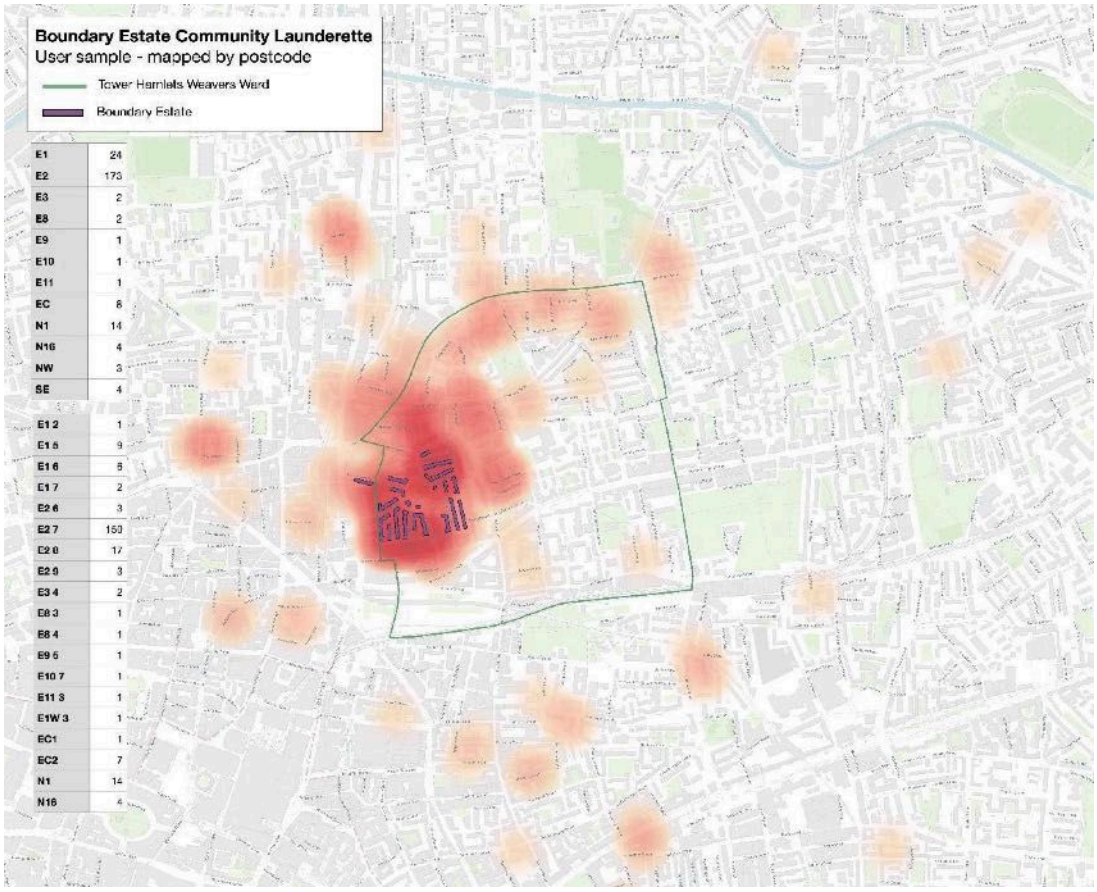


Figure 1: Jonathan Moberly, 2024

1.2 Social Value in policy

Social value and the concept of placing importance or a monetary value on wellbeing has existed in local governance for years. The 2000 Local Government Act permitted local authorities to do anything they considered likely to improve the ‘economic, social and environmental well-being of their area’. This concept was further affirmed into policy in 2013, with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, which required public service commissioners to consider how to ensure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. The Act was intended to work as a tool in aiding commissioners to increase their value for money from procurement and encourage communication with “their local provider market or community to design better services, often finding new and innovative solutions to difficult problems” (Cabinet Office, 2021). The London Sustainable Development Commission defines social value as “a way of understanding and measuring the benefit to society from the delivery of goods and services. These can be environmental, economic or social benefits which, when experienced by people create added wellbeing and a better quality of life.” (LSDC, 2024).

The importance of such ideas has become even more prominent since COVID-19, with the country being forced to understand the importance of local community, economic security, and healthy environment in determining one's wellbeing. This is

reflected in the Procurement Policy Note (PPN 06/20), issued in September 2020, which required social value to be explicitly evaluated in central government procurement, rather than simply 'considered'.

Whilst the Social Value Act touches on the cornerstones of social value (social, economic, environmental impacts), it does not adequately define social value to include discussions of co-production and participatory approaches. Similarly, the varying and contrasting definitions of social value across public and private organisations can create a convoluted landscape for those wishing to use or understand social value. The primary concept in measuring social value, as opposed to monetary value, is centring and engaging with people, to understand the nuances and realities of an organisation's impact on their lives. This report will centre people in understanding the laundrette's impact on the local wellbeing

1.3 Tower Hamlets Local Plan

In Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031, Policy S.CF1 highlights the council's commitment to supporting community facilities, recognising their "vital role in creating and sustaining liveable neighbourhoods by providing valuable services." This policy aims to use community facilities to help create "more liveable and sustainable places," aligning with the broader vision and objectives of the Local Plan (Tower Hamlets Local Plan, 2020).

Building on this, Policy D.CF2 addresses the importance of retaining existing community facilities, stating they must not be removed unless it can be demonstrated that either: a) there is no longer a need for the facility, or b) a replacement facility of a similar nature would better meet the needs of current users. In the case of the Boundary Community Launderette, it offers an essential service to the local community, and a replacement facility would not provide additional benefits, making its retention crucial for the area's well-being.

1.4 Tower Hamlets Council meeting

Following the July Tower Hamlets meeting regarding the future of the launderette, several councillors who strongly supported the launderette's continued tenancy provided statements endorsing its vital role in the community. Their unwavering support highlighted the importance of maintaining this essential service for local residents:

> The Boundary Estate is world famous as one of the earliest examples of social housing designed for the wellbeing of its residents, after 135 years it remains as a beacon of what can be done when there is a will to succeed. The laundry was an integral part of the development enabling residents over generations to have of washing facilities … The decision by the council to raise the rents sixfold and then send in bailiffs to change the locks of the premises is wrong. … It is a Sledgehammer to crack a nut and I am delighted that the administration is thinking about reversing this decision.
>
> Councillor Peter Golds (Conservative)

> Civil society organisations, like the launderette, provide an important service to society that should be provided by the state. We as politicians should value their provision, and look to support organisations like the launderette as much as we can.
>
> Councillor Mufeedah Bustin (Labour)

> First of all the laundry provides a vital service for our community. Not just in relation to health but also as an important space for people to feel a sense of community and belonging. I can assure the public and the petitioners that I along with Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Mayor's office and the senior officers have already had an initial meeting and agreed a tenancy at will until a move to permanent solution is found.
>
> Councillor Saied Ahmed (Aspire)

> I remain committed to helping the Boundary Estate launderette remain open & operating as a precious community asset … You have our full support. I want to assure you on that.
>
> Mayor Lutfur Rahman

The unanimous and strong support shown by councillors during the meeting underscores how the launderette aligns with Tower Hamlets' vision for a diverse, accessible, and sustainable future. This backing highlights the launderette's integral role in fostering community resilience and providing essential services.

2 Methodology

2.1 SROI

A traditional cost-benefit analysis (CBA) compares the projected costs and benefits of different projects. CBA theory can be taken a step further, with social CBAs which similarly assess impacts of competing interventions on social welfare while also considering the costs and benefits (Magenta book, 2020). Whilst effective methodologies, this paper will employ a Social Return on Investment (SROI) framework. This methodology monetises the social, economic, and environmental impact a company or organisation has. It is designed to depict a holistic image of the outcomes which may not be reflected in conventional financial evaluations. As defined by Nicholls et al., "Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a framework for measuring and accounting for this much broader concept of value; it seeks to reduce inequality and environmental degradation and improve wellbeing by incorporating social, environmental and economic costs and benefits" (Nicholls et al., 2012). Ultimately, calculating the money going into the organisation (inputs) and the social value that goes back into the local community (outputs) enables a cost-benefit ratio to be calculated. For example, in Kitty's Launderette Social Impact Report, Small calculates that "every £1 invested creates £7.11 of social value" (Kitty's Launderette Social Impact Report, 2020).

2.2 The principles of SROI

SROI methodology relies on 7 key principles:

Involve stakeholders	Stakeholders must guide what gets valued and measured.
Understand what changes	Use evidence to analyse what the positive and negative impacts of the intervention are.
Value the things that matter	Monetise social values by applying financial proxies.
Only include what's material	Decide what information and evidence should be included in the evaluation to ensure stakeholders have an accurate and fair understanding of the impacts.
Do not over-claim	Ensure the organisation is only taking credit for the value they have created.
Be transparent	Findings should be discussed and reviewed by stakeholders to ensure the analysis reflects reality.
Verify the result	Check findings are accurate.

(Nicholls et al., 2012)

2.3 The six stages of SROI and how they were applied in this report

2.3.1 Identify key stakeholders and the scope of the project

The first step was to organise in person interviews with a range of stakeholders, from residents of the Estate, to travelling customers of the launderette, to directors of the launderette, to local shop owners. It was important to ensure this was a stakeholder guided project to ensure the report reflected the real importance of the launderette on people's lives. When discussing with the key point of contact, Jonathan Moberly, vice-chair of Boundary Tenants and Residents Association (TRA), it was also imperative to ensure diversity in the stakeholder engagement. This was to ensure a holistic analysis of the organisation's social value impact.

2.3.2 Determine outcomes

Engagement with these stakeholders led to a mapping of the impact of the launderette on the local community. Doing this would show the interaction between the inputs, outputs and overall social value outcomes. Based on this, a framework of analysis for evaluating key social value impacts were found, these key categories were:

1. Improved mental health
2. Increased independence
3. Creating a sense of community
4. Good job creation and fair employment

2.3.3 Collecting evidence and evaluating

This step involved collecting data to provide evidence of the launderette's impact. Data was collected through a survey which ran for 28 days and received 82 responses [Appendix 1]. The survey was completed both online, and on physical copies in the launderette which were later uploaded. Data on the inputs and the workings of the launderette were also provided by Jonathan. With the data

collected, we then valued the different categories of the launderette's social value impact by assigning financial proxies, found through various databases.

2.3.4 Understand impact limitations

When assessing the social value of each category, the SROI methodology requires that a 'deadweight' - an estimation of value that would have existed irrespective of any interventions - be calculated. Although the impact of the launderette was clear, the limitations of this impact also needed to be explored. This required understanding what social value would exist regardless of the laundrette's reinstatement. This was understood through questions in the survey which were built to understand what other factors or establishments in the area would have also added to a higher social value. For example, perhaps the launderette adds social value in creating a sense of community, but there may be other establishments in the area which add to this sense of community. For each social value category explored within the survey, questions asked for the impact with and without the launderette with a rating from one to five. It was important to understand the exact added impact that the launderette provides.

Originally, a value for the number of customers that each category would impact was predicted using an attribution percentage; however, the social value calculated using a predicted number of customers was unrealistic (Appendix A2). To account for the limitations of the laundrette's impact and this unrealistic amount, the social value was calculated using only the 82 people who had responded to the survey. This approach likely means the estimated social value will be lower than the true value, as the survey received 82 responses, but the launderette has over 375 customers.

2.3.5 Calculate the SROI

The SROI for each category was calculated by focusing only on people who rated it a five - the highest value. An attribution – the percentage of respondents who scored five – was also calculated.

The number of respondents scoring five was multiplied by the financial proxy - which is valued at per person per year benefiting from an intervention – to achieve the gross financial proxy achieved annually.

The deadweight percentage was estimated using the difference in those who ranked 5 out of 5 with and without the launderette, which was between 15% and 40%. The deadweight value was calculated by multiplying this percentage by the gross financial proxy. This was then subtracted from the gross financial proxy to calculate a figure for the annual proxy value after deadweight costs.

Finally, the overall social value outputs are compared to the launderette's input, resulting in a ratio to understand the output. In this instance, the launderette's input over the three months of June, July and August 2024 was measured to be £16,628.10. Adjusted annually, this figure is £66,512.40, which represents the estimated annual operating costs of the community launderette.

2.3.6 Verification

The last step involved sharing the findings with stakeholders to ensure an accurate depiction of the launderette's impact.

3 Framework of Analysis

To develop a conceptual framework for analysing social value creation, this paper synthesised key elements from frameworks used by the UK Government, independent charities, research organisations, and prior social value audits. These core principles were then adapted to reflect the unique business model of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette. The laundrette's social value will be assessed across five key areas:

1. Mental Health and Wellbeing
2. Community Building
3. Independence
4. Health and Hygiene
5. Good jobs and inclusive economic growth

This tailored framework ensures a comprehensive evaluation of the laundrette's multifaceted contributions to its community.

4 Literature Review

A key issue in effective social value implementation is the lack of consistent definitions. This literature review will look at definitions across differing sectors (public, private, and research organisations) to consolidate an appropriate definition and framework of analysis for social value in the context of the Community Boundary Estate Launderette.

4.1 Prior studies on social value frameworks

The Confederation of British Industries (CBI) used case studies from businesses offering goods and services within the public sector to analyse how different sectors implemented social value within their practices. Given the difference in services, each sector had differing approaches to social value implementation:

In the construction industry, social value was enacted through fair employment and skill development schemes via apprenticeships, as well as a 'Building Social Value' tool which emphasises engagement with local supply chains and educational opportunities (CBI, 2020).

Within the professional service realm, including law and finance firms, social value is enacted by forming partnerships with other businesses or the voluntary sector. In June 2024, Deloitte announced its partnership with dsm-firmenich - innovators in nutrition and health - to help develop sustainable food systems. Dsm-firmenich use the Sustell software to calculate the environmental impact of mass-protein production within a company's supply chain. Deloitte will use their technological

expertise to advise businesses on how to efficiently operate and utilise Sustell for effective ‘environmental, social and governance reporting’. (Deloitte, 2024). Such cross-industry collaborations ensure a holistic approach to effective social value

Social value in the defence sector revolved around ideas of “prosperity”. In his 2018 review, Philip Dunne MP highlighted that although the defence sector significantly influences national life as well as the economy and public across the UK, he saw further potential to integrate prosperity into ‘procurement decision-making’ (Philip Dunne MP, 2018; CBI, 2020). Much of the sector's impact has been centred on its financial contribution to Britain’s economy and its role in the ‘sustainability agenda’, rather than its social impact. A study by Oxford Economics on the defence supplier Thales highlighted the company's significant economic impact. Over 30% of Thales' British suppliers are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), demonstrating strong support for local businesses. Additionally, Thales has invested more than £130 million in research and development, driving innovation across multiple sectors (Oxford Economics, 2019; CBI 2020).

With these different approaches to social value, the lack of a consistent social value framework is to be expected. CBI surveyed different organisations and independent stakeholders in their approach to using or building a social value framework, as can be seen in Figure 2. They assessed whether they used a bespoke internal model or an existing external one, and whether social value impact was measured through quantitative or qualitative methods.

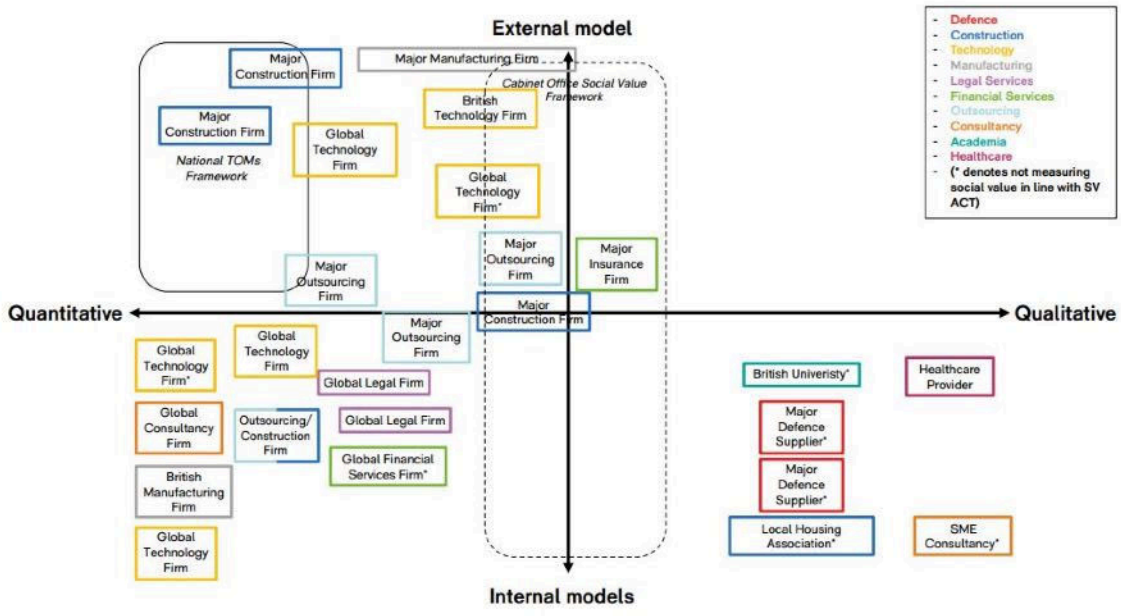


Figure 2: CBI, 2020, p. 32)

As shown in the graph, there is a tendency towards internal models, and a strong preference for quantitative data in understanding the impact of social value. The preference towards internal models gives organisations the ability to adapt the model to fit their understanding of social value and their customer base. The emphasis on quantitative data over qualitative can be ascribed to the simplicity of

presenting easily understandable figures which can be used to compare social value outcomes to understand the benefits to local economies and communities (About LM3, www.lm3online.com/about).

Social value, by definition, strays away from simple MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tenders) values, and quantitative data alone may overlook certain nuances in the realities of local communities. Qualitative data is vital in giving local people the space to speak frankly about the extent to which a social value program may have impacted,

4.2 Case Studies

To better understand how social value can be implemented and different approaches, a city council and local councils' approaches are reviewed. To understand how projects are assessed to calculate their social value, a social value report on an asset of community value, and a report on a community Laundrette are also reviewed below:

4.2.1 Manchester city council

Manchester's City Council was among the first in the UK to adopt a progressive procurement approach before the Social Value Act. GMCA Social Value Framework, 2020, aimed at supporting a green - zero-carbon by 2038 - inclusive economic recovery for Manchester. The Council's approach to social value includes a focus on: creating employment and skill building opportunities; providing good employment; community building; local and resilient supply chain; ensuring clean air; and pushing for green organisations.

When evaluating bids for Tenders, Manchester City Council has allocated 20% of the weighting to be focused on Social Value and 10% to evaluate the supplier's contribution to carbon reduction, to help the Council in achieving zero carbon by 2038 (Manchester City Council, 2022).

Manchester's Social Value Policy outlines the council's approach to prioritise these targets. They have developed toolkits and engagement events for suppliers, as well as pre-procurement briefing meetings to raise awareness and understanding of social value. Additionally, their focus on ensuring bidders understand the council's social value priorities as mentioned above, and tenders are also given the option to make a cash contribution in lieu of providing 'Social Value in Kind', to allow for flexibility for different contracts. (ibid)

Social Value development and implementation within the council is monitored by the Social Value Governance Board, which is supported by the Social Value, Commissioning and Contracts Leads group, who focus on sharing and integrating best practices. The council also works with external partners such as the Centre for Local Economic Strategies to track progress and jointly develop new 'social value innovations' (ibid).

The council's 2022/23 social value survey assessed their top 300 suppliers. This survey reported that £302 million was expended on local organisations in

Manchester, with an estimated £210 million of that going back into the economy. Additionally, this survey approximates that this policy has led to the creation of 640 apprenticeships; 3,700 jobs; and 232,000 hours given to the voluntary sector. (Manchester City Council, 2023).

4.2.2 Islington council Affordable workspace

During the pandemic, Islington Council recognised that small businesses were being priced out of the Borough due to the high rent. Thus, smaller businesses looked to locate elsewhere.

As a result, the council introduced the Affordable Workspace Programme. Under the draft Local Plan, the Council requested developers to allocate 10% of constructed office space to be 'genuinely affordable workspace at peppercorn rent' for a minimum of two decades. (Social Value Portal, 2023). These spaces were provided directly to workspace operators who leased these spaces out to provide start-up opportunities for local people

The council uses the Social Value TOM System (local.gov.uk, 2019) to report and measure the impact of the program. Workspace operators are expected to demonstrate how the spaces they have rented have created long-term benefits for the local community and businesses. Key aims in achieving social value in the context of affordable workspaces is measured through: employment and skill initiatives; business guidance and assistance; coaching and networking; cluster development; and local community engagement (Social Value Portal, 2024).

In the Council's Social Value report, the project was estimated to have generated £1.42 million in social value. This can be seen especially in one of the three key facilities launched, SPACE4, a coworking and event space focusing in 'tech-for-good' organisations. As of the beginning of 2023, this space has alone generated £554,114 in Social Value as well as 28 apprenticeships, 394 weeks of training, and 8,000 hours of career support sessions (Social Value Portal, 2023).

4.2.3 Social Value Index: Building the Case for the Democratic Commons in Tottenham

Tottenham, particularly the Seven Sisters area, serves as an important hub for North London residents. Wards Corner, an indoor market within an Edwardian building, has been at the centre of a 15-year battle for democratic governance. The market reflects the diverse cultural landscape of Tottenham, with a majority of traders being of Latin American descent. The site was purchased by Transport for London (TFL) in 1973, and proposals for redevelopment have been ongoing since. The threat of privatisation prompted concerns about the loss of cultural heritage and community displacement. However, in 2021, Grainger plc withdrew from the redevelopment project, creating an opportunity for a council-led approach aligned with community priorities. Wards Corner has been identified as one of Haringey Council's nine assets of community value, demonstrating the cultural and economic significance of this space.

In this report, Almeida develops a framework to analyse the social value of Wards Corner using the theory from the “Calculating the value of the commons: Generating resilient urban futures”, paper, as well as Petrescu et al.’s “diverse economy framing” (Petrescu et al., 2021), and the Ward Corner Community Plan (Almeida, 2023). The three areas used to explore social value are: direct financial revenue generated by the sale of goods and provision of services; the provision of social programmes and spaces, including childcare; and the downstream benefits of tackling the wider needs of Tottenham, such as addressing the high unemployment, crime, and deprivation rates. (ibid)

Calculations

Direct Financial Revenue
Social Value £3,045,777

This number was calculated by analysing the income to the community of the average worker in a community business. With some tweaks, this proxy then projected the revenue brought by each worker for the next year. The report then calculates the number of traders able to work in this space and calculates the overall annual income from goods and services, and then how much of that will stay in the Tottenham area.

The income at state level and for the commons is then calculated by looking at grant funding and the rate it had increased over the years.

Provision of Social Needs
With childcare becoming increasingly more expensive, the report calculates the amount parents could theoretically save by using the nursery the Wards Corner can provide (£2,002,098). Income saving is generated at the household and state level, using UC childcare guidelines.

This is again done using data from the National Education Union to calculate cost saving to supplementary educational tutoring (1,824,930). The method is again used to calculate social value generated from the provision of affordable workspaces (£2,035,584).

Downstream Benefits
The paper discusses the benefits in using a community approach to crime reduction in moderating social cohesion in deprived neighbourhoods (Sampson et al., 1997). The paper calculates the cost of the anticipation of crime and the cost of crime to calculate the individual cost per annum (£6,682,176). The household and state cost savings from Wards Corner is calculated using crime reduction statistics from the Sampson (1997) study.

The process is repeated in calculating unemployment reduction (£1,827,863) through jobs created and UC savings to the state. Deprivation reduction (£509,172) is calculated by analysing Wards Corner’s potential to provide necessary social programmes and stability through employment.

The application of the Social Value Index to Wards Corner allowed for the demonstration of the benefits of Public-Commons partnership as it allows the space for local communities to develop solutions to local problems.

4.2.4 Kitty's Laundrette Social Impact Report

Kitty's Laundrette is a community launderette operating in the Everton area of Liverpool. This co-operative is used as a social space and provides affordable and ecological laundry services. This report analyses the social value of Kitty's Launderette through the following metrics: Reducing hygiene poverty, rebuilding a sense of community, raising awareness of healthy living and wellbeing, and creating good jobs. (Small, 2020).

The report first uses the Indices of Multiple Deprivation to assess the economic problems in the local area. It continues contextualising the area by identifying other challenges faced, such as hygiene poverty, environment, health and wellbeing, COVID-19, employment, and austerity, among others.

The report uses the SROI method to measure the extra-financial value of the outputs which are not shown in conventional financial statements by assigning financial proxies. This method requires stakeholder involvement, understanding what changes, adding a financial proxy to the social value generated, then calculating the provisions that exist in the area that would have added that value if the organisation was not there (deadweight cost), in order to achieve a transparent and true net value.

Calculating the social value Kitty added in tackling hygiene poverty (£1,152,282) involved analysing the reduction in social isolation and the support and benefit brought to young people.

The launderette aimed to raise awareness for healthy living and use the communal space to improve mental health. The health and wellbeing (£670,733) value was calculated by using the cost of mental health services and additional costs to the NHS.

The launderette's contribution to rebuilding a sense of community (£1,373,162) was calculated by numerating people who believed they would feel belonging to their local neighbourhood by taking part in activities, calculating the number of volunteering hours, and the number of cultural events.

Good jobs and inclusive economic growth (£609,454) was calculated by seeing the direct jobs created by Kitty's and the number of people supported in getting into work.

Overall, Kitty's Launderette was estimated to create £3,552,739 in social value over three years, with every £1 invested into the organisation creating £7.11 in social value output (2020).

5 Social Value Calculations

This section will conduct an individual SROI on each social value category, using numbers from the survey conducted. The Figure 3 below shows the impact of the launderette by depicting the average ranking for each category, with and without the launderette:

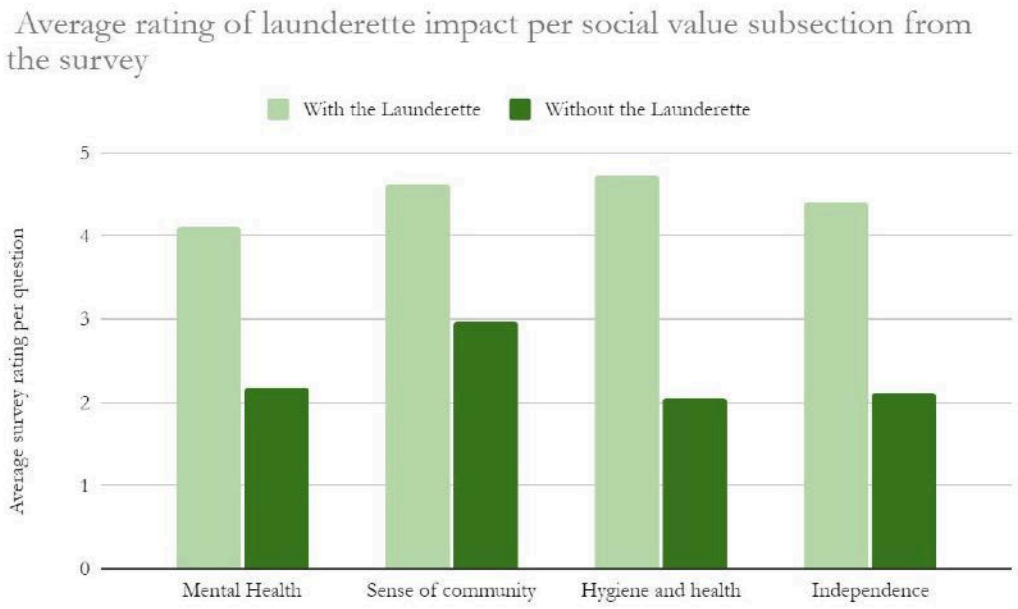


Figure 3

5.1 Mental Health

5.1.2 Mental health SROI

Category	Attribution	Number of users	Financial Proxy	Financial Proxy Description	Source	Gross Proxy Value	Deadweight	Deadweight Cost	Annual Cost After Deadweight
5.1 Mental Health	60%	224	£1,024	per person per year	GMCA via Kitty's Report	£229,463	20%	£45,893	£183,571

Of the 375 total users of the laundrette, an estimated 224 individuals benefited from improved mental health outcomes, based on a 60% attribution rate derived from survey data. A financial proxy of £1,024 per person per year, sourced from Greater Manchester Combined Authority (quoted in the Kitty's Laundrette Report), suggests a gross social value of £229,463. After accounting for a 20% deadweight (or outcomes that would have occurred anyway), the adjusted annual social value stands at £183,571.

5.1.3 Mental health in the launderette

In the survey, people were asked to rate their mental health both with and without the launderette, showing an increased sense of mental health with the presence of the launderette. These figures are depicted in the Figure 4 below:

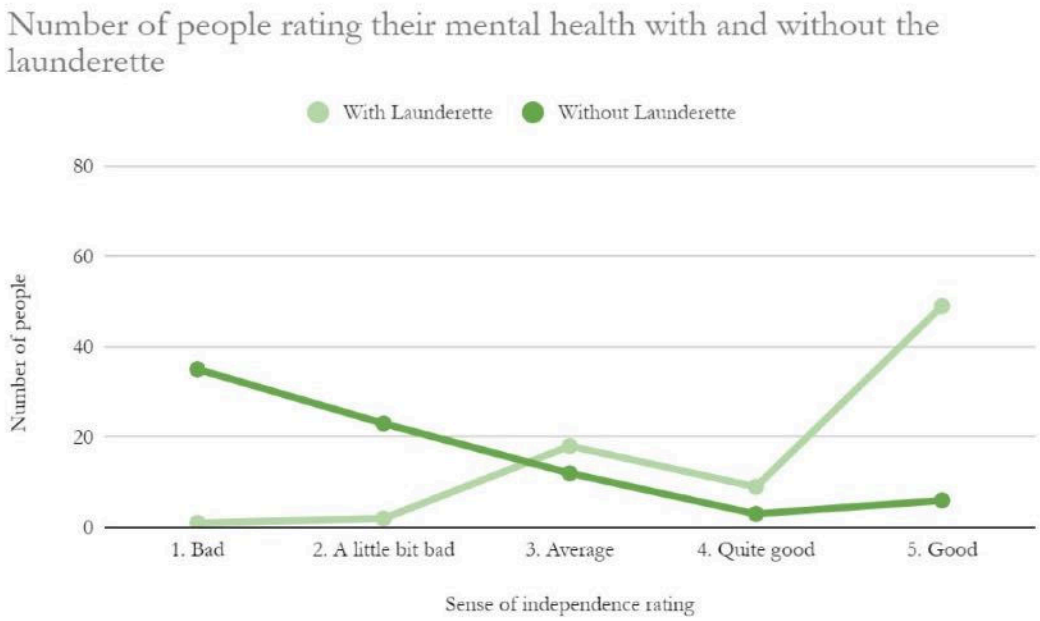


Figure 4

Between 2010 and 2016, Tower Hamlets experienced more gentrification than any other London borough, and areas such as Shoreditch continue to develop (Almedia, 2021). Rapid urbanisation often led to employment and housing instability. Alongside social isolation and worsening communal support networks, mental health conditions often worsen in these affected communities (Kolokotsa et al., 2020). This can include severe psychological distress for residents, which can lead to a lower quality of life, thus ‘triggering or exacerbating’ mental health issues, including anxiety, stress, and depression (Simon et al., 2024). This is further heightened by socio-economic disparities, which can limit access to mental health facilities.

The laundrette has continued to benefit the community's mental health since its inception, and its value as a safe haven for people struggling with their mental health was brought up in every interview.

In an interview with a local shopkeeper, who has worked opposite the launderette for 22 years, she discussed her experience in how she saw the impact of the staff on local mental health. She described a member of staff, who worked at the launderette for almost 30 years:

> I saw her literally marching people home because they hadn’t taken their medication for Tourettes and things like that. So she would be able to tell. We’d have someone pacing up and down the street and raising hell and swearing and shouting and she’d be like ‘you haven’t taken your medication, have you?’ And I’d literally see her locking up and marching them home

She went as far as to refer to the staff as “borderline social services in terms of watching out for people.” The sentiment of staff prioritising local mental health was repeated by a member of staff, who claimed:

> We do have guys that have got mental health issues that very much use the launderette for their bit of community seeing people and talking to people and when it closed that they were my main concern. What would they do? Where would they go? If you’re coming in and if you want to quiet, you get left alone. If you want to be chatty, then we’ll do the conversation with you.

This structure in fact allows the space to foster a genuine feeling of inclusivity. While other local private charity organisations offer activity-based community bonding opportunities, the staff at the launderette are able to provide a chat, but for some customers who have mental health issues, such as social anxiety, the launderette offers a tranquil space for them to sit in a safe environment that puts no pressure on them. As stated by a customer:

> It’s not like other organisations that have arbitrary set inclusivity policies, because it's been open for 30 years, people just know about it. There’s an intangible feeling of being welcome. Box ticking structure around inclusivity can be a clad or fashion. Here, there's an informal policy of inclusivity because it was started by residents themselves. We don't need a policy, no one has been turned away. There’s never been any anti-social behaviour there, they know how to handle things like that.

During one of the more heartstring-tugging interviews, a customer discussed his experience growing up next to the launderette, and the strong bonds he was able to make there. He stated:

> If I was stressed out, if I was depressed, you know after my mum passed the first place I came was the launderette

The launderette’s authenticity, longevity, and grassroots beginnings is what has allowed for trust to foster and create a safe space for local residents. When discussing mental health in these conditions, it can be natural to focus on instances of neurosis and psychosis. However, it is imperative to consider the other side of the coin. As defined by Schiuma et al., “Mental health is knowledge and actions aimed at developing and utilising all existing potential, talents, and characteristics as fully as possible, thereby bringing happiness to oneself and others and avoiding mental disorders and illnesses” (Schiuma et al., 2022). Mental health is something that should be not only mediated, but nourished. The Boundary Launderette provides a strong social support system; a factor found to be key in both preventing and managing mental health problems (Simon et al., 2024). The women of the launderette have proven themselves to be vital to support those with long-term, or instances of, mental health struggles. As stated by the local

shopkeeper: “When it’s very cold, they let old people sit by the driers, just to keep them warm if their flats are really cold.” It is also important to highlight how the laundrette institution has enriched and uplifted mental health by creating a stable and authentic community.

5.2 Community

5.2.1 Community Social Value SROI

Category	Attribution	Number of users	Financial Proxy	Financial Proxy Description	Source	Gross Proxy Value	Deadweight	Deadweight Cost	Annual Cost After Deadweight
5.2 Community	74%	279	£3,753	per person per year	GMCA via Kitty's Report	£1,046,950	45%	£471,127	£575,822

Community benefits were reported by 279 users, corresponding to a 74% attribution from survey responses. Using a proxy value of £3,753 per person annually - drawn from Greater Manchester Combined Authority (and quoted in the Kitty's Laundrette Report) - the gross community value generated is estimated at £1,046,950. After applying a 45% deadweight, the net social value attributed to community strengthening is £575,822.

5.2.2 Community in the launderette

In the survey, people were asked to rate their sense of community both with and without the launderette. The lack of a sense of community without the launderette is seen in the Figure 5 below:

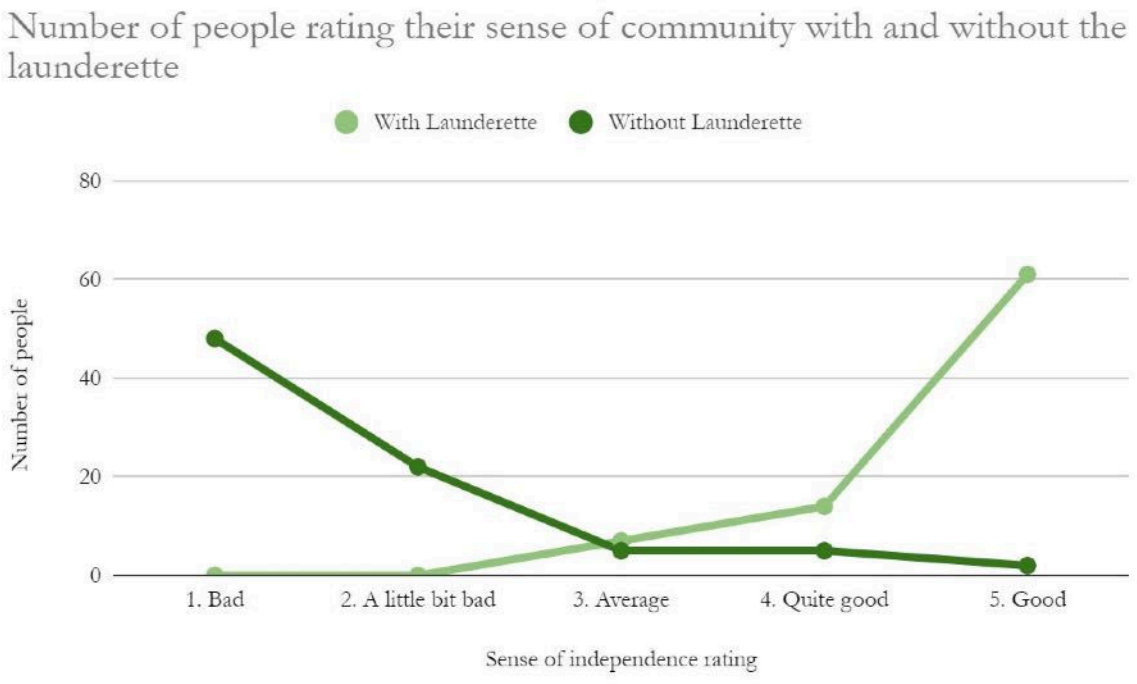


Figure 5

Having a local community and strong support network has a big impact on mental health, as discussed in the above section. As stated by a customer in an interview, doing laundry is almost a communal bonding, with a “sort of intimacy to it”. In exploring ideas of community, a key idea is how people do not choose where to live based on their habits, but communities are created through “repeated everyday interactions and interventions” that form both the neighbourhood and the individual (Benson and Jackson, 2012). By providing an essential service to local residents that supersedes social divides, the launderette can bring together people “of all communities and backgrounds” (staff interview). This was further discussed in a staff interview when discussing customer reactions to the closure of the establishment:

> Somebody expressed when we opened back up that going to different launderettes they didn't feel part of that launderette family. I think we have got more of a family vibe

A member of staff stated that social interaction was a key part of the job:

> We always socialise, some people come in here, some people maybe even live alone, and they get the chance to socialise with the staff and with each other.

However, in Boundary Launderette, community transcends laundry transactions, as discussed by a long-term customer:

> It’s got that accessible atmosphere. There’s this enticement, that community feel that makes people wanna come in even if they don’t have any washing. The staff are so friendly and approachable. People can just come in and have a nice chat, get the stress and anxiety off their minds.

The customer further expanded on this:

> It provides a space for the most vulnerable in the community. For those with physical disabilities, mental health conditions, those who are isolated, vulnerable, old. It provides a sanctuary for them. There isn't another place like that.

In one of the more vulnerable interviews, a customer who had grown up adjacent to the launderette who had moved away but remained a loyal customer stated:

> It's vital, it's the one thing I look forward to. You know my life is so dull and boring, it's one of the few things I can enjoy doing.

As people increasingly do not live in the area they were born in, such as diaspora, communal routine can be a catalyst for connection and camaraderie, the foundation of how we define ‘community’ has become increasingly dynamic and diverse (Blokland, 2017).

The community Boundary Launderette has formed over the last three decades was also vital in enriching the social fabric of the area. When the launderette was first built in 1992, Arnold Circus was a crime hotspot known for its anti-social behaviour and gang activity. The local shopkeeper who was interviewed reported fear for her personal safety when initially opening her store in 2002. However, with the launderette opening for long hours and always staffed, she was reassured by the feeling that she always had eyes on her. In a study examining a low income neighbourhoods, key findings were that high levels of social cohesion, increased sense of safety, and good local aesthetics significantly related to low stress levels (Henderson et al., 2016). As an anchor within the community, the launderette has increased word-of-mouth anecdotes and increased recognition amongst residents, which aided in increasing the sense of safety in the area.

While safety in the area has improved, the 2021 Annual Residents Survey revealed that crime and anti-social behaviour remain the primary concerns for 47% of residents (Tower Hamlets Partnership, 2023). Furthermore, 26% of respondents reported feeling unsafe after dark. One resident highlighted recent incidents, referencing two linked crossbow attacks that occurred on the 4th and 14th of March, leaving two people injured.

> You know, if the launderette had been open, the women who work here would have known something was up. They're kind of the eyes and ears on the ground. People are talking to them. People are doing their laundry, they're talking about what they see… they’re kind of a finger on the pulse of the community.

While it is impossible to verify this claim, it is clear the launderette, the buzz of the footfall, and the women of the launderette present a strong sense of comfort and safety for local people. In an area of rapid urbanisation and change over the years, their steady and stable presence fostered an authentic understanding of the area, which in turn helped local residents, customers, and other shops feel looked out for.

In the theory of community social organisation, public-goods from social capital include “informal social control mechanisms, network ties to extra-local power, mutual trust, capacity for efficacious action, and organisational resources” (Ferguson and Dickens, 1999, p. 243). As put by a resident, “to treat [the launderette] like a business misses the point.” The wider intangible benefits only flourish effectively because of the long-term trust created between the launderette and local stakeholders.

5.3 Independence

5.3.1 Independence calculations

Category	Attribution	Number of users	Financial Proxy	Financial Proxy Description	Source	Gross Proxy Value	Deadweight	Deadweight Cost	Annual Cost After Deadweight
5.3 Indepen-dence	74%	279	£182	per person per year	Authors	£50,771	30%	£15,231	£35,540

279 users also experienced gains in personal independence, with a financial proxy of £182 per person per year developed by the authors. This results in a gross impact of £50,771. With a 30% deadweight applied, the adjusted annual value of this outcome is £35,540, reflecting a modest but meaningful gain in user autonomy.

The social value of independence has been calculated by hypothesising that individuals need to travel, on average, 60 minutes per week to access essential services such as shops. This travel entails a cost, which has been estimated using the standard fare for two weekly bus journeys on Transport for London (TfL) services. Each journey costs £1.75, resulting in a weekly cost of £3.50 and an annual total of £182. This figure reflects a basic pay-as-you-go scenario and is supported by user survey responses, which highlighted the need for regular local travel as a key factor in maintaining independence.

5.3.2 Increased independence in the launderette

When people were asked about their sense of independence, there was a clear lack of independence felt without the launderette, as shown in Figure 7:

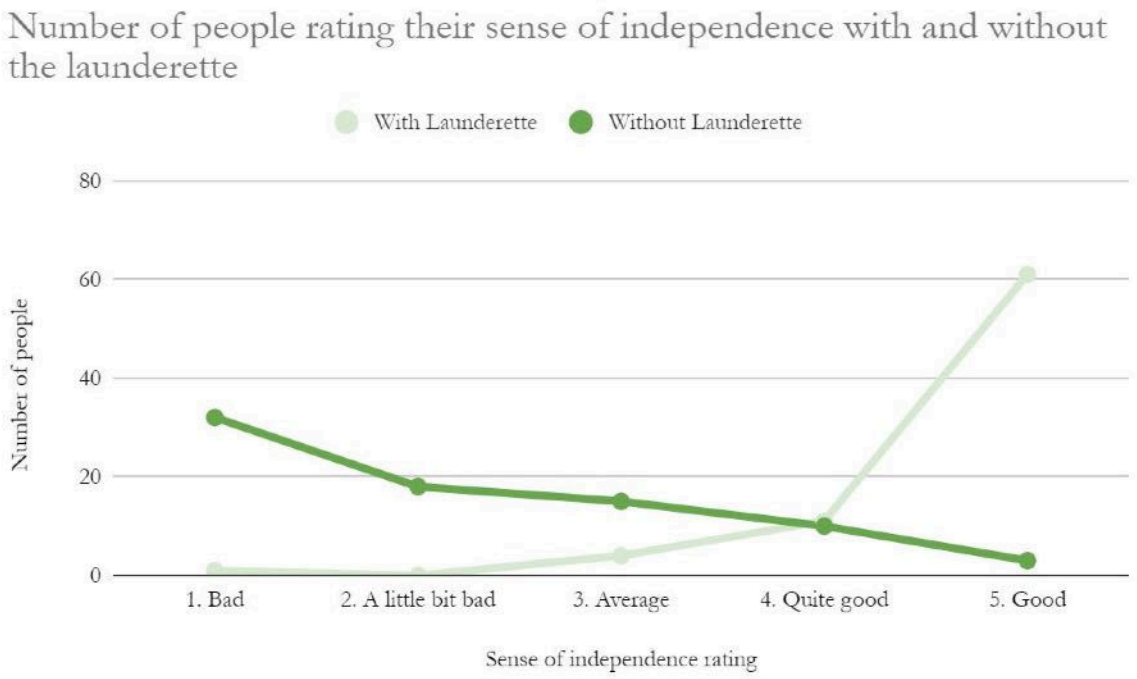


Figure 7

By performing an essential household service at a below market price, the launderette saves people time and money, thus increasing customers' independence by saving time and money. Independence autonomy can be defined as an individual's choice to pursue their life plans based on their "preferences, evaluations, and volitions (Spector, 2022; p.315). When the launderette was closed down, the importance of having access to a local and affordable facility was amplified. A member of staff discussed this, stating:

> People were so happy when we opened it. Some people said they had to go one and a half miles to dry their clothes in Dalston.

The provision of service washes from the launderette staff is vital for those with limited mobility or time. Additionally, the alternative launderettes require either a 15 minute walk, carrying a heavy load of sometimes wet laundry, or a bus ride away. For some, the financial or physical cost of this is not an option, especially given the frequency at which most people do laundry. A customer discussed this, saying:

> People who might have health issues, elderly people, who live by themselves … people actually having to carry their stuff a mile down the road. Some people don't have the money.

The concept of independence is especially important for the families in the estate. In an interview with a mother reflecting on the laundrette's closure and the time consumption of the alternative laundry options, she estimated that the launderette saved her two to three hours a week. Another mother calculated that it saved her around fourteen hours a month. For employed parents, particularly mothers, household roles can remain a source of additional strain and distress, with little decline in traditional household requirements (Baruch, Biener, & Barnett, 1987; Meissner et al., 1975; Shaw, 1988 & 1991; Zuzanek &Smale, 1992). The pressure of having essentially two jobs - at work and in the home - has been referred to as the "second shift" (Hochschild, 1989).

In a cost-of-living crisis, having this cheap and accessible facility is vital to increase autonomy and standard of living for families. With Tower Hamlets having the youngest median age of any area in England and Wales, the launderette plays a crucial role in supporting local families (Tower Hamlets Partnership, 2023). Its services provide essential, affordable access to laundry facilities, particularly for young families living in council housing or small flats, where space for home washing and drying is often limited.

As with most of the other social value subcategories, increased independence, especially for those who work, is good for mental health. People employed in industrial societies under a "time-budget" feel increasingly psychologically stressed (Robinson & Godbey, 1997; Zuzanek & Smale,1997; Zuzanek, Beckers, & Peters, 1998). The stress created by the "time-crunch" phenomenon and increase in chronic life stress can be linked to various cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, and emotional issues (Zuzanek,1998). Moreover, Cooper and Cartwright suggest that nearly half of

all early deaths in the UK can be accredited to lifestyle and stress-related health issues. Based on the survey, 83% of working customers feel an increased sense of independence because of the launderette. While important for all, having the access to the launderette and using the time for leisure or to tackle other tasks is indispensable in fast-paced urban living.

5.4 Hygiene

5.4.1 Health and hygiene costs calculations

Category	Attribution	Number of users	Financial Proxy	Financial Proxy Description	Source	Gross Proxy Value	Deadweight	Deadweight Cost	Annual Cost After Deadweight
5.4 Hygiene costs	73%	274	£156	Increase wash costs per year	Authors, Survey-based	£42,805	5%	£2,140	£40,665

Increased access to washing facilities contributed to improved hygiene for 274 users. Based on survey-informed proxies, the financial value of this outcome is £156 per user per year. This translates to a gross value of £42,805, with minimal deadweight (5%). Consequently, the annual impact after adjustment is £40,665, highlighting the cost-effective nature of this benefit.

In this instance, the social value impact of the launderette on health and hygiene is twofold. First, it enhances residents' overall sense of cleanliness and hygiene by providing access to facilities that can handle larger loads and more thorough cleaning than typical home washing machines. This is especially vital for items such as bedding, which require regular, deep cleaning to remove allergens and dust.

Second, the launderette plays a crucial role in reducing damp and mould issues in residents' homes. Many households struggle with drying clothes indoors, which can lead to excess moisture and, over time, mould growth—both of which pose significant health risks. By offering a reliable space for laundering and drying clothes, the launderette helps to mitigate these issues, contributing to healthier living environments.

5.4.2 Increased hygiene and hygiene poverty

Previous chapters have highlighted the significance of the launderette's accessibility, particularly for individuals with physical or mental limitations. When surveyed on their sense of cleanliness and hygiene with and without access to the launderette, the results were striking. The percentage of people rating their hygiene as a 5 (Good) dropped dramatically from 85.2% (69 people) to just 3.7% (3 people) when the launderette was unavailable.

This stark contrast underscores the critical role the launderette plays in maintaining hygiene standards within the community. Additionally, the number of people rating their hygiene as a 1 (Bad) surged to 43.8% (35 people) without the launderette.

These findings, represented in the Figure 8, clearly demonstrate the profound impact the launderette has on residents' overall sense of hygiene and well-being.

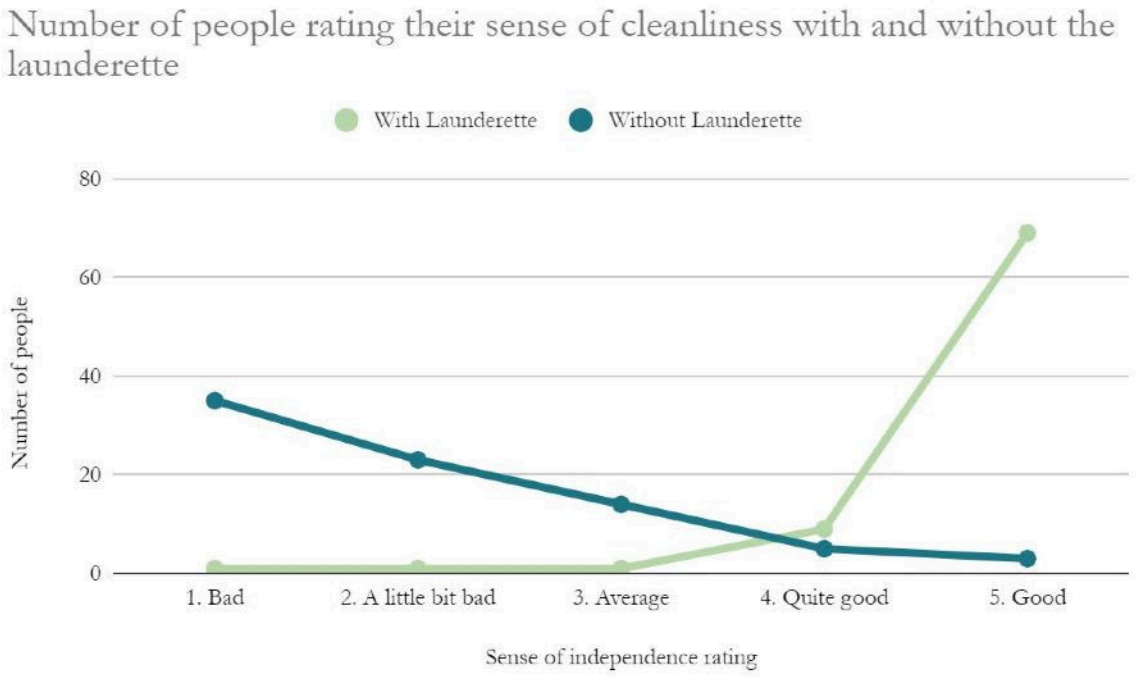


Figure 8

Amidst the ongoing cost of living crisis, hygiene poverty is becoming an increasingly pressing issue, with 8% of adults in the UK having experienced it over the past 12 months (Prescott-Smith et al., 2024). This crisis is not just a matter of physical discomfort; it has significant mental health implications. Of those facing hygiene poverty, 68% report an impact on their mental well-being, a noticeable rise from 61% in 2022. The effects are even more severe for vulnerable groups—80% of people with disabilities or health conditions say their mental health has been negatively affected, and 78% of those claiming Universal Credit report similar struggles (ibid).

The consequences extend beyond mental health, with one in six individuals stating that hygiene poverty has harmed their work life, and 13% admitting they have avoided work altogether due to poor hygiene conditions. This issue is particularly acute in areas like the Boundary Estate, where a large portion of residents live in council housing and rely on communal resources such as the launderette.

The launderette serves as a lifeline for these residents, providing affordable and reliable facilities for maintaining basic hygiene. Its importance cannot be overstated, especially in the context of rising costs and the increasing prevalence of hygiene poverty, which threatens both the mental well-being and economic stability of vulnerable communities.

The local shop owner prioritises hygiene by using sterilised dishcloths, tea towels, floor cloths, and mops instead of the disposable blue towels often seen in

commercial settings. To maintain cleanliness, they generate three loads of laundry each week, which they usually take to the local launderette.

However, when the launderette was forced to close, the impact rippled across the community. The shop owner had to rely on a more distant launderette, which added not just inconvenience but significant cost, as it required a taxi journey each way. This turned a previously simple and economic routine into a much more expensive and inefficient process.

Moreover, the alternative launderette lacked the infrastructure for pick-up, collection, and delivery services, further complicating matters. The closure of the local launderette reveals a butterfly effect on the community. What seems like a small disruption creates wider challenges for businesses relying on these services. A service boundary in this context limits the area the local launderette serves, and when it's no longer available, the community feels the consequences, particularly in terms of increased costs and inconvenience.

This example highlights the launderette's central role in the community, serving as more than just a convenience, but an essential support for local businesses.

5.4.3 Damp and mould in the Boundary Estate

Damp and mould are persistent issues affecting many apartments in the Boundary Estate, particularly those on the ground floor. Tower Hamlets, the most densely populated borough in England, experienced a 22% population growth between 2011 and 2021 (Tower Hamlets Partnership, 2023). This increased density, especially in smaller council flats, places residents at greater risk of mould. Condensation, a leading cause of mould growth, is often the result of excess moisture in the air and poor ventilation—conditions that become especially problematic during the winter months (Wandsworth.gov.uk, 2024). Air drying clothes indoors significantly raises humidity levels, exacerbating the risk of mould. However, opening windows for better ventilation during colder weather presents its own challenges, as it can make the apartment uncomfortably cold.

A resident of the estate shared how the wooden windows in their flat are listed, meaning they cannot be replaced. As a result, when residents dry clothes indoors, the moisture accelerates the rot of the windows over time. A resident explained his experience with this below:

> There were times in my life you could peel the actual frame off. Like the walls get damp and, you can actually peel the plaster off.

In discussing the impact of the launderette's closure on residents and their health, they stated:

> The majority in this estate are tenants that work very hard, don't earn a lot, and some of them can't afford the washing machines or if they've got a washing machine, the space within is not big enough to dry or it causes damp.

> It was difficult when it was closed, their houses became mouldy and damp … some people say [their flats] have started to smell. They were scared for their children

A family that had to be relocated due to mould issues cost the council £50,000 for temporary housing over a five-month period, excluding the additional expenses required to repair their original home. This case highlights the significant financial burden that poor housing conditions can place on local authorities, underscoring the importance of preventative measures, such as access to proper laundering facilities, to mitigate damp and mould in homes.

The launderette offers a practical solution to this dilemma. By providing residents with an alternative to drying clothes indoors, it helps reduce moisture levels and prevents the growth of mould, creating healthier living environments without the need to compromise on comfort or warmth.

Another customer, who owns a washing machine at home, shared that she relied on the larger machines at the launderette to wash her bedding weekly. As someone with asthma, she found these industrial machines crucial for removing dust and allergens that could exacerbate her condition.

She pointed out that, even for those who have access to their own machines, the rising cost of electricity poses a significant challenge. To keep expenses down, many can only afford to run their washing machines at 20°C, which often results in a bad odour and less effective cleaning. In contrast, the launderette offers a fixed rate, ensuring consistent and thorough cleaning without the worry of fluctuating energy bills. This not only ensures a better wash but also simplifies budgeting, offering a sense of financial predictability that home washing can't provide.

The Boundary Launderette provides a vital service to the Boundary Estate community, contributing significantly to both health and hygiene. Serving as a safeguard against the rise of damp and mould in homes, particularly when space is limited and indoor drying exacerbates these issues. The launderette's role is even more crucial in the context of the cost of living crisis, where hygiene poverty is on the rise and electricity costs are soaring. For many residents, particularly those with physical or mental struggles, access to the launderette ensures a consistent level of cleanliness and prevents the financial strain of running inefficient home washing machines.

The closure of the launderette illustrates its far-reaching impact, both socially and economically. From increased mould-linked health risks to the financial burden on local authorities for emergency housing, the launderette's absence ripples across the community. It is clear that this communal facility not only provides a practical solution for laundry needs but also functions as a cornerstone of well-being, offering residents financial stability, improved mental health, and healthier living environments. Its importance cannot be overstated, particularly in vulnerable areas where access to affordable hygiene services is a lifeline.

5.5 Good jobs

5.5.1 Good jobs calculations

Category	Attribution	Financial Proxy Source	Hours / Basis	Gross Proxy Value	Deadweight (15%)	Net Annual Value
Jobs for people with disabilities	1 person	National TOMs Framework	£12,141.15 (individual) + £1,093.55 (government)	£13,234.70	£1,985.21	£11,249.50
Four jobs at London Living Wage	4 employees	Living Wage Foundation	16 hrs/week × 50 weeks = 800 hrs each	3,200 hrs × £13.15 = £42,080	£6,312.00	£35,768.00
Volunteering	4 volunteers	National TOMs 2019 (NT17)	7.5 hrs/week × 52 weeks = 390 hrs each	1,560 hrs × £14.80 = £23,088	£3,463.20	£19,624.80

The table presents a social value assessment of three categories of contributions of the laundrette: employment for people with disabilities, jobs paid at the London Living Wage, and volunteering. Each entry outlines the attribution (number of people or roles involved), the source of the financial proxy, hours or basis for calculation, and resulting gross value. A standard deadweight rate of 15% is applied to account for outcomes that would have occurred without intervention. The total value shows the monetised impact of inclusive employment and volunteering, with net benefits ranging from £11,249.50 for a single job for a person with disabilities to £35,768.00 for four Living Wage roles, and £19,624.80 from sustained volunteer contributions.

5.5.2 Good and fair employment

Good jobs and fair employment are central pillars of social value, frequently highlighted in social value frameworks and policy discussions. This is particularly relevant in Tower Hamlets, a borough facing disproportionately high unemployment rates—4.6% compared to the national average of 3.7%. Employment disparities are even more pronounced among women, with only 59.7% of women in Tower Hamlets employed, compared to 72% nationwide (Tower Hamlets Partnership, 2023).

The Boundary Community Launderette, an ethical employer of four women, plays a vital role in addressing these challenges by providing meaningful employment to individuals vulnerable to these statistics. Its commitment to fair employment practices is evident in the dedication of its staff, with some employees having worked at the launderette for decades—one for nearly thirty years and another for twenty years. This longstanding service underscores the launderette's role as a stable and supportive employer in the community.

At present, the launderette employs four part-time workers, who together ensure the facility remains open for 54 hours each week. These hours are divided among the staff, with occasional overlap but generally one member of staff managing each shift. Notably, all employees are paid at least the London Living Wage of £13.15 an hour, making the Boundary Community Launderette one of only four launderettes in

the country that are accredited Living Wage employers. This commitment to providing good jobs with fair pay further enhances the launderette's social value, reinforcing its role as a community asset not only for its services but for the quality of employment it provides.

One staff member, who has a disability, shared her experience of re-entering the workforce at the launderette. She highlighted that the flexible working hours were particularly accommodating for her needs. The schedule allowed her to have sufficient breaks between shifts, enabling her to manage her condition effectively and avoid overexertion. This arrangement facilitated her recovery on days off and helped prevent her disability from being triggered.

In her testimony, she described how the tailored work hours have significantly contributed to her ability to work comfortably and sustainably, making her experience at the launderette a positive and manageable one:

> Finding a job for me felt very daunting because, when my partner died in 2020, I was then put on universal credit. I had to go to the jobcentre to find work. I'm 62 this year so coming to look for work at the age of 59, 60, was very daunting in itself.
>
> Before finding my job here, I applied for a lot of work and when I put that I've got a disability, they would say because of your disability, we're gonna have to say no. So the closure was daunting in the respect that I'd have to do it all again
>
> I remember from my interview, I explained that I've got a long term disability, but I was told that [the launderette] works to help people with disabilities back into work. So it made me feel even better knowing that I could go in there and be myself.

In another interview with a customer, she voiced her concern over the staffs' employment during the closure:

> What are the families and the extended networks that are gonna be affected by the fact that these people are not working here?

By offering local people good and fair employment, the launderette adds economic opportunities in the area

5.5.3 Volunteering

The four directors of the Boundary Community Launderette each volunteer a minimum of three hours per week for meetings, with additional hours as needed. They manage critical corporate responsibilities, including payroll, HR, reporting, accounting, and troubleshooting issues, such as coordinating with machine engineers. On average, each director contributes between three to twelve hours of volunteer work weekly.

Following the council's closure of the launderette, which depleted its financial reserves while staff continued to be paid for the seven weeks of closure, the directors have dedicated considerable effort to revitalising the business and

managing its precarious cash flow. Additionally, the council's request for a new business plan has further increased the directors' workload.

In support of this social value report, Jonathan Moberly has been exceptionally proactive, providing necessary information, facilitating surveys at the launderette, and coordinating and attending meetings. His ongoing commitment underscores the directors' collective dedication to ensuring the launderette's continued operation and service to the community.

5.6 Net social value calculations

SROI		Gross	Discount	Net
Total value of inputs				***£ 66,512***
5.1 Mental Health		£ 229,463	£ 45,893	£ 183,571
5.2 Community		£ 1,046,950	£ 471,127	£ 575,822
5.3 Independence		£ 50,771	£ 15,231	£ 35,540
5.4 Hygiene costs		£ 42,805	£ 2,140	£ 40,665
5.5 Good Jobs		£ 78,403	£ 11,760	£ 66,642
	Total	*£ 1,448,392*	*£ 546,152*	***£ 902,240***
	SROI ratio	***£ 13.56***		£ 1.00

The net social value calculations presented above indicate a strong SROI for the laundrette. With a total input value of £66,512, the net social value generated amounts to £902,240 after applying discounting (or deadweights), resulting in a SROI ratio of £13.56 for every £1 invested. These figures suggest a highly efficient use of resources, with meaningful improvements across well-being, independence, hygiene and employment. Overall, the analysis provides compelling evidence of significant and diverse social returns relative to the financial inputs.

6 Conclusion

The Boundary Community Launderette's efforts to secure a long-term lease under Tower Hamlets' Community Premises Portfolio (CPP) and explore grant opportunities are pivotal in ensuring its future sustainability and continued service to the local community. As an essential resource for the Boundary Estate, the launderette is not just a place to wash clothes but a cornerstone of the community, providing affordable services while promoting health, well-being, and social cohesion.

Its foundation as a grassroots initiative, led by local women and volunteers, speaks to its deep connection with the people it serves. Over the years, the launderette has become a trusted and reliable institution, fostering relationships that extend beyond its services. **This long-term social investment has built the launderette up into an institution with a social value output of £13.56 for every £1 put into it.** This sense of community ownership and involvement reflects the values embedded in the Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan 2022–26, aligning with the borough's goals of reducing inequality and supporting local residents.

As Tower Hamlets continues to evolve through rapid urban development, the preservation of community-based services like the Boundary Community Launderette is vital. These services contribute to the borough's unique social fabric, offering stability and continuity in a time of change. By securing a CPP lease and pursuing public grants, the launderette not only safeguards its own future but also strengthens its ability to meet the ongoing needs of the community. Through this dual approach, it will continue to play a critical role in promoting social value, inclusivity, and long-term support for residents, reinforcing its position as a lifeline for the Boundary Estate and an indispensable asset to the borough.

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8 Appendix

A1 Customer survey

Timestamp	Are you a current resident or a former resident?	How often do you use Boundary Estate Community Launderette?	Please rate your overall experience of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your overall mental health. (1 = poor mental health, 5 = excellent mental health)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your overall physical health. (1 = poor physical health, 5 = excellent physical health)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your overall sense of belonging to the community. (1 = no sense of belonging, 5 = strong sense of belonging)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your overall sense of connection to the community. (1 = no sense of connection, 5 = strong sense of connection)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your overall sense of safety in the area. (1 = unsafe, 5 = very safe)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your overall sense of independence. (1 = not independent, 5 = very independent)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your overall ability to access the services you think you need. (1 = not at all able, 5 = very able)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	How did the closure of Boundary Estate Community Launderette affect you?	Finally, are there any other comments you have about the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, its users, or its services that you would like to add?	Do you identify as?	What gender do you identify as?	What is your ethnic background?
8/4/2024 12:	Yes	A few times a week	£2.7&£3.	5. Good		5. Good		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		5. Very independent		5. Very independent			This beautiful place has a heart-beat that provides life, energy and purpose to the community. Its absence is felt by everyone who has ever been around it. I pray a shop-per launderette makes a return soon. It is an essential service for the community.	Self-employed	Female	White: British
8/4/2024 13:	Yes	Monthly	£2.7&£3.	3. Average		4. Quite good		4. Quite clean		4. Quite clean		3. A bit clean		4. Quite independent		2. A little bit independent		It made me sad.	It really feels a good space	Full-time	Male	White: British
8/4/2024 14:	Yes	Once a week	£2.7&£3.	3. Average	Suffer from anxiety and depression	2. A little bit bad	No washer/dryer in kitchen of home. Need to go outside to do this and prevent damp in the house	3. Average		1. Bad	I still recently started to connect with other users, but I don't feel safe leaving laundry alone as I sometimes get harassed	1. Bad	I will still be down as I do not feel comfortable if I would be a bit inconvenient as I either further every or hang my clothes in the flat	1. Very dependent		1. Very dependent		Stress is further heightened by the fact being left to do laundry in the bathroom which is very unsanitary, even with the best of intentions. I feel incredibly stressed about it and I was sorry.	Please continue your service. We are disabled without you	Full-time	Female	Asian: Bangladeshi
8/4/2024 15:	Yes	A few times a week	£2.7&£3.	5. Good		5. Good		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		5. Very independent		5. Very independent				Full-time	Female	Asian: Bangladeshi
8/4/2024 16:	Yes	Once every couple of weeks	£2.7&£3.	5. Good		5. Good		4. Quite clean		4. Quite clean		3. A bit clean		4. Quite independent		3. A bit independent				Full-time	Female	Asian: Bangladeshi
8/4/2024 17:	Yes	Once a week	£2.7&£3.	3. Average	Suffer from anxiety and depression	2. A little bit bad	No washer/dryer in kitchen of home. Need to go outside to do this and prevent damp in the house	3. Average	Friendly staff always happy to chat. Community feeling. Community meeting service. Church hosted service.	1. Bad	Good place to meet neighbours and build relationships in my area	2. A little bit bad	Allows a quicker turnaround of laundry. Saves a long time in my routine.	2. A little bit independent	Takes longer to dry clothes as will have less clean clothes without the Launderette	2. A little bit independent	Decent hang on to dry clothes indoors.	2. A little bit independent		It's a valuable community hub. Boundary estate do not have much else in the area. Many residents are elderly and rely on the launderette to do their laundry. Without it, they will have to travel further to do their laundry. Many residents do not have washing machines in their homes. The launderette is also a place where people can socialise and meet their neighbours. It is a place where people can socialise and meet their neighbours. It is a place where people can socialise and meet their neighbours.	Full-time	Female	Asian: Bangladeshi
8/4/2024 18:	Yes	Once every couple of weeks	£2.7&£3.	3. Average		2. A little bit bad		2. A little bit bad		1. Bad		2. A little bit bad		1. Not at all independent		1. Not at all independent				Full-time	Female	Asian: Bangladeshi
8/4/2024 19:	Yes	Once a week	£2.7&£3.	3. Average		2. A little bit bad		3. Average		1. Bad		2. A little bit bad		1. Not at all independent		1. Not at all independent				Full-time	Female	Asian: Bangladeshi
8/4/2024 20:	Yes	Once a week	£3&£4	5. Good		1. Bad		1. Bad		1. Bad		1. Bad		1. Not at all independent		1. Not at all independent				Full-time	Female	White: British
8/4/2024 22:	Yes	Once a week	£2.7&£3.	3. Average	Boundary Estate Launderette is local and part of the community. Other venues closing and laundry is obscene a	2. A little bit bad	Like will be difficult without this service	4. Quite good		2. A little bit bad		1. Not at all independent		1. Not at all independent		1. Not at all independent				Full-time	Male	Asian: Bengali
8/5/2024 16:	Yes	Once every couple of weeks	£2.7&£3.	3. Average		2. A little bit bad	I would miss the community	5. Good		1. Bad	no as it's obvious by my previous answers	5. Very clean		5. Very independent		4. Quite independent		I felt the loss of predictable amenities	It's vital living asset to all about	Self-employed	Male	White: other

Timestamp	Are you a customer at the launderette?	How often do you use the launderette's services?	Please provide your postcode	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your mental health. (consider anxiety, stability, etc...)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in the area, please rate what you think your mental health would be without the launderette	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette please rate your sense of community (Consider community building/bonding, social interaction, sense of safety within the community etc...)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in the area, please rate what you think your sense of community would be without the launderette.	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate to what extent the laundrette helps you keep clean and healthy (Consider washing/drying facilities and drying related issues such as mould and damp...)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in your area, please rate what you think your sense cleanliness would be without the launderette.	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your sense of independence. (Consider time saved, financial benefits, etc...)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in your area, please rate what you think your sense of independence would be without the launderette.	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	How did the closure of Boundary Estate Community Launderette affect you?	Finally, are there any other ways you consider the Boundary Estate Community Launderette adds value to your life or is there anything you would like to add?	Occupation	What gender do you identify as?	What race do you identify as?
8/5/2024 20:	Yes	Once a week	E2 7dj	5. Good	Boundary Estate Community Laundrette plays a big role in the community for to people have their clothes cleaned and washed easily, the staffs are amazing and the people behind working for the laundrette have a massive impact playing positive impact on the mental health wellbeing of residents whom are using the laundrette.	1. Bad	The boundary Estate Community launderette makes the Community a complete community. Without it would be incomplete community from my understanding and experience.	5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		2. A little bit clean		5. Very independent		3. A bit independent		By closure of the Boundary Estate Community launderette had made me feel bad and difficult in washing my clothes and being clean at large as I had to travel, made it worse in many sense. Loss in many ways.	Yes having the Boundary Estate Community launderette makes me feel good in all ways. Thanks.	Full-time	Male	Asian/Asian British
8/6/2024 18:	Yes	A few times week	E2 7JH	3. Average		1. Bad	I dont know how I could get my washing done / carry it	5. Good	The laundrette is one of the few places we meet our neighbours. Recently one of our residents and another person was attacked in Arnold circus / shot with a crossbow. Many of us are too scared to go there/ sit there now. We need all the community we can get now.	1. Bad	As above thanks	5. Very clean	I can't afford to get my flat is the winter - clothes stay wet / take days to dry at home.	1. Not at all clean	As above & I would struggle to take washing elsewhere/ love the interaction I have with other boundary residents and would be not as clean and a lot more lonely without laundrette	4. Quite independent		1. Not at all independent	I would have to find help to get washing done	Horrible	It's the centre of our community along with Arnold Circus	Full-time	Female	Asian Bengali
8/7/2024 16:	Yes	Once a week	e2 8pr	3. Average		3. Average		4. Quite good		3. Average		5. Very clean		2. A little bit clean		5. Very independent		4. Quite independent		It was very difficult to wash my clothes, as the next closest laundry is far and is not very nice	It provides an excellent service and is a welcoming community base	Full-time	Female	White british
8/8/2024 15:	Yes	Daily	E2 7JX	4. Quite good	the laundrette is a life saver to many residents not just my self	1. Bad		5. Good		1. Bad		4. Quite clean		1. Not at all clean		5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent		My washing just piled up and affected my mental health . i cannot afford to put the heating on due to the high cost of gas	A bit of me time	Part-time	Female	Asian Bengali
8/8/2024 17:	Yes	A few times week	E2 7HJ	4. Quite good		2. A little bit bad		5. Good		2. A little bit bad		5. Very clean		2. A little bit clean		5. Very independent		3. A bit independent		It created chaos in our home. We live in a small flat and without proper drying resources or space. We had to wash important bed, bathroom and kitchen linen and leave it out to dry which would sometimes take days. This had a negative affect on our health and on our dynamic in the house.		Full-time	Female	White other
8/9/2024 16:	Yes	A few times week	E2 7ex	5. Good		3. Average		5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		3. A bit clean		3. A bit independent		3. A bit independent		Yes		Self-employed	Male	Asian Bengali
8/9/2024 21:	Yes	Monthly	N16 7NT	5. Good		3. Average	Meeting and talking with the local community and staff is very refreshing and everyone is super helpful. To get to meet and talk to new people offers new and interesting insights creating a friendly feel.	5. Good		3. Average	The community launderette is more than just a service- Its a place where people can talk and share also acting as a safe space for many.	5. Very clean		2. A little bit clean	The community launderette helps many people and also helps keep homes damp and mould free - The launderette is vital in many areas similar to mentioned above. The community launderette like this also helps keep council costs low as it means no damp and mould in personal properties.	5. Very independent		4. Quite independent	Launderette is practical, fast and staff are very nice and helpful.	Couldnt use facilities and to lose a local service like this which has been around for so long meant there was not another launderette to use close by. Losing the communication with the local and staff members was something we do not want to experience again. This community feels like a family.	The Boundary Estate Community Launderette does so much more than the services they provide. They provide a safe space and also provide many people with jobs helping so many people around them.	Full-time	Male	Asian/Asian British
8/11/2024 8:	Yes	Daily	E2 7JL	5. Good	I live in a tiny studio flat with no ventilation and space for a washer / dryer and without this laundrette and the customer service i receive I would have very bad mental health.	1. Bad	Same as previous answer, but also the impact on the community and the area itself. It would feel like it's heart had been taken away. It really has a mental impact on the community.	5. Good	Very strong. I've met so many people here and continue to do so. I love talking to the people inside.	1. Bad	Other laundrettes customer service in the area is appalling. I was hit round the head with one of the doors to the dryers by one of the workers whilst sitting waiting for my washing without an apology. Disgusting customer service. No one talks to you.	5. Very clean	Always clean and tidy	1. Not at all clean		5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent		I couldn't do my washing. I was risking my own hygiene. Other Local laundrettes were more expensive and very awful customer service. And their washing machines made my clothes smell horrible even with detergent.	Community. Washing. A sense of feeling together. Meeting new people. It's part of this estate and it should remain so. It would not be the same without it.			
8/11/2024 9:	No	0	E27FD	5. Good		5. Good		3. Average		2. A little bit bad		2. A little bit clean		1. Not at all clean		5. Very independent		5. Very independent				Full-time	Male	White british
8/11/2024 1(	Yes	Monthly	E27JA	3. Average	Knowing that the launderette is there makes me feel that society is just about still working. We are struggling with the cost of living. The laundrette gives me the believe that not everything in life is monetised yet and that just occasionally humans still matter more than money.	1. Bad	It is important to know that there is a service, a lifeline when your household infrastructure breaks down, something that you can afford, that helps you, and that has a physical place and regular opening hours, that you can drop into. This can't be replaced by invisible services that you need to be referred to or put on a waiting list for, or by charities that do a weekly event	5. Good	A community needs a place and that is the launderette	1. Bad	Without a place at its centre, a community is dispersed and can feel virtual, more unreal and more lonely. If the launderette goes, we will all know that the council doesn't value the boundary estate community. It is that simple.	5. Very clean		4. Quite clean	I wouldn't be able to manage bigger loads and would struggle to dry large items like bedsheets	5. Very independent		3. A bit independent	As above I would struggle more with certain things. If my washing machine broke I wouldn't know what to do, other than being reliant on having the money to replace it, which I might not	It made me feel sad, like it was a death knell for Shoreditch. That people and community officially don't matter anymore	I would ask that the council considers the big picture rather than just the rent from one property. If the aim is to serve tower hamlets residents as best as possible, this is it, it is already here, the launderette is an amazing community asset that is valued and whose value stretches beyond the frequency of washes. It is a place where everyone feels welcomed and part of a community in an otherwise tough city	Self-employed	Female	White other

Timestamp	Are you a customer at the Boundary Estate Community Launderette?	How often do you use the launderette?	Prompt: Are you a member of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, your household or a visitor?	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your sense of community (1 = low sense of community, 5 = high sense of community, etc.)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in the area, please rate your sense of community (1 = low sense of community, 5 = high sense of community, etc.)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your sense of community (1 = low sense of community, 5 = high sense of community, etc.)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in the area, please rate your sense of community (1 = low sense of community, 5 = high sense of community, etc.)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your sense of community (1 = low sense of community, 5 = high sense of community, etc.)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in the area, please rate your sense of community (1 = low sense of community, 5 = high sense of community, etc.)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	How did the closure of Boundary Estate Community Launderette affect you?	Finally, we'd love any other ways you'd consider the Boundary Estate Community Launderette adds value to your life or is more pressing you would like to add?	Ownership	What gender do you identify as?	Why do you identify as this?
8/13/2024 11:Yes	Once a week	<£7/w	S. Good	5	It is a fun place to go for the laundrette	1. Bad	1	It is usually hard to meet neighbours in London.	5. Very clean	4 I already wrote the flat becomes crowded and damp when we had to dry our clothes here.	1. Not at all wet.	It would be crowded and damp	5. Very independent	The pick is quick, easy and friendly	2. A little bit independent	I might have to carry my laundry back home for is the next laundrette.	We had recently moved in, I invested problems of community asset and should be recognised as such by the Council	The Launderette is a community asset and should be recognised as such by the Council	Full-time	Female	White other
8/13/2024 11:Yes	Once a week	£2.78/w	5. Good	5	The flat becomes crowded and damp when we have to dry our clothes here. We rely 2 rooms (bedroom and kitchen) and a cat.	5. Good	5	I have met many people who work in the launderette and the launderette is not just a place to wash clothes, it has become a place of the community	5. Very clean	I am not able to wash all my clothes at home. Now I come to the launderette once a week which is much more convenient and very clean	1. Not at all clean	2. A little bit clean	1. Not at all clean	5. Very independent	4. Quite independent	2. A little bit independent	With the cost of living becoming a joke I am able to save more money	I can recommend	I had just moved in and was disappointed	Getting involved in the activities/trips to make friends	Full-time	Male	White other
8/13/2024 11:Yes	Once a week	£2.7/w	5. Good	5	I love very close to the laundry and it's handy to visit when it can take days to dry	5. Good	5	I have many friends and make worldwide connections in the laundry. Everyone is very nice and it is to be a very relaxed set	5. Very clean	4. Quite clean	1. Not at all clean	3. A bit clean	1. Not at all clean	5. Very independent	4. Quite independent	1. Not at all independent				Full-time	Male	White other
8/13/2024 11:Yes	Sometime s	£2.75/	5. Good	3	We have no space at home to wash the quantity of laundry which it can take days to dry	5. Good	5	I met many individual lives.	5. Very clean	1. Not at all clean	1. Not at all clean	2. A little bit clean	1. Not at all independent	5. Very independent	5. Very independent	1. Not at all independent	I can recommend	It makes my life very difficult	The community of this laundry is very supportive	Full-time	Female	South Asian
8/13/2024 11:Yes	every 2/3 weeks	£3.5ET	4. Quite good	2	A little bit bad	2. A little bit bad	2	We live just outside the area but would venture in purely for this great launderette has Everything is lovely here.	5. Very clean	2. A little bit clean	Refer to answer in question 4.	My washing machine at home doesn't wash and dry so this is a great alternative to Launderettes allowing me to work from home. I need this.	5. Very independent	4. Quite independent	5. Very independent	3. A bit independent	Can't do washing anywhere	Relief to answer a question A. Sorry, I have all our needs met in a single morning, without it I would have to commute to laundry and machine days subsequently to and dry.	Sion happiness above. We have a toddler at home which makes laundry inconvenience and	It makes my life very difficult	Full-time	Male	Chinese
8/13/2024 11:Yes	Once a week	£2	5. Average	3	Average	1. Bad	1	I don't interact with anyone in my community except when I'm in the launderette	5. Very clean	2. A little bit clean	Refer to answer in question 4.		2. A little bit clean	3. A bit independent	5. Very independent	1. Not at all independent	I live with 3 other people with no dryer. It'll be a nightmare	It's a massive time saver for me. I'm a student and I have a very busy schedule. Being able to do my laundry in the launderette is very convenient and helps me to stay on top of my day-to-day		Full-time	Male	Asian Bangla
8/13/2024 11:Yes	Once a week	£2.60/A	5. Good	1	Bad	1. Bad	1	I speak to people in the launderette but it's not a social place. It's a super place	5. Very clean	4. Quite good	Refer to answer in question 4.		5. Very independent	5. Very independent	5. Very independent	1. Not at all independent				Full-time	Male	mixed
8/13/2024 11:Yes		£C2	5. Good	5	Good	5. Good	5	The area would be nothing without this launderette	5. Very clean	5. Very clean			5. Very independent	5. Very independent	5. Very independent	3. A bit independent				Self-employed	Male	White British
8/13/2024 11:Yes	Once a week	£2.75/E	5. Good	5	Good	1. Bad	1	Added stress to finding somewhere which is as local and provide the service I need	5. Very clean	1. Not at all clean			5. Very independent	5. Very independent	5. Very independent	1. Not at all independent				Full-time	Female	Asian/Asi an British
8/14/2024 11:Yes	A few weeks	<£7/w	5. Good	5	Nice and friendly place to go to. Always a nice vibe.	5. Good	5	It's been very lonely, no reason	5. Very clean	2. A little bit clean			5. Very independent	5. Very independent	5. Very independent	1. Not at all independent	I live with 3 other people with no dryer. It'll be a nightmare			Full-time	Female	Asian/Asi an British
8/15/2024 11:Yes	Once a week	£1.6/E	5. Good	1	Bad	3. Average	3	Helpful lady with with drying facilities, greeted us for and are very	2. A little bit clean	2. A little bit clean			3. A bit independent	5. Very independent	4. Quite independent	3. A bit independent				Full-time	Female	Chinese
8/15/2024 11:Yes	Once a week	£2.7/E	5. Average	3	Average	3. Average	3		2. A little bit clean	2. A little bit clean			3. A bit independent	5. Very independent	5. Very independent	3. A bit independent				Full-time	Female	Asian/Asi an British
8/15/2024 11:Yes	A few weeks	£2/A	3. Average	1	Bad	Launderette helps - times of need	5	Launderette helps - times of need	5. Very clean	1. Not at all clean			1. A bit independent	1. Not at all independent	1. Not at all independent	1. A bit independent				Full-time	Female	White
8/16/2024 11:Yes	As and needed especially in winter months	£2.7/J	3. Average	3	Average	Bit nice to be able to talk	4	Nice to invest and chat to others	4. Quite good	Only have/need when you can't dry clothes you need and staff load at home	4. Quite clean									Retired	Female	White British

Timestamp	Approximately how often do you visit the Boundary Estate Community Launderette?	How did you discover the Boundary Estate Community Launderette?	Where do you currently live?	What is your postcode?	On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you describe the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please? (1 = Very poor, 5 = Excellent)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering washing your clothes in your own home, how would you describe the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please? (1 = Very poor, 5 = Excellent)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering washing your clothes in your own home, how would you describe the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please? (1 = Very poor, 5 = Excellent)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you describe the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please? (1 = Very poor, 5 = Excellent)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering washing your clothes in your own home, how would you describe the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please? (1 = Very poor, 5 = Excellent)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	How did you discover the Boundary Estate Community Launderette?	Finally, are there any other ways you consider the Boundary Estate Community Launderette adds value to you? Is there anything you would like to add?	Occupation	What gender do you identify as?	What is your ethnicity?
8/16/2024 11:14:00	Monthly	Other	Other	E2 7NP	3. Average		3. Average		3. Average		3. Average		3. Average		Other		Full-time	Female	White British
8/16/2024 11:14:00	Other	Other	Other	E2 7JJ	2. A little bit bad		5. Good		5. Good		5. Good		5. Good		Other		Full-time	Female	White British
8/16/2024 11:14:00	Other	Other	Other	E2 7NW	1. Bad		5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		Other		Part-time	Male	Mixed African
8/16/2024 11:14:00	A few times a week	Other	Other	E2 7JJ	3. Average		5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		Other		Full-time	Male	Asian Vietnamese
8/16/2024 11:14:00	Other	Other	Other	E2 7NB	3. Average		5. Good		1. Bad		4. Quite clean		5. Very clean		Other		Full-time	Male	Asian Vietnamese
8/16/2024 11:14:00	Other	Other	Other	E2 7NB			5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		Other		Full-time	Male	White British
8/17/2024 11:14:00	Other	Other	Other	E2 7JQ	5. Good		5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		Other		Full-time	Female	White other
8/17/2024 11:14:00	Other	Other	Other	E2 7NJ	5. Good		5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		Other		Part-time	Male	Asian British
8/17/2024 11:14:00	Other	Other	Other	E2 9BW	5. Good		4. Quite good		2. A little bit bad		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		Other		Full-time	Male	Asian British
8/30/2024 11:14:00	I can't remember the last time I used the launderette. I have a washing machine and tumble dryer in my flat.	Other	Other	E2 7JD	5. Good		3. Average		1. Bad		4. Quite clean		5. Very independent		Other		Retired	Male	Asian British
8/30/2024 11:14:00	Other	Other	Other	E2 9AJ	5. Good		4. Quite good		2. A little bit bad		4. Quite clean		5. Very independent		Other		Full-time	Female	White British
8/30/2024 11:14:00	Other	Other	Other	E2 7NB			5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		5. Very independent		Other		Full-time	Female	Black Caribbean

Timestamp	Are you a customer at the launderette?	How often do you use the launderette's services?	Please provide your postcode	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your mental health. (consider anxiety, stability, etc...)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in the area, please rate what you think your mental health would be without the launderette.	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your sense of community. (Consider community building/bonding, social interaction, sense of safety within the community etc...)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in the area, please rate what you think your sense of community would be without the launderette.	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate to what extent the launderette helps you keep clean and healthy. (Consider washing/drying facilities and drying related issues such as mould and damp...)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in your area, please rate what you think your sense cleanliness would be without the launderette	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	On a scale of 1 to 5, considering the presence of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, please rate your sense of independence. (Consider time saved, financial benefits, etc...)	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	Considering existing services in your area, please rate what you think your sense of independence would be without the launderette.	Can you expand on your previous answer? (Optional)	How did the closure of Boundary Estate Community Launderette affect you?	Finally, are there any other ways you consider the Boundary Estate Community Launderette adds value to your life or is there anything you would like to add?	Occupation	What gender do you identify as?	What race do you identify as?
8/20/2024 12	Yes	A few times week	E2 7LE	5. Good		1. Bad	With the cadence of the Launderette our quality of life is much better. We use it twice a week and it makes our life much easier. The ladies who work there are lovely and provide excellent customer service	5. Good		1. Bad	We meet local people at this launderette while we do our weekly laundry so its all good	5. Very clean		2. A little bit clean	I wouldn't be able to complete laundry tasks at home as my wife and I have a busy schedule so we really love the convenience of the Launderette.	5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent	It saves us lots of time for our laundry tasks so it would make our lives worse if the Launderette didn't exist.	We will need to find another Launderette which is far away so it won't be ideal for us	As previously said, it makes our lives easier so we would like to keep having the facilities the Launderette offers.	Self employed	Male	White
8/20/2024 14	Yes	Once every couple of weeks	E2 7LE	5. Good		4. Quite good	The launderette is very convenient, it would affect my working week if I had to travel further. I like having it as part of the Boundary community.	5. Good		2. A little bit bad	It's a pleasant central hub for the local community where people can interact who otherwise might not.	5. Very clean		3. A bit clean	Great service	5. Very independent		4. Quite independent	It's convenient, quick and the staff are helpful	I felt it was a great shame to lose such a community hub	I feel that many areas of London are becoming fragmented. The Launderette helps retain a sense of community that is increasingly unusual.	Full time	Female	White british
8/20/2024 14	Yes	A few times week	E2 7NP	5. Good		1. Bad	Launderette is amazing, the staff are very helpful, without this service it would be very difficult	5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		1. Not at all clean		5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent		Mental state was low.		Part-time	Female	Asian Bengali
8/20/2024 17	Yes	A few times week	E2 7ex	4. Quite good		2. A little bit bad		5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		3. A bit clean		5. Very independent		2. A little bit independent		Very depressing		Self employed	Male	Asian Bengali
8/21/2024 14	Yes	not specified	not specified	5. Good		1. Bad		5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		1. Not at all clean		5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent				Self employed	Female	
8/21/2024 14	Yes		E2 7ET	5. Good		5. Good	Very handy, we make use of it	5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		5. Very clean		5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent	lots of people in the area use it. It is very helpful	Very bad	Please keep it open, we need it		Female	Asian Bengali
8/21/2024 14	Yes	Once a week	E2 7JE	5. Good		3. Average	It is a convenient local amenity and staffed by friendly people. Without it I would need to travel to Dalston for laundry - much more inconvenient.	5. Good		2. A little bit bad	It is my main connection to the local community	5. Very clean		2. A little bit clean	I wouldn't do laundry as often. Drying clothes indoors leads to damp	5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent				Full time	Male	Asian/Asian British
8/21/2024 14	Yes	Once a week	E2 7JR	4. Quite good		1. Bad	The Boundary flats are damp and mouldy and I have asthma without a launderette my physical and mental health would greatly suffer.	4. Quite good		1. Bad	Feels good to have community with staff and fellow residents	4. Quite clean		1. Not at all clean	Boundary flats are damp and mouldy			1. Not at all independent		Stress, loss of time & finding an alternative, very bad.		Full time	Female	
8/21/2024 14	Yes	Once a week	E1 6RL	5. Good		1. Bad	With no space to dry clothes, my flat would be very cramped and crowded. It would also smell damp and make us overall feel more depressed. The Laundry makes washing and drying a 1 day task not a 3-day one.	5. Good		1. Bad	The staff are very friendly and overall it is a space where people come together that otherwise wouldn't interact. It's good for local community integration.	5. Very clean		2. A little bit clean	I would be at risk of mould developing because my flat is old, small and can't air very well	5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent	As said before, it turns a task from 3-days of drying and leaving a machine to a 1/2 day or 1-day task.	I had to dry at home and it impacted living space.	It also encourages me to visit Local businesses while waiting for machines to finish.	Student	Male	White british
8/22/2024 17	Yes	Once a week	N1 6RX	5. Good		3. Average	I would have added stress and worry about getting things washed and dry and issues of mould in my house.	5. Good		2. A little bit bad	The staff are amazing and it is an institution. It would be very missed and I would have reason to venture to Boundary (?) Street.	5. Very clean		2. A little bit clean	I have no space in my home to dry laundry so I have to hang in my room which has bad damp issues			2. A little bit independent	I work 5-7 days a week and dropping it off and knowing I will collect clean folded laundry is so important to me as I have no time. Also prices are very affordable.	I struggled and had to go in the evening to a much further launderette to dry. It was more expensive and didn't offer services, it was a terrible experience.	It is such an important place. It needs to stay open!	Full time	Female	White other
8/22/2024 17	Yes	Once a week	N1 6RX	5. Good		2. A little bit bad	The launderette is such a vital part of my weekly jobs, being able to drop laundry for a full service wash alleviates that job load	5. Good		1. Bad	The launderette gets me in touch with others around the area, the ladies that work there always make me smile, it makes me feel community	5. Very clean		1. Not at all clean	We suffer from mould in our house. So drying wet laundry isn't an option, we need to dry in a dryer which we do not own.	5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent	The closest launderette is a 25 min walk otherwise, and it isn't as nice	Massively affected me, each week was a stress as to how to get the laundry done.	It makes me feel community while providing an integral facility to my life and well being.	Full time	Male	White
8/23/2024 20	Yes	Once a week	E2 7QY	5. Good		1. Bad	It saves us a lot of time and energy and gives great peace of mind, really important in the winter for damp.	5. Good		2. A little bit bad		5. Very clean		1. Not at all clean	It helps me maintain a clear and organised household	5. Very independent		2. A little bit independent		I was very sad. As it is a great service for the local community.	It's an important service that needs to be protected for the local community, it offers a service to help organise and maintain cleanliness but also helps reduce damp/mould issues in the home. Which is a UK problem.	Working full time + student		White
8/23/2024 20	Yes	3 - 4 times a year	E8	5. Good		2. A little bit bad		5. Good		2. A little bit bad		5. Very clean		1. Not at all clean		5. Very independent		2. A little bit independent		Had to do without regular washing of large bedding items - duvets and pillows	Independence from big businesses. Ability to retain staff [...?...] without [...?...] to replace them	Full time	Female	White European
8/23/2024 21	Yes	twice a year	E2 7NP	5. Good		1. Bad	Its very close to our house and easy-to-use machines	5. Good		1. Bad		5. Very clean		1. Not at all clean		5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent				Full time	Female	Asian Bengali
8/23/2024 21	Yes	twice weekly	E2 7LF	5. Good		1. Bad	The community launderette is a friendly welcoming affordable and a vital part of this area - without the launderette, it would not be possible for my family to have clean laundry. This is paramount to my family's and my own, well being.	5. Good		1. Bad	The staff and customers are a vital part of this neighbourhood, and without it then the street and area would be gentrified, cold and unwelcoming.	5. Very clean		1. Not at all clean	I have no other way of keeping my family's clothes, sheets and towels clean. They would get sick and dirty without the launderette's services!	5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent	The launderette is quick and efficient, and works well with its opening hours and my schedule. Thank you to all those who work here	I was horrified and saddened, and I had to pay £10 for a wash! I am on disability benefits so this was terrible	I am so grateful to the community launderette and grateful to all those who support it	Part-time	Female	British Indian
8/23/2024 21	Yes	Once a week	E2 7LF	5. Good		1. Bad	When the launderette closed life was very difficult. We do all of our laundry here. It is affordable and we can walk here and go home between cycles.	5. Good		1. Bad	We meet the local community here there are very few places where rich and poor meet in this area. It feels like working class shoreditch people are being forced out and their community threatened. We meet people from all races and religions here which promotes empathy.	5. Very clean		1. Not at all clean	There is no other option locally we aren't afford a machine or a delivery service we wouldn't clean dirty clothes so often	5. Very independent		1. Not at all independent	I can do laundry quickly and conveniently.	It was awful. We felt our way of life was threatened.	Perhaps selling cleaning supplies.	Self employed	Male	White
8/31/2024 13	Yes	Once a week	E2 7EX	4. Quite good		2. A little bit bad		4. Quite good		2. A little bit bad		5. Very clean		1. Not at all clean		4. Quite independent		2. A little bit independent		Nowhere to wash my clothes in the area. I have no washing machine. It also brings a sense of community	It is a crucial part of the community here and needs to stay. It is such an amazing opportunity for the council to demonstrate commitment to the community.	Full time	Male	White other

Boundary Estate Community Launderette: Understanding Value

Produced by Jonathan Moberly, Anastasiya Karotkaya, Melissa Spearman, Susanne Lager.
Note to Reader by Aaron Davis.
A submission for UCL Civic Design short course, with Boundary Tenants and Residents Association

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This report has been produced by students of theUCL short course Civic Design. This is a university assignment and therefore staff and students do not have professional liability on the content of the report. For any question, contact course coordinator: pablo.sendra@ucl.ac.uk

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Note to Reader

The Boundary Estate in Tower Hamlets is the first planned council housing estate in the United Kingdom. Developed by the London County Council (LCC) in the 1890s, the site was conceived from the outset with community infrastructure in mind – seen in the Central Laundry that has historically acted as a local meeting hub for the residents. The idea of a shared communal facility was so central to the scheme that the decision to build it helped persuade the LCC to later develop the entire site as one integrated community, rather than parceling it to private interests. Today, the ***Boundary Estate Community Launderette*** offers a window into the collective life of residents, and also functions as a community space that the readers of this report will see has been bound together by residents for more than a century.

This report sets out to document the value of the Launderette's collective identity – not through abstract metrics, but through lived experiences of the people who use it, work in it and have grown up alongside it. Two workshops were held in early May 2026 at St Hilda's Community Centre, bringing together residents, regular users of the Boundary Estate and participants from a short course in Civic Design from ***University College London*** (UCL) who helped facilitate the process. Gathering around a paper-covered table, participants wrote down stories and memories about the Launderette, contributed to a hand-drawn timeline and responded to a set of deliberately open-ended questions designed to invite reflection rather than produce data. Seven themes emerged: (i) the use of the Launderette; (ii) community building and resilience; (iii) physical health; (iv) independence; (v) local employment; (vi) mental health and wellbeing; and (vii) overall a form of community presence. Together, these themes revealed the Launderette as a community asset that does things no policy framework could fully anticipate, such as – reducing damp and mold in people's homes, offering dignity and affordability to those without domestic appliances, providing an unlikely point of connection between people from very different walks of life or simply having a shared space that still belongs to everyone in an area transformed by gentrification. The fact that participants spoke of being part of a 'Launderette Family' says something valuable about what this place means for the residents of the Boundary Estate.

It would be a mistake, however, to read this only as a report about what the Launderette gives to its community. The workshops that produced the information were themselves an experiment in a different kind of participation – one where we, as facilitators, considered ourselves as learners in this process. The UCL team and short course participants brought skills in civic design and collaborative methods, but our encounter at St Hilda's was gaining knowledge of a more embedded kind: the accumulated experience of people who had watched a community asset be born, threatened, and eventually saved, and who understood the Launderette's value not solely as a functional space, but also as a meeting place for people who live or work locally. These workshops, and this report, sit within a broader set of exchanges taking place across the Boundary Estate, where UCL and residents are building a collective understanding of the future of the place. Our contribution is therefore only a small part of that conversation – offered as an output report that belongs to the residents, and something, we hope, to build upon.

Introduction

The Boundary Estate Community Launderette opened in September 1992. It was started by members of the Tenants and Residents Association supported by Tower Hamlets Environment Trust. Grant funds from Tower Hamlets and other private funders enabled the Launderette to be fitted out and provided funds to cover costs for the first few months.
Due to issues with the lease renewal, Tower Hamlets Council forced the closure of the Launderette in February 2024. After a campaign gathering 2,500 signatures, lots of publicity, and talks with Tower Hamlets, the council was forced to allow the Launderette to reopen on a 'tenancy at will'. Since then, the Launderette has been working with the Council to redesignate the premises as a community asset so that it can continue to trade with a reduced rent.

The brief for the UCL Civic Design group was to understand the social value provided by the Launderette, how it impacts on people's lives and meets community needs. Key outputs from the brief were to propose a method that the Launderette can use to measure its social value each year to meet its reporting obligations to the local authority, and to explore how Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) could be used to report on social value of other community initiatives in Tower Hamlets.

During the ten-week progress of the Civic Design course, the status of the Launderette was changing, which led to modifications to the brief. During this time the Launderette achieved its corporate restructuring as a Community Interest Company, and it received Mayoral approval for the premises to be assigned to the council's Portfolio of Community Assets. An application for Community Benefit Rent Reduction (CBRR) was completed and submitted, which has been approved by the CBRR panel confirming a new reduced community rent.

These developments led to a re-evaluation of the brief. The emphasis on KPIs has now reduced, and a new focus has been placed on telling the story of the Launderette, both through its history and the stories of people who have been involved or affected by the Launderette over time.

History of laundry services on the Boundary Estate

This section of the report pulls together research into the history of laundry services on the Boundary Estate. This research helped to understand the context of the Launderette and was used to inform workshop activities.

It is also intended that this will be a resource for the Boundary Estate Community Launderette to use in the future to help demonstrate the importance of the Launderette, for example during lease renewal discussions or applications for grant funding.

A summary of this history is included in this report, and a full record of all of the research has been provided to the Launderette for their use.

Founding of the Boundary Estate and the Central Laundry

Bethnal Green in the mid-nineteenth century had become a dismal slum. Some streets had been cleared by the Great Eastern Railway to create Bishopsgate Station and Goodsyard. The railway line separated wealthier homes of the silk masters of Spitalfields, from the journeymen weavers of Bethnal Green. A miserable district of "decaying and tottering hovels", some felt it should be swept away:

A national mood for slum clearance saw the passing of a series of laws between 1875 and 1890 empowering local councils to condemn poor quality homes, and to purchase, clear and rebuild slum areas. That drastic action should be taken to deal with the slums between Boundary Street and Mount Street (now Swanfields Street) had been discussed for years, but the impetus to take action was the forming of the London County Council in 1889 and the passing of the Housing of the Working Classes Act a year later. The act gave the council the powers to undertake clearance of the fifteen acres of Old Nichol slums, to be replaced by artisan dwellings in 21 blocks, with adjoining workshops and shops.

By late July of that year the arguments for a central laundry were developing: drying clothes in the home could result in "considerable inconvenience and physical injury"[1], while drying outside (on roofs) resulted in clothes soiled with air pollution - a communal laundry would be a better solution.

In October 1894 the committee approved of the Central Laundry in principle. The cost of the building was carefully justified by the savings made in not providing washing facilities in each block, in the prices that could be charged for laundry and bathing and a modest levy on Boundary Estate rents.

Alongside the development of arguments, budgets, architecture and engineering drawings for the Central Laundry, the council had been hoping to break up the scheme and lease portions of land to private housing providers. By July 1895, the Public Health Committee noted that the decision to proceed with a Central Laundry strengthened arguments to keep development under the control of the LCC as a single estate scheme: as rents from across all dwellings in the scheme would need to contribute to this central facility.[2] Thus, the very presence of the Central Laundry enabled – and made sense of – the development of a holistic integrated housing scheme. Indeed, it was not until October 1895 that the decision was taken by the council to develop the entire estate under its own purview, some years after clearance and development had begun.[3] [4]

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[1] 'Boundary Street Improvement Scheme', *Shoreditch Observer*, 4 Aug 1894 [link]

[2] 'Boundary Street', *Shoreditch Observer*, 13 July 1895 [link]

[3] "Not until the Council decided to construct a central laundry did it move to ask the Home Office for authority to retain all the land and build housing itself." *Housing for the Working Classes in the East End of London 1890-1907*, Richard Vladimir `, PhD Thesis, Ohio State University, 1969

[4] *Working Class Dwellings: The Rebuilding of the Boundary Street Estate*, Owen Fleming, RIBA, 1900, p6

The Central Laundry would be constructed with two clubrooms incorporated into the building: the laundry facility and communal space have been intrinsically linked since the birth of the estate.

By March 1897 the Central Laundry was operating "in full swing" three days a week, as the Evening News reports: "Tenants are provided with all the latest and best appliances for washing, wringing, drying, and mangling or ironing at a charge of threehalfpence an hour and it is found that on average the family wash is got through in three hours and three quarters."[5]

The luxury of such a modern, hi-tech facility was not universally welcomed. The new estate came with copious rules and regulations, which included a ban on many of the trades that residents of the Old Nichol had carried out. This included prohibition of carrying out laundry services anywhere on the estate other than in the Central Laundry, whether domestic or commercially. Washing lines in the courtyards were also prohibited, forcing all residents to use the Central Laundry, a condition "much grudged by the ladies of the establishment, who would prefer to do their own washing with their own soap and soda on their own premises."[6]

There were 33 washerwomen by trade in the Old Nichol; on the new estate there would be none.[7]





The Central Laundry was staffed by an engineer, his wife (the matron), a matron's assistant and a stoker. Perhaps to show his importance, the engineer seems to appear twice in the left hand image, standing proudly in a double exposure (photos - Tower Hamlets Council / London Picture Archive).

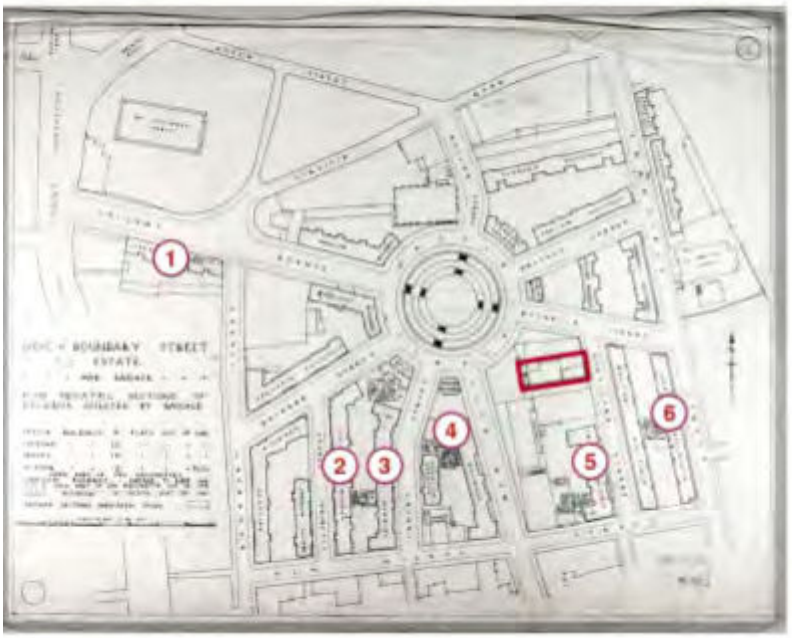
World War II

As bombs started falling over British cities during the Blitz, beginning in September 1940, East London was particularly vulnerable. The Boundary Estate took several hits, and many community members still carry the tragic memories and family traumas of the war. However, the neighbourhood was relatively spared from total physical destruction. The solidly constructed buildings proved to be resilient enough to withstand most of the blasts from nearby bombings. [8]

Local oral history, or 'urban legend', suggests that the German Luftwaffe used Arnold Circus as a key navigation point during their air strikes, due to its distinct circular layout.

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[5] 'Boundary Street Scheme', *Evening News (London)*, 13 March 1897 [link]
[6] 'Notes', *The Tablet*, 13 August 1898 [link]
[7] *The Housing Question in London 1855-1900*, CJ Stewart, LCC, 1900, p191
[8] *War Damage, Boundary Street Estate, Shoreditch,* London Archives 1941, retrieved from *Layers of London* [link], accessed 06 April 2026.



LCC bomb damage map 1945.

(1) Cleeve Buildings, ten flats out of use;
(2) Laleham Buildings, ten flats out of use;
(3) Hedsor Buildings, ten flats out of use;
(4) Clifton Buildings, two flats out of use and upper part of two maisonettes;
(5) Henley Buildings, ten flats out of use;
(6) Cookham Buildings, one damage to roof, one flat and upper part of one maisonette out of use.

The Central Laundry is outlined in red.

Base image: London Metropolitan Archives (City of London Corporation), retrieved from *Layers of London* [link]

While it has been hard to confirm the operational capacity of the Central Laundry during the war, it is well-documented that public laundries and wash houses across London played a vital role in maintaining public health. During this time, a network of mobile laundry facilities and transport units also operated throughout the city to assist those without access to functioning utilities. [9]


MINISTRY OF FOOD

SOAP

RATIONING





Wartime rationing of soap restarted in February 1942 and carried on after the war until September 1950. These advertisements for Puritan soap ("double-ration lather") and Lux ("withdrawn during the war because we would not risk lowering its high quality") can still be seen on a wall inside the shop at 30 Calvert Avenue, next door to today's Community Launderette.

[9] *The Blitz, Imperial War Museums* (2026) [link], accessed 06 April 2026.

With soap[10] and washing powder alongside coal being heavily rationed from 1942 onwards, communal laundries and bath houses likely became a very important resource for residents to uphold basic standards for both health and spirit.[11]

Post-war change and the rise in automatic washing machines

After World War II, there was a significant increase in the number of council homes that were built around the UK.[12] Many of these homes included modern amenities for the time, such as indoor toilets and hot running water. The Boundary Estate, however, was showing signs of deterioration and, after 60 years, was severely in need of refurbishment to bring it up to modern living standards. Residents were still sharing toilets, with cold water only, coal fires for heating, with no bathroom facility except at the Central Laundry and occasionally at shared sculleries. Residents started moving away from the older housing available at the Boundary Estate and the number of empty flats increased.[13]

A resident of the Boundary Estate recalls being taken to the Central Laundry as a child in the early 1960s and watching women cleaning items on scrubbing boards. The resident's recollection was that her mother would wash smaller items at home but that larger bulky items would be washed and then dried on pull out hanging rails at the Central Laundry as there was not space to do so at home.

In the mid-1960's, the London County Council (and subsequently the Greater London Council) began a programme of modernising the Boundary Estate. This included combining flats together so that new bathrooms and kitchens could be provided, thereby reducing the overall number of flats on the estate.[14]



Estate regeneration.
Left and centre: shared scullery and toilet
Right: a modern bathroom and kitchen for every flat (photos - Tower Hamlets Council / London Picture Archive)

In the UK in the 1950s and 1960s, electric and automatic washing machines were generally becoming more popular.[15] We did not find much evidence about whether this change was reflected on the Boundary Estate, however, there was a broader move towards people being able to more easily wash their clothes at home. The increase in domestic washing machines

[10] *Soap Rationing*, Advert from the Ministry of Food, *Bromley Historical Times* (2021) [link], accessed 06 April 2026.
[11] *Coal rationing in and after WW2 in the UK*, 1900s.org (2026) [link], accessed 21 April 2026.
[12] *Build it up, sell it off*, UK Parliament (2026) [link], accessed 28 April 2026.
[13] *The Secret History Of Our Streets S01E06 Arnold Circus,* BBC (2012) [link], accessed 28 April 2026.
[14] Baker, T.F.T. (ed.) (1998) 'Bethnal Green: Building and Social Conditions after 1945 Social and Cultural Activities', *A History of the County of Middlesex*: Volume 11, Stepney, Bethnal Green. London: Victoria County History, pp. 135-147 [link] accessed 5 May 2026.
[15] Were, C. (2022) 'The history of the washing machine: Linton and District History Society', *The Ross Gazette*, 22 Nov. [link] accessed 27 April 2026.

contributed to the belief that shared washing facilities were no longer necessary. Cleaning clothes started to become a private household responsibility rather than a communal need and councils increasingly moved away from maintaining collective services.

Closure of the Old Central Laundry

The exact date for the decision to close the Central Laundry on the Boundary Estate is not known. However, evidence shows it closed sometime after 1964 and was unused and derelict by 1976[16]. Over this period, many communal washhouses and local public laundries across London were disappearing, some examples of which are included below.

The LCC Housing Committee approved the conversion of washhouses into housing on other estates during the 1960s, for example at the Broadway Estate in Bethnal Green, Millwall Estate in Poplar[17], St George's Estate in Stepney and at the Morningside Estate in Hackney.[18]

A 1972 *Acton Gazette* article titled "Tenants Lose Battle to Keep Laundry" — while not directly about the Boundary Estate — illustrates a wider pattern of communal laundry closures across London during the early 1970s. In this case, the laundry on the Vale Estate in Acton was reported to be running at a financial loss of around £2,000 a year, which the council used to justify its closure. Councils increasingly argued that such facilities were no longer necessary due to rising ownership of domestic washing machines and were financially unsustainable to maintain. However, residents resisted the decision, pointing to the continued importance of the laundry for households living in overcrowded flats with limited drying space and low incomes.


Acton Gazette

TENANTS LOSE BATTLE TO KEEP LAUNDRY

'...this estate will be another eye-sore' –Resident

SHOCK PROPOSALS ON TOWN CENTRE

Is it a two-way stretch for the High Street?

Fire wrecks tennis clubhouse

Bollo Lane clean, says Council

The 1972 Acton Gazette article

Although these examples of laundry closures are not about the Boundary Estate specifically, they help demonstrate the broader pressures shaping similar decisions elsewhere. It shows how financial arguments, combined with ideas of modernisation and changing household technologies, drove the closure of communal laundries across council estates in this period, despite continued resident dependence on them.

Yet for many residents living on working-class estates, this vision of modern domestic life did not fully match reality. Families relied on small domestic washing machines, local commercial laundrettes, hand washing and drying clothes indoors or on balconies. On estates like the Boundary, many flats were overcrowded, poorly ventilated, and never designed for modern appliances or efficient drying systems. Even when residents owned washing machines, drying

[16] 'Bath-house … condemn or clean-up?' *East End News*, 27 Feb 1976
[17] Conversion of wash-houses, *East End News and London Shipping Chronicle*, 28 Oct 1960. [link], accessed 25 April 2026.
[18] Unknown. (1961) 'Conversion schemes', *East End News and London Shipping Chronicle*, 3 Feb. [link], accessed 25 April 2026

laundry remained difficult, especially in winter. Clothes hanging across rooms, condensation, and damp walls became common features of everyday life.

Following the closure of the Central Laundry on the Boundary Estate, the GLC made efforts to provide drying facilities in each flat and a cupboard was fitted out with a rail and a directly wired heater intended to be an airing cupboard. Conversely, signs were put in the boiler (hot water tank) cupboard stating that no clothes were to be stored in this cupboard by the order of the GLC.



GLC sign in the boiler cupboard of Boundary Estate flats

Drying rooms were also provided around the estate containing a spin dryer and tumble dryer to facilitate the drying of clothes. These drying rooms shut down in the 80's.

In a household with two working parents and two or more children, doing the laundry, even with a washing machine installed, was a difficult chore, with no easy solution for hanging washing and managing to dry all clothing.

In the 1980's, even with new facilities, flats on the Boundary Estate were 'hard to let' which led to many properties lying empty, and led to them eventually being squatted. In due course, more flats were let, some to families with small children – which later also led to overcrowding.



Remnants of a 1970s drying room.

In this context, the later creation of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette was not simply the opening of another local business. It represented the return of a shared community infrastructure that answered practical, social, and emotional needs that private domestic technologies had failed to solve.

Creation of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette

In 1989, plans to establish a Community Launderette in the Boundary Estate were launched. Frustration had been growing on the lack of washing facilities in the area and the overcrowded and damp-prone housing conditions in the estate made it impossible to dry clothes or fit washing machines in one's home. It was felt by many residents that a Community Launderette

would be the solution, with the most important objective being that it would be a space for everyone!

In 1992, after 4 years of digging for funding, pursuing premises, and conducting surveys, the Community Launderette was born in a vacant shop in 'run down' Calvert Avenue. Most of this work was done by the Environment Trust, along with the Boundary Tenants and Residents Association (TRA, who had no previous expertise in opening and running a business. This is, in part, why it was felt by so many that the opening of a Launderette was a real achievement for the community. The funding was raised by Tower Hamlets Environment Trust steered by Lorraine Hart, accumulating funds from a variety of public and private sector agencies. Donators included EDF & Mann Charitable Trust, Mr M. Stone (Chair - EDF & Mann), Spitalfields Task Force, The Allen Lane Memorial Trust, The City Action Team, The Church Urban Fund, an anonymous benefactor and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.[20] In total, £67,000 was contributed to the fund, and importantly London Borough of Tower Hamlets provided the premises (which had previously been a barred up chemist) on the estate at an affordable rent. [21]

Already in those first years, the Launderette played a significant role for the community providing a space for: information exchange on local activities, displaying local voluntary sector job vacancies, a set for a TV advert, an art exhibition, and a newspaper collection spot. It became a community space where people could come together. Even though the majority of people came in to do their washing, many we spoke to in our workshops recalled a space that created a lot of spontaneity in social interactions.[22] Maire Glace was the manager of the Community Launderette for 30 years, and is recalled by many as being integral to what the Launderette meant and provided for the community.

In 1998 in an interview by the London Housing News Maire said "It's not just about washing, drying and folding clothes. Sometimes I can find myself helping someone to fill out a form

[20] Unknown , *Boundary Estate Community Launderette*, (London Housing News 71, 1998)
[21] Unknown, *Their beautiful launderette*, (The Sunday Express, March 13th 1994)
[22] Insights gathered at two workshops run at the end of April 2026 by the UCL Civic Design Short Course

because they can't write, giving advice about a problem or lending an ear when someone wants to talk about their health or family event they went to last week or whatever."[24]



Their beautiful launderette

Families clean up a BURA award

In 1994 the Launderette won the British Urban Regeneration Association (BURA) Award for Business in the Community and got a £5000 cheque. The prize was said to be awarded to volunteers who had brought a sense of community to London. Martyn Lewis (the chairman of the judges) said: " It is a perfect example of free enterprise serving the community and it seems to be getting as close as possible to the grass roots need" .

Since its opening the Launderette has employed many people from the local community, providing part time work to a wide array of people either looking to support their families or students needing some extra cash.[26]

Since the establishment of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette, Shoreditch has experienced significant gentrification. Nearby streets such as Shoreditch High Street and Redchurch Street have become destinations for bespoke fashion and night time economy uses. This in turn has increased market rents in the area, affecting the kinds of businesses that can occupy Calvert Avenue shops. Over the years the Launderette has been resistant to a lot of these changes and is seen as one of the last remaining community spaces on Calvert Avenue[27].

Campaign to Save Our Launderette

February 2024: Save Our Launderette campaign

In February 2024, Tower Hamlets Council changed the locks to the Boundary Estate Community Launderette as the Launderette had not committed to a lease renewal which would have increased their rent "sixfold" – matching that of Shoreditch High Street commercial stores. [28]

This repossession happened with no prior warning to the Launderette, and led the Boundary Tenants and Residents Association to arrange an emergency meeting to organise next steps,

[24] 1998 Interview with Maire Grace by the London Housing News
[26] 'My Beautiful Launderette', *Sunday Express*, March 13 1994
[27] Insights gathered at two workshops run at the end of April 2026 by the UCL Civic Design Short Course
[28] Diane Taylor, *London estate laundry celebrates fresh start as council backs down on closure* (The Guardian, 2024), [link] accessed 10th May 2026.

leading to the creation of the *Save Our Launderette* campaign.[29] As part of this, a petition was created, which had the following three demands:

1. "grant a temporary tenancy at will under the previous terms, with immediate effect, to enable the Launderette to resume operations immediately pending grant of a new lease;
2. add the Launderette premises, 28 Calvert Avenue, to the Tower Hamlets Council Portfolio of Community Premises;
3. agree that the Boundary Estate Community Launderette is eligible for Community Benefit Rent Reduction".[30]



Save Our Launderette campaign

The petition also received testimonies from local users of the Launderette, showcasing its vitality for the local community:

> "The Launderette is vital for reducing mould in our homes and therefore reducing the cost of cleaning homes from the damage of mould. Mould is a danger to our elderly and those with respiratory issues, by being able to dry our laundry we reduce the cost and burden on the NHS and the council." [31]
> *Matthew*

> "Our landlord often does not maintain our utilities so we have relied on the Launderette when we have been without a washing machine for weeks on end. I have 4 flatmates and no outside space to dry our clothes."[32]
> *Ula*



Launderette supporters outside Tower Hamlets Council

Vigorous campaigning within "the estate, local schools, churches, mosques, and door to door conversations" led to over 2,500 signatures within two weeks and widespread support, including extensive news coverage, for the

[29] Boundary Estate Community Launderette, *Save our Launderette* (Crowfunder, 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026); Petition: Save Our Community Launderette (2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026; Liz Jackson, *Tower Hamlets: Community launderette reopens after petition* (BBC, 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026.
[30] Petition: Save Our Community Launderette (2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026; Liz Jackson, *Tower Hamlets: Community launderette reopens after petition* (BBC, 2024).
[31] Boundary Estate Community Launderette, *Save our Launderette* (Crowfunder, 2024), paragraph 19, link, accessed 10th May 2026).
[32] Boundary Estate Community Launderette, *Save our Launderette* (Crowfunder, 2024), paragraph 19, link, accessed 10th May 2026).

Launderette to reopen.[33] This led to meetings with Tower Hamlets councillors and the Mayor, after which the Launderette was reopened with a tenancy at will. [34]

April 2024: Launderette reopening and Crowdfunder

Seven weeks after the forced closure, the Launderette had keys returned to them following widespread support to reopen, through a temporary tenancy at will while longer-term arrangements were yet to be agreed.[35] This fulfilled the first of the petition demands, with the latter two remaining. However, the Launderette was now in a difficult financial position due to the 7 weeks of closure, before which they had only begun trading again at pre-COVID levels. [36]

In light of this, a crowdfunder was launched, to fundraise for 7 weeks of loss against seven weeks of forced closure and for legal costs to negotiate a new affordable lease with Tower Hamlets council – launching in July 2024, the crowdfunder passed its goal of £5,000 by the end of August 2024.[37]

March 2026: New affordable lease

With an ongoing tenancy at will that could be terminated by the council with one day's notice, the Launderette continued to operate in a state of uncertainty, with staff on rolling casual contract with no long-term security.[38]

Throughout this period, conversations between Tower Hamlets council and the Launderette were ongoing. The Launderette was advised to register as a Community Interest Company (CIC) in order to meet the requirements for becoming part of the council's Portfolio of Community Premises, which would then allow them to be considered for the Community Benefit Rent Reduction. In March 2026, the Boundary Estate Launderette CIC was formally established.[39]

At the last cabinet meeting before 2026 local elections, the Launderette was recommended to be included in Tower Hamlets Council's Portfolio of Community Premises in the agenda for the Mayor's decision.[40] The reasons for this recommendation included the Launderette's provision of affordable, local laundry services and contribution to a reduction in damp and mould issues on the Boundary Estate.[41] Upon accepting this recommendation, Mayor Lutfur Rahman "paid

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[33] Lea Chehabeddine, *Boundary Estate Community Launderette: Social Value Report* (2025), page 6, link, accessed 10th May 2026; Ruby Gregory, *Battle to save 30-year-old East London launderette serving one of the oldest council estates* (MyLondon 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026; Marcia Veiga, Tower Hamlets: 'Shock' closure of launderette prompts petition (BBC, 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026.

[34] Lea Chehabeddine, *Boundary Estate Community Launderette: Social Value Report* (2025), page 6, link, accessed 10th May 2026; Diane Taylor, *London estate laundry celebrates fresh start as council backs down on closure* (The Guardian, 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026; Liz Jackson, *Tower Hamlets: Community launderette reopens after petition* (BBC, 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026; Samia Uddin, *Community Launderette reopens amidst gentrification concerns* (Tower Hamlets Slice, 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026

[35] Boundary TRA, *We Got the Keys Back!* (Youtube, 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026; Liz Jackson, *Tower Hamlets: Community launderette reopens after petition* (BBC, 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026.

[36] Boundary Estate Community Launderette, *Save our Launderette* (Crowfunder, 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026).

[37] ibid.

[38] Ruby Gregory, *Battle to save 30-year-old East London launderette serving one of the oldest council estates* (MyLondon 2024), link, accessed 10th May 2026.

[39] Gov.UK, *BOUNDARY ESTATE LAUNDERETTE CIC* (Gov.UK n.d.), link, accessed 10th May 2026.

[40] Tower Hamlets, *Issue Details* (Democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk 2026), link, accessed 10th May 2026.

[41] Ibid, point 3.35

tribute" to the Launderette and the Boundary Tenants and Residents Association for putting the council under pressure to review their policy.[42]

Transferring the premises to the council's Community Portfolio allows the Launderette to apply a Community Benefit Rent Reduction: their application was approved by the CBBR panel in May 2026. This should result in a five year lease at an affordable rent.[43] The Launderette will have to report to Tower Hamlets Council on the value they are providing to the local community every year, with exact metrics to be agreed.

The Boundary Estate Community Launderette is on the brink of agreeing a tenure for five years on an affordable rent. This has been achieved through the hard work of local residents and organisers, widespread campaigning, and the outpour of support advocating for its continued existence – securing its future to provide affordable and important services to many communities.

Civic Design Workshops

Methodology

The main scope of our research project was to demonstrate the social value of the Community Launderette. Throughout our workshops and in the research period prior, we wanted to collect as many memories and stories as possible from residents to create a story-telling piece demonstrating the impact of the Launderette for the community.

The Timeline

The timeline piece was a combination of desktop research, filing through archives, and conversations with residents during the workshops. We decided it was pivotal to demonstrate the longevity of the Launderette as this is a key marker of social value and community resilience.



The timeline workshop activity at first workshop

In the workshop, we wanted to collect more memories and stories from local residents that could add more information to this timeline. We drew up a line demarking key dates, quotes, and pictures of the history of the Launderette. It was important for participants to see this comprehensive view of the timeline, surrounded by

[42] Nick Clark, *Boundary Estate Community Launderette secures new lease following campaign* (Tower Hamlets Slice 2026), paragraph 13, link, accessed 10th May 2026.
[43] Ibid, paragraph 12

pictures and key events, to help with memory recall across the Launderette's three decades. We asked participants to add on any events or memories through post-it notes on the timeline. The timeline was surrounded by questions to prompt participants, for example:

- *Did you know about any of these events?*
- *Is there anything on this timeline that you remember?*
- *Do you know any events or stories that aren't on here?*
- *Do you have any stories of the Launderette, either your own memories or stories from other people?*

The Table

To collect different experiences and stories of the Launderette, there was a need to create a space of openness where participants felt comfortable to share their feelings about the Launderette. It was important to have conversations that helped people recall what the Launderette meant for them and their community, as for many people of course it was first and foremost a service for them to wash their clothes.



Table exercise from workshop 1 (29th April 2026)

We set up a table covered in paper to write on and different pictures of the interior of the Launderette with questions and prompts written. Throughout the workshop we asked participants questions and recorded their comments on post-it notes whilst they shared and told their stories. Here are some examples:

- *What's your favourite spot on the Launderette?*
- *Thinking of a time where you felt happy at the Launderette, what was it? Where in the Launderette was it?*
- *What smells, sounds, and textures do you think of when you think of the Launderette?*
- *How does the community benefit from the Launderette?*
- *Have you ever been in the Launderette and saw it positively impact someone's life? What was it?*

Most of the questions functioned as 'opening' exercises to help participants to recall and imagine the Launderette. This was important especially for people that had either never visited the Launderette or had not used it for a long time. The table was covered with paper meaning that anyone could write their thoughts down promptly, making it easier for us to have conversations whilst writing. This informal format helped to remove the pressure that a conventional workshop style might have caused.

T-Shirts

We asked people to write on T-shirts their answers to questions such as:

- *What does the Launderette do for you?*
- *One word to describe the Launderette?*
- *How are you using the Launderette?*

Additional Questions on Day 2

After the first workshop we reflected on our conversations and our methodology, which led to additional questions we felt may lead to richer explorations into the value of the Launderette. It was really important to explore why participants may think of the Launderette as a *community* asset, and so we asked people to imagine what the Boundary Estate would be like without it. Here are some questions we decided to ask on Day 2:



- *What would you do if the Launderette wasn't there?*
- *Even if you don't use the Launderette, do you think the Launderette is important for the community?*
- *What would you do if your washing machine breaks down?*
- *What do you do when you're waiting for your washing?*

Findings

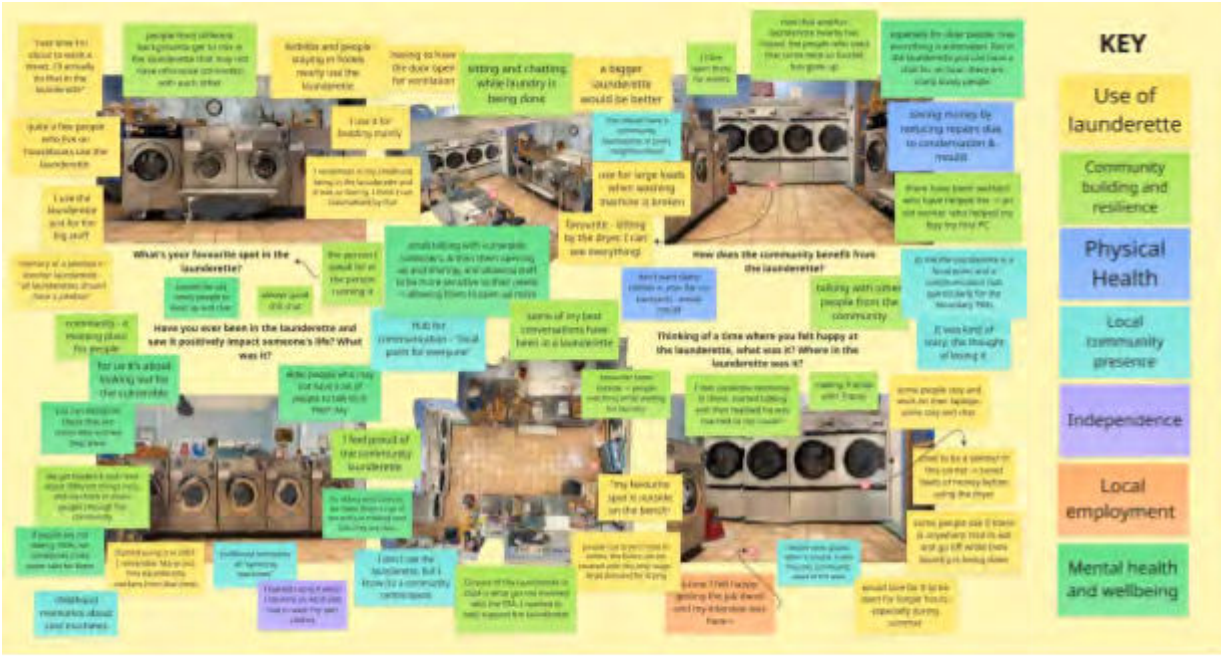
There were seven key themes emerging from the two workshops. At the analysis stage, the first five were similar and highly relevant to the five conceptual frameworks identified in the previous social value report for Boundary Estate Community Launderette.[44] We found two additional themes – one exploring the different uses of the Launderette and another about the wider role of the Launderette's physical presence in the area. Each theme is explained in greater detail alongside findings: use of the Launderette; community building and resilience; physical health; independence; local employment; mental health and wellbeing; and local community presence. These themes were useful to delineate areas of focus in our analysis, however many are interlinked to a range of connected benefits.



Findings: T-shirt exercise from workshop 2 (30th April 2026)

[44] Lea Chehabeddine, *Boundary Estate Community Launderette : Social Value Report* (2025), link, accessed 10th May 2026

The outputs from the workshop have helped us collect qualitative data demonstrating the social value of the Launderette, which will be explored in greater detail in the recommendations section of this report.

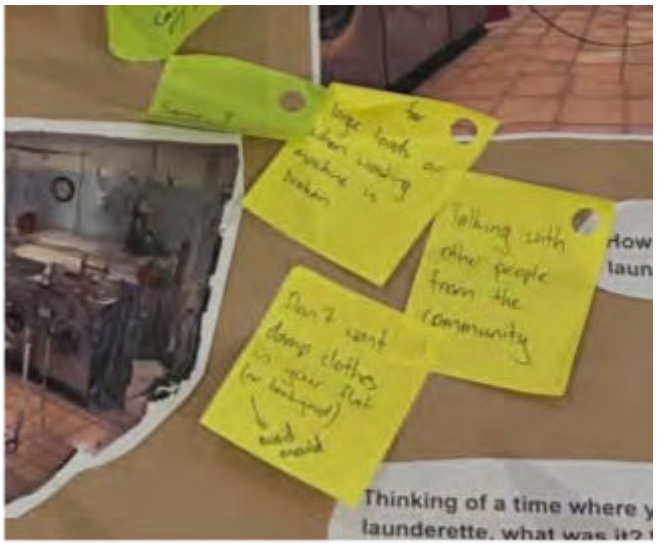


Findings: mapping exercise from workshop 1 (29th April 2026)

1. Use of the Launderette

We found that the Launderette has a variety of uses beyond washing and drying. Responses also included need and frequency of use, what people do while they are waiting for their washing, and people's favourite spots in the Launderette. The Launderette was also praised for their book collection of donated books – which can be borrowed or bought to raise funds for charity, both by users and non-users of the space.

In line with the Launderette's existing 'user heat map' created using the findings of the previous Social Value Report[45], we found that users of the Launderette go beyond local residents to those who live in houseboats, local Airbnbs, customers at nearby hotels, and those who do not have access to housing. It is also important to note that the closure of East London launderettes in the past few decades also leave the Boundary Estate Community Launderette as one of the few affordable launderettes people in the area might use. The Launderette also has a high demand for 'drying-only' users, particularly in the winter, demonstrating its importance for avoiding mould and damp in users' homes – which is also relevant to health and hygiene.



A snapshot: mapping exercise from workshop 1 (29th April 2026)

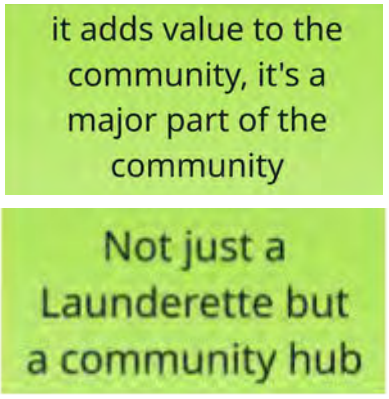
[45] Lea Chehabeddine, *Boundary Estate Community Launderette* (2025), p13, link, accessed 10th May 2026

2. Community building and resilience

The usage of the Launderette also extended to being a place of connection, where friendships and community form, and where friends arrange to meet as they do their weekly washing, more on this can be found under community building and resilience. Users of the Launderette shared a number of experiences of receiving support, witnessing others receive support, meeting new people while they wait for their washing, and recognising it as a place where a sense of community is felt. Alongside this, participants also noted how this has led them to build relationships with people from different backgrounds, who they might not have otherwise connected with.

Participants as well as staff noted that staff make a concerted effort to check in on those who are using the Launderette, noting the friendliness of the staff there and how welcoming the space feels.

The term 'community hub' or 'hub' was prominent across both workshops, which shows how significant the Launderette is considered for the local community, providing a point of connection for many communities.



Examples of workshop responses

3. Mental health and wellbeing:

Workers in the Launderette pay attention and support those who are vulnerable or in need of extra assistance. There have also been instances noted by staff where those who might be struggling with loneliness or have struggled with their mental health have slowly begun opening up and making connections with others through their continued use of the Launderette.

Across both workshops, we also found that the Launderette is a socialising space for older people, especially for those who may not otherwise have opportunities to socialise in their day-to-day life. Multiple participants also expressed that it has provided space to connect with others, and shared experiences where they have seen people receive support at the launderette in moments of distress.

Additionally, there is also an important link between mental health and being able to access clean clothing and bedding in affordable ways, which is explored more in the next theme.

4. Independence

The Launderette is affordable for a range of users who might not be able to wash or dry clothes in their homes and also for those who do not have regular access to housing. Participants noted that the affordability and presence of this service is important for the dignity of its users and therefore also significant to better mental health. For those who have mobility issues, having somewhere in a short, walkable distance, where staff can support with washing, has been an essential part to a functioning and independent life.

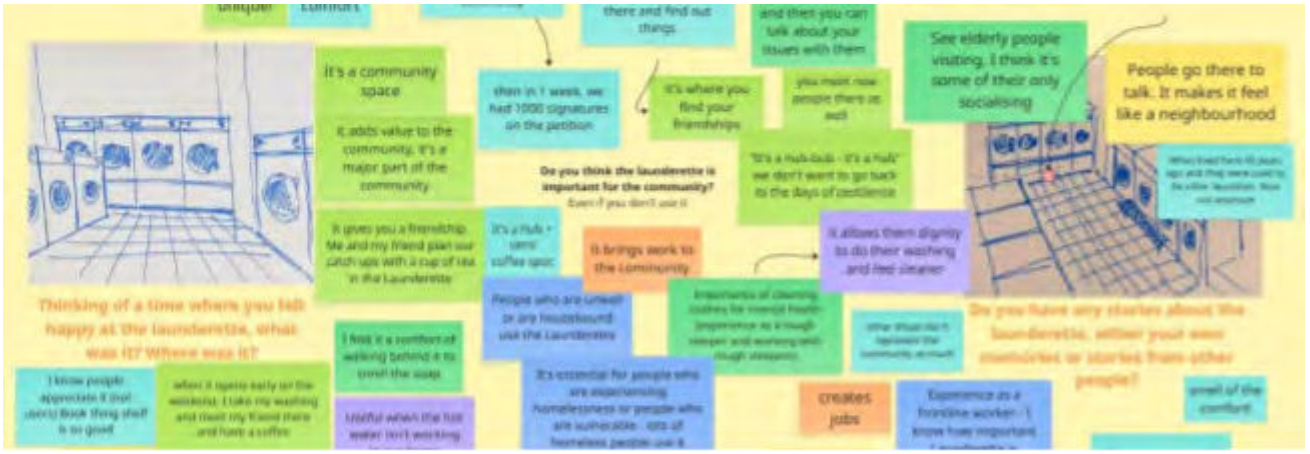
Additionally, those who have to do larger washes every week rely on the Launderette to maintain clean clothes for themselves and their family members, contributing again to

functional, independent lives. Participants also mentioned that it is cheaper for them to wash and dry clothes at the Launderette than at their homes due to the rising cost of bills.

Being able to wash and dry clothes affordably was important for participants' independence, which is also supported by the Launderette's previous social value report's findings.[46]

5. Physical health

The importance of being able to dry one's clothes in a designated space outside of one's home was a dominant finding across both workshops. Many residents, even those with washing machines in their own homes, relied on the Launderette for drying. This was due to a lack of outdoor space to dry clothes as well as serious concerns of drying clothes leading to damp and mould in their homes, which is a pre-existing issue for many residents of the Boundary Estate.



Findings: a snippet from the mapping exercise from workshop 2 (30th April 2026)

Workers from the Launderette also shared that there are times in the winter where the floorspace of the Launderette is covered in 'drying-only' bags waiting for dryers, signalling how critical the Launderette is for avoiding damp and mould in user's homes.

Damp and mould can contribute up to a third of high levels of indoor moisture in homes, and there is also a strong association between drying clothes at home and mould spores – which poses a "health risk to those prone to asthma, hay fever and other allergies".[47] Recognising these serious risks – including fatal cases – there are legal regulations on social housing that require landlords to respond urgently and appropriately to damp and mould issues – namely, Awaab's law.[48] As such, the Launderette provides an essential service to avoid or reduce factors that can significantly contribute to damp and mould in users' homes and subsequent health risks that arise from that.

6. Local employment

The Launderette creates jobs and brings work to the community. With commitments to providing London Living Wage, flexible working hours, good working conditions, creating

[46] Lea Chehabeddine, *Boundary Estate Community Launderette: Social Value Report* (2025), page 30, link, accessed 10th May 2026
[47] Eleanor Bradford, *Indoor laundry drying 'poses a health risk'* (BBC, 2012), paragraph 1, link, accessed 10th May 2026.
[48] National Housing Federation, *Awaab's Law* (National Housing Federation, 2025), link, accessed 10 May 2026.

access for those with disabilities who require part time work, participants who work or have worked at the Launderette spoke highly of the experience. They also noted how the aforementioned factors have made a significant difference for workers of the Launderette, and this is also evident in the decades-long tenure of many workers.[49]

7. Community Presence

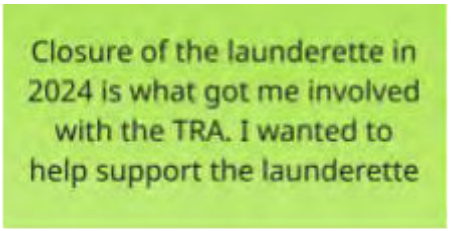
Maintains community ties
→ chit chat/spontaneous conversations

Provides a space for informal congregation
→ a community hub

Builds interdependence
→ space for informal caring
(signposting, advice, listening)

Builds resilience
→ space that has been part of the community for for 30 years

This final theme brings together all those mentioned thus far, alongside the positive impact it has to the wider existence of the Launderette: it an important and physically visible community presence that is valued highly even by those who do not use it or benefit from it directly.



Example of workshop response

Many participants mentioned that the local community at the Boundary Estate would not exist as it does currently if the Launderette did not exist – non-users also emphasised this point. The presence of an open, accessible space strengthens the sense of community, especially as rapid gentrification in Shoreditch has also changed local landscapes. The importance of the Launderette's existence was also demonstrated by the 2,500+ signatures that emerged from the 2024 closure and subsequent petition.

Participants continually used terms such as we are the 'Launderette Children' – especially the generation that grew up with the Launderette – or its *Our* Launderette, showing the sense of pride and ownership people feel towards the space. Workers from the Launderette also use the term 'My Launderette Family' to express a sense of connection, care, and closeness associated with the Launderette.

Recommendations

A principal focus in identifying these recommendations has been how the Launderette can continue to measure their value and use this information in multiple ways, such as annual reporting to Tower Hamlets Council and Companies House, lease renewal discussions, and grant funding.

Recommendations have also been identified for the council relating to how they can work with and support the Launderette as well as other VCS organisations who are running important community assets.

[49] Lea Chehabeddine, *Boundary Estate Community Launderette: Social Value Report* (2025), page 36, link, accessed 10th May 2026

Launderette recommendations

A questionnaire was used to help inform the Boundary Estate Community Launderette Social Value Report. However considerable effort was needed to obtain a significant number of responses from Launderette users. The way the questions were designed, which was necessary for the Social Value Report, was confusing for some respondents and required extra explanation.

Despite this, there was a lot of useful data which came out of the exercise. It was also noted that the free space on the questionnaire where people could write whatever they wanted, resulted in responses that were particularly useful to the Launderette.

1. Move away from the format of the previous questionnaire to an approach which incorporates free-form, open-ended questions. This could take the form of a table set up outside the Launderette where people can write their thoughts.

2. Suggested prompts that could be used to engage with the community have been included below. These include questions used in the workshops as well as targeted questions which provide quantitative data.

3. Effort should be made to get feedback from non-Launderette users in addition to those who use the launderette to better understand and measure the community presence theme.

Questions for the Launderette to measure value in the future

The following prompts and questions are recommended for the Launderette to use in the future when engaging with users of the Launderette as well as the wider community. The intention of these questions is to gather qualitative and quantitative data which the Launderette can use to support its activities.

Open-ended questions:

1. Do you use the Launderette or have you ever used it?
2. What would you do if the Launderette wasn't there?
3. Do you think the Launderette is important for the community?
4. Have you ever been in the Launderette and seen it positively impact someone's life? What was it?

5. Do you have any stories about the Launderette?

Targeted questions:

1. What postcode do you live in?
2. What is your age group?
3. How frequently do you use the Launderette?
4. What machines do you use?

Council recommendations

London Plan Policy S1 'Developing London's social infrastructure' and the associated supporting text requires councils to consider social infrastructure needs of communities and recognises the importance of informal networks in contributing to this[50]

The Launderette is part of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in the borough and is now a part of the Council's Portfolio of Community Assets. It is an important piece of social infrastructure for the Boundary Estate and surrounding community. Therefore, the Council should be finding ways to support the continuation of the Launderette.

It is also noted that the Council directly benefits from supporting the Launderette. As a social landlord, it has a responsibility under Awaab's Law to address issues of damp and mould that present a significant risk to tenants. By offering an affordable alternative for people to dry clothes outside of their flats, the Launderette is directly assisting the Council in reducing potential maintenance costs associated with damp and mould for social housing in the area.

The decision by the Council to significantly raise rents and then close the Launderette in 2024 indicates that they were not aware of the service that the Launderette was providing, nor how essential this space is to the wider community.

As such, Tower Hamlets Council needs a better understanding of the informal social infrastructure in the borough. The value of these spaces in meeting the needs of communities should be better recognised by the Council. In the Alternative London Plan for a Caring City, policy 27 identifies the value of local audits to identify and understand "community assets, local economy and social infrastructure".[51] If the Council were to do something like this, they would have a better understanding of the community assets that exist and are valued across the borough.



[50] Greater London Authority, *The London Plan* (2021), link, accessed 5 May 2026.
[51] Just Space, *The Alternative London Plan for a Caring City* (2026), link, accessed 10 May 2026.

The first objective of the Council's VCS Strategy is to build "strong, trust-based relationships between the VCS and the Council".[52] The priorities relating to this objective note that:

> *not all organisations have the same capacity to engage, particularly smaller or grassroots groups. That's why we will work with the VCS to identify and remove barriers to participation and co-design practical solutions— such as agreeing on a fair approach to recognising and valuing VCS contributions to Council decision-making.*[53]

It is good that the Council recognises the difficulties for smaller organisations to engage with them. This should also be reflected in the expectations from the Council on the Launderette's reporting requirements.

There should be a focus on what is manageable and realistic. The Launderette is a not-for-profit and managed by volunteers, therefore, they do not have the time or money to put towards significant reporting requirements.

The Boundary Estate Community Launderette Social Value Report uses the Social Value Return on Investment (SROI) Framework[54]. This has been a very useful piece of work to justify the Launderette's value. However, it is not something that they would have been able to prepare by themselves.

As a result of changing to a Community Interest Company (CIC), the Launderette already has reporting requirements to Companies House. This includes a description of the company's activities, how the activities benefit the community, as well as a summary of how stakeholders have been consulted and their feedback considered.



The council should consider frameworks which are straight forward for community-run organisations to input into, and which will work best for the individual VCS organisation. This should incorporate qualitative data where quantitative metrics do not reflect the full value.



Align the Launderette's reporting requirements to the council with the requirements of the CIC reporting. This will reduce the amount unnecessary rework required for the volunteer-run launderette.

[52] London Borough of Tower Hamlets, *Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2025-2029* (2025), link, accessed 9 May 2026.
[53] Ibid, p11
[54] Lea Chehabeddine, *Boundary Estate Community Launderette* (2025), page 36, link, accessed 10th May 2026

The Emotional and Social Value of the Launderette

The story of the Boundary Estate Community Launderette shows that even the smallest local spaces can become deeply meaningful for people. What began as a practical solution to washing and drying clothes gradually turned into something much larger: a place of care, connection, and belonging.

For many residents, the Launderette was never just about laundry. It was a place where neighbours talked, parents brought their children, older residents spent time with others, and everyday life happened together. Over the years, it became part of people's memories and personal histories. Some residents who visited the Launderette as children later returned as adults to help protect and support it. This emotional attachment reveals how strongly the space became woven into the identity of the community.

The project also represents dignity and mutual support. It responded to real struggles faced by working-class families living in overcrowded housing, offering not only a service but also respect, visibility, and a sense that the community deserved something of their own. Lorraine Hart's reflections show that the true achievement was not simply opening a Launderette, but creating a place that people could genuinely call *ours*.

Its survival for more than thirty years demonstrates the lasting importance of community-led spaces. In a city where many local services and social spaces disappear over time, the Launderette stands as a reminder that community initiatives can create long-term social value, emotional connection, and collective memory across generations.

TOWER HAMLETS

Governance Directorate
Legal Services
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
London
E14 2BG

Tel: **020 7364 4347**
Fax: **020 7364 4804/4861**
Email:
mohammedzabir.ahmed@towerhamlets.gov.uk

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

The Boundary Estate Laundry Company
28 Calvert Avenue
London
E2 7JP

NL 1661 3633 8GB

6 July 2023

Our Ref: Pespro.1222/MZA
Your Ref:

Dear Sirs

Re: 28 Calvert Avenue, London E2 7JP

I enclose herewith a Section 25 Notice terminating your tenancy on 13 January 2024 and proposing terms for a new lease.

Although the Council is prepared to negotiate a new lease, you must take certain action within the strict timetable in order to preserve your legal rights to a renewal of the lease. These are set out in the Notice and the notes accompanying the Notice.

Should you wish to discuss the heads of terms stated in the attached Notice, you may contact Alex Webber (Asset Manager) by email on thomas.parsonage@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

In the event that you do not wish to take a new lease, please confirm by retrun the arrangements that you will be making to return the keys and to give vacant possession to the Council by 13 January 2024.

TOWER HAMLETS

Yours faithfully

Mohammed Ahmed
On behalf of the Corporate Director Governance & Monitoring Officer

Tower Hamlets Council
Town Hall
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
E14 2BG

EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Living Wage
INVESTORS | Silver
Lexcel

LANDLORD'S SECTION 25 NOTICE ENDING A BUSINESS TENANCY, WITH PROPOSALS FOR A NEW ONE

SECTION 25 OF THE LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT 1954

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR THE LANDLORD: If you are willing to grant a new tenancy, complete this form and send it to the tenant. If you wish to oppose the grant of a new tenancy, use form 2 in Schedule 2 to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, Part 2 (Notices) Regulations 2004 or, where the tenant may be entitled to acquire the freehold or an extended lease, form 7 in that Schedule, instead of this form.

To: The Boundary Estate Laundry Company Limited of 28 Calvert Avenue, London E2 7JP

From: The Mayor and Burgesses of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, whose registered office is at 160 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ.

1. This notice applies to the following property: 28 Calvert Avenue, London E2 7JP

2. I am giving you notice under section 25 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 to end your tenancy on 13 January 2024.

3. I am not opposed to granting you a new tenancy. You will find my proposals for the new tenancy, which we can discuss, in the Schedule to this notice.

4. If we cannot agree on all the terms of a new tenancy, either you or I may ask the court to order the grant of a new tenancy and settle the terms on which we cannot agree.

5. If you wish to ask the court for a new tenancy you must do so by the date in paragraph 2, unless we agree in writing to a later date and do so before the date in paragraph 2.

6. Please send all correspondence about this notice to:

Name: The Mayor and Burgesses of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Address: Legal Services, 160 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ

Signed:



Date: 6 July 2023

Landlord

SCHEDULE

LANDLORD'S PROPOSALS FOR A NEW TENANCY

Term: 5 Years

Rent: £12,000 per annum plus 25% of Net Profit pa

User: As a laundrette only.

Alienation/Subletting: Tenant may assign the whole of the property with the landlord's consent subject to the Assignee being a similar Community laundrette tenant. The tenant must have no arears and the landlord may require an AGA.

Repair: Tenant to keep the property in full repair. Tenant to contribute to a service charge, which is a fair proportion to the cost of maintaining the parts of the property used in common.

Deposit: 3 months' rent deposit to be paid.

Other: Tenant reimburses the landlord for the cost of insuring the property. Other terms as in the existing lease, subject to modernisation if required.

Keep open provision: Laundrette is to open 6 days per week as per the lease. If the shop is found to be closed on days Mon - Sat (excluding Sundays and Bank Holidays) the rent will revert to open market.

Special provision: If Company Accounts are not sent to the Council on a quarterly basis the rent will revert to Open Market. 3-week grace period after at the end of each quarter.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR THE TENANT

This Notice is intended to bring your tenancy to an end. If you want to continue to occupy your property after the date specified in paragraph 2 you must act quickly. If you are in any doubt about the action that you should take, get advice immediately from a solicitor or a surveyor.

The landlord is prepared to offer you a new tenancy and has set out proposed terms in the Schedule to this notice. You are not bound to accept these terms. They are merely suggestions as a basis for negotiation. In the event of disagreement, ultimately the court would settle the terms of the new tenancy.

It would be wise to seek professional advice before agreeing to accept the landlord's terms or putting forward your own proposals.

NOTES

The sections mentioned below are sections of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, as amended, (most recently by the Regulatory Reform (Business Tenancies) (England and Wales) Order 2003).

ENDING OF TENANCY AND GRANT OF NEW TENANCY

This notice is intended to bring your tenancy to an end on the date given in paragraph 2. Section 25 contains rules about the date that the landlord can put in that paragraph.

However, your landlord is prepared to offer you a new tenancy and has set out proposals for it in the Schedule to this notice (section 25(8)). You are not obliged to accept these proposals and may put forward your own.

If you and your landlord are unable to agree terms either one of you may apply to the court. You may not apply to the court if your landlord has already done so (section 24(2A)). If you wish to apply to the court you must do so by the date given in paragraph 2 of this notice, unless you and your landlord have agreed in writing to extend the deadline (sections 29A and 29B).

The court will settle the rent and other terms of the new tenancy or those on which you and your landlord cannot agree (sections 34 and 35). If you apply to the court your tenancy will continue after the date shown in paragraph 2 of this notice while your application is being considered (section 24).

If you are in any doubt about what action you should take, get advice immediately from a solicitor or a surveyor.

NEGOTIATING A NEW TENANCY

Most tenancies are renewed by negotiation. You and your landlord may agree in writing to extend the deadline for making an application to the court while negotiations continue. Either you or your landlord can ask the court to fix the rent that you will have to pay while the tenancy continues (sections 24A to 24D).

You may only stay in the property after the date in paragraph 2 (or if we have agreed in writing to a later date, that date), if by then you or the landlord has asked the court to order the grant of a new tenancy.

If you do try to agree a new tenancy with your landlord remember:

- that your present tenancy will not continue after the date in paragraph 2 of this notice without the agreement in writing mentioned above, unless you have applied to the court or your landlord has done so, and

- that you will lose your right to apply to the court once the deadline in paragraph 2 of this notice has passed, unless there is a written agreement extending the deadline.

VALIDITY OF THIS NOTICE

The landlord who has given you this notice may not be the landlord to whom you pay your rent (sections 44 and 67). This does not necessarily mean that the notice is invalid.

If you have any doubts about whether this notice is valid, get advice immediately from a solicitor or a surveyor.

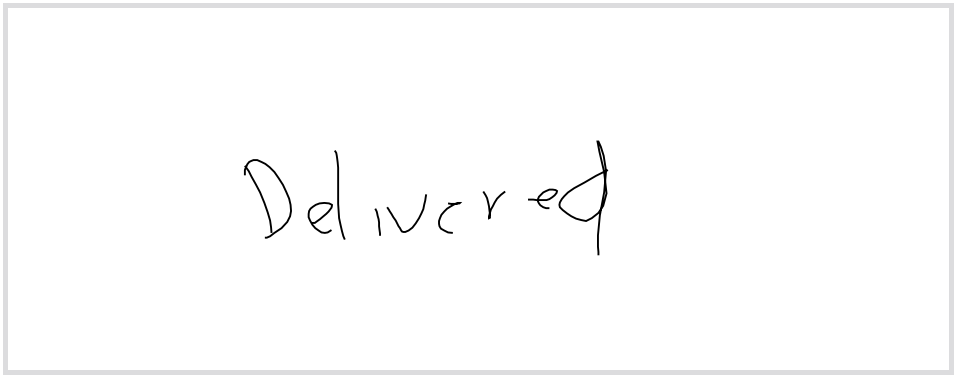
FURTHER INFORMATION

An explanation of the main points to consider when renewing or ending a business tenancy, "Renewing and Ending Business Leases: a Guide for Tenants and Landlords", can be found at www.odpm.gov.uk. Printed copies of the explanation, but not of this form, are available from 1st June 2004 from Free Literature, PO Box 236, Wetherby, West Yorkshire, LS23 7NB (0870 1226 236).

Track your Item

Proof of delivery

Tracking number: NL166136338GB



Your item was delivered on **08-07-2023**.

Signed for by: 28 CALVERT LAUDERETTE.
Service used: Royal Mail Signed For™
Delivered at: 10:00, Saturday 08 July 2023

Cabinet 24 March 2026	TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: David Joyce, Corporate Director, Housing and Regeneration	**Classification:** Unrestricted
Boundary Estate Community Launderette - addition to Community Premises Portfolio	

Lead Member	**Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding**
Originating Officer(s)	Wayne Trevor, Senior Strategy and Policy Officer
Wards affected	Weavers
Key Decision?	~~Yes~~/No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Forward Plan Notice Published	18 December 2025
Exempt information	*None*
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	6- Empower Communities and Fight Crime

Executive Summary

This report seeks approval to add 28 Calvert Avenue to the Council's Community Premises Portfolio (CPP) on a temporary basis personal to the Boundary Estate Community Launderette. The launderette has operated as a not-for-profit community facility since the early 1990s, providing affordable laundry services to local residents, but occupies a property currently held within the Housing Revenue Account retail portfolio and therefore subject to market rent. The organisation cannot afford a commercial rent, and without intervention would be unable to continue operating, resulting in the loss of a valued community service.

Adding the premises to the CPP would allow the application of community rent and enable the organisation to apply for Community Benefit Rent Reduction, supporting the continuation of the service while governance matters are addressed. The proposal aligns with the Council's VCS Premises Policy, Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy, and Housing Strategy, including objectives to support community infrastructure and reduce damp and mould in homes. Given that not all CPP criteria are fully met, the designation would be subject to strict conditions, ensuring it is

temporary, non-transferable, and dependent on the continued provision of not-for-profit laundrette services.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the addition of 28 Calvert Avenue, occupied by the Boundary Estate Community Launderette (BECL), to the Community Premises Portfolio on a temporary and personal basis until such time as BECL ceases to provide not-for-profit launderette services or vacates the property.

2. To note the specific equalities considerations as set out in section 4

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

1.1 The Boundary Estate Community Launderette (BECL) has operated as a not-for-profit organisation since the early 1990s, despite not being a not-for-profit legal entity.

1.2 The property they occupy at 28 Calvert Avenue is part of the HRA retail portfolio, not in the Community Premises Portfolio (CPP) and therefore a market rent for retail use is applicable.

1.3 BECL cannot afford a retail market rent and therefore would be unable to continue with their affordable, below market cost laundry services.

1.4 Adding this property, with some personal conditions, to the CPP allows the community rent to be applied, with the possibility of Community Benefit Rent Reduction.

1.5 This allows BECL to continue their work in providing local and affordable laundry services, and in supporting the reduction of damp and mould in homes on and around the Boundary Estate. They are open 6 days a week, from around 9am to around 6pm, including Saturday and Sunday.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

2.1 **Continue with previous lease process**- to secure market rent on commercial terms (not a community use rent). BECL are unlikely to be able to afford this. If so, the property reverts to council and will be remarketed on commercial terms. BECL is likely to close with reputational damage to the Council

2.2 **Council takes possession** by ending the current tenancy and markets the premises for retail use at market value**.**

2.3 **Do nothing-** BECL remains on the current tenancy at will. Not in line with policy and does not provide stability for BECL to apply for longer term grant funding.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 The council owns the freehold to 28 Calvert Avenue within the HRA. It is a retail property, situated in a parade of retail properties on the Boundary Estate in Weavers Ward.

3.2 Retail properties on the shopping parade command comparatively high rents compared to other council parades. The launderette was on a legacy rent of £2,000 pa which is way below current market level.

3.3 The council served a s25 notice under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 to end the lease in July 2023. This is part of a standard legal process for lease renewals which required a response from the tenant. No response was received meaning that the lease ended in January 2024; and the tenant was required to provide vacant possession. In February 2024 steps were taken to secure the property which included changing the locks. This resulted in the closing of the facility and complaints from the directors of the launderette and from the wider local community.

3.4 This resulted in negative public attention, including from the BBC and Guardian. A petition with over 2,500 signatures was handed to Cllr Kabir Ahmed at the Town Hall in early March 2024, supported by the Boundary Estate TRA. The petitioners made three requests:

- Grant a temporary tenancy at will (TaW) on previous terms with immediate effect
- Add the launderette premises to the Community Premises Portfolio (CPP)
- Apply CBRR to the community rent for the premises.

3.5 A TaW was agreed as an interim arrangement to allow the launderette to reopen whilst options for a longer-term arrangement are worked through. This was originally granted for a period up to12 months, although is now continuing on the same terms.

3.6 A petition was presented to a Council meeting on Wednesday 17 July 2024 and the Council resolved that the petition be referred to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration, for a written response within 28 days.

3.7 The Interim Director of Property and Major Programmes and other officers met with the Directors of BECL on 30 July 2024. At that meeting, the Director agreed to investigate a CPP listing which would allow a community lease to be offered with community rent of £14 psf and the opportunity to apply for CBRR of up to 80%, subject to meeting the CBRR eligibility requirements. The Directors of the Launderette agreed to address some governance and business plan issues.

3.8 Officers have met with the Directors of the launderette on several occasions since then to provide support with the governance issues and to ensure other eligibility requirements of CBRR can be met. The Directors are working with a researcher from University College London to establish an evidence base of the impact of the launderette.

3.9 The premises are not currently included in the council's community premises portfolio, which was agreed at Cabinet in March 2021.

Policy

3.10 In relation to new premises being added to the community portfolio, the council's VCS premises policy states that: "In exceptional circumstances the council may agree to premises being added to the community premises portfolio. To be considered the premises must,

3.11 *Be currently occupied by a VCS organisation;*

3.12 *Be different in nature from premises where the council would expect to generate a commercial income such as shops, railway arches, office facilities, and parking/garaging facilities, and not be required by the council for offices or direct service delivery, and*

3.13 *Not be used for the delivery of statutory services through a public service contract.*

3.14 The council will also take into consideration the potential cost to the council tax payers through rental income foregone."

3.15 The 2021 Cabinet report did not include a specific process for decisions on changes to the CPP. However, the Property scheme of delegation includes the following, "To approve after consultation with the Corporate Director Resources and other Corporate Directors as appropriate appropriations between relevant function areas and statutory holding powers, except where public notice of the proposed appropriation is required and objections are received."

3.16 Where all three CPP criteria are met, it has been considered that a decision on inclusion of a property in the CPP is analogous to an appropriation. On this basis, previous proposals have been brought to the Director for approval. However, in this case, the criteria are not met hence a decision from the Mayor is required.

Criteria

3.17 The assessment on whether the premises meets the criteria for inclusion in the CPP are set out below.

3.18 The premises have been occupied by The Boundary Estate Launderette Company Limited (company number 02490332), a private limited company with share capital. This form of legal entity does not meet the council's requirements for a VCS organisation. However, the company have operated from the premises as a not-for-profit organisation since their incorporation in 1990 as evidenced in Appendix A which includes providing laundrette services at around 20% below market rates. The BECL Directors are working to amend their legal entity so that it meets the council's requirements. It is expected that this issue can be satisfactorily resolved, and that this criterion would be met going forward. The new legal entity will be Boundary Estate Launderette CIC.

3.19 The council has three other launderettes in its retail portfolio operating on a commercial basis. The council's policy is to secure market rents for all letting within the shops portfolio. The premises at 28 Calvert Avenue are part of the

HRA retail portfolio although the council has not received a commercial income from these premises in the recent past.

3.20 The premises are not currently used to deliver statutory services through a public service contract (PSC) and are not expected to be required for such purposes in the future.

3.21 Criterion 1 is partly met, criterion 2 is not met, criterion 3 is met. On this basis it is not considered that a decision to add the property to the CPP can be taken under delegated authority. If the property is to be added to the CPP it is considered appropriate for three conditions to be applied:

3.22 *for as long as The Boundary Estate Launderette Company Limited are in existence as a not-for-profit entity and occupy the property,*

3.23 *and that they continue to provide not-for-profit laundrette services for local people*

3.24 *the CPP designation will end if the BECL vacates the property.*

3.25 For the avoidance of doubt, if The Boundary Estate Launderette Company Limited cease to provide not-for-profit laundrette services for local people, the property will cease to be part of the CPP and will revert to the commercial portfolio. The CPP entitlement is not transferable to any other organisation and is for Boundary Estate Launderette CIC only.

Financial impact

3.26 The property is held in the HRA, along with the surrounding council residential property. Rental income is therefore credited to the HRA.

3.27 If the property were added to the CPP on the basis of benefits to the residents of the council housing, the HRA would forego rental income for retail use, estimated in March 2023 at £22,000 pa. This is potential income foregone and is not currently forecast in a budget.

3.28 The property has an area of 452 sf. At the community rent of £14 psf, the annual rent would be £6,328. As an example, an 80% community benefit rent reduction grant would therefore be £5,062 pa. The annual rental income would be £1,266 pa. The current rent is at an annual equivalent rate of £2,000 pa. This would mean a small reduction in rent collected by £734pa.

Strategic Framework

VCS Premises Policy

3.29 The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Premises Policy was agreed by Cabinet in 2021. This policy set out the Council's approach to leasing council-owned premises to recognised VCS organisations. The policy established a portfolio of premises to be leased to VCS groups only known as the Community Premises Portfolio. Premises in the portfolio would be leased on standard community lease terms which includes a Community Rent of £14psqft, a lease length of 3-5 years and are outside of the 1954 Act.

3.30 A further discount scheme providing discounts of up to 80% for qualifying organisations was also established via the Community Benefit Rent Reduction Scheme. CBRR is managed via an application process and is treated as a non-cash grant. The reduced rental income is treated as income foregone.

This process is overseen by the CBRR Panel which is chaired by the Head of Revenues and Benefits, under delegated authority by the Grants Determination Sub Committee (GDSC). Updates are provided to GDSC on a quarterly basis. Grants are monitored in accordance with the Tower Hamlets Grants Framework and undergo annual monitoring and assessment. Mechanisms exist to remedy any non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant by the recipient. The Council has the ability to terminate the grant if the terms and conditions are not met.

3.31 The CBRR grant lasts for a maximum of 5 years. A check will be made on whether the conditions are still being met at the annual review, and at the end of the agreement every 5 years, and this will be reported by to the CBRR Panel.

3.32 A review of the VCS Premises Policy has been initiated by the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration. It is not intended that this proposal changes the VCS Premises Policy, but the issues raised will be considered as part of the review.

Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy

3.33 The Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2025-2029 states that the Council will '*Work in partnership with the VCS and other stakeholders to foster a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable sector that continues to improve residents' lives*'.

3.34 Objective 4 of this strategy is 'supporting the VCS to grow its independence and long-term sustainability', specifically 'We also recognise that access to physical space remains a key barrier in some areas. To address this, we will work with VCS organisations to improve access to affordable premises by changing planning and community premises policies to increase community space in new developments, making Council buildings available to lease or rent in a fair and transparent way, and ensuring our rental fees remain accessible for community groups'.

Tower Hamlet's Housing Strategy 2025-2035 (in consultation)

3.35 The Housing Strategy 2025–2035 sets out a clear commitment to address poor housing conditions, including damp and mould, as part of its vision for "More Homes, Better Homes, Safer Homes." Damp and mould are recognised as significant health hazards, often linked to overcrowding, poor insulation, and delays in repairs. These issues harm physical and mental health, particularly for vulnerable residents and children.

3.36 Our approach is multi-faceted: We will comply with new national standards like Awaab's Law and the revised Decent Homes Standard, ensuring timely repairs and removal of health hazards. £140 million will be invested over five years to improve council homes and tackle damp and mould. Data on damp and mould will guide future investment and service improvements.

3.37 Initiatives like the Boundary Estate Community Launderette directly and specifically support the reduction of damp and mould by providing local and affordable washing and drying facilities and in promoting Council campaigns around damp and mould prevention.

3.38 **Other social criteria**

3.39 An independent report commissioned by BECL from The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London identified 5 areas of social value provided by the launderette. These areas are Mental Health, Community, Independence, Hygiene Costs and Good Jobs. Their research identifies a Social Return on Investment (SROI) of £13.56 for every £1 invested, and they conclude '*These figures suggest a highly efficient use of resources, with meaningful improvements across well-being, independence, hygiene and employment. Overall, the analysis provides compelling evidence of significant and diverse social returns relative to the financial inputs'.*

3.40 The full report can be read in appendix B.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The EQIA pre-screening tool did not identify any adverse impacts of this approach on any of the equality groups. It is expected that this approach will have positive impacts on some groups.

4.2 Analysis from the independent report (see 3.39) indicate the proposal would positively address inequality and poverty by reducing cost and access barriers for households with low incomes, single-parent families, and residents in overcrowded or poor-quality housing who rely on shared or inadequate laundry facilities. Stakeholder interviews and local community feedback highlight that affordable, reliable laundry access supports health and dignity, reduces financial strain (avoiding high per-wash commercial costs), and mitigates time poverty-particularly for women and carers who disproportionately shoulder domestic responsibilities. The service is also relevant to residents with disabilities and older people, for whom accessible, proximate facilities lessen mobility and transport barriers. To maximise equality impacts, the proposal embeds concessionary pricing, transparent hardship support, and accessible design (step-free access, clear signage, support where needed), alongside community-led oversight to monitor uptake, affordability, and user experience across protected and vulnerable groups. No adverse impacts on protected characteristics have been identified to date; however, BECL will implement ongoing equalities monitoring (usage, affordability, satisfaction, and complaints by demographic) and adjust the model where data shows differential outcomes. This will be managed through the ongoing CBRR grant monitoring process.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,

- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

Best Value Implications

5.2 The council's community rent of £14 psf represents a figure adopted by the council to reflect market rental value for community use across the borough. The council has a general obligation to obtain best consideration in property transactions, including grants of lease over 7 years in duration. The inclusion of the community rent in the proposed lease represents a figure that the council has chosen to reflect market rent for community uses across the borough generally.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 This report is seeking approval to include of 28 Calvert Avenue, occupied by the Boundary Estate Community Launderette (BECL), to the Community Premises Portfolio until such time that the BECL vacates the premises. As a result, it will allow the BECL to apply for an 80% rent reduction as part of the community rent reduction scheme.

6.2 The laundrette is currently paying a legacy rent of £2,000 per annum. Being a HRA asset, this rental income forms part of the HRA commercial rent portfolio. This proposal will increase the rent chargeable to £5,062 per annum. If the BECL is successful in its application for rent reduction, the rent payable will reduce to £1,266 per annum, a shortfall of £734 per annum which the HRA will need to absorb.

6.3 The conversion to the Community Premises Portfolio and move away from charging a commercial rent for this property does not represent best consideration for the Council. The commercial rent for this property is estimated at £22,000 per annum and therefore rent of £20,734 per annum will be foregone by the HRA should the BECL be eligible for the discounted community rent.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 With reference to recommendation 1, paragraph 3.10 of this report confirms that the Council's VCS premises policy permits: "In exceptional circumstances the council may agree to premises being added to the community premises portfolio". Approval by the Mayor in Cabinet ensures proper oversight of the inclusion of individual premises into the latter portfolio. The report makes clear that 28 Calvert Avenue, which is occupied by the Boundary Estate Community Launderette (BECL), will be added to the Community Premises Portfolio on a temporary and personal basis until such time as BECL ceases to provide not-for-profit launderette services or vacates the property. This enables the

Council to comply with its best consideration obligations under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 as appropriate in the future. The Local Government Act 1972: General Disposal Consent 2003 does allow for a disposal to be at an undervalue provided the Council considers it will help to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social, or environmental well-being of its area.

7.2 The Council's Voluntary and Community Sector [VCS] Strategy 2025 – 2029 has been developed in consultation with the VCS. The Council recognises that the activities of many organisations which occupy its premises provide valuable community benefits. In recognition of this, the Council offers a rent reduction of up to 80% of the rent payable to organisations which meet specific eligibility criteria and can demonstrate their activities provide community benefit. In all cases, disposal at less than best consideration is subject to the condition that the undervalue does not exceed £2,000,000 (two million pounds).

7.3 The Council has the legal power to grant the leases and the grant of the reduced rent referred to in this report.

7.4 The grant of the lease at a less than commercial rate constitutes a grant as the Council is not obliged to waive any part of the rent.

7.5 The Council needs to ensure that the total monetary benefit received from any low value lease by the organisation is not going to exceed £315,000 in any consecutive 3-year period. This is because there is a commercial market for laundry services and the community laundry will gain a benefit from having a subsidised lease when compared to competitors. Therefore, when considering the Subsidy Control Principles there is a risk that this subsidy could distort market competition. However, there is a de minimis exemption under the Subsidy Control Act 2022 of £315,000 in any continuous 3-year period such that provided the monetary benefit received by the community laundry does not exceed this level then the Subsidy Control Act will not apply.

7.6 In as far as the report recommends a departure from the pre-agreed CBRR scheme, the justification for this approach is clearly set out within the body of the report. Based on the community benefits outcome, which will be realised through supporting the organisation as recommended in this report, the approach taken is reasonable and rational

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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Appendix A- Evidence of not-for-profit operation- Boundary Estate Community Launderette_ Archive.pdf
- Appendix B- Boundary Estate Community Launderette- Social Value Report- Launderette Report combined final.pdf

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- None

Officer contact details for documents:
Wayne Trevor, Senior Strategy and Policy Officer, VCS and Assets

APPENDIX A- Evidence of not-for-profit operations

Summary of evidence:

- Original organisation created by residents to meet the need for local laundrette services in early 1990s
- Significant fundraising activities to raise capital for machines.
- Won a number of awards relating to community work and regeneration
- Provides a variety of other social benefits
- Income from activities covers running costs- directors are unpaid volunteers.

Full evidence pack:
Boundary Estate Community Launderette_ Archive

APPENDIX B- Independent report commissioned by BECL from The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London

Launderette Report combined final.pdf

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

RECORD OF THE DECISIONS OF THE CABINET

HELD AT 5.38 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2026

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present in Person:

Mayor Lutfur Rahman	
Councillor Maium Talukdar	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor))
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding)
Councillor Musthak Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Jobs, Enterprise, Skills and Growth)
Councillor Saied Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living)
Councillor Shafi Ahmed	(Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Emergency)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar	(Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care)
Councillor Kamrul Hussain	(Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation)
Councillor Abu Talha Chowdhury	(Cabinet Member for Safer Communities)
Councillor Bodrul Choudhury	(Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Equalities and Social Inclusion)

Officers Present in Person:

Dr Somen Banerjee	(Director of Public Health)
Sam Brown	(Director of Corporate Property and Estates)
Hannah Dalgleish	(Director of Regeneration and Development)
Richard Ennis	(Interim Corporate Director, Resources and Section 151 Officer)
Jonathan Fox	(Principal Contracts Lawyer, Legal Services Governance)
Stephen Halsey	(Chief Executive)
Alex Hatt	(Head of Regeneration)
Isaac Hoeschen	Cabinet Support Officer
Afazul Hoque	(Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy)
David Joyce	(Corporate Director, Housing & Regeneration)
Abdulrazak Kassim	(Director of Finance, Procurement & Audit)
Ahsan Khan	(Corporate Head of Financial and Technical)
Gillian Marston	(Interim Corporate Director, Communities)
Geoff Pearce	(Strategic Project Manager)
Steve Reddy	(Corporate Director, Children's Services)
Rebecca Williams	(Strategy and Policy Officer)
Justina Bridgeman	Democratic Services Officer (Committee)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Georgia Chimbani, Corporate Director of Health and Adult Social Care. Dr Somen Banerjee, Director of Public Health, substituted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

That the unrestricted minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 18 February 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings, subject to Councillor Bodrul Choudhury being physically present.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE MAYOR

See minutes.

5. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions

See minutes.

5.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

No decisions were called in.

6. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Mudchute Farm and Park- Lease renewal

DECISION;

1. **AGREED** a 30-year lease at an initial rent level of £15k pa to be inside the provisions of the Landlord and Tenants Act 1954 to The Mudchute Association for Mudchute Farm and Park.

2. Noted the specific equalities considerations as set out in section 4.

Reasons for the decision

- To comply with Council policy to ensure all leaseholders have an appropriate lease agreement.

- Deliver on the Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy, specifically to support independence and long-term stability.

- The proposed lease terms are different to those agreed at a meeting of Cabinet in June 2019 and therefore require a new Cabinet decision. The form of new lease agreed in 2019 has not been granted.

- To recognise the unique scale and circumstances of the site- the scale, complexity and mixed use of Mudchute Farm and Park distinguish it from standard community premises. The grant of a longer lease than is standard under VCS Premises Policy is therefore justified and proportionate in this specific case.

Alternative Options

- **Offer a community lease** of 5 years, at Community Rent of £14psft and on other standard lease terms with Community Benefit Rent Reduction of 80% (subject to satisfactory application) in line with the Council's VCS Premises Policy and Procedures agreed by Cabinet in 2021.

- The Mudchute Association have already rejected this offer as being financially unsuitable to secure long-term capital and revenue grant funding, which generally requires a lease of 10 years or more. The current lease is within the Landlord and Tenant Act (LTA) 1954 and therefore a court is likely to award a lease of up to 15 years.

- **Take possession of the site and operate in-house**: The Mudchute Association have managed, maintained and enhanced the 32-acre site since 1977 at minimal cost to the Council and provide access for free to the public. Returning the site to in-house operation would require additional revenue and capital resources and is likely to prompt strong community concern. This option also has potential issues for a two-tier workforce.

- **Do nothing**: The current lease has expired and is currently holding over. Continuing this approach would perpetuate the issues of securing long-term grant funding and further reputational damage to the Council. Not recommended.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR HOUSING & REGENERATION (D. JOYCE)

6.2 Boundary Estate Community Launderette - addition to Community Premises Portfolio

DECISION

1. **APPROVED** the addition of 28 Calvert Avenue, occupied by the Boundary Estate Community Launderette (BECL), to the Community Premises Portfolio on a temporary and personal basis until such time as BECL ceases to provide not-for-profit launderette services or vacates the property.

2. Noted the specific equalities considerations as set out in section 4.

Reasons for the decision

- The Boundary Estate Community Launderette (BECL) has operated as a not-for-profit organisation since the early 1990s, despite not being a not-for profit legal entity.

- The property they occupy at 28 Calvert Avenue is part of the HRA retail portfolio, not in the Community Premises Portfolio (CPP) and therefore a market rent for retail use is applicable.

- BECL cannot afford a retail market rent and therefore would be unable to continue with their affordable, below market cost laundry services. Adding this property, with some personal conditions, to the CPP allows the community rent to be applied, with the possibility of Community Benefit Rent Reduction.

- This allows BECL to continue their work in providing local and affordable laundry services, and in supporting the reduction of damp and mould in homes on and around the Boundary Estate. They are open 6 days a week, from around 9am to around 6pm, including Saturday and Sunday.

Alternative options

- **Continue with previous lease process**- to secure market rent on commercial terms (not a community use rent). BECL are unlikely to be able to afford this. If so, the property reverts to council and will be remarketed on commercial terms. BECL is likely to close with reputational damage to the Council.

- **Council takes possession** by ending the current tenancy and markets the premises for retail use at market value.

- **Do nothing**- BECL remains on the current tenancy at will. Not in line with policy and does not provide stability for BECL to apply for longer term grant funding.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR HOUSING & REGENERATION (D.JOYCE)

6.3 Highway Clubs Lease Renewal- 2 Lowood Street

DECISION

1. **OFFERED** a 15-year lease to The Highway Clubs charity for Broad Street Amateur Boxing Club at 2, Lowood Street, within the protection of the 1954 Act at an initial rent of £78,000 p/a rent with a Community Rent Reduction Grant (CBRR) of up to 80% for 15 years (subject to successful application) which would result in a net rent of £15,600pa.

2. Noted the specific equalities considerations as set out in section 4.

Reasons for the decision

- To end an ongoing legal process and prevent further legal costs for the Council and the VCS organisation.

- Rebuild trust with a long-standing Tower Hamlets charity.

- Offer a lease term of 15 years which is the maximum a court can award under the 1954 Act.

- Offer a lease within the protection of the 1954 LTA which is what a court would award.

- Offer a rent aligned with current community rent policy.

Alternative options

- **Continue with 1954 Act legal process**- The Council served a S.25 Notice terminating the lease on the 31 August 2019 and offered a new five-year lease at a rent of £85,000 per annum with a landlord's break at any time after the second year on giving not less than 12 months' prior written notice. The Club rejected the lease offer, and the matter proceeded to court. This would result in more legal costs and further reputational issues for the Council. This could generate approximately £35,000 pa rental income for the Council based on an expert report already obtained by the parties, subject to the outcome of the legal process.

- **Obtain possession of site**- The current lease expired in 2017 and is now holding over. Under the terms of the lease and LTA 1954 the council could seek possession of the site subject to further legal analysis. This is likely to be met with a high level of resistance and

community campaigning and reputational issues for the Council. Not recommended.

- **Do nothing**- The lease continues to hold over, allowing the tenant to remain in occupation and continue under existing lease terms. The council is currently billing the tenant £27.50 quarterly. Does not support the VCS organisation to secure long-term grant funding to support their future financial sustainability. Not recommended.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR HOUSING & REGENERATION (D.JOYCE)

6.4 Strategic Delivery and Performance Report Year 4 Quarter 3

DECISION

1. Noted the strategic delivery and performance report for Q3 covering the period of 1st October 2025 to 31st December 2025.

2. Reviewed the status of 60 performance measures in Q1 tracking the delivery of Year 4 of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026 (See Appendix A).

3. **AGREED** to establish a dedicated Task and Finish group, to address performance indicators that consistently fail to meet their targets, and to report back to a future cabinet meeting with detailed action plans.

Reasons for the decision

- The Council's reporting cycle – the Performance Management & Accountability Framework is set up to provide quarterly update reports for the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026 including operational performance measures.

- Targeted performance measurement is relevant to strategic policy as it helps services to be designed so that they can deliver strategic objectives.

- By examining performance measures of operational activity, the council can make informed decisions about how to effectively steer resources towards the goals of the organisation.

Alternative Options

- Cabinet may decide not to review the performance information. This is not recommended as Corporate Directors and Lead Members have a key role to review and challenge under-performance in their services and utilise performance information to inform resource allocation.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR RESOURCES (R. ENNIS)

6.5 Annual Equality Report 2024-2025

DECISION;

1. Noted and **AGREED** the contents of the Tower Hamlets Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2024-25.

Reasons for the decision

- The Tower Hamlets Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2024 2025 highlights the council's considerable achievements in meeting its equality objectives and how it is meeting its Public Sector Duty under the Equality Act 2010. When Cabinet agreed the Corporate Equalities Plan, it was agreed an annual report will be brought to Cabinet to demonstrate progress.

Alternative options

- The council could choose not to publish its progress against inequality in the borough. Equality is already embedded throughout the council's plans, strategies and activities. However, it is considered that reporting on the council's progress against its equality objectives helps demonstrate the council's considerable commitment to and investment in tackling inequalities, meeting its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and helps the council to demonstrate Best Value and the impact of its programmes on residents.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR RESOURCES (R. ENNIS)

6.6 CS6028: Overnight and related short breaks for children and young people with autistic spectrum condition (ASC) and complex health needs (CN)

DECISION

1. **AGREED** the recommendation of the report and approve the award of two block contract (Lots) for the delivery of a new Overnight and Related Short Breaks Service from 1st of November 2026.

2. Noted the Equalities Impact Assessment / specific equalities considerations as set out in Paragraph 4.1 and 4.2.

Reasons for the decision

- The current contracts for the provision of Overnight and Related Short Breaks for disabled children and young people (CYP) are due to expire on 31st October 2026. A competitive tender process was completed between October to November 2025, with 6 bids received and evaluated.

- A decision from the Mayor and Cabinet is required to approve the award in line with the recommendations in this report. This will ensure a seamless continuity of a high-quality overnight short breaks provision for our most vulnerable children, young people, and their families.

- As this is a statutory service, the Council has a legal responsibility to ensure its delivery under the Children & Families Care Act 2014. Failure to award the service before the current contracts end would risk breaching our statutory duties to provide specialist short breaks to children and young people with the highest level of need. All available extensions (two years) have already been utilised with no further extensions remaining.

Alternative options

- Transitioning to spot purchasing when the contract ends is an option, however it comes with several risks, the primary one being that the cost will be significantly more. It will also be difficult to track, monitor and forecast spend making it an inefficient and unsustainable option for the Council.

- Delivering services off contract also introduces additional risks in that the Council will not be able to contract manage closely as it does with commissioned providers, which in turn could compromise service quality and safety. Moreover, this approach limits opportunities to build strong relationships with providers and to develop specialist services for our children. There are a limited number of providers in the market able to deliver these specialist services for our children.

- Discontinuing the service altogether is not an option. The Council has a statutory duty to provide overnight and related short breaks for children and young people with disabilities. All available extensions on this contract (two years) have already been utilised with no further extensions remaining.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES (S. REDDY)

6.7 Tower Hamlets Future Places

DECISION;

1. **ENDORSED** the Tower Hamlets Future Places (THFP) framework as the borough's strategic narrative for showcasing its achievements, strengths, and long-term development ambitions.

2. **AGREED** to use THFP to strengthen engagement with investors and partners, supporting a more coherent and proactive approach to attracting high-quality, sustainable investment aligned with Council priorities, ahead of its launch at MIPIM in 2026.

3. Noted the specific equalities considerations as set out in Paragraph 4.

4. **AGREE** to attend future MIPIN events to explore opportunities for global engagement and present an update report at a future Cabinet meeting.

Reasons for the decision

- THFP actively promotes Tower Hamlets as the local authority experienced, effective and innovative in supporting inclusive growth, the most successful (inner) London borough in delivery of regeneration opportunities to date and with great ambitions for the future.

- It outlines a clear vision for sectoral and spatial regeneration, and the council's commitment for partnership working to maximise public benefits for local business and residential communities.

- The establishment of a coordinated approach to engaging regeneration stakeholders, alongside the preparation of targeted delivery plans for initiatives identified within Tower Hamlets Future Places, supports the Council in committing to a long-term strategic vision that reflects shared ambitions for the borough and aligns with the Our Tower Hamlets 2025 2035 Plan, the Strategic Plan, and Mayoral priorities.

Alternative options

- The Council could choose not to adopt the recommendations within THPF and continue re-active approach to regeneration initiatives in the borough. However, this would endanger its ability to actively shape and deliver on key manifesto priorities and reduce the visibility of the potential for partners to invest in the borough.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR HOUSING & REGENERATION (D. JOYCE)

6.8 Tomlinson Close Mini Regeneration Housing Scheme

DECISION;

1. **APPROVED** that a Demolition Notice be implemented to ensure there are no further Right-to-Buy applications for the existing homes.

2. **APPROVED** the subsequent removal of the Right to Buy for all new Council-owned rented homes to be delivered as part of the redevelopment, except for rehoused tenants from 2 – 20 Tomlinson Close who will retain their right to buy.

3. **APPROVED** the Decant and Rehousing Strategy, including a guaranteed Right to Return for eligible secure tenants to new affordable homes within the new development.

4. **DELEGATED** Authority to the Corporate Director Housing Regeneration, in consultation with the mayor, to sign off the final the design and submit the planning application.

5. Noted the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) see Appendix 1

Reasons for the decision

- The decisions sought in this Report are to enable the delivery of the Scheme allowing the provision of 55 new homes.

- The redevelopment of 2 - 20 Tomlinson Close and MUGA site will secure a number of public benefits, including:

    - Increasing the supply of affordable housing, for which there is an acute need.
    - Providing local economic investment, including job and training opportunities.
    - Improving housing stock; and
    - Improving public realm.

- It is therefore considered that the Scheme would contribute towards the promotion and improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the borough.

Alternative options

- The alternative options to making the Order are:

    - Refurbish and retrofit the existing buildings; or
    - Adopt a do-nothing approach.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR HOUSING & REGENERATION (D. JOYCE)

6.9 Harriott, Apsley & Pattison (HAP) Houses Regeneration Scheme – Development Agreement & Contract Award

DECISION;

1. **AUTHORISED** the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Mayor to enter into a Development Agreement and execute the Phase 1 construction contract with Vistry Group following the successful completion of the Second Stage tender via a Pre-Construction Services Agreement. Under the terms of the Development Agreement and in consultation with the Council, Vistry Group (formerly known as the development partner) shall lead on the construction delivery of Phase 1 & 2.

2. **DELEGATE** Authority to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Mayor, the authority to appoint any necessary consultants required to assist the Council in the delivery of the project.

3. Noted the Development Agreement shall include the delivery of the complete project including Phase 1 & Phase 2.

4. **DELEGATED** Authority to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration, the authority to proceed with site remediation works, required to deliver Phase 1, under the existing Minor Works Contract.

5. **DELEGATED** Authority to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Mayor, the authority to enter into the ESCo (Energy Service Company) Agreement and relevant leases relating to the regeneration.

6. Noted the ESCo agreement is a performance-based contract where a specialised firm implements energy-efficiency projects, financing the upfront costs and guaranteeing that savings will cover the investment.

Reasons for the decision

- The decisions sought in this report are to enable the delivery of 407 new homes and a new community centre, on council-owned land currently occupied by seven housing blocks between 4 and 8 stories (known collectively as Harriott House, Apsley House and Pattison House), comprising 68 flats, 32 maisonettes, and 2 community buildings.

- A Resident Ballot was held between 18th March and 9th April 2020. Of the 132 eligible voters, 123 votes were cast, a turnout of 93%. 121 residents voted in favour of regeneration (98.4%) and 2 (1.6%)

residents voted to reject the council's proposal, demonstrating strong community support.

- Of the 407 homes to be delivered by the scheme, 59 are allocated as replacement homes; a further 116 additional affordable homes will be delivered within the scheme (50 under Phase 1 and 66 under Phase 2), housing new residents to the estate, as well as helping to address overcrowding within the existing homes. 22 of these homes have been identified for hidden households across the estate, ensuring that the scheme tackles the localised overcrowding in the community, as well as serving the borough's wider affordable housing needs.

- The scheme delivers policy-compliant 43% (175 no.) affordable housing alongside 57% (232 no.) open market homes, meeting strategic targets with substantial net affordable housing gain. The affordable housing mix is comprised of social rent, shared ownership, and shared equity homes.

- The new homes will replace older blocks with ongoing damp issues and repair costs, instead providing homes with: greatly improved fire safety measures, high thermal performance and the lower energy use this enables, large balconies for every home, new communal place spaces and community gardens, secure bike storage for every resident, improved public realm and street scene benefiting the wider community, along with increased refuse storage in dedicated bin chambers, removing the current large number of bins spread across the estate.

- The new HAP buildings range between six and eight stories, respecting local character whilst homes have been designed to meet the planning policy requirements for sustainability, aiming to achieve an estimated site-wide CO2 emission reduction of at least 45% over the Target Emission Rate (TER) using the SAP 10 emission factors, through a combination of energy conservation measures, renewable heat, and electricity generation technologies, such as Photovoltaic solar panels (PV) and Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP).

- Furthermore, the development includes a new community space. The Council have worked closely with the Redcoat Community Centre & Masjid (RCCM) to design a space which meets their needs and the needs of those who will be using the building.

- Given the proposed regeneration of the estate, long term maintenance of the buildings has been reduced, with limited services remaining on the estate. Decant of existing tenants shall occur upon completion of Phase 1.

- The project has been procured on a Two-Stage Design & Build route. The open procedure procurement exercise ran between March and October 2024, with Invitation to Tender (ITT) and Pre-Qualification

Questionnaire (PQQ) issued simultaneously on the 4th March 2024 via the Pro Contract e-tendering portal. 8 developers submitted responses to the PQQ, with 3 passing to full qualitative and quantitative evaluation of ITT responses. Tenders were evaluated based on a weighting of 50% quality, 40% price, and 10% social value, with the highest scoring bidder determined and resultant appointment of a Vistry Group as development partner via a Pre-Construction Services Agreement.

- During the Pre-Construction Services Agreement, the LB Tower Hamlets Delivery Team have ensured best value through rigorous procurement and cost management procedures. Each subcontractor package was competitively tendered in accordance with the Council's procurement requirements. All cost submissions were robustly challenged and validated against market benchmarks to demonstrate value for money. The team undertook regular value engineering exercises and maintained full cost transparency throughout the pre-construction phase. This approach enabled informed decision-making, optimised project value, and provides assurance that the proposed contract sum represents demonstrable best value for the Council.

- The Pre-Construction Services Agreement period has enabled detailed design of the scheme and the subsequent submission to the BSR Gateway 2 submission on the 3rd of February 2026. The two applications, one submitted for each separate building mass as per best practice recommendations, were successfully validated on the 6th February 2026 and are now under review for determination by the BSR.

- Following completion of detailed design, Vistry Group have submitted a Second-Stage tender price which enables the Council to now enter into the Development Agreement and execute Phase 1 construction contract for compete delivery of the scheme (Phase 1 & Phase 2). Vistry Group shall be responsible for complete delivery of the project including Phase 2 construction works and BSR Gateway 3 approval.

- In relation to the proposed Form of Contract, Potter Raper Ltd, acting as Employers Agent, have recommended appointing Vistry Group under a JCT Design & Build Contract for Phase 1 on a fixed price lump sum basis and Phase 2 with fixed LBTH contribution for the affordable homes within phase 2. While construction costs have increased during PCSA period, we now have strong confidence in pricing robustness. Cost increases stem from unforeseen ground conditions; asbestos removal and contaminated material disposal substantially exceeded initial estimates following detailed site investigations. The current fixed price position is robust, comprehensively priced, and reflective of current market conditions and site-specific challenges.

Alternative options

- Evaluation of delivery model options were considered and presented to Cabinet in February 2023 in which the development partnership model

was recommended and approved. At this stage, alternatives included ‘land sale with contract’ and ‘income strip model’. An alternative option to the delivery of the project is not presently recommended as the Second-Stage tender process has now concluded and meets the Council’s requirements in terms of value for money and deliverability.

- Following Second-Stage tender completion, four alternatives were reevaluated:

  Option 1: Open market tender creates 9-12 month delay, jeopardising secured funding and affordable housing delivery.

  Option 2: Council-led private sale (232 units) exposes LBTH to market risk without specialist expertise or infrastructure.

  Option 3: Single stage retender introduces 6-9 month delay, design liability issues and loses Vistry Group's site knowledge.

  Option 4 (Recommended): Proceed with Vistry Group under fixed price JCT Design & Build contract and Development Agreement, maintaining programme certainty.

  An alternative option is not recommended. The Second-Stage tender meets Council requirements for value and deliverability.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR HOUSING & REGENERATION (D. JOYCE)

6.10 Best Start Family Hubs Programme

DECISION;

1. **APPROVED** the allocation and expenditure of up to £1.6 million of ringfenced Best Start Family Hubs & Healthy Babies funding to commission the Perinatal Mental Health and Parent-Infant Relationship (PNMHPIR) service for 2026–2029.

2. **APPROVED** the commencement of procurement to secure specialist delivery partners in accordance with the Council’s Procurement Procedures and the programme’s national requirements.

3. **AUTHORISED** the Corporate Director for Children’s Services, in consultation with The Mayor, to award a contract in accordance with the prevailing procurement law and in accordance with the terms of this report.

Reasons for the decision

- To comply with national programme requirements: The Perinatal Mental Health and Parent-Infant Relationship strand is a core mandatory component of the Healthy Babies offer under the Best Start Family Hubs programme. National guidance requires every local authority to deliver PNMH and Parent-Infant relationship support as part of the integrated 0–2 pathway, ensuring early identification and intervention for perinatal mental health needs.

- To secure delivery of an essential clinical and early intervention service for vulnerable families: Local need assessments and programme papers show increased levels of parental mental health difficulties, trauma, attachment challenges, and postnatal anxiety - exacerbated by the pandemic. Without this service, families would be at significantly higher risk of escalation to specialist mental health services or safeguarding pathways.

- To utilise the ringfenced government funding allocated for this purpose: The council has received confirmed allocations for PNMHPIR totalling £514,000 per year for three years, amounting to £1.54 million. These funds are explicitly intended to deliver enhanced perinatal mental health and Parent Infant support as part of the 2026–29 Best Start Family Hubs & Healthy Babies programme. Cabinet approval is required as expenditure exceeds the £1m threshold.

- To begin timely procurement to ensure continuity of specialist provision from April 2026: Delivery of PNMH services requires a specialist, clinically governed provider and a multidisciplinary partnership model. Procurement must begin promptly to secure a compliant contract, meet governance requirements, and avoid service gaps at transition to the new programme.

Alternative options

- Choosing not to proceed with the Perinatal Mental Health and Parent Infant Relationship (PNMHPIR) investment is not viable, as this service is a mandatory requirement within the national Healthy Babies offer. The Council has been allocated ringfenced funding of £514,000 per year specifically for this purpose and failing to deliver the service would place the authority at risk of noncompliance, potential loss of funding, and withdrawal of essential early intervention support for vulnerable families.

- Delivering the full PNMH-PIR offer solely through in-house provision is also not recommended. The service requires specialist clinical expertise, therapeutic capability, and robust multi-agency pathways that the Council cannot provide internally at the scale required. A reduced or minimal service model would similarly fail to meet national

expectations and undermine the borough's ability to address rising perinatal mental health needs effectively.

- The only feasible and compliant option is to commission a specialist provider to deliver the full PNMHPIR pathway, ensuring clinical governance, high quality interventions, and alignment with the national Best Start Family Hubs standards. This approach allows the Council to use its ringfenced allocation appropriately, meet procurement requirements for programmes exceeding £1 million, and secure the best outcomes for families during the critical perinatal period.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES (S. REDDY)

6.11 Whitechapel Leisure Centre - Redevelopment

DECISION;

1. **APPROVED** a budget set out in Appendix 1 to procure and appoint a design team and all associated professional services and surveys (including internal Project Management) required to progress the designs and prepare and submit a planning application for the redevelopment of the Whitechapel Leisure Centre. This cost will be met from the CIL feasibility and HRA feasibility (2026/27) budgets and will proportionately split 70% Leisure and 30% Housing

2. **COMMENCED** engagement with TFL and any other stakeholders to enable design development.

3. Carry out public consultation with regards the redevelopment proposals.

4. **DELEGATED** authority to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Mayor to proceed to appoint a design team and other professional services as required with appropriate "gateway" approval processes in place at the end of each RIBA design stage (feasibility, concept design and coordinated design).

Reasons for the decision

- The Mayor and Cabinet is recommended to approve budget set out in Appendix 1 to enable the next stage of design development for Whitechapel Leisure centre enabling design development to RIBA stage 3 which will incorporate more detailed survey information derisking project proposals ahead of a planning application.

- Permission to proceed to the next stage of the project development and come back to cabinet once more detailed feasibility in carried out.

Alternative options

Option 1: Do Nothing – Not Viable

- The SLNA evidences a borough-wide undersupply of swimming provision, with a 1,723 sqm water space deficit in 2023, increasing to 1,845 sqm by 2038.
- Over 12,000 swims per week are displaced outside the borough.
- Whitechapel is identified in the SLNA as a priority site for a new 6 lane pool; doing nothing fails to address this strategic gap.
- The existing leisure centre is ageing and below modern standards, requiring major reinvestment.

Option 2: Retain and Refurbish Existing Centre – Not Recommended

- Refurbishment cannot deliver the new 6 lane x 25m pool and learner pool required to meet demand.
- The existing structure cannot accommodate a swimming facility.
- Population growth of 26% by 2038 requires expanded capacity, which refurbishment cannot provide.
- Refurbishment maintains an ageing asset with high lifecycle costs and fails to meet inclusivity, accessibility, and energy-efficiency targets.

Option 3: Remove Housing – Not Recommended

- Tower Hamlets has one of the highest housing needs nationally, including commitments to deliver 4,000 affordable rented homes.
- Whitechapel North and South are strategic growth sites identified in the Local Plan.
- Removing housing conflicts with housing targets and reduces scheme viability.
- Housing co-location supports regeneration and helps fund the leisure components.

Preferred Option: Full Redevelopment with Housing

- Delivers the SLNA's recommended new pool and modern leisure provision.
- Supports growth, health outcomes, affordable housing delivery, and long-term financial sustainability.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR HOUSING & REGENERATION (D. JOYCE)

6.12 Record of Corporate Director Actions 2025/26 Q3

DECISION;

1. Noted the Record of Corporate Directors' Actions set out in Appendix 1.

Reasons for the decision

- The Council's constitution requires that Corporate Director's Actions in respect of contracts over £100,000 must be reported to Cabinet for noting.

- The regular reporting of Corporate Director's Actions should assist in ensuring that Members are able to scrutinise officer decisions.

Alternative options

- The Council is bound by its constitution to report to Cabinet financial decisions taken under Corporate Director's Actions.

- If the Council were to deviate from those requirements, there would need to be a good reason for doing so. It is not considered that there is any such reason, having regard to the need to ensure that Members are kept informed about decisions made under the delegated authority threshold and to ensure that these decisions are in accordance with Financial Regulations.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR RESOURCES (R. ENNIS)

6.13 Budget Monitoring 2025/26 – Quarter 3 Forecast Outturn

DECISION;

1. Noted the Council's quarter 3 revenue and capital forecasts as of 31 December 2025.

2. **APPROVED** in principle, increase in funding substitutions from quarter 2, including NCIL, CIL and s106, subject to the appropriate governance process (£7m).

3. Noted the significant progress made against the 2025/26 savings targets of £30.2m as of 31 December 2025.

4. Noted the quarter 3 General Fund forecast net overspend of £18.6m will be funded from the risk reserve.

5. **APPROVED**, subject to final outturn, the General Fund capital net position comprising net rephasing of (£2.7m) and net overspends of £2.6m, resulting in an overall variance of (£0.1m) against the revised budget as per table 6.

6. **APPROVED**, subject to final outturn, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital net position comprising net rephasing of (£16.7m) and net overspends of £1.8m, resulting in an overall variance of (£14.9m) against the revised budget as per table 7.

REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- The regular, timely and accurate reporting of Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring and progress against savings targets through the year is a key financial control. It makes visible variations to budget to inform decision making and enable the council to take timely mitigating actions.

- It is important that issues driving variations to budget are understood and addressed so that the council remains both within the approved budget envelope and on track to delivering the plans Council budgeted for.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- The council could choose to monitor its budgetary performance against an alternative time frame, but it is considered that the reporting schedule provides the appropriate balance to allow strategic oversight of the budget by Members and to manage the council's exposure to financial risk. More frequent monitoring is undertaken by officers and considered by individual service directors and the council's CMT including approval of management action.

Action by:

CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR RESOURCES (R. ENNIS)

7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Nil items.

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

9. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Not required.

10. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10.1 Chair's Advice of Key Issues or Questions in Relation to Exempt / Confidential Business

Nil items.

10.2 Any Exempt / Confidential Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Nil items.

11. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Nil items.

12. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 8.07 p.m.

Chair, Mayor Lutfur Rahman

Cabinet



Save Our Launderette Petition
Presentation to Tower Hamlets Full Council 17 July 2024
boundary.tra@gmail.com

Our Community Launderette has served residents for more than 30 years. We are recognised as a community asset. Please give us an affordable and long-term lease to secure our next 30 years!

History

The Boundary Estate Community Launderette was opened in 1992 by Tower Hamlets Environment Trust and local residents as a not-for-profit service for residents. The Boundary Estate was the first social housing in the UK. Built in the 1890s, the flats do not have places to wash and dry clothes without creating damp and mould issues.

The launderette serves an area of Tower Hamlets that falls within the 10% most deprived in the country. Local staff and volunteer directors have kept the launderette going for more than 30 years, even throughout the Covid-pandemic, providing an essential service at affordable prices. For those who could not afford washing machines, detergent and high energy costs, they can rely on the launderette and not suffer the health, wellbeing and mental issues associated with hygiene poverty. With the rising costs of living, the importance of our launderette must surely be recognised and protected.

For the old and isolated the Launderette is their only safe form of social interaction with neighbours and staff. The launderette provides stable meaningful employment for four local residents; two of them have been working here for over twenty years. They are like family to residents who interacted first as children and now as regular users themselves.

Surprise repossession by Tower Hamlets Commercial Asset team on 8th Feb 2024

Our beloved Launderette was repossessed by a Bailiff on the morning of 8 February, ordered by the council's Commercial Asset Team without prior notice. The Launderette did not owe any rent. Apparently a Section 25 notice was served but neither the staff nor our volunteer director received it, and no further effort was made to connect. The Commercial Asset Team informed that they wish to increase rent sixfold to Shoreditch market levels not affordable for the Launderette. Many shops on our estate have been lost to pop-up fashion stores catering only to visitors, this is one of the few remaining shops providing a service to residents.

We launched a Save Our Launderette campaign which received more than 2500 petition signatures in two weeks and an outpour of support and appeals to reopen the Launderette. The campaign received widespread national and local press coverage. Our petition continues to grow daily.

Staff and Residents' voice

Shah, a resident with protected characteristics:

I am a disabled person who lives near the laundrette and have been using their services for many years. I do not leave my house for anything apart from going to doctor appointments, shopping, or for the laundry of my clothes. The staff at the laundrette are like family to me and many others, they are always happy to see us and are friendly and very helpful. They are part of our community and help us more with our lives than the services of the laundrette. The unexpected seizure of the laundrette has caused myself and the local community a lot of unnecessary pain, stress & anxiety. I live with pain 24/7 and do not have the means to travel far. I implore you to see it in your heart and think of what this is doing to people like myself, and reopen the laundrette.

Tracey, Launderette staff

For me, it isn't just a job, it is my Launderette Family. My partner died, I had to find work, the people here are like my family.

With the reopening of the Launderette in April 2024, we thank all of you in this council chamber for recognising us as a Community Asset

We are grateful to the outpour of support from the community and interventions by our local Weavers Ward councillors leading to the reopening of the Launderette in April. This was warmly welcomed by everyone, including our Mayor and several councillors in this chamber.

Where are we now?

We are in progress meetings with the Corporate Director and his team and hope that they will work with us to co-produce a secure long-term future for our Community Launderette. Helping to facilitate this project are UCL academics and several like-minded social enterprises. The council can utilise our Launderette as a case study to help shape policies to protect local amenities against the ill-effects of gentrification.

What we need from you?

Support the transfer of the Launderette premises from the commercial asset portfolio to the portfolio of community assets. We have served the local community for 30 years, be part of this legacy to contribute to the next 30 years in serving the residents of Tower Hamlets.

Working together to preserve the Launderette as a Community Asset

Mr Mayor Rahman on Twitter

> *Great news that Boundary Estate Community Launderette reopened this week…Meanwhile, we are working on a long-term solution to ensure this valuable community asset can stay open.*

Weavers Ward Cllr Kabir Ahmad on Twitter

> *We will keep listening and keep working to ensure this community asset is preserved*

Weavers Ward Cllr Asma Islam at the Boundary TRA meeting

> *The premises status needs to be changed from a commercial asset to a community asset.*

Cllr Kamrul Hussain on Twitter

> *As a resident of Weaver's, I know the importance of this valuable community asset. I am confident we will be able to find a solution*

to save this Asset

Cllr Abu Chowdhury on Twitter

Great to see progress on finding a long term fix so the people of Boundary Estate can keep this great community project

Cllr Iqbal Hossain on Twitter

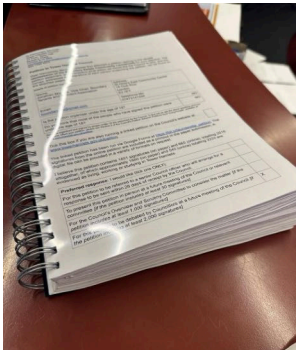
Wonderful News!

Sian Berry, MP

I am really shocked at this, the council is not making a rational decision: it is saving the council repairs. The different departments need to speak to each other. The commercial arm is doing this to increase revenue but the £10,000 gained does not justify the harm. They need to speak to the repairs department, listen to the residents and get a real idea of the money they are saving by not throwing out this vital community service. 1 in 13 in poorer places do not have access to washing machines. It is an error not to consult the residents and the TRA, it is not the right way to treat people trying to provide a service.

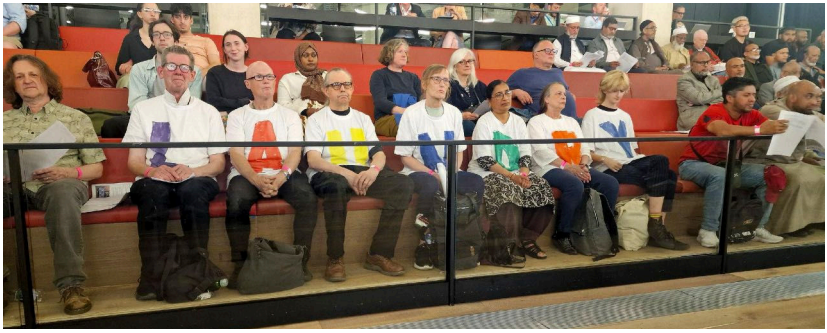
Quite a few councils put in exceptions (in their planning process) to protect their launderettes …I noticed Tower Hamlets don't seem to have done so.






March 6 2024 - petition handed to Cllr Kabir Ahmed





July 17 2024 - Presenting and debate at a meeting of the Full Council

[link] Transcription and video of the debate

Housing & Regeneration

Jonathan Moberly
Vice Chair
Boundary Tenants and Resident Association
St Hilda's East Community Centre
18 Club Row, London E2 7EY

Via email

16 September 2024

Dear Jonathan

I refer to the Petition in respect of the Launderette, which was presented to the Council meeting on Wednesday 17 July 2024. Council resolved that the petition be referred to the Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration, for a written response.

The Launderette organisation has been issued with an interim agreement to allow the launderette to reopen whilst options for a longer-term arrangement are worked through.

A meeting has taken place with the Launderette to discuss the steps that would need to be taken for the council to put longer-term arrangements in place, based on the undersigned petition. The discussions going forward will included the community portfolio aspects mentioned in points two and three of the petition. These aspects are being explored by officers, working with the launderette group to find a solution to the longer-term arrangement for the future sustainability of the Launderette as part of the community cohesion.

Further meetings will be arranged to progress with the launderette group.

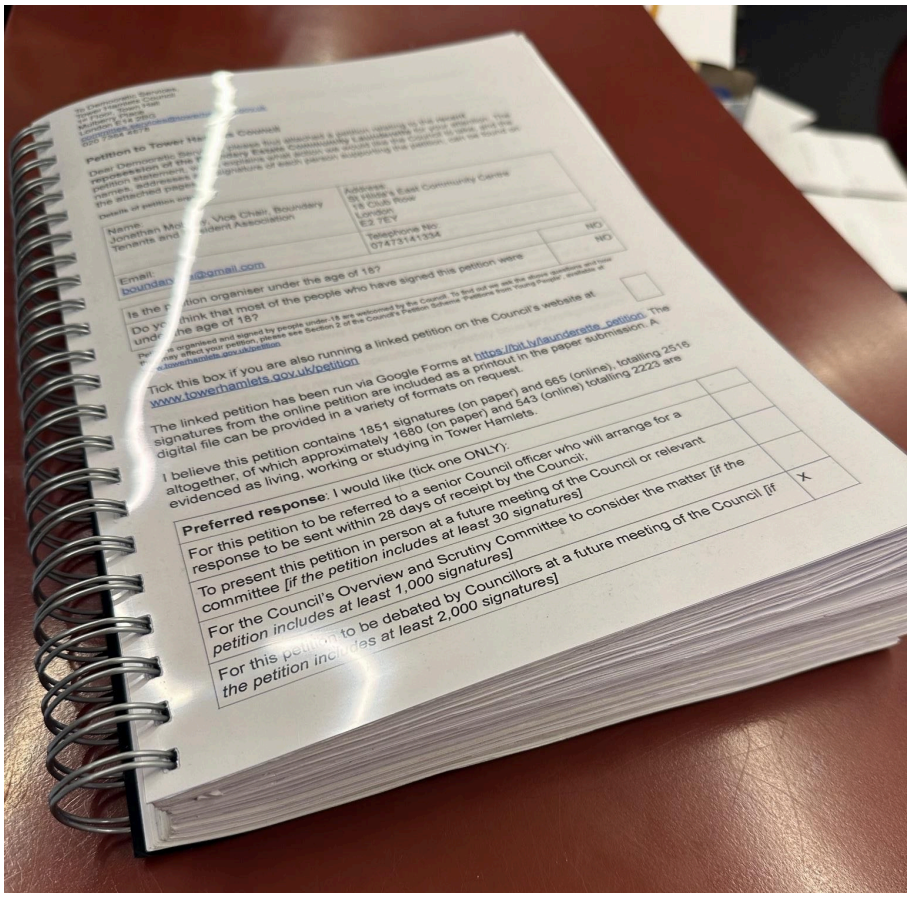
Kind regards



Paul Patterson
Interim Corporate Director, Housing & Regeneration
paul.patterson@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Tower Hamlets Council
Tower Hamlets Town Hall
160 Whitechapel Road
London
E1 1BJ

Boundary Estate Community Launderette
Community Response



Alongside the 2500-signature petition, the campaign has received over three hundred messages of support sent as emails, sms, WhatsApp and comments since the Launderette was repossessed by Tower Hamelts Council on 9 February 2024.

WhatsApp messages

[Ken]

> Dreadful news! I use the launderette for all my laundry, at 82 it takes a load of me. I urge the council to reconsider

[Shah]

> Dear Sir/ Madam,
>
> I hope my WA message reaches the right people who need to read it.
>
> I am a disabled person who lives near the laundrette, and have been using their services for many years now.

I do not leave my house for anything apart from going to Dr appointments, shopping, or laundry of my clothes. The staff at the laundrette are like family to me & many more in our community, they are always happy to see us and are friendly & very helpful. They are also part of our community and help us more with our lives then the services of the laundrette.

The unexpected seizure of the laundrette has caused myself and the local community a lot of unnecessary pain, stress & anxiety. I am someone who lives with pain 24/7. I do not have the means to travel far, nor can I do so on foot because of my disability. So there for I implore you to see it in your heart and think of what this is doing to people like myself, and reopen the laundrette...

Shah

Thank you.

[Marcia]
Turned up as usual to do our weekly washing on Monday. Absolutely devastated to read your notice, not only for the impact on us but your staff and the local community. You are and have been a vital service to us. We have a business in the area since 1996 and also bring our home washing. We live on a boat therefore impossible to wash/dry sheets & towels regularly. As you served the community your prices have been affordable. Your staff are so kind and helpful. Please do pass on our thoughts and thanks to them for their help over the last 20 -30 years. Very stressful for them. Hope you are able to resolve. We don't need another coffee shop/fancy clothes shop we need you! Please keep us updated. Marcia & Robert (White wash man/woman).

[Cluadius] Love the launderette - especially for large washes and those of us who don't have driers in the flat! And the ladies are super nice. Would be a real shame to see it disappear, after useful places like corner shops have already gone.

[Afroza] Yes would be a shame to see it go. So handy having it on our doorstep rather than lugging washing down to bethnal green road side. It would be a big loss to many people round here

[Harriet] Yes we use it regularly! Would be very sad to see it go

[Marcus] I rely on the launderette for all my drying

[Charlene] Same, rely on laundrette as do not have a dryer

[Helen] Yes I find it very useful for drying as I don't have a dryer I also feel it benefits other residents who need it. I am happy to band together and find a solution but the director needs to reply to her emails it doesn't help when there is no communication

[Kate] I use it for large stuff. Wouldn't fancy carting that all the way to BG rd. would be sad to see it go

[Georgetta] I use it every few months for duvets, pillows, mattress covers. At one stage, the machine was broken and couldn't take duvets so I went to Pitfield st - that one is now closed. It'll be a real shame to see this one go, it's an asset to the community. Happy to help write letters etc

[Rukshana] I use it for my drying. No space in my flat. I grew up here and remember it being here since I was a kid. It would be a great loss to the community. Such a shame how all the local shops and businesses are disappearing. Sad times.

[Jean] The launderette was a resident led project set up in 1992. It has been run by volunteer directors since then.... 31 years. It was set up because there are no drying facilities in the flats. Drying at home causes damp and mould. Families needed larger machines to get their washing done. For lots of reasons it was a good idea....

[Jake] Hi - I've just walked past the laundrette and the notice that it has been repossessed. I live in Clifton House and wanted to see if I could help - I don't know if you've received formal legal advice yet, but I'm halfway through my solicitors exams this year so if we needed any help in that regard I'd be more than willing to give it a go. To be clear I'm not qualified yet and property is not my specialty, but I know how important the laundrette is to the community so I thought I'd just let someone know! Best wishes, Jake

Instagram

It was at the launderette in St Paul's Rd c.1967 that I discovered what a community is ... folding sheets with a dear wise older lady who knew what community meant. Long live community launderettes

Emails

[Barbara]

The launderette is very important in the economy of my household, I have only one day available for laundry and other big house chores and it allows me to do all my washing and put things away before getting ready for an intense working week.

More importantly, it helps us not to have washing hanging around the flat, which unfortunately is prone to damp and mould. In winter especially it takes quite some time to get dry as we are away at work and don't have the heating on.

The launderette is also a community space where you can have a chat with the volunteers, support them by buying secondhand books and so on. Community spaces are rare, they may not be profitable in pure bank language but they are invaluable.

I hope it is possible to reconsider this decision, and I'll be happy to help.

[David]

Hi, I'd like to help get the laundry reopened. THANK YOU

[Gail]

This unilateral out of the blue closure by bailiffs speaks volumes about what the council thinks about local residents, local businesses, the community and vulnerable people Tower Hamlets Council does not care! This is destructive damaging behaviour towards a local business and whole community - shame on Tower Hamlets Council!

Closing the Boundary Estate Community Launderette without warning leaves many local people without facilities to wash their clothes - the council has leJ vulnerable people without means to keep clean - especially older and poorer people.

During the cost of living crisis more than ever residents need to access shared community facilities if they are not able to afford their own machine and maintenance the council should be suppor1ng not destroying this facility.

It is environmentally sound to choose to use the community launderette, rather than everyone having separate facilities - the council should support good environmental op1ons.

For many people the launderette is essential for larger items such as duvets, especially people with young children or allergies, who need to wash pillows/duvets.

The launderette is vital when your home washing machine breaks down - why is the council making life harder?

The launderette is a centre for community - friendly, welcoming as well as practical - the council should be supporting community but they are destroying it.

Local people depend on the launderele for jobs - how many jobs have just been lost due to the council's actions?

The launderele has provided decades of essential washing and drying facilities to the local community - it is in constant use and much needed by local people.

Destroying this shared facility isolates us from each other evermore.

If the council carries on like this every business in Calvert avenue that has long standing roots and relationship with the community, that has any individuality, will be gone - for a row of faceless transitory 'anywhere' shops that mean nothing to the community - but it's all about the money for Tower Hamlets Council isn't it, and lip service to community.

[Gary]

Hello, I live in Tower Hamlets in Walker House, on the corner of Boundary Street and Calvert Avenue.

I just learned the Laundrette on Calvert Avenue has been closed. This is a tremendous disappointment, as its been a resource I've depended on all the years I've lived here. I moved in in 2015.

I rely on the Laundrette for washing and drying my clothes, and bedding. I have no other way to do that inside my flat. And the nearest Laundrette is too far away for me to get to.

I would plead the Tower Hamlets council to reinstate the Laundrette lease. Both for me, and for the rest of the community which relies on it.

Thank you in advance for your urgent help in this important community matter.

[Georgette]

Responding to say happy to lend a hand.

Am an irregular user of the launderette but keen to see it remain open for those in the community who rely on it more. Kind regards

[Jay]

Dear BE Community Launderette I use the launderette since I have moved for a year now and I am affected by the closure. I would like to show my support if the Council can resume from closure. How can we help?

[Kashim]

Hi I was very concerned and upset to find out that Boundary Launderette was suddenly closed, without notice, by Tower Hamlets Council on Friday 9th.

I have been using this launderette since 1992, and it has been a community hub providing a service beyond just a laundry in terms of the health and wellbeing ever since.

I am keen to support any campaign to re open the Boundary Estate Launderette.

[Jodie]

So sad! Happy to help somehow

[Marcus]

Please save the launderette. I rely on it every week as I have not laundry facilities , please re-open!!!

[Myk]

Hi I saw the notice on the door. I'd been talking to some of the staff and trying to get my head round the situation, and I'd like to be involved in any attempt to resolve this issue and get the launderette running again.

[Sadia]

This is so upsetting to hear. I can’t believe this.

My family and I have been using the laundrette since 2010!

Living in a flat with a large family, it has been important to me to use the laundrette, mainly for drying clothes. It’s easily accessible to to me, as I can run errands during school and working from home hours.

It will be such a shame to see it closed, especially when we need it for our weekly usage and also the community aspect. Have met so many lovely people from the community and have made lasting friendships.

Please update me on this matter

[Sep]

Hello I run community-based hair salon in Shoreditch & in Cleeve work shops we have 16 units we all use the laundrette on Calvert Avenue for our businesses, it's crucial for us to have something close by .

not to have something so important for our businesses means it will affect our business not in a pleasant way as it complies with health and safety & walking distance & cost effective & environmentally friendly as it's close by .

[Will]

Just saw the sign on the laundrette - keen to know what can be done.

[Melanie]

Hi
I saw the closure notice on the laundrette today, we use it a lot and would be both affected by the closure and sad to see it go. Do let us know how we could help save it.

[Oksana]

Good afternoon,

I am writing on account of the closing of the Community Laundrette at 28 Calvert Ave, London E2 7JP. I was very upset to hear the news, and I'm writing to you in hope that the decision may be revised. I just recently have become a customer of the Laundrette, and I believe it is an invaluable and important place for local community as well as for a lot of people from all over London that come to Arnold Circus. I believe that the place cannot be replaced, and hope for my voices to be heard, as well as the voices of many other people that care for the Laundrette. Thank you for your time and consideration.

[Alex]

Hello! What can I do to help, I am extremely sad to see the laundrette closed.

[Maria]

Hello I'm a barrister
I just saw your Instagram post and wondered if you managed to get this sorted out?

[Mica]

Do let me know how I can take action. I live on the street in Cleeve House.

e-Petition comments

	Do you wish to leave a comment?
Sharron	We need more community facilities not clossing them with out warning or consultation. Please keep this service going.
Charlie	The Boundary Estate Community Laundrette has often been a lifeline for us. It is the heart of the community, and must be saved
Loucas	Please save our community laundrette.
Paul	Please save our community laundrette
Susanna	This is a vital part of the community and it’s outrageous that you have closed it. The council should be protecting communities not taking them apart.
Pam	I think it would be a great loss to all the residents if the launderette were closed.
Miss	I have been using this laundry service since it opened. It is a lifeline to me as I do not own a washing machine and with the cost of living crisis I will not have the funds to purchase one anytime soon. This laundrette is apart of the fabric of this community and it would be a travesty if it was to close. Its also no way to treat the dedicated staff that run the service.
Subera	The Laundrette is a lifeline for many of us that live in Arnold Circus, especially the fact that we do not have any balconies to dry our clothes. The condensation that builds up during drying clothes also contributes to mould in the flats. I am a regular user of the community Laundrette and have been for the past 12 years and very disappointed with the recent closure.
Shafayet	We have had mould in our flat and one of the ways to tackle the issue was to dry the clothes outside in the community Laundrette. I am very disappointed to see the closure of the Laundrette and would like these to be reinstated as soon as possible. we have been using this for many years, it is particularly important for families with young children and elderly people! Been back our community Laundrette!
Motosir	Very disappointed in what the council has done without any warning. You should be ashamed of yourself. Where do you expect the locals to go now???
tessa	Please don't shut the laundrette
eoin	This is an indispensable asset to the community- the laundrette is a local business providing a service to local people and local businesses and to repossess the building with no prior warning is shameful and a discredit to the Tower Hamlets council.
Eddie	Please bring back our laundromat !!
Oksana	Due to my work, I spend a lot of time in the Tower Hamlets area, and I'm a user of the Laundrette and also believe it plays an important role in the live of the local community.
Alex	Please reopen the laundrette!

Genevieve	I live 2 mins away from the laundrette and have relied on it several times when my flat's washing machine was broken or needed maintenance. I know a few ppl in my building also used it over the years. The laundrette is relied on by a wider residential community in Hackney, aside from Tower Hamlets. In the area, it is the best situated laundrette with affordable prices for the local community, including residents of more humble means. Other laundrettes are far more expensive (unaffordable for local residents) or very far away. Their staff/services are also poor in comparison with Boundary Laundrette - several incidents of rudeness and inappropriate behaviour from their staff have been reported over the years at those other businesses, who all have male-only staff. Please allow the laundrette to re-open for our community. We really love that place and rely on it, not only for convenience, but also for the safety of women and young people who use it.
Alexander	The launderette is a valuable community asset which it would be a tragedy to loose.
Grace	As a resident of Tower Hamlets and council tax payer for almost 7 years, I consider supporting essential services like the launderette to be fundamental to the council's role. Having accessible washing and drying facilities is critical to residents' wellbeing (hygiene and health) and ability to avoid humidity and mold issues in their flats (which it is in the council's interests to maintain). If the launderette is lost, this will be an abject failure of the TH council. I spent several years living on Calvert Avenue and have myself seen the use the community makes of this vital asset. It would be extremely difficult and expensive to open an equivalent facility - why is the council obstructing the provision of a service it should be doing its utmost to preserve?
David	The launderette is a vital local resource.
Ryan	This place is great for our community and as a resident tax payer I would love to see it continue
Kate	My home washing machine can't handle large things like duvets and curtains - like many others I rely on our dwindling number of launderettes. The council closed the one on my estate many years ago - please don't make the same short-sighted mistake with this community resource!
Stephanie	The launderette is extremely valuable to the community and if it remains closed it will affect a large group of people in many and varied ways. It's important that this service remains available for the social, physical health and mental health value it brings to its residents and wider community.
Lucy	Community resources, such as the launderette, are vital to support the wellbeing of local residents.
Carole	I know many people who live on the Boundary Estate, and who are devastated at the loss of this vital community service. There are no other laundrettes nearby and no provision for busy parents & working people to do their laundry. This sudden closure is having a terrible effect on the local community, and its health. It was completely unnecessary to have closed it with no prior discussion.
Charlotte	I have used the launderette at various times even though I don't live on the boundary. It offers a really important service to local people and is exactly the sort of thing the council should be building up not undermining.
Katrina	Please save such a valuable wonderful essential part of our community!! We need it!!
Nicholas	The laundrette is an essential community service, not extraneous, and should not be treated as discretionary by the council

Jodie	I rely on this laundrette to dry all linen and towels. We live in a very small flat with no space to hang wet washing. We need this community resource...it is essential to daily living.
Hussina	Save the community laundrette!
Harriette	Terrible decision. Gentrification continues
Poh	My flat is small and damp and I use the launderette for my clothes. It is an important amenity for residents like myself. It is also a nice place to meet other residents. Pls do not close our launderette.
P	I've used this launderette for years and as a pensioner have always appreciated it's low cost and community spirit
Katharine	The laundrette is part of our community, and serves a real need.
Caitlin	We use the laundrette in our home every week and there is no available alternative for us! In the interests of the health of residents please reconsider.
Astrid	I am a resident of the Boundary Estate. The launderette is central to the Boundary Estate community, it is the anchor that makes the area feel like a community. I first used the launderette almost 15 years ago, we don't have a dryer at home nor adequate space to dry clothes. Having the launderette there gives a sense of security that goes beyond its essential functions, it is a place to feel connected as well as provide absolutely vital services. The reasons behind why the launderette was originally established are more relevant than ever when the country is facing a cost of living crisis, a mental health crisis and a loneliness epidemic. I am shocked that the council would try to close such an essential and much loved community asset.
Harun	I shared my.comments in an email before.
Mohammed	Save the launderette
Sam	The laundrette is a significant part of our community which provides not just a service but an important connection between residents of the estate.
Sabina	It would be terrible for the community if the launderette closed down. To close it would be a permanent stain on the record of Tower Hamlets Council.
Claire	Save the laundry
Callum	I love the launderette its is such a good community vibe and the staff are so nice.
Jashim	I have been a regular user of the Laundrette previously and support it wholeheartedly to resume its services to the community.
Muhammad	Keep your hands off the laundrette
Tasnim	My father used to work in this laundrette for as long as I could remember, he recently retired and I also knew of his colleagues. I hope the laundrette can be saved.
Abdul	Don't close

Rae	Since living in the area, 2 years ago, I have been using the laundrette every week. I don’t own a washing machine and can’t afford to get one in due to plumbing problems which is beyond my control. I’ve heavily relied on the boundary laundrette’s service as it provides an amazing service for a very reasonable price that I cannot find anywhere near by. I have back problems and having this so close by to my home has been a life saver. Not only this but the warm, friendly staff provides a sense of community to the area and I look forward to visiting the laundrette everytime. I’ve met neighbours and made friends there. It would be a huge loss to the community for so many reasons and not having the laundrette near by will bring great sadness and will make my life alot harder.
Katy	Always been to his launderette six years.
Giulia	Due to the lack of drying facilities in apartments this is massively important so that there is no deterioration in properties and health due to damp and humidity.
Ruth	I’ve used and appreciated this neighbourhood asset for many years & really appreciate all the lovely people who run it please do not close it !
shahina	I have four children and always have big washes and no space to dry clothes. The laundrette has been a life saver for me. I will be in a struggle if the laundrette closes.
S	This is a community launderette more than an enterprise as essential part and service for all of us who lives here.
Mofizur	Why is the launderette closing down?
Aimee	It's vital that these community resources are kept in place. The launderette must be saved.
Melanie	The laundrette is a vital resource for the many who can't do laundry in their own homes, and for local businesses like ours who also use it. We've been here for 20 years and one by one the useful local shops have closed. We can't lose the laundrette as well.
orestis	I’ve lived in the boundary estate for 8 years now. I now have two children and I use the laundrette at least twice a week mostly for drying as there’s not enough space to dry clothes indoors in the estate. It would be a great loss of it’s gone and we already feel the impact of it’s absence.
Marcus	It makes no sense that the launderette be closed when most of the residents within the boundary rely on the launderette for all our flashing and drying needs. It makes absolutely no sense. I use it twice a week. Please reopen asap
S	As stated above , if we dry clothes indoors we start getting black mould in the property , and suffer health problems, like sinus infections, severe migraines,coughs and asthma problems , makes my husbands sleep apnea worse, closure of the laundrette is totally deplorable , will effect tenants/ children’s health in this area. My children have come done with severe coughs cause of mould issues missing out school for many days.
Diana	This launderette is a vital local service.
Solomon	The launderette is essential, we can always dry our washing indoors, please please please, do not lose it. It is a community gem.
Charlotte	We are loosing too many places for people to meet without buying beer or coffee. Not everyone can afford to buy these luxuries
Linda	Horrified

Patrick	As someone that has worked nearby for over 20 years, I know what a crucial hub to the community the Laundrette is, It also provides a service acting as a laundrette. People without washing machines and local businesses rely on this facility as its the only one around. At a time when shops are doing badly I can't think of a better use of the site than the current one. There have been 4 grocer/shop closures in the area over the last 10 years so the laundrette is the only amenity left that is not for young professionals.
Rukshana	I depend on the laundry to dry my clothes. I don’t have a balcony or any outdoor drying space so for me the laundrette provides an essential service. That aside, I was born and raised on the Boundary Estate and the Laundrette has been a part of the community for as long as I can remember. I understand successive governments have stripped funding to local governments to a point where councils are having to innovate and look at different ways to cover the costs of running their Borough but cutting back on on a service at the heart of the community is not the way.
Mohammed	I grew up in the neighbourhood and would be such a shame to see this place go
Matt	The council’s decision to effectively evict the launderette without notice demonstrates a flagrant disregard for the livelihoods of the dedicated staff who work there, the amenity and wellbeing of all Boundary residents, and the history, character and community of the estate. This is both an overreach in terms of means and a strategic oversight that fails to recognise the community value of the launderette.
Diana	The laundrette is the heart of our community . we have no outside garden to dry our clothes , nor can we afford to turn the heating on to dry . Please reopen the laundrette.
Saif	I love the lauderette. Kwep it for local people. I like talking to people there.
Ian	I se the launderette regularly - it’s such a good place and my laundry will become much more difficult. Please bring it back.
Ali	This is an essential service for the community. This act by the council is criminal. Just back off Tower Hamlets!!!
Hasina	We use this laundry at all the time and very sad to see it go. Please reopen as soon as possible.
Fatima	I’m very sad to see the laundry close. We were regular users and we would like this to be open as soon as possible. This is not fair.
Jane	Stop closing service that serve the community
Paula	Work near by & know how important this facility is for the Boundary tenants and residents
Anton	My young family and I have used the launderette to dry clothes, which is indispensable given there's no room for a dryer in the small flats, and given the level of damp and mould in the old 1899-built houses on the Boundary Estate. We have also used it in emergencies, to wash large items when my son had been sick etc. It is an indispensable local resource and mainstay, and I am appalled at the way its owners and staff have been treated by Tower Hamlets.
Katie	Bring back the launderette!!!!
Jeremy	This launderette is a place for homeless people to use and people that are are sofa surfing, the hidden homeless in temporary accommodation and for people who are housed and are on low incomes and cannot afford a washing machine.

Tom	St Mungos Navigators
Andrea	Save this much needed space
Helen	This launderette is essential for the people living on the Boundary Estate as the flats are very prone to damp so they need somewhere to wash and , importantly, dry their clothes. Is the flat get damp and mould results, it is a health hazard. There are many children living in the flats.
Rowan	Our charity has done our laundry here for years, it's an important community service run by lovely people.
Manu	Disappearing community venues devalue the neighbourhood , diversity suffers
PJ	I work for St Mungos as an outreach worker for the homeless and rough sleeping community. This is a viral lifeline for this community especially
Maxine	This laundrette is very important to me and many of my neighbours.
Lidia	The laundry is an important part of our community - don’t destroy our community
Michael	Community laundries are essential and I found them perfect in London Borough of Hackney when living in poor conditions and on a low income as couldn't afford a home washing machine.With the current cost of living demanding a six fold rise in rent is ridiculous.Another community service lost - how sad.
Ed	We are regular users of the launderette and were very saddened to see its sudden closure. It is a great community asset and we are concerned for the financial welfare of its staff.
Sid	It’s ridiculous why that would close ?
Emma	Closing community spaces such as these is not progressive and has huge effects on all communities.
Serdzhan	One of the new businesses around and we were super happy with our community laundrette! Really sad with what is happening and we need them back and running again!
Sayeed	This laundrette is part of our community. We would not be able to function without it! Especially in winter where we can dry our clothes
Dominic	Lovely people there and it serves the community very well. Keep it !!
Dominique	Closing social infrastructures in the present economic context is as cruel as it is unnecessary, solves nothing and makes TH unpopular
Kathryn	An excellent service for local people
Shumi	Appalled the council have closed down the launderette! Iv already got damp and mould issues in the flat and now it will only get worse having to dry my laundry indoors!!!
Shazia	This laundrette is essential to the community and to local residents. Please do not destabilise the community by throwing out businesses such as this.
Kim	Shouldn't be closed. Vital facility for licals
Margaret	This is a useful local amenity much used and valued by the residents. Residents and the Community deserves better treatment from THC to allow them to keep their Launderette service. Not to be hijacked and given notice without discussion or warnings.
georgina	a lot of the communitie use this launderette. some people have no washing machine ect

michelle	LEAVE THE LAUNDRY OPEN & STOP BEING GREEDY B@574RDS! IT'S SERVED THE LOCAL COMMUNITY FIR YEARS! HANDS OFF!!😡
Gary	This is a tremendous disappointment the Laundrette was closed, it's been a resource Ive depended on all the years I've lived here. I moved in in 2015. I live upstairs from it, and rely on the Laundrette to for washing and drying my clothes, and bedding. I have no other way to do that inside my flat. And the nearest Laundrette is too far away for me to get to. I would plead the Tower Hamlets council to reinstate the Laundrette lease. Both for me, and for the rest of the community which relies on it. Thank you in advance for your urgent help in this important community matter.
Jim	Please keep the laundrette open, it's a community hub and always busy
Andrew	This is a vital local community service. I cannot comprehend the justification for this, other than raising more money for the council. The holistic case cannot make any sense
Minaxiben	Very friendly community and staff, including myself and customers - saving this launderette is very important
Manisha	Please save the laundrette! There is a huge sense of community that is lost without it. I personally use the laundrette multiple times a week as i have no space to dry and condensation is a major issue in the winter months.
Trinesh	It's a nice community atmosphere, staff are very helpful and this launderette is needed for the community. Have been multiple times and is a very welcoming atmosphere. This launderette provides a lot of jobs to people making very positive contributions. This launderette needs to be saved and reopened. Thanks
Richard	Why has this act been done without any consultation? Will L.B.T.H provide washing machines free of charge to the customers affected? Why is L.B.T.H acting in such a cavalier manner? So much for Aspire claiming that the council that they run is a listening one.
Charlene	The boundary estate is not designed to dry laundry - the buildings are drafts and mouldy already and trying to dry laundry just isn't practical. Residents rely and require the community laundrette.
Helen	It would negatively impact the tennants
Tyrone	This is a Lovely launderette was open for people by the people
June	Very sad to see a wonderful laundrette close like this been a pleasure to have it for so long and to see staff have no job, I have been using laundrette for 20 years I don't think it should just close like this everybody knew one another very friendly atmosphere I lived here for 30 years not nice to see this it is part of the community.
Abdirahim	This is a gross injustice.
Amin	Solidarity
Mahida	We need this laundrette it has saved many of us as our flats don't have balcony's to dry our clothes!!!!

Ayesha	The laundrette is a real asset to this community as many families don't have a private garden to dry their clothes. When drying indoors, it leads to the growth of mould, which can become a serious hazard for families, particularly those with young children. The laundrette have always provided access to the drying machines for vulnerable families. Please don't shut it down.
Adrian	Let's save the Launderette!
Nicolette	The launderette also serves many of us in Shoreditch.
Angelika	Support g the community
M	People need services like these
Sabreen	The community laundrette has belonged to the community for and a very long time and it needs to stay that way.
Eve	The laundrette is a great spot for the community the staff are friendly and helpful and without the laundrette there it's far to take your washing anywhere else
Robert	Disgraceful behaviour by a disgraceful Tower Hamlets administration
Yasser	I have lived here for 26 years. The only other launderette on Wellington Row closed over a decade ago. This is a community facility
Barnaby	This place is truly a great place
Gabrielle	The Boundary Estate Community Launderette is an incredibly important part of the residential community contributing to the comfort and wellbeing of residents alongside being a community hub for over 30 years. The tactics taken by the local council are unnecessarily aggressive. Please listen to the needs of the local community to find a way forward that embraces and respects the Boundary Estates and all those who live and work here.
Dan	I went to the launderette to find out closed. Sad.
Peter	It's real asset and essential service for the community
Anton	Used the laundry many times over the years. An invaluable service to the community
Edel	I wish for this matter to favour the tenant and residents in need of this historic and important community launderette.
Mohamed	Please allow this launderette to remain open for the community's sake
Nazir	This launderette is extremely important for all members of the community, I wish to see it open once again
Sinead	Community asset.
Subi	The Boundary Estate Launderette is an important asset and community resource it's closure will be devastating.
Steve	Our launderette is a good hub and community for everybody especially the OAP and is a big help having the Launderette especially with our cost of living
Goeun	These local amenities are crucial to the community and we need to do everything to protect them.
Ted	This is terrible from the council and common sense should prevail. This is a much loved community asset.
Myrtille	You would expect such action from rogue landlord not a council. Shameful behaviour
Anna	Save this vital community laundrette

Angela	This is an outrageous situation, I was shocked to hear of it, as a long-term resident
Ashraful	This is a much needed community resource that the locals have been using last few decades. It must stay open to serve that purpose.
Sultana	The local community have been using this community resource and it is very much needed.
Lutfun	I am over 70 and me and my friends use this laundrette service to dry all my bedding. Taking this away will severely affect me and the elderly in this area.
Mohammad	Please keep this community resource open for the locals. It is much used and its absence will cause a lot of inconvenience.
Clem	Must protect historical charm and local community.
Jonah	To whoever holds the power to save the launderette, I'd just say this: it feels good to be considerate of others.
Bryn	We have family living in This area and active users of this facility. It is fundamental to the local community that this decision is reconsidered and perhaps greater emphasis given to its value to local residents beyond the income that the council wishes to generate.
Michael	This important and much loved community space must be protected.
Abdul	The launderette is essential for the estate as most of the residents need it. It needs to be reopened asap.
Gail	This is another example of Tower Hamlets Council failing the community it purports to value in their sadly all too common pursuit of funds for dodgy 'projects' which have no benefit to the community. This decision should be reversed immediately.
C	This laundrette is crucial to those living in the boundary estate and further. It is heavily used and would be a huge loss to this area.
Lydia	This is an essential utility in the community. Myself and my family depend on it.
Don	Disgraceful behaviour - hopefully quickly rectified.
Jacqueline	My son and his family live in Calvert Avenue and we've seen every time we visit what a vital resource the Launderette is for the community. Facilities like this are just as important as community centres and this will be a huge loss !
Michael	I grew up on an estate in Islington and we didn't have a washing machine so know how important this launderette must be
Anna	This is an entirely cynical and craven closure of a vital and vibrant community service and hub! Completely unjustifiable!
Leila	The launderette is a vital local amenity and community hub
Noriko	This laundrette is a vital place for Boundary Estates residents. If the council concerns its residents's health and wellbeing, they cannot act like this. Please re-consider what you are doing and re open the place for people who are really in need.
Louise	Sad to see the sudden closure of an essential community service.
Rebecca	I teach adult Esol. Some of my students have very damp homes and we encourage them not to keep wet clothes in their homes. Laundrettes are an issue of health and safety as well as providing relief from isolation and loneliness.
Eldar	Please keep the laundrette working

Shirin	Listen to residents to give them what they need!
Sangeeta	Please save Tower Hamlets!!
Louise	Having done volunteer work in the area, I have heard what a vital community resource the launderette is and urge the council to immediately reinstate a lease so that it may reopen.
Sarah	Please re-open the laundrette & reduce the rent
Tim	It’s strange that communication has broken down between the council and the laundrette - but obviously the rent increase should be proportionate and fair whilst recognising the value of community resources such as this.
Sarah	I have good friends living in the Boundary Estate and they consider this laundrette a vital part of their community- as well as providing a vital laundry service. I completely agree, every small town has a laundrette, why take this away to create mould issues for the sake of a few more £ in rent from shops that won’t maintain a long lease.
David	I was appalled at this absurd decision. People need laundrettes, not only to wash, but also to dry their clothes, to save their flats from damp. Alright, Officers didn't think their actions through. But the worst decision is to blunder on when practicalities have been indicated. Wiser council is to change your minds in the light of new information. Do the right thing
Helene	Why remove an essential facility for the well-being of the residents who already struggle with the cost of living crisis? This does not make any sense from a human, financial and long term plan point of view.
John	This is madness and so short sighted. It will force many people who are already living close to poverty into drying clothes in their often overcrowded flats. Mould is already a national disgrace in our social housing and this decision will only lead to more mould, lung disease, greater strain on the health service and more premature deaths. Shame on you Lutfur Rahman.
Holly	My family owned a launderette in a small town, I feel like I fully understand how important it can be to local residents. I hope there is a resolution soon!
D	Please keep this service and charge community rent
Syma	I have studied, worked and lived in Tower Hamlets. I found out about this petition through Save Brick Lane
Sheikh	Please don't close this very important community hub and launderette.
Tina	Set up by the community for the community. Such initiatives should be applauded, supported and flourish. Stop ransacking cultures and sterilising London.
Gillie	I feel the laundrette serves an important purpose inthe community as a practical Help but even more maybe as a social centre. Loneliness causes great unhappiness esp Among the elderly
Leigh	Leave this place OPEN
Nirad	Keep community spaces open.
Kate	This is an important community asset and needs to be retained
Claire	Please keep the laundrette open
Sara	this is an important community asset

Martin	I have had the great pleasure to meet and chat with various people who work in the launderette for the over 30 years I have lived on Columbia Rd. Every time my washing machine breaks down or I'm waiting for a new one, I have used Boundary estate launderette, and when I have no time the service wash is brilliant. This is just a most special place for so many people.
Paul	I agree fully on the mould and damp iasue. Poor insulation of our homes and single glazing is terrible for drying laundry. Hence why we need this local facility. Don't forget the old laundrette on montclare Street. Times have changed, but it shows how this estate always needed them.
Joynul	It's in the councils best Interest to reopen the launderette, they say residents come first but in this case looks like their pockets do!
Katherine	I have been a leasehold resident for the past 13 years and have cherished this launderette. The closing of the Boundary Launderette is a very poor decision on behalf of the council - the economic and social benefits the facility brings are multiple. This will put a strain on the NHS and other public services, as well as making the neighbourhood a little more soulless. I would urge the council to reconsider.
Clare	I agree that the Lauderette is important to people's health and wellbeing, and to the fabric of the Boundary Estate dwellings (Council owned). The Coucil's handling of the situation seems heavy handed.
Jess	This is an important part of the local community and vital for vulnerable members of the community
Maggie	We use the launderette and don't want it to close. It's a lovely place and serves the community. Think of all the damp and mould issues Tower Hamlets Council will cause / make worse in the surrounding flats and houses if it closes.
Chris	I have been using the launderette for years. Why are Tower Hamlets Council closing such a useful and historic local service!
Kay	Stop closing important and cultural venues in the community especially by nefarious and cowardly means
Nadiya	Please don't close it!! I grew up in the area in the 80s and it has been our lifesaving local launderette to date!
Liya	Our community launderette, vital to our neighborhood, has been closed by the council without warning. This hurts us all. It's more than just a place to wash clothes; it's where friendships are made. We need it back.
Sabrina	The Community Launderette is a rare gem for people living nearby, as it is useful, affordable, and brings a sense of community which is intangible but so important - ESPECIALLY in the centre of Shoreditch where it famously has gotten gentrified, with almost zero affordable place to get essential services and goods. We are surrounded high-end designer shops and boutiques, bougie butchers and groceries shops. Small community business like this MUST be supported and it needs to STAY to keep the soul of the oldest council building in London alive. If this property becomes yet another shop for non-residents, it would be the most awful decision. I also wish to stay the woman who runs the shop has been kind and helpful ever since I moved here.
Victor	It is such an important part of the community, the fact that it is busy every day shows how valued and necessary it is. Please do not take this away.
B	The launderette provides an important & vital resource for the local community .

Joy	Need to save community groups too many have been lost under new TH leadership
Sigrid	This place will be so much more to the community around it that just a place to wash clothes
Manvir	I used to live and work in the area and frequently used the laundrette often and it bought a lot of joy and really is a valued asset to the community
Campbell	Seems to undermine the whole community to remove this important service
Kate	Good luck!!!!!!
Mark	I had friends who lived in one of the estates and I knew a lady who worked there. The laundrette assisted many in the community.
Richard	I have mould in my flat and I know how difficult doing laundry in a flat is and the expense of tumble drying everything I wish we had a community laundry nearby
Manuela	I used to work in the area and the laundrette was indespensible to us. Really lovely place providing such an important service.
Fraser	The local launderette is a key and clear benefit to the local community. It is very actively used on a day to day basis and greatly assists all of us that use it in the running of our everyday lives. It's recent closure has already caused unnecessary inconvenience and difficulty; the council need to act to have it reopened as soon as possible.
Emily	Community spaces save lives
Kristian	I used the launderette during lock down when my washing machine broke. Very much needed for people without a machine and drying facilities
Toyah	Leave this Laundrette open it's our local laundrette and it's more then an laundrette it's community, it's family
Nina	We need the laundrette
Malcolm	Come on T.Hamlets do the decent thing please
lyndy	I have relied on this launderette since 2002
Sam	It's our family laundry
Emily	This community asset is clearly a lifeline for many. Laundry is a necessity, and damp and mould at home is not a joke. This laundrette should get all the support it can from the council.
Jessica	Appalling manner of dealing with considerations in relation to commercial rent increases applicable to non profit, community facilities. It is as if Tower Hamlets wishes to incur reputational damage, in which case well done. The launderette appears like a small fish to fry as part of the overall budget. May I suggest that rather than seeking to increase rent here, enquire further into the mayor's accounts, to cover any shortfall in projected profit?
Hayley	This cannot be closed. Such a vital resource
Elsa	This is such a sad and unfair situation. As a person who has a wife with severe mental health and understanding the simple needs for a better life. This should never have happened
Salma	We've been using this laundtte for a long time and would be sad to see it close
Ella	Terrible decision.
Abdul	Please don't close it down
Zinebe	Much needed service for local residents needs TH council support

Rebecca	The launderette is a valuable faiclity and should be regarded as a communty assets.
Khaled	Yea, save the community laundrette
Amr	Save our laundrette
Katharine	I am shocked at the council decision to close the laundrette. It is a popular resource for the community, and as it acts a a social hub as well as a washing and drying facility (reducing black mould and damp in flats on the estate). The technical legality of how this happened without consulting those that benefit from it and the lack of care shown in the face of public outcry is simply appalling.
Dan	I use the laundrette and it would be difficult without it.
Ashleigh	Open a gofundme so we can pay for the extra rent!
Samira	As someone who often uses my local launderette in Bow, I know this is a vital amenity for a community. Being a parent, I can emphasise with many of the service users. I hope this issue can be solved and Tower Hamlets Council can do right by the The Boundary community.
Moynul	These launderettes are a dying space in our communities and provide a wonderful service.
Simon	Stop closing important community resources and meeting places.
Katy	Save our laundrette <3
Alex	The launderette is amazing, I used it so many times while living on boindsry estate
Weijing	Stand by the community and people creating so much kindness and value
Weijing	Stand by the community and people creating so much kindness and value
Tamsin	Solidarity
Rebecca	I occasionally work out of St Margaret's house and for the last 9 years have been supportive of the launderette. I have donated to its appeals knowing what a vital service it provides to local people who need it. To close it now is disregarding the needs of disadvantaged people in the Borough against principles of equality and equity.
Michelle	The council needs to make residents more important than money. What would they make that into instead of a launderette another coffee shop, takeaway or a pop up venue. Ridiculous council.
Sabeha	The laundrette is a vital community asset. It employs local people and serves the community- please don't let it be shut down!
Fiona	This facility is a vital part of the community at Tower Hamlets. To close it is short sighted and damaging. Please reconsider.
Jill	I used to live in tower hamlets and I am close to a couple of founding members of the launderette. It would be another nail in the coffin of the community
Tim	My Beautiful Launderette needs to remain it provides a vital service
Lorraine	The Council should be proud to have the longest running community launderette in the whole of the UK. Instead they insult the community who made it happen. Shameful
Peter	Save the community laundrette

Freya	Without access to a laundrette and drying facilities people run the risk of Mold and damp, the removal of this facility was cruel and short sighted as to the needs of the residents
Sarah	This facility has been so helpful to residents for years. Although I don't live there, I know a number of Boundary residents, and they hugely value the laundrette. Please do reconsider
Ula	I do not live on the Boundary Estate but I have lived near the laundrette since 2016. Our landlord often does not maintain our utilities so we have relied on the laundrette when we have been without a washing machine for weeks on end. I have 4 flatmates and no outside space so using the laundrette to dry our clothes has been really important for avoiding damp and all the negative knock-on effects of that. It was also a calm and pleasant place to sit while waiting for my laundry to wash. The next time our machine breaks, or we have a plumbing issue which means we can’t use our washing machine, we will have to pay a bus fare to take our laundry to another laundrette which will probably now be too busy. I am really saddened that it has been repossessed as this helps to wear down the quality of life for many households. That the staff did not even receive prior notice of the repossession is appalling.
Ahad	immediately pending grant of a new lease;
Catherine	Important to save community resources and assets
Polly	this aggressive and high-handed action by the council is horrendous. Stop destroying the local community and help us address inadequate and unhealthy housing, poor amenities and ASB. That would be a much better us of your time
Deb	Please reconsider closing this launderette!!!!!
John	The launderette is a vital community asset and the Council should do its upmost to sustain its long-term future.
Ian	No thank you
Angela	I used to live in the boundary estate so I know how much the laundrette is valued as a community space. Please don’t let this valuable resource close
Nigel	It was a godsend when the Laudrette opened back on the 1990's. To find that the bottom line for renting the space hasn't taken into account the importance of the laundrette to local community is bad enough, but to ignore the damage and cost it could effectively have to council properties throughout the area with the likely problems created by condensation is foolhardy. There should have been a cost benefit analysis prior to making a purely bottom line desicion.
Maureen	This is a vital part of the community and should remain open
Mohammed	Keep it open
Ishan	This is asset towards community
Koyes	This place must stay open
David	It’s a disgrace that this wonderful community resource has been closed in such a disrespectful manner to the staff and local residents. This is a much needed service to combat the ongoing issue of mould in our homes due to not having drying facilities in the flats.

Matthew	I can’t believe that the laundrette has been closed. It is the most valuable of all the shops on Calvert Avenue and much needed for the community. Its so local and easy to carry heavy laundry to as we need to dry our clothes, bedsheets and duvets there. It’s a lovely community hub where everyone is so friendly and helpful, and people can meet there for a chat while washing and drying their clothes. I have seen elderly people being helped in there and offered a cuppa. This is crucial for combatting loneliness in our community. It’s got a little library in there where people can drop off and pick up books which is great for the environment. The laundrette is vital for reducing mould in our homes and therefore reducing the cost of cleaning homes from the damage of mould. Mould is a danger to our elderly and those with respiratory issues, by being able to dry our laundry we reduce the cost and burden on the NHS and the council. The council have not engaged in any kind of negotiation with the members of the laundrette to find a way to keep it open and functioning for all the residents. People have lost their jobs in a cruel and drastic manner.
Tom	Shocking behaviour from the landlord
Henry	Hope this oversight and misjudgment can be swiftly resolved as soon as possible.
Ali	We must protect our local community from unfair corporate practices
Shahnaz	I grew up in Tower Hamlets, I'd go past the laundrette every day after school. The staff all knew me and were always so friendly. My dad also worked there for almost 20 years before he retired. I'd often go to work with him and saw first hand how much of a vital spot it was for the community to speak to people you wouldn't usually speak to, provide support and advice and just pop in for a quick chat. It's such a shame to see the council take such drastic measures for what is a key part of the community
Lucy	Please reopen the laundrette
jane	This si a much needed community facility - it deserves saving
Kathryn	I really value the service and use the laundrette regularly. We really need this laundrette
Ali	I used to live on the Boundary. The flats don’t have room for washing and drying. Especially drying in winter. Very shortsighted to close a much used and loved laundrette.
Naomi	This launderette is essential
Poh	Our community launderette is more than just a launderette. It is a place for residents to meet each other. Why is the council destroying a community space which binds us?
Raz	Save it shop for the community
Neville	Many landlords are no longer permitting the drying of clothes in shared areas previously used for this purpose within blocks of flats. Launderettes are therefore even more essential, to avoid condensation and mould in homes.
Robin	It is vital for many people to have access to these sort of facilities

Karen	This is an important community facility and presumably cheaper than providing everyone with individual washing facilities. Having clean dry clothes is a basic need.
Anthony	Hope you can win. Stupid decision by a dodgy council
Terri	Dear London Borough of Tower Hamlets, I lived on the Boundary Estate from 1990 to 2004 and was Secretary of BETRA - the Boundary Estate Tenants and Residents Association - for some of that time. As a group, we worked hard to improve conditions on the Estate. We supported the Launderette and with the help of many of our fellow residents were responsible for launching and steering the project that culminated in the construction of the Clifton House playground. I have now moved away but visit the Estate regularly and am always delighted to see that its spirit has not changed. Local residents are still engaged in their community through St. Hilda's, the Friends of Arnold Circus and the new Boundary TRA, for example. They continue to fight to maintain past achievements and secure a better future. Reading the Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2025, it is clear that the Boundary Estate Community Launderette has been successful in achieving a number of its ambitions for a healthy borough. The Launderette stands at the centre of a vibrant local network, providing: - a safe, social space for residents, particular the elderly and solitary; - a service that helps mitigate the health problems inherent in living in damp and overcrowded conditions; - a route into employment; - an informal one-stop-shop for information about local issues. By contrast, in seeking to close down the Launderette for what I can only imagine are financial reasons, LBTH is clearly failing to implement the 'system-wide improvements' set out in its strategy. - It is failing to ensure that networks impacting on health and wellbeing are sustained and strengthened. - It is failing to communicate effectively with its residents. - It is failing to put the community of the Boundary Estate first. For this reason I would urge you to listen to local residents and to: - grant the Launderette a temporary tenancy at will under the previous terms; - add the Launderette to the Tower Hamlets Council Portfolio of Community Premises; - agree that the Launderette is eligible for Community Benefit Rent Reduction. Kind regards, Terri White

F	The laundrette is one which is used by 90% of the local community, it us much preferred to these unecessary shops which are open on the same road. Please re open as now my relations who have mobility issues are having to travel to laundrettes further down the road.
Alex	It is essential that community assets, such as the Boundary Estate Community laundrette should be kept open and in the public domain for the continuing use/needs of the estate and its community.
Mohammad	Community organisation like this should be supported by council
Eva	The laundrette forms part of the community infrastructure and we need it back.
Angela	Need to keep it open as a good facility for locals such as my mum and brother
Frances	I am a Director of the East End Trades Guild and call on Tower Hamlets to support local small business
Angela	Need to keep it open as a good facility for locals such as my mum and brother
William	My nan lived most of her life in Boundary Estate, my dad was born and brought up there, and as a born and bred Bethnal Green boy i remembrr going there with my nan as a chilf
Benna	Please support the Community Launderette to be able to continue to offer their important services to the community.
Carl	Save the place
This	See above. We must save the launderette
monica	This business is essential to the neighborhood and we should keep the rent the same for the owners of the business.
David	This is an important service for local residents and should continue as the are no substitutes for the service it provides.
Daniel	i used to live around there and it’s terrible it’s closing down
Ailen	I really hope that this community space can open its doors again! It’s been there for so long and it plays a vital part for the local community - especially old people.
Annie	I would like a response to this and hope the council will reinstate this essential community facility immediately
Maxine	Local people need the laundry, it’s a much needed service for the community
Anthony	Help them get back open, it’s an asset for the neighbourhood
Josephine	Driving up rents in high value areas of the council at the cost of losing rare and vital community amenities is a short term and destructive policy. The community spaces must be preserved while we still have them. Look at generating revenue from idling cars instead.
Adriana	Please care for community spaces! They are the future!
Albina	Local services and small businesses are such an important pillar of community and for this reason, I don’t want the laundrette to be closed.
Robert	I have been using the laundrette recently as I am unable to have a washing machine in my Tower Hamlets flat.

Simon	The council should be ashamed removing a very community asset from the local community and instead board it up for no community benefit and sadly if the launderette is not re-instated a coffee shop or luxury boutique. The council need to be held accountable and provide critical services to the 100s of residents locally that do not have a washing maxhine or wish to be part of this community launderette that served many families,
Yuko	Please save a community space in the area
Cerys	I used this laundrette for many years when I lived on French Place as I didn’t have a washing machine and it was a real lifesaver - I don’t know what I would’ve done without it. It’s about much more than rental income for the council - it’s an essential service
Tamara	The council spend millions on a new council building but can’t do something for the community it is meant to support. Corruption at its core. Shocking behaviour.
Sarah	Please listen and work with residents of the Boundary Estate!