

# Brent's Community Strategy

2006-2010



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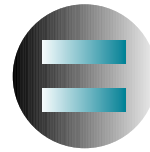
PARTNERS  
FOR BRENT

# Brent

One of only two majority black and minority ethnic boroughs, Brent has the most culturally diverse population in the country. This unique quality is celebrated locally. It has created an exciting place and a harmonious community with a youthful, highly mobile and expanding population.

As a location, Brent has much to offer residents and businesses. There are good quality services and excellent transport links both to central London and the rest of the country. Brent's 8,000 local businesses make an important contribution to the local quality of life as well as London's economy, and there is potential for future business growth.

However, Brent is an outer-London borough that faces many inner-London problems. Ranked 58th on the national deprivation league table, there is a sharp north-south divide with an affluent north and generally poorer south. One in seven residents live in areas which are amongst the ten per cent most deprived wards in the country. One in four is long-term unemployed and nearly a quarter of households are overcrowded.



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## **FOREWORD BY CLLR ANN JOHN**

Home to over 263,400 people with most culturally diverse population in country and a reputation for the peaceful co-existence and tolerance of our residents, Brent is a community to be proud of – one I am proud to represent.

What unites us all is our desire to make Brent a safe, clean, green place; a lively place which is prosperous and healthy; and a place where everyone's needs are recognised and everyone's contribution is valued.

Developed following extensive consultation with residents and local organisations, this Community Strategy provides an insight into your aspirations and illustrates our commitment to meeting them.

Together with our partners in Brent's Local Strategic Partnership, we have set out a clear and achievable yet challenging vision for Brent, with the aim of delivering better-tailored and more efficient services for residents.

Brent is an exciting place to live and work in and to visit. The opening of the Wembley Stadium this year will breathe new life into the area while the wider redevelopment alone will provide thousands of new jobs, new homes, exciting new leisure facilities and improvements to public transport, bringing benefits to the whole of Brent.

Although local services face many challenges, not least the discrimination and disadvantage experienced by too many of our residents, we are united in our determination to tackle them and optimistic about overcoming them.

We all have a part to play in strengthening our community, as this Strategy makes clear. I welcome your thoughts on it and look forward to working with you to turn it into reality.

Together, our actions will establish Brent as an even better place to live and visit, full of opportunities and welcoming to all.

**Cllr Ann John**  
Leader of Brent Council & Chair,  
Partners for Brent

December 2005



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# Our vision

Brent will be a prosperous and lively borough, full of opportunity and welcoming to all. A place that will thrive for generations to come, whose future will be determined by local people.

# Our values

We will deliver efficient, accessible and sustainable services to excellent standards.

We will develop tailored solutions to meet the needs of individuals, families and communities.

We will celebrate our borough's diversity and build upon our national reputation for nurturing successful community cohesion.

# A great place

Brent will be a great place to live in and to visit. It will be safe, clean, green and lively. Local people will be confident that our streets and open spaces are safe places to be and that our green spaces and leisure facilities will be worth visiting. Residents will care for their surroundings, appreciate where they live and enjoy what Brent has to offer.

## A safe place

**We want Brent to be a safe, secure place to live in and to visit. We have made real progress in recent years, halting the overall rise in crime and cutting it in our priority neighbourhoods<sup>1</sup>. Our challenge is to reduce fear of crime and the impact upon violent crime and robberies.**

Central to our approach to community safety has been the provision of high visibility policing and local warden services covering our parks, key housing estates, town centres and priority neighbourhoods.

We have built a national reputation for addressing the root causes of the borough's crime. Successful initiatives include the high profile launch of the Brent Against Drugs campaign, targeting young people to warn them of the dangers of drugs and our award-winning Not Another Drop campaign against gun crime, which has been replicated in other parts of the country.

Where possible we adopt a preventative approach to working with potential offenders, using acceptable behaviour contracts and youth inclusion projects, addressing housing needs and promoting drug and alcohol treatment.

At neighbourhood level we have piloted wardworking, a new approach to improving service delivery, responsiveness and participation which helps to reduce the fear of crime. wardworking promotes Neighbourhood Watch and makes improvements to the street scene; for example removing rubbish, abandoned cars, fly tipping and graffiti.

And we have improved safety in the home too through fire safety, security lighting and accident prevention.

Together, we are committed to ensuring that you are safe and secure. We aim to:

- complement the expansion of local police Safer Neighbourhood Teams with ever greater levels of collaboration across the borough's patrol services; and
- offer new opportunities for residents to become involved in plans for their neighbourhoods by rolling-out wardworking borough-wide.



<sup>1</sup> Brent's priority neighbourhoods are areas which fall into the top 10% of deprived wards in the country. They are in Harlesden, Stonebridge and South Kilburn.

## A clean place

**We want to provide clean, well-designed and cared-for streets and open spaces so that people feel good about the areas in which they live and work. Our challenges are to prevent a few people from spoiling the environment for the rest of us and to raise standards fast enough to keep up with rising expectations.**

During recent years we have radically improved the cleanliness of our local environment, providing additional resources for maintaining pavements, recycling facilities and environmental enforcement activities. The impact of the Big Brent Clean-up is already evident with residents reporting increased satisfaction with the cleanliness of the borough and the performance of the waste collection services.

The wardworking pilots have also supported the environmental agenda, providing a forum for a detailed discussion on local issues and a much more responsive service for the neighbourhood.

Nevertheless, we still require considerable change to meet and maintain the high standards of cleanliness that our local residents expect.

Together, we are committed to creating welcoming streets and open spaces. We will:

- provide a dedicated street care officer for every ward;
- increase the standard of cleanliness across the borough;
- reduce the gap in standards of cleanliness between neighbourhoods; and
- raise our performance to exceed that of neighbouring boroughs.



## A green place

Residents want to enjoy safe, clean parks, open spaces and play areas which are rich in wildlife and offer a variety of activities – and they expect developments to be sustainable. Our challenges are to ensure that everyone in Brent has access to the borough's public spaces, and to protect our environment through waste reduction.

In recent years we have made a significant investment in parks, open spaces and play areas, attracting 16 million visitors, and improving satisfaction amongst residents who use local parks. Parks in Brent have won the prestigious Green Flag ever since the scheme was established.

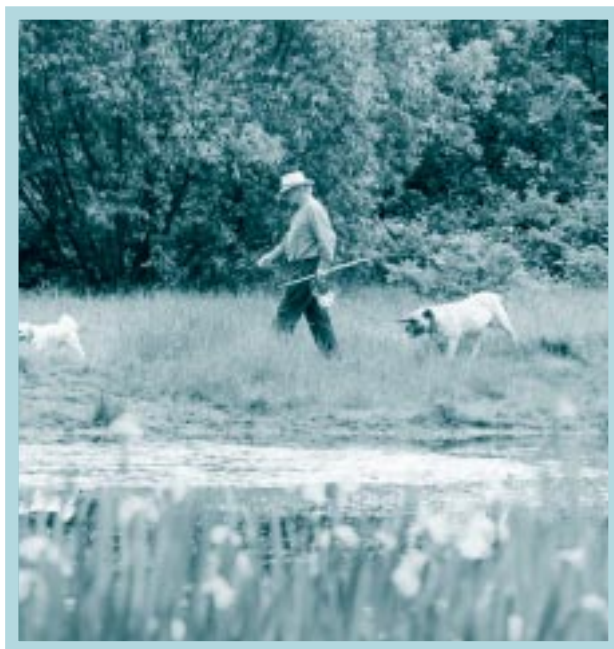
We promote recycling and waste reduction in local schools and communities. Most households now have door-step recycling collection and we are seeking ways to provide the remaining flatted properties with a suitable service.



Our development programmes have enthusiastically embraced the green agenda with renovation works that are increasingly sustainable in both design and construction, actively encouraging the use of renewable and energy efficient resources that minimise waste.

Together, we are committed to improving the quality of life today, without compromising our future. We will:

- further improve the quality and accessibility of local parks, play areas and open spaces and encourage greater use for pleasure and to promote wellbeing;
- develop improved transport networks, making it easier for residents and visitors to abandon their cars when visiting Brent's green and natural environments; and
- work with local people to protect our environment, reduce the amount of waste our borough sends to landfill, encourage greater biodiversity and limit our contributions to climate change.



Photography: Graham Mullett



## A lively place

**Brent hosts a multitude of arts and cultural events. Our successful programme of festivals has raised religious awareness, cohesion and connectivity amongst our diverse communities. Our challenges are to establish a broader range of exercise and sports activities and to ensure that they are accessible for all.**

Brent's cultural assets range from the spectacular Swaminayan Hindu Temple to the internationally renowned Wembley Arena. The new Stadium and wider developments in Wembley will create a vibrant heart for Brent which will be complemented by a range of community-based initiatives, for instance the relocation of our museum of community history to Willesden.

Cultural services are at the forefront of our approach to community cohesion and engagement with hard to reach groups. Our festivals programme, which includes the Respect Festival, Diwali, Eid, Hanukkah and St. Patrick's Day, reflects the diversity of

Brent's population. Local communities are involved in planning and delivery and attendance at these events is estimated at 50,000 a year, demonstrating local interest in and support for inter-cultural events.

Further investment is a priority with clear links to programmes to promote healthy life styles, combat social isolation, improve youth services and reduce anti-social behaviour.

Together, we are committed to promoting access to leisure. We aim to:

- enhance civic pride in Brent by encouraging residents and visitors to celebrate their unique cultural identity and encouraging greater interest in Brent's history;
- facilitate opportunities for physical exercise and sport, reducing barriers to participation and promoting healthy living; and
- establish Wembley as a national and international destination and securing tangible benefits for local people.



# A borough of opportunity

Brent will be a prosperous, healthy place where there are opportunities for all. A place where income and employment levels will be higher than the London average, where businesses thrive and where residents will enjoy good health and be able to make healthy choices.

## Local employment and enterprise

**We want to create a place where businesses want to locate, and can succeed. As Brent is one of the country's top 50 deprivation hotspots for employment and income, our challenge is to ensure that local people fill the jobs, boosting the local economy and their own prosperity.**

We have actively supported the attempts of local people to gain employment and to progress in work. By identifying the needs of local employers, preparing residents for them and acting as broker, Our employment initiatives help more than a 1,000 local people to enter employment each year, largely from the borough's poorer neighbourhoods.

In future we will offer more support to those who are furthest removed from the labour market in order that they can move from dependence on welfare benefits to employment. This will provide a significant boost to residents with physical disabilities, learning difficulties and mental health issues, as well as families in temporary accommodation and ex-offenders.

Our efforts to encourage enterprise growth are centred on four themes, all identified through partnership with local businesses. They are: strengthening links between businesses and schools and including enterprise on the curriculum; creating the right environmental conditions for business growth; improving access to business advice, support and finance and maximising opportunities for inward investment.

Together, we aim to boost local employment and income. We will:

- provide basic skills training and opportunities to progress to higher qualifications;
- improve pathways to and progression within employment, particularly for those furthest from the labour market;
- make sure the transformation of Wembley is sustainable and creates new opportunities for growth across the borough; and
- rejuvenate the borough's town centres, ensuring that areas do not fall into decline and undermine business growth.



**Brent in2work helped Noreen Raja find work.**

## Health and wellbeing

**We want Brent residents to have the best possible chance of a long, fulfilling and healthy life. Our challenge is to reduce the gap in life expectancy, which is dramatically lower in the south of the Borough.<sup>1</sup>**

Although we have made progress towards tackling the broader determinants of health by targeting the areas of greatest need, we continue to under achieve in encouraging local people to quit smoking, the single greatest cause of preventable illness and premature death in England, while immunisation and cancer screening rates are low.

Access to services is greatly improved. The proportion of residents registered with a GP has increased substantially and local people can now consistently get an appointment with a practice nurse within 24 hours and a GP within 48 hours. Practically every patient needing an urgent cancer referral sees a specialist within two weeks. However, too many accident and emergency patients continue to wait more than four hours before they can be admitted or discharged.

We have also made progress in modernising services. We are in the final stages of creating a new patient-focused service at the Brent Emergency Care and Diagnostic Centre and are consulting on plans to update services at Northwick Park. Having redeveloped Willesden Community and Kingsbury Hospitals, we are creating healthy living centres across the borough in order to shape services to meet local needs and to encourage healthier living.

Together, we are committed to reducing health inequalities and promoting well-being. We aim to:

- improve access to healthy choices and help residents to make informed choices about their health and care;
- tackle smoking and obesity, reducing the prevalence and achieving better outcomes for coronary heart disease, diabetes and cancer;
- halt the rise in sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy;
- improve early diagnosis of tuberculosis and cancers, and
- provide integrated, tailored-healthcare and promotion services at neighbourhood level.



<sup>1</sup> A male child currently born in Kenton ward, can expect to live for 81 years but one in Harlesden can only expect 71 years. Similarly, life expectancy for female children drops from 84.5 years to 78.6 years.

# An inclusive community

Brent will be an inclusive community, welcoming to all. Services will respond to the needs of young and old alike, supporting them to achieve independence and encouraging them to take a full part in the life of the borough.

## Settled homes

**We aim to increase housing supply, particularly affordable housing, ensure decent homes and meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents. This would be a challenging agenda in any area, but in Brent, we need to find a way of securing settled homes for the large number of families with children based in temporary accommodation.**

Local housing providers work closely with each other and with residents to increase housing provision, ensure decent standards and enable tenants to shape provision.

Brent's priority areas have undergone a transformation. Nearly 4,000 new and refurbished homes will be delivered in South Kilburn. Chalkhill has been successfully regenerated, Church End is nearing completion and there are future plans for Barham Park.

In the last three years we have secured £129 million for the delivery of affordable homes. This has enabled us to provide, more than 600 additional homes, with over 1,000 more due for completion. Having exceeded regional targets for provision of affordable homes, we now have Opportunity Borough status which will enable us to unlock further sites for redevelopment.

Tenant satisfaction is high. We are on target for achieving decency standards for council and housing association properties and for vulnerable tenants in private housing. Last year, we returned 700 empty properties back to use, prevented 755 families from becoming homeless and stopped 500 people from being evicted.

Together, we maintain our commitment to securing settled homes. We will:

- promote sustainable development and create balanced communities;
- seek Government approval to secure permanent homes for families in temporary accommodation, enabling them to enter paid employment; and
- support our most vulnerable tenants, regardless of tenure.



## Early excellence

**We want Brent's children to realise their potential and succeed in life. Our challenge is to support the large proportion of children who experience the greatest barriers to learning: those who live transient lives, children living in our priority neighbourhoods or on low incomes and those with additional or acute needs.**

The achievement of Brent's children and young people has improved dramatically in recent years. Collectively, Brent's young people are the 11th highest performers in London and they are now achieving above the national average at GCSE (A\*-C). Nevertheless, key groups are falling behind, particularly black children and young people.

Local services have a track record of developing and delivering excellent and innovative services which benefit those in most need: through extended schools, support when children move from primary to secondary school and counselling and mediation services.

2005 saw a radical re-organisation of services for children and young people, with the creation of a new inter-agency children's service that places families, parents and carers at the core of our collective activities towards securing better outcomes for local children.

Together, we are committed to early excellence across all our communities.

We aim to:

- provide universal access to extended schools and children's centres;
- establish a new generation of local, personal and needs-led services to redress the inequalities facing Brent's children and young people;
- shift support towards earlier intervention and prevention;
- provide services that are fully inclusive, accessible and sensitive to the unique cultural diversity of our young population;
- encourage the collective responsibility for protecting and supporting the emotional development of our children and young people; and
- ensure our neighbourhoods provide safe, caring, stimulating, yet challenging activities and environments for young people.



**Jordy Mumbiny,**  
St Margaret Clitherow RC primary school.

## Support when you need it

**Most of us need help at some time and many depend upon intensive support for prolonged periods, particularly older people or those who have a long-term illness or disability. Our challenges are to provide tailored care packages for those with the greatest need and engage in preventative work so that need does not escalate unnecessarily.**

Brent's residents benefit from a broad range of services which promote independent living.

We have introduced a range of initiatives designed to improve the physical fitness and inclusion of older people and those with physical, mental or learning disabilities, through the improvement of access to parks and open spaces.

Residents value our minor accident treatment services, nurse led drop-in services and the informality and the accessibility of GPs in smaller practices, community transport schemes and integrated community equipment service.

We have achieved a significant reduction in the number of delayed discharges from hospital, although we recognise the need for further improvements. Our well-established rehabilitative services have contributed towards a relatively low proportion of older people needing to be admitted into residential and nursing care.

Home-based caring services are sensitive to and based upon individual need and cultural preferences. These are complemented by outreach, crisis resolution and respite care services, as well as day centre and vocational projects.

Together, we are committed to enabling residents to lead more active lives. We will:

- develop a person-centred single assessment process across the borough's health and social care services;
- intervene early to prevent residents from having to face crisis and further deterioration in their health and wellbeing;
- enable more people to remain in their homes, leading active lives;
- provide tailored services for those with acute needs; and
- improve the health and fitness of Brent's residents in order to secure a more active and independent future for everyone.



**Happy at home – Ada Moon benefited from a grant to improve the homes of people with disabilities.**

# How to get involved

There are lots of different ways to find out what is going on in Brent, make your point and influence what happens.

## Brent Council and other public services

- 5 Area consultative forums
- 6 Service user consultative forums
- 4 Area housing boards
- 5 wardworking pilots (going Borough-wide in 2006)
- 1 Citizen's Panel
- 12 Brent magazines a year

### Brent Council Consultation Team

WEB [www.brent.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.brent.gov.uk/consultation)  
EMAIL [cnet@brent.gov.uk](mailto:cnet@brent.gov.uk)  
TEL 020 8937 1055

## Residents and community groups

### Brent Resource and Information Network (Brain)

WEB [www.brentbrain.org.uk](http://www.brentbrain.org.uk)

## The voluntary and community sector

### Brent Association for Voluntary Action (Brava)

WEB [www.brava.org.uk](http://www.brava.org.uk)  
EMAIL [info@brava.org.uk](mailto:info@brava.org.uk)  
TEL 020 8838 1350

## Local businesses

### Brent Employer Partnership

WEB [www.employerpartnership.org.uk](http://www.employerpartnership.org.uk)  
TEL 020 8937 6438

## Local Strategic Partnership

### Partners for Brent

WEBSITE [www.brent.gov.uk/pru](http://www.brent.gov.uk/pru)  
EMAIL [pru@brent.gov.uk](mailto:pru@brent.gov.uk)  
TEL 020 8937 1030

# Information in other languages

This brochure is about the Community Strategy. To obtain a copy in another language please tick the appropriate box, fill in the form and return it to the address below.

PLEASE TICK

ALBANIAN

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If you would like this leaflet in large print or audio tape please call the Local Strategic Partnership on 020 8937 1030.

Please return to: Local Strategic Partnership,  
Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley, Middlesex  
HA9 9HD.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_



**PARTNERS  
FOR BRENT**



Working together for a safer London



This Community Strategy, and its supporting delivery plan (Brent's Local Area Agreement) have been produced by Brent's Local Strategic Partnership. Within the Partnership the Council comes together with other public services (including the local police and fire services, the national health service and local training and employment agencies), representatives of local businesses and of community and voluntary organisations in order to better understand and serve residents' needs, priorities and preferences

March 2006