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# **ANNUAL Equality Report 2008/2009**

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## **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 CO<sub>2</sub> 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 60<sup>th</sup> 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.

	<b>BME Training Attendance</b>	<b>Female Training Attendance</b>	<b>Disabled Training Attendance</b>
Target	59.00%	63.00%	3.50%
<b>Actual percentage</b>	<b>65.18%</b>	<b>66.37%</b>	<b>3.88%</b>

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.
- 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.