



**Tapestry**  
prevention, care and support

# Food Delivery Services for vulnerable people in Havering

## A call to arms



### Contents

1. Foreword
2. Background
3. A one-off opportunity to meet a need
4. Why Tapestry?
5. What is preventing Tapestry continuing with this service?
6. Call to Arms – What do we need you to do?

Individuals can benefit from this service by

Telephoning 01708 796600

Emailing [Hello@tapestry-uk.org](mailto:Hello@tapestry-uk.org)

## 1. Foreword

Access to good food is vital and is the fundamental requirement for good mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Quite simply, if an older individual is not eating well, their physical and mental health will deteriorate and they are more likely to be ill, to suffer from depression, feel isolated, fall and injure themselves and be unable to take advantage of any other support put in place to help them.



## 2. Background

Tapestry has been providing food services for over 50 years, establishing the first Meals and Wheels Service, in Havering, in the 1970's as Age Concern Havering.

During the pandemic, in response to urgent need, Tapestry re-established a food delivery service providing hot, healthy, freshly produced meals to vulnerable people locked down with no access to food. Many of these meals were provided for free to those in emotional or financial crisis.

**Since establishing the service over 28,000 meals have been delivered to vulnerable people in the community.**

The initial plan was to end this service when the pandemic and lockdowns ended, and individuals had access once again, to quality food.

However, what the provision of the service has demonstrated to us is that vulnerable people, living in the community, were already struggling to access healthy food and without ongoing support will continue to do so.

The vast majority (80%) of the individuals using this service were not known to Tapestry before the service was launched.

The service was supported, during the peak of the pandemic, by monies from the Lottery and Barclays Bank, but since that funding has ended, the service has been run at a loss partially supported by payments for the meals.

We cannot continue to do this and from the end of January, we may have to start to withdraw the service to individuals who just receive food from us. Tapestry clients at our Hubs will continue to receive a range of support services at home, including food deliveries, through our new 'Care at Home' service. **We are currently delivering 350-400 meals a week.**



### 3. A one-off Opportunity to meet a need

The reason I am bringing this to your attention is that we have an opportunity to meet a need that is growing and needs addressing.

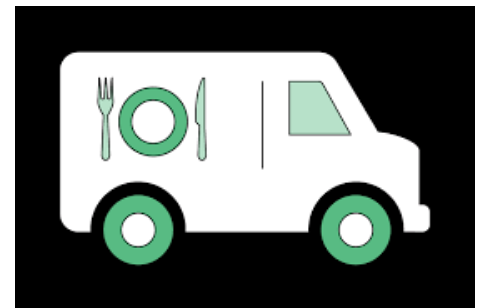
Tackling it early and effectively would have a dramatic effect on the overall health and wellbeing of our elderly community over the next couple of years as we return to normal post COVID-19.

Current estimates suggest there could be as many as 10% of over 65's who are malnourished or at risk of malnourishment, that could be as many as 6,000 people in Havering alone, and new research has shown that many don't have access to food, or are unable to shop and/or cook to enable them to eat healthily.

Food accessibility is a key challenge facing local communities and particularly older people.

There is growing awareness and campaigns such as Sustain's Transforming food for older people campaign. Through which, they are highlighting the need, and challenging local communities to address this issue.

<https://www.sustainweb.org/older-peoples-food/>



The Sustain campaign specifically seeks to ensure existing meals on wheels services are improved and grown, and that new services are created that ensure that older people are provided with food to enable them to live healthily at home for longer.

This is something I am sure that Havering would want to do, and will be challenged to address in the very near future.

Tapestry's food delivery service is a high-quality service providing nutritionally balanced freshly cooked meals and because it is a social business, and volunteer supported, it can provide these quality meals at an **affordable** rate, which is comparable with frozen food deliveries or standard meals on wheels deliveries of reheated frozen food.

As the service is delivered by staff and volunteers it also provides important daily human contact for individuals, acts as an early warning system for safeguarding concerns for social services and council safeguarding teams and can be linked to other important support services provided by Tapestry and many other voluntary sector organisations.



#### 4. Why Tapestry?



- a. By providing this service over the past 21 months, we have developed skills and have a scalable solution which we are able to develop and deliver immediately.
- b. As a social business we do not require continual grants to deliver this as the service, once it reaches a certain scale, it will become sustainable through monies raised by **affordable** payments for the quality healthy meals.

**Withdrawing the service now would remove this important service from the individuals that use it and, just as importantly, will also remove the opportunity for those that need the service, but remain unknown to Tapestry, to access the service in the future.**

#### 5. So, what is preventing Tapestry continuing with this service?

Currently it is simply a lack of scale that is making the service unsustainable, and it would seem a negative step to withdraw or suspend the service, when there is already a need in Havering and growing evidence from across London and Nationally that suggests that many more in Havering are likely to need this kind of support. We would only need to merely increase the user numbers by another 30-35 a day to make the service financially sustainable, more would provide us with the monies to develop the safeguarding and care side of the service tackling loneliness and isolation.

#### 6. Call to Arms – What do we need you to do?

We are asking for your support to help us **identify** those who need the service and **get the message out** to them to make it known that the service is available.

Please, through your colleagues and contacts,

- Make individuals, who may need the service, aware and put them in contact with us
- Make organisations you know, who work with people who may benefit from the service, aware and get them to contact us.
- Use your social media platform to highlight the availability of the service, if you have one, or any other media you use.

**Just by making people aware of the service, and them benefiting from it, you can ensure that the service remains in place to help those who are using it and those that need it now and in the future.**

Thank you,

Tony Lowe M.B.E CEO Tapestry Care UK Limited