

# Brent Council's Performance Plan, 2004-2005

*Draft v.03*

# Brent Council's Performance Plan 2004-2005

## TRANSLATIONS & CONTACT DETAILS

*(Translation to appear inside front cover in appropriate community languages)*

*Languages -*

- *Albanian*
- *Arabic*
- *Gujarati*
- *Hindi*
- *Punjabi*
- *Somali*
- *Tamil*
- *Urdu*

## Brent Council's Performance Plan 2004-2005

Brent Council is committed to providing value for money and ensuring that our services are relevant to the needs of all sections of the community. To help us achieve this aim, we welcome your views on how you think we are doing, particularly in those services which form our priorities for improvement.

This document contains details of Brent Council's performance over the last year and the targets for improving services in future years. If you would like to make any comments or suggestions about this plan, or if you would like further information, a translation or a large print version of the document, please contact us at:

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Reference copies can also be found in One Stop Shops and libraries. The contact details for our One Stop Shops are listed below. To find out where your nearest library is call our general enquiry number on **020 8937 3144** or check our website: **[www.brent.gov.uk/libraryservice](http://www.brent.gov.uk/libraryservice)**

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### **Kilburn One Stop Shop**

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Middlesex HA9 9HV

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## Foreword from the Leader of Brent Council

I am pleased to introduce Brent Council's fifth annual performance plan, which lets you know how the council is performing and sets out our priorities for the coming year and beyond.

In 2004/05 we will continue to reconstruct and improve key services such as Education and Social Services. The necessary investment will be made to ensure progress in these vital areas. The results of recent government inspections have borne out our approach and the steady progress in both these services has been validated by external scrutiny. The council is well on track to fulfil its priorities for children and young people.

We will continue to direct our efforts into the regeneration of the borough. The council gained Beacon Status over consecutive years for its work in this area. This practice will continue and become more successful as the partnerships get stronger. The New Deal in South Kilburn is gearing itself up to deliver major and irreversible change and with Wembley we are now on the brink of finally realising the promise we have worked so hard to obtain. The Planning Committee have agreed the developers planning application, signalling a new phase in the regeneration of Wembley.

As we promised when we launched our corporate strategy we would pay very close attention to those issues of key public concern which impact directly on local people's quality of life. Consistently at the top of everyone's list has been crime, fear of crime and the quality of the environment. We are addressing these with a major initiative which will link our approach to crime and fear of crime whilst simultaneously improving people's local environment - a package of measures which combines a targeted and concentrated approach to envirocrime (graffiti, dumped cars, fly tipping and noise) with an enhanced and improved warden service putting a presence on the streets where people most want to see it. We will establish a new direct partnership with the police to build on our recent success with anti-social behaviour orders, we will target additional investment on our street scene and initiate a further major push on our 'war on waste' with an expanded recycling service.

Our approach is built upon the success we have already achieved in these areas and the popularity of our neighbourhood focus. The next step is to integrate, focus and enhance this. With a mix of funding from the council and central government we have built up a number of different warden services on our estates, on our streets and in our parks. We propose to establish additional warden services in such key areas as Willesden, and Harlesden, and create a mobile service that can move with our crime hotspots. We will pull these services together and whilst they will continue to have their individual service remits and identities we will establish a single central control and point of public access. We will create a new joint team with Brent Police, to act proactively both to prevent and challenge anti-social behaviour. Our wardens will act as local people's eyes and ears reporting envirocrime incidents and alert our enhanced services to remove eyesores quickly and efficiently. We will increase enforcement action by appointing a number of new officers to take a proactive approach to major sources of public concern such as noise, alleyways and unadopted land.

As well as addressing nuisance and the causes of nuisance we are also determined to set in hand a series of exciting projects that will positively enhance the lives of Brent

people. We are absolutely committed to ensuring the provision of a new swimming pool in Kingsbury and to the relocation of the Grange Museum to the Willesden Library Centre. We will implement our sports strategy providing an enhanced level of facilities and support for local people to engage in sporting activity.

We take our responsibilities on waste and recycling very seriously. We have taken on board the recommendations put forward by the council's Overview Committee with the provision of a proper civic amenity site being at the core of this.

2004-5 is a year when the issues of crime and the environment will be the council's critical focus, a year when major improvements are made to the lives of local people, and where they live. Underpinning all this is our absolute commitment to service excellence to a sustained but dynamic approach to improvements across all services, supported by sound financial management, rigorous and accountable corporate governance and an approach to the constitution which allows all members to make best use of their talents.

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## About this plan

This plan is the fifth of an annual series and comes in two parts. Part one, the Performance Plan, tells you about our objectives and priorities for the coming years and reports back progress against delivering those priorities. This is part of the government's requirement for councils to provide Best Value services that are efficient, economical and effective. In order to provide Best Value to our local community we must also review our services and set targets for improvement.

The first part of the plan provides you with information about the areas where we are doing well and those where we have set priorities for improvement. These priorities take into account issues of local concern as well as national priorities set by the government. This year we have reported our performance by our Corporate Strategy themes. Where appropriate we report back on the views of others regarding our performance, particularly the results of our Comprehensive Performance Assessment undertaken in 2002.

The second part of this plan, the Performance Digest, includes details of our performance against over 100 national and local indicators. We have set out the information in tables to make it as clear as possible and to allow you to make comparisons and to see the targets for improvement that we have set ourselves. Some of the indicators show how the council is doing against other local authorities. Most of these indicators are quite detailed and rely upon precise definitions of what is to be measured – we would be happy to give you a more detailed explanation if this would help.

In this plan we have set out our priorities and targets for the coming years based on what residents and partners have said to us through consultation and what the government expects us to achieve. The following chapters tell you about our priorities, how we set about achieving them and our targets for 2004/05 and beyond.

# 1. Objectives and priorities

Our Corporate Strategy outlines Brent Council's vision, values and key priorities up to 2006. It is the council's contract with the people of Brent, setting out the main issues that will be addressed between 2002 and 2006. The full strategy is available on our website at: [www.brent.gov.uk/corporatestrategy](http://www.brent.gov.uk/corporatestrategy)

## **“Building a Better Borough”**

### **Our vision**

Brent will be a borough where all its communities enjoy a high quality of life and will be able to fully participate in society. Brent Council will have a reputation for good, democratically accountable leadership, strong partnerships and excellent services. Brent will be a borough proud of its diversity, served by an ambitious, progressive and outward looking council. Brent will be a home of choice for its diverse population and businesses.

### **Our values**

#### *Raising the quality of life*

Raising the quality of life is one of Brent Council's key aims. We are serious in our drive to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of all residents. Through service delivery and partnership we will strive to ensure that our work and that of our partners is of universal benefit. We aim to transform the environment and continuously improve the service offered to local people, whatever their age or need. We will take a focussed approach to delivering our regeneration strategy and are committed to environmental sustainability for the benefit of future generations.

#### *Serving all our communities*

Brent is a borough of many communities and cultures. We will work to ensure all Brent's diverse communities are served sensitively and effectively. We will recognise the diversity of the borough. We will ensure that we always consult residents appropriately and that they are represented by local councillors and the council to the highest standards. We will promote tolerance, understanding and community cohesion between our different communities.

#### *Developing and motivating our staff*

To achieve its aims Brent needs the highest quality staff. Our organisation will be one that shows clear leadership but works in an open and collective way. We need service areas that are dynamic and customer-focussed and service units that are entrepreneurial and empowered. An organisation that acknowledges problems, makes hard choices but learns from mistakes without blame or recrimination. We will drive forward our Improving Brent programme providing support, development opportunities and quality training for all our staff. Brent Council will be an employer of choice.



### ***Achieving service excellence***

All Brent staff, regardless of role or grade, share a commitment to providing excellent, sensitive and appropriate services. This commitment includes dedication to seeking continuous improvement and a strong belief in public service, democratically accountable local government and the rights of Brent residents both as citizens and service users.

## **Key priorities**

As well as details of our visions and values, the strategy has five crosscutting themes that were developed following consultation with Brent residents. These key areas of concern for local people are highlighted below, together with the priorities for action.

### **1 Supporting children and young people**

Brent has a young population. Nearly 29 per cent of local people are under 19 years of age and this proportion will increase over the next ten years. The council will invest in the borough's children and young people to ensure they have the best possible life chances. We want to make sure that by the age of 19 all young people will be in full time education, work or vocational training.

Priority actions:

- Early years
- Improving the life chances of vulnerable children and young people
- Health and well being
- Citizenship
- Youth activities
- Improving schools
- Recruitment and retention of staff
- Children as victims and perpetrators of crime.

### **2 Promoting quality of life & the green agenda**

The quality of the environment and access to affordable housing and public transport, leisure, cultural and sporting facilities all affect the quality of people's lives. The council intends to enhance the quality of life in Brent by creating an attractive, secure and sustainable environment, where all communities have access to varied leisure, cultural and sporting activities and quality affordable housing.

Priority actions:

- Maximise access to affordable, quality housing for all Brent residents
- Improve the quality of the local environment
- Deliver green policies in waste management and environmental design
- Work to Improve the quality of local public transport, reduce congestion and decrease the number of fatalities from traffic accidents
- Ensure a diverse range of arts, leisure, sports and cultural activities are available to all sections of the community.

### **3 Tackling crime and community safety**

Fears about the level of crime top the list of residents' concerns. The council will make Brent a safer place for local residents, visitors and businesses by combating crime, reducing the fear of crime and supporting alternative choices for individuals who may be at risk of committing crime.

Priority actions:

- Reduce the level of crime committed in Brent through implementation of the Brent crime and disorder reduction strategy.

### **4 Regeneration and priority neighbourhoods**

Brent is a borough of stark contrasts: it has both affluent suburban areas and deprived inner city areas; it is the second most ethnically diverse borough in the country; and it includes London's largest industrial estate, Park Royal. Through delivery of its Regeneration Strategy, the council will ensure that Brent provides a home of choice for its diverse population and businesses.

Priority actions:

- Reduce gaps between Brent's deprived communities
- Reduce unemployment levels across the borough to below the London average, concentrating efforts on those people most in need
- National stadium development.

### **5 Achieving service excellence**

Providing public services to a diverse, urban population with high levels of need is a complex and challenging role. Brent Council will be an outward-looking authority that strives to deliver excellent services, which are relevant to the needs and aspirations of local communities and represent value for money.

Priority actions:

- Ensure that people can access services in the way that is right for them by providing a range of customer service options including telephone, internet & personal contact
- Members and staff will be well trained and professional, with an understanding of the diverse needs of the communities of Brent
- Sustainable service and resources planning
- Strengthening corporate governance.

## **Local Strategic Partnership**

Brent's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), 'Partners for Brent' is an umbrella body which brings together the public, private, voluntary, community sectors and local communities so that different initiatives and services support each other and work together to improve the borough.

The LSP is structured around thematic priorities, closely related to the Community Plan and the council's Corporate Strategy. The LSP currently has four multi-agency, cross cutting, thematic sub-groups, covering:

- health & social care
- crime prevention & community safety
- local housing, environment & transport
- education & lifelong learning.

Partners for Brent is a dynamic and evolving partnership. It is currently reviewing the role of the partnership and its thematic sub-groups, to assist the integrated performance management of the Community Plan and Corporate Strategy and effective multi-agency delivery of shared priorities.

## **Comprehensive Performance Assessment**

The Audit Commission confirmed the progress being made by Brent Council in its latest Comprehensive Performance Assessment score for the authority. The assessment put Brent at the top end of the 'fair' category, and 'in a good position to improve the services it provides to local people'. Overall service performance was rated two out of four, and the council scored three out of four for the way it is run.

The Audit Commission has recognised the council's progress to improve the key priority areas of children's social services; sports, leisure and cultural services; revenue and benefits; and, recycling and waste management. It has also recognised our excellent work on housing and anti-social behaviour.

For more information visit: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/cpa>

Some of the areas for improvement identified in the assessment report include the following:

- improving the operation and impact of the scrutiny and overview process
- enhanced briefing, support and training for elected members
- stronger performance management arrangements, including 'vital signs' indicators of corporate health
- improvements to management information and service monitoring arrangements
- closer co-ordination of service and financial strategies
- increasing our focus on income generation
- action to tackle under-performance in weaker areas, such as sports and leisure, revenues and benefits, waste recycling.

We met with the Audit Commission in February 2003 to discuss the detailed content of our Improvement Plan and agreed six improvement priorities. These are shown in the table below. Our actions to improve our performance in these six priority areas are discussed in chapter two, along with progress in delivering our other strategic priorities.

## Corporate priorities

- Develop the capacity of staff and members through focused training, the Improving Brent programme and achieving Investors in People for the whole council.
- Strengthen performance management culture, through Best Value, performance management procedures and improved monitoring and scrutiny.

## Service priorities

- Implement the improvement plan for children's social services.
- Improve leadership and service outcomes in sports, leisure and cultural facilities.
- Improve the performance of the council's revenue and benefits service to increase efficiency and provide a high standard of customer service.
- Improve the council's performance in recycling and waste management

## MORI Best Value Survey

The government has specified that local authorities must collect and report on a number of resident satisfaction performance indicators once every three years. The 2003/04 satisfaction survey (the second satisfaction survey – the first one having taken place in 2000/01) was undertaken by MORI between October 2003 and January 2004. The survey looks at seven best value performance indicators. These indicators encompass fourteen different measures, including overall satisfaction with the council, service satisfaction, quality of life in Brent and quality of life issues as well as current themes in London and in local government generally.

The government set out in strict terms how the questionnaire survey of local people will be conducted and which questions will be asked. This is to allow them to measure the satisfaction survey performance indicators and to be able to make comparisons between authorities (see table below). In order to comply with these requirements, some questions were asked about services which are not the responsibility of the council, for example bus services. The survey asks people for their opinions regardless of whether they have used the relevant council services or not, and these general satisfaction levels are reported in the performance indicators. The results are also broken down to differentiate between users and non-users of the services asked about in the survey. Satisfaction rates for users of individual council services are significantly higher than for all respondents, indicating that the views of those who use council services are more positive than those who do not.

The BVPI data is included in the performance digest at the back of this report, however the findings from the survey have been summarised by MORI and some of the key points are reproduced below:

- Almost half (48 per cent) of residents say they are satisfied with the way the authority runs things overall, while 22 per cent say they are dissatisfied. Levels of satisfaction are consistent with those found in 2000/1 (45 per cent satisfied, 23 per cent dissatisfied). On this overall 'corporate health' measurement, Brent's rating (48 per cent) is slightly below the London average (52 per cent), and the council ranks seventeenth out of 29 boroughs overall.

- Priorities for the area centre on 'liveability' issues; with 58 per cent of residents feeling more should be done to reduce the levels of crime in Brent and 41 per cent feeling that more should be done to improve the cleanliness of the streets. Both of these local priorities are reflected in the council's Corporate Strategy and are reported on in chapter two of this report.
- On balance, Brent residents tend to feel that they are kept well informed by the council. Over half (55 per cent) say the council keeps them well informed, while 45 per cent say they are given at best a limited amount of information. This is an area where comparative data from other London boroughs proves particularly helpful; these findings place the council in the top half for London boroughs.
- Residents think that many aspects relating to quality of life in Brent are getting worse. On the other hand, there is a general sense that many specific council services have improved over the last three years. Specifically local recycling facilities, doorstep recycling and collection of household waste.

The satisfaction scores on the fourteen BVPI measures together with our London rankings are set out in the table below.

BVPI No.	Indicator	2000/2001	2003/2004	London Ranking 2003/04
3	Satisfaction with overall service provided by authority	45%	48%	17
4	Satisfaction of complainants with complaints handling	28%	29%	15
89	Percentage of people satisfied with cleanliness of streets	47%	51%	13
90	Satisfaction with household waste collection	74%	73%	14
90	Satisfaction with recycling facilities	54%	51%	18
90	Satisfaction with local tips	43%	50%	23
103	Satisfaction with provision of public transport information	45%	50%	14
104	Satisfaction with local bus services	37%	48%	28
119	Satisfaction with the local authority's cultural and recreational activities overall	43%	30%	22
119	Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities	41%	38%	23
119	Satisfaction with libraries	56%	56%	24
119	Satisfaction Museums/galleries	30%	25%	21
119	Satisfaction with Theatres/Concert Halls	N/A	29%	20
119	Satisfaction with parks and open spaces	59%	66%	17

*Note: the figures in the table above are for all respondents (users and non-users).*

While Brent Council has improved the overall level of satisfaction and keeps most people well informed, in general the satisfaction figures are still slightly below London average. There is improvement but the rate of increase is slow and a cause for concern.



## Strategy into action

Each year the council's key strategic aims and priorities are converted into actions through its budget and service planning process. Key strategic aims are derived from the corporate strategy, community plan, CPA improvement plan and government requirements. The council's Executive produces an annual plan listing the action it intends to take that year to meet the key priorities and progress on the previous year's action. The Improving Brent Action Plan 2004-2006 draws together the different strands of improvement activity taking place across Brent Council and sets out a programme of further actions up to December 2006. The action plan is discussed in more detail below.

Chapter two of this performance plan is set out under the five key themes of the corporate strategy. Under each theme you will find information relating to our progress, both in terms of successful implementation of parts of the strategy and remaining priorities.

## Improving Brent - excellent services for a diverse community

The Improving Brent Action Plan, 2004-2006, builds on the Improving Brent programme and outlines the practical steps which we need to take to secure an 'excellent' rating in the 2006 CPA process. At the core of this action plan is the focus on delivery of the 2002-06 corporate strategy.

The action plan identifies the different drivers of continuous improvement in Brent Council, including:

- Our Corporate Strategy, 2002-2006;
- Improving Brent programme, since September 2000;
- The CPA inspection regime and improvement planning;
- The organisation's commitment to tackling under-performance;
- The recommendations made by external inspectorates, including Ofsted and the Audit Commission;
- Strengthened performance management arrangements;
- Our determination to be a customer driven organisation;
- The promotion and mainstreaming of diversity and respect for service users and staff;
- The development of staff and managerial capacity within the organisation;
- Effective support and development of councillors and the democratic process; and
- The drive to ensure that by 2006, no performance measure in Brent is in the lowest quartile of performance for London Boroughs.

Mainstreaming service improvement is a key message of the action plan, which states that, *'the pursuit of excellence is part of the core business of every service unit and service area in Brent Council.'* Summaries of key improvement targets are provided for Social Services, Environmental Services, Housing Services, Education, Arts and Libraries and the corporate centre of the council. The plan also summarises targets under the following themes:

- *Targeted improvement activity* – as part of the 2002 CPA process, we are committed to improving performance in sports and leisure, waste, recycling and streetcare, and revenues and benefits;

- *Strengthening performance management* – over the past year the council has made significant progress in establishing the right performance management structures. Across the board improvements in performance indicators are now being seen, particularly in the council's top 30 'vital signs' indicators. However, we still have much to do to really become a performance driven organisation – the targets set under this theme are intended to truly embed performance management within Brent's working culture;
- *Creating a customer driven organisation* - good standards of customer service are the hallmark of an outward facing, customer led organisation, which plans and delivers its services with the needs of the user, not the provider, at the forefront. Raising customer service standards is a central component of the Improving Brent programme and is vital to improving the performance of all service delivery activity. We aim to achieve a 'right first time' approach and targets have been set to ensure that all staff, managers and contactors have the right understanding and skills to serve the needs of our diverse community;
- *Promoting and mainstreaming diversity* - Brent Council is proud of its diversity and the richly multi-cultural community it serves. Providing mainstream services that are inclusive, responsive and accessible to all sections of the community is at the heart of being an excellent local authority, together with the promotion of diversity in the composition of our workforce to better reflect the local population.
- *Increasing staff and managerial capacity* - the overwhelming majority of the council's resources are invested in staffing and our performance is the sum of the skills, creativity and commitment of the officers and councillors who work for the council. Investing in staff and the human resources structures that support effective staff management is at the forefront of our approach to achieving excellent, high performing staff and services. Targets have been set to ensure that Brent Council can demonstrate that it invests in its staff and is seen as an employer of choice.
- *Supporting the democratic process* - central to the performance of the council is an efficient and effective democratic process. Targets have been set to ensure that local democracy is promoted and supported in Brent.

To achieve excellence and deliver the corporate strategy by 2006, the council's senior managers will work with its political leadership to ensure that resources are available, progress is widely communicated, and achievements reviewed and evaluated. The Improving Brent Steering Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, will oversee implementation of the plan.

## 2. Performance

### Introduction

This part of the performance plan has been structured to reflect the five themes of the council's corporate strategy. Each theme is further divided into the key activities the council undertakes in that area.

Under each theme you will find summary information about how the council has performed against its objectives and priorities. Where appropriate we have provided information about independent inspections and audits of our services, such as undertaken by Ofsted. We have also discussed the outcomes from some of our Best Value reviews where these relate to the priorities covered.

### Statement of contracts

The council has undertaken an exercise to identify all service contracts awarded during the 2003/04 financial year and believes that there have been no relevant contracts awarded which have involved a transfer of staff and required compliance with the requirements of the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.



## 2.1 Supporting children and young people

### Education

#### Raising Standards of Education

Raising standards of education and improving the performance of our schools are key, ongoing priorities for the Education, Arts & Libraries Department.

Pupils take tests and are assessed by their teachers at the ages of 7 (Key Stage 1), 11 (Key Stage 2) and 14 (Key Stage 3) and take GCSE and GNVQ examinations when they are 16 (Key Stage 4).

The percentage of 7 year olds achieving level 2 or above at Key Stage 1 has fallen slightly this year, especially in writing which also included a spelling test for the first time. The table below shows current attainment levels against those achieved in 2000 and shows the national average for all three years.

Key Stage 1	Reading		Writing		Maths		Science	
	Brent	National	Brent	National	Brent	National	Brent	National
2000	82.9%	83%	83.9%	84%	88.9%	90%	85.6%	88%
2002	84.5%	83%	86.3%	86%	90.4%	90%	88.3%	89%
2003	82.8%	84.5%	79.5%	81.6%	89.1%	90.7%	85.8%	89.9%

The 2003 Key Stage 2 (11 year olds) results fell in mathematics and science compared to last year. In English however, efforts focused on raising standards have led to Brent now being above the national average despite having a high proportion of children with English as a second language. The table below shows current attainment levels compared with levels achieved in 2000, together with national averages.

Key Stage 2	English		Maths		Science	
	Brent	National	Brent	National	Brent	National
2000	73.4%	75%	72%	72%	82.8%	85%
2002	74.6%	75%	75.8%	73%	85.2%	86%
2003	76.5%	72.0%	72.0%	72.7%	83.0%	87.1%

The continuous improvement over recent years in attainments at Key Stage 3 (14 year olds) has been maintained in 2003 although we are still somewhat behind national averages. Raising the attainment of pupils at Key Stage 3 is a priority. It forms part of the council's 'Public Service Agreement' (PSA) with central Government and is supported through the new Key Stage 3 Strategy and Leading Edge partnerships. Encouragingly, the progress made between national tests for 11 and 14 year olds in Brent is amongst the best in London and above the national average.

Between 2002 and 2003, there was an improvement of 1.3 percentage points in the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A\*-C. Although Brent is below the national average it is on par with the London average and has higher levels of achievement than most of our Statistical Neighbours. For five or more GCSE passes at grades A\*- G. there was also an improvement of 1.3 percentage points, bringing Brent almost up to the national average and above that of our peers. The average points

score, which records attainment at all levels, is now 1.3 points below the national average, an improvement on 2002.

Overall, education standards shown in the tests and public examinations continue to rise and Brent has largely met the targets for 2003 contained in the new Education Development Plan for 2002-2007. More rapid improvement will be required at all key stages if the new targets are to be met in 2004.

Historically, the level of achievement of children in care and pupils from certain ethnic minority groups has been below the average level of achievement. Reducing the gap between these under-performing groups and the Brent average is a specific priority.

### **Beacon Status and Leading Edge Partnerships**

In recent years, three secondary and five primary schools in Brent were awarded 'Beacon' status by central government. This means that they were identified as being amongst the best performing schools in the country and they represent examples of best practice. They offer advice and support on a wide range of issues to other schools in Brent that perform less well.

Following on from the success of the Beacon Schools initiative, which will be phased out by August 2005, Government has introduced the Leading Edge Partnerships Programme. Secondary schools at the cutting edge of innovation and collaboration have been selected from amongst the country's best schools to extend and spread excellence so that standards of teaching and learning continue to improve in schools across the country. Two Brent secondary schools, out of only 103 nationally, have been selected to take part in the Leading Edge Partnerships Programme.

### **Pupils out of School**

In recent years we have worked hard to reduce the number of pupils excluded from school. This number of permanently excluded Brent pupils dropped progressively since 1995, from 165 to 75 in 2003/04.

In order to increase the level of alternative tuition available to those pupils that are permanently excluded, we opened a new Pupil Referral Unit in September 2002. This has increased the level of alternative tuition available to these pupils. We also continue to focus our efforts on placing excluded pupils back into mainstream education wherever possible.

### **Funding our schools**

In 2003/04, under new school funding arrangements, the council has not only set its school budget above the level of funding expected by Central Government but is also one of a minority of councils both in London and Nationally to have delegated and devolved to schools the level of budget provision expected by Central Government.

Providing adequate funding for our schools remains a priority. We will strive to continue to set school budgets above the level of funding required by Central Government and to delegate to schools the expected level of funding provision.

### **Ofsted Inspection 2003**

An Ofsted inspection of Brent Local Education Authority took place in January 2003. The inspectors reported that since the previous inspection in 1998 Brent has made

highly satisfactory progress in improving the quality of service it provides to schools and in carrying out the recommendations of the previous inspection.

Many of the recommendations for improvement within the report matched our own self-evaluation and work on most of them is already underway. We have published an action plan covering all of the recommendations in detail. A full copy of the inspection report and our action plan is available on our website: [www.brent.gov.uk/education](http://www.brent.gov.uk/education)

### Special educational needs

Following the Best Value Review of special educational needs (SEN) in 2003, we have produced a document entitled 'Special Educational Provision in Brent: The Case for Future Change'. It sets out the council's vision for the future of SEN provision and has been circulated widely for consultation. The consultation will inform the development of detailed proposals to improve and expand provision within Brent for our children with special educational needs.

**Want to know more?**

**Education Information Service**

**020 8937 3000**

[www.brent.gov.uk/education](http://www.brent.gov.uk/education)

### Children looked after

The services we provide for children looked after by the council are the most important responsibility we have as an organisation. Investment in children's social services has been increased to raise professional standards and improve the quality of care provided to the most vulnerable children in our society. Our performance in this area is closely measured and we continue to make progress in identifying and monitoring vulnerable children.

An inspection of Children's Services by the SSI in 2003, noted that services are continuing to improve, and the Social Services Star Rating for Brent published in November 2003 indicated that we have promising prospects for improvement. There have been improvements in the stability of placements of Looked After children and in the employment and educational outcomes for care leavers, as well as the educational qualifications of children looked after.

The percentage of children looked after by Brent Council with three or more placements during the last year has dropped consistently from 23 per cent in 2000/01 to 15.3 per cent in 2003/04. Low figures indicate good performance, and the Department of Health has recognised our continuing good performance.

As part of the council's local public service agreement (LPSA) negotiations with the government, 'employment, education and training for care leavers aged 19' has been included as one of 12 targets within the agreement. Measures are being put in place to meet tough new targets set for 2005/06, and monitoring of performance has shown definite improvement over the last two years.

**Want to know more?**

**Social Services Quality and Support**

**020 8937 4143**

[www.brent.gov.uk/socialservices](http://www.brent.gov.uk/socialservices)

## 2.2 Promoting quality of life and the green agenda

### Environment

#### Investing in the public realm

Improving the quality of the public realm makes a real contribution to the quality of everyone's life. We are close to completing the renewal of all our street lights. The proportion of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people has risen from 27 per cent four years ago to 96 per cent. We are now committed to a big programme of improvements to footways, roads and parks over the next three years.

#### Transforming transport

We have made good progress in making our roads safer. There has been a further steep fall in both the number of people killed and seriously injured in road accidents and the number slightly injured. We have made this a priority in our local Public Service Agreement and should meet the national targets well ahead of the 2010 deadline.

#### Protecting the public

Fly tipping, graffiti, abandoned vehicles, noise nuisance, dog fouling and litter are just some of the problems that degrade the environment and make people feel unhappy and unsafe. This issue has become a priority for the council's Environmental Services, who have cut red tape, react more quickly and are developing preventative measures. We have improved the time we take to clear reported fly tips, improved the clearance of graffiti, and the number of vehicles abandoned in the borough dropped sharply last year. Our graffiti-removal programme has led to a 66 per cent reduction in the return of graffiti in targeted areas. Our work on envirocrime has won a national award for its success.

We are extending the popular street warden and park warden schemes to new areas and are putting extra money into street cleaning, clearing graffiti and enforcement against envirocrime. We hope to see real improvements over the next year and have included targets for improving the street scene in our local Public Service Agreement.

#### The war on waste

We have made real progress in the last year in increasing the proportion of household waste that is recycled. This is one of the six top areas for improvement identified in the Action Plan following our Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

We improved the percentage recycled to 8.6 per cent last year from 6.7 per cent the year before. We still have a long way to go to reach the nationally set target of 18 per cent in 2005-06. We are extending doorstep and local recycling to almost all properties in the borough this year and are extending the collection of garden waste for composting which we began last year. We are also opening a new recycling centre with much better facilities than we have had before.

#### Sport and leisure

The Audit Commission inspected our sports and leisure services in 2002 and found they were poor, with poor prospects for improvement. Improving sports services is one of the six targets from our Comprehensive Performance Assessment Action Plan.

Since then we have developed a framework for sports and leisure which is leading towards an integrated strategy. We have reorganised the sports service and the number of visits to sports and leisure facilities went up by more than 12 per cent last year. Increasing participation in sport and physical exercise in priority neighbourhoods is being negotiated as a target in our local Public Service Agreement.

<b>Want to know more?</b>	<b>Environmental Services</b>
	<b>020 8937 5004</b> <a href="http://www.brent.gov.uk/environment">www.brent.gov.uk/environment</a>

## Libraries, arts and culture

### Libraries

The Library Service now meets 19 of the 26 criteria for the national Public Library Standards and the number of visitors and items issued in libraries continues to grow, by 11 per cent and 1.6 per cent respectively. Since December 2002, libraries opening hours have increased by 29 per cent across the whole service and over 30 per cent more children took part in the Summer Reading scheme in 2003 compared to the previous year. Spending on books and other items has increased by over 30 per cent since 2002 and customer satisfaction has increased from 81.5 per cent to 85.3 per cent in the last year

### Arts and culture

Brent Council and Kensington and Chelsea have collaborated to provide an on-line arts information service called 'The SEER' ([www.theseer.info](http://www.theseer.info)) which will support the creative needs of both boroughs. An estimated 53,000 people attended events within the 2003-4 Festivals programme, which will see further improvements in 2004-5. The council has consulted widely on Brent's Cultural Strategy and the Wembley Public Art programme. 2004 will see Cultural Services launch both the strategy and the public art programme.

<b>Want to know more?</b>	<b>Education Information Service</b>
	<b>020 8937 3000</b> <a href="http://www.brent.gov.uk/education">www.brent.gov.uk/education</a>

## Housing

Under the Government's CPA process, Brent Council's Housing Service was awarded the maximum score of 4.

### Brent Housing Partnership

Brent Housing Partnership (BHP) was established in October 2002 as an 'Arms Length Management Organisation' to manage the council's housing stock. BHP has been inspected by the Audit Commission and received the top rating of three stars, with excellent prospects for improvement. The key objective for Brent Housing Partnership is



to meet the government's 'Decent Homes Standard' by 2010, and significant progress has been made this year with 871 dwellings brought up to the standard by the end of March 2004. The full programme will bring a total of 5,300 properties up to decent homes standard by 2006. Performance improvement can also be seen in tenant satisfaction levels which have risen significantly during 2003/04. Amongst key priorities for BHP over the next year will be reviewing and improving services to vulnerable residents and ensuring implementation of the three star retention action plan.

## **Supporting People**

An Audit Commission review of the Supporting People service at the end of 2003/04, gave the service two stars with excellent prospects for improvement. This is an extremely good result for a service in a new and demanding area and is the best outcome achieved by any similar service in the country so far.

## **Housing Resource Centre**

The Brent Homelessness Strategy, published in July 2003, contains a range of key initiatives designed to prevent homelessness, minimise rough sleeping and the use of hotel accommodation, and improve services to all homeless households.

Assisted by additional government funding, the Housing Resource Centre has achieved the very tough government target relating to the use of 'bed and breakfast' accommodation – that, by March 2004, no homeless household with children should be placed in bed and breakfast, except in an emergency and then for a maximum of six weeks.

## **Private Housing Services**

Addressing homelessness has led to renewed emphasis on filling empty properties. Brent has sustained one of the largest private sector capital programmes in London over the last four years, including by far the largest programme to tackle empty property. Now new, tougher targets for 2005/06 have been negotiated through our Public Service Agreement with the government. This is a major part of the strategy to reduce homelessness and therefore to reducing bed and breakfast use, neighbourhood regeneration and local environmental priorities.

## **Strategic Housing Function**

Together with the other West London boroughs, Brent participated in the publication of the West London Housing Strategy in July 2003. Since then, the service has focused on joint working to deliver the objectives of the strategy, mainly through a number of sub-regional working groups. In particular, Brent has the lead role in the Affordable Housing Group. The West London boroughs are working with the GLA on a pan-London study of housing need, which will consolidate the work done by individual boroughs, for example through our own recent Housing Needs and Stock Condition Survey, to provide a complete picture of need at the regional and sub-regional level.

**Want to know more?**

**Housing Policy & Research Team**

**020 8937 2336**

**[www.brent.gov.uk/housing](http://www.brent.gov.uk/housing)**

## Adult Social Services

The council plays an important role in influencing the quality of life for older people, disabled people and those with mental health problems, particularly in helping people to live at home wherever possible. We aim to ensure services are focused on meeting the needs of users and carers, that there is fair access to care services, and that users are involved in shaping services wherever possible.

The 2003 Social Services Star Rating for Brent said that we are viewed as having promising prospects for improvement for services provided to adults

### Older people

The number of older people helped to live in their own homes has increased in 2003/04. In delivering national and local policies to promote independence, the numbers of older people helped to live at home and receiving community based services has increased. As a result of this, the numbers of older people in residential care continues to drop (see below).

There has been a further reduction in the number of older people admitted to residential and nursing care per 10,000 population aged 65 and over in Brent. Good performance is generally low, and the number of people we have admitted to residential and nursing care has been falling for the last three years.

### Adults with physical disabilities helped to live at home

Over the last four years we have shown continuous improvement in our performance to help adults with physical disabilities to live at home. Our performance has improved from under 1.5 per cent in 2000/01 to 3.8 per cent in 2003/04. This reflects the work of Brent Social Services to deliver the national and local priorities of promoting independence. This increased figure reflects improvements in both overall performance and in data collection.

### Performance management

During the last year, Social Services have successfully introduced a number of key information management initiatives, including:

- a new electronic client index that will hold records on all case information
- a new electronic finance system rolled out across the department
- the new HR database – HR pro
- a new IT system for the Joint Equipment Stores

All of the above are designed to improve the quality of information held by Social Services and to allow more effective retrieval and analysis to improve the quality of information used by senior managers to further improve services.

**Want to know more?**

**Social Services Quality and Support**

**020 8937 4143**

**[www.brent.gov.uk/socialservices](http://www.brent.gov.uk/socialservices)**

## 2.3 Regeneration and priority neighbourhoods

### Employment

For the second year running Brent Council has been recognised for its regeneration work through the Beacon Council scheme. In 2003/04 we attained Beacon Status for 'Removing Barriers to Work'. The programmes aimed at tackling worklessness have included Brent in2work, Brent Business Broker and Refugees into Jobs. Some of the key achievements from these programmes are listed below:

- Since its launch in August 2002 Brent in2work, together with the Building One Stop Shop, has supported over 480 Brent residents into employment and has helped a further 300 long-term unemployed people. Brent in2work now aims to create 250 learning opportunities, 975 employment opportunities and will support 30 SMEs.
- Brent Business Broker was launched in May 2003 to involve local businesses in Neighbourhood Renewal. To date, 40 businesses and 75 business employees have contributed time and expertise, 17 residents have been helped into employment and 400 young people have been given job focussed training from employers.
- Refugees into Jobs has been running since 1997 and has helped over 100 refugee professionals, such as doctors, into employment and have started a programme to help refugee teachers. Targets set for the next two years include reaching 400 new clients, providing 800 advice sessions and helping 80 refugees into employment.

### Vision for a new Wembley

The council has set out a 'Vision for a New Wembley' which aims to ensure that regeneration goes beyond the stadium and encompasses the whole of the area providing high quality leisure, retail, housing, office, educational, civic and cultural facilities which embrace and celebrate Brent's multicultural communities. The council is actively using its influence, statutory powers and community leadership role to take action directly, attract investment, or work with others such as the LDA and transport agencies to realise the Vision and all its components. The main areas of progress are summarised below:

- Construction of the new National Stadium is currently ahead of schedule with anticipated completion in late-2005 and work is well under way on capacity improvement for Wembley stations, upgrading of road and pedestrian access routes and discussion with local communities to identify appropriate event parking arrangements.
- The council's Planning Committee have now considered and agreed the submission of major 'mixed-use' plans for land immediately surrounding the Stadium, the 'link' area to the High Road and Central Square. These include over 3,700 residential units, significant retail, leisure, office and community uses plus major public realm infrastructure, and represent a significant next phase in delivering the Vision for a new Wembley.
- Schemes to support and engage with local people have been developed to maximise the opportunities that the regeneration of Wembley will offer. Employment and training programmes developed with educational institutions,



private companies and other agencies are helping local people access new jobs, both in the construction and operation phases.

## Neighbourhood renewal

Through targeting regeneration in our most deprived areas we are now beginning to see progress in St. Raphael's, Brentfield, Harlesden, Stonebridge and the South Kilburn New Deal for Communities area.

Brent was awarded £2,279,000 from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for 2003/04 and the same level of funding will apply to 2004/05. During 2002, in line with government advice, a 'plan driven' process was adopted by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), this ensures that local people are at the centre of diagnosing the key issues and prescribing the solutions for their neighbourhoods. The LSP allocates NRF expenditure each year through the approval of each of the Neighbourhood Action Plans and it has agreed a rolling programme of activity, based on the limited amount of resources available to it.

Two locally based Neighbourhood Teams have been established in St Raphael's and Brentfield, and a team for Harlesden and Stonebridge. The teams are responsible for working with local people and preparing Neighbourhood Action Plans. These plans clearly set out the priority issues to be addressed, the projects to address them and an appropriate level of funding. The teams are responsible for identifying appropriate delivery organisations, consortia and partnerships for each project. Finally the teams have a key role to play in terms of continually widening participation in the process.

Of the 2004/5 NRF funding allocation for Brent, £150,000 has been agreed by the LSP to begin activity in the only priority neighbourhood not yet covered by a team - Church End and Roundwood.

**Want to know more?**

**Policy & Regeneration Unit**

**020 8937 1030**

**[www.brent.gov.uk/regeneration](http://www.brent.gov.uk/regeneration)**

## 2.4 Tackling crime and community safety

### Introduction

The Brent Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2002-05 sets out seven key objectives designed to tackle crime and reduce the fear of crime. The strategy is being delivered in partnership by the council, police, fire service, probation service and neighbourhood regeneration projects. The first annual report (2002-03) on progress to deliver the strategy has been published and is available at: [www.brent.gov.uk/crimezone](http://www.brent.gov.uk/crimezone). The council's PSA negotiations with the government have a strong community safety focus, with targets negotiated for robbery, burglary and fire-related crime.

### Performance against our seven key objectives

#### Reduce gun crime

Gun crime offences have reduced in 2003/4 by 25.8 per cent compared to the previous 12 months. Police figures for March 2004 show that on percentage change Brent is the 6th best in London. There has been greater community engagement on all aspects of the gun crime agenda, with the police working with the council and supported by the community.

#### Reduce residential burglary

There has been a 4.5 per cent increase in residential burglaries in 2003/04, which follows a 6.6 per cent drop in 2002/03. Despite this rise, targets for anti-burglary activities were met in the year, including:

- 200 residential dwellings secured to British Standard levels;
- 20 new Neighbourhood Watches established in the borough (over half in burglary hot spots); and
- 6 press releases were issued providing timely advice to residents such as advice on illuminating homes and taking precautions during Diwali.

#### Reduce street robbery

Street Crime has reduced by 0.2 per cent from 2002/3 to 2003/4 against a target reduction of 15 per cent. Although challenging targets have not been reached this year, targeted actions have achieved success, and have included:

- increased police visibility at train stations and schools;
- establishment of the Brent Council-run warden service in Wembley. This has improved the complete service offered to residents, raises authority presence in the area and also targets offenders;
- the Community Safety Bus was successfully used to distribute anti-robbery advice to residents. Over 5,000 leaflets were distributed and over 500 personal attack alarms were given to vulnerable people.

#### Reduce violent crime

Violent crime has increased by 17 per cent over the last year. Despite this increase, activities have been focussed on improving our understanding and evidence of domestic

violence which is now informing the development of a strategy for addressing this serious issue. Progress has also been made to address hate crime, including racial harassment, and to tackle known under-reporting through initiatives such as the 'third-party reporting' project.

### **Reduce crime committed by children and young people and against children and young people**

For crimes committed by children and young people, there have been decreases in robbery, burglary, violence and drug related offences but an increase in vehicle related crime. The total number of young offenders is decreasing and partnership efforts are continuing to target persistent offenders. Activities to reduce re-offending have included improving employment opportunities for young offenders, using restorative justice techniques and the implementation of the Local Intervention Fire Education (LIFE) programme for at risk young people. Work has also continued to tackle victimisation among young people and children including better evidence of the extent of the issue, work with Victim Support and identifying areas of safe play.

### **Reduce drug and alcohol abuse**

Partnership work to address the prevention and treatment of drug and alcohol abuse continues to make progress with targets being met for the number of adults and young people receiving treatment via the Drug Action Team.

### **Reduce fear of crime through regeneration**

Reducing the fear of crime is a key objective of the local partnership. Key targets were set for anti social behaviour, fire related criminal activity and repeat victimisation of small retailers in Church Road, Harlesden. The outcomes are listed below:

- There has been a burglary, robbery, theft, criminal damage and fraud reduction of 90-95 per cent among the small retailers in deprived areas who were beneficiaries of a small grant programme,
- The target for Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (an informal mechanism used to address problematic behaviour before going to the court for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order) has been exceeded,
- Up to December 2003 there were two fire related fatalities, 29 injuries, and 721 cases of arson,
- Ten wardens are based at Wembley Police Station, and two at Willesden Police Station
- A team of three council officers has been established to deal with anti-social behaviour, and the issuing of anti-social behaviour orders
- Stage one of Operation Cubit has been completed to remove unlicensed and unroadworthy vehicles from the streets
- The Wembley Crime Action Zone Safer Streets Project saw work undertaken around training, evidence gathering and publicity
- Safe Haven Project has led to mainstream activities around domestic violence as well as successful targeted community safety action by the police, council and fire service.

**Want to know more?**

**Community Safety Team**

**020 8937 1058**

**[www.brent.gov.uk/crime](http://www.brent.gov.uk/crime)**

## 2.5 Achieving service excellence

### Introduction

Providing public services to a diverse, urban population with high levels of need is a complex and challenging role. Brent Council aims to be an outward-looking authority that strives to deliver excellent services, which are relevant to the needs and aspirations of local communities and represent value for money. These aims require investment in the corporate infrastructure of the council, providing quality training to staff and members, ensuring we have the best information on which to base decisions and work in the most creative ways to solve the problems of modern urban life.

### Customer access

We will ensure that people can access services in the way that is right for them by providing a range of customer service options, including telephone, internet and personal contact.

#### **Extended access to council services and high standards of customer care**

Key improvement in the last year have included:

- A major expansion of the Kilburn One Stop Shop with very positive public feedback and high levels of use.
- A major increase in library opening hours plus large increase in public use.
- An on-going programme to raise customer service standards across the council
- Ongoing improvements in complaints handling and addressing the underlying causes
- The implementation of a Customer Relationship Management System to raise standards of customer service by improving consistency and follow through

#### **Accessing services and information through the Brent website**

The Brent website has been awarded 'transactional status' and is in the top 20 Local Government sites. On-line facilities now include Frequently Asked Questions, payments, service requests and email alerts for local events - 73 per cent of service transactions are now available on-line.

MORI survey results show that one third of all Brent residents over 16 have accessed the council website and 87 per cent of these rate it easy to use. Despite these encouraging figures, the council continues to take steps to open up electronic access to council services and information – a major campaign to encourage web access has been undertaken, and free internet access points are now available at 11 libraries and 21 North West London On-line centres in community facilities.

#### **Improved access for all**

Improving and enabling access to council services and information for all members of Brent society is a major driver for us. Some of our key achievements to date are listed below:

- We have now invested £3.25 million in disabled access improvements to council buildings and services including One Stop Shops, Libraries, Cemeteries and Adult Education. 45 per cent of council buildings now meet accessibility standards (this covers all the major buildings used by the public) and this will rise to 65 per cent by the end of 2004
- 95 per cent of public road crossings are now disability friendly
- All staff have now completed a common disability awareness programme
- An improved translation service is offered for all council forms and publications for any language
- The council's website has been redeveloped to conform to national accessibility standards and is now speech enabled
- Email enquiries and service requests are being increasingly used by the public
- We have gained the Disability Symbol Award
- Language cards and deaf peoples cards have been introduced
- We have a policy to recruit locally more customer services staff with multiple languages

## Diversity

We are continuing to put diversity at the heart of what we do. We are driving the Brent diversity agenda forward through our Diversity Reference Group and Leadership Group on Equality and Diversity supported by the Corporate Diversity Team. We have published a new Race Equality Scheme for 2004-2006 including reporting back on the 2003/04 scheme. We have also achieved level 1 of the Equality Standard for Local Government and are working towards Level 2.

A new forum for Brent's black and minority population to speak out about local issues was launched in October 2003. The Black and Ethnic Minority Consultative Forum meets four times a year and the work of the forum is managed by a steering group made up of members from the local community.

## Investing in our staff

In January 2004, Brent Council was awarded 'Investors in People' (IiP) status - underlining the progress that the council continues to make in developing and supporting staff. The corporate assessment has led to the development of an action plan to ensure that the council can build on this success and prepare effectively for the next IiP council-wide review.

The Improving Brent Action Plan has seven complementary themes including two which link directly to the CPA improvement plan – 'strengthening performance management' and 'increasing staff and managerial capacity'. These two key areas for action are discussed below.

### Increasing staff and managerial capacity

A number of organisation-wide staff development programmes have been put in place during 2003/04. These have focussed primarily on improving capacity at middle and



senior management levels but have also covered general employee performance and development. The programmes are discussed below:

- 'Leadership for Excellence' is the council's management development programme for senior managers. It has been designed with three key objectives in mind:
  - Building capacity within senior management,
  - Strengthening a culture of performance management,
  - Developing senior managers and equipping them to apply for, and be successful in attaining top management positions, with the aim of increasing BME staff in these top level roles.
- 'Pathways to Success' programme for BME middle managers, and 'Making Progress' programme, for BME senior managers, are being developed for delivery in 2004/05. They have been designed to:
  - offer middle managers from BME backgrounds comprehensive management development to support them in reaching senior management positions in the future.
  - address under-representation and support the progress of BME staff into assistant director and director posts in the future.
- Management development programme for managers - to complement service area programmes and ensure middle managers are equipped with the skills necessary to properly performance manage.
- Equalities training for all staff - a programme of equalities training has been run across the entire organisation tailored for different levels of staff, it has been designed to:
  - increase staff awareness of equalities and diversity issues
  - make services more sensitive to local needs and,
  - make all staff aware of current equalities legislation.
- Corporate induction programmes - a systematic and comprehensive induction programme has been operating in 2003/04 to ensure new staff are well informed about the council and its processes at an early stage in their employment.

## **Performance Management**

Key HR actions designed to contribute towards improved performance management are highlighted below:

- Employee performance and development scheme – has been designed to assess employee performance and engender a clear focus on employee learning and development.
- 'Managing sickness absence' - the new staff sickness procedure was implemented on 1st May 2004. It has been designed specifically to be an enabling tool for managers to properly manage sickness absence and improve attendance at work thus enabling incremental progression in achieving performance targets.
- The new HR management information system has been rolled out across the organisation in 2003/04 with the objective of enabling better resource and workforce capacity planning.

## **Benefits Service**

Since the Benefits Service came back under Brent Council in October 2002 the service has been set the challenge of removing the backlog of outstanding work as a priority. Over the last 18 months the backlog has fallen from approximately 18,500 outstanding

items to under 6,000 – a reduction of two-thirds. Speed of processing new claims has also improved from an average of 89 days in 2002/03 to 56 days in 2003/04 – a performance improvement within the target set of 60 days. With backlogs clearing we are aiming to process new claims within an average 50 days for the 2004/5 financial year. Accuracy of processing has been maintained above target at 97 per cent. However, we have not met our targets for processing changes in circumstance, renewals assessed before expiry and recovery of overpayments. In 2004/05, with backlogs clearing, we can turn our attention to meeting all our challenging targets.

Improving our benefits service is a serious challenge and a key priority for the council because of the impact it has on some of the most vulnerable members of our society. Our strategy for improvement and our performance has been closely scrutinised by the council's Performance & Finance Select Committee. The council's Public Service Agreement negotiations also include a benefits related target.

**Want to know more?**

**Policy & Regeneration Unit**

**020 8937 1030**

**[www.brent.gov.uk](http://www.brent.gov.uk)**

## Glossary

<b>ALMO</b>	Arms Length Management Organisation.
<b>BACES</b>	Brent Adult & Community Education Service.
<b>Beacon Council</b>	Scheme run each year to identify councils providing excellent services in specific themes.
<b>BEST</b>	Brent Educational Support Teams
<b>Best Value</b>	Every local authority is required to deliver Best Value services. They must do this by reviewing their services and monitoring performance.
<b>BFS</b>	Brent Financial Services.
<b>BHP</b>	Brent Housing Partnership.
<b>BME</b>	Black & Minority Ethnic.
<b>BOSS</b>	Brent's Building One Stop Shop.
<b>BRAIN</b>	Brent's community website.
<b>BVPI/PI</b>	Best Value Performance Indicator/Performance Indicator - national and local indicators.
<b>CCTV</b>	Closed Circuit Television.
<b>Charter Mark</b>	Quality award for customer-focused services.
<b>CPA</b>	Comprehensive Performance Assessment - of local authorities.
<b>CPR</b>	Child Protection Register.
<b>CTB</b>	Council Tax Benefit.
<b>CVI</b>	Coarse Visual Inspection.
<b>DfES</b>	Department for Education & Skills.
<b>DLO/DSO</b>	Direct Labour Organisation/Direct Service Organisation - local authority functions which may be delivered by the authority or contracted out, e.g. domestic waste removal.
<b>DVI</b>	Detailed Visual Inspection.
<b>DWP</b>	Department for Works and Pensions.
<b>Env H</b>	Environmental Health.
<b>GCSE</b>	General Certificate of Secondary Education.
<b>GLA</b>	Greater London Authority.
<b>GNVQ</b>	General National Vocational Qualification.
<b>GOL</b>	Government Office for London.
<b>GP</b>	General Practitioner – doctor.
<b>HALS</b>	Housing Association Leasing Scheme.



<b>HB</b>	Housing Benefit.
<b>HRC</b>	Housing Resource Centre.
<b>ICT</b>	Information & Communication Technology - refers to IT and telecoms, including the internet.
<b>IIP</b>	Investors in People
<b>ILIP</b>	Interim Local Implementation Plan - local interpretation of the Mayor for London's Transport Strategy.
<b>ISO14001</b>	Quality standard for environmental practice.
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority.
<b>LDA</b>	London Development Agency.
<b>LEA</b>	Local Education Authority.
<b>LSP</b>	Local Strategic Partnership
<b>MORI</b>	Market & Opinion Research International - independent market research organisation.
<b>MPA</b>	Metropolitan Police Authority - responsible for policing in the capital.
<b>MPS</b>	Metropolitan Police Service.
<b>NNDR</b>	National Non-Domestic Rates - business rates.
<b>Ofsted</b>	Office for Standards in Education.
<b>PFI</b>	Private Finance Initiative - a method of delivery improved services in partnership with the private sector.
<b>PHIU</b>	Private Housing Information Unit.
<b>PHS</b>	Private Housing Service.
<b>PSA</b>	Public Service Agreement - agreement between the council and the government to deliver some services to tougher targets.
<b>SAP</b>	Standard Assessment Procedure - method for rating the energy efficiency of buildings.
<b>SEN</b>	Special Educational Needs.
<b>TS</b>	Trading Standards.
<b>UDP</b>	Unitary Development Plan - the council's statutory development plan for the borough.
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation.

### 3. Performance digest

#### Introduction

Each year the council is required to publish a set of performance indicators as part of this Best Value Performance Plan. The indicators always cover the financial year and are checked by our external auditors. This digest contains a complete list of indicators, some of these have been highlighted for discussion in chapter two of this performance plan. There are two types of indicator which measure how the council's services are performing:

1. **Indicators set by the government** – designed to pick out key performance by the council as a whole or by different parts of the council such as Environment or Housing. Most of these can be compared with other local authorities nationally and over time. These are called Best Value Performance Indicators or BVPIs.
2. **Indicators the council sets for itself** – these are local performance indicators and they will have been set through service development plans, best value reviews or in some cases by retaining a deleted Audit Commission indicator.

The government has set the date for the publication of the Best Value Performance Plan for the end of June each year. This has been done to enable us to include actual performance data for the previous financial year. Most of the figures you will see are actual figures however, there are some performance indicators that are still estimated. These are mostly financial figures where there has not been sufficient time since the close of the financial year to calculate them accurately. Where estimates are used, these are clearly indicated.

#### Contents

General performance (Corporate Health and Revenue & Benefits)  
Education & Life-long Learning (including Libraries & Museums)  
Social Services  
Housing  
Environment

#### Key to tables

SERVICE AREA PERFORMANCE: CORPORATE CENTRE						
INDICATOR DEFINITION	HOW WE PERFORMED 2003/04		FUTURE TARGETS			COMMENTS & COMPARISONS
	TARGET	ACTUAL	04/05	05/06	06/07	
BV number & abbreviated version of the Audit Commission definition	Our performance against the target we set ourselves for 2003/04		Our targets for the next three years			Explains any change in performance or additional context. May also contain average performance across London for 2002/03

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