



in London

Local Minds working in partnership



Mind in London manifesto

Mayor of London and London Assembly elections 2024

Mind in London manifesto: No London mind left behind

Introduction

As local Minds, we see the impact of poor mental health on Londoners every day. We work closely with our diverse local communities to provide accessible mental health support that works for them.

But we're seeing the demand for support rise as inequality grows, the cost of living crisis continues – and budgets for crucial services are cut.

We need the next London mayor to work with us to improve the mental health of all Londoners. We've made this easy for them by setting out exactly how they can achieve this in our mental health manifesto for London: No London mind left behind.

Five priorities for the London mayor

Our manifesto sets out actions in 5 priority areas that the mayor needs to take, to ensure that no London mind is left behind.

1 Cost of living and poverty

Support Londoners who are adversely affected by the ongoing cost of living crisis and those who are experiencing poverty.

2 Health inequalities

Tackle the health inequalities that Londoners experience due to race and ethnicity.

3 Children and young people

Protect and improve the mental health of London's children and young people.

4 Community services and communities

Invest in London's communities through improved access to community services.

5 Housing

Support Londoners to have access to good quality and stable housing.

1 Cost of living and poverty

Support Londoners who are adversely affected by the ongoing cost of living crisis and those who are experiencing poverty.

Cost of living

We're facing the biggest cost of living crisis in a generation, and it's affecting mental health.

We know that employment instability, income decline and unmanageable debts can have a significant impact on our mental health and are closely linked to increased rates of common mental health problems, increased substance misuse and suicide.

The fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic, financial stress and debt, inflation and a housing crisis is increasing our vulnerability to financial stress and the risk of homelessness. And while this is a nationwide problem, Londoners are bearing the brunt of this – with a London Assembly report finding that inflation is estimated to be 1.5% higher than the rest of the country¹. It's well evidenced that poorer households experience a higher inflation rate as they spend a much larger share of their household income on gas and electricity.

Poverty

The recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation report on poverty, painted a stark picture of life in England today, with London (joint with the North East) noted as having the highest rates of poverty in the country². Mind's own research exploring the two-way relationship between poverty and mental health shows us that there is still a lot of shame around money and mental health, that choice and control in support services is important, that services aren't practical or respectful and that people facing poverty often go outside of regulated systems for help.

The lifelong impact on children living in poverty cannot be underestimated either, with young people in the lowest income bracket being 4.5 times more likely to experience severe mental health problems than those in the highest.³

¹ London Assembly (2022) Research shows Londoners are most affected by soaring inflation: [Research shows Londoners are worst affected by soaring inflation | London City Hall](#)

² <https://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2024-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk>

³https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308083993_Children_of_the_new_century_mental_health_findings_from_the_Millennium_Cohort_Study

What do we want the mayor to do?

- Improve access to benefits for all Londoners, by building capacity and collaborating with mental health organisations to plan and deliver the types of services that can support people with mental health problems to access and navigate the benefits system.
- Work with local authorities to increase awareness and information sharing around cost-saving initiatives e.g., free boiler replacement schemes for renters.
- Encourage all employers across London to adopt the London Living Wage (separate to the national living wage to reflect the higher cost of living in the city) to cover workers' basic living costs with no age discrimination.



2 Health inequalities

Tackle the health inequalities that Londoners experience due to race and ethnicity.

London is the most ethnically diverse region in the UK, with 287 ethnic groups and nationalities identified in the last census across the 32 boroughs.⁴ We know that there is increasing inequality amongst the population of London, with racialised and marginalised groups experiencing worse care and support than other groups.

Evidence suggests that people from Black, Asian and other racially minoritised communities are at higher risk of developing a mental health problem in adulthood. But they're less likely to receive support for their mental health⁵. Black people are more likely to access treatment through a police or criminal justice route. Black and mixed Black groups are between 20% and 83% more likely to be referred from the criminal justice system than average.⁶ Black people are also 5 times as likely as white people to be detained under the Mental Health Act.⁷

There is also significant economic and social inequality among racially minoritised communities and poverty rates have increased, disproportionately effecting marginalised groups, with 4 in 10 Pakistani or Black households living in poverty.⁸

⁴ <https://trustforlondon.org.uk/news/census-2021-deep-dive-ethnicity-and-deprivation-in-london/#:~:text=London's%20ethnic%20diversity&text=Although%20London%20as%20a%20whole,of%20people%20are%20non%2Dwhite.>

⁵ <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20180328140249/http://digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB21748>

⁶ https://www.mentalhealthlaw.co.uk/media/CQC_Count_me_in_2010.pdf

⁷ <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/health/mental-health/detentions-under-the-mental-health-act/latest/>

⁸ <https://www.jrf.org.uk/work/uk-poverty-2023-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk>

What do we want the mayor to do?

- Encourage London-based mental health services to engage effectively and meaningfully with Black, Asian, and racially minoritised communities, the VCSE and faith-based organisations, taking learning and guidance from them, making services more accessible as a result.
- Ensure that the voices of those of us with diverse lived experience of mental health problems influence all decisions on health and wellbeing provision in the capital.
- Continue to work with the NHS and local authorities to ensure increased diversification of London's mental health workforce to better reflect the communities they serve.
- Ensure that local mental health services work with VCSE and faith-based organisations to promote mental health support in the community and challenge stigma.
- Ensure mental health services offered throughout London are inclusive – that they are offered in multiple languages, or that translation and interpretation services are offered to people who don't speak English as a first language. And that therapies offered are culturally appropriate and geographically accessible.



3 Children and young people

Protect and improve the mental health of London's children and young people.

Children and young people's mental health is worsening, with 1 in 4 young people experiencing a mental health problem recorded in 2022 (up from 1 in 6 the year before).⁹ Many young people are still feeling the effect of the pandemic and the legacy impact from school disruption, closures, and exam uncertainty, coupled with a post pandemic cost of living crisis, soaring inflation, and increasing housing instability.

We know that some of the school attendance and exclusion policies brought about following the pandemic to reduce school avoidance are more likely to affect children and young people with mental health problems. Minds recent education inquiry found that 48% of young people were being disciplined for behaviour due to their mental health and that 68% were absent from school due to their mental health¹⁰.

In London specifically, we know that there has been a significant increase in demand for CAMHS services. We also know that some children and young people face long wait times for those services, with a small but significant number waiting longer than a year for an initial contact, while waiting times for neurodevelopmental services are significantly surpassing wait times for other services.

⁹ [Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2022 - wave 3 follow up to the 2017 survey - NHS Digital](#)

¹⁰ [not-making-the-grade.pdf \(mind.org.uk\)](#)

What do we want the mayor to do?

- Encourage our London schools to adopt a Whole School Approach to mental health to promote early identification and intervention of mental health needs, work with them to reduce exclusions and ensure that schools are conducive environments for fostering good mental health.
- Promote and support interventions such as anti-bullying programmes and evidence-based parenting programmes to improve children's mental health. And encourage services that support the mental health of parents and caregivers, particularly during the perinatal period.
- Ensure that there are equitable mental health support offers across all London schools, and that there isn't disparity across the different ICS footprints.
- Support the development of community-based early support hubs and acknowledge the importance of extracurricular enrichment and cultural activities, ensuring all children have access to such spaces.



4 Community services and communities

Invest in London's communities through improved access to community services.

The Community Mental Health Transformation Programme has seen some pioneering, innovative and ambitious work take place throughout the city, testing new ways of integrated working and improving community mental health services across London. We know that transformation takes time and cross-system working and local areas need to maintain a focus. As NHS and local governments come under increasing pressure, we are concerned that any cuts will disproportionately impact on VCSE organisations, who are often supporting the most marginalised communities.

So many mental health services are dangerously overstretched and overwhelmed, and we need to ensure that statutory services invest in and commission appropriate services that respond to the needs of their diverse communities, particularly in the face of growing health inequalities and poverty.

In light of the roll out of Right Care, Right Person, we also need to ensure that all agencies are working together to ensure people in a crisis get the help they need wherever they present.

What do we want the mayor to do?

- Hold the five London ICSs to account on their commitments to engage with the VCS as a true strategic partner, recognising the value in providing stability to the VCS market on whose community services so many Londoners depend on.
- Ensure that the voice of people with lived experience is represented and able to influence all decisions on health and wellbeing provision in the capital.
- Ensure there is commitment across London services to the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework
- Ensure there is robust oversight and appropriate evaluation of the impact of Right Care, Right Person across London.

5 Housing

Support Londoners to have access to good quality and stable housing.

Housing instability across London is on the rise. The increased costs of private renting, rising interest rates on mortgages and a lack of sustainable and stable social housing means that housing issues are affecting vast swathes of society across both private and social housing sectors at a scale not seen for decades.

A recent Mind survey found that 80% of people with mental health problems have lived in housing that has made their mental health worse, 40% of people with mental health problems have experienced stigma or discrimination in the place they live and 66% of people with mental health problems have had an issue with their home¹¹.

In London specifically, in a recent YouGov poll over 40% of renters reported that their mental health had been affected by poor property conditions¹². With a lack of available social housing, private renters are facing brutal conditions, with advertised rents in the capital going up by as much as 12.1% in some London Boroughs.¹³

Overcrowding, frequent moves and poor living conditions have a considerable impact on wellbeing, affecting every aspect of a person's life, including access to services, schooling, family relationships and community support networks.

¹¹ <https://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/campaigns/housing/>

¹² Source: Shelter/YouGov. Note: 4,023 private renting adults in England surveyed between 14 July and 16 August 2023

¹³ [Average London asking rents hit new record high | Evening Standard](#)

What do we want the mayor to do?

- Ensure that systems and processes around allocating social housing treat people with mental health problems fairly and equitably and that initiatives are developed to offer specialist housing advice to people living with mental health issues.
- Hold property developers to account on providing genuinely affordable housing options.
- Hold social and private landlords to account to ensure proper maintenance of properties, ensuring people have safe and healthy living conditions.
- Lobby the government to bring in rent control across the city, ensuring people have better access to affordable housing options.
- Champion a Housing First approach in response to homelessness, encouraging the decriminalisation of homelessness and recognising with compassion the challenges homeless people face, many of whom experience mental health problems.
- Lobby the government to ensure key housing policy is pushed through, including the much-delayed Renters Reform Bill, which would put an end to no fault evictions, and Leasehold Reforms, which would give more rights and protections to homeowners.





Local Minds working in partnership

Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing & Hounslow Mind – hfehmind.org.uk

Havering, Barking & Dagenham Mind – haveringmind.org.uk

Islington Mind – islingtonmind.org.uk

Kensington and Chelsea Mind – kcmind.org.uk

Mind in Enfield and Barnet – mindeb.org.uk

Mind in Bexley – mindinbexley.org.uk

Mind in the City, Hackney, and Waltham Forest – mindchwf.org.uk

Mind in Croydon – mindincroydon.org.uk

Mind in Haringey – mindinharingey.org.uk

Mind in Harrow – mindinharrow.org.uk

Mind in Hillingdon – mindinhilligdon.org.uk

Mind in Kingston – mindinkingston.org.uk

Mind in Tower Hamlets, Newham, and Redbridge – mindthnr.org.uk

Richmond Borough Mind – rbmind.org.uk

South East London Mind – selmind.org.uk

Mind in London is a partnership of 15 local Minds, working across London's boroughs.

We are mental health experts with grassroots connections.

We have a proven record of delivering services shaped by and for our diverse communities and we see first-hand the impact poor mental health has on Londoners.

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