



# Community Health Partnerships

## Tessa Jowell Health Centre, East Dulwich

### Summary:

- Two storey £22.5m health centre completed in April 2020
- The healthcare centre is key to the transformation of primary and community health and wellbeing services across south Southwark
- Designed to integrate primary, community health and wellbeing services to meet the needs of growing local population
- Practical completion and operational opening took place during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic
- The health centre was delivered via the NHS Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) Programme; providing design, build, finance and operational skills and capabilities
- BREEAM Excellence achieved

The Tessa Jowell Health Centre delivers much-needed improvement to local health services in East Dulwich, South East London and is a purpose-built health hub for the local community. The facility is at the heart of local health commissioner's efforts to transform GP and community-based services in Dulwich and the surrounding area.

Community Health Partnerships (CHP) was commissioned by Southwark CCG (CCG) – now part of South East London CCG – to design, build and finance the scheme on the site of the old Dulwich community hospital via the NHS Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) Programme. CHP now operate the building as lead tenant.

The health centre reached practical completion in April 2020, opening at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, and during the national lockdown.

The centre was named posthumously after Dame Tessa Jowell, the local MP who was instrumental in campaigning for it to be built. The name was chosen following a competition run in the local community.



### **Meeting the needs of the local community**

Southwark is a small, densely populated inner London borough. The population is relatively young and ethnically diverse, with significant contrasts of wealth, poverty, and educational achievement. The numbers of very young and very old people have increased and continues to do so. Life expectancy for local people has improved in recent years, but needs to improve further, especially for people living in the more deprived parts of the borough.

In south Southwark there are some particular challenges. They include lower life expectancy due to heart disease and cancer and variable access to GP services. There are also significant numbers of people with long-term conditions - for example, high blood pressure, diabetes, coronary heart disease and severe breathing disorder (COPD) – who need greater support, closer to home.

### **Partnership working**

CHP together with its LIFT partners, worked in partnership with the CCG Group (CCG) to deliver its goal is to make primary, community health and wellbeing services more accessible, joined-up and convenient for patients.

Working as delivery partners, we supported the CCG to engage local people to ensure the design was accessible, inclusive, and met the needs of patients. We supported the development of the business case, sourcing and securing the capital. We oversaw the construction to successful completion and operate the health centre as landlord, ensuring its smooth running.

### **Designed for integration and wellbeing**

The centre was purposefully designed to support the integration of care locally, bringing together local GP services with other health services, such as out-of-hours, diagnostic services, children’s community outpatient services, outpatient clinics, physiotherapy services, renal dialysis, phlebotomy services, and commercial pharmacy.

## **Sustainable and inclusive design**

The health centre was awarded BREEAM Excellence rating for its sustainability. Measures include the ability to attach to the neighbourhood heating system if required. Plus, the site is easily accessible by public transport which aims to reduce traffic flow.

The new building is part of CHP's Inclusive Design project which aims to ensure ease of access to health centres for everyone.

## **Opening during the pandemic**

The health centre opened in April 2020, during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. This presented many unforeseen challenges, which included ensuring contractors and staff could work on safely and socially distanced on site, the impact on completion timelines, and supporting tenants moving in.

Sharon Linton is CHP's Tenant Liaison Manager working on the project. She said: "Working to see Tessa Jowell through to fruition was both challenging and exciting. Under normal circumstances, preparation to move into the centre and engaging with many new building tenants would have been enough to focus the mind. Putting that with the unforeseen Covid-19 pandemic which presented itself prior to completion, made the situation a little trickier. I'm glad to say that we have all come out the other end with a wonderful building and great services available to patients and community groups alike."

Click on the image above to watch a video of the Tessa Jowell centre and the benefits it is bringing to the local community.