

A Regeneration Strategy for Brent

2010-2030

INTRODUCTION

In 2001, Brent launched its twenty year Regeneration Strategy. With an ambitious vision to raise the quality of life for Brent residents, the strategy firmly placed regeneration at the centre of the Council's priorities. Almost ten years later, the progress is clear to see. Wembley Stadium has become an iconic national landmark and is well established as a world class venue. Considerable investment has been made in neighbourhood renewal programmes in the Borough's most deprived neighbourhoods to improve social and economic conditions and work has now begun to transform the physical environment in South Kilburn. Brent in2 Work established itself as one of London's best performing employment programmes offering tailored support to those people and places most in need resulting in an employment rate that now exceeds the London average.

The borough is alive with opportunity. It is one of the most diverse boroughs in the country with a number of distinct and growing communities in neighbourhoods such as Harlesden, Wembley and Kilburn. Development of the lands surrounding Wembley Stadium is well underway and a new Civic centre for the borough will be open in 2013. Plans are in place to improve the North Circular Road and Alperton, and the economic benefits from all these programmes will be felt by the surrounding communities. With a strong culture of entrepreneurialism, the borough has a diverse business base. Park Royal, London's largest industrial estate, is situated to the south west of the borough and transport links to central London are excellent.

But there is still much work to do. The economic downturn and resulting cuts in public spending means the borough now faces very different challenges to when the first Regeneration Strategy was launched back in 2001. Deprivation levels remain stubbornly high in the neighbourhoods to the south of the borough and while unemployment has risen universally, it is these communities that have felt the impact of the recession the most. Low income levels persist along with a reliance on benefits and social housing. In a new era of austerity, the need to tackle these issues through regeneration is ever more critical. The Borough must identify new ways of working to ensure plans the transform the physical, economic and social landscape are realised and that local people tangibly benefit.

Underlying this is a changing political landscape with a new Coalition Government proposing radical reform in all areas of policy including the welfare state, housing and planning regulations. Since 2001, the Mayor of London has played a particularly key role in shaping the regional regeneration agenda and consideration must be given to the London Plan and the Mayor's Economic Development and Housing Strategies.

With limited public funds, the Council is itself undergoing a radical transformation to ensure it offers improved and efficient services to residents. The Brent - Our Future 2010-2014 corporate strategy, sets out a full commitment to reducing poverty and inequality through regeneration and economic development. At the heart of this is a new Regeneration Department that brings together the key

functions and activities needed to develop a coherent and integrated approach to drive forward major development programmes in the borough.

This new Regeneration Strategy has been developed to proactively respond to the opportunities and challenges brought by this new political and economic environment. It looks forward to 2030 with more focused strategic priorities and with a new specialised team in place, Brent is ideally placed to successfully deliver its ambitious vision; transforming the Borough in a way that reduces poverty, inequality and exclusion.

BRENT'S ACHIEVEMENTS 2001-2010

Moving forward, it is important that we recognise the progress made in delivering our 20 year strategic ambitions through strong partnerships with the public, private and community sectors to address social, economic and physical need in the Borough. Great strides have been made in delivering positive change and enabling residents to access a wealth of opportunities and continually improve their quality of life. Residents in the most deprived neighbourhoods feel more satisfied with the areas they live in, fear of crime has fallen and employment rates are above the London average. Specific achievements include:

- Building on the success of Brent securing the new National Stadium in Wembley, Brent has been able to secure over £2 billion of commercial investment into Wembley, with proposals for a large mixed use regeneration scheme that will transform Wembley into one of London's leading visitor attractions and create new homes, jobs and shops for thousands of people.
- Brent Council have secured planning permission for a new state-of-the-art Civic Centre, with greatly improved facilities for customers and Brent Council staff in the heart of the regeneration area, overlooking the new Arena Square.
- The council's flagship employment programme Brent in2Work has supported on average 1000 Brent residents a year into work, mainly those who have been long-term unemployed.
- Brent in2Work have worked in partnership with over 50 employment providers from the public, private and voluntary and third sector organisation to help support Brent's hard to reach communities living in Brent's most deprived neighbourhoods.
- Strong relationships with local businesses have been developed through the Employer Partnership and it continues to engage highlighting supply chain opportunities.
- Launched a 'vision' for the North Circular Road, and have taken the first steps towards the delivery of an improved environment for local people.
- Good progress has been made in South Kilburn regeneration area in recent years. The Council has secured planning consent for 500 new homes and work is underway on site. A new sports centre has already been completed.
- Brent council delivered its Neighbourhood Renewal Funded programme in two of Brent deprived neighbourhoods; Harlesden & Stonebridge and St Raphael's, Brentfield and Mitchell Brook. The Neighbourhood Renewal teams worked with local residents to help address a range of issues including; crime reduction, community engagement and improving access to

employment and skills opportunities. During this time there was a significant rise in the proportion of residents satisfied with their area from a half to two-thirds.

Challenges

However, significant challenges still remain.

- Brent is ranked amongst the top 15% most deprived areas of the country with some neighbourhoods falling within the 5% most deprived (including Church End, Harlesden, Stonebridge, South Kilburn, Chalkhill and St Raphaels)
- Almost 10 % claim jobseekers allowance in the deprived neighbourhoods and above average proportion of out of work benefit claimants
- Around a third of children live in poverty
- Low level of adult skills – only 25% have NVQ 4 or above compared to 38.6% across London
- 20% of households have annual income of £15,000 or less
- There is an 11 year gap in life expectancy between people living in Harlesden and those in Northwick Park

Progress in tackling these issues will be effected by the rapid political changes on both a national and local level, resulting in a change in government priorities and structures. The onset of the economic downturn has resulted in an unprecedented reduction of public funds and the Council has responded with a ambitious “One Council” change programme to deliver a more effective, dynamic and community focused organisation. The prevailing economic circumstances mean that the Council needs to be creative and innovative in developing new ways of working to achieve its ambitions. It requires the Council to be decisive in its leadership of major programmes and projects, disciplined and consistent in its project management arrangements, and well networked.

BRENT 2030

To address these challenges the Council has adopted a single community and corporate strategy, which sets out a clear vision for the Borough. Our regeneration vision for 2030 Brent blends this corporate ambition with our spatial plans as set out in the Borough’s Local Development Framework, particularly the Core Strategy which identifies 5 growth areas and targets the provision of 22,000 new homes.

“The vision is of a Brent fully integrated into the city – a single urban borough which makes a full and positive contribution to the London economy.

Brent will be a thriving, vibrant place where its communities live in an environment that is safe, sustained and well maintained. Residents will enjoy a high quality of life and are able to reach their full potential. The Borough will have a reputation for high quality services focussed on tackling and preventing social exclusion and poverty. Unemployment will be below the London average, and everyone will have access to high quality education, health provision and affordable homes. Areas of deprivation will be economically and socially transformed through major physical

redevelopment and Brent will provide the home of choice for its diverse populations and businesses.

At the core of Brent will be a landmark international development at Wembley, providing a source of pride, identity, wealth and aspiration for the Borough as a whole.”

This vision is supported by three core strategic priorities that contribute directly to the strategic objectives of the “Brent – Our Future 2020-2014 strategy, One Borough, One Community, One Council” and are outlined below:

One Borough

- To deliver transformational change across the Borough, focusing primarily on the identified priority areas for investment

One Community

- To increase employment and income levels of Brent residents concentrating on those most in need

One Council

- To maximise investment in Brent from the private, public and community sectors in line with our regeneration priorities and ambitions

ACHIEVING THE VISION – DELIVERY PRINCIPLES

The success of the past ten years has been underpinned by a clear set of principles generating a proactive and dynamic approach to regeneration delivery in Brent. This strategy will continue this good practice while developing new ways of working to respond to emerging opportunities and ensuring the best possible value for money. Effective formal partnerships with the public, private and voluntary sectors will still be essential with the Council playing an even stronger leadership role. A robust evidence base will continue to be vital to target programmes and focus resources on those people and places most in need. At the same time, all our programmes and projects will be continually challenged, developed and improved through rigorous performance management to ensure economic and social benefits for local people are realised.

Leadership

Strong leadership is even more important under the prevailing economic climate. The Council needs to take a clear and consistent position to ensure the desired outcomes are achieved during the lifetime of programme and within the available budgets.

Equality

Using evidence, we will build on our targeted approach to focus regeneration efforts on those people and places most in need. Success will be defined by raising quality of life and access to opportunity for the most deprived communities.

Local Benefit

The Council is fully committed to ensuring that local people fully benefit from the opportunities generated by the physical regeneration of the Borough. We will ensure that our major projects deliver improved employment, education, health and quality of life outcomes focusing these benefits on the Borough's most deprived communities.

Sustainability

Fundamental to the success of regeneration is looking beyond the now, into the future and to develop innovative solutions to tomorrow's problems. Regeneration in Brent is focused on the long term and transforming the borough in an irrevocable and irreversible way.

Quality

Sustainable regeneration can only be achieved through the highest quality design and delivery. We aspire to deliver to the very best quality across all elements of regeneration meeting the needs of our diverse communities.

Value

Through regeneration we are committed to searching new and improved ways of working and challenging the status quo to develop effective and efficient services that meet the needs of residents rather than the public sector organisations delivering them. Value for money is

increasingly important in the delivery of regeneration. We will endeavour to position Brent in such a way that opens up access to funding and finance in pursuit of our regeneration goals. And we will consider how best to make use of our own land, property and intellectual assets to lever in additional resources.

Partnership

Central to regeneration is forming and developing strong partnerships with public, private and third sector and where necessary identify areas for joint service planning and budgeting and sharing of resource to build on strengths and avoid duplication thus maximising benefits for local people. We will continue to collaborate, where it makes absolute sense, with partners across London including the Greater London Authority and the Housing and Communities Agency, West London and the Local Strategic Partnership.

Responsiveness

Regeneration activity takes place within a dynamic economic and social environment. To achieve our long term vision for Brent, it is essential that we are able to work flexibly and adapt programmes and projects to meet changing demands and needs. We must be proactive in exploiting emerging opportunities and ensuring new risks are identified and averted.

IMPLEMENTATION

Supporting our delivery principles and driving progress to achieving our 2030 vision are two key implementation tools namely the; regeneration action plans and; programme management. Both techniques have been well tested and refined and are now integral elements of our approach to regeneration ensuring effective and coordinated action across the Borough.

Regeneration Action Plans

Our Regeneration Action Plans are the building blocks to achievement of our 20 year strategy. The plans set out a clear delivery programme every three years outlining pieces of work to be undertaken during that time. More specifically, under each strategic priority they include:

- The issue being addressed
- Outline of activities to tackle the issue
- Specific and measurable performance indicators to demonstrate overall impact of the activity and contribution to the strategic priority

This approach allows for flexibility of delivery and an ability to adapt to local changes and arising opportunities during the lifetime of this strategy. Moving forward, the Action Plans will be integrated into the Council's service planning process.

Performance Management

Monitoring our performance against the action plans is a well established process that takes place through quarterly scrutiny meetings. Using the Council's Performance Plus system, progress towards our indicators is measured and gaps in project performance is also highlighted along with equalities data.

Programme Management

A robust programme management process will be followed by each of the Council's major capital programmes and projects. The process will be managed through a Programme Management Office to ensure a consistent approach.

The approach will ensure that programmes and their associated projects will be quality assured using governance arrangements and a gateway process that check programmes and projects are:

- still aligned to deliver the Councils strategic objectives at each stage of their lifecycles.
- outcomes and benefits are set, monitored and achieved.

Clear financial management to maximise investment and reach the best value for money are also central to the process.

Each Major Programme has a director level champion, strategic programme board and programme management team with responsibility to:

- Establish the programme vision and contribution to the regeneration strategic priorities;
- Develop business plans
- Agree Programme/Project Initiation documents(PID)
- Develop programme/project plan
- Monitor delivery progress against budget and milestones
- Closedown the programme/project

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

To deliver transformational change across the Borough, focusing primarily on the identified priority areas for investment namely:

Alperton	Burnt Oak/Colindale
Chalkhill	Church End
Harlesden	North Circular Road (inc. Brentfield and St Raphaels)
Stonebridge	South Kilburn
Wembley	

This priority retains the Council's local approach to regeneration, focusing activity and intervention on specific areas of need. Prevailing socio-economic issues in the most deprived neighbourhoods will be tackled through physical redevelopment in the borough's designated growth areas. Wembley, Alperton, Burnt Oak/Colindale, South Kilburn and Church End have been identified as spatially important to the borough, capable of accommodating large scale growth and essential infrastructure for new homes, business investment and job opportunities.

The regeneration focus in the Borough's *most-in-need* areas have and will continue to provide intensive activity to coordinate, engage and support partnership working with local residents, partners and stakeholders to prescribe and implement effective solutions to re-connect these neighbourhoods to the wider borough and London as a whole.

Our Ambition

- To reduce deprivation levels within the borough's 6 priority neighbourhoods of Harlesden, Stonebridge, St Raphaels, Church End, Chalkhill and South Kilburn
- To deliver a step change in the quality of life across the growth areas and priority neighbourhoods
- To build, support and sustain mixed income, mixed tenure communities, with good access to high quality community facilities and services
- To champion and promote high quality design across all of the Borough's growth areas and priority neighbourhoods
- To work jointly with teams across the Council providing support on strategies that cut across regeneration objectives

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

To increase employment and income levels of Brent residents concentrating on those most in need

Employment remains at the heart of this strategy and the belief that getting a job is a pivotal factor in tackling social exclusion, health inequalities and intergenerational poverty. Unemployment in Brent, particularly within the priority neighbourhoods, is significantly higher than the London and national average, a statistic supported by low skills, work experience, confidence and motivation levels amongst residents. This priority retains the job focussed approach the Council has excelled in delivering over the years. Through direct delivery of employment brokerage and also through partnership working with other providers, employers and networks, Brent has made a significant contribution to raising employment levels in the borough.

The challenge however lies in ensuring this practice is sustained and continued into the future. With government strategy to tackling unemployment constantly evolving, it will be necessary to explore new and innovative ways to secure investment and resources to ensure delivery of employment activities is focused on those people and places most in need. In doing so however, this strategy places local need and a local solution at the heart of any activity and will ensure this principal remains central to our future approach. As set out in the Core Strategy, ensuring the Borough's strategic employment areas, such as Wembley and Park Royal, are fit for purpose to support the Council's economic growth ambitions is key. Ensuring residents have access to good quality employment opportunities with the potential to progress and raise their income levels is also essential.

Our Ambition

- To raise employment levels across the borough with particular emphasis on the priority neighbourhoods and those furthest away from the labour market
- To use employment as a key tool to reduce health inequalities and raise quality of life for the Borough's most excluded communities
- To increase income levels across the borough with emphasis on the priority neighbourhoods
- To establish Brent as a local authority trailblazer in relation to the delivery of employment services, by forging partnerships with the private and voluntary sectors to deliver government employment services and contracts
- To drive improvement and efficiency in the local employment provider base, ensuring local provision meets the needs of Brent's diverse communities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

To maximise investment in Brent from the private, public and community sectors in line with our regeneration priorities and ambitions

Achievement of the twenty year vision will require a balance of strong leadership and coordinated partnership action to ensure our programmes and projects are focused on our strategic goals and resources available within all sectors are maximised.

We will need to be creative in how we use our own land, property and intellectual assets and in opening up the Borough to access funding that meets our long term ambitions. But we also need to go further, developing strategic partnerships at local, sub regional and regional levels that compliments and contributes to the transformation of Brent's investment areas. Where it makes sense, we need to explore the potential to use these partnerships to share resource and assets to ensure the best value for money and excellent services for residents.

The transformation of our investment areas will be reliant on effective dialogue with our most in need communities and we will work with our partners to use their knowledge and experience to extend our reach, develop major projects and support social and economic initiatives that meet this need.

Our Ambition

- To position and promote Brent as a Borough which is 'open for business' in terms of ongoing private and public sector investment
- To make maximum use of the Council's own resources to lever in additional investment to the Borough in pursuit of Brent's regeneration priorities
- To pro-actively seek appropriate partnership arrangements in order to deliver Brent's regeneration priorities

Measuring success – performance indicators

<i>Strategic Priority</i>	<i>Performance indicator</i>
<p>SP1 To deliver transformational change across the Borough, focusing primarily on the identified priority areas for investment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty and polarisation : Working age residents claiming out of work benefits between priority areas and rest of Borough • Housing Affordability : Ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings
<p>SP2 To increase employment and income levels of Brent residents concentrating on those most in need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents employed : Proportion of working age residents in employment • Working age of people on out of work benefits • Income levels : Median earnings of employees in the area
<p>SP3 To maximise investment in Brent from the private, public and community sectors in line with our regeneration priorities and ambitions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills levels : Proportion of working age residents qualified to level 2 or above • Productivity : Gross Value Added per employment • Delivery : Proportion of Major Projects delivered to time and budget