

► INCLUSIVE
GROWTH
STRATEGY

2020 REVIEW

► INTRODUCTION



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Brent's Inclusive Growth Strategy (IGS) was adopted by Brent Council in December 2019 and provides the evidence base, policies and actions to deliver a vision for more inclusive regeneration and growth for businesses, residents and the wider benefit of the borough.

Over 2020 Brent has faced enormous challenges arising from the coronavirus pandemic, but amidst the crisis real progress has been made to encourage greater participation and a fairer sharing of the increased prosperity that growth brings. Regeneration has delivered new homes, including new affordable homes, jobs and infrastructure. Education and skills outcomes have included a significant reduction in the schools attainment gap of underperforming groups.

Improvements have been made in our natural and urban environment, and initiatives launched to encourage healthier lifestyles and wellbeing. The London Borough of Culture 2020 achieved against its ambitions, with the voices of artists, creatives and young people at its heart, and projects set in motion for a creative legacy that will last for years to come.

2020 and the coronavirus pandemic has accelerated trends and changes which were already underway, and magnified their effects and impacts. As we move forward into 2021, we also take the opportunity to refocus our efforts on prioritising those actions which will aid an inclusive recovery, and to seize the opportunities which will benefit all, and reduce inequalities in Brent over our short, medium and long-term futures.

► ECONOMY

Brent is home to a diverse economy with over 15,000 businesses employing 126,500 people and generating a Gross Value Added of £8.5 billion. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the largest UK recession since records began. Lockdown, social distancing and market uncertainty place the economy in a precarious position. Brent has high numbers of furloughed workers and the 6th lowest wages in London at only £639 average gross weekly wages for full-time employees in November 2020. Key sectors in Brent's economy have shown to be vulnerable during the pandemic – manufacturing, transport & storage, construction – as are concentrations of microbusinesses and self-employed people. Brent's businesses, residents and prosperity are thus at higher risk from the impacts of COVID-19, underlining the imperative to raise resident skill levels and support business and employment growth, including through the provision of affordable workspace and development of new economic sectors.

Employment and Skills

Brent's Inclusive Growth Strategy (IGS) and the West London Build and Recover plan highlight the

importance of emerging and growth sectors including: digital, creative, life sciences, food preparation and consumption, the low carbon economy and the knowledge economy. The West London Alliance commissioned an Oxford Economics report, published June 2020, to map the sectoral structure of the local economy, likely COVID-19 impacts, and identify business skills demands moving forward.

Brent's Employment and Skills team continue to work with adult educational institutions and employers to project future labour needs and ensure that the local curriculum offers match identified skills gaps. In 2020, Brent Works facilitated 172 job starts including

57 apprenticeships, with 21% of job placements in growth sectors, almost double the amount of similar opportunities versus last year.





Town Centres and High Streets

Brent's town centres face significant challenges, although to an extent the 'lockdown' helped local centres thrive. Brent is taking an interventionist approach in priority areas to enable high streets to adapt, diversify and remain relevant for businesses, residents and visitors.

In Harlesden capital investment is transforming vacant town centre spaces to deliver inclusive growth, with the Picture Palace being refurbished for community use, Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) investment into the former HSBC bank building, plus a successful Heritage Action Zone grant to improve street frontages in the conservation area. In Kilburn, the London Borough of Culture 2020 with Metroland Cultures launched 20 artists' residencies in former National Health Service offices. Brent's Cabinet approved a new Affordable Workspace Strategy in September 2020, including £250,000 for a meanwhile workspace pilot to reactivate vacant properties in Willesden, Church End and Neasden. Public realm improvements are

enhancing the quality of the environment to make town centres more attractive places to visit and shop.

Recent and proposed changes to planning legislation have introduced a new context for High Streets, which is impacting on our ability to influence what happens to premises, and the local planning framework for town centres under review.

Development and Construction

Capital investment in new housing and commercial development represents a significant contribution to the local economy and provides opportunities, jobs and apprenticeships for local businesses and residents. Construction and development makes up 11% of the local economy and contributes approximately £1 billion per annum.

New development also funds new infrastructure through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and s106 planning contributions, and local services through council tax and business rates revenues. Brent's Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement shows that CIL and s106 receipts for vital new infrastructure to support development across the borough totalled almost £30m in 2019-20, and approximately 400 jobs were created for local people via s106 agreements.



Promoting Fairness

Brent Council became a Disability Confident employer in 2020, targets becoming a Disability Confident Champion by March 2021, and is exploring the opportunity to become a Good Work Standard Employer. In 2020, for the seventh year in a row, Brent Council received accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation, confirming its status as a London Living Wage Employer. Brent Council also continues to campaign and work with employers across the Borough to increase the number of jobs paying the London Living Wage.

The Moving on Up project supports young black men into employment, and is using NCIL funding for Business in the Community to research unconscious bias. It has recently been expanded to commission additional targeted support for young Somali men. In 2020, Moving on Up engaged 140 young black men,



supported 15 through a mentoring programme and placed 52 into employment. Employers and young black men are being engaged to explore unconscious bias and help them develop inclusive recruitment and employment practices which remove barriers and support excluded groups into employment. Research is focusing on businesses in the financial and professional IT and technology firms, creative and construction industries, and is due to complete at the end of 2020.

Business Support

In 2020 the Council prioritised business support to respond to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and plan for economic recovery, including:

- £64.6 million claimed by 4,347 businesses in Brent through the Small Business Grant Scheme and the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality grant scheme up to the end of August 2020.
- Advising businesses on available grants, funding and



Promoting Fairness

Moving on Up engaged 140 young black men and placed 52 into employment.

3rd party support.

- Setting up a £3.3m local discretionary grants fund and distributing grants to 560 businesses.
- In November 2020, the Additional Restrictions Grant was opened to cover the 28-day period following the end of the second national lockdown on 2 December 2020.
- West London Alliance Oxford Economics report published June 2020 investigated COVID-19 impacts on the local economy, to understand business needs and aid economic recovery planning.
- Working with the West London Alliance to lobby central government for COVID-19 recovery tasks.
- Co-ordinated support and enforcement to ensure High Streets compliance with COVID-19 regulations to enable businesses to re-open safely after lockdown.
- 'Shop Safe, Shop Local' communications campaign.
- Webinar series ongoing including 'Meet the Buyer', and 'navigating procurement opportunities', from November 2020 onwards.
- Winner of the Small Business Saturday Award and Environmental Contribution 2019.
- Weekly business newsletter to over 8,000 subscribers.



Employment & Skills

In 2020 Brent Works facilitated 172 job starts and 57 apprenticeships.



Business Support

In 2020, £64.6 million support grants claimed by 4,347 businesses in Brent.

Top Economy Priorities for 2021 and beyond

- Support and develop business and employment recovery and growth in Brent.
- Diversify our town centres in order to sustain their function as economic, leisure and community hubs.
- Curate a strategic vision for affordable workspace for different businesses and sectors.



► EDUCATION & SKILLS

Forecast changes to the structure of the UK society and economy present both challenges and opportunities to the education sector, skills and employment at a local level, some of which are being accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Brent has lower than average educational attainment levels and labour market outcomes concentrated amongst specific demographic groups, which risk being further disadvantaged in an increasingly high skilled labour market, with the potential for long term economic implications for Brent and its residents. The Black male achievement gap, evident in Brent's schools, for example, extends beyond education into higher rates of unemployment. In 2020, the female economic activity rate in Brent was also the 2nd lowest amongst London boroughs at just 64.2%. Targeted support, education, skills, training and careers advice for underperforming groups is viewed as critical to reduce and prevent widening inequality.

Rising automation, growth in the knowledge economy and changing working patterns will all affect education, skills and employment demands across London. The sectoral make up of Brent's economy and workforce mean around a third of jobs in Brent are viewed as at higher risk of automation, and an ageing population, increasing retirement ages and more flexible working mean it is forecast that there will be more older workers, and that people will likely change jobs more

regularly over their working lifetimes. The shape of education provision in the borough, greater training, re-skilling, apprenticeships, entrepreneurship and career development opportunities must adapt to ensure Brent's workforce are able to compete and prosper within the changing labour market and new economy.

Supporting Underperforming Groups

The June 2018 Schools Forum approved funding for 'Raising the Achievement of British boys of Black Caribbean heritage in Brent schools' programme. The engagement of schools with the programme and it's very positive impact on the attainment for these pupils in Brent is to be celebrated. Brent schools have shown a focus and determination to tackle the legacy of underachievement of British boys of Black Caribbean heritage. The leadership of Black Caribbean Champions, supported by their head teachers, has proven strong in the majority of schools engaged in the programme. The most recent data shows a significant reduction in gaps in the attainment of British boys of Black Caribbean heritage against all pupils at Key Stage 2 and at Key Stage 4.

In May 2020, the Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board, agreed that vulnerable children should be added to the borough's priority groups, after the Timpson Review of School Exclusion evidenced the low attainment of this group nationally. The work of schools and the Council in supporting vulnerable children's continued attendance at schools during the COVID-19 pandemic also highlighted the imperative to continue to improve the outcomes of vulnerable children in Brent. Monitoring the attendance, attainment and progress of vulnerable children is now an agenda item at all school effectiveness meetings with schools.



Supporting underperforming groups

In 2020, Brent's female economic activity rate was 64.2%, the 2nd lowest in London



Promoting childcare options

By Spring 2020, the Early Years team had spoken with 2,184 families to offer childcare advice.



Brent Start and Brent Works

Brent Works has created 200 new paid work experience roles as part of the Government's Kickstart Programme.



Promoting Childcare Options

Low take-up of nursery education grants has been an area of concern in Brent. The Council has worked with parents and providers to raise awareness of childcare options and support provider sustainability and quality.

By Spring 2020, 5,111 families had been reached through various events and the team had spoken with 2,184 families to offer childcare advice and guidance. Since March 2020, the free entitlements have been widely promoted through the Council's communication channels and parent champions.

Ensuring sustainability of childcare provision is another a key priority and from March 2020, the Council has worked to ensure more targeted support and early identification of pressure points in terms of sufficiency. Two surveys were carried out in Brent in June 2020, to understand the impact of Covid-19 on both demand and supply of childcare provision in the borough. In particular, to understand the existential financial crisis facing providers and concerns of parents influencing their childcare choices.

Brent Start & Brent Works

Brent Start focusses on developing skills, retraining, and preparing residents for the world of work. Brent Start commissioned Ultra Education (UE) to use entrepreneurship as a vehicle to increase the life chances and close the gaps in educational attainment and achievement of Black Caribbean Boys in Brent. From January 2021 to July 2022, UE will work with children, parents, teachers, siblings, communities and strategic partners to deliver a comprehensive programme addressing multiple and complex issues in new and

innovative ways, including entrepreneur camps, 1:1 young entrepreneur tuition and the Kids Business Awards.

Brent Works helps employers find the right local people to work for them and supports local people into jobs and apprenticeships. Brent Works has hosted a series of webinars based on the Local Labour Market and needs of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic to enable continued access to jobs, including with the NHS, Met Police, Care, Construction, Apprenticeships and Kickstart. In 2020, Brent Works also started working with homeless charity Beam to support homeless people into jobs and apprenticeships.

Brent Works is part of the Park Royal Employment and Skills hub and other programmes include: the Moving on Up programme supporting young Black men into employment; Wembley Park Supported Internships programme for student education, health and care plans to gain skills to make them more employable; Bright Futures, working with probation services, to help residents who are ex-offenders leaving prison to move into employment; various initiatives prioritising support for care leavers.



▶ HOUSING

For 2021, Brent Works with local businesses has created 200 new paid work experience roles as part of the Government's Kickstart Programme. For a period of 6 months 16-24 year olds will be employed, and some employers are boosting hours and pay or using the roles as a pre-employment/pre-apprenticeship gateway for permanent recruitment.

Champion Careers in Growth Industries

Brent's economic development plans include matching residents with jobs in growth sectors; and in 2020 we supported a wide range of such roles: including lab technicians, software designers, IT technicians, art technicians and furniture designers. In December 2020, Brent Council awarded Career Camps CIC a contract to deliver 'tech career camps'.

Top Education and Skills Priorities for 2021 and beyond

- Support underperforming groups to reduce inequality in education and employment outcomes.
- Support people into work and reduce unemployment.
- Offer retraining & upskilling opportunities, including in growth sectors.

Over 2021, Brent residents will have the opportunity to gain knowledge, skills and experience to develop careers in the tech and creative industries, and engage with employers. The project will target priority groups, including young people, unemployed people, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people and young women.

A skills and demand study commissioned by the West London Alliance boroughs and due to be published in 2021 will identify and map detailed skills requirements from growth industries, which will inform work with education providers to shape and develop new programmes.



The housing crisis in the UK is at its most stark in London, where the imbalance between supply and demand is exacerbated by faster population growth and scarcity of developable land. Brent has a varied built environment and character, with around 120,000 homes, and is a relatively expensive place to live, with a well-established trend of housing costs outstripping low wages increasing unaffordability and unequal access to homes. Average property prices have risen 77% over the past 10 years, from £296,000 to £522,000, and average rents have risen 35% between 2011 and 2019 from £1,105 to £1,500 per month. Property prices and rent are expected to continue to rise. Overcrowding in social housing and parts of the private rented sector is relatively high, and keyworkers providing

vital local frontline health, education and community safety services are unable to afford a decent home. Brent's private rented sector is expanding in these difficult circumstances. New build private rented housing is accelerating housing delivery and providing higher quality (albeit sometimes expensive) private rented homes, with the challenge to work with landlords and drive up management and quality standards in existing older stock.

Targets and Delivery

Brent's draft housing target is 23,250 new homes over 2019-2029 – or 2,325 new homes each and every year for the next 10 years. Brent's Local Plan examined in Autumn 2020 designates 8 growth areas as the most sustainable spatial expression for this growth, exploiting brownfield land, good access to public transport and higher densities to deliver the majority of new homes alongside regeneration benefits and infrastructure. Delivery of new homes and a mix of housing sizes and tenures able to meet the pressing and diverse needs in the borough requires investment from large and small developers and housebuilders, Registered Providers and the Council itself.

2,433 new homes including 31% affordable homes were completed in Brent in 2019-20, with delivery boosted above target by new private rented homes in Wembley Park. Providing confidence and attracting investment from the private sector remains key to delivering new homes, including new affordable homes. Brent is viewed

as a stable and attractive borough within which to develop, with 531 new affordable homes secured by 106 planning agreements in 2019-20, and we will continue to build new partnerships to deliver much needed new housing for our residents.

New Council Homes

Brent Council's ambitious housebuilding programme is to deliver 5,000 new affordable homes by 2024, with 1,000 new council homes for council tenants, and 4,000 homes built by Registered Providers. There were 287 new council homes started construction in 2020. Brent's wholly owned housing company i4B also acquired a brand new block in Wembley Park with 153 new flats for keyworkers across the borough and beyond. In 2019, Brent also made significant purchases of 114 new flats at the Grand





New homes

In 2019-20, 2,433 new homes including 31% affordable homes completed.



Homelessness

During COVID-19 first lockdown 330 homeless people accommodated.



New council homes

i4B acquired a brand new block of 153 new flats for keyworkers in Wembley Park.

► INFRASTRUCTURE

Union development in Alperton and 235 new homes in the Gloucester & Durham blocks in South Kilburn. Brent is building capacity to deliver yet more new affordable homes, and in March 2020 entered into a collaboration agreement with Network Homes to support core aspects of the housing development process, with the collaboration seen as an exemplar for other Local Authorities and Registered Providers to follow.

Homelessness

Brent Council is committed to tackling homelessness and is working with third sector agencies to provide support for rough sleepers and prevent people at risk becoming homeless. During lockdown the Council accommodated over 330 homeless people. Each person's needs have been thoroughly assessed to establish the right type of accommodation for them, and to date the Council has found suitable accommodation for over 150 people.

Technology in Housing

Brent is piloting Smart Home technology to test new

devices and energy efficient measures in the Council's housing stock in 2021. The project will be used to evaluate how SMART technology can improve energy efficiency and will be used as a proof of concept for future SMART projects.

In early 2021, new features will be added to the online My Account portal through which council tenants and leaseholders view rent statements and raise and monitor service requests, as we continue to upgrade out customer portal to provide safe and flexible access to

Top Housing Priorities for 2021 and beyond

- **Meet Local Plan housing targets, and build 5,000 new affordable homes, including 1,000 new council homes, by 2024.**
- **Diversity housing delivery to meet different and changing needs in the borough.**
- **Driving down the number of households living in temporary accommodation.**



Brent carefully considers capacity and demand to plan for better infrastructure for a growing population and changing demographics, and to support development, improve environmental standards and align with national and regional policies. For regeneration and development to be sustainable, sufficient physical, social, green and utilities infrastructure must be provided to serve the new communities it accommodates.

The COVID-19 pandemic is recasting the role infrastructure plays locally and nationally, and highlights how critical digital connectivity and green open spaces are for people's work and physical and mental health. Physical distancing and the rise in homeworking at the same time challenge traditional conceptions of the office and the commute. Motorised vehicle use fell dramatically when lockdown was introduced, but returned to normal levels a few months after the first lockdown, whilst public transport use remains below and cycling use above pre-COVID levels.

Whether people's reactions to the pandemic continue into the medium and longer term, and visions for a new 15-minute city become a reality, is unclear. Brent Council must in any case plan for the future, work with partners and lead by example to encourage positive behaviours, and secure the investment necessary to maintain and deliver the new infrastructure vital for the well-being of local businesses and residents, and which will support inclusive growth.

Brent Infrastructure Funding Statement 2019/20



Infrastructure investment

Brent's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is a comprehensive framework that support the Local Plan and Brent's future infrastructure needs to 2020-2041. 80 projects for education, health, community, parks and transport are identified for over £600m worth of investment.

Development funds new infrastructure through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and s106 planning obligations. Brent's Annual Infrastructure Statement published December 2020 shows the scale of these contributions over 2019/20, with £27.3m CIL received, and £31.5m allocated and spent on new education facilities at Morland Gardens and in Wembley, 3 medical centres in Alperton, South Kilburn and Wembley, transport and public realm improvements in Wembley, and 94 approved neighbourhood level community projects. An additional £3.3m s106 funding was spent on infrastructure over 2019-20, including on transport and affordable housing projects.

Brent has an ambitious programme of capital investment in schools, housing and community infrastructure, much of which is underway, and moving forward will seek to ramp up delivery and pool funding sources, including borrowing.



Digital Infrastructure

Increased homeworking and consumption of online goods and services means fast, reliable internet connections have never been more important. Brent Council is working with internet providers to deliver rollout of full-fibre 1 GB capable broadband across the borough.

Brent's proactive approach to agreements between broadband providers and landowners is improving coverage and internet access to Brent's housing stock. Hyperoptic and Community Fibre have established more than 7,000 new connections, with more new phases planned. Operators are also encouraged to expand their full fibre networks beyond social housing, with Community Fibre planning 10,000 new connections in the north of the borough as part of a Single Dwelling Unit pilot. Brent's two largest Growth Areas Alperton and Tokyngton have up to 57% higher Ultra-Fast (UF) and Full Fibre (FTTP) connections than the London average. A project is underway to secure improved connectivity and access to the internet across the South Kilburn regeneration area.



Infrastructure Investment

£31.5m Community Infrastructure Levy allocated.



Infrastructure & Green Recovery

Over 4,900 potholes filled between June and August 2020.



Digital Infrastructure

Hyperoptic and Community Fibre established over 8,300 new connections.

Infrastructure and Green Recovery

2020 has seen new secure cycle parking delivered in the borough, with £300,000 of developer funding providing 60 new cycle hangars to meet growing demand. Cycle parking has also been planned into new public realm schemes, for example at Kilburn Station, and town centre improvements secured under the £20m footway investment programme. 42 miles of pavement will be repaired between October 2019 and March 2021, with major repairs spread across the

borough, to give footways a new lease of life and make it easier for people of all ages to get around. London and Local policies are also ensuring development proposals remove barriers to cycling and create a healthy environment in which people choose to cycle. Planning policies support cycle routes and require all new developments to provide cycle spaces, with new residential developments to provide 1-2 new long stay cycle spaces per new home.

Brent Council's Climate Emergency response includes a



Brent Travel Plan to promote sustainable travel across Brent's operations. A Corporate Travel Survey launched in Autumn 2020 is assessing staff travel habits and how they have changed in the COVID-19 pandemic, and will inform Brent's overarching Travel Plan.

SMART Technology

Brent Council have designed and are launching pilot projects to better utilise SMART technology:

- Air pollution sensors are due to be trialled in 2021, with suppliers engaged on options for set up, monitoring and evaluation.
- CCTV footage in town centres is proposed to help better understand how people use town centre – including how well spaced people are and whether they lend themselves to physical distancing – with appropriate measures to protect individuals' identities.
- More than 4,900 potholes were filled between June and August 2020 thanks to pioneering new

technology. The Council partnered with Vaisala to deploy a vehicle with dash-cams; as it drove the borough's 340-mile network of streets, video technology mapped the road surface and identified defects. The Council then deployed Velocity, pothole specialists, to repair the defects. The Velocity method uses injection-patching, cutting carbon emissions 90% versus traditional repair techniques, and taking just 2 minutes instead of 20 minutes to repair each pothole.

Top Infrastructure Priorities for 2021 and beyond

- Investment in new technology and innovations to deliver a digitally SMART borough.
- Partnership working to improve water and sewer capacity, and mitigate drought and flooding risks.
- Investment in major public transport infrastructure, including the West London Orbital line and Crossrail.



► ENVIRONMENT

Brent's environment will come under pressure from a growing population and the effects of climate change, with a widening mismatch between the supply and demand for natural resources. Coordinated action by businesses, politicians and individuals must be taken now to mitigate the growing threat of climate change. Environmental concerns are high on the political agenda with Brent declaring a Climate Emergency in 2019 and the opportunity for a green economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic also highlighted the importance and value of good quality parks and open spaces. Brent Council has won numerous awards for its environmental work, including the International Gold Green Apple, Association of Town

& City Management Environmental and Smart Technology Sustainable Cities Awards in 2019, and must continue to show leadership as we seek to ensure a sustainable environment for current and future generations.

Modal Shift

Brent's draft COVID-19 Transport Recovery Plan identifies key strategic cycle routes to support more active travel. Following a successful bid for £125,000 from Transport for London, in September 2020 a new semi-segregated cycle lane was implemented on the Harrow Road, between



Wembley Triangle and the A406 North Circular Road.

Brent's Active Travel programme is delivering 10 Healthy Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and 33 new School Streets, which are testing measures to encourage modal shift away from polluting motor vehicles and supporting more people cycling and walking.

Tackling Climate Change

In November 2020, Brent's Climate Emergency Strategy (2021-2030) was approved for public consultation. The Strategy aims to seize the opportunities the Council has to make a direct impact on the climate emergency, identify where investment can be targeted for maximum impact, and support and enable residents, businesses,



Modal shift

In 2020, Brent launched 10 Health Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and 33 School Streets.



Climate change

In 2020, 1,000 new trees were planted in Brent.



Circular economy

Over 1,200 residents donated 4.6 tonnes of items to the British Heart Foundation

voluntary and community sector groups, schools, registered providers and other organisations, to all play their local part in working together to tackle what is a global emergency.

Brent is working hard to make the borough more accommodating to clean electric vehicle use.

54 Source London electric vehicle charging points were installed in 2020, and further works are underway with 180 lamp column chargers due to be installed by the end of March 2021.

Green infrastructure has grown up across Brent in 2020. New trees, urban greening and rain gardens have been incorporated into public realm and highway improvements, including at Alperton Station, Harrow Road / District Road local safety scheme, Neasden Town Centre, Wembley High Road and Cricklewood. New areas of woodland were created in parks and street trees planted in residential areas. Over 1,000 new trees were planted in Brent in 2020.

Circular Economy

Brent's circular economy this year benefited from community skip days to coincide with the Great British September Clean. The Brent Community Skip was made available to local residents to drop in up to 5 bulky items free of charge, and toured all 21 wards in Brent.

The project involved partnership working between Veolia and the Council's Neighbourhood Managers to sort items and ensure recycling and reuse wherever possible. Over 1,200 residents used the skip, dropping off over 2,600 bulky items, with reusable items shared with other residents who could use them. Any furniture, electrical goods, bikes and bric-a-brac in good working condition did not go to waste, with 4.6 tonnes of these items donated to the British Heart Foundation, and a new pop-up shop run by the West London Waste Authority.



Top Environment Priorities for 2021 and beyond

- Grow the local circular economy, including employment opportunities and community schemes to reduce waste in the borough.
- Work with partners to reduce pollution, across business, domestic and road transport sectors.
- Make better use of our open spaces, to promote biodiversity, increase access to nature and reduce the risks of climate change.



HEALTH

Health in the context of the capital is multifaceted, requiring an understanding of demographics, determinate social and environmental factors and behaviours,

and health and care systems that deliver services and treatments for ill health and disease. An ageing population and changing patterns of disease, with people living longer with multiple and complex conditions, will impact the health of our society and peoples lifestyles. Increasing demand and costs are expected to sharpen focus on maintaining accessibility to health services, alongside changes in the way individuals approach and receive healthcare. Nursing and social care vacancies in London are higher than the national average, as is staff turnover in the National Health Service (NHS) more broadly, placing further strain on the social care sector.

Local health issues in Brent include obesity and diabetes. In 2020, 40.1% of Brent's children leaving Year 6 were observed as overweight or obese. The highest rates of childhood obesity were in Welsh Harp and Stonebridge, the lowest in Kenton and Alperton. In 2017, 11.8% of Brent's population were estimated to have diabetes, above the 8.7% London average, and diabetes rates are predicted to rise to 13.6% by 2035, partly due to an ageing population, high obesity levels, and Brent's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population's predisposition to diabetes.

COVID-19

COVID-19 has highlighted health inequality at local, national and international levels. Tragically, in the first wave Brent suffered the highest COVID-19 death rate

in London and 2nd highest death rate in the UK. At the same time Brent moved to the forefront of COVID-19 interventions. In July 2020, London's first hyper-local COVID-19 testing site in Harlesden offered tests to people without symptoms working in high-contact professions, such as taxi drivers, cleaners and people working in shops and restaurants. Harlesden is an area hit hard by COVID-19, due to factors such as diversity, inequality and the number of local residents working in high-contact roles. With the approval of the rapid Lateral Flow tests (LFT), the Council rapidly expanded testing for asymptomatic residents, at the height of the second wave having nine LFT and three PCR sites across the borough.

Utilise Social Prescribing

Brent have established links between social prescribers in the NHS, the new Adult Social Care / Public Health Gateway contract, and leisure services, with exercise on prescription and similar offers proving popular and effective prior to COVID 19. Additional work is planned to build links between the Council's library and heritage service and social prescribers, to increase health literacy and promote the Council's resources, including digital access. Brent will also use £250,000 grant funding awarded by The Heritage Lottery Fund to promote heritage for wellbeing.

Technology in Health

In 2020, Health and Social care teams launched a number Technology Enabled Care (TEC) pilots. The Brain in Hand and Kemuri Sense pilots are underway and it is estimated future deployment of these technologies at scale can improve service efficiency and outcomes for residents. Brain in Hand is a digital self-management support system for people who need help in remembering things, making decisions, planning, or managing anxiety. The app aims to reduce Accident & Emergency visits and ambulance call outs, delay admissions to residential care, reduce loneliness and support people struggling to maintain employment. Kemuri Sense is a sensor-based device using discreet technology to monitor



COVID-19

In the first wave Brent suffered the highest COVID-19 death rate in London.

patterns and behaviours of clients' daily lives and promote independence post-acute episodes, improve outcomes, and deliver value for money.



Brent's public health team have worked with Good Thinking, who provide digital mental wellbeing support for London. The use of free, quality assured online tools and apps was promoted to support good mental health, including NHS-approved apps to help users deal with stress, anxiety, low mood and poor sleep. Brent's public health team have also worked with North West London NHS to promote and evaluate a number



Environmental and Sports Facility

In Summer 2020, 268 Brent residents attended free, group exercise classes in Brent's parks.

of disease specific apps (for diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and cardiovascular health) where licenses have been funded by the NHS and so are free to local residents.

Environmental and Sports Facilities

Brent has continued to implement 'Our Parks', an initiative bringing free, group exercise classes, led by experienced, fully qualified and insured instructors to eight of Brent Parks. During lockdown these sessions have continued to be provided and have attracted up to 48 people per session. Once lockdown measures lift these sessions will continue face to face. A £70,000



Utilise Social Prescribing

In August 2020, Brent was awarded a £250,000 grant to promote heritage for wellbeing.



investment has been agreed for improvements for part of the Capital Ring walk which passes through Brent at Northwick Park. We have also implemented Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and other initiatives to support more active travel. The proposed redevelopment of Bridge Park leisure centre will provide a state of the art new leisure centre.

Top Environment Priorities for 2021 and beyond

- Encourage healthier lifestyles and support partner delivery of tailored and preventative approaches to local health problems.
- Ensure local restaurants, workplaces, schools and other places where residents spend time are designed and operated in a way that promotes good health outcomes.
- Promote technology's increasing role to improve efficiency and flexibility for healthcare professionals, and improve patient outcomes through early diagnosis and better treatment.

CULTURE

Brent was the London Borough of Culture 2020 at a time when art and culture have been hit hard by COVID-19. Cultural venues have shut, sporting events hosted without crowds, it is not currently known when venues can re-open and mass gatherings can return. Culture permeates all aspects of peoples' lives. From placemaking, to leisure, to employment, culture plays a massive role in the ecology, diversity and soul of our communities.

Pre-COVID-19, creative economy jobs, exports and Gross Value Added grew faster than any other sector, and although up to 30% of jobs in London are at risk of automation over the next 20 years, 87% of highly creative occupations are considered to be more resilient and at low risk of automation. In the current climate, culture and the arts must be supported not only for the part they play in bringing diverse communities together, but also the economic value and jobs they bring to the local economy.



Brent celebrates its diversity and supports the invaluable contributions creativity and culture make to local society and to the local economy.

Brent's Inclusive Growth Strategy proposes we nurture our creative capital by building a legacy from the work of the London Borough of Culture 2020, promoting cultural spaces and networks, providing workspaces to accommodate creatives, and ensuring the cultural diversity of the borough is recognised and celebrated, including through greater local tourism.

Arts for Young People

The London Borough of Culture 2020 (LBOC) education programme has offered resources and opportunities for partnerships with Brent schools. Over 2020, 119 schools and settings and 223 educators have engaged with the programme. This support has enabled teachers to embed arts and heritage into curricular and extra-curricular programmes, working directly with artists to develop resource packs for pupils.

The education programme also established a Cultural Leads Network and Cultural Champions network which connects teachers and educators to Continuing Professional Development and arts organisation in London to ensure a rich arts and culture offer is building in schools. In addition, 20% of Culture Fund recipients are working with schools on arts and heritage projects including: Irish dance, Latin dance, carnival arts, nature & gardening, disability arts, and poetry.



Plans are in motion for the Brent 2020 legacy. A Local Cultural Educational Partnership will create a long-term sustainable mechanism to ensure every child in Brent has access to arts and culture, and sustain the Cultural Leads Network and Cultural Champions networks into the future.

Promote Creative Career

Through Blueprint Collective & Artist Network, LBOC's programme for young people, 148 young people received training, workshops, mentoring, 1-2-1's and paid opportunities to work with creative professionals to curate and deliver creative projects including: VENT Podcasts, Locked In Films (interviews), and 5 paid placements with the LBOC team (social media, producing, programming). Participants developed skills essential for successful creative careers, and were connected with professional contacts in the field. In addition, one member of the Collective has a full time



Arts for young people

119 schools and venues have engaged with the London Borough of Culture 2020 education programme.

role within the Brent 2020 team, alongside a community advisor.

The Brent Artist Network promotes creative careers by pooling funding and job opportunities for working artists and offering (virtual) spaces for Brent creatives to connect to address and discuss similar challenges and aspirations. The network has a membership of 470 artists working and living in the borough.



Workspace for artists

Metroland Studios provided 10 studio and desk spaces, a gallery space and social space, for Brent based artists.

Workspace for Artists

Metroland Studios provides a new, specially designed and curated destination for Brent visual artists to make, work and collaborate with other artists. Outfitted with 10 studio and desk spaces, a gallery space and social space, Metroland Studios is a dedicated workspace for artists and their patrons, all while giving a life to previously disused office building in the heart of Kilburn.



Promote creative careers

The Brent Artist Network has a membership of 470 artists in the borough.

Through the residency programme, 10 Brent-based visual artists and collectives will receive free access to studio space for 1 year.

Library Outreach

Between September 2020 and January 2021, the Brent Biennial took new artworks to 10 libraries across the borough, extending access to public art for Brent residents and Londoners at large, reinforcing libraries as cultural and social destinations, and broadening their role within the community. The Biennial also created new video and audio content accessible from Brent libraries, providing a new cultural service during lockdown.

The No Bass Like Home oral history archive has opened libraries and heritage up to new audiences, increasing outreach and engagement through culturally significant subject matter and newly recorded content relevant and reflective of Brent residents. The No Bass online festival held November 2020 built on these new audiences, drawing in yet more people to contribute to the archive, raising awareness and providing a platform for stories about the reggae revolution that emerged from Brent to sweep the UK.



London Borough of Culture 2020 (LBOC)

Despite the challenging and unprecedented circumstances of 2020, the LBOC programme has achieved its ambition, pivoting its approach to digital content and online platforms, whilst retaining the voices of artists, creatives and young people at its heart.

The legacy of Brent's year as London Borough of Culture will include:

- **Culture as a clear priority for the borough** – the creation of a new post within the council to take forward the legacy of Brent 2020.
- **Brent as a dynamic and supportive community of artists and creatives** – delivering support through a residencies programme and Artist Network; connections created through Blueprint Collective.

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- **Putting Brent on the map as a cultural destination for London** – maintained through the ongoing visual arts and music Biennials.
- **Brent has culture embedded in its history and at its heart** – the home of reggae & jungle and to many writers, poets, creatives.
- **A borough committed to creating cultural opportunities for its young people** – establishment of Brent's Local Cultural Educational Partnership; the future life of Blueprint Collective.

Top Culture Priorities for 2021 and beyond

- Deliver on the legacy from the London Borough of Culture 2020.
- Create more and richer cultural opportunities for young people.
- Encourage artists and creatives to flourish, build the creative economy in Brent.

