



Executive - appendices

Monday, 12 April 2010 at 7.00 pm

Committee Rooms 1, 2 and 3, Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley, HA9 9HD

Membership:

Lead Member Councillors:

Portfolio

Lorber (Chair)	Leader of the Council
Blackman (Vice-Chair)	Deputy Leader of the Council
Allie	Lead Member for Housing and Customer Services
D Brown	Lead Member for Highways and Transportation
Colwill	Lead Member for Adults, Health and Social Care
Detre	Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Development
Matthews	Lead Member for Crime Prevention and Public Safety
Sneddon	Lead Member for HR and Diversity, Local Democracy and Consultation
Van Colle	Lead Member for Environment, Planning and Culture
Wharton	Lead Member for Children and Families

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The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Agenda - appendices

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members.

Item	Page
5 <u>APPENDIX:</u> Parks Strategy for Brent 2010-2015	1 - 92
<i>Report circulated separately</i>	
9 <u>APPENDIX:</u> Brent Equalities Monitoring	93 - 126
<i>Report circulated separately</i>	
10 <u>APPENDIX:</u> Childhood Immunisation Task Group	127 - 164
<i>Report circulated separately</i>	
11 <u>APPENDIX:</u> Task Group report - Services for women in and exiting Prostitution	165 - 190
<i>Report circulated separately</i>	



Parks Strategy

2010-2015

Chapter 1: Introduction

The need for a parks strategy

It is generally accepted that good quality parks and open spaces are important for enhancing the quality of urban life. Quality green spaces have been shown to support the local economy, enhance physical and mental health, benefit children and young people, reduce crime and fear of crime, support social cohesion, aid movement between spaces, and protect biodiversity and the environment (ODPM, 2005).¹

Corporate Strategy. The Sustainable Communities Strategy for Brent to 2010 and our Corporate Strategy both identify the parks in the borough as vital assets contributing to the health, wellbeing and overall quality of life of people living, working or studying in the borough.

As part of the Council's vision for Brent as 'a green place', our Corporate Strategy seeks to:

- Maintain the quality of parks and open spaces and upgrade the current range of facilities available within them, and
- Develop a programme of green activities – such as tree planting, developing 'pocket parks' and other open spaces to improve access to open space for residents

Local Area Agreement. Based on feedback from residents, among the Local Area Agreement (LAA) options identified by central government for local authorities, the Council has adopted priorities, in line with the Corporate Strategy, to:

- Reduce the adult mortality rate from circulatory diseases through measures tackling obesity (e.g. exercise referral, and health walks in parks)
- Reduce obesity among primary school pupils (through a wide range of measures including increased participation in physical activity (e.g. outdoor play and sport in parks)
- Increase participation in sport by both adults and young people (separate targets) through increasing capacity and clubs and sporting opportunities (with disabled people as a particular target group)
- Increase participation in regular volunteering (e.g. with play groups, allotment societies, sports clubs and Friends groups in parks)
- Raise satisfaction with parks and playgrounds among young people (a new agreement from 2009/10)
- Reduce CO2 emissions

¹ ODPM (2005), *How to Create Quality Parks and Open Spaces*. ODPM Publications.

Brent's parks and the Parks Service play an important role in helping the Council to achieve its LAA targets against all these priorities. The Parks Service has also developed a set of local objectives and performance indicators against these.

Biodiversity and Climate Change. The value of the borough's green spaces of all types is also recognised for their contribution to maintaining and improving local biodiversity. They are also vitally important in helping to adapt to climate change through, for example, planting and conservation of trees to provide shade from the sun, and consideration of the type of planting and of maintenance regimes in order to conserve water and provide floodplains.

Economic Development. Parks also make an important contribution to the wealth of the borough by helping to attract visitors and inward investment. Historic parks, such as the Victorian Gladstone and Roundwood parks, have a particular appeal and need to be protected and enhanced both for their inherent cultural value and their contribution to local wealth creation. Increasing the overall employment rate is a further priority (and Local Area Agreement) for the Council and a particular challenge in the current economic downturn.

The current Parks Strategy. The Council, with support from residents and a range of stakeholders, has achieved many of the recommendations set out in the current Parks Strategy that comes to an end this year. For example:

- Annual visits to our parks have increased to nearly 16 million a year from 13 million five years ago²
- Five of our parks - Gladstone, Roundwood, Barham, Preston, Mapesbury Dell and Queen's Park (in Brent and managed by the Corporation of London) - have received national ('Green Flag') recognition for the high standard of planting and facilities in these parks, and, in 2009 the Barn Hill Conservation Trust retained the 'Green Pennant' award for its work on the Roe Green Walled Garden
- Our allotment service has been re-vitalised and the quality of several sites has been transformed (eg. Gladstone Park Gardens and Townsend Lane)
- A comprehensive range of sports facilities in our parks have been upgraded and new facilities provided in areas of need (for example pitch drainage works a multi use games area and new sports pavilions at Gibbons Recreation Ground, Gladstone Park, John Billam, and the GEC, in addition to pavilion upgrades at Northwick Park, Vale Farm and King Edward VII Park and new multi use games areas at Vale Farm, Hazel Road and Grove Park)
- The results of the most recent annual Parks Survey show new approaches taken by the Park Warden Service have resulted in improved perceptions of security and safety in parks (including dog control, graffiti and vandalism), improved communications with users and greater community involvement; all issues identified as residents' priorities through the 'Best Value Review' consultation process in 2001
- In terms of Biodiversity, since 2001 the Council has achieved increases in hay meadow, woodland, hedgerow and pond habitats at Fryent Country Park; and of marshland conservation at the Brent Reservoir where 'Local Nature Reserve' status has been declared
- In 2008-09, Brent Parks Service received a 'London in Bloom' Silver Gilt Award for Horticultural Excellence and 3rd Place in both the Community Garden and Parks Bedding in the Discretionary awards. We have an

² Annual Brent Parks Surveys 2003 - 2008

excellent record in the local completion and have represented London in the regional Britain in Bloom competition in which won a silver gilt and came second in category. In 2009 we attained another Silver Gilt in the Large City category

- Brent Council Parks Service won the Beacon Status Award in 2002 under the theme 'Improving Urban Green Space'
- Our Parks Service has also secured a £1.2 million DCSF 'Playbuilder' grant to improve between 20-24 children's playgrounds across the borough. This project has resulted in improved working relationship with our Children and Families Departments and forged strong consultation networks with young people (For example, findings from the TELUS Survey 2009 shows that the young people of Brent have voted their local parks and playgrounds as the second best in the country. Results will be fed into the new NI199 indicator- 'Satisfaction with parks and playgrounds by young people')

Despite these successes, we know there is still much to achieve; not least how to address spatial deficiencies in open space, play and sports facilities to meet local needs in some of the most densely population parts of the borough and, looking to the future, how best to provide and sustain new areas of open space and facilities to meet the needs of the growing population linked to our area regeneration plans. We also know that many of our established park facilities are out-dated and inadequately maintained while improving residents' sense of security in our un-staffed parks and open spaces continues to be a priority. So too is the achievement of further Green Flag awards at Welsh Harp Open Space, King Edward VII Park, Brent River Park and, in time, other sites.

Now, a new plan is needed to guide the priorities for action in these and other areas of our work in the Parks Service for the coming five-year period.

At the same time that the current Parks Strategy is coming to an end, several changes are taking place in Brent that require new strategic planning when it comes to parks and green spaces and the amenities they provide.

Regeneration Areas. First, is housing growth planned around five regeneration areas – Wembley, Alperton, Church End, Burnt Oak/Colindale and South Kilburn. The Council has drafted a framework for investment in infrastructure to serve the people living in the new homes that these major regeneration schemes will attract. This 'Infrastructure & Investment Framework' includes consideration of access to parks and open space and management of these assets to help improve their quality.

The Local Development Framework. Second, all local councils in England are in the process of developing new Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) for future land-use as part of the government's statutory planning process. These LDFs replace the current Unitary Development Plans. As part of this change in Brent, the Council is preparing a Draft Core Strategy Submission Document.

To ensure that all future development in the Borough is properly supported with the necessary community infrastructure – including parks and open spaces – and that the Core Strategy is approved by the Secretary of State, a fully evidenced assessment of infrastructure needs is required.

This new Parks Strategy will help identify gaps in existing provision of parks and open spaces so that future investment (including contributions from developers) can be effectively targeted to achieve maximum community benefit.

London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. One of the legacies of the Games coming to London will be an increased interest in sport and active recreation by people of all ages and abilities, particularly the young. Sports and recreation facilities in Parks and open spaces will play a vital role in capitalising on this new enthusiasm and interest in sport. The Parks Strategy will need to consider how best to respond to this opportunity in the context of the Mayor's 2012 Olympics legacy plan, A Sporting Future for London (April 2009)

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP). A further consideration for the Parks Strategy with regard to facilities for sport and active recreation is the government's major investment programme in transforming education through capital buildings and infrastructure investment at both secondary level (the ongoing BSF and Academy School programmes) and at primary level (the new Primary Capital Programme). One of the aims of these programmes is to improve access and opportunities for local communities to access quality facilities on school sites (such as sports pitches and play areas) outside the school day. Clearly, the opportunities presented by BSF and PCP to provide community access to the types of sports and play amenities that are also provided in many of our parks and recreation grounds (e.g. grass and synthetic pitches, games courts and equipped play areas) need to be considered carefully in preparing our next Parks Strategy.

What do we mean by Parks?

The scope of the strategy includes the following types of urban green space within the borough: **public parks** (including sports amenities within parks), **public open spaces**, **children's play areas** in parks and **allotments**.

Working with others

Although the drafting of this strategy has been led by Brent Council's Parks Service, it has been compiled with input and consultation from related Council services (notably Planning and Sports), a variety of partners and Brent residents.

Annual Parks Survey. The Council carries out surveys of 10% of residents each year to find out what people think about the borough's parks and patterns of use according to demographic group to determine future needs reflecting equality of access.

Consultation on parks and play issues and priorities has also taken place with the Citizen's Panel and with the Brent Community Friends (Youth Forum) as part of developing proposals for improved play provision under the 'Playbuilder' grant aid scheme.

Local Interest Groups. Regular consultation on sports issues in parks takes place as part of the Brent Community Sports & Physical Activity Network (CSPAN) developed from the Brent Sports Club Forum. Other ways in which the Council works with residents to address parks issues include the various Parks Friends Groups that make a major voluntary contribution to Brent park life, as well as several Allotment Forum. These groups have all helped shaped a range of major changes during the last five years in line with the last Brent Parks Strategy.

Regional Groups. Across the sub-region and London as a whole, the Parks Service attends a number of consultative groups to make sure it keeps abreast of park

developments of relevance to Brent in neighbouring boroughs as well as good practice in parks planning and management, new developments, trends and investment opportunities.

Public Consultation on the Draft Strategy. Public consultation on the draft strategy took place from October 2009 to January 2010. The draft Strategy was available in Brent's libraries and remaining One Stop Shops. It was also available to download from the Parks Service's website and was on the Council's Consultation tracker inviting people to feedback via the online consultation questionnaire. A web link and flyers were sent to members of the Council's User Consultative Forums and the Brent Magazine ran an article on the draft strategy. The Youth Parliament considered the draft strategy and provided feedback which will inform delivery of the actions within the strategy.

Letters and/or emails were sent to the following individuals and organisations together with copies of the draft Strategy and Executive Summary asking for their comments and feedback:

- Senior Council Officers and Members
- Local Friends of Parks and Open Spaces
- All of the listed Residents Associations
Youth Parliament
- Greater London Parks Benchmarking Group
- Greenspace
- Council's User Consultative Forums which include Brava, BME, Disability and Older People's Forums
- All local Schools through the Schools Extranet

The responses from the consultation process have informed the final version of the Strategy. The majority of comments supported the key themes and objectives.

What's in the document?

The strategy is divided into six chapters.

Chapter 1 - Introduction. This first chapter explains why the strategy has been written and the consultation processes that have been undertaken to inform the strategy.

Chapter 2 - A Profile of Brent. This provides an overview of Brent as a 'place', including the demographic profile and trends, socio economic and health issues and trends, transport issues and Brent's location in relation to other London boroughs. At the end of the chapter, these factors are considered in the context of what they means in terms of patterns of demand and need for public parks and open space. (Links are provided for those wishing to access more detailed needs information.)

Chapter 3 - Strategic and External Influences. This chapter reviews key local and external strategic influences and policies affecting parks and open spaces in Brent including: land use planning and regeneration, health and sport (including the 2012 London Olympic & Paralympic Games), climate change and biodiversity and, across all these areas, equality of opportunity.

Chapter 4 - Brent Parks Today. Current provision of public parks, public open spaces, sports facilities in parks, children's play areas and allotments is summarised in this chapter. Existing provision and programmes are considered in relation to their

quantity (benchmarked against other similar London boroughs and standards), distribution and accessibility to people from all parts of the borough, and their quality. Quality assessments are based on residents' own perceptions and those of an external assessor. (Links are provided for those wishing to access to more detailed reports, maps and data on which the summary is based.)

Chapter 5 - Identifying Service Objectives and Strategic Priorities. This chapter summarises the main issues arising from the evidence of needs set out in the preceding chapters and identifies service objectives and strategic priorities for the Brent Parks Service over the five-year period to 2014.

Chapter 6 – Action Planning and Review. The final chapter sets out a draft 5 Year Action Plan for implementation of the strategy and details how the strategy will be reviewed, enabling the comparison of achievements against actions and recognising new opportunities and unpredicted changes that may have an impact on parks provision in Brent.

Chapter 2: Profile of Brent

Introduction

Brent is a place of contrasts. It is characterised by a sharp divide between the relative affluence of the northern wards and high levels of social and economic deprivation in areas south of the North Circular Road. Although there are also pockets of deprivation in the Northern wards that should not be overlooked, the north of the borough is generally sub-urban in character with an older population whilst the south experiences many of the challenges faced by inner city communities.

Map 1: Wards within the London Borough of Brent



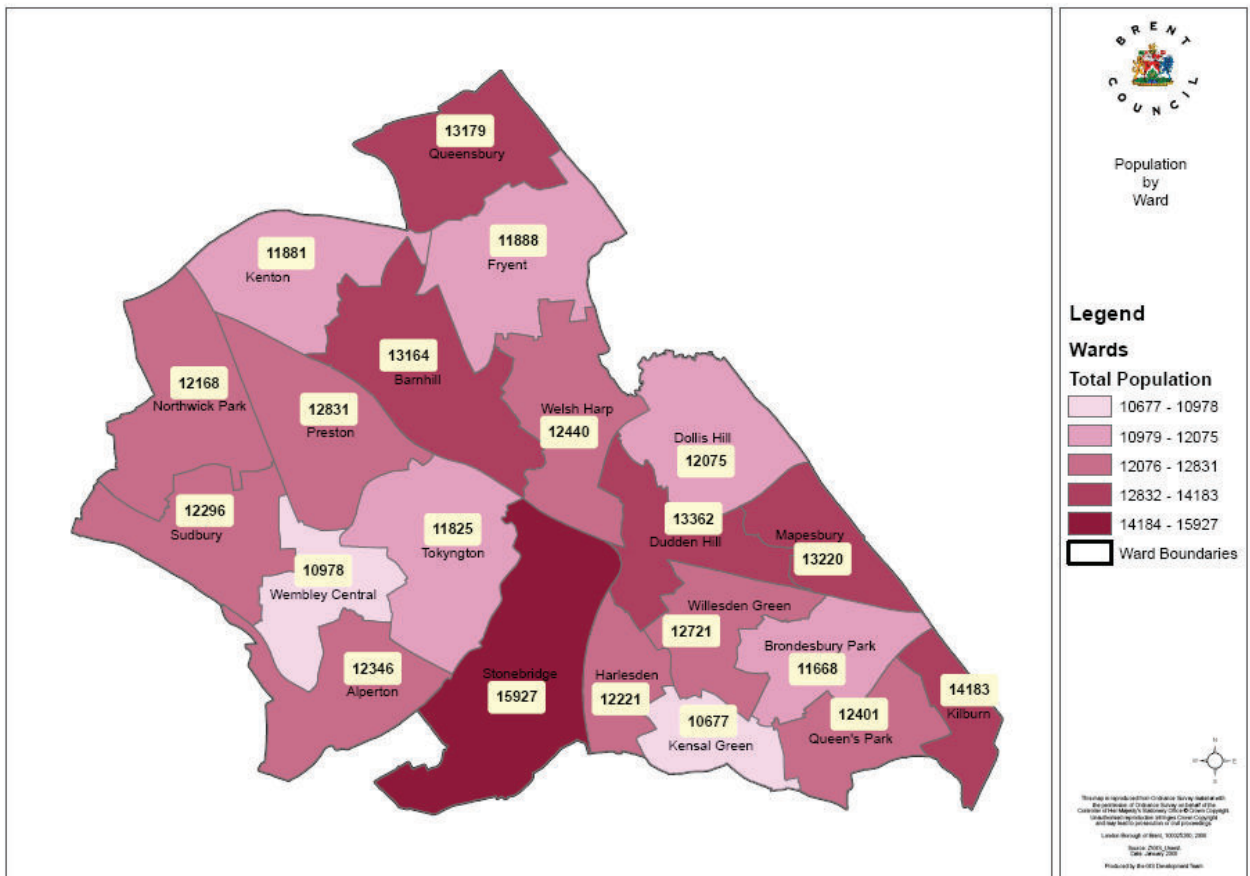
Within the West London sub-region Brent has the highest levels of diversity and multiple deprivation and is also the most densely populated borough. Brent shares its boundaries with 7 other boroughs (Barnet, Harrow, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster and Camden) and many Brent residents will use park facilities across the border, in neighbouring authorities.

Population and Projections

Brent’s population is growing. Recent figures indicate significant numbers of people moving into the borough creating new emerging communities. Brent also has significant numbers of transient people. The GLA estimate Brent’s population was at least 279,200 in 2007 and independent research commissioned by the Council estimates the figure to be nearer 289,000 at March 2007.

Population growth in Brent has largely occurred in the south of the borough and is predominantly the result of an increase in the number of young adults, often with pre-school or young children. This has resulted in a significant 8% increase in the birth rate in the past eighteen months. Brent has the second highest number of new National Insurance registrations in the country at 15,600 in 2007. Nearly 8% of Brent’s population is classified as refugees or asylum seekers. The ONS 2006 mid-year estimates place Brent with a slightly higher male population at 136,000 with 135,400 females.

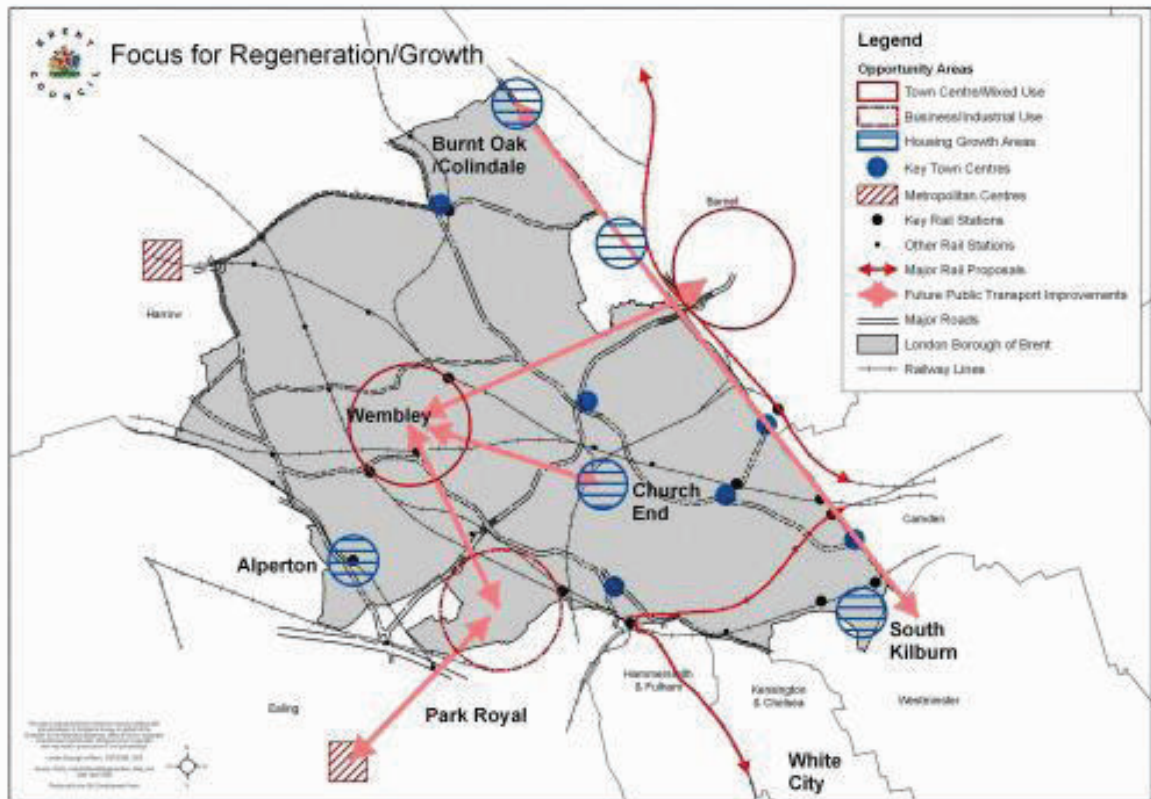
Map 2: Population densities by ward



The GLA projections estimate Brent’s population to grow to over 291,000 by 2016, an increase of nearly 12,000. However, this figure does not incorporate the impact of additional housing in the borough and the London Plan identifies that Brent will

accommodate 11,200 new homes by 2017. **The population is therefore expected to grow to over 305,000.** These new homes will be focused in five housing growth areas; Wembley, Alperton, Burnt Oak/Colindale, Church End and South Kilburn. **Wembley, Alperton, Burnt Oak/Colindale and South Kilburn are expected to gain 1,000 - 1,500 additional households (2,500 - 3,750 people) and Church End is expected to gain 500 – 750 additional households.**

Map 3: Key regeneration areas within Brent



Currently the wards with the highest population figures are Stonebridge, Kilburn, Mapesbury, Queensbury and Dudden Hill. Stonebridge and Kilburn wards both have the highest population according to GLA estimates with just over 17,000 and 15,000 respectively.

Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

Brent is one of only two local authorities serving a population where the majority of people are from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. 54.4% of Brent residents are from black and minority ethnic communities, this compares to approximately 40% of London's population and 12% of the population of England and Wales. These groups comprise of established Indian, Black Caribbean, Black African and Irish communities as well as emerging Eastern European, Somali, Turkish and Hispanic communities. Brent residents speak over 130 different languages but ethnicity varies by ward. The Asian population tends to be located towards the west of the borough, with Queensbury having the highest number of Asian residents and Wembley Central the highest number of Asian or Asian British Indian residents. The highest concentrations of Black African Caribbean residents are in Stonebridge and Harlesden wards. The white population tend to be located towards the east of the Borough and Kilburn. Mapesbury and Dollis Hill wards have the highest numbers of white Irish residents. In the next 10 years the BME population is expected to increase

to 60% of the population. The largest increase is expected to be in the Asian population which is expected to increase to just under a third of the population (32%) by 2016.

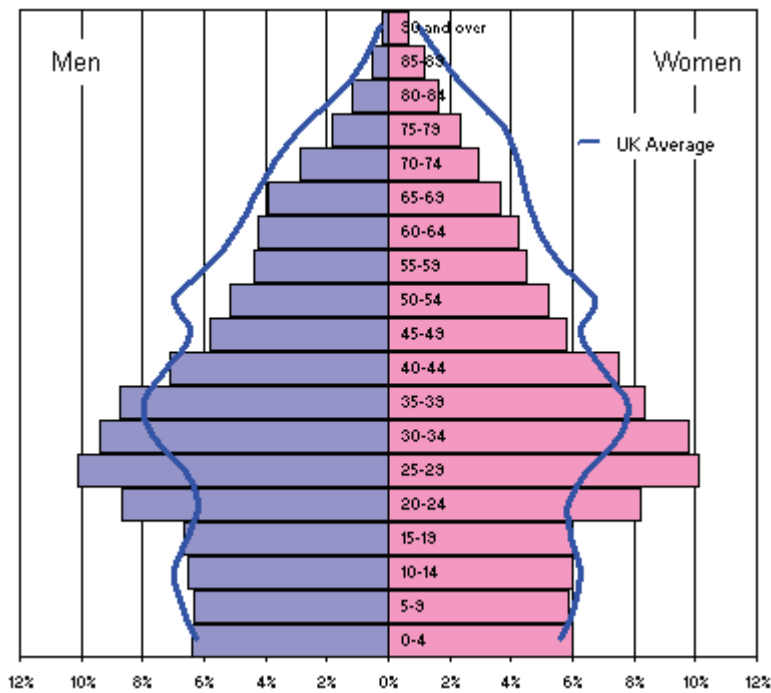
Age Structure

Brent has a relatively young population, a quarter of residents are aged 19 years or under. The South of the borough has the highest concentrations of young people and in Brent's five most deprived wards, a third of residents are aged under 16 years. 62% of people in Brent are under the age of 40 years (Nationally 52% of the population is aged under 40) and only 14% of the population are of pensionable age.

The largest numbers of children live in Wembley (28%) and the least in Kilburn (16%). Whilst many live in moderate prosperity, many however are still living in low income households in deprived areas. Harlesden has the highest percentage of children living in deprived households, (59% of all children in the area).

The population pyramid below shows the structure of Brent's population compared to that of the UK (shown by the blue line). This pyramid emphasises Brent's young population.

Graph 1: Population Pyramid



Gender

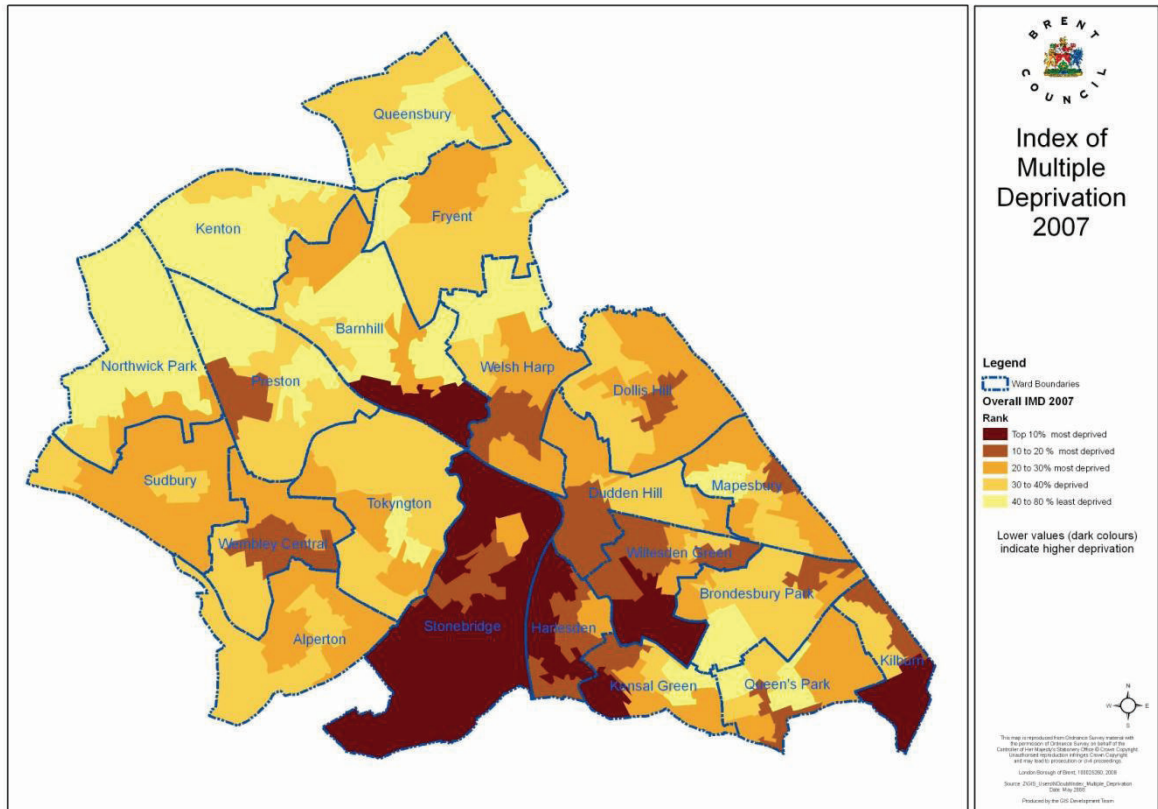
At the last census, 51.5% of the resident population of Brent were female very close to the London average of 51.6%.

Deprivation

The 2007 Index of Multiple deprivation identified Brent as the 53rd most deprived area out of 354 boroughs; previously the borough had been ranked 81st (1 = Most Deprived, 354 = Least Deprived).

This ranking now places Brent within the 15% most deprived areas of the country. While the main locations of multiple deprivation are in the South of the borough, particularly in Stonebridge, Harlesden, parts of Kensal Green, Willesden Green and Kilburn wards there are new pockets emerging in the North and West in parts of Barnhill, Welsh Harp and Wembley Central wards.

Map 4: Deprivation levels within individual Wards



Deprivation experienced within the borough is characterised by relatively high levels of long-term unemployment (24% of unemployed people are classified as long-term unemployed compared to a London average of 15%), low household incomes and dependence on benefits and social housing. Across Brent 65.5% of residents aged 16-74 were registered as economically active which is slightly down on the London average of 67.6%. Of those registered economically inactive, 5% were unemployed according to the Census data in 2001. In addition, qualifications and skills levels in Brent are low and Brent ranks 6th from bottom within London on overall residence-based skills and qualifications score.

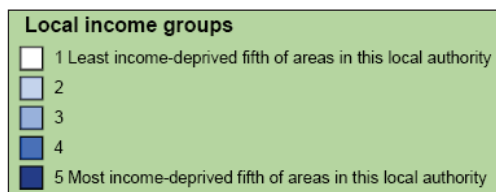
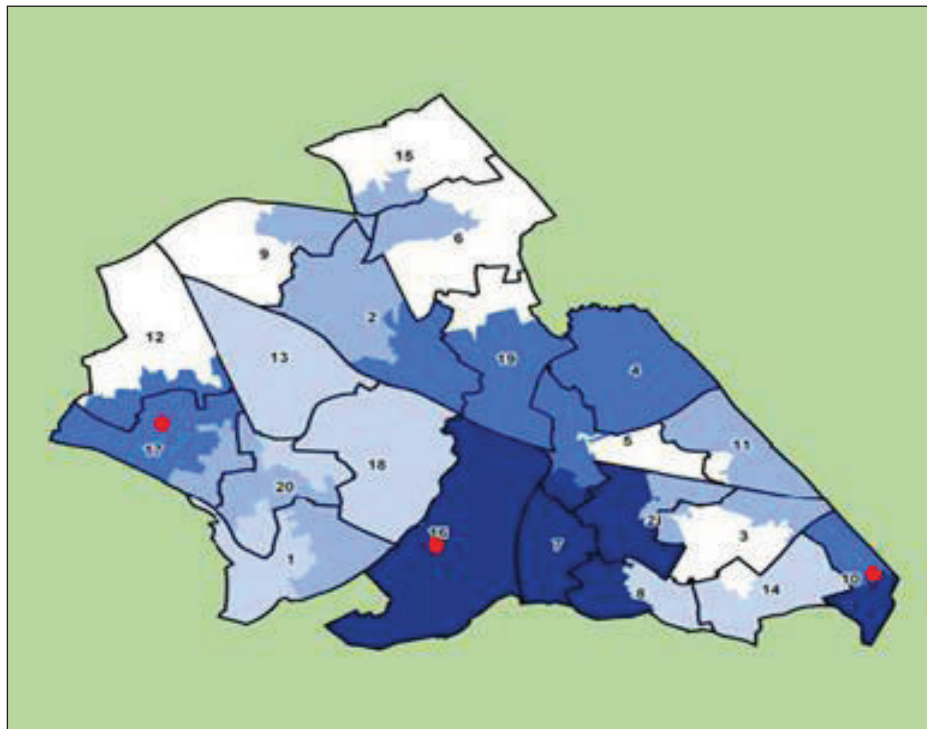
Children and young people are particularly affected by deprivation with a third of Brent's children living in low income households, a quarter in social housing and a fifth in single-adult households.

Income

According to the methodology PayCheck, Brent has the 4th lowest average mean income levels in London (Waltham Forest, Newham, and Barking & Dagenham are lower). PayCheck is a measure of household income from all sources including benefits (i.e. not just earnings). The mean or average household annual income for

Brent is £35,607 from 2007 dataset (Greater London is £38,781). There is a £13,000 difference in mean annual income between the wealthiest and poorest neighbourhoods within Brent. Mapesbury is the wealthiest ward with an average annual income of £41,053. In comparison Stonebridge has average annual income of £28,052. Stonebridge, Harlesden and Kilburn wards are the most income deprived areas in the Borough and the majority of the remaining wards fall within the 20% most income deprived areas in England.

Map 5: The most and least income deprived wards in the borough.



Health

There are significant health inequalities in the borough, linked to location, gender, level of deprivation and ethnicity. The most deprived wards in the South of the borough have a higher death rate, and lower life expectancy than the less deprived wards in the North of the borough. The prevalence of diabetes in Brent is high compared to the national average with 4.6% of the population being diagnosed with the condition, although the proportion that are undiagnosed may be closer to 6%. Brent has one of the highest rates of TB in London and in England.

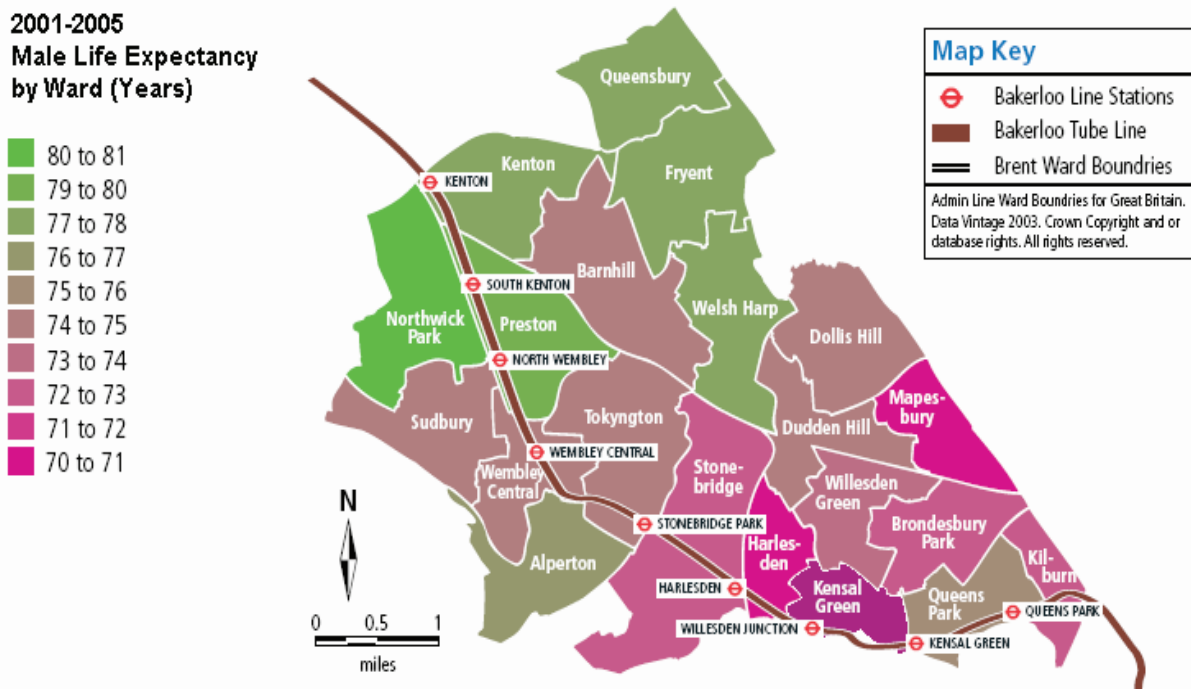
The 2001 Census found 70% of Brent's population to be in good health, with 21% rated fairly good and 9% as not good. Over the last ten years, rates of deaths from all causes have decreased for both men and women and are lower than the England average. Circulatory diseases, including heart disease, strokes and cancers, are the most common cause of death in Brent. The health status of the Borough is also a

reflection of income deprivation with the prevalence of life limiting health conditions and lower life expectancy in the most deprived wards in the south of the Borough.

The prevalence of diabetes in Brent is high compared to the national average with 4.6% of the population being diagnosed with the condition. Brent also has one of the highest rates of TB in London and in England.

The Department of Health's 2007 health profile of Brent in 2007 states that on average people live longer in Brent than England overall and female life expectancy is rising faster than in England. However there is a stark difference in the life expectancy within the deprived areas compared to the more affluent areas. These differences can be illustrated by examining male life expectancy along the Bakerloo line where a journey of 3.5 miles takes you from Harlesden which has the lowest life expectancy level for men to South Kenton where life expectancy is over 9 years longer.

Map 6: Male Life-Expectancy Gaps Between Deprived and Affluent Wards in Brent (Harlesden to South Kenton along the Bakerloo Line)



A high proportion of people rate their health as 'not good', and diabetes and tuberculosis are higher than the England average with diabetes affecting 1 in 20 people.

Approximately 19.6% of Brent's population are classed as obese which is slightly less than the 22.1% for the rest of England. However, **the percentage of children in year 6 who are obese is 22.5% in Brent** which is 5% higher than the national average. This places Brent with the 10th highest obesity levels for year 6 in England (compared against 152 PCT areas).

Use of parks and open spaces for physical activity and sport can have a huge influence on improving the health of the borough and contribute to the Council's LAA priorities to reduce mortality rate from circulatory diseases and to tackle obesity in both adults and children.

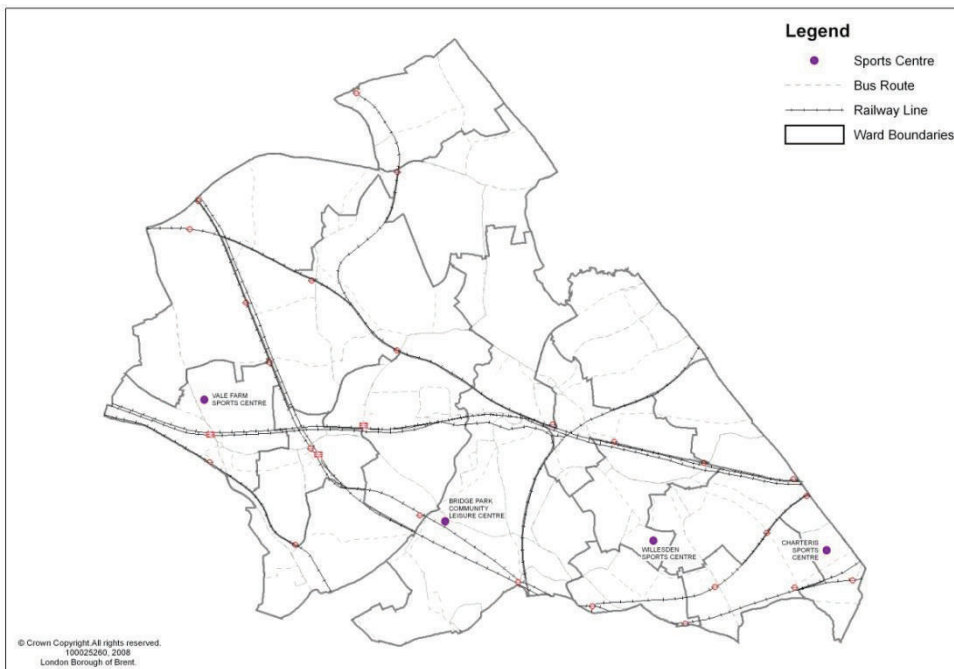
Accessibility

Car ownership. Brent has a very low vehicle ownership; 37.3% of households do not have access to a vehicle and therefore public transport plays a key role in transporting people around the Borough particularly in the southern wards with the lowest household income and car ownership rates.

Public transport. The Borough has a complex public transport network with 48 daytime bus services and 13 night bus services which are utilised by 30million people a year, a figure that is growing at more than 5% per annum. Some 26 stations provide access to one or more of the Bakerloo, Jubilee, Metropolitan and Piccadilly London Underground lines and national rail services operated by Chiltern Railways, Silverlink Trains and South Central.

There are some areas of Brent which have poor public transport accessibility and these are often areas of high deprivation where car ownership is also low. This includes the St Raphael's and Brentfield Estates which are severed by the A406 North Circular Road meaning access is restricted and it is compounded by infrequent bus services. Clearly, local parks and open spaces, small open spaces and 'pocket parks' accessible on foot are important in serving the open space, play and recreation needs of residents in these areas.

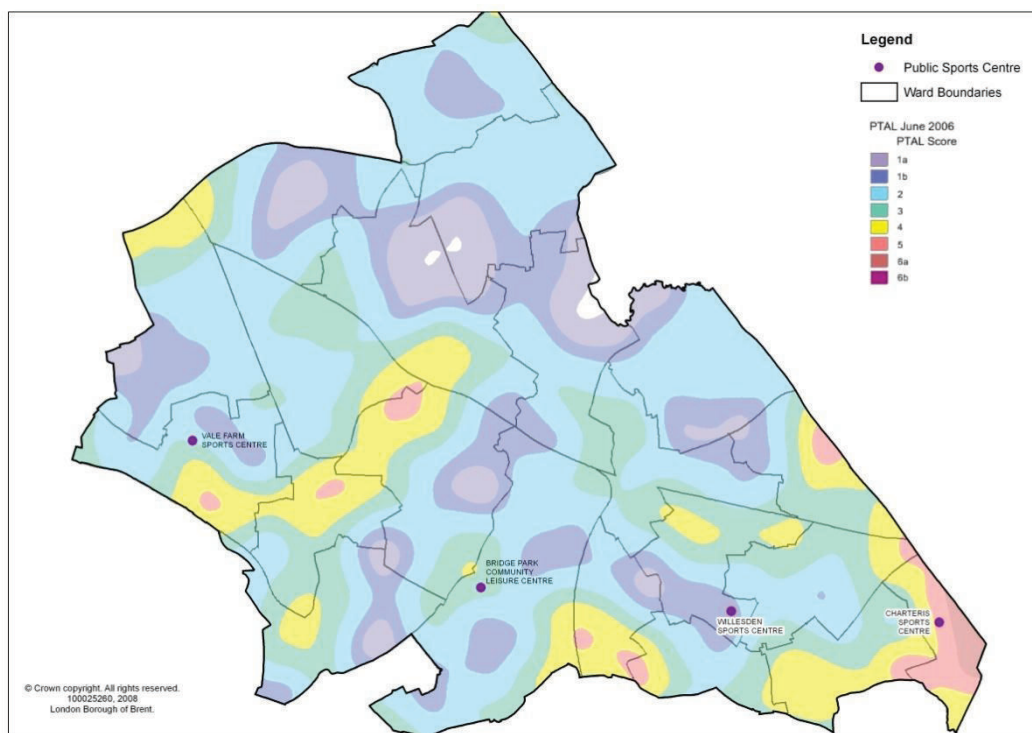
A further aspect of accessibility is severance, where major highways or rail corridors create physical and psychological barriers which effectively cut off communities from key services. Key examples of this in Brent are the A406 North Circular Road and the West Coast Mainline railway which both sever the borough. The high speeds and traffic flows of the A406 are both intimidating and limit crossing only to designated controlled points.



Map 7: Main bus and rail routes within Brent

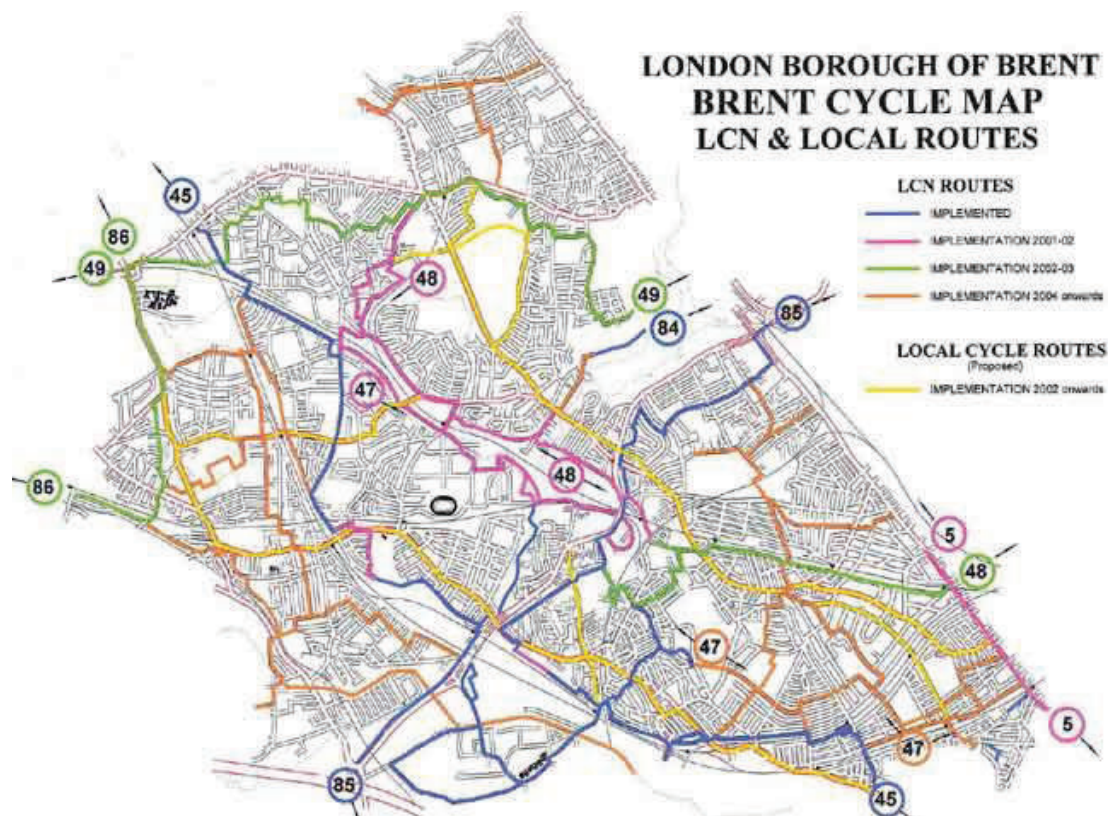
Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL) provides a more detailed picture of how accessible different parts of the borough are to the public transport network. The higher PTAL scores (4-6b, yellow to red) indicate areas which are within a short walking distance of one or more forms of public transport interchange. The map below shows that the areas with the highest PTAL scores are Kilburn, parts of Mapesbury, Kensal Green, Harlesden, Sudbury, Wembley Central and Tokyngton.

Map 8: Public Transport Accessibility Levels in Brent



Cycle links. There are currently 9 London Cycling Network routes that pass through the borough and these can be seen on the map below. The government's emphasis on green travel has raised cycling onto the political agenda and meant that there is increasing amounts of funding for cycling projects. We continue to improve cycle routes within the borough incorporating, where possible, parks and open spaces that are accessible after dark. Local routes can be seen on the map below.

Map 9: Cycle Routes in Brent



Crime

Brent has traditionally been a high crime area, although, in recent years significant progress has been made in reducing crime levels within our borough. Since 2003/04 (PSA 1 baseline year) the borough has achieved a 15% reduction in its British Crime Survey (BCS) offences. This is the equivalent of 3,248 fewer offences than in 2003/04.

The most deprived areas of Brent witness the most amount of crime in locations such as Stonebridge, Harlesden, Kilburn, Tokyngton and Wembley Central wards.

Implications of Borough Profile on Demand and Need for Parks

A population of this size and broad pattern of distribution across Brent – i.e. mix of dense urban environments mainly in the south of the borough and much less densely populated areas of suburban character (mainly in the north) – demands access to the full range of types or categories of open space from large Regional Parks of 400 hectares or more readily accessible by public transport, through to small areas of open space of less than 0.4 hectares within walking distance and providing natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation (sometimes with seating and play equipment) – ie. 'Pocket Parks'.

The hierarchy of different types of open spaces and the standards of provision recommended for London and adopted by Brent Council are set out in the following chapter.

Population Growth. The increase in the borough population by around 25,000 people over the ten-year period from 2007 to 2017, using GLA estimates and taking into account local housing growth forecasts will generate a demand and need for additional open space in the areas of growth. The needs for parks and open spaces in the main regeneration areas is considered in the following chapter.

Ethnic profile. Whilst parks can be seen as an important service for all members of the community, there is limited research that identifies specific needs of various equalities groups in the provision of parks and open spaces. Different ethnic groups may be seen to use parks in different ways. For example, in the US, Latino park users were found to use parks more frequently in large family groups for socialising and celebratory events, whilst Caucasian users visited parks less frequently and more likely to visit alone, and African Americans were the group most likely to engage in the use of sports facilities at the park alone (Loukaitou- Sideris 1995, cited in Marcus and Francis, 1998)³.

The Black Environment Network (BEN, 2005)⁴ has developed a series of guidelines for Green Space managers to increase the use of green spaces by ethnic groups as well as involving such groups in the creation, care and improvement of green spaces. Parks (and other green spaces) need to be clean and well maintained, and there needs to be the organisational resources and capacity to deal with issues such as safety, conflict and anti-social behavior. This includes fears of racism. Black and ethnic groups need to feel welcome and a sense of belonging can be achieved by the approach of parks staff, outreach programmes, encouraging culturally relevant events and targeted activities for different ethnic groups, events and activities that promote social cohesion, and the inclusion of features and interpretation that recognise cultural diversity. Translated materials should be used where appropriate and staff should consult to find out how specific communities prefer to be addressed and receive information. Our staff members receive training in equalities awareness and strive to adhere to the good practice guidelines and principles set out above.

Age profile. In Brent, there are more young children and a higher birth rate in the south of the borough. Parks are important in the provision of play for children and some studies show that access to green space increases children's creative play, social skills and concentration span (ODPM, 2006)⁵. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister suggests that green spaces and play areas need to be well maintained and that it is critical to involve children in the decision making process about the design and care about the spaces they use (ODPM, 2005). A report by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE, 2004)⁶ provides principles and guidance on the involvement of young people in the design, development and management of public spaces. Working together with the Council's Children and Young People's Service and our Friends groups, Brent's Parks Service adheres to these good practice principles in planning for new and upgraded play spaces.

³ Marcus, C.C. and C Francis (1998) *People Places: Design Guidelines for Urban Open Space*. John Wiley and Sons: United States

⁴ BEN (2005) *Ethnic Communities and Green Spaces. Guidance for Green Space Managers*.

⁵ ODPM (2006) *Enhancing Urban Green Space*. London: The Stationary Office.

⁶ CABE (2004) *Involving Young People in the Design and Care of Urban Spaces*

Deprivation and Car Ownership. As free to access amenities, local parks and open spaces are accessible to people of all income levels. As such, parks can be more effective in meeting the recreational needs of people with little disposable income than those types of community facilities where access charges generally apply even if highly subsidised, for example indoor sports centres and swimming pools. In Brent, we face the challenge presented by the highest concentrations of families and people on low incomes and without cars falling, for the most part, in the same areas of the borough where land available for public open space is the most scarce.

Health and Disability. Parks and green spaces can have positive impacts on both physical and mental health and well-being. For example, easily accessible recreational activities can reduce obesity and the risk of disease. Horticultural therapy projects in parks can provide benefits by increasing self-esteem and a sense of wellbeing in people with a disability, and clinical evidence suggests that exposure to a green environment reduces anxiety and stress (Tibbats, 2002)⁷.

The ODPM (2005) recommends developing access audits of sites, and identifying barriers. Barriers may be physical such as path surfaces, steps and gradients or related to information and interpretation (English Heritage, 2005)⁸. Removing barriers can involve providing extra facilities or making changes to infrastructure or information. Examples include:

- Providing appropriate and adequate seating for those with impaired mobility
- Ensuring gate handles are easy to reach and grip
- Using colour contrast to ensure entrances and exits are easy to identify for visually impaired people
- The use of paint or contrasting materials to highlight step nosings
- The provision of information in accessible formats.

Independent access audits have been carried out on most of Brent's parks and open spaces and an action plan developed to make improvements against the auditor's recommendations. The priority projects to be implemented during the life of this Strategy are shown in Chapter 5.

Gender and Fear of Crime. Fear around personal safety is a key reason why women may not use parks and open spaces. The British Crime Survey found that women feeling unsafe in their local area outnumber men by 6:1 (cited in WDS, 2007)⁹. Key issues that made women feel *unsafe* were inadequate lighting, poor sightlines, bad maintenance, lack of signage, dogs and lack of suitable toilet facilities. Factors that made women feel *safe* included the presence of '*happy smiling people*', an '*official presence*' in parks and separate areas for bicycles and dogs. Statistics show that in public places young men are the most likely group to suffer attack (WDS, 2007).

⁷ Tibbats, D. (2002) Your Parks. The benefits of parks and green space. Urban Parks Forum Ltd

⁸ English Heritage (2005) Easy Access to Historic Landscapes. English Heritage

⁹ WDS (2007) What to do about Women's Safety in Parks. Women's Design Service & Anne Thorne Architects' Partnership

Use of Parks and Open Spaces

From the 2008 and 2009 Brent Parks Survey among a sample of 10% of households, it is estimated in the order of 16 million visits are made annually to parks and open spaces in Brent.

In terms of use of all outdoor amenities for sport and physical activity – whether in parks and open spaces, or on rivers and reservoirs or in the streets – the national *Active People (AP)* survey is an excellent source of data for adults. AP is a nationwide survey of participation in sport and active recreation by over 16 year olds in each local authority area. The survey therefore allows the Council to compare itself with other authorities across the country. The first survey, AP Survey 1, conducted in 2005/2006 was based on a telephone interview with 1000 people aged 16 or over per local authority. AP Survey 2 was carried out in 2007/2008 with a smaller sample of a minimum of 500 per authority. AP Survey 3 started in October 2008 and will run to October 2009. The results of AP Surveys 1 & 2 of relevance to the Parks Strategy are summarised here. The results of AP Survey 3 and subsequent AP surveys will inform the strategy review process (see Chapter 6).

Of relevance to the Brent Parks Service, the AP surveys provide useful data on the types of outdoor sports/physical activities people are participating in as well as levels of volunteering in sport, club membership, levels of sport tuition, and satisfaction levels with local provision.

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) identifies three London authorities as Brent's 'Regional Statistical Neighbours'. These are Lambeth, Newham and Tower Hamlets.

Table 1 compares Brent's AP participation results with rates in these similar authorities together with the quantity (area) of parks and green space available, both overall and per person.

Table 1: Active People Surveys 1 & 2 results, green space and participation rates

Borough	Population	AP 1 score	AP 2 score	Total Area (m2)	Parks and Open space	% of Total area	Parks and Open Space Per person
Tower Hamlets	196,121	19.7	17.7	19,700,000	2,240,000	11.4	11.4 m2
Newham	243,737	14.5	14.7	36,100,000	7,170,000	19.87	29.4m2
Lambeth	266,170	25.6	25.0	26,730,000	2,240,000	8.39	8.4m2
Brent	263,463	18.0	19.5	43,250,000	5,220,000	12.11	19.8m2

As the table shows, Brent has a large area of parks and open spaces compared to two of its statistical neighbours Tower Hamlets and Lambeth. Despite this, Brent's overall AP Survey 1 score for regular participation (3 x 30min a week) in sport or physical activity was lower than in these boroughs. Interestingly, Brent's score for regular participation increased in the two year period to AP Survey 2 while in both Tower Hamlets and Lambeth the participation score fell. Also, Newham with more parks and open space than Brent has a lower AP score. While Brent and Newham's score are low relative to Lambeth and lower than the London average, it is important

to recognise this score relates to **all** participation in sport and physical activity including indoor activities i.e. not just park-based sports and activities.

Participation in specific Outdoor Sports and Physical Activities

The AP provides information showing the percentage of the population at national, regional and local level that had participated in a particular sport/activity within the 4 weeks preceding survey. The findings are valuable in helping to provide an indication of the demand for specific activities and so demand for specific sports facilities.

Reviewing cycling levels within Brent, against the regional statistical neighbours, shows that (as with the overall AP participation score) only Newham scored lower in AP Survey 1 although it is noted that the results are likely to be affected by the cycle commuter effect and the greater proximity of the ONS ‘near neighbour’ boroughs of Lambeth and Tower Hamlets to Central London.

Table 2: Active People Survey 1 (2005/2006) results, cycling

30min continuous cycle in 4 weeks preceding interview	
Local Authority	Percent
Lambeth	16.2
Tower Hamlets	10.9
Brent	9.2
Newham	7.1
London	10.8
National	11.1

Table three sets out AP participation findings against national and regional averages for a range of outdoor sports, jogging and walking.

Table 3: Active People Survey 1 (2005/2006) results, outdoor sports and activities participation rates

Sport type	Participation in Outdoor Sport and Activities in the last 4 weeks (%)		
	Brent	London	National
Athletics track and field based activities	0.3	0.2	0.1
Cricket	1.5	0.9	0.9
Gaelic Football	0.1	0.1	0.0
Outdoor Bowls	0.2	0.2	0.5
Outdoor Football	5.7	6.0	5.8
Rugby League and Rugby	0.3	0.7	1.0

Sport type	Participation in Outdoor Sport and Activities in the last 4 weeks (%)		
	Brent	London	National
Union			
Running and Jogging	5.4	7.1	5.1
Tennis	2.1	3	2.1
Walking	0.1	0.2	0.3

The outdoor participation rates are mixed, with participation in activities such as cricket and athletics being higher than the national and regional averages. Other sports, such as outdoor bowls and rugby have lower participation rates than the national and regional averages and the rest of the sports including tennis and football follow the trends of the national rather than regional benchmarks.

Sports Clubs

There are a variety of different sports clubs in Brent offering opportunities for adults and juniors in activities as varied as athletics to volleyball. The Sports Service website includes a free Sports Club Directory which currently has over 90 clubs registered. However it is recognised that the number of sports clubs in Brent is lower than in many other London Boroughs. This correlates with the Active People Survey 2 (2007/2008) results where only 20.6% of Brent adults are members of a club compared to over 23.6% across the West London sub-region.

Young people's Sports Participation

The Active People survey only surveys adults over the age of 16 and therefore misses a significant percentage of Brent's residents from the survey. Furthermore it is recognised that developing a healthy habit of physical activity at a young age is more likely for that person to remain physically active into adulthood and older age.

Within Brent there are two School Sports Partnerships (SSP's) introduced in 2002. These, together with the provision of an advisory teacher for PE, have had a momentous impact on both the quantity and quality of overall provision of PE in Brent. In 2003 only 24% of Brent's primary and secondary school pupils were receiving two hours quality PE. In 2007, 83% of pupils aged 5-16 years participated in at least two hours of high quality PE and out of hour's school sport in a typical week. The 2008 School Sport Survey results show that 87% of Brent pupils now receive 2 hours quality PE in the curriculum. The national PE and Sport Strategy for Young People (PESSYP) now sets out an ambition to offer all children at least 5 hours of sport every week by 2011 comprising at least two hours high quality PE in the curriculum (5-16 year olds) and the opportunity for at least a further three hours sport beyond the school day delivered by a range of school, community and club providers (5-19 year olds).

Aside from school sports days, 59% of pupils in Brent schools were involved in intra-school sports activities. The average number of sports provided by each Brent school during 2006/07 was 15, and the most widely available sports were football, dance, gymnastics, athletics, cricket, basketball and rounders. The biggest increases in availability of sports have been for multi-skill clubs, golf, tennis, gymnastics, basketball and fitness. On average each Brent school has links to 7 different sports

clubs and 10% of pupils in Years 1-13 have been involved in sports volunteering and leadership during the 2006/07 academic year.

While most of this activity takes place on school playing fields, a significant proportion - particularly the sports club use linking with schools – takes place in our public parks and recreation grounds.

Chapter 3 Strategic and External Influences

This chapter sets out the national, regional and local policy framework taken into account in the development of this Parks Strategy. The policy framework is summarised according to key policy areas where parks and open spaces have the greatest impact i.e. land use planning and regeneration, health and sport (including the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games) and the associated legacy plans, climate change and biodiversity, and, across all these areas, equality of opportunity. The section begins by considering the policy positions of both the Local Strategic Partnership and Brent Council as they relate to parks and open spaces.

Brent Strategic Partnership - Sustainable Community Strategy

Brent's Sustainable Community Strategy (2006-2010) produced by Brent's Local Strategic Partnership, sets out how the council and its partners will meet the needs and aspirations of Brent's residents. The strategy has three crosscutting ambitions. The borough's parks and open spaces have an identified role in prioritising efforts to achieve each of these:

A Great Place

- Committed to promoting leisure
- Improve the quality and accessibility of local parks, play areas and open spaces, encouraging greater use by all
- Facilitate opportunities for physical exercise and sport by reducing barriers to participation and promoting healthy living

A Borough of Opportunity

- Reducing health inequalities and promoting well being
- Tackle smoking and obesity, reducing the prevalence and achieving better outcomes for coronary heart disease, diabetes and cancer

An Inclusive Community

- Provide services that are fully inclusive, accessible and sensitive to the unique cultural diversity of our young population
- To enable residents to lead more active lives and providing services that are sensitive to our diverse community's needs
- Improve the health and fitness of Brent's residents in order to secure a more active and independent future for everyone.

Brent Council's Corporate Strategy

Brent Council's Corporate Strategy (2006-2010) has five priorities for action:

1. Promoting quality of life and the green agenda
2. Supporting children and young people
3. Regeneration and priority neighbourhoods
4. Tackling crime and community safety
5. Achieving service excellence

Parks and open spaces clearly have a role to play within all five corporate priorities and especially the first two. The Council's commitment to parks and open spaces (and to the play areas and other amenities provided within them) is further illustrated by its close consideration of these facilities in developing new land use planning policies and in drawing up master-plans for the regeneration of priority neighbourhoods.

Land Use Planning

Local

Brent is partway through the process of producing its first *Brent Core Strategy and Proposals Document* to guide local land use and regeneration from 2009/10. These documents will form the main planks of land use policy under the new Local Development Framework (LDF) statutory process that will replace the current Unitary Development Plan (UDP) first adopted in 2004.

Of relevance to the borough's parks and open spaces, the LDF Core Strategy will include policies (similar to those in the current UDP) that serve to protect and enhance the borough's environment by ensuring all new developments will be sustainable and do not harm existing amenities. For example, the draft Core Strategy includes policies that aim to:

Preserve and enhance Brent's existing parks and open spaces

Prevent any further loss of outdoor sports pitches and playing fields

Seek new provision where deficiencies exist

Improve access opportunities to parks and open spaces for people with disabilities and other disadvantaged sectors of the community

Secure new play facilities in all major developments

Regional

The London Plan - The key strategy at London-wide level of relevance to this Parks Strategy is '*The London Plan*' – *the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy (February 2008)*. The London Plan includes a policy (3D.12) that all boroughs should produce an Open Space Strategy. It also sets out a series of standards for provision of a range of types of open space across London.

Based on local studies and parks needs assessment planning work (including a pilot survey carried out in 2008 among a sample of 10% of Brent households), the Council considers the London Plan standards the most appropriate to guide strategic provision of parks and open spaces across the borough as these are tailored to a predominantly urban environment like Brent. A key finding of the pilot survey in support of this approach is that 96% of residents walk to their local park.

The provision standards of relevance to this Strategy extracted from the London Plan are set out in table 3D.1 in the London Plan as reproduced below:

table 3D.1 London's public open space hierarchy

Open space categorisation	Size guideline	Distances from homes
Regional Parks Large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publicly accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. Offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	400 hectares	3.2 to 8 kilometres
Metropolitan Parks Large areas of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities and features at the sub-regional level, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	60 hectares	3.2 kilometres
District Parks Large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of natural features providing for a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits.	20 hectares	1.2 kilometres
Local Parks and Open Spaces Providing for court games, children's play, sitting-out areas and nature conservation areas.	2 hectares	400 metres
Small Open Spaces Gardens, sitting-out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.	Under 2 hectares	Less than 400 metres
Pocket Parks Small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment.	Under 0.4ha	Less than 400 metres
Linear Open Spaces Open spaces and towpaths alongside the Thames, canals and other waterways; paths; disused railways; nature conservation areas; and other routes that provide opportunities for informal recreation. Often characterised by features or attractive areas which are not fully accessible to the public but contribute to the enjoyment of the space.	Variable	Wherever feasible

source GLA

In July 2008 the GLA published a report entitled '*Planning for a better London*'. This report set out the current Mayor's policy priorities and proposals for changes to the London Plan. The following proposed changes to the London Plan are of particular relevance to this Parks Strategy:

Theme - Meeting the environmental challenge: Policy - To make sure the planning system protects and enhances open spaces and does all it can to protect and promote trees and woodland

Theme - Keeping London moving: Policy - To ensure a strategic planning policy framework supportive of cycling and walking

Theme - Planning for London's diverse places: Policy - To ensure that new communities are just that (i.e. have the necessary transport, social, environmental and cultural infrastructure)

In September 2008, the Mayor and CABE Space published for consultation updated planning guidance Draft Best Practice Guidance (BPG) for the preparation of borough Open Space Strategies. This Parks Strategy for Brent follows the principles set out in this most recent guidance and in earlier national government planning guidance *Planning Policy Guidance Note 17*. In particular, the priorities for action set out in Chapter 5 of this document have been determined following an analysis of open space needs based on assessment of demand factors (e.g. resident surveys, population forecasts, new housing proposals), and of supply factors (e.g. the provision and accessibility of open spaces in relation to London Plan standards and quality audits both in-house and by an independent assessor).

Natural England Strategy for Natural Green Space in Urban Environments - Natural England (formerly English Nature) is the statutory body that champions the conservation and enhancement of the wildlife and natural features of England. It does this in the urban environment as well as the open countryside. Among other priorities in the urban environment, Natural England has worked for a number of years to promote the provision of natural green space and, in 1996, it adopted its current Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) model.

The ANGSt model requires:

That no person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2ha in size

At least 1ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 population

At least one accessible 20ha site within 2km from home

One accessible 100ha site within 5km

One accessible 500ha site within 10km

Natural England justifies these standards in the following ways supported by a range of research studies:

- Everyday contact with nature is important for wellbeing and quality of life
- Everyone should be able to enjoy this contact, in safety, without having to make any special effort or journey to do so
- Natural green space in towns and cities can play an important part in helping safeguard our national treasure of wildlife and geological features
- Accessible natural green spaces give everyone an excellent chance to learn about nature and to help protect it in practical ways
- Adequate provision of vegetated areas helps to ensure that urban areas continue to function ecologically.

Brent Council supports Natural England's view that access to natural green space is important to residents' health and wellbeing (both physical and psychological). The Council also strives to meet the ANGSt model standards where possible.

However, the first standard – i.e. no person to live more than **300m from a natural green space of at least 2ha** – is not considered a realistic target particularly in the more densely developed areas in the south of the borough. Accordingly, the Council adopts the more achievable London Plan target of **400m distance from local parks and open spaces of 2ha or more.**

Regeneration

Of particular relevance to this Parks Strategy is the *Brent Regeneration Strategy (2001-2021)* and the resulting master-plans that the Council and partners have prepared for five priority areas in the borough for major regeneration and housing growth i.e. Wembley, Park Royal, South Kilburn, Alperton and Burnt Oak/Colindale.

Integral to the master-plans for these designated growth areas are detailed infrastructure proposals for enhanced access to parks and open spaces (including play areas and sports and recreation facilities) for existing and new residents of these areas.

In some cases, the work to establish the open space needs of each area and the options available has resulted in proposals for new local parks (of 1.5 to 2 hectares), for smaller 'pocket' parks of about 0.2 to 0.4 hectares, for new play areas, multi-use games areas (MUGAs) or sports pitches.

In others, the assessment of needs and review of options has led to proposals to upgrade and enhance existing parks and open spaces that are easily accessible from the neighbourhood, for example by developing new facilities within these existing parks.

Details of these open space infrastructure proposals relating to the five growth areas are set out in Chapter 5: Identifying Priorities & Actions.

Health and Physical Activity

At national level, in November 2004, the Department of Health (DH) published the policy document '*Choosing Health: Making health choices easier*' which is concerned with the effect that lifestyle choices can have on health. The policy has a particular emphasis on reducing obesity, smoking, substance and alcohol misuse.

Specifically addressing the pressing issue of rising obesity levels, in September 2008 the DH published a cross government strategy for England entitled '*Healthy Weight Healthy Lives*'. This document highlights the importance of increasing levels of physical activity alongside improved diet, particularly in areas of relative deprivation where the incidence of obesity is greatest and where national surveys (e.g. the Active People Survey) have shown that physical activity levels are lowest.

In February 2009, DH launched new guidance for Local Authorities and Primary Care Trusts '*Be Active, Be Healthy: a plan for getting the nation moving*'. This guidance sets out ideas and plans for getting two million people more active by 2012 to leave a lasting legacy from the London Olympic & Paralympic Games. Plans of particular relevance to parks services include the expansion of the Natural England initiative '*Walking the Way to Health*' and the creation of 2,102 '*Active Challenge Walking Routes*' across the country.

At the local level, among its five priorities for 2009/2010, Brent NHS Primary Care Trust has a goal to "*promote good health and prevent ill-health*" with a particular focus on those neighbourhoods (Super Output Areas) where the incidences of child obesity and adult coronary heart disease are highest and the mortality age is the lowest. Harlesden is the neighbourhood in the borough with the poorest health and lowest mortality age.

In addition to the Department of Health's plan to increase participation in physical activity, the London Mayor has also published a plan for a sports legacy from the 2012 Olympics & Paralympics. Entitled '*A Sporting Future for London*' (April 2009), this plan sets out proposals for £30 million investment (half from the Greater London Authority) in programmes to i) secure a sustained increase in participation in both sport and physical activity amongst Londoners, and ii) assist in tackling social problems including ill-health, crime, academic underachievement and lack of community cohesion.

Clearly, free-to-access, attractive and secure parks and open spaces within easy walking distance for people living in Harlesden and the other areas of poor health - and programmes such as health walks (sometimes prescribed by local GPs) and holiday activities for children - are critical to increasing physical activity levels and reducing obesity. Particularly strong opportunities for integrating health care services and health promotion activities exist where local area Health Centres are co-located with parks and/or community sports centres. The new Vale Farm Health Centre procured under the Brent LIFT (Local Improvement Finance Trust) programme and adjacent to the Vale Farm Sports Centre and parkland with outdoor sports facilities is a prime example. Through joint working between the Parks Service, the Sports Service and the PCT, Brent has developed a thriving programme of guided *Healthy Walk*. In 2009, these ran from April to September across eleven park venues.

The important role of Brent's parks and open spaces as places for people of all ages to be active for health is recognised in the Council's Draft strategy for *Sport & Physical Activity 2010 -2015*. As detailed in the following chapter, Brent's Parks Services provides facilities for football, rugby, cricket, Gaelic football, boules, tennis,

basketball, golf and bowls across around 30 park sites (although with very limited provision in the south east of the borough and recognised issues regarding the quality of pitches and changing facilities in a number of the parks, as well as issues concerning lack of changing facilities suitable for women and girls, and a low number of active clubs in most of these sports). In addition, the parks provide opportunities for informal active recreation in the form of walking, running and cycling. These include an increasing number of mapped routes and trails including cycle paths forming part of the fast-growing London Cycle Network.

The Council has also recently produced a *Planning for Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy (2008 - 2021)* with the following vision:

To ensure the co-ordinated, strategic development of formal and informal facilities for sport and active recreation within Brent that meets the needs of a changing multi cultural population and provides attractive, sustainable, accessible, quality facilities that enhances the Boroughs natural and built environment. Such provision will increase opportunities for participation in sport and active recreation by all sections of the community resulting in improved health, well being and enhanced quality of life of Brent's residents.

This strategy establishes the following local standards for outdoor sports provision based on detailed assessment of need both now and to meet projected population growth to 2021, as illustrated in table 4 overleaf:

Table 4: Summary of Local Standards for Outdoor Sports Provision

Outdoor Sports Facility	Standard per 1000 population	Local Standard	Quality Standard	Access
Synthetic Turf Pitches	0.02 pitches or 0.02 ha/200sqm	1 per 50,000	Full size, floodlit STP of good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 1.6km or 20 minutes walk
Athletics Tracks	0.02 lanes	1 lane per 50,000	Good or excellent quality	Retain existing provision and accessibility
Football Pitches	0.4 ha	1 ha of grass pitch per 2,500 population	Good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 1.6km or 20 minutes walk
Gaelic football Pitches	0.03 pitches or 0.06 ha/600sqm	1 pitch per 34,000	Good or excellent quality	Located to maximise club development
Tennis Courts	0.32 courts or 0.028 ha/280 sqm	1 court per 3,000	Good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 1.6km or 20 minutes walk
MUGAs	0.13 MUGA or 150 sqm	1 MUGA per 8,000 population	Good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 800m or 10 minutes walk in areas of high young person population density
Bowling Greens	0.03 rinks or 90sqm	1 bowling green per 33,300	Good or excellent quality	Retain existing provision and accessibility
Rugby Pitches	New facilities at	1 pitch per	Good or excellent	Retain new provision at

	Gladstone Park expected to meet demand	279,000	quality, floodlit	Gladstone Park
Cricket Pitches	0.04 pitches or 0.08ha/800 sqm	1 pitch per 27,500	Good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 1.6km or 20 minutes walk
Netball Courts	0.13 court or 130 sqm	1 per 7,500	Good or excellent quality, floodlit.	Provision linked to schools and sports centres.
Changing Rooms	All outdoor sports facilities with 2 or more grass pitches.	All outdoor sports facilities with 2 or more grass pitches.	Of good or excellent quality. Accommodate use at the same time by different age & genders. Provide toilet facilities. Larger pitch sites to provide enhanced facilities in the form of a pavilion.	Publicly accessible adjacent to sports pitches (2 or more pitches).

Source: *Planning for Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy (2008 – 2021)*

The strategy sets out priorities for action in relation to all forms of indoor and outdoor facilities for sport including those facility types identified above, many of which are provided in the borough's parks. These facility priorities are set out in Chapter 5.

Culture

The Brent Cultural Strategy 2010-2015 sets out a vision of a range of cultural opportunities that are engaging, accessible and enriching for all local communities so that by 2015 Brent will be confident in culture as a catalyst for improving the quality of life of everyone who lives or works in the borough regardless of their individual circumstances. It has been produced by the Brent Culture Sports and Learning Forum, a sub-group of the Local Strategic Partnership ('Partners for Brent').

The current Brent Cultural Strategy expired at the end of 2009. Its replacement highlights the key principles that all Brent's cultural partners and providers will need to consider in delivering the shared vision for culture in Brent.

The Culture, Sports and Learning Forum uses the following definitions of culture:

The term 'Culture' includes arts, creative employment, festivals, libraries, museums, heritage, architecture/design of the public realm, children's play, parks, tourism and other forms of leisure and recreation.

The term 'Sport' includes all forms of physical activity which through casual or organised participation, aims at improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition at all levels. 'Culture' is used to include both 'culture' and sport as defined above.

Eight headline principles have been identified and they are:

- **Enhancing Cultural Vibrancy**
- **Increase Participation**
- **Raising the Profile of Culture**
- **Encouraging Young People to Take Part**
- **Developing Public Spaces**
- **Making the Most of 2012**
- **Supporting the Cultural Economy**
- **Promoting Health and Wellbeing**

This strategy will in turn contribute to the delivery of all these principles.

Education and Childcare (including play)

The *Brent Early Years Education & Childcare Strategy (2005 – 2010)* sets out how the Council supports children (in accordance with the Corporate Strategy) through early years education and childcare.

The borough's parks and open spaces play an important education role for young children for example by:

- Providing access to appropriately resourced spaces for play, exercise and recreation
- Helping parents to ensure that their children are healthy, promoting healthy lifestyles to children and parents introducing and encouraging activities with their children
- Providing access to free informal learning opportunities, particularly in relation to personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) and physical education (PE)
- Use of parks for more formal learning opportunities e.g. as 'outdoor classrooms' (this is also an action identified in the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan see below)
- Parks and open spaces as part of Safer Routes to Schools (SRtS) in line with promotion of cycling and walking to school and the drawing up of School Travel Plans

In terms of the 0-19 age group as a whole, the Council's *Children & Young People's Plan 2006-2009* includes an objective (1e) '**To provide accessible and safe play, sport, culture and leisure**' as part of its first priority – i.e. creating the conditions in which children and young people thrive. Clearly, in addition to existing and new community sports facilities located on school sites under the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and the Primary Capital Programme PCP), the borough's parks and the facilities provided within parks for informal play, for recreation and for organised sport make a very significant contribution to the achievement of this objective.

We are in the process of developing a new five-year Play Strategy consistent with this Parks Strategy and the overall objectives for the development and delivery of play opportunities established in the most recent Play Strategy (2003-2008) i.e.

- More children able to participate in better play provision
- Provision targeted to areas most in need
- Increased awareness of the importance and value of play
- Extended and improved quantity and quality of play opportunities

Biodiversity and Climate Change

The Council published its second *Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)* in July 2007 updating the Council's first BAP prepared in 2001. This local plan links with regional and national plans to promote biodiversity and with separate Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and Species Action Plans (SAPs).

An important development since the Council's first BAP was the introduction of the following '*Biodiversity Duty*' as part of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)*. This duty on public authorities raises the profile and visibility of biodiversity. It clarifies existing commitments and makes biodiversity a natural and integral part of policy and decision-making.

The Biodiversity Duty

Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity

The Brent Biodiversity Action Plan is concerned not only with biodiversity in green spaces, but also with biodiversity throughout the environment including in urban areas and the built environment. Biodiversity contributes to improved environmental quality. This is not limited to species and habitats only, but includes improved air quality both locally and globally, noise reduction, green space, walking routes for local journeys, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage systems and reduction in flood risks; and direct and indirect economic benefits.

Trees and other vegetation are net absorbers of carbon during their lifetime. This has the effect of reducing atmospheric carbon and of potentially providing a carbon-neutral source of energy to substitute for the combustion of fossil fuels. Trees can also reduce winter heat loss around buildings; and provide summer shading for both buildings and people. The consequences of increasing CO₂ and other greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere and rising average temperatures (which are likely to be more pronounced in London than in rural areas due to the heat-sink effect), include increased risks of drought and flash flooding and, in terms of flora and fauna, a general northwards shift in the distribution of species.

As part of a strategy to address these issues and combat these risks, The Council has adopted an Environmental Policy, and a Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan for 2006-2011 that includes a target to cut CO₂ emissions; and includes a tree-planting project.

The BAP sets out the importance of the following green spaces in Brent managed by the Parks Service to the achievement of these targets:

- **Parks and green spaces:** Parks and green spaces provide much of the area of publicly accessible land in the Borough and encompass much of the semi-natural habitats including grasslands, trees, woodland, hedgerows and ponds. And there is a wide range of wildlife to be seen.
- **Allotments:** There are 1,108 allotment plots in the Borough across 23 sites managed by Brent Council Parks Service, and a number of private allotments. These areas provide opportunities for relaxation and exercise; for growing food and providing seasonally changing vegetation; in reducing urban flooding and helping to store carbon dioxide; and for providing wildlife and biodiversity on the doorstep.

Neighbouring Local Authorities

Consideration of the strategic context for this Brent Parks and Open Spaces Strategy would not be complete without considering what is happening to parks and open spaces just across the borough boundaries. Locations and plans of relevance on the part of Brent's neighbouring boroughs are summarised in brief below:

Harrow: Residents on the northern fringe of Brent in Queensbury Ward are well served by parks and open spaces (e.g. Woodcock Park, Northwick Park and Preston Park) relative to those living in the more built up areas in the south of the borough. Brent residents in these areas also benefit from access to extensive areas of public open space across the borough boundary in the Harrow on the Hill and Sudbury Hill areas as well as Kenton Recreation Ground and Queensbury Park. We are not aware of any strategic plans and developments by Harrow Council that will impact on this provision in the short to medium terms.

Barnet: Similarly, those Brent residents on the north-east border with the London Borough of Barnet (Fryent Ward) have good accessibility to most types of public open space within Brent, including the Fryent Country Park. Via the A5 Edgware Road, Brent residents in these areas can also access readily Barnet's significant park and open space amenities such as Montrose Recreation Ground and the Silk Stream Park and sports grounds close to the Colindale Hospital and West Hendon Playing Fields borders Silver Jubilee Park. In addition Brent co-manages the Welsh Harp Reservoir with Barnet and is part of a best practice partnership arrangement.

Camden: London Borough of Camden has a five-year strategy in place for its parks and open spaces taking it up to 2011. For Brent residents close to the Camden borough boundary (e.g. in Mapesbury and Dollis Hill Wards), Grange Park, Fortune Green and, further to the east, Hampstead Heath are within a reasonable travel time.

Westminster: The City of Westminster Open Space Strategy (Feb 2007) is recently adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in the City of Westminster Local Development Framework and will serve as a Corporate Strategy for 10 to 15 years. The largest accessible areas of open space in Westminster for residents in the south east corner of Brent – i.e. the Kilburn and Queen's Park Wards - are Paddington Recreation Ground (with a range of recently upgraded indoor and outdoor sports facilities and a public play area) and the much smaller Randolph Gardens Open Space (designated in the City of Westminster strategy as a 'Priority Area for Additional Playspace').

Hammersmith & Fulham: In May 2008, the Council published a ten-year strategy for its parks and open spaces. Two areas of open space within this borough are very accessible to residents of Kensal Green Ward in Brent, namely Wormwood Scrubs Park (including major provision for athletics and football) and Little Wormwood Scrubs Recreation Ground. These amenities will attract some use by Brent residents although the Grand Union Canal, the railway and industrial estates act as significant physical barriers. Hammersmith and Fulham Council are committed to improving the sports facilities and other amenities in Wormwood Scrubs Park. Responsibility for Little Wormwood Scrubs has passed to Kensington and Chelsea who plan improvements to the facilities and maintenance of the park.

Ealing: Ealing Borough Council is reviewing and updating its parks and open spaces strategy. Current priorities of relevance to residents along the south-west boundary of Brent (e.g. those living in Alperton Ward) include establishing 'wildlife flagship parks' at Horsenden Hill and Brent River Park. Residents and schools in this part of Brent also benefit from good access to the Perivale Wood Local Nature Reserve.

Chapter 4: Brent Parks Today

Introduction

Current provision in Brent of public parks and open spaces, children's play areas and outdoor sports facilities in parks, and allotments is summarised in this chapter.

The existing provision is considered in relation to:

- **Quantity and Accessibility:** the number and scale of public parks and public open spaces benchmarked against London Plan standards for accessibility to people from all parts of the borough i.e. their physical distribution in relation to where people live and work and the available access and transport routes
- **Quality:** quality assessments are based on residents' own perceptions and those of an external assessor.

At the end of the chapter, issues and needs arising from this assessment of the 'supply' of Brent's parks service, considered in the context of the 'demand' set out in the earlier chapters, are summarised.

References and links are provided for those wishing to access to more detailed reports, maps and data on which this summary of needs is based.

Quantity and Accessibility of Open Spaces

Catchment Areas

Open Space catchment areas are based on '*distance from homes thresholds*' – i.e. a measure of the distance that people can reasonably be expected to travel on a regular basis to use open space from their home.

Local open space offering some form of children's play amenity should be available within easy walking distance of where people live. As detailed in the table on page 3 in Chapter 3, the GLA London Plan defines this as **400m actual walking distance** (i.e. using the available routes as opposed to 'as the crow flies'). People are generally willing to travel further to use recreation areas providing outdoor sport facilities or to larger parks. The distance from homes thresholds for these larger types of public open space offering a wider range of amenities is therefore greater (as shown in the table).

While people do not think of the parks and open spaces in their locality in terms of their type or designation - i.e. Metropolitan Park, District Park, Local Park, Small or 'Pocket' Park etc - these designations, adopted in the London Plan, are useful in helping to understand the roles of open spaces of different sizes and characteristics and in assessing the quantity and accessibility of provision of parks and open spaces in Brent and in identifying any spatial deficiencies.

For this reason, Brent Parks Service uses the public open space hierarchy or categorisation of types adopted in the London Plan (see table 3D1 in Chapter 3). The figures shown in brackets are the size guideline for each type i.e.

- Regional Parks (400 ha)
- Metropolitan Parks (60 ha)
- District Parks (20 ha)
- Local Parks and Open Spaces (2 ha)
- Small Open Spaces (under 2 ha)
- Pocket Parks (under 0.4 ha)
- Linear Open Spaces (variable)
- Allotments

Play facilities can be found in parks of all sizes from Pocket Parks to Regional Parks. Sports facilities, such as tennis courts, bowling greens and playing pitches, are generally only provided in parks and open spaces such as recreation grounds of 2 hectares or larger - designated as Local, District or Metropolitan parks - although occasionally small-scale sports facilities such as multi-use-games-areas (MUGAs) or tennis courts can be found in Small Open Spaces of under 2 hectares.

Table 5 below shows existing provision of parks and open spaces in Brent according to these categories or designations of type.

Table 5: Parks and Open Spaces in Brent by Type

GLA category	Name & Location (Metropolitan & District Parks only)	Number	Total Size (hectares)
Regional Parks	None in Brent. <i>(Nearest are Hampstead Heath to east and Colne Valley Regional Park to the west)</i>	0	0
Metropolitan Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fryent Country Park, Kingsbury <i>See Map at Appendix 1</i>	1	115
District Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gladstone Park, Dollis Hill • Northwick Park, North Wembley • Vale Farm <i>See Map at Appendix 2</i>	3	99
Local Parks	<i>See map at Appendix 3</i>	28	208
Small and Pocket Parks	<i>See map at Appendix 4</i>	42	26.5
Linear Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brent River Park (also a Local Park as over 2ha) 	1	16
Allotment sites	<i>See map at Appendix 5</i>	23	17.9

* Queens Park in Kilburn is a Local Park located within Brent managed by The Corporation of London

How We Compare

In comparison with the ten other outer London boroughs that are members of the London Parks Benchmarking Group, Brent has below the average total area of parks and open space (at approximately 450ha compared with average of 567 ha.) When the relative population sizes are considered, provision per 1,000 people in Brent falls significantly below the average (1.71 ha per 1,000 compared to 2.49 ha per 1,000).

The number of allotment sites is in line with the average across the ten local authorities that provided benchmark data in 2008. However, the size of the area given over to allotments is below the average at 15.1 ha (excludes 2.8 hectares in the self managed Kenton Lane) compared to 26.8 ha.

The number of play areas in parks and the total population per play area are broadly in line with the benchmark averages for the eleven outer London boroughs where we have 2008 data. However, it would appear that, on average, the size of Brent's play areas are smaller than the average with an average of just over 5 items of kit per equipped play area compared to the average of over 11 items. These benchmark statistics are summarised in table 6 below.

Table 6: Comparisons of Parks and Open Space provision in Brent with ten other outer London boroughs

Outer London Borough	Hectares of Parks and Open Space*	Hectares per 1,000 population (2001 Census)	Allotment Sites (and total area in hectares)	Play Areas for 0-12 year olds in Parks and Open Spaces (Pop per play area)	Number of Items of Kit per Play Area
Brent	450	1.71	23 (17.9)	43 (6,127)	5.05
Barking and Dagenham	523	3.13	14 (10.93)	15 (11,133)	22.4
Bexley	523	3.02	36 (45)	29 (5,954)	19
Bromley	No data	No data	No data	65 (4,547)	9.25
Croydon	1132	3.42	6 (13)	55 (6,011)	6.67
Enfield	809	2.95	32 (46)	43 (6,362)	15.05
Havering	777	3.49	25 (no data)	45 (4,983)	No data
Merton	409	2.16	18 (43)	37 (5,108)	7.95
Newham	174	0.78	7 (10.99)	31 (7,235)	8.55
Sutton	463	2.52	36 (27.6)	26 (7,092)	9.54
Waltham Forest	251	1.15	26 (27)	56 (3,899)	8.04
Average	567	2.49	22 (26.82)	40 (6,229)	11.15

* Excluding housing estates, including allotments & cemeteries

Spatial Mapping of our Parks and Open Spaces and their Catchment Areas

Our Planning Department has carried out a spatial mapping analysis comparing this provision in Brent and close to its boundaries against the standard 'distance from homes thresholds' (i.e. catchment areas) adopted by the Council from the GLA London Plan. The results of this analysis for each type of open space is shown in the maps appended and summarised in the following table:

Table 7: Spatial Deficiencies in Public Open Space in Brent by Type

GLA category	Distance from homes threshold	Summary of locations with gaps in provision against the GLA distance from homes threshold
Regional Parks	3.2 to 8 km	There are no regional parks in the borough
Metropolitan Parks <i>(See Map at Appendix 1).</i>	3.2 km	The south of the borough has poor access to Metropolitan Park provision as it is over 3.2km from Fryent Country Park
District Parks <i>(See Map at Appendix 2).</i>	1.2km	Wards in the south of the borough have poor access to district level park provision. Alperton, Stonebridge, Harlesden, Kensal Green, Queen's Park, Brondesbury Park and Kilburn wards are over 1.2km from a district park. Parts of Wembley Central, Tokyngton, Willesden Green and Queensbury ward are also deficient in district park provision.
Local Parks <i>(See Map at Appendix 3).</i>	400m	There are pockets of deficiency throughout the borough. Much of the south of the borough lacks local public open space provision, with areas of deficiency in all of the following wards - Alperton, Stonebridge/Park Royal, Harlesden, Willesden Green, Kensal Green, Queen's Park, Kilburn and Brondesbury Park. Eastern areas of Mapesbury and Dollis Hill also have poor access to public open space. Central areas of Preston, Tokyngton and Wembley Central wards are also deficient in local open space. Whilst the north of the borough has the greatest provision of open space there are still areas which are not within 400m of a local or larger public open space, these include areas in east Queensbury and Fryent adjacent to the Edgware Road and west Queensbury along Honeypot Lane. There are also pockets of deficiency in Kenton, Northwick Park and Sudbury wards.
Small and Pocket Parks <i>(See Map at</i>	Less than 400m	There are pockets of the borough which have very poor local open space provision with no local parks or small/pocket park provision within 400m, these are Wembley (Tokyngton

Appendix 4).		<p>ward), parts of Wembley Central, South Harlesden, South Kensal Green, North East Brondesbury Park and South Mapesbury.</p> <p>Areas of Willesden Green, Dollis Hill, North Queensbury, NE Fryent and Kenton also have poor access to smaller open spaces, although they have good access to District Parks.</p>
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A further relevant designation used by the GLA in the London Plan is ‘*areas of access to nature*’. Brent is generally well provided for in this regard. However, the London Plan identifies the more densely populated south east of the borough around Kilburn as deficient in areas of access to nature.

Open Space Needs of Projected Population Growth

Population growth is expected in five key housing growth areas, the largest being Wembley and also Alperton, Burnt Oak/Colindale, South Kilburn and Church End. The council has drawn up an Infrastructure and Investment Framework (IIF) which sets out the foreseeable infrastructure requirements that will arise from anticipated new housing and commercial development. This includes the open space needs of new population growth. The IIF sets out the main package of infrastructure measures that should be provided to create sustainable communities, however it is not to suggest that all of the items will be delivered; it may not be possible to provide everything on the IIF list and this does not preclude other items being added (the IIF will be reviewed annually or bi-annually).

To plan for the open space needs of new housing, the mayor’s public open space hierarchy has been applied. In order to ensure the overall open space provision also meets the needs of children and young people, the mayor’s Supplementary Planning Guidance has been applied. This sets out a benchmark of 10sqm of play space per child and categorises play facilities into the following categories:

Table 8: GLA Play Facility Categories

	Description	Min size	Accessibility to play space
Doorstep playable space	A place where children under 5 can play	100sqm	Within 100m
Local playable space	A place where children up to 11 can play	300sqm	Within 400m
Neighbourhood playable space	More extensive play area for children up and over to 11	500sqm	Within 400-800m
Youth Space	A place for young people aged 12 and over	200sqm	Within 800m

In addition to the 5 key areas of housing growth there are two further identified areas where the future open space needs have been assessed. These are Park Royal – a large industrial area with some limited expected housing development associated with Central Middlesex Hospital and part of the First Central site, and North Circular Road (NCR) Regeneration Area – where improvements to the environmental conditions and safety of residents directly affected by the NCR.

Summary of growth area open space requirements

Table 9: Open Space Requirements by Population Growth Areas in Brent

	Number of new homes up to 2026	Open space requirements	Play requirements
Wembley	11,500	<p>New park (min 1.2ha)</p> <p>3 x new pocket parks/local squares (min 0.4ha)</p> <p>Improved links to existing open spaces at Sherrans Farm and Chalkhill open space</p> <p>Enhanced wildlife area along Wealdstone Brook</p>	<p>Doorstep play areas within housing development</p> <p>5 x new neighbourhood play areas</p> <p>3 x new Multi-Use Games Areas</p>
Alperton	1,600	<p>New public open space (1ha)</p> <p>3 x new canal-side pocket parks/local squares</p>	<p>Doorstep play areas within housing development</p> <p>Improved play facilities at Mount Pleasant and Heather Park.</p> <p>New play facilities in new public open space</p> <p>New MUGA at One Tree Hill</p>
Burnt Oak/Colindale	2,500	<p>3 x new pocket parks (min 0.2ha)</p>	<p>Doorstep play areas within housing development</p> <p>3 x local play areas within new pocket parks</p> <p>Improved play facilities at Eton Grove</p> <p>Neighbourhood play including new MUGA at Grove Park</p>

Table 9: Open Space Requirements by Population Growth Areas in Brent – cont

	Number of new homes up to 2026	Open space requirements	Play requirements
Church End	800	New 2ha park (incorporating cemetery land)	Doorstep play areas within housing development New play facilities at Villiers Road New MUGA adjacent to St Mary's Primary School
South Kilburn	2,400	Expand South Kilburn Open Space 4 x pocket parks (0.2ha) including improvements to Cambridge Gardens	Doorstep play areas within housing development Improved play facilities at South Kilburn Open Space 4 x new local play areas within new pocket parks New MUGA in South Kilburn Open Space
Park Royal	~	New park at Coronation Gardens (2ha) 3 x new pocket parks/local squares (0.2ha)	Doorstep play areas within housing development New multi-use games area.
North Circular Road Regeneration Area	~	Green links – improve walking and cycling links between open spaces in the area New open space corridor adjacent to the NCR	Improve play facilities at Crouch End Road, Brent River Park and Sunny Crescent New MUGA in Brent River Park

Quality of Open Spaces

The value of parks and open spaces is as much about the appropriateness and quality of what they offer as it is about how easy the open space is to get to from people's homes. In assessing local deficiencies and in determining priorities for action - whether new provision or improvements to existing provision - it is therefore important to know what people think about the parks and open spaces, and people's views on how they need to be improved.

The main source of information on what Brent residents think of their parks and open spaces is the Annual Parks Survey run as one element of a comprehensive green

space performance management system contracted from the KMC Consultancy. This survey has been conducted each year since 2000 using a randomly selected sample of 10% of Brent home addresses. The response rate tends to fall within a range of 10% (in 2008) to 19% (2007) of the sample, generating between 1,000 and 2,000 responses. As a household survey, it covers people of all ages and ethnic groups and both regular parks users and non-users.

A second element of the KMC performance management system is an annual survey targeted specifically at non-users of our parks and open spaces.

In 2008, further surveys were commissioned to inform this new strategy and a major funding bid to the Government's 'Playbuilder' fund. One survey considered play areas in parks from the viewpoint of primary age schoolchildren. Another focused on fear of crime among young people and included findings of relevance to parks.

The objectives of these consultation processes were to:

- Establish the standard of parks in the borough and whether they meet the demands/needs and expectations of communities both now and in the future
- Ascertain what are the real issues amongst stakeholders, how well used and appreciated parks and open spaces are, how accessible they are and what improvements /changes people wish to see
- To monitor the impact of service improvements on resident satisfaction levels

The main findings of these 2008 consultations are summarised as follows (the findings relate to the 2008 and 2009 Brent Parks Surveys except where stated):

Patterns of use of Brent's Parks

- Users of the Council owned Parks tend to live locally and visit regularly (31.5% at least three times a week on average)
- 15% always visit alone, whilst 35% always visit in a group – i.e. with a partner, children, other family, friends or a combination of these.
- The average number of people in a group is 3.8.
- Users visit Brent's parks primarily to *exercise, let children play or relax* (these top three responses accounting for 85% of the total). Consequently, *play facilities, access and general atmosphere* came out as highly important aspects of the service. This is consistent with the findings of the Parks Survey in previous years
- 96% of respondents walk to their local Park. This is consistent with previous years' findings and supports the case for the local target for provision of local parks in line with the London Plan target of a 400m walk distance threshold
- Queens Park (a Corporation of London owned site) and Gladstone Park were identified as the most visited Parks in Brent

What people like most about Brent's Parks

- The aspects of the service rated most highly were *staff helpfulness, cleanliness and overall maintenance*.

What concerns people most about Brent's Parks

- 83% of respondents (slightly higher than the previous year's 80%) have some concerns with safety. Concerns about '*groups of youths hanging around*'

stated by the majority of people, with '*lack of visible assistance in cases of emergency*' cited as the second 'fear inducing' factor.

- Whilst a large number of respondents still have concerns about safety the levels of satisfaction around 'secured sites' (i.e. those parks that can be closed after dark) has continued to increase.
- 95% of respondents stated that would like to see park wardens in un-staffed sites. (*Brent Parks Wardens are permanently based at seven major parks with a mobile patrol service covering all other parks in the borough. Parks Wardens patrol Roundwood Park, Barham Park, Gladstone Park, King Edwards VII Park, Roe Green Park, Preston Park and St Raphael's/Gibbons Recreation. The wardens can respond to problems raised by members of the public and their presence helps children and families using the parks and playsites feel safe and secure. There is also a 'Mobile Play Team' supported by the Big Lottery Fund that focuses on those play sites without a permanent warden.*)
- Fear of crime and poor facilities were cited as the main barriers to entry. (*Interestingly, among a sample of about a hundred young people interviewed as part of the Brent Youth Parliament's Crime & Safety Survey 10% rated the parks after dark as 'the most dangerous places in Brent' compared to 21% for 'Stonebridge'*)
- There is continuing dissatisfaction with the inadequate toilet provision in parks

What improvements people would most like to see

The most frequently cited improvements among adults were (in order of importance):

- A greater emphasis on **safety** – staffing, improved visibility across sites etc
- Infrastructure **repairs** – including paths, toilets and pavilions
- Control of **dogs** and freedom from dog fouling
- Improved, **updated facilities** e.g. sports and a variety of 'exciting' play equipment e.g. sensory gardens, paddling pools etc
- Greater **variety of facilities** especially for youths

Young children would most like to see more exciting play areas (*this finding of the Parks Survey is reinforced by the views of a sample of primary age schoolchildren in the course of a consultative workshop in 2008 to inform a successful bid to the Government's 'Playbuilder' fund*)

Knowledge about Brent's Parks

The 2008 and 2009 Parks Surveys and previous years' surveys indicate a lack of knowledge about what sports facilities are in parks; some respondents gave satisfaction ratings for facilities that were not actually there. This finding points to a need to continue to improve information services about the Parks. The survey shows that the top three media used to find information about the parks service are (in order of preference): the Council's *website*, *the local library*, *the local paper*. More on-site marketing by means of on-site presence of staff and management, where possible, is also needed.

Summary of people's basis requirements from Parks

The findings of the annual Brent Parks Surveys show that local people visit parks and open spaces for a wide variety of reasons, depending on their life stage, their location and their preferred activities. However, in spite of the different reasons for

visiting, they share a common set of basic requirements for their parks and open spaces. (*These same basic requirements were echoed by non-users of Brent's parks in a survey conducted in April 2008 as factors that would encourage non-users to start using Brent's parks*):

- **Clean** – without litter, dog mess or graffiti
- **Safe** – preferable with a visible staff presence
- **Green** – restful, rich in wildlife
- **Varied** – with activities and events and a variety of local choices in particular children and young people's facilities
- **Welcoming** – well maintained, with good infrastructure and signage

For school age children, a national survey of 150,000 children across 145 local authorities (the Ofsted 'Tell Us' National Survey 2008) found that '*Better Parks and Play Areas*' ranked second highest in a list of '*Things that would do most to make it a better place to live?*' scoring 47% after 'Cleaner, Less Litter' (48%).

Satisfaction Ratings and Trends - Individual Parks

Resident satisfaction scores were recorded for 65 of the 90 parks and open spaces across Brent in the 2008 Parks Survey using a simple scoring system:
0-2 = v. poor 3-4 = poor, 5-6 = fair, 7- 8 = good, 9-10 = v. good

Of the 65 that were scored:

- 2 scored 9 (i.e. 3% of those scored) – Gladstone Park and Mapesbury Dell (*interestingly both are actively supported by voluntary sector groups, a consultative committee and a conservation trust respectively*)
- 18 scored 8 (28%) ranging in size from Fryent Country Park to Franklyn Road Playground (a 'pocket park' in the London Plan designations)
- 33 scored 7 (51%)
- 12 scored 6 (18%)

None of the parks and open spaces where scores were recorded scored lower than 6 out of 10.

The trend in resident satisfaction with Brent's Parks is steadily upward. For example satisfaction with Gladstone Park has increased from a rating of 5.5 (i.e. fair) in 2001 to 9 (very good) in 2008 and 2009; Mapesbury Dell's rating has increased from 4.5 (poor) in 2002 to 9 (very good) in 2008 and 2009

Further improvement is expected at other parks where recent commitments to physical infrastructure improvements have been made e.g. Gibbons Recreation Ground has already improved its rating from 4.2 (poor) in 2001 to a 2008 rating of 7.9 (good). We expect this to improve further to a 'very good' rating once the sports pavilion is built.

Satisfaction Ratings and Trends - Aspects of the Parks Service

The table below shows the actual ratings of aspects of the Parks Service awarded by residents in the 2008 Parks Survey against the annual targets set by the Council in

the 2007/08 Parks Service Plan. These aspects will continue to be monitored annually through the five-year duration of this strategy (see Chapter 6).

Table 10: Satisfaction Ratings against Targets by Service Area

Service Area	Target Resident Survey Satisfaction Rating for 2008	Actual Resident Survey Satisfaction Rating in 2008
Verges	7.6	7.7 (+0.1)
Children's play	9	8.8 (-0.2)
Grounds Maintenance	9.3	9.4 (+0.1)
Park Cleanliness	9.1	9.2 (+0.1)
Warden supervised Parks	8.8	8.9 (+0.1)
Unsupervised Parks	7	7.1 (+0.1)

As the table shows, with the exception of children's play, all service areas listed were marginally ahead of target in terms of resident satisfaction ratings in the year. It is expected that the children's play service satisfaction rating will improve markedly over the five year term of this strategy stimulated in large measure by new investment in new and upgraded play areas and ongoing revenue maintenance part-funded by the Council's successful bid to the 'Playbuilder' fund.

In addition to the Parks specific consultation, two major pieces of Council consultation, the Place Survey (PS) and the Residents Attitude Survey (RAS), have recently concluded and help to provide an understanding of what the residents of Brent feel about the area they live in and how well they feel Brent Council performs its services.

The Place Survey was developed by the Department of Communities and Local Government and replaces the previous BVPI surveys. The survey asks respondents about their views on the local area and local public services. The PS took place in Brent between October and December 2008 to a postal sample of 8,000 households.

The RAS is Brent's main way of measuring how residents view the council and its services. Brent usually conducts a RAS at least once every three or four years. The RAS is carried out by face-to-face interview with a sample of respondents. The responses are weighted so that they represent Brent's population accurately. The 2009 RAS was conducted between May and August 2009.

Although the two surveys have similar questions, the PS questions mainly focussed on attitudes toward the local area overall and how the range of local organisations work together (e.g. Council, the Police, NHS Brent), whereas the RAS is concerned solely with attitudes toward the council. The following table depicts all 21 wards and their respective age and ethnicity breakdown as well as the satisfaction with parks and open spaces. The top six ward scores for each category are highlighted in green with the lowest six in red.

Brent Parks Strategy 2010 - 2015

Ward	13 – 19 (PS)	60+ (PS)	BME (PS)	Satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces	Satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces (RAS)
Alperton	6.3%	8.4%	72%	62%	64%
Barn Hill	9.3%	12.4%	55%	64%	70%
Brondesbury Park	10.8%	9.8%	34%	72%	87%
Dollis Hill	9.3%	9.5%	52%	71%	79%
Dudden Hill	10.0%	9.3%	47%	78%	97%
Fryent	12.6%	10.2%	53%	79%	92%
Harlesden	10.4%	7.6%	62%	61%	83%
Kensal Green	9.2%	7.6%	47%	80%	87%
Kenton	5.5%	12.3%	57%	53%	84%
Kilburn	8.5%	8.6%	44%	65%	76%
Mapesbury	9.7%	7.8%	33%	64%	82%
Northwick Park	7.0%	10.4%	58%	69%	86%
Preston	9.2%	11.6%	58%	58%	92%
Queens Park	6.8%	8.0%	35%	78%	88%
Queensbury	9.8%	11.9%	65%	60%	83%
Stonebridge	6.0%	9.2%	67%	50%	63%
Sudbury	11.7%	9.7%	64%	71%	92%
Tokington	9.2%	10.3%	70%	69%	78%
Welsh Harp	9.2%	10.1%	54%	72%	85%
Wembley Central	9.0%	8.6%	79%	55%	81%
Willesden Green	11.2%	6.8%	45%	76%	79%
Mean	9.1%	9.5%	55%	64%	82%

Note: missing satisfaction scores denote score not in top 19 responses.

There is quite a differential between the Place and Residents Attitude Survey in wards like Wembley Central (55% -81%), Preston (58% -92% and Kenton (53% to 84%). In the Place Survey these were the worst performing wards; whilst Preston was one of the top six in the Residents Survey. The increased satisfaction (Place Survey conducted in 2008 and the Residents Survey in 2009) would coincide with the major landscape and infrastructural improvements to Preston in 2009. The other lowest performing wards namely Wembley Central, Kenton and Stonebridge.

Strategy Consultation Findings

Public consultation on the draft strategy took place from October 2009 to January 2010. The draft Strategy was available in Brent's libraries and remaining One Stop Shops. It was also available to download from the Parks Service's website and was on the Council's Consultation tracker inviting people to feedback via the online consultation questionnaire. A web link and flyers were sent to members of the Council's User Consultative Forums and the Brent Magazine ran an article on the

draft strategy. The Youth Parliament considered the draft strategy and provided detailed feedback which will inform delivery of the actions within the strategy.

Letters and/or emails were sent to the following individuals and organisations together with copies of the draft Strategy and Executive Summary asking for their comments and feedback:

- Senior Council Officers and Members
- Local Friends of Parks and Open Spaces
- All of the listed Residents Associations
Youth Parliament
- Greater London Parks Benchmarking Group
- Greenspace
- Council's User Consultative Forums which include Brava, BME, Disability and Older People's Forums
- All local Schools through the Schools Extranet

The responses from the consultation process have informed the final version of the Strategy, 200 of the 202 respondents agreed with the key themes and objectives

Children's Play Areas

Introduction

The Council is developing local standards for play provision to be incorporated in the emerging Local Development Framework. The LDF will replace the existing Unitary Development Plan in 2009/10. Specifically, the draft Core Strategy provides that "*The Council will secure new play facilities in all major developments*". Policy CP12 of the draft Core Strategy requires that the infrastructure requirements of new housing schemes are met by the time of occupation. In addition policy CP16 protects all open space (including play facilities) from inappropriate development and seeks new provision where deficiencies exist or where additional pressure is created on outdoor play provision.

The Council's spatial planning framework, currently in the form of the adopted Unitary Development Plan (2004) and emerging Local Development Framework (LDF), sets out the council's strategy to protect and enhance all open space and play areas in the borough. UDP policy OS18 – "Children's Play Areas" sets out the requirement of children's play facilities to National Playing Field Association (NPFA) Standards in residential developments over 15 units. Alongside UDP policy OS18, the council requires 10 m² of well-designed play and recreation space for every child to be accommodated in new housing developments in conformity with the London Plan adopted Supplementary Planning – "Providing for Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation".

Catchment Area Analysis

To inform the local play standards and our recent successful funding bid to the Government's 'Playbuilder' fund, our Planning Department, with colleagues from the Parks Service, has completed a detailed needs analysis of play areas across Brent including play provision in the borough's parks.

The needs assessment includes spatial mapping of the accessibility of the existing 43 play sites (using the London Plan 400m actual walking distance threshold). It also maps the play site locations in relation to other amenities (i.e. public open space,

schools, public toilets), and in relation to areas of child density in the population and areas of relative deprivation. The needs assessment includes a detailed audit of the condition of sites and takes into account proposed developments at the time of the audit. Note: The needs analysis has taken into consideration those children that are currently between the 5-8 but will be within the target age come the end of the funding process.

The detailed findings and map are at Appendix 6.

Table 11 below summarise the spatial needs for additional play areas in Brent by Ward assuming the 400m actual walking distance standard.

Table 11: Public Play Areas in Brent - Spatial Deficiencies by Ward

Ward	Summary of spatial deficiencies
Queensbury	Some areas more than 400m walking distance from play facilities at Eton Grove. High child population density in north of Queensbury.
Fryent	Areas in East of Fryent ward are more than 400m from play facilities at Roe Green, Church Lane, Silver Jubilee open space.
Kenton	Low child population density area
Barnhill	High child population density in Chalkhill area. Also area in north of ward which is more than 400m from Lindsay Park and has a medium child population density.
Welsh Harp	Some areas more than 400m from play facilities at Church Lane and Neasden recreation ground.
Preston	Pockets of high child population density in west of ward which are more than 400m distance from play facilities at King Edward Park and Preston Park.
Northwick Park	Small area of medium child population density more than 400m from play facilities at Northwick Park.
Sudbury	Pockets of medium child density which are more than 400m from play facilities at Butler's Green, Maybank and Barham Park
Wembley Central	Large areas of high child population density which are more than 400m from play facilities at One Tree Hill and King Edward VII Park
Alperton	Area in north of ward with high child population density and over 400m from play facilities at Mount Pleasant open space.
Stonebridge	Significantly high child population density in areas placing pressure on play facilities at Brent River Park, Gibbons Recreation Ground, Crouch Road open space.
Harlesden	Significantly high child population density in areas placing pressure on play facilities at St Mary's Road open space and other small play facilities within housing areas..
Kensal Green	Pockets of medium/high child density which are more than 400m from play facilities at Roundwood Park and Hazel Road play area.
Public Play Areas in Brent - Spatial Deficiencies by Ward -cont	
Queens Park	Areas in west of ward are more than 400m walking distance from play facilities at Queen's Park and Tiverton playground.
Kilburn	Significantly high child population In areas placing pressure on play facilities at Carlton Vale open space and Streatley Road playground.
Brondesbury Park	Area of medium child population density in south of ward more than 400m from play facilities at Tiverton playground and Brondesbury Park open space.

Willesden Green	North area of ward has high child population density and no existing play facilities.
Dudden Hill	Pockets of ward which are more than 400m from play facilities at Gladstone Park.
Mapesbury	Pockets of medium/high child population density which are more than 400m from play facilities at Gladstone Park and Mapesbury Dell.
Dollis Hill	Significantly high child population density north part of the ward which is more than 400m from play facilities at Gladstone Park.
Tokyington	Medium/high child population density in south of ward which is more than 400m from play facilities at Brent River Park.

Determining Priorities for New and Upgraded Sites

To prioritise the Parks Service sites and locations for new investment in play provision, we have applied the following criteria:

Areas where there is:

- High population density of children aged 8-13 and 5-8
- High density housing/multiple occupancy
- Open space deficiency
- Proximity to accessible toilet facilities
- Accessibility for children with disabilities
- Proximity to anti-social behaviour hotspots
- Proximity to schools, Children's Centres, shopping areas & other venues where children & parents go

Further, the prioritisation of play sites take account of:

- State of repair
- Potential to add value through links to other funding streams
- Potential to add value to existing planned works already scheduled to meet identified needs
- Cost implications for long-term maintenance and sustainability

We have agreed a schedule of sites for new play site provision or upgrades to existing play areas based on assessment against the above criteria. These priority schemes are for implementation during the first three years of this five-year strategy part-funded by the Government's DCSF Playbuilder Fund. The details of the priority assessment findings are at Appendix 6.

A summary of the priority schemes is set out in the following Chapter (Chapter 5: Identifying Service Objectives and Strategic Priorities.)

Longer term projects for years four and five will be developed through the Annual Service Planning process informed by the spatial needs assessment above and the results of the annual Parks Survey in future years.

Quality

In addition to the criteria set out above, the needs assessment and selection of priority schemes is informed by the findings of the Parks Surveys from 2000 to 2008.

Consistently, these surveys have found that, among parents, concerns over '*stranger danger*' are one of the main reasons for non-use and whilst most parents would like

to see a greater variety of play spaces, safety considerations are paramount. Brent Parks Wardens are permanently based at seven major parks in the borough. Parks Wardens patrol Roundwood Park, Barham Park, Gladstone Park, King Edwards VII Park, Roe Green Park, Preston Park and St Raphael's/Gibbons Recreation. The wardens can respond to problems raised by members of the public and their presence helps children and families using the parks and play sites feel safe and secure.

As indicated earlier, children who took part in a consultative workshop in 2008 are more concerned with the quality and variety of the play experience than safety. Children want areas filled with nature, from plants, trees, flowers, and water, to animals and insects. They want different things to do, and developmentally appropriate learning environments that hold their attention for hours.

The workshop found there are some gender differences in terms of what improvements children would like to see: The boys wanted the more boisterous, exciting and adventurous play space with a strong emphasis on sport whilst girls preferred an area where they could socialise and be safe. They were also conscious about keeping fit and were interested in the Multi-Use Games Areas concept.

Younger girls (8-10 year olds) in the workshops were more conscious of having their own space i.e. they liked the idea of the older children's equipment being separate, they were particularly interested in the play house concept with different levels for different ages. Older girls (11-13) were specifically interested in an area to socialise with their friends and wanted a play space that stimulated and sustained their attention. They felt that current equipment was boring and there was a need for a café in every park site.

Overall satisfaction ratings for playgrounds in the annual Parks Surveys tend to be higher for playgrounds that offer additional facilities e.g. cafes and toilets, when compared to the small local sites without these amenities.

Sports Facilities in Parks

Introduction

The Council has recently produced a *Planning for Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy*. This strategy establishes local standards for outdoor sports facility provision in terms of quantity (e.g. pitches per 1,000 populations), quality (i.e. good or excellent) and access (e.g. publicly accessible within a 1.6km or 20 minute walk.)

These local standards have been devised from benchmarking Brent's provision with that in other similar London boroughs, a detailed audit of local supply (including consideration of accessible provision across borough boundaries), and a detailed assessment of demand factors including the size, age and sporting market profile of the population and projected population growth.

While some provision for outdoor sport is located on school sites and private sports grounds, in Brent most provision is within public parks and within open spaces designated as sports grounds.

Quantity of Pitches

The audit inspected 89 pitches; 46 pitches on 32 local authority sites (including Queens Park owned by The Corporation of London), 30 pitches on 22 education

sites, and 13 pitches on 11 private and 1 housing association sites. The audit only included pitches that were marked out and appeared to be in use, rather than 'informal' spaces able to accommodate pitch sports. The numbers and types of these pitches are shown in the table below. It is noted that, as the audit was undertaken during winter months, it is possible that some summer pitches are excluded.

Table 12: Number of pitches by each pitch type

Pitch Type	No. of LA Pitches	No. of Education Pitches	No. of Private Pitches
Football	36	26 + 2 decommissioned	8
Cricket	6	3	4
Gaelic Football	3	0	0
Rugby	2	1	1
Total	46	30	13

The majority of playing pitches in the borough are maintained by the Parks Service and are sited within our parks and open spaces. The most common type of pitch is football. Very few education sites have their own sports pitches with only 8 of Brent's 14 Secondary Schools and 5 of the 60 Primary Schools having sports pitches. There are currently 2 decommissioned football pitches at Copland Community School and Chalkhill Youth Centre. Full details of all football pitches can be seen in Appendix 7, the outdoor sports pitches audit.

Brent has a relatively low number of 'privately owned' pitches, for example by sports clubs or companies. This number may have been greater in the past as a number of sites were developed for alternative uses during the 1990s.

Quality of Pitches

The quality of pitches was also assessed using a Visual Quality Assessment (VQA) methodology based on a model advocated by Sport England. The results are shown in table 13. This shows that the **vast majority of pitches in the borough are of average, below average, or poor quality. This is an important failing to be addressed through this strategy over the next five years.**

The Council's own pitches were assessed to be in the worst condition, with 89% of pitches being average or below quality and none rated as excellent. The quality of education pitches is generally better although 21% are still rated as below average, and two fifths rated as average. None are rated as excellent. The private pitches overall ranked higher in terms of quality. However, the quality of private pitches varies, with almost a third below average. Only one pitch is rated as excellent being the cricket pitch at South Hampstead Cricket Club.

Table 13: Pitch Quality Ratings

Rating	% LA Pitches	% Education Pitches	% Private Pitches
An excellent pitch	0.0	0.0	7.7
A good pitch	10.9	36.8	38.5
An average pitch	26.1	42.1	23.1
A below average pitch	54.3	21.1	30.8
A poor pitch	8.7	0.0	0.0

From the site survey the symptoms of poor conditions in local authority sites included water-logged pitches (indicating poor drainage), poor condition of goalmouths, uneven surfacing, high proportion of weeds, damage caused by vehicles and horses being driven/ridden across the pitches, collapsed drains, golf divots and large stones and bricks observed at surface level.

Floodlighting

There are currently no floodlit grass pitches in the borough, other than ones on private pitch sites. There are decommissioned floodlights at Alperton Sports Ground and the former London Wasps rugby training ground at Vale Farm, Sudbury Avenue.

Changing Facilities

Only some of Brent's playing pitches have changing room facilities. The changing rooms that are available were also assessed in accordance with the Sport England VQA. The results are shown in the table overleaf.

Table 14: Changing Facilities Quality Ratings

Rating	No. of LA sites	No. of Education sites	No. of Private sites
Excellent	3	2	3
Good	3	3	1
Average	3	1	4
Poor	1	0	1
Very Poor	1	0	1
Total	11	7	10

A total of 11 local authority changing facilities were assessed, equating to one third of Brent sports pitches having changing rooms available for public use. Just over half are in good or excellent condition with Gladstone Park, Willesden Sports Ground and GEC Sports Ground rated the highest. Two were rated as poor; Silver Jubilee Park and Tokyngton Recreation Ground.

Seven of the 22 education facilities have changing facilities, most of which are in good condition. Two (Claremont High School and JFS) were rated as being in excellent condition.

More than three quarters of the private playing pitches have changing room facilities available, which are mainly of average condition.

Three of the facilities, at The Pavilion Stonebridge, Goals at Alperton Sports Ground and Wembley Cricket Club were rated as excellent.

Needs Analysis – supply and demand

The table below summarises the supply versus demand analysis of outdoor sports provision both at 2008 and at 2016 based on population change forecasts and known commitments for new provision. (It is noted that while, generally, population growth will have an effect in terms of increasing demand, due to new provision being planned in Brent and neighbouring boroughs net demand may not change).

Table 15: Outdoor Sports Facilities Needs Analysis – supply and demand

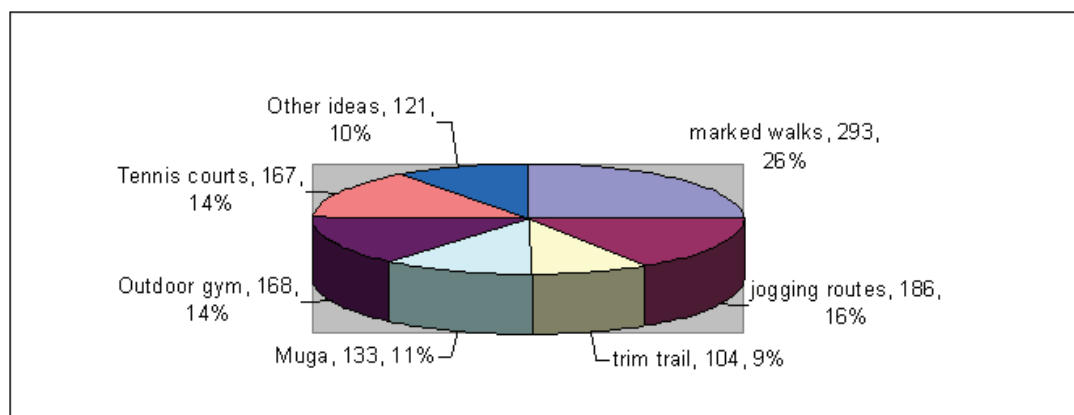
Facility Type	Brent Current Provision (2008)	Demand (2008)	Surplus +/-Deficit -	Demand (2016)	Additional provision required by 2016 based on current provision
Synthetic Turf Pitches	5	5.6	-0.6 pitches	6.1	1.1 pitches
Athletics Tracks	6 lanes	6 lanes	0	6 lanes	0
Football Pitches	70 pitches (18 adult, 47 youth, 5 mini)	120 pitches (43 adult, 52 youth, 26 mini)	-25 adult -5 youth -21 mini	147 pitches (40 adult, 77 youth, 30 mini)	22 adult 30 youth 25 mini
Gaelic Football	8 pitches	7 pitches	+1	9 pitches	1 (One additional pitch will be provided at Gladstone Park from 2009)
Rugby Pitches	2 pitches – publicly accessible	1 pitch	1 pitch	1 pitch	1
Cricket Pitches	10	10	0	11	1
Tennis Courts	74 courts	10,552 match slots which equates to 91 courts	-17 courts	11,426 match slots which equates to 99 courts	4 additional courts now and a further 4 by 2016. Plus 13 courts can be brought back into use / upgraded.
MUGAs	21	35	-14	38	17
Bowling Greens	9	9	0	9	Current provision is expected to

Facility Type	Brent Current Provision (2008)	Demand (2008)	Surplus +/-Deficit -	Demand (2016)	Additional provision required by 2016 based on current provision
					meet existing demand and into the future
Netball courts	10 (within schools, may be higher)	39	-29	44	34

Clearly, it will not be realistic to provide and maintain the number of new football pitches, netball courts and MUGA required to meet forecast levels of demand by 2016. Prioritisation for future investment will be needed based on agreed criteria linking to the available resources of clubs, schools, coaches, volunteers and our own Sports Development Team to develop programmes to ensure the new facilities provided are used for the benefit of local communities. Our new strategy for sport and physical activity in Brent for 2010 to 2015, currently at draft stage, will address these capacity building issues.

Needs Analysis – Survey findings

From the 2008 and 2009 Parks Survey, facilities in parks that would encourage residents to take part in more physical exercise were:



This demonstrates that facilities for informal and low intensity physical activities such as marked walks and jogging routes might have a greater impact on participation levels in physical activity than the provision of new pitches and courts for specific sports. Clearly, this is a further consideration in determining the allocation of available resources for sport and physical activities in our parks.

Consultation with our sports club communities on prioritising the facility investment needs is ongoing via the Brent Community Sport & Physical Activity Network (CSPAN), developed through the former Brent Sports Forum. The poor quality of many of the existing pitches and changing rooms in parks is highlighted in most discussions with club representatives as a greater barrier to development of use than a quantitative lack of provision.

Allotments

Quantity and Accessibility

Across Brent there are 22 allotment sites in the Council's ownership managed by the Parks Service with a total land area of 15.1 hectare and offering 919 plots in total. Our allotment sites range in size from just 6 plots (Vale Farm) to 120 (Dollis Hill)

As shown in table 6 earlier in this Chapter, the number of sites is in line with the average across the other outer London boroughs used as benchmarks although the total area of land allocated to these sites falls below the average for these boroughs.

The distribution of allotment sites relative to where people live is shown at Appendix 5. From this mapping work it is apparent the areas that are least well served in terms of access to allotment sites. In these areas, and where there is an identified expressed demand, we will continue to strive to identify realistic opportunities to provide new allotment plots.

Quality

The quality of our allotment sites has improved markedly since the last Parks Strategy was prepared and its key recommendation – i.e. to appoint a dedicated Allotments Officer to work with allotment holder voluntary groups and secure resources for physical improvement works – was implemented.

This improvement is reflected in the uptake of plots - 14 of 23 (61%) of allotment sites are full, most with waiting lists.

Allotment holders' views were canvassed a few years ago as part of a Best Value Service Review. At this time, allotment holders also identified the key components of a good allotment service. These were:

- Security (i.e. good gates and fencing)
- Rubbish Disposal (i.e. provision and emptying of skips)
- Toilets
- Good Communications with Council
- Well Maintained Paths
- Water Supply

The identification of these priorities contributed to the development of a robust improvement programme on five key sites. These improvements were implemented during the last Parks Strategy.

However, the latest condition survey (March 2009) identifies significant improvements needed to fencing, paths, sheds etc at the majority of our sites.

Old Kenton Lane in Kingsbury, with 180 plots has moved to self-management. The advantages of the self-management model – with a suitably motivated and appropriately constituted group of volunteers - are widely recognised. As part of our evolving development plan for our allotment sites we are committed to continuing to work with local allotment groups to build capacity and encourage more to consider self-management.

Biodiversity

Our parks and open spaces (including the allotment sites) provide a large proportion of the semi-natural and wildlife habitats in the borough. For example, the hay meadows at Fryent Country Park are amongst the best wildlife grasslands in London. In some areas of the Borough, for example around the Brent Reservoir, on Barn Hill and at Gladstone Park, there are remnants of more acid grasslands.

Fryent Country Park and our larger parks are also major providers of trees, woodland and hedgerows offering a wide range of habitats and helping to reduce carbon in the atmosphere. A small number of our parks and open spaces (for example Gladstone Park) have ponds which, along with garden ponds and streams and the much larger bodies of water at Brent Reservoir, along the River Brent and the Grand Union Canal, provide valuable wetland habitats.

We are committed to conserving and increasing these different habitats wherever possible in the borough. Our Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) includes targets for us to:

- Conserve, manage and improve the diversity of the hay meadows at Fryent Country Park
- Conserve, where possible, areas of acid grassland in the Borough
- Encourage the creation and management of small meadows in gardens, parks and other areas
- Create and maintain areas of rough grassland where practical
- Encourage hedges in parks, gardens and other area
- River Brent restoration project: Work towards achieving the restoration of the River Brent and tributaries through Brent, including continuation of the restoration work at St. Raphael's Open Space and Tokyngton Recreation Ground
- Plant trees in parks towards the achievement of targets in Brent's Tree Planting programme

Towards the successful implementation of these and other strategic actions aimed at improving the quality of the parks and to improve wildlife habitats, our Parks Service and other Council services work to a range of standards and quality management systems including:

ISO 9000 (Quality Management System) and ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System) - including a pesticide reduction target

- **Green Flag Awards** – in 2008 we held just two Green Flag Awards for *Roundwood Park* in Harlesden (which has benefited from major renovation works and an excellent café), and for our most visited park, *Gladstone Park*. This park has seen major improvement works since 2002 part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Football Foundation, Big Lottery Fund and London Marathon Charitable Trust. In July 2009 we were awarded a further three Green Flag Awards for Barham, Preston and Mapesbury Dell
- **Green Pennant Awards** - The *Roe Green Walled Garden* in Kingsbury holds a Green Pennant Award.
- **Charter Mark 2009** – in recognition of excellence in customer service
- **Britain in Bloom/London In Bloom** - a Silver Gilt Britain in Bloom Award in 2007 and Silver Gilt in London in Bloom in 2008

- ***The Soil Association Organic Standard*** – for Fryent Country Park
- ***Beacon Status 'Improving Urban Green Space ' 2002***
- ***Horticulture Week Team of the Year Award 2007***

Summary of Issues and Needs

Issues and needs arising from the assessment of the 'supply' of Brent's parks service set out in this chapter, considered in the context of the 'demand' set out in the earlier chapters, are summarised in table 16.

Table 16: Brent Parks Service - Summary of Strategic Issues and Needs

Issue	Needs by Service Area	Evidence Sources
Spatial provision and need for more open space	Parks – Spatial deficiency in a number of areas of the borough against the 400m walking distance standard taking into account accessible parks across borough boundaries, plus new provision needed in Growth Areas	Maps at Appendices 3 & 4
	Play Areas – Spatial deficiency against Brent Local Standard in a number of areas not met by the 'Playbuilder' project roll-out of new and upgraded play areas	Map and Play Area Needs Assessment Report 2008 at Appendix 6
	Pitches - By 2016, there will be a need for 40 adult, 77 junior and 30 mini pitches to meet demand. This is almost double the existing pitch provision	Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy 2008 - 2021
	Allotments - Spatial deficiency in certain areas of the borough and unmet expressed demand (waiting lists).	Map at Appendix 5

Issue	Needs by Service Area	Evidence Sources
Quality of provision and need for improvement and/or restoration	Parks - Despite upward trend, 12 parks still have only 'fair' satisfaction ratings; Poor standard of toilets in most parks; Longstanding restoration projects in Roundwood Park (open air theatre), and Gladstone Park (Dollis Hill House)	Annual Parks Surveys 2000-2008, reports by English Heritage, Arts Council England, and feedback from local restoration trusts
	Play Areas – A number of play areas in parks are in need of improvement. 9 sites identified in recent needs assessment for major improvements in 2008/09 to improve accessibility and others in future years	Audits and Needs Assessment Report 2008
	Pitches - Poor quality of many park pitches and changing rooms	Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy, Brent CSPAN feedback
	Allotments - Quality issues at most sites	Allotment Condition Survey March 2009 Allotment groups feedback

Issue	Needs by Service Area	Evidence Sources
Safety of Parks and Play Sites in Parks	Concern among parents of ' <i>stranger danger</i> ' and need for greater mobile park warden presence and work with Safer Neighbourhood Teams at those sites without a permanent warden.	ROSPA Audit of Park Play Sites 2008 and Annual Park Surveys
Community Involvement	Good level of community involvement in parks. Need to identify local park volunteers in those locations where friends groups are not yet established and consider options for greater self-management of park service facilities e.g. allotment sites, sports facilities.	Audit Commission report in 2002 and developed further since.
Information	Need for further development of both web-based and park-based information about facilities, programmes and habitats in parks	Annual Parks Surveys 2000 - 2008
Maintenance	Need for development of 'green' horticultural maintenance specification Need to identify and secure maintenance budgets to support and sustain any new provision of parks, open spaces, play areas, sports pitches, and allotments. E.g. Playbuilder revenue budget, S106 agreements	BAP 2007 No growth in Parks Maintenance Budget in Council budget for 2009/10
Programmes	To achieve physical activity and child obesity reduction targets, need to find innovative ways to expand programme of Events, Health Walks, Cycle training etc within existing budgets and by maximising available grant aid	Active People Survey Results 1 (2005/2006) & 2 (2007/2008)
Bio Diversity	To meet targets of Brent's Tree Planting Programme, need to undertake a survey of tree planting densities in all Brent Parks and identify priority parks for tree planting Need to identify opportunities for hedges, small meadows and rough grassland in parks and open spaces	Brent Tree Planting Programme

Chapter 5: Identifying Service Objectives/Priorities and Themes

Introduction

This chapter summarises the main issues arising from the evidence of needs set out in the preceding chapters and identifies service objectives/priorities and strategic themes for the Brent Parks Service over the five-year period to 2015 and will support our vision for parks and open spaces'

'To provide good quality, attractive, enjoyable and accessible green space which meets the diverse needs of all Brent residents and visitors'

The strategic themes will be the subject of consultation with stakeholders before the strategy is finalised for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in support of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy for Brent.

The final chapter (which follows) sets out a draft Action Plan for the implementation of the service themes over this period. The action plan will be reviewed annually and updated to reflect external and internal changes and influences and used as the basis for annual Service Plans for the Parks Service. The Draft 5 Year Action Plan is proposed in the context of the service objectives, the resources that are already in place (or potentially available) and known delivery opportunities.

Service Objectives/Priorities

In accordance with the Sustainable Communities Strategy and our Corporate Plan, our key objectives/priorities for the Parks Service over the next five years will be to:

- Ensure that Brent retains *a diverse array of parks settings and recreation opportunities* (including play, passive recreation, sports, wildlife habitat and local cultural programmes) that satisfy *a wide range of community and ecosystem needs*
- Ensure that Brent's *natural and built heritage is protected and enhanced*
- Manage parks to ensure that they are *safe and therefore accessible to all* who want to use them
- Ensure all parks and green space (including allotments) are maintained to encourage *health, sustainability and biodiversity*
- Ensure that all parks are *maintained to a consistently high standard* and that independent assessment of performance is regularly undertaken
- Ensure mechanisms are in place to ascertain community needs, to identify barriers to use and to *increase customer satisfaction*
- Promote parks and *raise community awareness and participation*
- *Develop and train staff* who are competent and empowered to provide a quality service which reflects community needs

- *Create financial solutions* through good financial management and work to secure additional funding through collaborative processes
- Increase partnership working
- Continue to *determine existing parks use* and user patterns, *enable community parks management* and *ensure future provision represents this diverse Borough*

Strategic Themes

In line with these objectives/priorities, and in the context of available resources and the potential for new resources (e.g. developer contributions and grants), over the five-year life of this strategy, we propose to focus our efforts on the following strategic themes:

1 Improving Existing Parks and Open Spaces

In seeking to continue to improve the quality of Brent's existing parks and open spaces and user satisfaction we will concentrate on the priority public concerns i.e.

- *Safety and security.* Our main considerations on this issue will include: increasing the size and coverage of the Park Warden service, ensuring a user-friendly and proactive approach to public safety and security on the part of our Park Wardens (i.e. not a policing role); providing lighting to strategic paths and main thoroughfares in our parks; traffic calming near park access points; and working to improve visibility across sites.
- *Infrastructure repairs and landscape improvements.* We will continue to use our Asset Management Plan and Condition Survey reports (e.g. the Allotment Condition Survey Report Mar 2009) to prioritise investment in repairs to paths, pavilions, pitches, play areas, allotment sites, public toilets, and other parks infrastructure as well as in landscape improvement projects. The Asset Management Plan will also be used to inform the feasibility of long-standing improvement projects (e.g. Vale Farm Sports Ground and the Open Air Theatre in Roundwood Park.)
- *General maintenance and upkeep.* Through our contract management policies and procedures and other actions, we will continue to strive to improve general standards of parks maintenance and upkeep. In the case of proposals and opportunities for new parks and open spaces and for new amenities in parks, a sustainable maintenance plan and allocated budget will be in place as a priority before proceeding.
- *Independent Auditing.* We will increase the number of independent park audits undertaken to assess improvement priorities (through the existing KMC Green Space Performance Management system).

2 Providing New Parks and Open Spaces

We will respond to opportunities where they arise in areas where there is evidence of need to create new public open spaces. We will focus on those areas where spatial mapping and survey evidence shows a significant level of deficiency against the London Plan standards, and on the population Growth Areas. We will also respond

positively to opportunities to increase amenities within new and existing open spaces i.e:

- *Play Areas.* Once the roll out of the current 'Playbuilder' project (including those play areas planned for the population Growth Areas) is completed, we will identify priority locations for new play areas by applying the local standard for provision of play areas and taking into consideration the potential of better community use of play facilities on school sites and opportunities presented by the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP).
- *Sports Facilities.* We will seek to provide new football pitches, netball courts, and MUGAs in those areas where spatial mapping and survey evidence shows a significant level of deficiency against the Local Standards set out in the Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy 2008 - 2021. As part of this work, we will follow a strategic approach to ensure new sports facilities are located in areas of greatest need. As with play areas, we will take into account the opportunities presented by BSF and PCP for improved community access to pitches and courts on school sites.
- *Cycling Areas.* We will also respond to opportunities where they arise to deliver additional safe cycling areas (e.g. cycle routes in Parks) and well-signposted routes that link different areas within Brent, including consideration of cycle to school routes.
- *Allotments.* Finally, where feasible (and in those areas where provision is most limited and the nearest site has a waiting list), we will create new allotment sites or expand the capacity of existing sites.

3 Developing New Activity Programmes in Parks

We will seek out and respond to opportunities to deliver new activity programmes aimed at increasing participation in sport and physical activity, particularly by children and young people. In particular:

- We will maximise opportunities for activity programmes in our Parks resulting from the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games supported by the Mayor's Legacy Plan for 'A Sporting Future for London' (April 2009).

4 Achieving Greater Community Involvement and Working towards Inclusivity

We will continue to work in close partnership with existing parks friends groups and similar organisations, encourage more community involvement in our parks and open spaces and work to ensure that our parks are accessible to all in the borough's diverse community by:

- Facilitating the establishment of new groups at parks and open spaces where they do not already exist.
- Continuing to work with constituted sports clubs and volunteer allotment groups towards agreements for self-management of more sites.

- *Inclusive Play Areas.* Ensuring all of the new and upgraded play sites under the 'Playbuilder' programme have inclusive play areas that can be used by disabled children, cater for a wide age group and accommodate parents, guardians and carers within a socially integrated setting. As part of this commitment and supported by the Transition Team Manager, a group of children with disabilities will work with designers and will be actively involved in the design, planning and evaluation of sites.
- *Broadening the User Profile of Allotment Sites.* Continuing to work with allotment holders, schools and other local groups to attract more use of the allotment sites by those groups identified in recent monitoring as non- or low-users i.e. young people, older females, disabled people and certain Asian minority ethnic groups.

5 Maintaining and Improving Biodiversity in our Parks

Actions in this priority area will include:

- *Creating new hedges, meadows and rough grassland areas.* Continuing to protect existing valuable grasslands and habitats (informed by existing audit information and the Biodiversity Action Plan 2007) and undertake a survey to identify opportunities for hedges, small meadows and rough grassland in our parks and open spaces
- *Tree Planting.* Undertaking a survey of tree planting densities in all Brent Parks and identify priority parks for tree planting to meet targets of Brent's Tree Planting Programme
- *Grounds Maintenance.* Developing a 'Green' Horticultural Grounds Maintenance Specification to reduce the use of pesticides etc.
- *A Guide to Biodiversity in Brent's Parks and Open Spaces.* To inform our residents and visitors to the borough about the tree, plant and wildlife species and habitats in the parks and open spaces and to aid people's understanding of our rationale for adopting particular policies (e.g. around planting and maintenance regimes).

6 Mitigating Climate Change Impacts

We will continue to improve our approaches to environmental sustainability and seek to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change in all aspects of our work. Specific actions will include:

- *Trees.* In assessing tree densities and designing the Borough's future tree planting programmes (including the selection of tree types), we will take into consideration the importance of trees in parks in providing areas of shade for both people and habitats.
- *Shrubs and Plants.* We will take into account climate change and sustainability considerations (e.g. shade value, water conservation and floodplains, maintenance requirements) in our selection of shrubs and plants for our parks and open spaces.

- *Water Conservation and Water Management.* We will continue to consider carefully the water conservation and water management implications in all areas of our work and, in consultation with other service areas, review regularly policies and procedures in all relevant areas (e.g. planting, watering, maintenance, water collection and recycling)

7 Promoting our Parks and Open Spaces and their Value

We will continue to work to improve the promotion of our parks and open spaces, our canals and waterways, the Capital Ring and other walking routes in the borough. We will promote their value to everyone in our community as important resources for people's health and wellbeing, for sport and play, for maintaining biodiversity and for mitigating the impacts of climate change. In particular, over the period of this strategy we will:

- *Website.* Develop more information material on the Council's website about facilities, programmes and habitats in our parks and open spaces
- *Signage.* We will work to upgrade signage in parks to improve clarity and to make information more accessible to everyone in our diverse community
- *Interpretation.* We will strive to provide improved information both on our website and in the parks and open spaces themselves to help people understand points of interest relating to the history and heritage of the spaces and features within them, cultural links, wildlife, plant and tree species etc.
- *Quality Assurance.* Work to retain the ISO 900/200, ISO14001 quality assurance accreditations and the Customer Service Excellence Award (formerly Charter Mark) currently held by the Council's Parks Service
- *National and Regional Competitions.* Continue to encourage and support local groups participating in the Britain / London in Bloom award scheme
- *Accreditations.* Identify the additional resources necessary to Increase the number of sites in the borough with Green Flag / Green Pennant awards through strategically focused improvements on the identified sites

Chapter 6: Action Planning and Review

Introduction

This strategy has been produced in order that the Brent Parks Service works in a planned and co-ordinated way over the next five years. This final chapter sets out a draft 5 Year Action Plan for implementation of the strategy and details how the strategy will be reviewed, enabling the comparison of achievements against actions and recognising new opportunities and unpredicted changes that may have an impact on parks provision in Brent over this period.

Use and Satisfaction

Ultimately, the success of the strategy will be measured against the use of the Parks and Open Spaces and the Play Areas, Sports Facilities and Allotment sites within them. We will continue to monitor use and satisfaction annually through a combination of the existing KMC Performance Management System and Park Audits, the Brent Parks Survey of a random sample of 10% of householders and via feedback from stakeholder groups. These include Parks Friends groups, local environmental conservation groups and trusts, sports clubs (via the Community Sport & Physical Activity Network), the Brent Disabled Users Forum, Brent Association of Disabled People, the Brent Race Health and Social Care Forum and many others with an active interest in our parks and the service we provide to residents and visitors.

From this year we will also be conducting regular surveys of young people to monitor their levels of satisfaction with our parks and playgrounds.

Sustainable Community Strategy Outcomes and Local Area Agreement Targets

At a 'high level' the success of the strategy will be measured in the contribution the Parks Service makes to the delivery of the community outcomes sought by the Brent Local Strategic Partnership – A Great Place, A Borough of Opportunity, An Inclusive Community.

More tangibly, this success will be measured by means of the Council's overall performance against its Local Area Agreement targets to where the Parks Service has a significant role. As detailed in Chapter 1, these relate to:

- Reducing the adult mortality rate through measures such as exercise referral including health walks in parks
- Reducing obesity among primary age children
- Increasing participation in sport
- Increasing volunteering
- Reducing CO2 emissions

As a member of the London Parks Benchmarking Group, in addition to these indicators, we propose to continue to lobby the Audit Commission and the Department for Communities & Local Government (CLG) to develop and adopt a specific set of national performance indicators for parks services.

Service Plans

As indicated in the introduction to the previous chapter, the relevance of the objectives/priorities for the Service and the strategic themes selected for the next five years will be checked each year through the service planning process. If, as part of this annual review process, there is a need to amend any of the service objectives or strategic priorities this will be done as part of the process and formal approval sought to the change.

Specific actions and targets for each year of the strategy are set against each service objective. Progress against the targets is monitored and the number of actions 'fully met', 'partially met' or 'not met' is documented within the Service Manager's Annual Report and reviewed as part of the process of agreeing the Service Plan for the following year.

Comprehensive Review

In the final year of this strategy, a comprehensive review will be undertaken including re-engagement with stakeholders to develop a new five-year strategy.

5 Year Action Plan

The table overleaf sets out a framework for action against the service objectives and strategic priorities or themes set out in Chapter 5. As explained above, the detail of the action plan will change over the five years (as part of the annual service review process) to reflect changes both in the external environment (e.g. national and London government policy changes, new grant programmes etc), and in the internal Borough Council environment (demographic change, policy changes, budget considerations, organisational change etc).

Theme 1:- IMPROVING EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Theme 1: Improve existing Parks and Open Spaces									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Safe parks accessible to all	Seek resources to expand the neighbourhood Park Warden teams and investigate joint-working arrangements with our Street Warden teams. Ensure that local traffic calming measures are implemented where appropriate in relation to parks and open space access points and also to ensure that access and safety around informal play sites is considered where these exist	Parks Service and Streetcare Parks Service	Funding agencies Volunteers Community Safety Team Safer Neighbourhood Team Brent Transportation TFL London Cycling Network	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Introduce lighting to paths in parks and open spaces where used as main thoroughfares or 'cut-throughs' and where appropriate in relation to impact on residents and wildlife habitats.	Parks Service	Local Area Planning Development Control Team Neighbourhood Ward Working	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Seek partnerships and develop concessions for facilities in park (for example cafes and toilets) and incorporate security function into the arrangement	Parks	Property and Asset Management Sure Start Café Operators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Investigate ways of providing well managed toilet provision in Parks and Open Spaces	Head of Parks	Property and Asset Management Sure Start Café Operators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Protect and enhance natural and built heritage	Develop a programme of <i>repairs to infrastructure and priority landscapes improvements</i> in parks and open spaces as informed by the <i>Asset Management Plan</i>	Head of Property and Asset Management	Parks Service Sports Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Head of Parks	Sports Service Sport England Football Foundation National Governing Bodies of Sport ProActive West London	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Implement the improvement plans to upgrade Barham Park , Eton Grove , Woodcock , One Tree Hill and Kenton	Head of Parks	Arts Council English Heritage Heritage Lottery Fund Libraries Arts and Heritage Service Friends of groups Property and Assets Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Implement the recommendations of the <i>Roundwood Theatre Feasibility Study</i>	Head of Parks	Arts Council English Heritage Heritage Lottery Fund Libraries Arts and Heritage Service Friends of groups Property and Assets Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue to seek funding and opportunities to improve standards of general <i>maintenance and upkeep</i> of all parks and open spaces	Head of Parks	London Parks Benchmarking Group Greenspace KMC Greenspace Performance Network Planning Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Increase the number of <i>independent park audits</i> to identify and prioritise improvements	Head of Parks	KMC Consultancy London Parks Benchmarking Group Greenspace/CABE ENCAMS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A diverse array of park settings and recreation opportunities	Improve opportunities for both formal and informal physical activity in parks and open spaces	Head of Parks	Sports Service Sport England National Governing Bodies of Sport Brent NHS ProActive West London	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Encourage young people to use parks and open spaces by providing where possible the facilities and events they have suggested through consultation	Head of Parks	Sports Service Sport England National Governing Bodies of Arts Council English Heritage Heritage Lottery Fund Libraries Arts and Heritage	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Raise the profile of culture by demonstrating the benefits and celebrating the cultural value of park settings and recreational opportunities for our diverse communities.	Head of Parks	Arts Council English Heritage Heritage Lottery Fund Libraries Arts and Heritage Service Friends of groups Property and Assets Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Increase partnership working	Share the information, experience, knowledge and data we hold to improve and direct the service we provide	Head of Parks	Sports Service Libraries Arts and Heritage Playbuilder Steering Group Friends of Groups Metropolitan Police Streetcare Planning CABE , ENCAMS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Work in partnership to increase capacity, finances and open up new opportunities for funding in particular around the area of toilet provision	Head of Parks	Sports Service Libraries Arts and Heritage Planning Service Playbuilder Steering Group Friends of Groups Metropolitan Police Streetcare Private Sector Community Orgs Property and Asset Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Theme 2:- PROVIDING NEW PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Theme 2: Providing new Parks and Open Spaces									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A diverse array of park settings and recreation opportunities	Create <i>new parks and open spaces</i> in priority areas of spatial deficiency starting with the Borough's established 'Growth Areas' examples include: Chalkhill, Stonebridge, Church End, Twyford/Abbey Road	Planning and Parks	Regeneration team/ Policy and Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Review unused housing land, including school playgrounds particularly in the south of the Borough	Planning and Parks	Regeneration team/ Policy and Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue to implement the 'Playbuilder' project programme including <i>new play areas</i> in 'Growth Areas'	Parks and Children & Families	DCSF and Play England Planning Service Regeneration team	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Identify priority locations for <i>new play areas</i> using the local standard for provision and consideration of community use of play facilities on school sites, including Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP) sites.	Parks	Brent CYPS BSF Team Brent CYPS PCP Team Brent Children and Families Service Housing Service Play England DCSF Planning Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A diverse array of parks and recreation opportunities cont...	Provide new football pitches, netball courts, and MUGAs in those areas where spatial mapping and survey evidence shows a significant level of deficiency against the Local Standards set out in the Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy 2008 – 2021 and Sports Strategy 2010-2015 and taking into account the opportunities presented by BSF and PCP.	Head of Parks and Sports Services	Sport England Football Foundation Regeneration Team National Governing Bodies of Sport Planning Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ensure new facilities comply with local standards set out in the Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy	Planning Service	Parks Service Sports Service Sports Clubs Friends of Parks Leisure providers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Provide additional safe cycling areas (e.g. cycle routes in Parks) and well-signposted routes that link different areas within Brent, including consideration of cycle to school routes.	Transportation Service	Parks Service Sports Service Transport for London London Cycling Campaign DCSF - Playbuilder	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Create new allotment sites or expand the capacity of existing sites where feasible (prioritising areas where provision is most limited and the nearest site has a waiting list)	Parks	Allotment Forum Groundwork London Allotments Network Planning Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Theme 3: DEVELOPING NEW ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES IN PARKS

Theme 3: Developing new activity programmes in parks									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A diverse array of park settings and recreation opportunities	Proactively listen to local communities and develop activity programmes that are based on the needs of individual, families and communities	Parks	Sports Service Arts and Festivals Team Children and Families/Playbuilder Youth Service Regeneration Team NHS Brent Friends of Parks Groundwork UK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Use market segmentation and social marketing information to inform the provision of services and effective marketing techniques	Parks	Sports Service Arts and Festivals Team Youth Service Policy and Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Promote parks as a place where people can walk and be physically active during their leisure time work breaks and for transport	Sports and Parks Services	NHS Brent GLA Arts and Festivals Team Sport England ProActive West London National Governing Bodies of Sport StreetGames / Street Athletics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Increase awareness of the opportunities available by developing and maintaining a comprehensive web-based directory of parks their facilities and events programmes	Parks	Sports Service Sports Clubs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Theme 3: Developing new activity programmes in parks									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A diverse array of park settings and recreation opportunities cont...	Maximise the opportunity presented by the Welsh Harp including increasing the sporting opportunity to the people of Brent	Sports Service	Parks Welsh Harp Sailing Association SSP's Schools Regeneration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop the annual Brent Fun Run and Walk at Fryent Country Park as a local mass participation event	Sports Service	Parks Service Community and Faith groups SSP's	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Offer activity programmes in parks that reflect the needs of Brent's diverse communities offering inclusive and specific opportunities ensuring we deliver the joint actions of the Cultural Strategy 2010-2015	Parks	Community and Faith groups SSP's Sports Service Children and Families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maximise opportunities presented by London 2012 to increase use of parks and open spaces.		Parks	Sports Service Brent Manager for London 2012 Community and Friends of Groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

THEME 4: ACHIEVING GREATER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND WORKING TOWARDS INCLUSIVITY

Theme 4: Achieving greater community involvement and working towards inclusivity									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Raise community awareness and participation	Develop parks and open spaces through community engagement and consultation, promoting civic pride and local ownership of programmes.	Parks	Regeneration Policy and Performance BRAVA Youth Service Children and Families Arts and Festivals Sports Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Facilitate the establishment of new friends groups at parks and open spaces where they do not already exist	Parks	Sports Service Arts and Festivals BRAVA Communications Team Groundwork UK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue work with constituted sports clubs and volunteer allotment groups towards self-management of more sites	Parks	Sports Service Sports Clubs Allotment Forum London Boroughs Allotment Network	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action				
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 2015
Raise community awareness and participation cont...	Ensure all of the new and upgraded play sites have inclusive play areas that can be used by disabled children, cater for a wide age group and accommodate parents, guardians and carers within a socially integrated setting.	Parks and Children and Families	Play England Playbuilder Steering Group includes, Planning, Sports, Transportation, Regeneration The Children's Society DCSF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Attract more use of the allotment sites by those groups identified in recent monitoring as non- or low-users for example, young people, older females, disabled people and certain minority ethnic groups	Parks	Allotment Forum Communications and Consultation BRAVA Day Options	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Work with sports clubs, Friends of parks groups, faith and community groups to improve their promotion and marketing in order to increase participation	Parks	Sports Service Sports Clubs Community, Friends of, Faith groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Raise community awareness and participation cont...	Use market segmentation and social marketing information to inform the provision of services and effective marketing techniques	Parks	Sports Service Sports Clubs Community, Friends of, Faith groups, Regeneration Youth Service, Children and Families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop closer relationship with local schools through initiatives like Playbuilder and Brent in Bloom	Parks	Children and Families DCSF Play England RHS Wildlife Association	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue to use a range of different and exciting approaches to raise awareness of the benefits of using parks and Open Spaces	Parks	Sports Service Communications Team Children and Families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

THEME 5: MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING BIODIVERSITY IN OUR PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Theme 5: Maintaining and improving biodiversity in our Parks and Open Spaces									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Encourage health, sustainability and biodiversity	Continue to protect existing valuable grasslands and habitats and <i>identify opportunities for hedges, small meadows and rough grassland</i> improvement	Parks	Environmental Health UK BAP Network Volunteer Groups BRAVA RHS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Undertake a <i>survey of tree planting densities</i> in all Brent Parks and identify priority parks for tree planting to meet targets of Brent's Tree Planting Programme	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy UK BAP Network Wildlife Trust Volunteer Groups BRAVA ANGST	✓	✓				
	Develop a 'Green' <i>Horticultural Grounds Maintenance Specification</i> to reduce the use of pesticides, etc	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Greenspace, CABE London Parks Benchmarking Group UK BAP Network PAN		✓	✓			

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Encourage health, sustainability and biodiversity cont...	Develop a Guide to Biodiversity in Brent's Parks and Open Spaces and Follow the guidelines set out in 'The Biodiversity Duty'	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Greenspace, CABE London Parks Benchmarking Group UK BAP Network PAN Groundwork UK	✓	✓				
				✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Continue to follow Brent's Biodiversity Action Plan which links to local, regional and national targets Parks.	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Greenspace, CABE London Parks Benchmarking Group UK BAP Network PAN Voluntary Organisations and Friends of Groundwork UK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Extend natural areas where appropriate and install associated interpretative signage	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Greenspace, CABE London Parks Benchmarking Group UK BAP Network PAN Voluntary Organisations and Friends of Groundwork UK ENCAMS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

THEME 6: MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

Theme 6: Mitigating climate change impacts									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Satisfy a wide range of community and ecosystem needs	Parks will continue its accreditation to the ISO 14001 standard and seek to mitigate climate change through a range of associated Management Programmes.	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy ISO Accreditation Group Corporate Environmental Policy Environmental Health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Parks will adopt the PAS 2050 method for measuring embodied GHG emissions of goods and services	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Corporate Environmental Policy Environmental Health London Parks Benchmarking Group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	In assessing tree densities and designing the Borough's future tree planting programmes (including the selection of tree types), take into consideration the importance of <i>trees in parks</i> in <i>providing areas of shade</i> for both people and habitats	Parks	Wildlife Trust BAP UK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Satisfy a wide range of community and ecosystem needs cont...	Take into account other climate change and sustainability considerations (e.g. water conservation and floodplains, maintenance requirements) in selection of shrubs and plants for planting in parks and open spaces	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy BAP UK E & C Environmental Policy Pesticides Action Network (PAN)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Consider water conservation and water management implications in all areas of our work	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy BAP UK E & C Environmental Policy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The PAS method for measuring embodied GHG emissions of goods and services will enable organisations, e.g. business, to effectively measure the climate change related impacts of their goods and services with a view to using this information to improve the climate change related performance of these.

THEME 7: PROMOTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES AND THEIR VALUE

Theme 7 Promoting Parks and Open Spaces and their value									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partner	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Raise community awareness	Develop more <i>information material on the Council's website</i> about facilities, programmes and habitats in our parks and open spaces and ensure joint – approach to publicity where appropriate	Parks	Sports Arts and Festivals Communication and Consultation IT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Upgrade <i>park signage</i> to improve clarity and to make information more accessible to everyone in our diverse community	Parks	Groundwork UK Wildlife Trust Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Provide more and improved <i>interpretation materials on the website and in our parks</i> to help people understand points of interest relating to the history and heritage of the spaces and features within them, cultural links, wildlife, plant and tree species etc	Parks	Communications and Consultation IT Local History Society Friends of Groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partner	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Raise community awareness cont...	Retain the <i>quality assurance accreditations</i> (ISO 900/200, ISO14001) and the Customer Service Excellence Award	Parks	Friends of Groups Volunteers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Encourage and support local groups participating in <i>Britain / London in Bloom</i>	Parks	London in Bloom RHS ENCAMS Communications and Consultation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Increase the number of sites in the borough with Green Flag / Green Pennant awards through strategically focused improvements on the identified sites	Parks	ENCAMS London Parks Benchmarking Groups Volunteers, Community and Benchmarking Groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

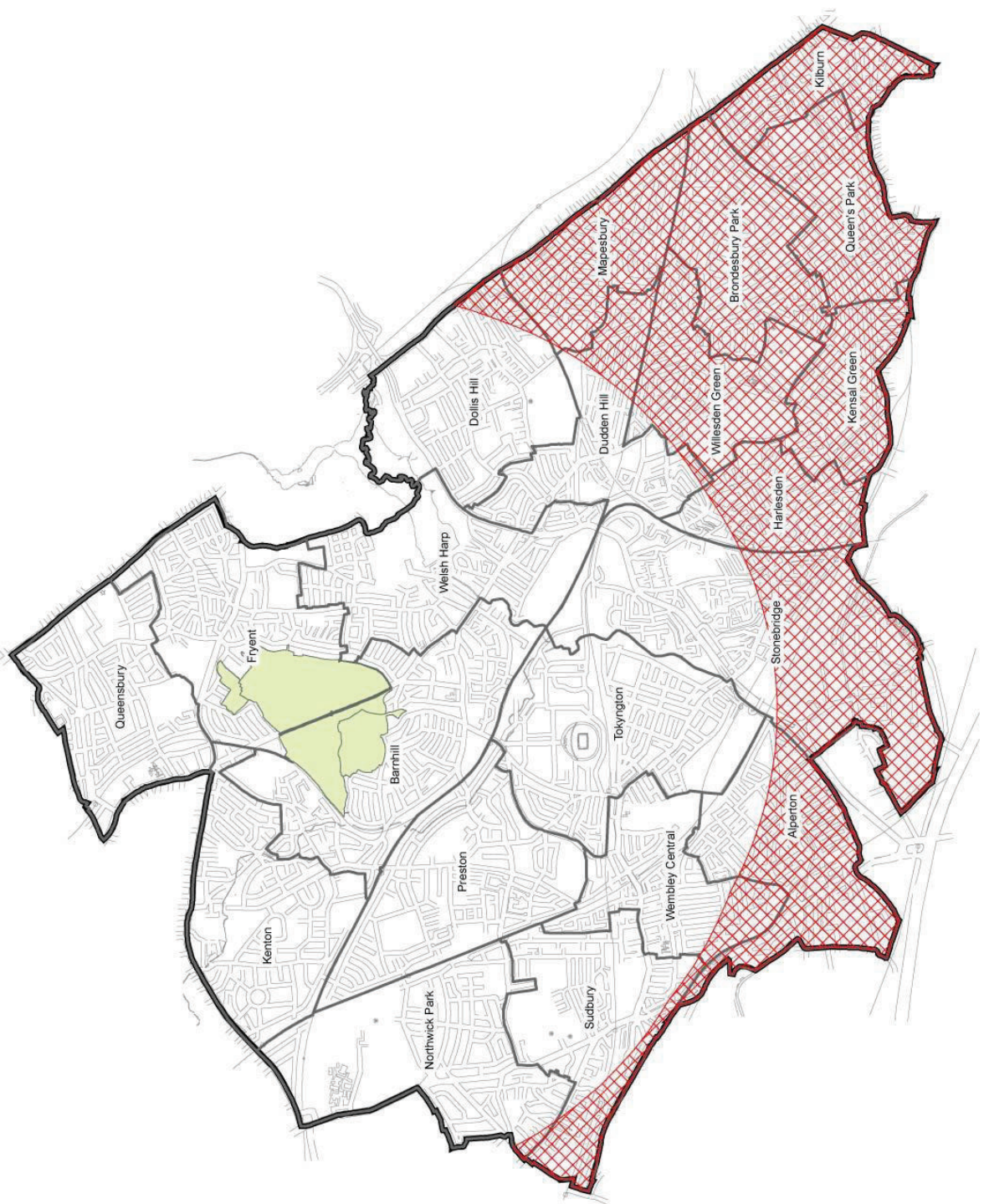


Appendix 1 Metropolitan Parks

- Legend**
- Metropolitan Park over 60ha
 - Over 3.2km from a Metropolitan Park
 - Ward boundaries
 - Borough Boundary



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2:GIS:LeamParks:LeamParks:090103
March 23, 2009
Produced by the GIS Development Team





Appendix 2 District Parks

- Legend**
- District Public Open Space over 20ha
 - Local Public Open Space over 2ha
 - District Open Space Deficiency
 - Ward boundaries
 - Borough Boundary

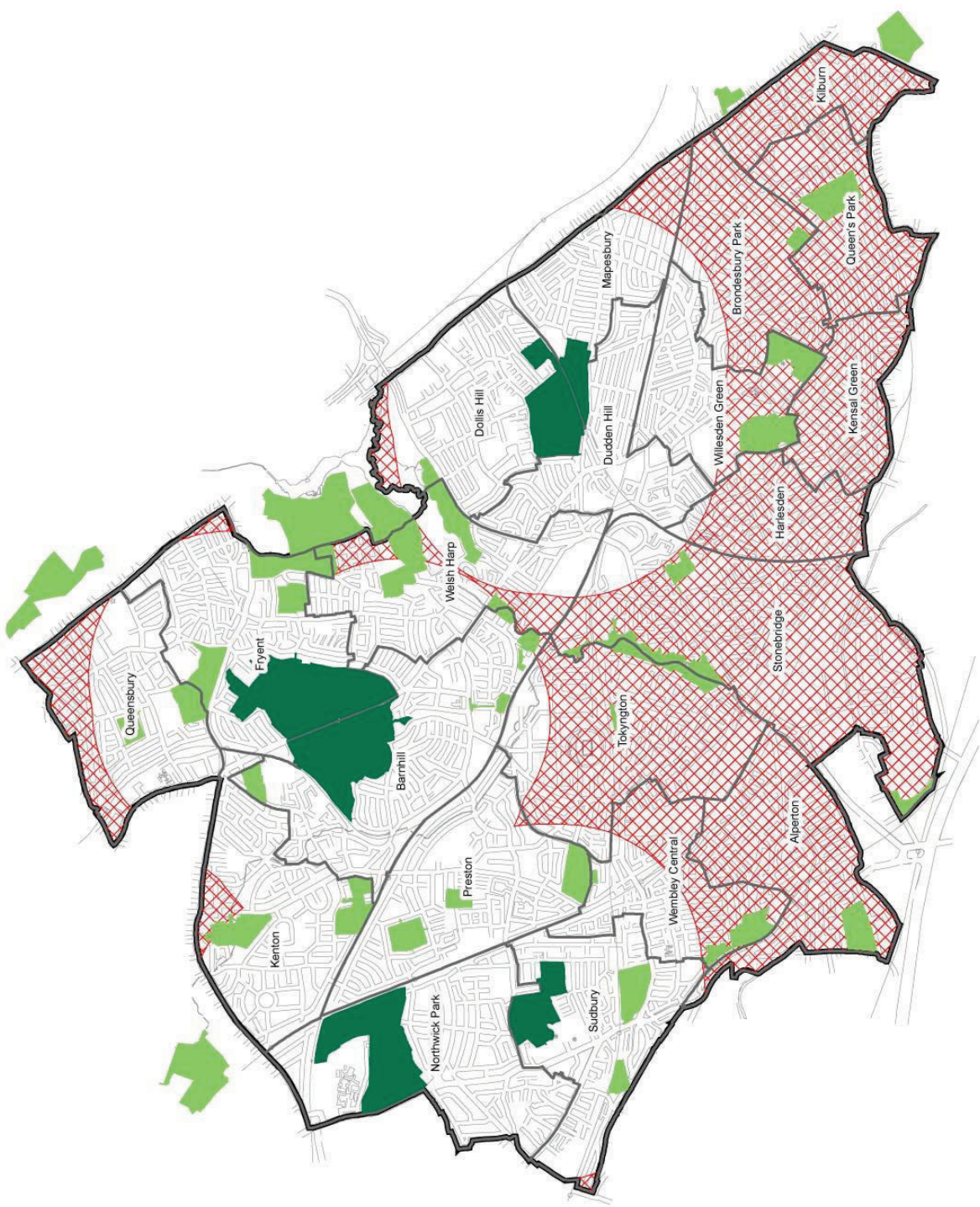


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London Borough of Harrow: 100222000_2008

ZUGO UrbanPlex Software Publishers
March 23, 2008

Produced by the GIS Development Team





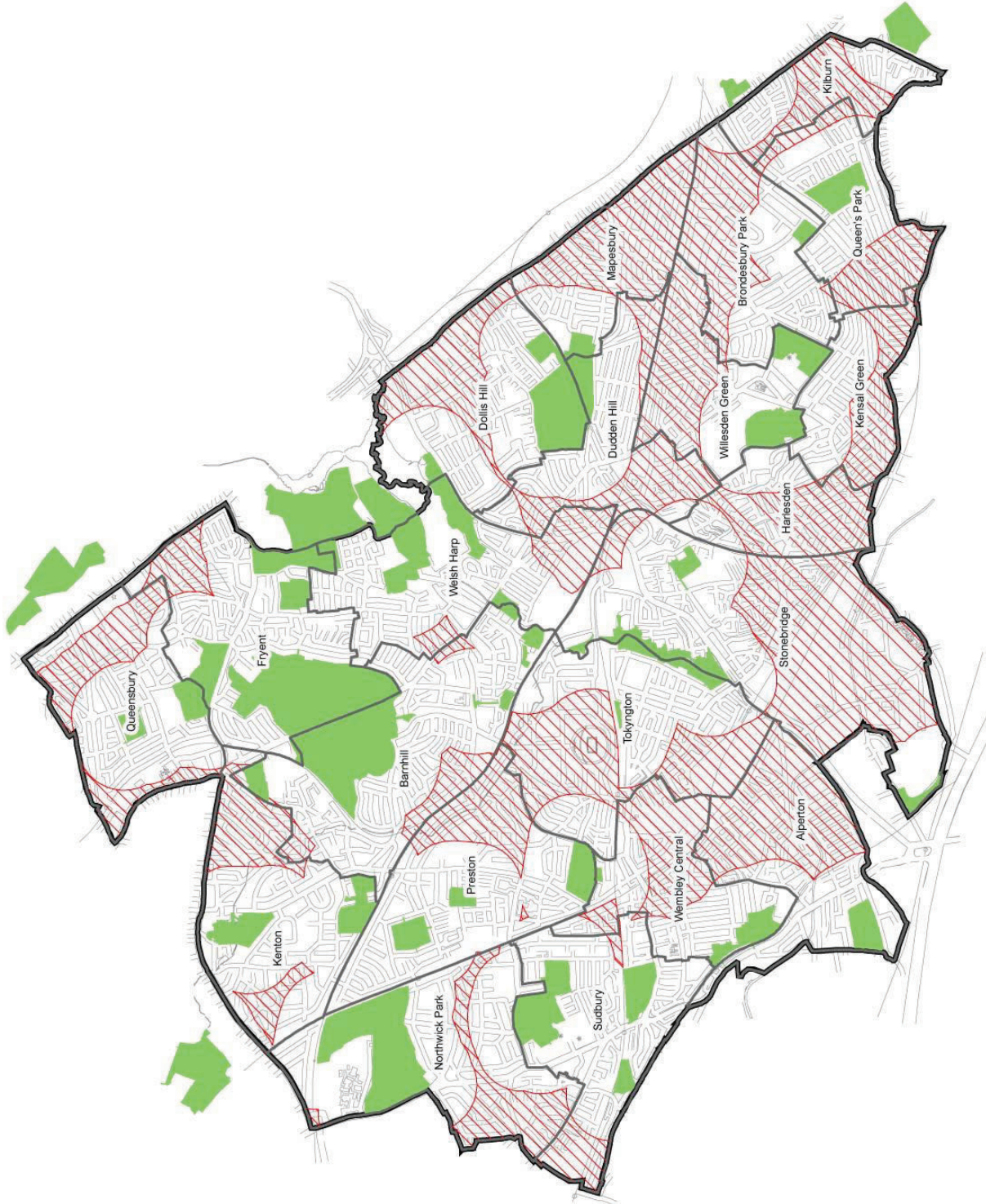
Appendix 3 Local Parks & Local Open Space Deficiency

- Legend**
- Public Open Space over 2ha
 - Open Space Deficiency
 - Borough Boundary
 - Ward boundaries



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London Borough of Havering, 1000202000, 2008
ZIGES UrbanPlex / Jefferys/Physicians
March 23, 2008
Produced by the GIS Development Team





Appendix 4

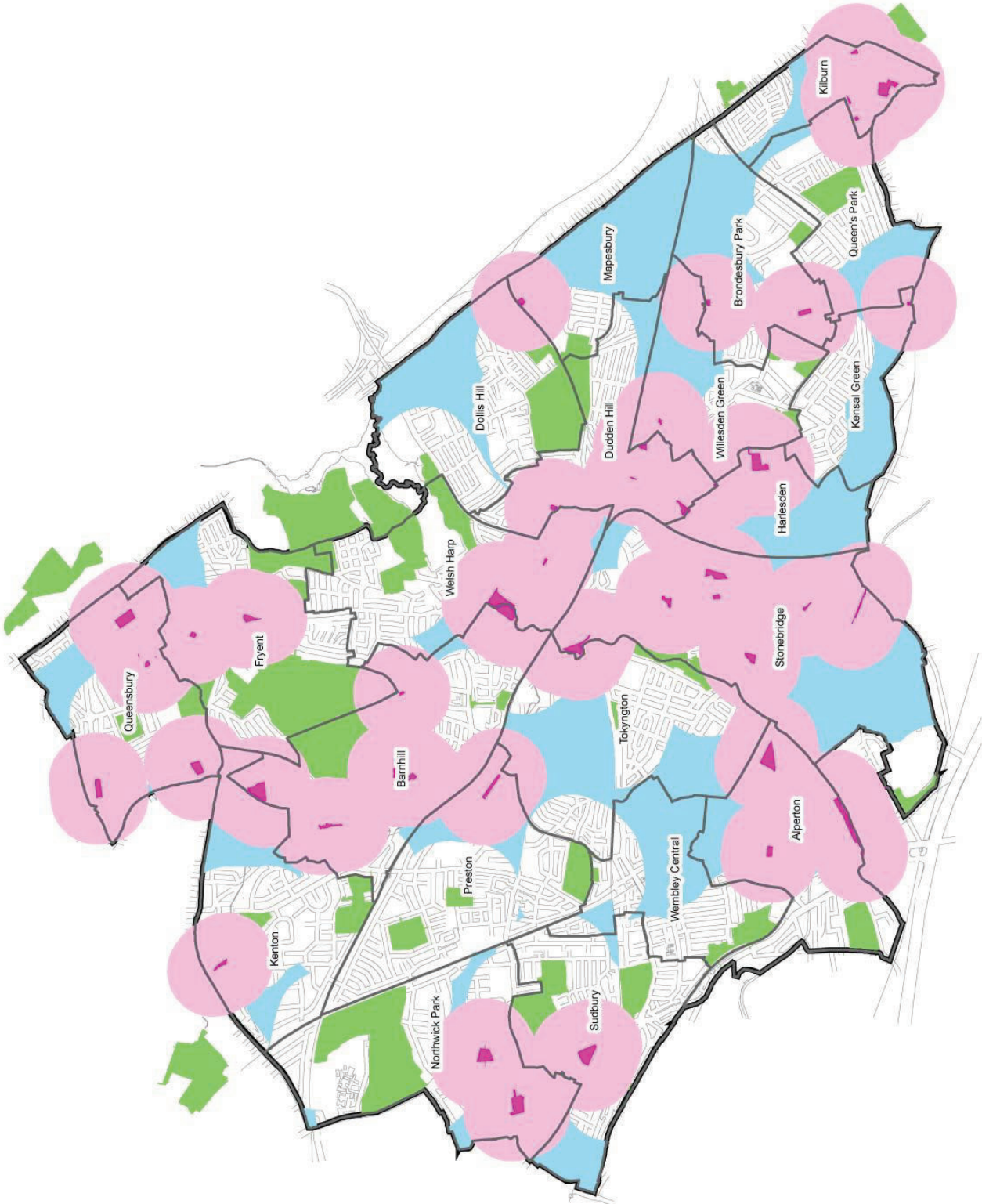
Small Pocket Parks

Legend

- 400m catchment area
- Small Open Space & Pocket Parks
- Local Public Open Space over 2ha
- Local Open Space Deficiency
- Ward boundaries
- Borough Boundary



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2-GIS Team/Para Latham/Geo/Phys/Eds
March 20, 2008
Produced by the GIS Development Team



Appendix 5



Brent Allotments 2009



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Appendix 6 – Playbuilder Needs Assessment and Findings

The identification of sites to be developed has been based on a robust needs analysis underpinned by a set of strategic principles. The needs analysis was developed taking into account information from the Planning Department's survey of play sites and the Parks Service's information about existing sites, including the audit of the condition of sites and proposed developments which will increase and improve play provision.

The needs analysis has been further informed by GIS mapping of the local area including:

- Access – lacking play space provision v child density
- Play accessibility 400m routes
- Population data - population aged 8-13 & relative deprivation
- Play spaces and traffic calming measures
- Play spaces and location of public toilets
- Play spaces and location of schools
- Play spaces and open space deficiency
- Play spaces and working family tax credit
- Play spaces and lone parents
- Play spaces and location of children aged 8-13 with disabilities by ward
- ABS hotspots.

The principles underpinning the selection of the proposed sites were that site development should prioritise sites in areas where there is:

- *High population density of children aged 8-13*
- *High density housing/multiple occupancy*
- *Open space deficiency*
- Proximity to accessible toilet facilities
- Accessibility for children with disabilities
- Proximity to ASB hotspots
- Proximity to schools, Children's Centres, shopping areas & other venues where children & parents go

Further, the selection of sites should take account of:

- State of repair
- Sites with potential to add value through links to other funding streams
- The potential to add value to existing planned works already scheduled to meet identified needs.
- Considerations of practicalities for the 1st year spend given time constraints and scheduling year 2 & 3 spend.

The list of recommended sites was agreed as a result of mapping the proposed sites against these criteria according to needs criteria, locality criteria and site criteria

Development of play areas

In **2008-2009** we proposed to develop and improve 9 existing play spaces with a specific focus on improving accessibility. These sites are located at Carlton Vale, Franklyn Road Open Space, Grove Park, Woodcock Park, Neasden Recreation ground, One Tree Hill, Springfield Open Space, Streatley Road Open Space and Eton Grove (Our rationale for developing 9 sites in the first year was that these are the sites where we anticipate that the work would be achievable in the timescale. This also allows us to prepare for the community/third sector site proposals and the major redevelopment of 2 sites in 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

Over the following two years of capital grant 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 we proposed to develop 11 sites, plus a minimum of 2 community projects. Over the 3 years this will give a total of 20 sites, plus a minimum of 2 further community projects.

Based on the needs analysis the following sites have been identified:

2009-2010

Villiers Road, Mount Pleasant, Brent River Park and Kimberley Road. Villiers Road will be a major re-development project. Kimberley Rd is a Brent Housing Partnership site. We also allocated a total of £50k between two community groups, Mapesbury Dell Conservation Trust (£10k) and Gladstone Park Consultative Committee(GPCC)- (£40k)

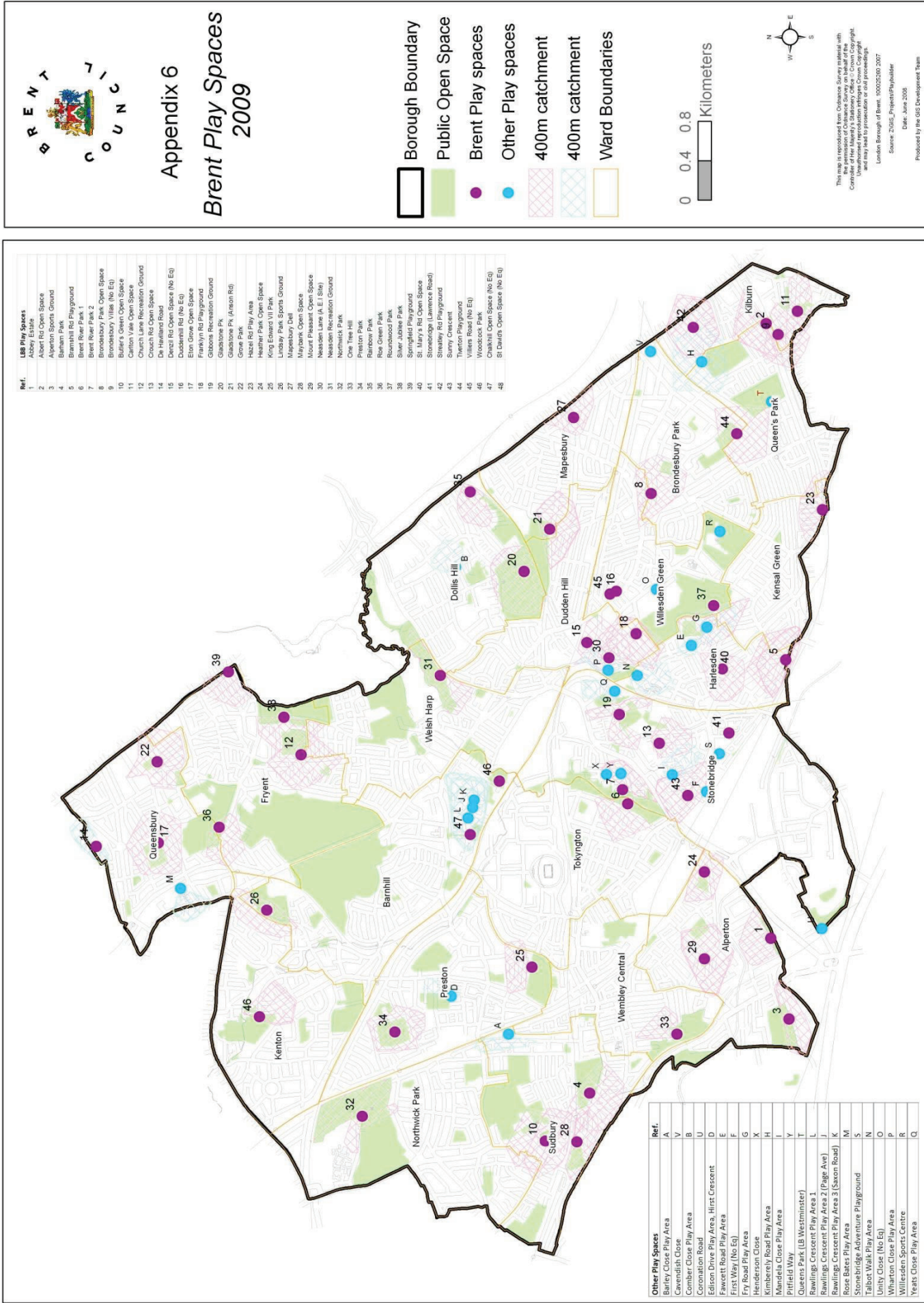
2010 - 2011

Bramshill Road, Crouch Road Open Space, Barham Park, Roundwood Park, Sunny Crescent, Hazel Road Open Space and King Edwards Park.

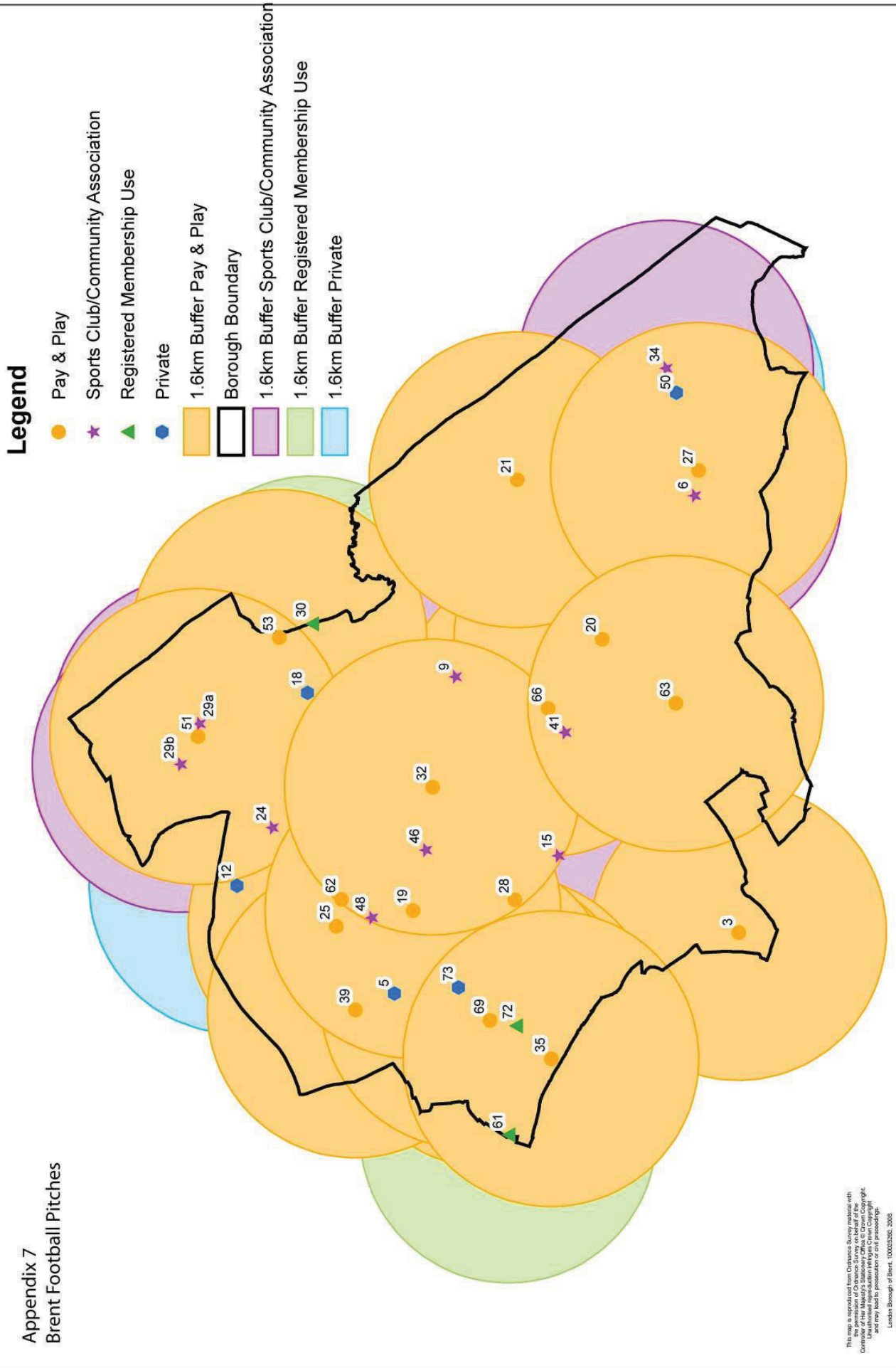
Bramshill Road will be a major re-development project. We also propose to allocate a further £50k in this year to support one or more community proposals.

Although Bramshill Road and Villiers Road are existing play spaces, we have identified both sites as being in need of and having the potential for major re-development which will facilitate the creative and innovative use of the sites. Both sites are in areas of high population density of 8-13 year olds and open space deficiency and so will make a real impact on children's opportunities for play.

Brent Council Parks Service is an accredited with ISO 9000/2000, ISO 14001 and will undertake a complete risk assessment on all new/improved play equipment in line with corporate standards. All new play equipment will be subject to a comprehensive, maintenance and repair programme.



Appendix 7
Brent Football Pitches



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London Borough of Brent, 10002026, 2008.

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September 16, 2008

Produced by the GIS Development Team

**ANNUAL
Equality Report 2008/2009**

Draft: Version 0.9
Mar 2010

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
About Brent	3
Headline results	4
What happens now	4
Section one	5
Workforce profile	5
Understanding council services and departments	5
Brent Council Diversity profile	8
Section two	
School workforce profile	12
Section Three	
Staff Survey and Human resources information	14
Section Four	
Key Achievements	19
Section Five	
Our diversity improvement priorities	33

INTRODUCTION

This is Brent Council's eighth annual Workforce and Equalities Monitoring Report covering the period from April 2008 to March 2009. It provides a profile of our workforce by age, disability, ethnicity, faith, gender and sexual orientation. The report provides information about our employment practices and information about activities and achievements in service delivery.

This report also contains details on our schools' workforce profile, along with a profile of Brent councillors, a brief report on our contractors' workforce profile and on agency staff.

This report provides a benchmark against which to measure progress in the future. It enables us and our stakeholders to identify priority areas for further research and action. It shows how we carry out our statutory duty to promote and monitor equalities.

The report is divided into sections:

- Section one covers council-based employees, councillors, contractors and agency staff.
- Section two looks at the workforce profile in schools.
- Section three looks at our human resource information and the results of the staff survey.
- Section four covers our achievements in equality diversity and community cohesion.
- Section five sets out the diversity improvements planned for 2009/2010.
- Section six is the appendices which contain additional figures including diversity data for particular service areas.

About Brent

Brent is a vibrant, modern, cosmopolitan borough and our communities contain a richness of diversity that is unmatched in London or indeed anywhere in the UK. Our population is growing and dynamic. We are one of the most densely populated outer London boroughs and recent figures indicate that significant numbers of people continue to move into the borough, creating new and emerging communities. Brent is a place where people want to live and this is evidenced in the results of the 2009 Residents' Attitude Survey where 83 per cent of respondents were satisfied with their local area as a place to live. In addition to this almost 74 per cent agreed that Brent is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

The rich diversity in our borough can be seen in our schools where over 130 different languages spoken. According to the Office of National Statistics, Brent has the second highest number of people who were born outside of the borough.

We recognise that through the delivery of our services and our key functions, we play a key role in enhancing the experience of residents and visitors to the borough. We are the only council with a majority ethnic workforce, 60 per cent, serving a majority ethnic population, 54 per cent. The continuous improvement of our services is a priority and in order to achieve this we have introduced an Improvement and Efficiency Programme. The aim of the programme is to ensure that we use our resources efficiently and effectively and that we continue to improve the quality of services that we deliver to our residents.

Brent is one of three local authorities serving a population where the majority of people are from ethnic minorities. The Office of National Statistics resident population estimates for June 2008 give our population as 270,600 which is the same as the previous year. However, independent research commissioned by the council has indicated that the figures could be significantly higher and the Greater London Authority (GLA) expects our population to grow to 293,003 by 2011/12.

Headline results

This report highlights Brent's progress between April 2008 and March 2009 in creating a diverse workforce.

On 31 March 2009 women made up 64.53 per cent of the workforce, which is an increase of 1.03 per cent on the previous year. Of the senior management posts PO8 and above 46.92 per cent are held by women which is an increase on the 2008 figure of 46.22 per cent.

In March 2009 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) employees made up 59.87 per cent of the workforce, compared to 58.87 per cent the previous year, but held 45 per cent of all management posts, which is an increase of one per cent on the previous year.

Disabled employees made up 3.78 per cent of the workforce, compared to 3.62 per cent the previous year, and held four per cent of all management posts, which is a one per cent increase on the previous year.

In January 2009 31.6 per cent of teaching staff in Brent schools came from BME groups which is an increase on the figure for 2008 ensuring that the BME representation of staff in Brent remain is one of the highest in the country.

What happens to the report now?

The report will be made available to all our employees, to elected councillors, to trade unions, partner agencies and to members of the public. The report will also be published on the internet and will be available in Brent's One Stop Service Outlets and libraries.

We hope you find the report useful and we would welcome any comments you may have. If you want to speak to someone about the report or if you want further copies, please contact Jennifer Crook, the Head of Diversity on 020 8937 1117 or Jennifer Laurent-Smart, Senior Corporate Diversity Manager on 020 8937 1623.

SECTION ONE

Workforce profile of council-based staff for the period April 2008 to March 2009

Brent Council comprises of different departments providing a wide range of services to the community.

Figures from 31 March 2009 show that there were 3,192 council-based employees, an increase of 367 employees on the previous year of which 2,544 were full time and 648 were part time employees. This means that 20.30 per cent of employees work part time, a slight increase on the previous year's figure of 20.04 per cent.

Insert table to show part time/ full time figures

From 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 the council's turnover rate was 12.43 per cent, a slight reduction in the previous year's figures of 13.26 per cent.

Understanding Council services and Departments

Central Services

Central service units principally provide support for all council services, as well as dedicated services to customers. They consist of the following:

- The Chief Executive's Office
- The Communication and Diversity Unit
- Legal and Democratic Services
- The Policy and Regeneration Unit
- Brent Finance and Corporate Resources
- Business Transformation

There were 720 employees across all these service areas on 31 March 2009, making up 22.56 per cent of the council's total workforce.

Children and Families

Employees within Children and Families units provide a range of services, including supporting lifelong learning through early year's development programmes, supporting schools in the borough, providing an educational psychology and learning support service, and tackling underachievement. They also work with vulnerable young people, including those who are disabled, looked after, at risk of harm or involved in criminal activity

On 31 March 2009 Children and Families employed 962 staff, making up 30.17 per cent of the council's total workforce.

Environment and Culture

Environment and Culture work to improve the quality of life of every resident, worker and visitor in Brent and the quality of the environment in the borough. This is achieved by; providing and maintaining essential infrastructure which people use and rely on; by providing services; by helping people to fulfil their potential and enjoy a full and healthy lifestyle; by providing cultural services such as libraries, parks, sports and the promotion of creative activity and by regulating activities and enforcing the law to protect citizens and their rights.

Environment and Culture takes the lead on the corporate priority of sustainability. The focus here is threefold: improving waste management and recycling levels; reducing energy use and CO₂ emissions; and ensuring people make more sustainable travel choices. The Directorate also takes a corporate lead for the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympic Games, ensuring we maximize the benefits for local people of London hosting the Games.

On 31 March 2009, the department employed 755 staff, making up around 30 per cent of the council's total workforce.

Brent will have a crucial part to play in the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games as Wembley National Stadium will host the football finals and semi finals, welcoming the Games back after 64 years. Hosting the games will enable us to celebrate Brent's rich cultural heritage through the cultural Olympiad as well as engaging learners of all ages and providing volunteering opportunities.

Preparing for the 2012 Olympics

Between April 2008 and March 2009, Brent delivered a number of 2012 inspired sporting and cultural events and activities for all the community to engage in. As part of the official hand over, Brent hosted the first leg of the Olympic Torch relay which was started by Sir Steven Redgrave and Brent student, Cheyenne Green. In addition, the Brent Museum launched the 'peoples Record', an exhibition of Brent resident's memories and memorabilia of the 1948 games and was developed to mark the 60th anniversary of the 1948 Olympics.

The Personal Best Programme is designed to help unemployed people or those who have little or no qualifications by providing them with a stepping stone into work or employment. It is the official London 2012 volunteering programme and gives individuals a combination of learning, training and work experience. Brent successfully delivered the second phase during 2008 which saw 68 residents complete the training with 21 going into further training or employment. Brent hosted the graduation ceremony for the Personal Best participants from across London which took place at Wembley National Stadium and was attended by Lord Sebastian Coe.

Brent's Festivals programme includes; Brent Respect Festival, the St Patrick's Day parade, Diwali parade and festival, Eid celebrations, Chanukah celebrations, Christmas programme and Holocaust Memorial Day. In the last year Brent's Diwali

festival has won two industry awards while the Respect festival was also recognised with an award.

Housing and Community Care

Housing and Community care provides services that are relevant to all equality groups and has specific responsibilities in a number of areas that are aimed directly at particular groups. In summary, the primary aims are to provide the policy and service framework that will support provision of decent homes, provide choice and quality across tenures and provide the help, care and support required for those with social care needs to live independent, safe and dignified lives at home or elsewhere in the community. Activity in these areas is central to corporate objectives around place shaping and wellbeing.

Based on the successful achievement of Level 4 of the Equality Standard during the year, the department has continued to make concerted progress on its Single Equality Scheme (SES)/ Equality Action Plan (EAP) targets.

Through a mix of direct service provision and partnership working, the department has strived to promote choice and independence and ensure that advice and support are available on housing and social care issues. In particular, services have been provided to support the most vulnerable residents and in this context engagement with groups and individuals representing the different equality strands has been vital. Activity in support of this is summarised in the section on achievements below.

Key objectives for the department include:

- increasing the supply and improving the quality of homes in partnership with social and private landlords, developers and the health and voluntary sectors;
- improving quality of life for vulnerable people;
- provision of advice, assessment and care management and a range of services and support to people in housing need, older people, people with sensory impairment, learning or physical disabilities, people experiencing mental health problems, and people with drug or alcohol problems.
- Increasing the number of people on Self Directed Support (SDS) and those having direct payments/ personal budgets

Continue to implement changes through the adult social care transformation programme in the areas of...

- User involvement and engagement
- Promotion of personalisation through individual choice and control
- Provision of prevention, reablement and rehabilitation services
- Provision of effective information, advice and advocacy support services
- Promoting diversification across social care markets through effective use of commissioning.

On 31 March 2009 the department consisted of 751 staff making up 23.53 per cent of the work force.

Brent Council Diversity Profile

Insert table for: Where staff are employed

Age profile

In March 2009 the highest proportion of Brent's employees was in the age group of 36 to 55 years, making up 60.5 per cent of the workforce. Four per cent of employees are in the 15-25 age group, 21.7 per cent are in the 26-35 age group, 29 per cent are in the 36-46 age group and 29.9 per cent are in the over 45 age group. 15.07 per cent of employees are over 55 years old. The average age of Brent employees is 43.7 years down from an average of 43.8 the previous year.

Insert graph showing age range within the council

Insert table for: Age breakdown across Directorates

Age Band	Children and Families	Corporate	Environment and Culture	Housing and Community Care	Council Wide
15 to 25	3.95%	3.61%	7.78%	0.80%	4.04%
26 to 35	23.78%	25.56%	25.50%	15.58%	21.71%
36 to 46	25.64%	34.44%	28.63%	29.29%	29.20%
46 to 55	30.84%	25.69%	27.31%	35.42%	29.92%
56 to 65	14.75%	10.14%	12.40%	17.04%	13.69%
66 and over	0.83%	0.56%	2.37%	1.86%	1.38%

Disability profile

On 31 March 2009 3.78 per cent people declared themselves to be disabled, this marks a slight increase on the previous year's figure which was 3.62 per cent for March 08. However this is still lower than the figure for 2007 which was 4.09 per cent.

In March 2009 Approximately 5.66 per cent of staff holding management posts declared themselves as disabled, which is a slight increase of one per cent on the previous year four per cent 2008 and an increase of two per cent from 2005/06.

Insert table for: Disabled staff in service areas (insert diagram)

Ethnic profile

To ensure that we deliver appropriate and responsive services, we believe that it is vital to have a workforce that represents the people we serve and that it is important for the council to set the standard for other local employers.

Black and visible minority ethnic groups in the borough make up the majority of the population at 55 per cent.

At March 2009, BME employees made up 59.87 per cent of the total workforce, an increase of one per cent on the previous year. Of the Senior Managers at grades PO8 and above 16.93 per cent are made up of representatives from BME groups.

Insert table for: Ethnicity by service area

Insert diagram

Of the Senior Managers at grades PO8 and above 16.93 per cent are from BME groups.

Gender profile

According to the Annual Population Survey in the 12 months to March 2009, 47.7 per cent of the working age-population are female and 52.3 per cent are male.

On 31 March 2009 64.53 per cent of Brent Council employees were women, which is an increase of 1.03 per cent on the previous year. This figure compares well to the local population.

The figures for the proportion of women in the council's workforce whilst remaining fairly consistent over the last few years are significantly higher than the figures for the general public. In 2003 women made up 63 per cent of the workforce, in 2004 it was 60 per cent, in 2005 it was 61 per cent and in 2006 it was 62 per cent. A higher proportion of women have jobs within the fields of social care, education and customer care. This pattern is consistent with historical trends.

Insert table for: Gender by service area

Insert table for: Grade bands in the council

Insert table for: Full-time and part-time profile, by grades

Religion and belief profile

This is the second time we are reporting on the religion and belief profile of our workforce. Data for this strand reflects information mainly for new staff hence, the large percentage in the unknown category. There has been an increase in the quantity of data held up from 7.58 per cent to 8.35 per cent.

The available data for the Religion and Belief Profile 2008 to 2009 of Staff shows that:

- 0.06 per cent (2) were Buddhist
- 4.32 per cent (138) were Christian
- 1.63 per cent (52) were Hindu
- 0.09 per cent (3) were Jain
- 0.06 per cent (2) were Jewish
- 0.56 per cent (18) were Muslim
- 0.13 per cent (4) were Sikh (significant drop)
- 1.00 per cent (32) had No Religion (significant increase)
- 0.25 per cent (8) were Other
- 91.67 per cent (2,926) were Unknown/prefer not to say
- 0.22 per cent (7) Not Given (not listed on last year's report)

Religion/belief	2007-2008	2008-2009
Buddhist	0.07 per cent (2)	0.06 per cent (2)
Christian	4.18 per cent (118)	4.32 per cent (138)
Hindu	1.45 per cent (41)	1.63 per cent (52)
Jain	0.11 per cent (3)	0.09 per cent (3)
Jewish	0.07 per cent (2)	0.06 per cent (2)
Muslim	0.60 per cent (17)	0.56 per cent (18)
Sikh	0.04 per cent (22)	0.13 per cent (4)
No religion	0.78 per cent (5)	1.00 per cent (32)
Other	0.18 per cent (3)	0.25 per cent (8)
prefer not to say	0.11 per cent (1)	91.67 per cent (2,926)
Unknown	92.42 per cent (2,611)	
Not given		0.22 per cent (7)

Sexual orientation profile

This is also the second time we are reporting on the sexual orientation profile of our workforce. Data for this strand reflects information mainly for new staff. There has been an increase in the quantity of data held up from 3.68 percent to 4.68 per cent.

The available data for the Sexual orientation profile of staff shows that:

- 0.03 per cent (1) was gay
- 4.54 per cent (145) were Heterosexual
- 0.09 per cent (3) were Lesbian
- 0.53 per cent (17) preferred not to say
- 94.80 per cent (3,026) were Unknown

Councillors' profile

The local government system is founded on the principle of elected representation and so it is important that our elected representatives reflect the communities they serve.

This is the fifth time that we are reporting on the profile of our councillors. After the May 2006 elections the Liberal Democrat group became the biggest group on the council after winning 27 seats. The council's Annual Meeting in May 2007 agreed to continue the two parties Executive consisting of six Liberal Democrat councillors and four Conservative councillors established after the previous year's local elections. The current political composition of the council is as follows:

Political party	Current seats	2006 election seats
Liberal Democrats	27	27
Labour	20	21
Conservative	14	15
Democratic Conservative	2	n/a

Agency staff profile

Since the last report there has been a significant reduction in our reliance on Agency workers. Our record for attracting permanent members of staff has improved but agency staff continue to play a key role in the delivery of services, particularly in the fields of social care, education and environment.

- On 31 March 2009 there were 441 Agency staff employed in Brent compared with 686 in March 2008 and 551 the previous year.
- There were 14.66 per cent were working in Children and Families down from 25 per cent the previous year,
- There were 17.41 per cent in Corporate services which is down from 24 per cent the previous year,
- There were 9.27 per cent in Environment and Culture compared to 18 per cent the previous year and
- There were 13.98 per cent in Housing and Community Care which is a significant reduction on the previous years figure of 32 per cent.

Insert table for : Agency staff in service areas

SECTION TWO

School workforce profile

Brent Council's vision is to ensure it is a borough of opportunity and a prosperous healthy place, which provides high quality education and schools that enables all our young people to achieve their full potential.

Teachers

On 15 January 2009, Brent schools employed a total of 2,853 teachers (2,650 FTE) and we have ethnic data for 93 per cent of them. 902 teachers, or 31.6 per cent, were from BME a groups, which is broadly equivalent to the previous year, but which remains one per cent lower than the figures for 2006/7 and 2005/6 but an increase of one per cent on 2004/05 and three per cent on 2003/04. This figure is one of the highest in the country. 88 per cent of teaching staff worked full-time.

Insert chart Ethnicity of teachers

Insert chart: Full-time and part-time staff in schools

Diversity within schools

Currently 90 per cent of pupils attending Brent schools are from ethnic minorities. This compares with an average of 21 per cent nationally.

The largest proportion of BME pupils are Asian Indian, Black African and Black Caribbean, but more schools now have pupils from an increasingly wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Approximately 130 languages are spoken in Brent schools. Apart from English, the seven most common languages spoken are Gujarati, Somali, Arabic, Urdu, Tamil, Portuguese and Punjabi. Sixty per cent of Brent pupils have English as an additional language.

Support for Schools

The School Improvement Service

The School Improvement Service (SIS) leads school improvement in Brent, working in partnership with schools to ensure an excellent and inclusive education, measurable progress, and the highest possible standards of attainment for every pupil. SIS support schools in helping to ensure that children are healthy and safe, that they enjoy their education, are able to make a positive contribution, and that they secure the basis for their future economic well being.

Ethnic Minority and Travellers Achievement Service (EMTAS)

The Ethnic Minority and Travellers Achievement Service (EMTAS), part of the SIS, aims to support nursery, primary, secondary and special schools in raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils. It also enables them to participate fully in all opportunities schools provide and to benefit from an inclusive education which values their diverse cultures and languages needs.

The focus of EMTAS's work is to:

- Raise standards of achievement of those ethnic minority groups at risk of under-achieving
- Meet the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL)
- Secure improved access to education, more regular attendance and higher levels of attainment for Traveller children
- Meet the needs of refugee children.

EMTAS provides guidance to schools on producing and updating race equality policies and collects details of racist incidents by school and the nature of these incidents each year. Where there are concerns, follow-up action is taken. In most cases schools send nil returns. Almost all Ofsted reports on Brent schools in recent years have commented very positively on the quality of racial harmony in the schools inspected.

SECTION THREE

Staff Survey and Human Resources information 2008/2009

▪ Staff Survey 2008

The 2008 Brent Council staff satisfaction survey ran from 20 October to 14 November – results were published in December 2008, so whilst some information was recorded in the 2008 Workforce Monitoring Report, this section provides a more comprehensive analysis.

The response rate for the 2008 survey was 66 per cent, a continuing increase over previous surveys and significantly above the local government benchmark of 44 per cent for this type of research. Scores were generally in line with the 2007 survey with performance against external norms being mixed, whilst engagement levels remain high.

Areas of strong performance include;

- good relationships within teams, driven by effective and supportive line management
- employees work seen as being related to the goals and objectives of the Council
- training, resulting in performance improvements
- the Council being largely seen as in line with equal opportunities and staff being treated with fairness and respect.

Areas for improvement included;

- respondents do not feel they have sufficient opportunity for bottom-up communication
- limited communication around career opportunities and promotion
- appraisals need to reflect performance more accurately
- visibility of senior managers has decreased
- reporting of perceived discrimination is low
- greater monitoring of working hours in order to maintain work life balance.

The 2008 survey was the first occasion in which the statistical technique 'Key Driver Analysis' was used to identify issues that motivate engagement amongst staff. Employee engagement goes beyond satisfaction and is generally defined as employees' willingness and ability to invest their personal effort in the success of the organisation. Key driver analysis identified the following questions as having the highest impact on engagement and where action should be taken:

- I am confident about my career opportunities at Brent Council;
- I believe that action will be taken on problems identified in the survey;
- My performance has improved as a result of skills I have developed over the past year;

- There are good working relationships and support between departments that have to work together.

- **Results on work-life balance and pay**

The results from this section showed slight improvement over the 2007 survey figures. 63 per cent of staff felt they were comfortable with the pressure placed upon them in their jobs. This is three per cent above the local government benchmark and can be regarded as a strength. Other positives to take from the 2008 results include: 72 per cent say they are able to use flexible working patterns when necessary and 65 per cent say they are able to balance working life with their personal commitments. Both of these questions show a slight increase on the 2007 survey findings. In addition, more than half, 55 per cent say they are able to do their job effectively within the hours for which they are paid.

Only 33 per cent of staff feel able to work from home when necessary, whereas 44 per cent feel they are unable to work from home and 23 per cent are neutral. It is likely that the low positive rating to this question reflects the fact that with some jobs, working from home is not a realistic option.

- **Results on discrimination in the workplace**

Seventy-four per cent of staff felt that Brent Council is an equal opportunity employer while 71 per cent feel they are treated with fairness and respect. Just over half of staff, 53 per cent believe that employees are appointed on the basis of merit. These scores are broadly in line with the findings of previous surveys and either on or above the local government benchmark. Employees with a disability are less positive about these questions as are employees who have between six and 20 years of service. There are also pockets of staff that are unsure about the basis for staff appointments.

2008 saw a three per cent reduction in the proportion of staff who felt they had been victim of discrimination. Levels of reporting of discrimination were the same as the 2007 survey, but the trend since 2006 shows a four per cent overall increase. Managers are seen as the single largest source of discrimination, 56 per cent, but also the most likely person to whom the discrimination is reported, 47 per cent. Staff are least likely to report discrimination to the confidential harassment advisory service – only three per cent, although this might be a reflection that the service was newly introduced at the time of the survey.

- **Results on bullying and harassment**

The level of harassment and bullying has reduced by four percentage points between 2007 and 2008. The level for 2008, 14 per cent, puts Brent in line with the local government benchmark. Respondents are more likely to report harassment and bullying than discrimination, and reporting levels for the former have increased by six per cent. As with discrimination, managers are identified as the main source of harassment and bullying.

HR Submission

Grievances and disciplinary cases

There were 57 cases heard by the council many of which were multiple claims. The majority of the claims were not diversity related. There has been a significant decrease in cases of harassment this year. The patterns of those from female, BME and disability has remained at a similar rate.

DISCIPLINARY ANALYSIS - MARCH 2008

Service Area	No. of Cases Period End	No. of Female Cases	No. of BME Cases	No. of Disabled Cases
Children and Families	12	7	6	0
Corporate	5	3	4	0
Environment and Culture	19	4	10	1
Housing and Community Care	33	17	25	0
Council Wide	69	31	45	1

FAIRNESS AT WORK ANALYSIS - MARCH 2008

Service Area	No. of Cases Period End	No. of Female Cases	No. of BME Cases	No. of Disabled Cases
Children and Families	13	10	8	0
Corporate	4	4	2	0
Environment and Culture	10	6	5	1
Housing and Community Care	31	24	17	1
Council Wide	58	44	32	2

HARASSMENT ANALYSIS - MARCH 2008

Service Area	No. of Cases Period End	No. of Female Cases	No. of BME Cases	No. of Disabled Cases
Children and Families	0	0	0	0
Corporate	0	0	0	0
Environment and Culture	0	0	0	0
Housing and Community Care	4	4	3	0
Council Wide	6	5	3	0

Job evaluation monitoring 2008/09

All posts at Brent Council are evaluated to determine the appropriate grade and corresponding salary. Over the last year 315 council based posts have been evaluated. Of these, 91 records of monitoring information are available for existing posts. This shows that the majority resulted in an increase in grade, 93 per cent, and the rest resulted in no change in grade. Further analysis of this information indicates that the ethnicity, gender, age and disability of an employee do not adversely impact the outcome of the job evaluation process.

Learning and Development

Corporate L&D Input

During the period April 2008 to March 2009, there were 89 interventions, for example courses, workshops, briefings or e-learning, were designed and delivered for the ten priority areas agreed by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) for the year 2008/09. A total of 5,577 places were available and 519 events were delivered.

Of the 5,577 places available, 4,062 places were utilised which is a 73 per cent take up rate. The attendance levels for the agreed learning and development priorities areas are detailed in table 1 of appendix four.

The top areas of attendance are fairly consistent with the top areas of expenditure with management and leadership development, information technology and health safety and well being.

Diversity Monitoring

Attendance by Black and Asian minority ethnic staff, women and disabled staff are exceeding the council targets.

	BME Training Attendance	Female Training Attendance	Disabled Training Attendance
Target	59.00%	63.00%	3.50%
Actual percentage	65.18%	66.37%	3.88%

Quality and impact of learning and development offer

Various methods were used to gather both quantitative and qualitative data for the evaluation of the learning and development offer. For example, staff survey results state that 'training is a success story for the council with almost two thirds of staff finding that the schemes in place are helping to improve their performance'

- Respondents are satisfied their performance has improved as a result of skills developed over the past year, ten percentage points above the local government benchmark.
- Respondents are positive in general about their training, with 70 per cent agreeing that the training they receive is appropriate and relevant to their job, six percentage points above the local government benchmark.

The corporate training programme

The corporate training programme includes a dedicated programme of courses addressing a wide range of diversity and equality needs. Some of the 2008/09 programmes include:

- Equality Impact assessment training
- Customer focussed diversity training
- Diversity awareness for staff and managers

As part of the Council's Single Equality Scheme, the Council in 08/09 sponsored a number of traineeships including some specifically relating to young people such as the National Graduate Training scheme. Other equality development initiatives include:

- Springboard (women only)
- Navigator (men only)
- Get Ahead (government initiative supported by IDEA for BME 1st line and middle managers)
- Common Purpose (Senior BME Managers)
- Train to Gain (government initiative supporting skills to NVQ level 2)
- BME senior managers network,
- Career development workshop for disabled and BME staff

SECTION FOUR

Key Achievements in equality, diversity and community cohesion 2008/2009

Human Resources

Key achievements

- Winning diversity and family friendly award for worklife balance work Workwise Award - 2008
- Introduction of a new flexible working toolkit – December 2008
- The launch of the new corporate learning programme, October 2008 – over 50 per cent of staff trained
- Staff health and well-being programmes including regular health checks and awareness sessions
- Continued success of the BME Senior Development Programme
- Recruiting people with disabilities increased from 3.18 per cent (March 2008) to 3.98 per cent (Mar 2009)
- Recruitment review currently being undertaken to improve access to employment
- Apprenticeship scheme launched with two young people employed with learning difficulties or disabilities
- Successful programme of health and well being events including annual health and well being day
- Implementation of single status for former manual workers which assures equal pay for women
- Began work on a Disabilities Development Programme with a launch at the Senior Managers Group
- Expanded the National Graduate Development Programme
- Supported BME senior managers on a national development programme – Common Purpose

Children and Families

Key Achievements:

- A decline in the number of teenage conceptions
- Sustained improvements in child and adolescent mental health services for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities
- An increase in the proportion of mothers who initiate breastfeeding
- An increase in the number of children and young people who participate in two or more hours per week of PE and sport in and out of school
- Increased adoption rates and numbers of children and young people in kinship placements
- A reduction in the number of children in care through effective and well targeted preventative and intervention services
- Children and young people reporting being well supported at school and feeling safe from bullying

- An increase in the resources available to protect children who may be at risk of significant harm
- The implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) across Brent to enable practitioners to identify risk factors early
- An increase in the resources available to offer preventative services to children with additional needs
- Good GCSE results which are above the London and national averages
- Improved educational attainment for children and young people with learning difficulties / disabilities in comparison to national averages
- A reduction in secondary and primary permanent and fixed term exclusions
- The percentage of Black Caribbean pupils achieving 5 or more A* -C at GCSE has improved from 32 per cent in 2005 to 58 per cent in 2008. There has also been an increase in the % of Somali pupils achieving 5 or more A* - Cs at GCSE from 34 per cent in 2005 to 51 per cent in 2008. In Brent we have also seen improvement at key stage 2 for our target groups. For example the percentage of Black Caribbean pupils achieving L4+ in English rising from 70 per cent in 2005 to 75 per cent in 2008 with more substantial increases in maths from 59 per cent to 70 per cent and in science from 71 per cent to 84 per cent in the same period.
- Improvements in the capacity and quality of alternative educational provision.
- An increase in the opportunities for all children and young people, including hard to reach groups, to offer their views and decisions
- An increase in the number of young people participating in positive activities
- A reduction in the numbers of young people offending for the first time
- An increase in the proportion of young people gaining Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications at age 19 above the national rate of improvement.
- Improvement in the participation levels of those over 16 in education, employment or training including those with learning difficulties and / or disabilities and those leaving care
- Reduced the percentage of children and young people aged 16 to 18 who are not in education, employment and training and whose status is unknown to well below national targets.

Environment and Culture

Key Achievements

- Environmental Health participated in a London-wide scheme providing practical training to students to help them gain their environmental health degrees. Three BME students were supported by Brent.
- The Transportation Service has set up a regular women's group for women working in the service to allow discussion on issues of concern and offer mutual support.
- The provision of a PATH trainee opportunity within the Parks Service has improved the workforce profile.
- In early 2009 the Transportation Team set up a 12 week training programme for borough residents aimed at encouraging people to take up a career within the service. Thirty local people representing a broad profile of local people completed the course and it will now progress through Brent's apprenticeship scheme.
- Streetcare worked closely with the Multi Faith Forum to install recycling facilities at faith centres.
- A representative of the BME and Refugee Forums has joined the Green Zones Board to advise on the development of our community development and environmental behaviour change scheme.
- We completed a customer satisfaction survey on our Assisted Waste Collection Service for those with mobility difficulties, resulting in a report that shows a high degree, over 70 per cent, of satisfaction.
- An innovative consultation was undertaken on our new Graffiti Policy. Alongside a 'traditional' consultation of sending out a paper survey to the Citizens Panel and StreetWatchers, we also held a graffiti victims focus group, visited four schools and talked directly with young people about their experiences and thoughts on graffiti using the 'Rant Box' mechanism supplied by creative design agency USCreates, talked directly with graffiti offenders in a structured way, using a street artist as the questioner, to understand the offenders' motivations for making graffiti and what services they would like to see in place to help divert them and finally we held a co-design event to work with the consultation feedback. This approach meant a range of individuals and organizations with an 'interest' in graffiti were able to help shape the policy.
- We undertook a comprehensive survey of Brent's school pupils to determine what sports young people wanted to do and how this could help develop the offer in Brent. 12,000 returns were received from young people in Brent which was more than the whole of the South London ProActive area when the scheme was repeated there.
- A Black Interest consultation steering group met monthly to inform the design and space layout of Harlesden Library Plus

- Valued Customer Panels were established at all libraries to ensure that stock and services were appropriate to the needs of local residents for example to advise on the range of community language books provided.
 - Work between the Parks Service and Children and Families secured £1.2 million of Playbuilder Funding to improve twenty-two play areas across the borough over the period 2008 – 2011. Nine sites were improved up to March 2009 and in each case young people between the ages of 8 – 13 years were involved in creating the design for the new play areas and in selecting the contractors. All schemes will include inclusive play facilities to allow participation by disabled young people. At the beginning of 2009, Brent's Parks were voted the third best in the country by young people through the 'Tell Us' Survey
 - Return to netball sessions were targeted at females in order to increase participation in sport and physical activity by women and girls.
 - A walks programme operates in ten parks and open spaces across the borough every week, designed to increase levels of physical activity by people aged over 60. Over 6000 visits were made to the programme during 2008/09 and evidence has been collected on resulting health improvement.
 - A multi-sports ability club was set up at Willesden Sports Centre on Saturdays and attracts on average 20 disabled children per week and the holiday sports programme now includes disability activities.
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- The school holiday sports programme in 2008 saw over 1000 different young people aged five to seventeen years who between them made over 4000 visits to over thirty different sports activities at over thirty different venues across the borough.
 - Brent's Females 'get active programme' was awarded £40,000 community investment funding by Sport England to deliver a two-year programme of taster sessions and activities.
 - Brent's Sports unlimited project was awarded £61,000 via Pro-Active west London to deliver after school based activities for young people.
 - In addition to '50+ classes' at all four sports centres, weekly classes were held in Kingsbury, Harlesden and Kilburn.
 - The Brent Museum and Brent Archive added to their collections by working with members of the Polish and Brazilian communities in Brent.
 - As part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) History Month Brent Archive created a LGBT timeline and Willesden Library hosted a "living book" evening where readers had the chance to meet and talk with members of the LGBT community.
 - Brent is the lead borough in the Outside Story project to improve the offer from libraries to homeless people.
 - A libraries project for children with disabilities resulted in a 50% increase in registered borrowers and a 39.5% increase in active borrowers. The project involved partnership working with Woodfield and Hay Lane schools and the provision of an improved range of stock including new formats. Partnership working with Ability Net also led to enhanced ICT facilities such as larger keyboards being made available.

- The Letterbox project was run in partnership with Booktrust and targeted looked- after-children aged seven to eleven years.
- One of three West London Story Forums took place in February 2009 in Willesden Green Library Centre. The forums were promoted across the borough attracting over 150 creative people, arts organisations, venues, festival and event organisers who live and work in West London to develop work that is rooted in its local communities under the question “What distinctive and innovative work do you want to create to tell West London’s Stories?”. Four Research and Development Bursaries were awarded. One aims to interview representatives of the 200 plus countries that participate in the Olympics who live in West London.
- The inaugural Brent Dance Month, July 2008, provided opportunities for Brent residents to learn dance.
- Environmental Health and Housing worked together on a scheme to reduce the numbers of Polish ‘rough sleepers’ in Alperton in the Alperton area.
- A Community engagement project was held which set out to address the problem of recurrent tagging and graffiti in the Harlesden area of Brent. As a result a mural was created which investigates the simplistic way in which society often judges, categorises and occasionally demonises young people and the inherent long-term dangers that such negative stereotyping poses for communities and the children within them. The mural, funded by Neighbourhood Working and created by artist Mat Hand, features twenty-five panels across a section of wall, with the portraits of children from Harlesden Primary School painted in monochrome.
- Statistically children from BME backgrounds are more likely to be involved in road traffic accidents so our accident prevention team worked with three schools in Stonebridge to help provide access to key road safety messages to children aged between four and 11.
- Cleared 94 per cent of offensive graffiti reports within 24 hours, with the remaining 6 per cent being cleared within 36 hours.
- A year round programme of Black History events now launched and established.
- Working with representatives from the Muslim community and local Muslim funeral directors facilities were improved at the Muslim section of Carpenter’s Park Cemetery.
- The Review Festivals Programme has begun to ensure it meets the needs of Brent’s community.
- The civil partnership policy has been renewed to ensure high satisfaction.
- A great deal of success has been achieved this year in combating the sales of age restricted goods such as alcohol, tobacco and fireworks.
- Alperton Cemetery wins the National Cemetery of the Year Competition, the best in the entire United Kingdom
- The London Resilience Team were impressed with our mortuary operations that we have become a designated fall back mortuary for any disaster or emergency in the Greater London area.

- Implemented 5 Green Zones across the borough, in which a local resident door knocks their neighbours to encourage them to adopt simple environmental behaviours. This actively contributes to community cohesion, removing barriers in the streets concerned and helping neighbours to meet each other.
- Cleared 94% (53 of 56 cases) of offensive graffiti reports within 24 hours, with the remaining 6% (3 cases) being cleared within 36 hours.

Finance and Corporate Resources

Key Achievements

- Simplification of procurement processes in collaboration with WLA. Revised Pre-Qualification Questionnaire now available for use with smaller procurement projects.
- Prequalification Questionnaire questions more tailored requiring less back-up documentation where not required for subsequent contract.
- Contract management guidelines updated to include relevant information regarding supplier monitoring and qualification. Revised Contract Management Guidelines including supplier monitoring guidance are now on the intranet.
- Government Gateway has been tested and penetration tested has been completed – plus security infrastructure.
- The new web content management system has gone live, which will meet the Government standards. It is now the responsibility of council departments to convert their web pages to the new format.
- More than 500 PCs, laptops and monitors have been wiped of data and shipped to Africa. So far equipment has been given to Ghana's National Health Students Association and the Crescent Future Kids programme in Zambia, which helps to give young people the skills to contribute to the future of their nation's economy. Some have also been sent to disability groups.
- Work with Disabled staff forum to improve accessibility of IT
- Client index implemented
- Revenue and Benefits anti-poverty strategy reviewed in consultation with stakeholders
- Over 6000 vulnerable Housing Benefit customers and over 4000 Council tax customers flagged
- Ethnicity for Housing Benefit known for 62 per cent of caseload
- Sexuality recorded for 2387 Housing Benefit customers
- Faith recorded for 3389 customers
- Debt advice information
- Ethnicity information 40 per cent
- Roll out graduate trainee scheme for finance
- Finance officer development scheme roll out

- Benefit trainees – further six people recruited and trained

Housing and Community Care 2008/2009

Key Achievements

- The department supported in planning a successful conference for refugee groups as part of the development of the Integrated in Brent project.
- Supported the workings of the Brent Refugee and Migrants Forum.
- Helped capacity build the local Refugee and Community Organisations.
- Provided Energy Advice to vulnerable households resulting in warmer homes and tackling Fuel Poverty through our work with Energy Solutions North West London.
- Extensive consultation on the new Housing Strategy 2009-14 took place during 2008/2009, with extensive input from tenants, residents and voluntary and community groups.
- Successful launch of Brent's housing strategy which brought together a wide range of organisations representing tenants, residents, and housing organisations
- Quarterly Private Housing Forums held during 2008/09 to help, assist and inform residents and landlords in the borough. Delegates represented a cross section of the borough's community, detailed breakdown of which can be provided upon request.
- We have built on the successful establishment of Better Government for Older People and with Age Concern have set up groups in four localities to further engage older people and provide them with information, advice, support and computer literacy
- Provision of Tele-care equipment has shown positive effects in enhancing quality of life for older people. A consumer survey was undertaken in 2008 and 82 per cent of respondents said that they and their relatives felt a lot happier and safer since Tele-care was provided.
- An initial equality impact assessment of Direct Payments take-up shows 57.8 per cent of users are from black and minority ethnic communities, and well over 50 per cent of users are women.
- Through its performance management framework and commissioning arrangements the department has strengthened equalities monitoring of the take-up of services in order to ensure effective targeting and improve service user and provider engagement.
- Across all voluntary and private sector service contracts, providers are required to routinely monitor the take-up of services and report on the total number of people that use their services within the borough.

- Service user information across respective diversity strands of age, gender, race, disability, sexuality, faith and gypsies/traveller communities is gathered to determine the level of service take-up by different groups.
- The information gathered is used to carry out both retrospective and predictive equality impact assessments, ensure effective targeting and address under representation.
- User and provider engagement is promoted through service user and provider forum meetings, satisfaction surveys, local involvement networks, open days, service conferences etc.
- Following an equalities impact assessment, we have reviewed priorities for funding voluntary sector organisations, leading to a redirection of support to new and emerging BME groups. 50 of 65 groups supported engage with specific communities across the diversity strands, while 15 provide more general services.
- We have met our target of a 5 per cent reduction in homelessness acceptances among African and Caribbean families, who were experiencing disproportionate levels of homelessness.
- Developed (in partnership with Brent PCT) an on-line process for ordering minor adaptation equipment.
- 4 BHP staff trained as qualified Trusted Assessors (TA's) on the use of the framework. One of the outcomes of the efficiency of this process reduced the administration of the ordering of equipment from 28 days to approximately 7 - 14 days.
- Celebration of Black History with a play presented to staff by the Yaa Asantwa Drama Group
- Carried out a gardening service for over 50 vulnerable and elderly tenants
- Work experience placements for 5 young people from the borough's schools
- Health Fayre Day for staff, including awareness, health check and exercise sessions
- 73% BME Satisfaction with overall service provided
- Reviewed BHP's borough wide Resident Involvement Compact
- In consultation with residents via a working group and our four Area Housing Boards produced a 5 year Resident Involvement Strategy 2009-2014, ensuring hard to reach groups are targeted.
- Consulted with residents and updated the Local Area Compacts where residents determine priorities for their areas.
- Produced an annual residents training brochure.
- Held an annual Residents' Achievement celebration to recognise the voluntary work carried out by resident representatives
- Recruited a Young Person Support Officer and a Welfare Benefit Officer to strengthen the range of services offered to vulnerable tenants' particularly young people.
- A new system of flagging vulnerable cases on BHP's database was developed to provide a visual indicator ensuring vulnerable residents receive responsive services taking account of their special needs.
- Developed a Vulnerable Data Profile which included diversity and equality information on vulnerable tenants.
- Established a Housing Support Young People Focus Group in partnership with Brent Homeless User Group.

- Restructured the format/agenda for consulting the BHP disabled user group forum
- Developed a user focus satisfaction survey in large print to cater for partially sighted tenants
- Developed a new BHP-Brent Mental Health Services (BMHS) partnership working agreement for mental health service delivery.
- Developed a 'qualitative questionnaire template' to collect and analyse 'diversity data'.
- Nine affordable units were nominated to BME RSLs to manage.
- In addition to the two apprentices with disabilities recruited by Human Resources, we appointed an adult with learning disabilities through Toucan Employment on a 3 months' work experience placement. The work experience placement has now ended and due to its success has resulted in the individual being employed on a temporary basis.
- We have had a lot of success with various affordable home ownership initiatives to increase accessibility to all members of the community, such as a regular magazines and open days - which run outside of working hours so that people with child care responsibilities can attend. Our draft shared ownership strategy also supports home ownership for adults with long term disabilities or mental health issues and promotes home ownership initiatives for BME households.
- We continued to make progress against our Temporary Accommodation reduction plan. As at the end of March 2009, we had achieved an 18% reduction in temporary accommodation use for homeless households. In January 2005 there were 4,466 households in temporary accommodation and this has reduced to 3,651 households. This is against a trend of year on year increases in the use of temporary accommodation in the decade before 2005. Previous analysis has shown that Black households are proportionately over-represented in terms of homelessness and living in temporary accommodation - there are a number of complex socio-economic reasons underlying this. However an overall reduction in numbers will have a positive impact on this group.
- Linked to the reduction in use of temporary accommodation, and as a result of service improvement work, there was a 36% reduction in homeless applications and a 46% reduction in the number of cases accepted as homeless in 2008/09 compared to 2007/08. This was achieved through successful homeless prevention measures, as the number of households seeking assistance with housing remained consistent with previous years.
- A refurbishment of our reception area was carried out, and was delivered on time and within budget. Particular attention was paid to the diverse needs of our customers during the design process, and private interview rooms were provided for "sensitive" conversations, as well as wheelchair accessible interview space and a specific seating area with a television for children who are waiting with their families to be interviewed. Linked to this was a redesign of our customer handling process which has enabled us to monitor and manage customer demand at reception much more effectively and waiting and service times have improved significantly.
- We worked with a wide range of partners and stake-holders to help deliver the Council's corporate and other strategies including homelessness prevention

and widening housing options, crime reduction, health improvement and environmental improvement. We have also worked closely with voluntary sector and charitable organisations including providing funding for homeless strategy related services and outcomes.

- We continued to work to tackle rough sleeping in the borough, in partnership with other agencies. Many of those known to be sleeping rough or at risk of doing so are very vulnerable, in terms of mental health, other health issues, and alcohol / drug addiction. In addition some have no recourse to public funds, such as those from the A10 EU countries, and failed asylum seekers. These issues mean that this client group are often difficult to engage with and to find solutions for. In 2007/8 a six month project was set up across partners in the borough with the support of GOL and CLG funding to try and address these concerns. BARKA UK was commissioned to work with A10 nationals with the primary objective of reconnecting them to their home country. The project was successful in closing down two rough sleeping sites in Alperton and Neasden and reconnecting 17 rough sleepers. The project resulted in reduced crime rates in the areas of the rough sleeping sites and improved health for rough sleepers who were able to access some basic services including free food and health screening.
- In 2008/2009 we have assisted in preventing homelessness in about 900 cases, through our county court advocacy service.
- The work in this area is mainly in the area of mortgage arrears litigation and rent arrears matters. The savings we have made here in terms of bed and breakfast cost saving it runs in the thousands of pounds.
- The tenancy protection team, we have prosecuted about 6 civil and criminal prosecution as part of our enforcement functions in protecting the rights of tenants and occupiers.
- 65 % of our customers are members of the BME community.
- Other areas are our out-reach work through cricklewood homeless concern. We saw over 1300 single homeless persons through this scheme. 40% were able to get training and support. (Please see the attached appendix) sent in a separate email.
- Total sign up for our letting team for the period under review is 579 households were rehoused.
- The Start Plus team in Partnership with the Safer Neighbourhood Police Team launched the Prisoner Release Scheme in order to offer support to ex offenders with a view to prevent re-offending
- The single access to Supporting People Accommodation based services was launched in October 2008, following on from the launch of the Start Project in 2006. In all over thousand households and applicants were assisted by Start Plus - 923 households supported to remain in their homes, of these 162 were older people, 22 with mental health issues and 28 with Physical disability. Start Plus is a programme which aims to support and promote independent living amongst Brent's vulnerable households mainly of which are the xx x BME minority groups. Approximately a hundred were assisted into support based accommodations within Brent. The introduction of this service meant that vulnerable clients and hard to reach client could now access support service from one single point of access, where they benefited from being matched against the providers best able to meet their needs.

- 7 households supported in their claim of Disability Living Allowances, one of which staff actually represented client at the tribunal. Over £14,000.00 backdated payments recovered to help improve clients's quality of life. These households were assisted to obtain disability badges, freedom passes and advice offered on motability
- Care and Support service supporting the Respect Festival to inform residents of support available to vulnerable households
- Over £50,000.00 pounds recovered from DWP and other benefit agencies for vulnerable households in form of backdated Council Tax, HB, Child Tax Credits and Community Care Grants. Additional £7,000 was obtained for homeless families in extreme needs and those with disabilities to assist with purchases such as washing machines and dryers.
- At least 15 residents were supported to access BACES in order to attend literacy classes.
- The department has continued to re-house and meet the accommodation needs of victims of domestic violence, and helped to identify assess and manage ex-offenders who'd pose the greatest risks to others within the community, and to themselves.
- 79% of all new clients who accessed supporting people services were from BME community
- new training programme introduced for vulnerable clients
- SP 5 year strategy 2009- 14 launched
- expansion of older people floating support services for complex needs
- introduced 6 step down flats
- clients attend Core Steering Group meetings and extensive involvement in the tender process
- A record number of 168 disabled facilities grants were issued allowing for adaptations and enabling in-situ solutions for our residents.

Communication and Diversity

Key Achievements

The Communication and Diversity Unit provides PR and strategic communication support for all non-political areas of the council, along with providing support on matters of equality and diversity, and developing and implementing the corporate consultation strategy.

- The Corporate Diversity Team successfully secured extra government funding for its Building Stronger Communities programme. This money has enabled the team to establish a range of projects that specifically aim to tackle inequality and social exclusion within the Muslim community. These include a girls-only active citizenship programme, a women's capacity-building project, and an innovative outreach initiative targeting young people.
- Projects such as the Noor Trust Muslim Student Leadership Programme, delivered at the University of Westminster's Harrow Campus, have enabled the council to expand its service offer to hard to reach groups. The

programme overall has helped to promote greater understanding of cultural differences and promote greater community cohesion.

- The Diversity Team's work on the Building Stronger Communities programme has been recognised both nationally and internationally as demonstrating best practice.
- The team has received praise from the Government Office for London
- Brent Young Leaders Programme won a regional award and has been cited as best practice by the Police and Home Office
- Brent's Building Stronger Communities programme has also attracted interest from abroad with VIPs visiting from the US Office of Homeland Security, the Australian High Commission and the British Ambassador to Iraq.
- Achievement of level 3 and 4 of the Equality Standard
- Achievement of the disability two tick symbol
- Recognition for successful prevent programmes
- Successful in securing a substantial amount of Home Office funding to benefit Brent community groups
- Raised the profile of Brent through high profile visits such as the Australian High Commissioner US State Diplomat visit
- Recognised as delivering best practice in relation to community Mapping
- Extensive outreach work with community groups resulting in an award for best programme from Active Change Foundation
- SES development and national recognition
- Unique work with mosques and Imams
- Development of innovative booklets

Over the past 12 months the Communication Team delivered:

- 12 monthly editions of The Brent Magazine, the flagship publication for the authority
- A targeted campaign to encourage new communities in the borough to register on the electoral register, resulting in 95 per cent of those eligible to vote being registered
- Compulsory recycling campaign resulting in an increase from 40 to 80 per cent of residents recycling
- A targeted Direct Payments and self-support campaign for vulnerable adults
- Promoted the Brent Youth Parliament to young people of high school age

Consultation Team achievements

- Project managed with the consultants, ORC the annual staff satisfaction survey.
- Delivered 'A Good School Place for every Child' - major public consultation for Children & Families
- Delivered the Graffiti Survey - Consultation with residents and young people for Environment & Culture.
- Undertook the Aiming High Survey - survey and focus groups with parents of children with special needs.
- Event managed twenty Area Forum meetings.

Legal and Democratic Services

Key Achievements

- Identifying the poorer response areas to the electoral canvas and sending out the canvas earlier
- Issuing canvassers with translation books
- Organising activities such as 'question time' for young people on the local democracy and training sessions for young people on polling station duties
- giving presentations and talks at schools and youth centres and organising school council elections
- conducting a 'census' of children in formal education in Brent to identify 16-17 year olds not yet registered to vote and contact them on an individual basis by post
- questionnaires featuring equalities issues handed out to the public at committee meetings
- revision of clients questionnaires to take in all six equalities strands

Policy and Regeneration

Key Achievements

- Equalities monitoring has become a standard feature of all consultation work carried out by the Neighbourhood Working Team.
- Successfully ensured that 227 residents were engaged with the Incapacity Benefit provision of Brent In2 Work.
- Developed a new council Evidence Base for use in service planning and policy development. The Evidence Base makes use of a variety of data sets including Mosaic ward profiles, a full borough profile, Place Survey results and research papers.
- The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinised the council's approach to tackling homophobic bullying in schools. As a result of the committee's recommendations an audit of anti-bullying policies was carried out to include reference to homophobic bullying. A pilot project on tackling homophobic bullying has also started in three schools and the results of this will be reported to the committee in February 2010.
- Contributed to review of consultation, engagement and empowerment arrangements within the council to assist in meeting our duty to involve and in preparation for Comprehensive Area Assessment.

- Work shadowing opportunities offered to young people at risk of offending.
- Work has been done to reinforce the ethnicity and age monitoring on anti-social behaviour cases. This is now recorded for both the victim and the perpetrator of ASB.
- Brent in2 Work's YETI manual has been revised to help ensure staff are comfortable and confident in asking customers diversity questions, they understand why diversity data is needed and how to correctly enter the data into the YETI system.
- Training and briefing sessions were delivered to all Brent in2Work staff on diversity. These training sessions allowed staff to discuss issues and share experience of asking diversity questions. An updates YETI manual was also provided for all members of staff.

SECTION FIVE

Our diversity improvement priorities in 2009/2010

The key priorities for improvement are:

1. Monitoring performance, understanding and knowing

Monitoring performance, satisfaction, understanding, knowing and mapping our diverse communities particularly in relation to inequalities which affect life chances for example educational attainment.

2. Involvement, engagement and consultation

This involves ensuring that there is active involvement by the communities in the work and responsibilities of the council. It also means ensuring that there is positive and proactive consultation and engagement by the council so that our communities are at the very heart of decision making.

3. Focusing on outcomes

Dismantling and challenging discrimination and barriers with a focus on sustainable priority targeting of outcomes and delivering change.

4. Exploiting the business benefits of equality and diversity

This involves ensuring that the business benefits of diversity translate into real organisational benefits and that the benefits of a modern, representative and diverse workforce are seen as key to delivering a quality service to our diverse communities.

5. Delivering quality services for all

This relates to ensuring that the services provided are responsive and take account of the diverse needs of our communities and recognise multiple disadvantage and discrimination.

6. Investing in all our communities

Ensuring that there is a strategy of inward investment into the borough, to gain economic benefits and build capacity for disadvantage communities, this includes procurement and commissioning exercises by the council.

7. Progressing outcomes through partnerships

Developing partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders and public authorities to ensure that there is a joined up approach to progressing equality and diversity targets and outcomes.

8. Leading in best practice

Revising and progressing the Single Equality Scheme to ensure that we go beyond compliance in our equality legislative duties and focusing on 'best and next practice'; taking the opportunity to obtain the maximum benefit of the legislation.

We will Utilise opportunities to benchmark our activities nationally, and also against other similar councils. This will involve making full use of external assessments such as The Equality Framework for Local government, (previously the Equality Standard), the CAA framework of assessment, Race for Opportunity, Opportunity Now, the Stonewall Index and the Disability Standard Assessment, Disability Two Ticks Symbol, that will allow us to focus on performance, improvement and outcome and will achieve a more strategic approach.

NHS Brent Response to Brent Council Childhood Immunisation Task Group report

General

NHS Brent fully supported and co-operated with the review carried out by the Childhood Immunisation Task Group. Several member's of the NHS Brent Childhood Immunisation Improvement Programme, including the Senior Responsible Officer, Consultant in Public Health and the Improvement Programme Manager, came before the committee to explain the current issues in delivering childhood immunisation and discuss the improvement actions that were in place or were planned to be implemented.

Response to Recommendations

Recommendation 1 - The task group recommends that NHS Brent ensures resources are available so that an accurate CIS database can be maintained beyond the life of the current data clean-up project.

Response It is recognised by NHS Brent that maintaining the improvements in data quality is a vital part of the improvement process. Consequently, Brent Community Services will ensure that the resources are available to maintain a minimum of 95% match between CIS and Exeter is maintained. The match between the two systems is a key performance indicator which is reported monthly.

Recommendation 2 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent reports back to the Health Select Committee in December 2010 on the information held on the CIS database and the Exeter database to ensure that there is at least a 95% match between the two.

Response The match between the two systems currently exceeds 95%. The performance in December 2010 will be reported to the Health Select Committee.

Recommendation 3 - The task group recommends that immunisation results for each GP practice in Brent are published quarterly on the NHS Brent website to help improve accountability.

Response A RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated report covering all practice's and BCS performance is published to all GP practices and BCS monthly. Publishing the report on the NHS Brent website will be discussed by the programme board.

Recommendation 4 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent starts to use the accurate CIS database to consider where there is underperformance in the immunisation service. For example, are there geographical or ethnicity trends that can be used as the basis for an effective immunisation promotional campaign.

Response At this stage of the improvement programme, underperformance is being targeted on a practice basis. Analysis by ethnicity, for instance, would require a further piece of work to extract this data from GP records, as it does not exist in CIS.

Recommendation 5 – The task group recommends that all staff employed by NHS Brent are given an overview of the benefits of vaccination as part of their induction programme. This should include information on childhood vaccinations and the adult flu vaccination. Training should be given to medical and non-medical staff working in frontline positions, and should be extended to GP receptionists.

Response Nurses and GPs already have access to vaccination update training which is offered twice a year. Responsibility for training non-medical staff is that of the individual GP practice.

Recommendation 6 – The task group recommends that as part of the induction training on immunisations, it is made clear to NHS Brent staff and employees at GP surgeries that there is no link between the MMR vaccine and autism so that they are able to communicate this message to members of the public, should they be asked about this subject.

Response This message is reinforced at every opportunity and NHS Brent will continue to do so.

Recommendation 7 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent carries out a childhood immunisation promotion campaign once an analysis of the CIS database has been completed and more is known about the children who have not had the vaccines they need. A campaign could be tied into vaccination clinics at children's centres (see recommendation 8 below).

Response The programme board is starting to look at what will be required to implement an effective promotion campaign. We are currently planning meetings with Health Trainers to begin working with focus groups to understand some of the issues that prevents parents vaccinating children.

Recommendation 8 – The task group recommends that vaccination clinics are trialled at five children's centres in Brent (one in each locality) to assess demand and popularity. One of the trials should be carried out at the weekend to see if there is demand for services outside core hours. As well as providing immunisations, health visitors should be available at the clinics to speak to parents about vaccinations and answer any questions that they have. The clinics could be timed to take place during a vaccination campaign (see recommendation 7 above).

Response Operating an immunisation catch up programme is part of the current 2010/11 improvement plan, however, given the failure of these clinics during the MMR catch up campaign means that we will have to design and test the delivery of any clinic carefully before rolling them out.

Recommendation 9 – The task group recommends that children's centres collect information on the immunisation status of each child that it registers. This information should be passed to a health visitor for follow up with the parents if the child has not received the vaccinations in the childhood immunisation programme.

Response Information presented at these types of contacts is not always available or accurate and currently we are expecting GPs to collect this data at registration and BCS to collect the data for children that are not registered with a GP. It is already within the BCS contract for them to check immunisation status at every opportunity and vaccinate when required.

Recommendation 10 – The task group recommends that each school in Brent has a member of staff (such as a school nurse) who is able to advise parents and teachers on the benefits of immunisation. This member of staff should be invited to attend NHS Brent immunisation training to ensure their knowledge is kept up to date.

Response School Nurses are available at each school and are there to advise and support parents to get their child immunised. The HPV programme has introduced a further team that operates specific sessions promoting HPV vaccination to female pupils, parents and teachers.

Recommendation 11 – The task group recommends that teachers in Brent are given an opportunity to attend immunisation training by NHS Brent so that they are better placed to advise parents on immunisation and the diseases that vaccines work to prevent.

Response NHS Brent will review what training is currently given to teachers and whether any further training is necessary.

Recommendation 12 – The task group recommends that parents are asked to provide information on their children's immunisation status when they fill out their school admission form. This information would be disclosed on a voluntary basis and passed to the school nurse for follow up with the parent if necessary.

Response NHS Brent will investigate this recommendation further with school nurses and teachers.

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Childhood Immunisation Task Group Report

March 2010

Membership:

**Councillor Ann John OBE
Councillor Eddie Baker
Councillor Sami Hashmi**

Contents

	Page number
Glossary	4
Chair's Foreword	5
Executive Summary	7
Recommendations	10
Introduction	12
Terms of Reference	13
Task Group Membership	14
Methodology	14
Main Findings –	15
a). Data collection and maintenance	15
• Data quality	15
• How NHS Brent is addressing data quality problems	16
• How has immunisation performance improved during the data clean-up project?	18
• Maintaining an accurate database	19
• Increasing accountability for immunisation data and service performance	20
b). Reasons for non-immunisation	20
• Economic, social and cultural issues	21
• Is the MMR controversy still an issue for parents?	22
• Vaccine safety	23
• Raising awareness	24
c). Swine Flu	24
d). Local authority involvement in childhood immunisation	26
• Children's centres	26
• Schools	27
e). Feedback from parents, carers and childminders	29
f). Other findings	29

• Out of hours vaccination	29
• Health visitors	30
• HPV Vaccine	30
Conclusions	30
Appendices	32

Glossary

Diseases protected against by the implementation of the childhood vaccination programme:

Diphtheria
Tetanus
Polio
Pertussis (whooping cough)
Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib)
Pneumococcal infection
Meningitis C
Measles
Mumps
Rubella (this used to be more commonly known as German measles)

Vaccines performance information

NHS Brent records vaccine take up rates for the following vaccinations:

Vaccine	Protecting against
DTaP/IPV/Hib	Diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis, Haemophilus influenza type b
Pneumococcal vaccine (PCV) booster	Pneumococcal infection
Hib / Men C booster	Haemophilus influenza type b and Meningitis C
MMR	Measles, mumps and rubella
DTaP/IPV booster	Diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis
MMR booster	Measles, mumps and rubella

Chair's Foreword

The Childhood Immunisation Task Group was set up because councillors in Brent had concerns over the low level of immunisations being reported by NHS Brent against virtually all of the vaccinations in the national childhood immunisation programme. As someone who spent their professional life testing vaccinations, it was of great concern to me personally that young people in Brent were not being vaccinated against diseases that are completely preventable. In the 21st century Brent should not be dealing with outbreaks of diseases such as measles, but we are because of low vaccine up take in the borough.



Whilst the delivery of the childhood immunisation programme is the responsibility of NHS Brent, it is clear to the task group that successful implementation of the programme requires a concerted effort from the PCT, GPs, health visitors and of course, the local authority. This report suggests a number of ways that we can make better use of resources and facilities that exist in Brent, such as children's centres, to ensure young people get the vaccinations they need.

This report echoes the views of the task group members, that the importance of vaccination against preventable disease cannot be overstated. In the UK we are in a fortunate position that many of us don't remember the shocking impact that diseases such as polio had on the people that caught it. Similarly, diseases such as diphtheria have become all but eradicated in the UK – I'd be surprised if most people could easily explain how diphtheria affected people. This is a good thing and shows that the vaccination programme has been a success. It is crucial that immunisation rates are maintained at a level where these diseases remain a distant memory.

The impact of immunisation rates falling below a level that ensures herd immunity can be seen in measles. In 2001 there were 70 cases of measles in England and Wales. By 2009 this had risen to 1,143 cases¹. There have been measles outbreaks in Brent in recent years that wouldn't have occurred if young children had received the MMR vaccine and booster. There is little doubt that the controversy caused by the now discredited research carried out by Andrew Wakefield has meant that the number of children receiving the MMR vaccine has reduced. Health organisations now have the challenge of ensuring the number of children receiving the vaccine reaches the level needed to ensure herd immunity.

There is much work to be done on this, but the task group is reassured that NHS Brent is putting in the necessary resources and effort. This needs to be maintained in the coming years despite the financial pressures facing the health service. The task group hopes that this report contributes to this vital area of health policy and service delivery and makes a positive contribution to the immunisation programme in Brent.

I would like to thank all those who took part in this review, from the health professionals working on the frontline to improve services to the parents we were fortunate enough to

¹ Source – NHS Choices

meet at the children's centres in Brent. All of the people we met were a valuable source of information and helped us reach our conclusions and recommendations. I would also like to thank my fellow task group members for their contributions, Councillors Eddie Baker and Sami Hashmi.

Councillor Ann John OBE

“The two public health interventions that have had the greatest impact on the world’s health are clean water and vaccinations”.

World Health Organisation

Executive Summary

Introduction

It was clear when the task group started its work that immunisation rates in Brent were poor and that there needed to be a significant change in approach to improve immunisation levels in the borough. This was acknowledged in the first version of NHS Brent’s Commissioning Strategy Plan 2008-13, which contained a target to achieve 95% coverage on the MMR and DTaP / IPV / Hib vaccines by the end of 2010/11 and to continue that through until 2013 and beyond. Although the target isn’t included in the latest version of the commissioning strategy plan, it is still NHS Brent’s intention to achieve these immunisation rates.

In order to do this there needs to be a significant push from all those involved in the immunisation process. The task group has found that there is a great deal of willingness from within the PCT and the local authority to work together to improve immunisation levels, but the systems and process are not yet in place to make this happen consistently across the borough.

Data Management

Of crucial importance to the whole immunisation programme is complete and accurate data, so that GPs and the PCT are aware of how many children there are registered in the borough and how many have received their vaccinations at the correct time. NHS Brent is responsible for immunising all children registered with a GP in Brent and all children resident in Brent who aren’t registered with a GP. NHS Brent does not have to record the vaccination status of children who are resident in Brent but registered with an out of borough GP.

Data quality was a continuing theme during the course of the review and the task group was encouraged to learn that NHS Brent has deployed extra resources to bring its databases up to date. This project has had an impact on the immunisation figures already – following an initial data clean up and change in the way immunisations were recorded in early 2009, 6,000 additional names were added to the database held by NHS Brent (an increase from 23,000 to 29,000). Because the denominator increased by 6,000 without a corresponding increase in the numerator, immunisation performance for 2008/09 is worse than in previous years. Better data management would have avoided the need for such a comprehensive data clean up.

Although NHS Brent is improving immunisation data collection and this is reflected in the current immunisation rates reported by NHS Brent, the task group is frustrated that the issues such as poor data management and lack of call and recall processes have been identified in previous reports, and yet they have only recently been addressed (or are being addressed). Whilst the work that is taking place now should lead to an

improvement in immunisation rates, it is disappointing that NHS Brent did not act sooner on the recommendations from previous reports.

Following a measles outbreak focussed on Central Middlesex Hospital in March/April 2006, a report was prepared for NHS Brent by Julie Billett, Specialist Trainee in Public Health. Her report contained an action plan for increasing MMR vaccine uptake in Brent. Her suggestions included:

- Health visitors to identify any unimmunised children and take appropriate action.
- All Health visitors will be responsible for ensuring the data is entered on to CIS (NHS Brent database).
- Health visitors to make a note of reason for refusal.
- Weekly review of gaps by Cluster service managers & Health visitor lead and feedback to Immunisation Coordinator.
- Opportunistic MMR vaccination in A&E and day care centre.
- Cluster service managers to be responsible for ensuring effective liaison with GP practices.
- Practice nurses, health visitors and immunisation nurses to opportunistically check MMR status of children and vaccinate.
- Practice nurses to ensure data fed back promptly to PCT.

The majority of these actions were identified as issues during the task group's interviews, nearly four years after the original report was written. The task group hopes that the good work being done currently to update information, initiate call / recall contracts with GPs and improve data collection will be maintained and not allowed to drift. If this was to happen, immunisation levels would inevitably reduce.

Reasons for non-immunisation

Data quality is not the only reason why immunisation rates in the borough were lower than they should be. The task group considered other factors that influence immunisation take up such as economic, social and cultural issues. There is much anecdotal evidence to suggest that Brent's high BME population is not the most significant factor in influencing vaccine take up. Indeed, research suggests take up is higher amongst BME population groups. However, data quality has also limited the amount of research that can be done on this and it is something the task group hopes can be addressed so the relevant groups can be targeted to improve vaccine rates.

Local authority involvement in childhood immunisation

As well as looking at what NHS Brent is doing to improve immunisation levels, the task group explored how Brent Council can contribute to this important work area. The council, via children's centres and schools, will have contact with the vast majority of children and their parents in the borough. Therefore, it follows that the local authority is well placed to assist NHS Brent in delivering the immunisation programme.

The task group was encouraged by the response received from children's services and managers of children's centres about the possibility of assisting the immunisation programme. As one children's centre manager put it, "if children's centres are to be at the centre of communities then they should be offering a holistic service, including a

range of health services such as childhood immunisation". This attitude toward partnership working is to be commended. However, it will still be for health visitors, nurses or GPs to provide the actual vaccination, not the children's centre staff. Health clinics are already an established part of children's centre timetables. The task group believes that introducing immunisation clinics at children's centres would be an extremely useful addition to existing services. The children's centres that the task group visited would be happy to host and promote such a service.

The task group met with approximately 20 parents to talk about their views on immunisation. The parents expressed a range of views which have helped inform recommendations. They were concerned about inconsistent information available on vaccines, both in the media and, at times, from health professionals. They would appreciate clearer information on the purpose of vaccines, the illnesses they prevent and the potential side effects of the vaccine. Some parents felt that advice from health visitors was sometimes hard to obtain, especially at the children's centres where they are extremely busy. The perceived link between MMR and autism was also an issue for some parents, but not the majority of parents the task group met. The overriding view from parents was that they are willing to listen to immunisation advice from health professionals but advice needs to be clear and understandable.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 - The task group recommends that NHS Brent ensures resources are available so that an accurate CIS database can be maintained beyond the life of the current data clean-up project.

Recommendation 2 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent reports back to the Health Select Committee in December 2010 on the information held on the CIS database and the Exeter database to ensure that there is at least a 95% match between the two.

Recommendation 3 - The task group recommends that immunisation results for each GP practice in Brent are published quarterly on the NHS Brent website to help improve accountability.

Recommendation 4 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent starts to use the accurate CIS database to consider where there is underperformance in the immunisation service. For example, are there geographical or ethnicity trends that can be used as the basis for an effective immunisation promotional campaign.

Recommendation 5 – The task group recommends that all staff employed by NHS Brent are given an overview of the benefits of vaccination as part of their induction programme. This should include information on childhood vaccinations and the flu vaccination for both vulnerable adults and children. Training should be given to medical and non-medical staff working in frontline positions, and should be extended to GP receptionists.

Recommendation 6 – The task group recommends that as part of the induction training on immunisations, it is made clear to NHS Brent staff and employees at GP surgeries that there is no link between the MMR vaccine and autism so that they are able to communicate this message to members of the public, should they be asked about this subject.

Recommendation 7 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent carries out a childhood immunisation promotion campaign once an analysis of the CIS database has been completed and more is known about the children who have not had the vaccines they need. A campaign could be tied into vaccination clinics at children's centres (see recommendation 8 below).

Recommendation 8 – The task group recommends that vaccination clinics are trialled at five children's centres in Brent (one in each locality) to assess demand and popularity. One of the trials should be carried out at the weekend to see if there is demand for services outside core hours. As well as providing immunisations, health visitors should be available at the clinics to speak to parents about vaccinations and answer any questions that they have. The clinics could be timed to take place during a vaccination campaign (see recommendation 7 above).

Recommendation 9 – The task group recommends that children's centres collect information on the immunisation status of each child that it registers. This information should be passed to a health visitor for follow up with the parents if the child has not received the vaccinations in the childhood immunisation programme.

Recommendation 10 – The task group recommends that each school in Brent has a member of staff (such as a school nurse) who is able to advise parents and teachers on the benefits of immunisation. This member of staff should be invited to attend NHS Brent immunisation training to ensure their knowledge is kept up to date.

Recommendation 11 – The task group recommends that teachers in Brent are given an opportunity to attend immunisation training by NHS Brent so that they are better placed to advise parents on immunisation and the diseases that vaccines work to prevent.

Recommendation 12 – The task group recommends that parents are asked to provide information on their children's immunisation status when they fill out their school admission form. This information would be disclosed on a voluntary basis and passed to the school nurse for follow up with the parent if necessary.

Recommendation 13 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent and the council's Children and Families Department work with secondary schools in Brent to promote the benefits of the HPV vaccine to pupils and their parents in order to increase the vaccination rate. Work needs to include information on the vaccines safety, accessing the vaccine and organising the way the vaccine is delivered so that opportunities to complete the course of vaccine aren't missed. Young people have an important role in this and groups such as the Youth Parliament should be approached to engage young people directly on this issue.

Introduction

Childhood immunisation against illnesses such as measles, mumps, polio and diphtheria are crucial to protect the long term health of young people in our borough. Immunisation has the most robust evidence in terms of safety, efficacy and cost effectiveness of all healthcare activities, but there have been long standing problems in achieving good levels of coverage in London². Brent has been no exception to the London-wide trend of low immunisation rates.

Brent Council's Health Select Committee established the Childhood Immunisation Task Group because councillors were concerned about the low immunisation rates in the borough. Childhood immunisation rates in Brent for 2008/09 were reported to be below target for all of the immunisations in the national immunisation programme except human papilloma virus vaccine and tetanus, diphtheria and polio booster as the table below demonstrates.

Table 1 - Childhood Immunisation Rates for Brent in 2008/09

Immunisation	Target	Actual
Children aged 1 – Diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis, Hib (DTaP/IPV/Hib)	75%	65.5%
Children aged 2 – Pneumococcal vaccine (PCV) booster	50%	41.8%
Children aged 2 – Hib / Men C booster	75%	45.6%
Children aged 2 – Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR)	75%	56.3%
Children aged 5 - Diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis booster (DTaP/IPV)	85%	24.8%
Children aged 5 - Measles, mumps and rubella booster	80%	32%
Girls aged 12-13 – Human Papilloma virus vaccine (HPV)	90%	92.1%
Children aged 13-18 – Tetanus, diphtheria and polio booster	50%	61.3%

The task group was keen to investigate how NHS Brent and partners, including the council, were addressing immunisation performance to ensure young people received the correct vaccinations to prevent the unnecessary spread of disease.

As well as looking at childhood immunisation, the task group felt it could not ignore the swine flu vaccination programme even though this would be aimed at a much wider population group than children. Swine flu was a significant issue at the time that the task group was agreeing terms of reference and so it was added to the remit of the work.

² NHS Brent Commissioning Strategy Plan 2008-2013

The importance of immunisations

The importance of achieving “herd immunity” against disease cannot be overstated. Herd immunity is achieved when enough people are vaccinated against a particular illness to prevent its spread, even to people who have not been vaccinated. For example, herd immunity against measles requires 95% immunisation coverage. Measles immunisation in Brent has been well below this level for many years which means a measles outbreak could happen at any time, and has happened in the recent past. Between January and September 2008 there were 87 cases of measles in north-west London, 45 of which were in Brent. There were outbreaks in three Brent schools. About 1 in 15 children with measles will develop more serious complications such as diarrhoea, pneumonia, fits and encephalitis and in some cases measles can kill. In sub-Saharan Africa the death rate for people with measles is around 25%, while in the UK it is estimated to be closer to 1 death per 10,000 cases. It is a serious illness easily prevented through vaccination. But many children in Brent are not vaccinated against measles and other preventable diseases.

Terms of Reference

The task group agreed the following terms of reference:

The Immunisation Task Group will -

- Assess NHS Brent’s approach to childhood immunisation, looking at current immunisation levels and the plans in place to improve childhood immunisation levels.
- Assess the progress that NHS Brent has made against the five work streams in its 2008-2013 Commissioning Strategy Plan –
 - MMR catch up programme
 - HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) immunisation programme (immunisation against cervical cancer)
 - Improving public awareness
 - Immunisation system management
 - Capacity and capability in the workforce
- Consider how NHS Brent is taking steps to improve data management. This is to ensure that there is accurate information on the number of young people who need to be immunised and on the numbers of people who’ve received the correct vaccinations.
- Consider best practice in immunisation work from around the UK and see how this could be applied in Brent.
- Consult with key stakeholders (such as GPs, nurses, parents etc) to find out how they think services can be improved.
- Consider if information (since discredited) on the safety of the MMR vaccine is still acting as a barrier to parents seeking immunisation for their children.
- Consider whether the promotional work undertaken to encourage parents to get their children immunised is adequate in a borough such as Brent with its diverse populations. This will include a review of the measles campaign that took place in autumn 2008 to see whether vaccination levels increased at that time.

- Consider how NHS Brent is preparing for the availability of the swine flu vaccination and whether systems are in place to ensure that those people who need it most are able to receive it.
- Make recommendations to NHS Brent and partners, based on the findings of this work.

Task Group Membership

The task group members were Councillor Ann John, OBE (chair), Councillor Eddie Baker and Councillor Sami Hashmi. The members were supported by Andrew Davies, Policy and Performance Officer.

Methodology

The task group collected much of its evidence from interviews with people working in the immunisation programme in Brent, or working in services that contribute to the delivery of the programme. The task group met with:

- Jo Ohlson, Director of Primary Care Commissioning, NHS Brent
- Dr Philip Minor, Head of Virology, National Institute for Biological Standards and Control
- Tony Menzies, Interim Immunisation Project Manager, NHS Brent
- Dr Reeta Gupta, Consultant and Immunisation Lead Paediatrician, NHS Brent
- Dr Penelope Toff, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, NHS Brent
- Kostakis Christodoulou, Head of Health Promotion, NHS Brent
- Brigitte Dingle, Health Inequalities Manager, NHS Brent
- Krutika Pau, Assistant Director, Strategy and Partnership, Brent Council Children's Services
- Peter Firkin, Manager of the Harmony Children's Centre
- Nicky Case, Manager of the Three Trees Children's Centre

Members of the task group also carried out visits to two children's centres, Harmony Children's Centre in Neasden and Three Trees Children's Centre in Queens Park. There the members had the opportunity to speak directly to parents, carers and child minders about immunisation, their views on immunisation services in Brent and the benefits of immunisation in general. The group also attended a public meeting on swine flu to see how NHS Brent is communicating with community groups and members of the public on swine flu and to see how people were responding to information on the swine flu vaccine.

Desk-based research was carried out to look at examples of best practice in other parts of the UK. In addition, a number of reports have been written in recent years on measles outbreaks in Brent (in 2006 and 2008). These were used by the task group to see where lessons from those outbreaks have been used to inform immunisation policy. NHS Brent also produces an annual childhood immunisation report which has been a useful reference document for the task group.

Main Findings

a). Data collection and maintenance

Data quality

NHS Brent has previously researched why immunisation levels are below target in the borough. The main reasons identified were:

- GPs and PCT staff do not follow the same procedures when handling immunisation data leading to inconsistent reporting.
- There was no clear definition for the PCT cohort of children to be immunised, therefore the denominator (i.e. the number of children who should be immunised) continued to be inaccurate.
- The reconciliation of data held by GPs and the CIS (NHS Brent information system) was incomplete.
- Data on unscheduled immunisations was not fully captured on CIS.
- Staff found inconsistencies with data collection and duplicated tasks frustrating.
- GPs in Kilburn reported a higher number of patient refusals for MMR.
- GPs reported that safety concerns relating to MMR remained strong.

Although the research showed a range of factors influencing immunisation rates, the task group was repeatedly told that data management issues were leading to low recording of immunisation rates. This was the single most important issue that needed to be addressed in Brent to improve immunisation rates.

The task group was told of a number of issues relating to poor data management that were affecting the accurate recording and reporting of immunisation rates in the borough:

- There are discrepancies between the number of children registered with a Brent GP and the number of children on the PCT's own database.
- Health visitors may not collect pink slips (that record vaccinations) from GPs once a child has been vaccinated and so this data is not recorded centrally. Effective data capture from GPs is crucial for accurate recording.
- A well defined data capture process does not exist leading to data not being captured at all, or being reported late.
- The denominator used to calculate immunisation rates is inaccurate and contains duplicate records, patients who have left Brent and patients for which the NHS Brent database does not contain immunisation data.
- A well defined patient call and recall process has only recently been established.

The data management problems facing NHS Brent were compounded by the complicated information collection method used to record immunisations and the disparity between the NHS Brent database and the patient lists held by GPs. The system for recording immunisations has been very complex and there are a number of areas where it can fail. Among the issues picked up by the task group were:

- Health visitors need to obtain consent from parents to include their child in the vaccination programme. This should be done shortly after the birth of the child, but sometimes this does not happen because of the work load faced by health visitors (there is a shortage of health visitors in the borough).
- Not all parents have their red book so they may not be aware of vaccination requirements for their children.
- Population churn is an issue in Brent. This has implications for GP registrations leading to missed vaccinations.

Although Brent was reporting the lowest immunisation levels in England, the reality is that because of poor data collection and breakdowns in the immunisation system it cannot be sure what the actual immunisation rate is for any of the vaccines provided for children aged five and under. The task group was told by a number of people, particularly NHS Brent staff, but others as well, that the real immunisation rate was likely to be higher than reported. If this is the case, it should be seen in immunisation rates for 2009/10, which will be reported against a background of improved data collection.

Poor immunisation data has been picked up as an issue across the borough. The Children's Trust Board is concerned about this as it monitors immunisation data for the Every Child Matters programme aim to keep children healthy. Without accurate information its monitoring role is compromised. There has been pressure from a number of different sources to resolve this issue so that a concerted effort can be made to improve vaccination rates – clean, accurate data is crucial to this.

The NHS Brent Annual Childhood Immunisation report for 2008/09 contains an example of how poor quality data is affecting immunisation programmes. In February 2009 Brent Community Services were commissioned to carry out an MMR catch up programme to patients not registered with a Brent GP, or those registered with a GP that did not provide immunisations. Patients were invited to attend a clinic by letter. Of the 2,049 patients invited to attend, only 246 turned up (12%) and of those 246, only 61 (3%) were recorded as being fully immunised. Of the 246 people that turned up, 185 had completed the MMR course already. Poor data had a detrimental effect on the catch up programme.

How NHS Brent is addressing data quality problems

NHS Brent has recognised these problems and has committed resources to the immunisation service to rectify data management problems. A data clean-up project has been taking place throughout 2009 to establish an accurate baseline for all immunisations in the childhood vaccination programme. The project is focusing on matching NHS Brent's Community Information System database with patient lists held by GPs. An accurate baseline is needed from which immunisation levels can be reported and steps taken to target the right groups of people to improve immunisation rates.

Since the task group started its work, NHS Brent has made the following changes to the immunisation service:

- Immunisation data quality has improved, with the match between the Community Information Service and Exeter data increasing from 65% to 92%.
- All 70 GP practices that deliver childhood immunisations in Brent are now sending immunisation data electronically every month to the PCT.
- Reported immunisation performance data has increased significantly, with some of the vital sign indicators improving over 30% between quarters 1 and 3.
- The majority of practices have developed a childhood immunisation scheme plan, which explains how each practice informs and advises patients regarding immunisation and how they ensure patients are informed of an immunisation which is due and what the follow up actions are if patients do not attend for vaccination.
- RAG (red, amber, green) rated GP performance data has been published for the 12 and 24 month cohorts for quarters 3 and 4.

Since NHS Brent started working on the quality of the data held on CIS information system nearly 8,000 problem records for children aged 0 to five have been reviewed and resolved.

Table 2 – Data clean-up progress

Date	Brent's responsible population*	Exact match between Exeter and CIS	Records to clean	% exact match
04/08/09	30,078	19,702	10,376	65.5%
22/01/10	29,675	27,065	2,418	91.2%

* Brent's responsible population is all children aged zero to five who are registered with a GP in Brent, or who live in Brent but aren't registered with a GP at all. Children resident in Brent, but registered with a GP in another borough are not included.

NHS Brent will work to maintain the match between the CIS database and the Exeter database (which contains the list of patients registered with a GP in Brent) at between 95% and 98%. It is planned to achieve the target by the end of March 2010. At this point responsibility for the database will move from the team brought into to run the data clean-up project to a "business as usual" team. Responsibility for maintaining the quality of this data will be held by Brent Community Services (NHS Brent's provider service). Mechanisms are in place to measure quality performance each month.

NHS Brent has been working with GPs during the data clean-up project. Discussions have taken place regarding the objectives, progress to date and quarterly improvement targets with over 40 practices in the borough. GPs are using a number of different techniques to deliver immunisation. Some methods which have proven successful include:

- Carrying out a monthly search on the practice clinical system to identify immunisations which are due or overdue.
- Telephoning parents/guardians to make appointments for due/overdue immunisation.
- Making the next appointment for immunisation during the visit for the last vaccination.

- Flagging due or overdue immunisations on the practice clinical system and follow up when the patient presents.
- Telephone or text reminder to parents/guardians 24 hours before a planned appointment.
- If a patient does not attend, follow up with a telephone call or a letter.
- Generally most practices find it easier to deliver primary immunisation at 2, 3 and 4 months as the child and parent present more frequently. For immunisation at 12 months, 13 months and over 3 years 4 months a more structured approach has proven to be most effective.

During 2009 the efforts have been focused on improving the quality of data to report childhood immunisation. The second phase of the programme will focus on individual practice performance which will be monitored and published monthly, with those practices whose performance is not improving, or whose rate of improvement is slow being supported by the PCT to develop improvement actions designed to achieve the 95% target. Any practice which requires an improvement plan will have regular meetings with the PCT to ensure that agreed actions are completed to plan.

How has immunisation performance improved during the data clean-up project?

The task group was interested to see how the data clean-up would affect immunisation rates in 2009/10. As mentioned above, the perception was that the true immunisation rates in Brent for all vaccinations would be higher than had been reported. This has turned out to be the case, as shown by the results in the table below.

Table 3 - Childhood Immunisation Rates for Brent in 2008/09

	Quarter 4 2008/09	Quarter 1 2009/10	Quarter 2 2009/10	Quarter 3 2009/10
Improvement Target		61%	65%	80%
Children aged 1 – Diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis, Hib	66%	58%	83.9%	86.9%
Children aged 2 – Pneumococcal vaccine (PCV) booster	45%	43%	73.2%	76.3%
Children aged 2 – Hib / Men C booster	46%	43%	77.5%	80.3%
Children aged 2 – Measles, mumps and rubella	55%	53%	76.2%	77.9%
Children aged 5 - Diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis booster	21%	21%	53.8%	62.1%
Children aged 5 - Measles, mumps and rubella booster	28%	28%	58%	58.9%

There are still issues that need to be addressed and performance is not where the PCT would want it to be on all vaccines. The MMR booster rate is below 60%. Herd immunity is achieved at 95% immunisation coverage so an outbreak is quite possible at any time. However, these improvements do show that the actual immunisation rates in Brent were higher than reported for 2008/09, and most encouragingly, there is an accurate baseline from which to proceed.

Maintaining an accurate database

NHS Brent has made great strides to improve the accuracy of its CIS database to ensure that there is an accurate match with the Exeter database. The task group believes that it is crucial that the CIS database is kept up to date so that the immunisation service is able to maintain performance standards and target groups or individuals to help improve vaccination rates (and more importantly, prevent illness in the future). The task group would be very concerned if funding was withdrawn from the service and data management became a reason for poor performance in the future.

Recommendation 1 - The task group recommends that NHS Brent ensures resources are available so that an accurate CIS database can be maintained beyond the life of the current data clean-up project.

Recommendation 2 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent reports back to the Health Select Committee in December 2010 on the information held on the CIS database and the Exeter database to ensure that there is at least a 95% match between the two.

Previous data clean ups have happened in Brent, but the ongoing maintenance needed has not happened, resulting in poor quality data within in a couple of years. Heart of Birmingham, seen as an exemplar PCT in this field, have continued to maintain their database following a data cleanup exercise and maintained high immunisation rates as a result. The Heart of Birmingham model is clear and straightforward. They send two letters to each parent, reminding them to get their child immunised at the correct times. If they don't make an appointment to do this, a professional will follow this up and if necessary will arrange a home visit. They can even provide vaccinations in the house if necessary, reducing the likelihood of the child not being vaccinated, and vaccinated at the correct time. The task group is pleased that NHS Brent is adopting a similar approach and hopes that efforts to work with GPs with poor immunisation rates leads to better communication with parents of children due for immunisations.

There is a 30% difference between the number of people living in Brent and the number of people registered with a GP in the borough. For immunisation purposes, NHS Brent is responsible for immunising all children registered with a GP in the borough. If GP lists are inaccurate (and a 30% discrepancy suggests they are) then this will affect published immunisation figures. Ensuring GPs keep up to date lists is crucial. NHS Brent is working with GPs to demonstrate the benefits of having an accurate list. The task group is concerned that there is a financial incentive to keep an inaccurate list and to receive £55 per year for each patient registered. The task group hopes an arrangement can be worked out that gives GPs a greater incentive to keep up to date patient lists in order to provide accurate immunisation performance data.

NHS Brent has a three-year rolling programme with all practices in Brent to clean up patient lists. Each patient in a practice is written to, to confirm whether they are still an active patient. Around 35% of patients won't reply, in which case the practice has to demonstrate they are still active by proving they have visited the GP in the recent past, through the use of repeat prescriptions, or through visits by other family members. If this can't be done, after 6 months they are removed from the list. Around 7% of patients are removed (some in error), but numbers usually build back up again. The PCT is looking at

ways to make this clean up more reliable so it has a better idea of actual patient numbers. The task group hopes that this work continues as it is of benefit to the immunisation service.

Increasing accountability for immunisation data and service performance

As stated above, GPs will play a crucial role, not only in delivering immunisations in their surgeries but also in accurately recording immunisation data and returning it to the PCT. In order to maintain good practice the service needs to be performance managed effectively.

In order to help GPs understand how other practices achieve higher results and to enable GPs to learn from top performing practices within the borough, immunisation performance information needs to be publically available and broken down by each vaccine in the childhood immunisation programme. This will also help to identify issues in localities. If one practice in a certain area is outperforming others, it will be possible to understand why this is.

Recommendation 3 - The task group recommends that immunisation results for each GP practice in Brent are published quarterly on the NHS Brent website to help improve accountability.

b). Reasons for non-immunisation

There are a number of reasons why immunisation levels are not at levels that provide herd immunity against disease. Dr Philip Minor, Head of Virology at the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control told the task group of three general issues that in his opinion, affect vaccination levels:

- The general public and some healthcare professionals may not fully understand what a vaccine is. They are not aware that vaccinations are essentially natural products rather than man-made chemicals. Vaccines are manufactured using the bacteria and viruses that cause the disease it will eventually prevent.
- People don't appreciate the effectiveness of vaccines because they prevent illness. When a person is ill, successful medical treatment has an obvious impact. It is easy to appreciate the benefit of medical intervention. This is not the case for vaccination. Explaining the benefits of preventative medicine is a challenge for health organisations, GPs and health visitors.
- There have been a number of high profile "scare stories", where vaccines have been wrongly linked to other illnesses. MMR is the most recent, but Pertussis was also been affected in the past. Public confidence in vaccines can take a long time to recover.

There are also reasons for low vaccine uptake that are specific to London. London has a highly mobile, transient population that makes it difficult to deliver an immunisation programme that requires accurate information and data in order to record patient's

immunisation status. There are also economic, social and cultural factors which have an impact on immunisation levels.³

Economic, social and cultural issues

Research has been carried out on the economic, social and cultural issues relating to immunisation take up in Brent. However, this research isn't particularly recent and so has to be considered with caution. There is also a great deal of anecdotal evidence, available from people working in the immunisation field in Brent on these issues.

The witnesses interviewed by the task group believed that ethnicity and culture did make a difference when it came to immunisation rates. The general view in Brent is that people from ethnic minorities are more likely to get their children immunised than those that are not. This is backed up by research carried out in 2005 by NHS Brent and Imperial College School of Medicine⁴, which looked at MMR take up within three ethnic groups in Brent – Indian, African Caribbean and Caucasian. The researchers found that MMR take up was as follows:

- Indian – 87.1%
- African Caribbean – 74.7%
- Caucasian – 57.5%

A further piece of work from 2006 gives further credence to the 2005 research. A health equity audit carried out by NHS Brent⁵ found that there were variations in MMR uptake across the borough in 2005/06 (the ward with highest uptake was Alperton, the ward with lowest uptake was Queen's Park). The research looked at the links between deprivation and ethnicity and MMR uptake. The main findings from the work were:

- The association between deprivation and MMR uptake was less apparent than in the previous health equity audits.
- Given that the overall MMR uptake rate for Brent as a whole had fallen in 2005/06, the apparent weakening of the association between deprivation and MMR uptake could have been due to worsening MMR uptake in Brent's less deprived wards, rather than improving uptake in the PCT's more deprived wards. This analysis matched anecdotal reports from primary care health professionals of poor levels of MMR acceptance amongst parents living in the more affluent wards in Brent.
- There was a positive association between the proportion of the population from Black and Asian backgrounds and MMR uptake. Wards that had a higher proportion of the population of Black or Asian ethnicity tend to have higher rates of MMR uptake.

³ NHS Brent Commissioning Strategy Plan 2008-2013

⁴ The Association of Ethnicity with MMR uptake in young children – presentation to The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, 18th April 2005 – Ruth Mixer, David Newsom and Konrad Jamrozik

⁵ MMR Vaccination Uptake Rates within Brent PCT - Health Equity Audit - June 2006

- It was acknowledged that the analysis of inequalities in ward-level MMR uptake rates by population ethnicity was crude because the 2001 Census data from which information about the ethnic profile of each ward is drawn would have been less accurate by 2005/06.

Although the evidence collected by the task group on this issue was anecdotal, everything that the task group heard supported the findings of the research. The managers of the children's centres interviewed by the task group felt that it was mainly white British or Irish people that had doubts about the safety of vaccinations, but particularly MMR. NHS Brent representatives agreed with this view.

Without accurate data making definitive statements on the links between ethnicity and vaccine take up isn't wise. One of the things that the task group would like to see now that the data bases have been improved is ethnicity monitoring so that an assessment of take up by different groups can be made. This will assist NHS Brent as it looks to target promotional campaigns at groups where take up is lower than it should be.

Recommendation 4 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent starts to use the accurate CIS database to consider where there is underperformance in the immunisation service. For example, are there geographical or ethnicity trends that can be used as the basis for an effective immunisation promotional campaign.

It should be added that research was carried out in 2009 led by a researcher from Imperial College in relation to the MMR catch-up social marketing campaign, but it has not been published yet. This will be a useful source of information for NHS Brent when it is available.

Is the MMR controversy still an issue for parents?

The task group can only base its views on whether the discredited research linking the MMR vaccine with autism is having an effect on MMR take up in Brent on the conversations it has had with people working in the immunisation service and with parents and child minders that took part in the review. This is not a representative group of people, but provides a snap shot of views.

The witnesses that the task group spoke to thought that there was still wariness amongst some parents to get their children vaccinated with the 3 in 1 MMR vaccine, because of concerns over the link with autism. How widespread this was is open to debate.

A number of the parents that the group spoke to were concerned about the link between MMR and autism, but nearly all had had their children immunised against MMR. Only one parent told the group that she did not want her son to receive the MMR vaccine because of the perceived link to autism, whilst another was originally of this view, but had changed her mind. Some parents had researched the issue on the internet, where it is not difficult to find a wealth of information in support of the MMR vaccination, but also plenty of websites that are opposed to vaccination. For a parent, reading contradictory information must add to their confusion. Therefore it is important that health organisations provide clear and consistent messages to parents on the MMR vaccine – that it is safe and has no links to autism.

It should be noted that in early February 2010 the General Medical Council decided that Dr Andrew Wakefield had acted dishonestly and irresponsibly when carrying out his research which he claimed linked the MMR vaccine with autism. The Lancet, the medical journal which originally published his research has accepted that the claims made by Dr Wakefield and his colleagues were false and has issued a full retraction of the paper. The research that caused the MMR controversy has been thoroughly discredited and yet it has taken 12 years since the publication of the original paper to reach this stage. The task group hopes that this puts a line under the affair and public confidence can be restored in the MMR vaccine.

Vaccine safety

As an alternative to the 3 in 1 MMR vaccine, the task group was told of parents who had paid to have their children vaccinated with individual measles, mumps and rubella vaccinations. These are available privately in the UK but are not endorsed by the Department of Health. The World Health Organisation also advocates the use of the combined MMR vaccination rather than single vaccinations. There are concerns with the single measles, mumps and rubella vaccines as they are not licensed or controlled in the UK. As well as having question over their production, their storage and use is unregulated. Nobody that the task group spoke to recommended individual vaccines as an alternative to the combined MMR vaccination.

There are concerns that the combinations of three and five vaccines in one (namely MMR and DTaP/IPV/Hib) can overwhelm the immune system. The task group heard evidence from a number of witnesses confirming that this is not the case. The immune system of a child will not be compromised by a vaccination. People come into contact with thousands of viruses and bacteria each day without realising it. There has also been much less concern about DTaP/IPV/Hib than MMR, even though it contains a greater combination of vaccines. The task group believes that on the basis of the evidence it has heard and read that vaccines such as MMR are completely safe in any reasonable sense of the word. The challenge is for health organisations to get this message to people starting with health care professionals.

There is one final point on the MMR vaccination that the task group wishes to highlight. Ensuring children have the MMR booster aged five is important as this isn't needed just to boost herd immunity. It is needed to ensure the child is fully immunised against measles, mumps and rubella and without it a child could still be susceptible to these diseases.

Recommendation 5 – The task group recommends that all staff employed by NHS Brent are given an overview of the benefits of vaccination as part of their induction programme. This should include information on childhood vaccinations and the flu vaccination for both vulnerable adults and children. Training should be given to medical and non-medical staff working in frontline positions, and should be extended to GP receptionists.

Recommendation 6 – The task group recommends that as part of the induction training on immunisations, it is made clear to NHS Brent staff and employees at GP surgeries that there is no link between the MMR vaccine and autism so that

they are able to communicate this message to members of the public, should they be asked about this subject.

Raising awareness

Ensuring systems are in place to deliver an effective immunisation service is only part of the solution to improve vaccination rates. NHS Brent may have to issue different advice, via different mediums to target specific groups of people to ensure children are vaccinated. While data quality has been poor the PCT has been reluctant to commit more money to publicity campaigns because of the poor response to the previous campaign and because the reasons for low immunisation levels are not fully known.

£80,000 was spent on the MMR social marketing campaign and catch up programme in the autumn of 2008, with no obvious increase in the number of children immunised. NHS Brent is unable to evaluate the success of the campaign because they do not have accurate before and after data to compare MMR uptake. There is currently a national study being done which is assessing the most appropriate communication methods to increase vaccine take up. NHS Brent wants to see the results of this research before commissioning another campaign.

Ensuring parents have accurate and understandable information on immunisations is a considerable challenge and one that was raised in the task group's discussions with parents at children's centres. The task group was told that following a measles outbreak in Brent in 2008, only two parents attended an MMR information event. That said, while the PCT has been working with inaccurate immunisation data there have been too many gaps and inaccuracies in the information to plan an effective, targeted campaign.

The importance of raising awareness of vaccinations and their benefits cannot be overstated. As Andrew J Hall, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation says in the introduction to the Department of Health Immunisation of Infectious Diseases guidance⁶ "following the ill-founded MMR scare, it has become even more important for those working in the field to be able to communicate to parents the benefits of vaccination, the known side effects of vaccines and the safety and efficacy of vaccines to allay fears".

Recommendation 7 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent carries out a childhood immunisation promotion campaign once an analysis of the CIS database has been completed and more is known about the children who have not had the vaccines they need. A campaign could be tied into vaccination clinics at children's centres (see recommendation 8 below).

c). Swine Flu

The task group considered NHS Brent's response to the swine flu pandemic and how it implemented the swine flu vaccination programme. Swine flu has been an ongoing issue

⁶ Immunisation against Infectious Diseases (The Green Book) – Department of Health. 2006

throughout the duration of the review and so the task group felt that it had to be considered within this work.

Flu vaccines are developed each year to respond to seasonal flu using well established manufacturing processes. The swine flu vaccine was available within months of the outbreak because the same manufacturing process used to produce seasonal flu vaccines were used to produce the swine flu vaccine, with some modifications to take into account the different strain of flu.

Ensuring a vaccine was quickly available against swine flu was helped by the considerable preparation that had been made for avian flu (H5N1). The swine flu vaccine was safety tested in the same way as seasonal influenza vaccines using comprehensive vaccine testing processes. Once any flu vaccine has been licensed (including swine flu) it is reviewed and monitored.

The task group was impressed with the work that NHS Brent did to prepare for swine flu. Members of the task group took the opportunity to attend a swine flu public event during the course of the review, one of a number of events run by NHS Brent for community groups, third sector organisations and members of the public to educate them on swine flu. Information on the swine flu vaccine was available at this event. Sixty people attended the first swine flu public meeting in September 2009, although only 12 people were at the event attended by members of the task group.

Other steps taken by NHS Brent to prepare for swine flu included:

- The Health Promotion Department putting in place a swine flu awareness programme for health staff in Brent. 600 people attended training events at an early stage in the outbreak, ahead of most other health organisations and public sector bodies.
- A swine flu vaccination programme was implemented in Brent in line with Department of Health guidelines. The vaccine was available in Brent by the end of October 2009.
- Health staff were offered the winter flu vaccine and the swine flu vaccine at the same time, but there was no obligation for staff to have either.
- The manager and members of a nursing unit where there had been a particularly good uptake of swine flu vaccine were quoted giving positive messages about the vaccine in a feature on the NHS Brent intranet.
- A nurse was employed to vaccinate vulnerable children attending special schools in the borough; this was a very successful initiative. Further to this all GPs were informed of the names of vulnerable children on their lists who should be offered swine and seasonal flu vaccination. It is planned to repeat this information each autumn to remind GPs of children who attend these schools and also those who are on the caseload of the Community Children's Nurses.
- The District Nurses carried out a successful campaign to vaccinate all housebound patients registered with Brent GPs.
- On a general issue linked to swine flu, NHS Brent recruited 38 health trainers to provide advice to people in their communities on a range of health issues, and vaccination was added to this programme. The health trainers are a good way of spreading health messages and something NHS Brent is keen to use.

It is of concern to the task group that there has been relatively low take up of the swine flu vaccine by health service staff (this doesn't just apply to NHS Brent, but is a national issue). Although the number of swine flu cases has reduced significantly since peaks in July and October 2009, the general attitude towards swine flu and flu vaccines is a worry. If NHS Brent is to convince people to have the vaccine they need (this includes all vaccines, not just flu vaccination) then the task group believes it is crucial that staff play their part in this and ensure they are vaccinated themselves. Negative stories in the press about low vaccine take up amongst healthcare staff can only contribute to a negative perception of vaccination amongst the wider population.

When the task group was looking at this issue (in October 2009) NHS Brent felt it was unlikely to achieve its original 90% swine flu vaccination target. This was based on seasonal flu vaccine uptake, which is usually much lower than this. The psychology of vaccination needs to be changed, so that people realise they are benefiting themselves and others by having vaccines such as swine flu. The task group also believes that efforts should be made to promote the benefits of vaccination to health service staff so that a greater proportion take up the vaccines themselves and can talk knowledgeably about them to members of the public (see recommendation 5 above).

d). Local authority involvement in childhood immunisation

Although NHS Brent is responsible for the delivery of the childhood vaccination programme it is acknowledged that the local authority should be assisting where possible to improve the health and well being of young people in Brent. This includes helping to facilitate the delivery of vaccinations. The most obvious way of doing this is via schools and children's centres. Already there is good work going on in children's centres, where health visitors work with parents and carers on improving their children's health. But any arrangements in place have been set up locally and there isn't a systematic process for using children's centres or schools to promote and deliver vaccinations.

Children's Centres

The task group believes that the needs of children are most important and should not be compromised by the local authority / NHS split. If children's centres are to be at the centre of communities then they should be offering a holistic service, including a range of health services such as childhood immunisation. The two children's centre managers that the task group spoke to were both supportive of this and would welcome and support vaccination services that were provided from their children's centres. Currently health visiting arrangements at the children's centres are arranged locally – there isn't a contract or service level agreement in place to provide these services across the borough.

Brent will eventually have 20 children's centres. It would be unrealistic to expect each children's centre to offer regular vaccination clinics, there isn't the staff or resources to do this. But the task group hopes that a vaccination rota can be developed, with a vaccination clinic held at every children's centre once a year. A rota between centres should be devised which takes the clinics around the borough, but alternating between localities in turn. It need to make use of locality networks, so that if a child from one centre needs a vaccination they could visit another children's centre to receive the

vaccine if the clinic is still some way off at their usual children's centre. The clinics would need to be staffed by health visitors or GPs, depending on who is to deliver the vaccinations. The children's centres should promote the vaccination clinics, providing materials and information to parents on the services available and, crucially, the benefits of the vaccination.

NHS Brent would need to make sure resources were in place to enable vaccination clinics to happen at children's centres regularly (if there are 20 children's centres in Brent and the aim was for each centre to hold one clinic a year, then there would need to be a clinic every 2 and a half weeks). This could be problematic – there is a shortage of health visitors in the borough for example, which could hamper this idea. However, the task group believes that there would be demand for vaccinations at children's centres and a chance to vaccinate children opportunistically if vaccination clinics were in place. One thing that will be of help is clean data, so that parents in the area can be contacted about the vaccination clinics, particularly if their child has missed scheduled immunisations. The task group also wishes to clarify that it would want to see immunisation clinics established in addition to current health visitor clinics at children's centres, and not as an alternative to these.

Recommendation 8 – The task group recommends that vaccination clinics are trialled at five children's centres in Brent (one in each locality) to assess demand and popularity. One of the trials should be carried out at the weekend to see if there is demand for services outside core hours. As well as providing immunisations, health visitors should be available at the clinics to speak to parents about vaccinations and answer any questions that they have. The clinics could be timed to take place during a vaccination campaign (see recommendation 7 above).

Some children's centres collect data on children's immunisation status. In order to assist NHS Brent, it would be helpful if this information could be passed to health visitors once a family registers at a children's centre so if there is an issue with immunisation the health visitor can address this. The task group would like this to become standard at children's centres in Brent, assuming sharing information in this way doesn't contravene data protection rules.

Recommendation 9 – The task group recommends that children's centres collect information on the immunisation status of each child that it registers. This information should be passed to a health visitor for follow up with the parents if the child has not received the vaccinations in the childhood immunisation programme.

Schools

In many respects, schools provide a greater opportunity to engage with young people and their parents than children's centres. Attendance at children's centres is voluntary. However, the vast majority of children attend school so there is potential to reach a greater number of young people in the immunisation programme.

Head teachers have an important role to play, as the most influential member of staff within schools. Ensuring they are properly briefed on the benefits of immunisation would be very helpful. The task group understands that head teachers would not wish to

interfere in decisions taken by parents, such as whether their child should be immunised. However, if a parent was to speak to a head teacher (or a teacher for that matter) and asked for advice on immunisation then it is important they are briefed on the facts and can talk about these issues. At the very least, the task group hopes that school staff can signpost parents to the accurate information on immunisation. Information on vaccination could be made available in schools and sent to parents of children when they start at school. Again, the NHS should be the organisation to provide this information. Schools should act as a link between the health service and parents.

Schools could help to facilitate the collection of data on immunisation status and subsequent referral to the school nursing service for follow up. The task group would like a question to be asked on a child's immunisation status when the child's parents fill out a school admission form (this is done after the child has been offered a place at school and any disclosure of the child's immunisation status would be voluntary). If this information was collected prior to the child starting school, it could be passed to the school nurse for follow up with the parent (the data should also be added to the CIS database). The onus would still be on the NHS to ensure the child received any outstanding vaccinations. The task group also believes that in administration terms, this will be relatively simple to implement and shouldn't create an additional burden on schools. The task group would like Brent to aspire to be in a position where the immunisation status of all children in the borough was known by the time the child starts school.

Of course, good intentions require people to be in post and willing to work together to make this happen. The task group has been told that there is a shortage of school nurses (and health visitors) in Brent. The recruitment of a full complement of staff is crucial in order for school nurses to be able to give immunisation the attention it deserves. At the very least the task group would like each primary school and secondary school in Brent to have a named school nurse in place who can take forward immunisation work. Ideally school nurses would be allocated a cluster of schools in the same locality to make best use of scarce resources.

Recommendation 10 – The task group recommends that each school in Brent has a member of staff (such as a school nurse) who is able to advise parents and teachers on the benefits of immunisation. This member of staff should be invited to attend NHS Brent immunisation training to ensure their knowledge is kept up to date.

Recommendation 11 – The task group recommends that teachers in Brent are given an opportunity to attend immunisation training by NHS Brent so that they are better placed to advise parents on immunisation and the diseases that vaccines work to prevent.

Recommendation 12 – The task group recommends that parents are asked to provide information on their children's immunisation status when they fill out their school admission form. This information would be disclosed on a voluntary basis and passed to the school nurse for follow up with the parent if necessary.

e). Feedback from parents, carers and child minders

The task group visited two children's centres during the course of the review to speak to parents about their views on childhood immunisation. The group visited Harmony Children's Centre and Three Trees Children's Centre on the 4th December 2009. The group also went back to Harmony Children's Centre on the 3rd February 2010 to speak to more parents, as on the first visit to the centre there was a childminders session rather than a parent's session taking place.

The main issues raised at the visits are set out in full in appendix 1. Although the views of parents and childminders need to be seen in context – this isn't a representative sample of parents in Brent, only the views of a small number of mothers (there were no fathers present when the task group visited the children's centres), it is useful to know how people feel about the vaccination programme for children and the swine flu vaccine. In summary, the main issues parents reported were:

- Advice provided by GPs and health visitors on vaccinations needs to be consistent and clear.
- Parents need to be more aware of the potential consequences of children not receiving vaccinations
- Health visitors are usually very busy and it can be difficult to get an appointment with them at the children's centres . Because of this using their time to discuss immunisations is very difficult.
- Clear advice from health professionals that there is no link between MMR and autism would be appreciated
- Conflicting information in the media and health services about whether children should have the vaccine or not meant that a number of the parents were confused as to what was best for their child.
- The parents felt that informal conversations around immunisation in children's centres would be really useful. If a health professional was present they would be able to ask questions about vaccines to allay any fears that they have

f). Other findings

Out of hours vaccination

The task group is keen that vaccination services are as accessible as possible. Opportunistic vaccination, delivered from sites such as children's centres or possibly schools, would help. Some of the witnesses spoken to by the task group would support the idea of vaccination clinics being open on the weekend, run from GP led health centres or polyclinics (which are open for 12 hours a day, seven days a week already). If parents are working during the week and unable to get their child to a GP for vaccination, these additional services could be very useful. Indeed, parents raised this as an issue at the children's centres. The task group would encourage the PCT to look at ways weekend vaccination services could be developed and promoted to parents so they are aware of the options available to them (see recommendation 8 above).

Health visitors

There have been issues with the health visiting service since NHS Brent went through turnaround, when the numbers of health visitors was reduced. The task group was informed that health visitors' priority has been on safeguarding children and not on immunisation simply because of the need to prioritise workloads. There are plans in place to recruit 20 more health visitors but members have been told that it is a demoralised service and commissioners haven't received good responses from Brent Community Services when problems have been raised. Data collection problems that had been attributed in part to the health visitors' service should be rectified by the move to electronic data reporting by GPs. It should be noted that despite efforts, the task group was not able to set up a meeting with the health visitors service.

HPV Vaccine

At the beginning of the task group's work, members were given information on vaccination performance by NHS Brent (see table 1 above). The HPV vaccine was performing above target, at 92% and so the task group did not focus on it during the course of the review. However, NHS Brent has looked again at HPV performance and now reports that the vaccine rate is around 69%. HPV requires three vaccinations, and there has been a significant fall in the number of Year 8 girls receiving the 1st dose of the vaccine compared to the same time last year. The reasons for this are unclear, but it is thought that it is linked to the death of a girl in 2009 who died shortly after receiving the vaccine, although it later emerged that she had underlying health problems and that the vaccine was not a contributing factor in her death.

The increase in the number of girls refusing the vaccine, or not returning consent forms at all is of concern to NHS Brent and to the task group. NHS Brent is keen to work with secondary schools on this issue and has asked that the task group include a recommendation to this effect. The task group believes that cooperation between the NHS and schools is crucial on this issue and is keen that performance in this area recovers quickly. NHS Brent also intends to look at the way that the HPV vaccine programme is organised so that all doses are delivered in an efficient way.

Recommendation 13 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent and the council's Children and Families Department work with secondary schools in Brent to promote the benefits of the HPV vaccine to pupils and their parents in order to increase the vaccination rate. Work needs to include information on the vaccines safety, accessing the vaccine and organising the way the vaccine is delivered so that opportunities to complete the course of vaccine aren't missed. Young people have an important role in this and groups such as the Youth Parliament should be approached to engage young people directly on this issue.

Conclusions

The task group is encouraged by the efforts that NHS Brent have made to improve the immunisation service. It was clear from the interviews with staff that there is a genuine commitment from the organisation to improve immunisation rates in the borough and stop the spread of diseases that are clearly preventable. The data clean-up project has

been a significant undertaking which gives Brent every chance of increasing the immunisation rate. As Heart of Birmingham have shown, clean, accurate data is crucial if targeted work is to be done to improve immunisation rates. Maintaining accurate data now becomes of paramount importance and is something the Health Select Committee should follow up in their 2010/11 work programme.

Although NHS Brent is responsible for delivering the childhood immunisation programme in Brent, the task group believes that a partnership approach with children's centres and schools will be beneficial and ensure greater coverage. Children's centres are hubs within their communities and already provide a wide range of services, including health services. Immunisation clinics would be a valuable addition to these services. Schools are possibly better placed than children's centres to contribute to the immunisation programme. Whilst delivery of vaccination services remains the responsibility of the NHS, the task group hopes that schools can help facilitate this for any children who haven't had their vaccinations by the time they reach school age.

Appendix 1 – Feedback from children’s centre visits

Subject	Feedback from Parents
<p>Information</p>	<p>There was good awareness of the vaccinations that children are supposed to have. All of the parents met by the task group said they had a red immunisation book for their child.</p> <p>Advice provided by GPs and health visitors needs to be consistent and clear. A number of parents were confused about the benefits of vaccination, the consequences of not having their child vaccinated and the potential side effects of a vaccination. This needs to be communicated more clearly with parents.</p> <p>Peer support is important. All parents go through similar experiences when it comes to vaccination and can offer advice to other parents. This could be facilitated by a health visitor at the children’s centre. Informal discussion groups would be a good development.</p> <p>Parents need to be more aware of the potential consequences of children not receiving vaccinations. People in Britain aren’t familiar with the diseases they prevent. Healthcare professionals should be able to describe the consequences of catching a disease that can be vaccinated against, such as measles or polio etc.</p>
<p>Access to services</p>	<p>Some parents do not always find it easy to access immunisation clinics or day time appointments with their GP, especially if they work full time. Parents suggested that vaccine clinics could be run in the evening or on weekends. There was enthusiasm for weekend clinics to improve access.</p> <p>It can be difficult to get an appointment at popular baby clinics (Church End Medical Centre was cited as an example). Vaccination clinics at children’s centres run by health visitors would be a good alternative. A catch up clinic would also be useful, so parents could make sure their children were up to date on their vaccinations if they had missed a vaccine.</p> <p>Health visitors are very busy and it is difficult to get an appointment with them at the children’s centres. They have so much to do, so using their time to discuss immunisations is very difficult. A separate immunisation information session at the children’s centre would be appreciated. It would give parents an opportunity to discuss their concerns, especially first time parents.</p>
<p>Views on vaccines</p>	<p>Parents had strong views on a number of vaccines, but particularly MMR and swine flu. One of the mothers that the task group met had decided that her child would not have the MMR because of fears they would develop autism as a result. Other parents had given the issue serious consideration before deciding to get the MMR for their child.</p>

	<p>Clear advice from health professionals that there is no link between MMR and autism would be appreciated. This is not always easy to obtain because of difficulties getting appointments.</p> <p>The fact that most parents had already had their child vaccinated, or would do when they were old enough was encouraging to the task group.</p>
Swine flu	<p>Parents were worried about the swine flu vaccine and whether their child needed to have it. Information given to parents had been mixed. Some parents had been written to by their GP advising them that their child should have the swine flu vaccine. However, there was no information on the benefits of the vaccine, how it works or the possible side effects, with these letters. Other parents had been told their child didn't need the vaccine. Some parents had not been contacted at all. Inconsistency in approach was an issue.</p> <p>Conflicting information in the media about whether children should have the vaccine or not meant that a number of the parents were confused as to what was best for their child.</p> <p>One mother reported that her GP had given her comprehensive information on the swine flu vaccine, but had been put off giving her child the vaccine because a friend had been ill for some time after receiving it. All reported that basic information on what the flu virus is, how it works, what the vaccine does, what the side effects are would be really useful when they are contacted by GPs, especially by letter.</p> <p>Some parents had worries about the long term impact of the swine vaccine on their child. They were unsure how their child would be affected in the future and were concerned it had been rushed through safety checks. Some mothers had declined the vaccine for their child because of their worries.</p>
What would help parents?	<p>The parents felt that informal conversations around immunisation in children's centres would be really useful. If a health professional was present they would be able to ask questions about vaccines to allay any fears that they have. First time mothers would also be able to learn from other mothers who have been through similar experiences. Discussion groups would be particularly beneficial for mothers who do not speak English as a first language and perhaps cannot read English at all.</p> <p>Parents reported that any immunisation campaign should sign post parents to websites where they can look up information on immunisations for themselves. Accurate information is crucial. Parents often want to find out more about their child's health for themselves, but sometimes don't know where to go to get information that is reliable.</p>

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Services for Women in and Exiting Prostitution

An Overview and Scrutiny Task Group Report

January 2010

Membership

Councillor Ann John (OBE) Chair
Councillor David Clues
Councillor Kanta Mistry

Andy Brown
DCI Kevin Concannon
Christine Topping

Index

Chair’s Foreword by Councillor Ann John (OBE).....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Recommendations.....	5
Introduction – Scope of the task group.....	7
Task Group Membership.....	9
Methodology.....	9
Policy Context	
Local.....	11
National.....	11
Key Findings	
The scale a nature of prostitution in Brent.....	13
The Impact of a major sporting arena.....	16
Tackling sex industry adverts in Brent.....	18
Working in partnership to provide services for women in.....	20
and exiting prostitution in Brent	

Chair's Foreword

This task group was established to investigate the scale and nature of prostitution in Brent, the impact that a major sporting arena would have on the sex trade and what could be done to help those involved in it or otherwise affected by it.

I believe that Brent Council and its partners have a civic duty to tackle the sex trade and thus have a positive impact on those whose lives have been blighted by it.

At the outset, I would like to thank my fellow councillors David Clues and Kanta Mistry and the representatives of partner agencies

including Andy Brown the Head of Substance Misuse at Brent Primary Care Trust and DCI Kevin Concannon and Christine Topping from Brent Police who attended our meetings as well as giving evidence.

I would also like to thank those who also gave evidence notably Helen Atkins of the Eaves *POPPY Project*, David Thrale, Brent's Director of Environmental Health, Helen Hepburn from *Make a Change Ipswich*, DCI Tim Beach of Suffolk Constabulary, DCI Kevin Hyland of the Metropolitan Police Clubs and Vice, David Blake the publishing director of Archant London and Alice Peycke the Partnership Co-ordinator of *Safe Exit* at Toynbee Hall.

I volunteered to chair this task group but didn't fully appreciate how involved I would become and what a personal journey that would entail. I had previously seen the problem primarily as a women's issue but I now believe it to be an issue which all of us should take more seriously.

In exploring the subject my fellow task group members and I have often been surprised, shocked and sometimes deeply upset by some of the evidence we have heard, particularly in relation to the impact the sex trade has on those involved. We knew from the beginning that our task group could not solve the problems of exploitation associated with prostitution and its links to organised crime but we do believe that Brent Council working with its partners can have a positive impact.

Too often society sees prostitution as something which will always be with us and which we can do nothing to tackle. I believe that attitude has led to widespread exploitation of some of our most vulnerable people, including children, the trafficking of fellow human beings and the violence which is endemic within the sex trade.

I hope this report will be a valuable contribution to changing attitudes and changing lives.

Councillor Ann John (OBE)



Executive Summary

This task group was set up following the publication of Eaves POPPY Project's¹ report *Big Brothel – A survey of the off-street sex industry in London* in August 2008 which highlighted the scale and nature of the brothel based sex industry in London. When Eaves POPPY Project looked at the number of adverts for brothels in local newspapers, Brent was identified as having the second highest number of adverts. This does not necessarily mean that the borough has the second highest number of brothels. However, as the findings were potentially significant for Brent the task group was charged with finding out the scale and nature of prostitution in Brent and what the council and partners could do.

The task group's key findings are as follows:

The Scale and Nature of Prostitution in Brent

The task group received evidence from Eaves POPPY Project, Brent police, NHS Brent and CO14 Clubs and Vice. We found that there is both on street and off street (indoor) prostitution in Brent. There are large gaps in intelligence particularly relating to off street prostitution, however the police and Eaves POPPY Project estimating between 54 and 64 brothels in Brent at any one time. The task group would like to see tackling prostitution as a higher and more co-ordinated priority and better guidance and training provided to police officers would deal with women affected by prostitution.

The Impact of a Major Sporting Arena

The task group looked at evidence relating to major international sporting events including the Olympics and World Cup. We also held discussion with CO14 Clubs and Vice and Safe Exit one of the organisations working with the five Olympic boroughs to develop a joint strategy relating to prostitution. The task group would like to ensure that Brent Council and partners continues working with these organisations to reduce the opportunities for trafficking, organised crime and prostitution associated with major sporting events. We would also like Brent Council and partners to lobby the Mayor of London to ensure that a pan London prostitution strategy is developed.

Tackling Sex industry Adverts in Brent

The Eaves POPPY Project research identified Brent has having the second highest number of adverts for brothels in London, 59. The government's publication '*Women Not for Sale*' quoted research that suggested that adverts in local newspapers are the most commonly used method used by men to make contact with women for sexual purposes. The task group was not only concerned with the number of adverts but also the wording used eg 'young',

¹ The POPPY Project provides accommodation and support for women trafficked into the UK for the purposes of sexual exploitation. www.eaves4women.co.uk/POPPY_Project/POPPY_Project.php

'new' and 'exotic' along with references to nationality or ethnicity. We talked to the Publishing Director who told us that sex industry related advertising accounts for about 10% of their income. We also found that although guidelines were available to their staff who take the adverts, these were not always followed. The task group heard a variety of different views about these adverts and ideally would like to see these adverts banned from local newspapers and would therefore add our voice to the national campaign. Meanwhile we would like the council and partners to work with local news papers to ensure they follow their own guidelines and carry a prevention and deterrent advert next to sex industry adverts.

Working in Partnership to Provide services for Women In or Exiting Prostitution

The task group talked to a number of organisations to gain a clear picture of the range of services women in or exiting prostitution would require. The predominant message we got was that the needs of this group of women were complex. However the main services could be identified as:

- Emergency medical treatment
- Sexual health
- Mental health
- Drugs and alcohol
- Immigration and asylum
- Supported housing
- Legal advice and advocacy
- Financial assistance
- Training, education and employment

We talked to Safe Exit at Toynebee Hall and Make a Change Ipswich to find out more about how their partnerships developed and worked. The task group was impressed by this approach and would like to see Brent council and partners develop a partnership approach to this issue.

Recommendations

1. That the Brent police make the tackling of prostitution in Brent a higher and more co-ordinated priority.
2. That Brent Police:
 - Enhance the awareness of Brent police officers and staff about the issues faced by women involved in prostitution and those who have been potentially trafficked.
 - Provide appropriate training to selected police staff around how to support and deal with women affected by these issues. (This is to include for example advice about tactical options in relation to dealing with a report of a local brothel).
 - Provide clear guidance as to partner staff and the public about how to report a crime against a woman affected by these issues and/or other concerns.
3. That Brent Council and partners, via the Crime Prevention Strategy Group, continue the work the task group has started in relation to the Olympics with the CO14, Safe Exit and other Olympic boroughs to reduce the opportunities for organised crime, trafficking and prostitution associated with major sporting events.
4. That the council and partners lobby the Mayor of London to ensure a pan London strategy / approach is developed prior to the Olympics
5. That the council and partners continue the task group's work and keep lines of communication open with the press to influence them to keep to their own guidelines and ensure that adverts relating to the sex industry do not include, for example:
 - Photographs
 - Information on ethnicity
 - Information on age
6. That local newspaper groups operating in Brent agree to carry a prevention and deterrent advert next to sex industry related adverts, the contents of which will be agreed by partners but will include useful contact numbers.
- 7 That the task group's report and the issues it raises are included in an article in Brent Magazine.
8. That it is a priority for all front line local authority and partner staff to remove cards advertising sex services from public areas.
9. That a Partnership Strategy on prostitution is produced which includes the development of services to help women exit.
10. That a Stakeholder Event is held to bring together all relevant agencies in the borough to help develop the Partnership Strategy.

- 11. That a Partnership Group be set up to take this work forward. This should be the responsibility of the Crime Prevention Strategy Group and include some of the task group membership to ensure continuity of developing expertise. The work of the group should include:**
 - **Identifying resources available to provide services and assistance for women exiting prostitution**
 - **Ensuring all relevant agencies know how to identify and respond to women in need of assistance.**
 - **Continue to gather and examine evidence about the scale and nature of prostitution in Brent**
 - **Develop and update a list of policy and tactical leads from partner organisations, and a map of services and pathways available to women within Brent and nationally**
- 12. That NHS Brent develops a treatment and care pathway for those women who are involved in or want to exit prostitution.**
- 13. That action against landlords is taken when a brothel is identified - eg letter to tell them they are breaking the law, and checks against council tax**

1. Introduction – Scope of the task groups work

This task group was set up following the publication of Eaves POPPY Project's² report *Big Brothel – A survey of the off-street sex industry in London* in August 2008 which highlighted the scale and nature of the brothel based sex industry in London. Their research, which was limited to adverts in local papers, identified approximately 1500 brothels in London and highlighted the prevalence of brothels in every part of London. The report also makes the link between off street prostitution and trafficked women. It suggests that the widespread availability of high risk services, such as sex without a condom, at an 'incredibly' low cost, points to a saturated market where women lack control, choice or economic alternatives.

When Eaves POPPY Project looked at the number of adverts for brothels in local newspapers, Brent was identified as having the second highest number of adverts. This does not necessarily mean that the borough has the second highest number of brothels. However, the number and nature of those adverts is of concern, particularly as in May 2008 the Newspaper Society issued guidelines on restricting the nature and publication of classified advertisement offering commercial sex acts.

These findings were potentially significant for Brent and rather than dismiss or ignore the report, we decided to tackle this issue head on. We wanted to find out if we really have got a problem in Brent and if so what can be done about it. We also wanted to find out what the impact of a major sporting arena would have on the sex trade in Brent.

The issue was raised at the Crime Preventions Strategy Group by the lead member for Crime Prevention and Public Safety, the partners involved expressed concern about the findings of Eaves POPPY Project, particularly the links made between trafficked women and brothels, and have agreed to support a review set up by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Members of the task group have undertaken this piece of work because we believe that this is the right thing to do for our local communities and for a vulnerable group of women. At the start of our work we agreed that this review was not about taking a moral stance about prostitution. However, as we have learnt more about the impact of this 'industry' on the lives of many of the women involved our views have moved on. Two of the most disturbing figures we have seen are firstly that the mortality rate for women in prostitution in London is twelve times higher than the national average³ mortality rate. Secondly, although less than 1% of children in this country are looked after by the state, 42% of young women involved in prostitution have been in local authority care at some point⁴.

There is a huge debate about whether some women chose to become prostitutes and what level of choice is really available to them. There are a myriad of different views and research available on this issue and these largely correlate to the philosophical, political or ideological stand point of the author. We do not intend to rehearse those arguments in this report, but will comment that we do believe that real choice is closely linked to life chances, ability to control your life, mental health and addiction. Recommendations in this report are not aimed

² The POPPY Project provides accommodation and support for women trafficked into the UK for the purposes of sexual exploitation. www.eaves4women.co.uk/POPPY_Project/POPPY_Project.php

³ Paying the Price, Home Office

⁴ Centre for Social Justice, DFES Children looked after in England 2005-2006

at women who work as prostitutes through real choice, have control over their life, have control over who they see and keep the money they earn. Our concern is with those women who find themselves involved in the sex trade through coercion, whether physical or emotional, addiction to drugs and alcohol, economic circumstances and lack of education, skills and opportunity. The following is an extract from the blog of Rebecca, a survivor of prostitution:

“How many voices and writings of exited prostituted women will it take until prostitution is viewed as a human rights issue.....What is ‘choice’ when it comes to being prostituted?”

- A free choice is not being prostituted in order to pay rent, to afford to care for your children.
- A free choice is not being on the receiving end of childhood abuse, whether sexual, neglect or physical.
- A free choice is not being brainwashed by the porn culture to believe that prostitution is glamorous and an easy way to make a pile of money.
- A free choice would mean the prostituted woman or girl could turn away men if they had bad feelings about them without any consequences.
- A free choice would be not being pushed by a pimp, manager or boyfriend to “just try it”.
- A free choice would mean freedom of movement and knowledge of the world outside prostitution.
- A free choice would mean there would be no need to use drink or drugs to blank out the reality.

We realise that the problems related to prostitution and its links to organised crime and trafficking cannot be solved by Brent Council and its partners alone, but we believe that by working together we can have an impact on the lives of some of the women who live or pass through Brent whose lives have been blighted by their involvement in this industry.

The scope of the review highlights the two main ways of tackling prostitution: reduce the supply of people in prostitution, and reduce the demand for their services.

Reducing Supply

Reducing supply relies on tackling trafficking, preventing women entering prostitution through other avenues and supporting women to exit prostitution.

Women involved in prostitution face a number of problems that impact on their health and life chances. These include:

- Violence
- Substance dependencies
- High risk to sexual health,
- Wider health issues including mental health, and
- Lack of education and skills
- Marginalisation / social vulnerabilities / stigma

Key findings from pilots funded by the Government's Crime Reduction Programme highlighted that enforcement alone merely displaces prostitution and support services are needed to have any impact in helping women.

Finding routes out of prostitution can be a difficult and lengthy process, particularly given the disparate and complex needs of the women involved. Eaves POPPY Project estimate that it can take up to seven years or longer for women to completely exit prostitution. This is compounded when women have been trafficked or are economic migrants with no recourse to public funds and therefore cannot access most public services.

Reducing Demand

Apart from the measures introduced in the Policing & Crime Act 2009 to outlaw paying for sex with someone who is controlled for gain which is discussed later in this report, one way of reducing demand for the service offered from brothels is to reduce the information available on how to access them. As Eaves POPPY Project report highlighted the high levels of adverts for brothels in our local press, it is proposed that this review will investigate this issue and see how the number of adverts for brothels and prostitutes in Brent can be reduced.

The Task Groups key findings are focussed on the following areas:

- The scale and nature of prostitution in Brent
- The impact of a Major Sporting Arena
- Tackling local advertising for sex services in Brent
- Working in partnership to provide services for women in exiting prostitution in Brent

2. Task Group Membership

Councillor Ann John OBE (Chair)

Councillor David Clues

Councillor Kanta Mistry

Andy Brown – Head of Substance Misuse NHS Brent

DCI Kevin Concannon – Met Police Brent

Christine Topping – Violence Against the Person Focus Desk Manager, Brent

Policy support was provided by Jacqueline Casson, Senior Policy Officer, Policy & Regeneration.

3. Methodology

In order to complete the work identified in the scope, and produce a set of recommendations that will start to tackle some of the issues related to prostitution in Brent and the needs of women who wish to exit, the task group gathered evidence from a wide range of sources. These were:

- Helen Atkins – Eaves R&D POPPY Project on prostitution and trafficking with a focus on the London Borough of Brent
- David Thrale – Director of Environmental Health on the licensing of massage parlours
- Andy Brown – Head of Substance Misuse, NHS Brent about local themes and perspectives on substance misuse and the sex industry
- Christine Topping – Violence Against the Person Focus Desk Manager, Brent Police, provided an snapshot of police intelligence relating to prostitution in Brent
- Helen Hepburn Development Manager, Make a Change Ipswich, and DCI Tim Beach, Suffolk Constabulary explained how the Make a Change projects had started following the murders of women involved in prostitution in Ipswich, the barriers they faced and their current work in developing an off street prostitution strategy.
- DCI Kevin Hyland CO14, Clubs and Vice, Metropolitan police
- David Blake, Publishing Director, Archant London
- Alice Peycke, Partnership Co-ordinator, Safe Exit, Toynbee Hall, Tower Hamlets told us about a court diversion initiative which aims to provide better services for women involved in prostitution
- The Chair of the task group attended the *Solace Human Trafficking Conference* which launched their report into the role of local authorities in addressing human trafficking.
- The Chair of the task group attended the Developments in Prostitution Policy conference organised by the Eaves the parent organisation for the Poppy Project. Information brought back to the task group included:
 - Taking a human rights based approach to prostitution – Cate Briddick, Rights for Women
 - Parliamentary developments on legislation against demand for prostitution – Fiona Mactaggart MP
 - GAPS Newcastle, sexual exploitation and sex work in Tyne & Wear – Laura Seebohm & Kelle Holliday
 - Successful demand prevention in Nordic Countries – Gunilla Ekberg CATW international

Individual members of the task group reviewed a great deal of literature and academic research in relation to this subject area and a list of references is set out at the end of this

report. Ultimately though, the task group was keen to ensure that this report focused on Brent and produced locally implementable recommendations.

4. Context

Local

Prostitution and the implications of the sex trade have not previously emerged as a major community safety issue in Brent. The council and partners were aware of a relatively small amount of on-street prostitution in the south of the borough, and a number of services, particularly relating to drugs and alcohol are commissioned by Brent Primary Care Trust and based in that area. A number of voluntary organisations, such as Women's Aid also provide services to women who work in the on-street sex trade.

Less was known about the off-street (in door) sex trade in Brent, which largely takes place in flats, houses and massage parlours. This was partly because it is not as visible as on-street and partly because the organised nature of much of trade means that brothels can close and reopen in a different premises very quickly. There have been a number of national initiatives aimed at disrupting the off street sex trade with particular focus on trafficking, these include: Pentameter, Pentameter2 and Operation Tolerance. Pentameter was the first proactive policing operation in the UK involving all fifty five forces. The aims of Pentameter included identifying the scale of the problem and the recovery of victims. Brent's local police, were involved in these initiatives and had some success Pentameter, which resulted in 10 brothels being closed, though the majority did re-open soon after in different locations.

As set out earlier in this report the results of research conducted by the Eaves POPPY Project⁵ in August 2008 and set out in their report *Big Brothel – A survey of the off-street sex industry in London* highlighted the scale and nature of the brothel industry in London. Approximately 1500 brothels were identified in London. Brent was identified as having the second highest number of adverts (59) in local news papers for brothels. The highest number of adverts for brothels was Westminster with 71 and the lowest Southwark with 8. Although this does not necessarily mean that Brent has the second highest number of brothels, it should be of concern to the council. The report also makes the link between off-street prostitution and trafficked women. It suggests that the widespread availability of high risk services at an 'incredibly' low cost, points to a saturated market where women lack control, choice or economic alternatives.

International, National & London

A number of countries have experimented with different approaches to dealing with prostitution. In Europe as a whole there is a move towards tighter regulation of the sex trade. Sweden, Iceland and Norway have tackled demand by making it illegal to purchase

⁵ The POPPY Project provides accommodation and support for women trafficked into the UK for the purposes of sexual exploitation. www.eaves4women.co.uk/POPPY_Project/POPPY_Project.php

sex, while ensuring that the women involved are offered support. Other countries such as the Netherlands and New Zealand have legalised or decriminalised the sale and purchase of sex acts in the hope that this would sever the links between prostitution and organised crime.

The British government's coordinated strategy on prostitution *Paying the Price* was published in January 2006. One of the aims of the strategy is to disrupt the sex market and provide appropriate protection and exit routes for those involved.

In January 2008 the Government launched a review into demand for prostitution visiting several European countries, including the Netherlands and Sweden, to explore different legislative approaches to tackling prostitution issues. In November 2008 the Government announced that it would outlaw paying for sex with a woman "controlled for another person's gain" - such as a pimp or brothel owner. In addition, men who pay for a sexual act with someone who has been trafficked into the country could face rape charges. In November 2009 the Policing and Crime Act was passed, which lays out the new proposals in Part 2 Clause 14.

SOLACE recently produced a report⁶ which explores how local authorities can improve their response to human trafficking including women trafficked into the sex trade. This report was produced in the context of the Council for Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings⁷ which came into force in the UK on 1st April 2009. The report identifies five 'core competences' local authorities need to focus on and offers practical ways in which local authorities can help. These are:

- Victim identification
- Victim support
- Assistance with repatriation of victims
- Prevention of Human Trafficking
- Partnership Working

In April 2009 the Mayor of London launched *The Way Forward: A call for action to end violence against women*⁸ a consultation on proposed set of actions for dealing with all forms of violence against women in London. This includes prostitution, trafficking, rape and sexual violence.

The existing legislative framework that relates to the sex trade is wide and includes:

- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002
- Serious Organised Crime Act 2005
- Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
- Asylum and Immigration Act 2004

In addition the protection of women is also included in a number of European and UN Conventions and declarations. These include:

⁶ The role of local authorities in addressing human trafficking www.solace.org.uk

⁷ www.coe.int

⁸ A consultation on a proposed programme of action can be found at www.london.go.uk/mayor/crime/waw

- European Convention on Human Rights 1950
- UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women 1994
- European Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings 2005

5. Key Findings

The Scale and Nature of Prostitution in Brent

The existence of on street prostitution in the south of the borough was, by its nature, well known to the council and its partners. So when ascertaining the scale and nature of prostitution in Brent the main focus of the task group was to find out more about where off street prostitution was located.

A presentation by the police categorised the types of prostitution in Brent as:

- Street prostitution – drug users / criminal networks (on street)
- Commercial premises – saunas / massage parlours (off street)
 - Controlled multi-occupancy – 2 types (off street)
 - Transient work force / strict control with a large number of girls involved who are transported to and from the venue. There is an employed receptionist and security guards. This is where trafficked women are most likely to be found and therefore criminal networks
 - Small number of girls in a less oppressive environment
- Self Controlled – Professional residential home (off street)

We heard from the police that there are distinct clusters of premises in the borough. They told us that they believed that data collected in February 2009 showed that there were an estimated 54-64 brothels in Brent at any one time. However, they also said that this figure could be significantly higher or lower as premises move around, though they tended to be clustered in main shopping areas and are generally in flats above shops. Figures from the police show slightly more premises in the north of the borough, 37 than the south 33.

The table below shows the number of identified/believed premises being used as brothels within each of the hotspot areas.

HOTSPOT AREA	NUMBER OF PREMISES
Kingsbury	16
Sudbury and Wembley	10
Harlesden	5
Willesden	6
Kilburn and Brondesbury	4
Cricklewood	11

Eaves POPPY Project's research, which took place between October 2007 and March 2008, found 59 advertised premises in Brent with at least 121 women working in them. This

compares with the highest number of 71 in Westminster, and the lowest of 8 in Southwark. Their research identified 45% of premises as flats, 36% houses and 19% massage parlours or saunas. A snapshot undertaken by CO14, Clubs and Vice on one day found 15 premises in Brent. As differing methodologies were used and premises move around these figures should not be seen as definitive and can only provide a snapshot. A hotspot map produced by Brent Police is attached at appendix A

The Director of Environmental Health told us that there are four licensed massage parlours in Brent and historically there has never been more than four. These licences are called special licences and are issued under the London Local Authorities Act 1990 – 2000. The vast majority of London boroughs, including Brent, have established a special treatments group to ensure consistency and agree a list of special treatments. This list of special treatments is extensive and includes: acupuncture, body massage, facials, reflexology and tattooing. Licences are issued subject to a number of conditions which include the applicant and therapists passing a fit and proper persons test, qualifications check and an inspection. The location of the massage parlours largely correlate with the commercial hotspots identified by the police in relation to brothels. We heard that these massage parlours are inspected annually and receive few complaints. The inspections focus on compliance with health and safety issues and infection control. The inspections are unannounced and the inspectors check the identity of those present with the qualification certificates provided with the licence application, though he agreed that qualifications could be forged. The inspectors can talk to the women present and if they suspect anything they would inform the police Clubs and Vice Unit CO14.

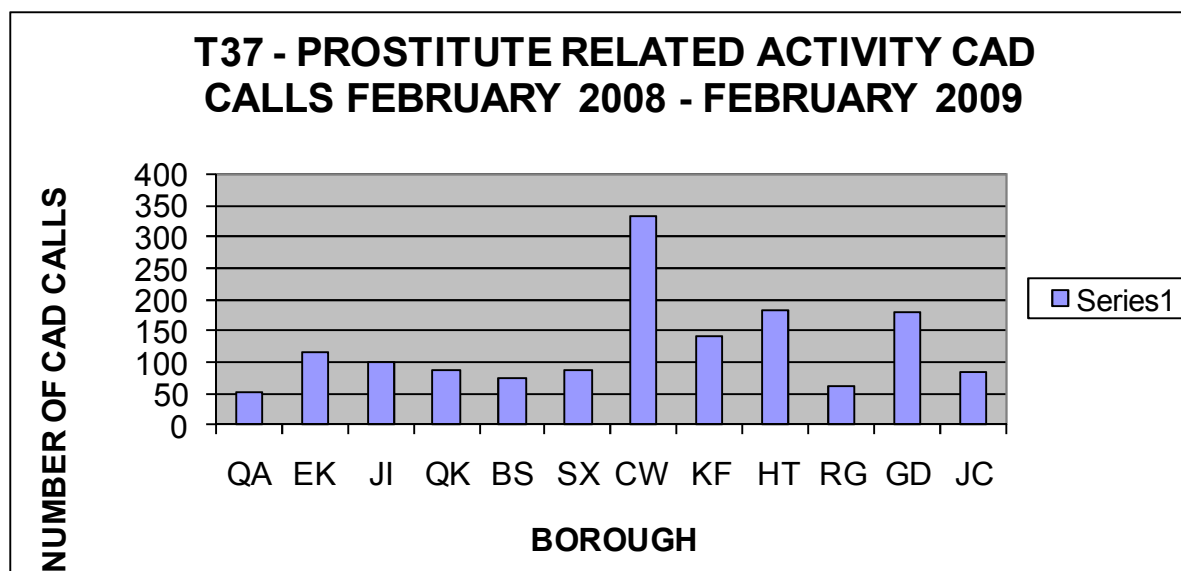
Eaves POPPY Project told us that there had been 13 referrals of trafficked women from Brent between April 2004 and January 2009. This meant that Brent was in the middle in terms of London Borough referrals, Westminster has the highest number of referrals at 109, Bexley has the lowest at 1. The women referred from Brent were aged between 18 and 43 from nine countries and three continents. The top three countries of origin nationally were Nigeria, Lithuania and China. In Brent the top two were Romania and Lithuania. CO14 told us that in London the top two nationalities are Lithuania and Latvia. The sources of referrals to Eaves POPPY Project from Brent included local NGO's, Willesden Police Station, Individual PCs, the Sapphire Unit and the Lithuanian Embassy.

The police provided a breakdown of Computer Aided Despatch reports (CAD), during the twelve months between February 2008 and February 2009, which related to prostitution. Fifty per cent of all calls were received during the weekend (Friday – Sunday) and sixty three per cent were received between 8pm and 8am. There were slightly more calls in the north of the borough than the south of the borough. The task group believes that the greater prevalence of calls from the north of the borough could be because people in the more affluent north of the borough are more likely to be proactive and complain.

Police custody reports covering the twelve months between 1st April 2008 and 31st March 2009 show a total of 21 arrests in relation to prostitution:

- Controlling a prostitute for gain – 3 arrests
- Keeping / Managing a brothel – 3 arrests
- Managing / assisting the management of a brothel – 4 arrests
- Placing adverts for prostitution - 10 arrests

Information on prostitution related CAD Call for other London boroughs is set out below.



KEY TO BOROUGHES AND TOTALS	
QA – Harrow	52
EK – Camden	116
JI – Redbridge	99
QK – Brent	86
BS – Kensington & Chelsea	75
SX – Barnet	87
CW – Westminster	334
KF – Newham	142
HT – Tower Hamlets – Olympic Borough	184
RG – Greenwich – Olympic Borough	60
GD – Hackney – Olympic Borough	178
JC – Waltham Forest – Olympic Borough	84

NHS Brent told us about the link between the sex industry and drugs. A short survey they conducted with alcohol and drug services they commissioned suggested that between five and 10% of women accessing services are involved in the sex industry, mainly on street work. This would translate into 50 and 125 problem drug users involved in the sex industry, though it is difficult to get exact numbers. The main drugs of choice for this group are heroin and/or crack cocaine. The highly addictive nature of crack cocaine means that addicts need to spend £200 - £300 per day. Many women in this situation are selling sex to support their own and in some cases their 'boyfriend's' or pimp's addiction as well.

Brent police told us that prostitution was not high on their list of priorities current top priorities are burglary and violence, though this does include violence against women. They admitted that there are gaps in their intelligence relating to the sex industry in Brent and gaps in training about how to deal with the women they encounter in this situation. The task group is concerned that by not having this as a high priority a space is created within which organised crime could become established and violence against women remain invisible. We are particularly concerned about the impact of a major sporting arena and the Olympics on demand for prostitution, this is dealt with in the next section of the report.

We heard from CO14 that they are able to provide training to Safer Neighbourhood Team's, which Brent Police are now in the process of arranging. The Association of Chief Police Officers, which leads on vice also provide a 4 day residential course to sergeants. In addition CO14 provide advice to the police on their website and are in the process of producing cards and a booklet which will contain useful information including referral routes. This will be available from December 2009.

Recommendations

That the Brent police make tackling prostitution in Brent a higher and more co-ordinated priority.

That Brent Police:

- **Enhance the awareness of Brent police officers and staff about the issues faced by women involved in prostitution and those who have been potentially trafficked.**
- **Provide appropriate training to selected police staff around how to support and deal with women affected by these issues. (This is to include for example advice about tactical options in relation to dealing with a report of a local brothel).**
- **Provide clear guidance as to how to report a crime against a woman affected by these issues and/or other concerns.**

The Impact of a Major Sporting Arena

The task group was keen to learn more about the impact that a big sporting arena would have on demand for prostitution and opportunities for organised crime. Wembley regularly hosts sporting and entertainment events and will be used to host events during the Olympics.

A report produced by the Future Group entitled *Faster, Higher, Stronger: Preventing Human Trafficking at the 2010 (winter) Olympics*⁹ was published in 2007 and investigated the impact that the Winter Olympics in Vancouver would have on rates of human trafficking particularly women trafficked for prostitution. The report highlighted that according to the Greek Ministry of Public Safety's data there had been a 95% increase in the number of identified human trafficking victims during the 2004 Athens Olympics. In 2005 the number had declined by 24% but was still 47% higher than it was in the year preceding the Olympics. In addition it was reported that the German Government told the Council of the European Union in 2007 that the demand for prostitution in and around venues did increase during the 2006 World Cup, though this increase was short lived.

CO14 informed us that evidence of increased prostitution was already being seen around some of the Olympic construction sites. DI Hyland believed that Brent should take action now to prevent any increase taking hold because in his view once an increase in organised crime occurs it is difficult to reduce it. We were informed that a new Olympic vice team was being created to work with the five Olympic boroughs and he would ensure that Brent was included in this work.

During our visit to Safe Exit¹⁰ we were told that they were working with the five Olympic boroughs to develop a joint strategy relating to prostitution and that a conference would be held later in the year. The chair of the task group asked Safe Exit to ensure that Brent was included in any future work. The task group asked the interim Head of Community Safety to attend the Prostitution and Olympic Summit which was held on 29th September 2009.

While we would like to see Brent Council and its partners continue working with the other Olympic boroughs we realise that this is a London wide issue. Olympic visitors will stay throughout London, not just confined to areas around the venues. We would therefore recommend at the council and its partners lobby the Mayor of London to ensure that a pan London prostitution strategy is developed.

Recommendations

That Brent Council and partners, via the crime prevention strategy group, continue the work the task group has started with the CO14, Safe Exit and other Olympic boroughs to reduce the opportunities for organised crime, trafficking and prostitution associated with major sporting events.

That the council and partners lobby the Mayor of London to ensure a pan London strategy / approach is developed prior to the Olympics

⁹ The Future Group is a Canadian based organisation www.thefuturegroup.org

¹⁰ An initiative set up by Toynbee Hall, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the Metropolitan Police and Providence Row Charity to develop better services for women in prostitution.

Tackling Sex Industry Adverts in Brent

As already stated the catalyst for this review was Eaves POPPY Project's Big Brothel report that identified Brent as having the second highest number of adverts for brothels in London. This does not mean that Brent has the second highest number of brothels or the second largest prostitution problem in London but the information available to us does indicate that there are pockets of on and off street prostitution in the borough.

Reducing demand for the purchase of sex in Brent would make the sex industry less lucrative for organised criminals and reduce the demand for women. We heard from CO14 that one flat in Soho could generate as much as 1 million pounds a year. To our great surprise we learnt from CO14 that the only person in the sex market chain who could not be prosecuted was the man who purchased sex, unless he was kerb crawling. Those who can be prosecuted include: the person who controls the women, the landlord of the premises, the person that prints the cards, the person who places the cards, the maid and the women,

The government is trying to tackle demand by making it an offence to pay for sex from someone who is controlled for another person's gain. The Mayor of London's proposed strategy on violence against women¹¹ suggests working with partners including local authorities to develop a public awareness campaign aimed at deterring paying for sex. We would urge Brent Council and its partners to take the opportunity to take part in any campaign that is aimed at reducing demand for the purchase of sex services.

During the course of our investigation we have heard more about the ways that the organised sex industry advertises its trade. These include:

- Local newspapers
- Newsagents window
- Phone cards
- And internet sites

Like any industry, advertising the availability of a 'service' in an area brings those wishing to purchase it into the area if it didn't advert, cards etc would simply not exist. Research suggests that advertisements placed in local newspapers are the most commonly used method men will use to make contact with women for sexual purposes¹². A government report, *Women Not for Sale* produced by the government Equalities Office 2008, estimates that nationally this type of advert accounts for £44m of advertising revenue this equates to 2% of total classified ads revenue¹³. This report also identified London as one of the regions with a particularly high concentration of this type of advert. In addition there is concern about how explicit the adverts are and the wording used. For instance words like 'young', 'new' and 'exotic' are used along with reference to the nationality of the women advertised.

The Publishing Director of Archant London told us that the revenue from this type of advertising accounts for around £1.5 million annually which is about 10% of income. The

¹¹ The Way Forward- a call for action on violence against women April 2009

www.london.gov.uk/mayor/crime/vaw/

¹² 'its just like going to the supermarket': men buying sex in East London; Kelly et al: Child & Women Abuse Studies Unit 2007. As quoted in 'Women Not for Sale, Government Equalities Office, 2008

¹³ Women Not for Sale, government Equalities Office, 2008

percentage has increased recently mainly because income from other core categories of advertising such as property and motoring has reduced. He told us that those placing this type of advert usually pay in cash and the newspaper asked them to sign to say that the premises being advertised is only offering massage, though they realised that this was unlikely to be true. The Publishing Director told us that guidelines were available to those members of staff taking the adverts so that words relating to ethnicity or age were not included. When challenged with examples from a recent edition of the local paper he said that some adverts containing these words do get through but he will raise the issue with his staff. He also informed us that there had, in recent years, been a shift toward internet advertising, but agreed that the number of adverts placed regularly and the fact that those placing them get upset if there is a misprint in the advert suggests that this form of advertising worked.

The task group heard that there has been an ongoing debate within the Archant group about carrying this type of advert, with a huge difference of opinion, but in the end it was a commercial decision for the group to continue to carry them. We also heard that residents in the Ham & High area, another Archant owned local newspaper serving an area close to Brent had successfully campaigned to remove boxed adverts with photographs with line adverts with toned down language. The task group was uncomfortable that a largely middle class campaign could have this result while Brent's local newspaper still had wording that the publisher itself said should not be appearing.

The task group has considered the issues around advertising in the local press very carefully. We have heard the view that the adverts are a good source of intelligence and that they should be toned down rather than removed. We have also heard from CO14 and Eaves POPPY Project that the adverts fuel demand and are frequently situated near the sports pages, the pages most likely to be read by young people, particularly young men. One powerful argument put to us was – you would not find it acceptable for adverts to appear about where to buy drugs or which houses were empty to burgle, so why are these adverts acceptable? We understand that the Crown Prosecution Service is currently exploring ways to make carrying this type of advertising an offence.

We have heard so many times about the links between the organised sex industry, drugs and other forms of organised crime and the plight of the women who become a commodity to trade that we are convinced that it is right to oppose these adverts. Our ultimate aim therefore would be for this type of advert to be banned from local newspapers and would add our voice to that campaign. Meanwhile we would like the council and partners to keep lines of communication open with the local press to influence the content of the adverts, so that pictures and information about ethnicity and age of the women are not included. We would also call on the newspaper publishers to carry a prevention and deterrent advert alongside sex industry adverts. This advert should include useful contact telephone numbers. Similarly prostitution related articles in the local press should also carry these contact numbers.

The Mayor of London and CO14 are working together to talk to telephone companies about blocking the telephone numbers used in adverts and dealing with printers who produce the cards found in telephone boxes and other locations. We believe that the council and

partners could also contribute to this by making it a priority for all front line staff, whether street sweepers or policemen to remove these cards wherever they are found.

Recommendations

That the council and partners continue the task group's work and keep lines of communication open with the press to influence them to keep to their own guidelines and ensure that adverts relating to the sex industry do not include, for example:

- **Photographs**
- **Information on ethnicity**
- **Information on age**

That local newspaper groups operating in Brent agree to carry a prevention and deterrent advert next to sex industry related adverts, the contents of which will be agreed by partners but will include useful contact numbers.

That it is a priority for all front line local authority and partner staff to remove cards advertising sex services from public area.

Working in Partnership to Provide Services for Women In and Exiting Prostitution

To gain a clear picture of the types and range of services that should be available for women wanting to exit the sex industry we talked to a number of organisations. Locally we heard from NHS Brent that they do currently provide drug and alcohol services that were mainly focussed on the drug hotspots in Brent, which largely correlate with areas of on-street prostitution. We also talked to some voluntary groups, like Women's Aid and the Asian Women's Resource Centre who operate in Brent and have been approached by women for help.

The predominant message we got from all of the organisations we talked to was that the needs of the women were complex. Eaves POPPY Project told us that there was a wide range of services required and Safe Exit, who work with mainly street sex workers confirmed that a holistic approach is needed as women have many interlinked problems. Overall services identified by the organisations we talked to were:

- Emergency medical treatment
- Sexual health
- Mental health
- Drugs and alcohol
- Immigration and asylum
- Supported housing
- Legal advice and advocacy
- Financial assistance
- Training, education and employment

We heard that prior to Safe Exit being set up at Toynebee Hall (Tower Hamlets) a stakeholder event was held which showed that lots of different organisations were operating in the area but that there was no co-ordination. A partnership steering group was set up to bring together voluntary and statutory agencies including the police and the local authority. This is chaired by a local councillor. There is a larger forum that operates on a thematic approach and is open to anyone to attend. The initiative is funded by the David Isaacs fund and the Tower Hamlets Partnership.

The Make a Change project was set up just over two years ago following the murders of women involved in prostitution in Ipswich. The Police, Probation Service, DAAT and the local authority came together to develop a clear set of strategic priorities that because they are intertwined needed to be delivered using a multi-agency approach. Strategic priorities included:

- Clear and agreed vision
- Intelligence gathering
- Developing routes out
- Tackling Demand
- Prevention of Children under 18 being abused through sexual exploitation
- Community Intelligence

And more recently:

- Coercive Adults
- Off-Street Prostitution

They did experience some barriers to getting the project going, such as different organisational cultures, commitment and ability to share information, but they are adamant that a strategy owned by all relevant partners provided the leadership and focus that this problem required. They believed that the backing of the council's leadership was key to this approach working.

The Make a Change team have undertaken a lot of awareness raising activities particularly with childcare teams who were not previously looking for sexual exploitation of 13 -15 year olds. Since then the numbers of children being supported have increased from 5 to 35. The team have identified that the same men (some women are involved) are involved in grooming children and adults. Local residents have taken an interest in this work, with public meetings held in affected areas. The team has gained a lot of intelligence this way. They have also gained recognition that prostitution is not 'here to stay or 'part of life'.

At the start of this report we highlighted that a large proportion of young women involved in prostitution had been looked after children. A report recently produced by Barnardo's, *Whose Child Now*¹⁴ highlights the issues around sexual exploitation particularly the links between children who frequently go missing and sexual exploitation and trafficking within the UK. We understand that the local safeguarding children's board has children that go missing as one of its three priorities for the year ahead. We would like to ensure that this issue is highlighted across the partnership.

¹⁴ Whose child now was published by Barnardos in November 2009

Ipswich are now starting to develop an off street prostitution strategy, but recognises that off street work requires links with different organisations like the fire service and trading standards. Emerging priorities for their strategy include: trafficking, exploitation and young people.

The task group was impressed by the partnership approach to developing a joint prostitution strategy and believes that this is the best way to tackle this problem and develop routes out of prostitution for women in or passing through Brent.

One of the main problems all of the agencies we talked to identified was housing, whether to get women away from situations that were unhealthy like 'crack houses' or to get them away from manipulative 'boyfriends' or criminal gangs.

The task group is aware when talking to organisations like Safe Exit and Make a Change Ipswich that they are mainly dealing with on street prostitution, where the women are visible and are largely British nationals with recourse to public funds. A large proportion of the sex industry in Brent is off street, which, as we have heard is more likely to include foreign nationals and possibly trafficked women, many of whom may not have recourse to public funds.

The Solace report mentioned earlier in this report, *The role of local authorities in addressing trafficking*, says that although many adult trafficked women may not have recourse to public funds local authorities can provide services on a discretionary basis. We believe that this could also apply to local authority partners. Upon identifying a women who may have been trafficked, local authorities or partners should contact Eaves POPPY project or another specialist organisation such as the UK Human Trafficking Centre for advice and assistance

The task group was keen to explore other practical measures that the council and partners could take to disrupt the sex industry in the borough. One option put forward by CO14 was suggested that if a brothel was being run in the area council could write to the Landlord or letting agent and tell them they are breaking the law. CO14 can assist with this by helping to develop a standard letter. It should also be possible to make checks against council tax to check whether the property is listed as domestic or business and to see if incorrect declarations are being made.

Recommendation

That a Partnership Strategy on prostitution is produced which includes the development of services to help women exit.

That a Stakeholder Event is held to bring together all relevant agencies in the borough, to help develop the Partnership Strategy.

That a Partnership Group be set up to take this work forward. This should be the responsibility of the Local Strategic Partnership and include some of the task group membership to ensure continuity of developing expertise. The work of the group should include:

- **Identifying resources available to provide services and assistance for women exiting prostitution**

-
- **Ensuring all relevant agencies know how to identify and respond to women in need of assistance.**
 - **Continue to gather and examine evidence about the scale and nature of prostitution in Brent**
 - **Develop and update a list of policy and tactical leads from partner organisations, and a map of services and pathways available to women within Brent and nationally**

That action against landlords is taken when a brothel is identified - eg letter to tell them they are breaking the law, and checks against council tax

That NHS Brent develops a treatment and care pathway for those women who are involved or want to exit prostitution.

References

The task group referred to a number of reports in the course of its work. Key documents include:

The Poppy Project (2008) Big Brothel A survey of the Off-Street Sex Industry in London, Eaves: London

Sandra Dickson, The Poppy Project (2003). Mapping Commercial Sex Across London, Eaves: London

Julie Bindell, The Poppy Project (2006). No Escape? An investigation into London's Service Provision for Women Involved in the Sex Industry, Eaves: London

Home Office (2004) Paying the Price a consultation paper on prostitution

Home Office (2006) A Co-ordinated Prostitution Strategy and a summary of responses to paying the price

Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership Ipswich, Street Prostitution Strategy 2007 - 2012

Shelter (2004) Off the streets – tackling homelessness amongst female street-based sex workers

Centre for Social Justice, DFES Children looked after in England 2005-2006

Solace (2009) The role of local authorities in addressing human trafficking

Mayor of London (2009) The way forward – A call for action to end violence against women

The Future Group (2007) Faster, Higher, Stronger – preventing human trafficking at the 2010 Olympics

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