



## Cabinet

**Monday 17 November 2025 at 10.00 am**

Conference Hall - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,  
Wembley, HA9 0FJ

Please note this will be held as a physical meeting which all Cabinet members will be required to attend in person.

**The meeting will be open for the press and public to attend or alternatively can be followed via the live webcast. The link to follow proceedings via the live webcast is available [HERE](#)**

### Membership:

#### Lead Member Councillors:

#### Portfolio

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| M Butt (Chair)       | Leader of the Council  |
| M Patel (Vice-Chair) | Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources             |
| Benea                | Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property                 |
| Donnelly-Jackson     | Cabinet Member for Housing   |
| Farah                | Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Jobs and Skills                |
| Grahl                | Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools                  |
| Knight               | Cabinet Member for Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture |
| Nerva                | Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure      |
| Rubin                | Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power                |
| Krupa Sheth          | Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement                        |

**For further information contact:** James Kinsella, Governance & Scrutiny Manager, Tel: 020 8937 2063; Email: [james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk](mailto:james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk)

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### **Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:**

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest\* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest\*\* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also significant enough to affect your judgement of a public interest and either it affects a financial position or relates to a regulatory matter then after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

### **\*Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

- (a) **Employment, etc.** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences** - Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

### **\*\*Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

(a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:

- To which you are appointed by the council;
- which exercises functions of a public nature;
- which is directed is to charitable purposes;
- whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party of trade union).

(b) The interests of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;

or

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of:

- You yourself;
- a member of your family or your friend or any person with whom you have a close association or any person or body who is the subject of a registrable personal interest.

# Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

| Item | Page |
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|------|------|

|          |                              |  |
|----------|------------------------------|--|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence</b> |  |
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| <b>2</b> | <b>Declarations of Interest</b> |  |
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Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, the nature and existence of any relevant disclosable pecuniary or personal interests in the items on this agenda and to specify the item(s) to which they relate.

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| <b>3</b> | <b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b> | <b>1 - 14</b> |
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To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 13 October 2025 as a correct record.

(Agenda republished to include the attached minutes on 13 November 2025)

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|----------|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>4</b> | <b>Matters Arising (if any)</b> |  |
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To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

|          |                           |                |
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| <b>5</b> | <b>Petitions (if any)</b> | <b>15 - 16</b> |
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To receive and consider any petitions for which notice has been provided, in accordance with Standing Order 66.

Members are asked to note that the following petition is due to be presented at the meeting:

- (a) Opposition to the Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) scheme between Kingswood Avenue and Salusbury Road.

The supporting details on the petition have been attached, for reference.

(Members are asked to note this petition was approved for presentation following the original agenda having been published)

- (b) Addressing the nuisance being created by pigeons under the Network Rail Green bridge, Kilburn Station.

(Members are asked to note that presentation of this petition has now been withdrawn from the agenda)

## 6 Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)

To consider any reports referred by either the Community Wellbeing or Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committees.

### Finance & Resources reports

#### 7 Draft Budget 2026 - 27 17 - 160

The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's budget proposals for 2026 - 27. It also provides a general update on the Council's overall financial position, including an overview of the current economic outlook

**Ward Affected:**  
All Wards

**Lead Member:** Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Mili Patel)

**Contact Officer:** Ravinder Jassar, Deputy Director Corporate and Financial Planning

Tel: 0208 937 1487  
[ravinder.jassar@brent.gov.uk](mailto:ravinder.jassar@brent.gov.uk)

### Neighbourhoods & Regeneration reports

#### 8 Willesden Green Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub 161 - 296

This report seeks Cabinet approval for the redevelopment of the Gladstone Park Youth and Community Centre site to deliver a new Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub. The Hub will provide modern health services, community amenities, and wellbeing spaces for some of Brent's most disadvantaged communities, while supporting growth in nearby regeneration areas with approval being sought for the required SCIL funding allocation and delegated authority to enable disposal and lease arrangements for delivery of the scheme.

**Ward Affected:**  
Cricklewood & Mapesbury

**Lead Member:** Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property (Councillor Teo Benea)

**Contact Officer:** Tanveer Ghani, Director - Property and Assets

Tel: 020 8937 1722  
[tanveer.ghani@brent.gov.uk](mailto:tanveer.ghani@brent.gov.uk)

#### 9 Approval to Proceed with Alternative Heat Supply for Willesden Green Library- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 4 297 - 312

This report seeks approval for the allocation of resources to enable the installation of an alternative, low carbon heating solution at Willesden



Green Library and other energy conservation measures following the Council's successful bid for grant funding under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 4 (PSDS P4) with the project aiming to deliver significant carbon savings, improve energy efficiency, and reduce operational costs.

**Ward Affected:**

Roundwood;  
Willesden  
Green

**Lead Member:** Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power (Councillor Jake Rubin)

**Contact Officer:** Tanveer Ghani, Director of Property & Assets

020 8937 1722

[Tanveer.Ghani@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Tanveer.Ghani@brent.gov.uk)

## Children, Young People & Community Development reports

### 10 School Place Planning Strategy 2024-28 Second Refresh

313 - 372

This report provides Cabinet with a second refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028, approved by Cabinet in October 2023 following a refresh received by Cabinet in November 2024.

**Ward Affected:**

All Wards

**Lead Member:** Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools (Councillor Gwen Grahl)

**Contact Officer:** Michelle Gwyther, Head of Forward Planning, Performance and Partnerships

020 8937 2499

[Michelle.Gwyther@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Michelle.Gwyther@brent.gov.uk)

## Chief Executive reports

### 11 Adopting the Socio-Economic Duty

373 - 388

This report sets out a proposal for the council to formally adopt the Socio-Economic Duty (SED) as part of its commitment to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

**Ward Affected:**

All Wards

**Lead Member:** Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Mili Patel)

**Contact Officer:** Sarah Milner-Barry, EDI Strategy Lead

020 8937 2891

[sarah.milner-barry@brent.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.milner-barry@brent.gov.uk)

## Service Reform & Strategy reports

### 12 Authority to participate in Collaborative Procurement in respect of Genitourinary Medicine (GUM) Sexual Health Services Contract 389 - 496

This report seeks approval for participation in a collaborative procurement with two other councils in respect of a new Genitourinary Medicine (GUM) sexual health services contract as an open-access service that addresses rising demand, responding to local and regional sexual health needs.

**Ward Affected:**  
All Wards

**Lead Member:** Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure (Councillor Neil Nerva)

**Contact Officer:** Ruth Du Plessis, Director of Public Health

Tel: 0208 937 3411

[Ruth.du-plessis@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Ruth.du-plessis@brent.gov.uk)

### 13 Exclusion of Press and Public

The following items are not for publication as they relate to the category of exempt information set out below as specified under Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

Agenda Item 8: Willesden Green Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub– Appendix 2 (Valuation)

This appendix exempt has been classified as exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: “Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)”

### 14 Any other urgent business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Deputy Director Democratic & Corporate Governance or their representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 60.

**Date of the next meeting: Monday 8 December 2025**



Please remember to set your mobile phone to silent during the meeting.

- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public. Alternatively, it will be possible to follow proceedings via the live webcast [HERE](#)



## LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

### MINUTES OF THE CABINET

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 13 October 2025 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor M Patel (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Benea, Donnelly-Jackson, Farah, Grahl, Knight, Nerva, Rubin and Krupa Sheth.

#### 1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Jehan Weerasinghe (Corporate Director Neighbourhoods & Regeneration) with Gerry Ansell (Director Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Resilience) attending as his representative.

#### 2. **Declarations of Interest**

The following personal interests were declared in relation to Agenda Item 10 (Additional HMO Licensing Scheme):

- Councillor Donnelly-Jackson – as a tenant in the private rented sector.
- Councillor Rubin – as a tenant in the private rented sector.

No other declarations of interest were made during the meeting.

#### 3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 8 September 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

#### 4. **Matters Arising (if any)**

None identified.

#### 5. **Petitions (if any)**

##### **5.1 Rebuild & renovate Roe Green Playground, Kingsbury**

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) welcomed Anna & Julia Cenalia (representing local residents and families from the area surrounding Roe Green Park, Kingsbury) to the meeting whom he advised were attending to present a petition seeking the rebuild and upgrade of facilities within Roe Green Playground and Park in Kingsbury.

In thanking the Leader of the Council for the opportunity to present the petition, Julia Cenalia (speaking on behalf of Anna Cenalia as the lead petitioner) highlighted the importance of Roe Green Playground and the surrounding park to

residents as a valued and much-loved local community facility. Unfortunately, however, she advised that the playground and park was now regarded as tired, worn and neglected with reference made to examples of broken and outdated equipment, damaged gates, cracked and uneven pathways, a lack of benches & bins and broken lighting. These were identified as issues which those in support of the petition felt needed to be resolved in order to encourage renewed use and address concerns relating to safety, with some residents (it was pointed out) now preferring to travel outside of the area to find a cleaner, more usable playground.

Disappointment was also expressed that a playground and park which had previously provided so much joy and happiness to residents was now seen as uninviting, empty, and dirty despite the fact that Roe Green Park was still regarded as one of the largest and most beautiful green spaces in Kingsbury and an area that should be able to serve as the heart of the local community bringing children, families and older residents together.

In seeking a way forward, Julia Cenalia advised that the petition was calling on the Council to support the rebuilding, renovation and modernisation of Roe Green Playground and the surrounding area in order to deliver a space that was safe, inclusive, well-lit and maintained with the provision of modern play equipment as well accessible paths, adequate benches and bins and with a regular maintenance schedule to keep the area falling back into disrepair. It was pointed out that the petitioners saw this as an opportunity for the Council to work in partnership with residents to create a meaningful community space, highlighting that the community needed space not only for small children but also teenagers and young adults with the potential also identified for this to include youth club or leisure facilities that would provide a safe place for socialising, learning and growing and give a sense of purpose and belonging.

In recognising that these type of improvements would require planning and funding, the Council was urged to work in partnership with residents to explore grant opportunities, design options and community involvement so that Roe Green Park could become a space everyone was proud of, highlighting that when investment was made in public spaces this in turn created cleaner, safer and more connected neighbourhoods and gave a sense of ownership and care over the spaces that were shared.

In bringing her presentation to close, Julia Cenalia asked members to visualise Roe Green Park one year from now as an accessible, well-lit and maintained space where children were able to enjoy using safe and modern play equipment and hoped the Council would be able to support the delivery of that vision for Brent's children, families and future generations.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement) thanked Anna & Julia Cenalia along with the other residents present for attending Cabinet to ensure their views were represented and to present their petition. As a starting point, in responding Councillor Krupa Sheth felt it important to confirm that the Council had already recognised the need for improvements in Roe Green Park and, as a result, allocated funding towards refurbishment of the area. In seeking to develop these proposals an initial site visit and meeting with local residents had recently been held, with the Village School and ward councillors also involved and the Council committed to working with local stakeholders in terms

of the design and delivery of the improvements and refurbishment, based around an initial target date of 2026. In recognising and welcoming the allocation of funding already identified by the Council to support the improvements being sought, Anna Cenalia (speaking as lead petitioner) also felt it important to highlight the scale of the park and need to explore all available options to attract additional funding in order to deliver the improvements residents were keen to support.

In summing up and bringing consideration of the item to a close, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) also took the opportunity to thank Ann & Julia Cenalia for attending the meeting to present the petition. In assuring the petitioners of the Council's aim to ensure that all of the borough's parks and open spaces remained open, inviting and safe for all, he also welcomed the acknowledgement of the financial challenges currently faced by the Council in seeking to meet these commitments. In recognition of these pressures, he confirmed the Council remained open and willing to explore all available funding opportunities, including external grant funding, to support delivery of the improvements being sought, working in partnership with local stakeholders. Taken alongside the commitment outlined by Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement) he ended by once again assuring the petitioners of the work being undertaken to support delivery of improved facilities which he hoped they would also be able to engage with as relevant stakeholders.

## **5.2 Addressing the mess and nuisance being caused by pigeons under the Network Rail Green Bridge, Kilburn Station**

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) advised that following consultation with the lead petitioner, presentation of the petition had been rescheduled for the next Cabinet meeting on 10 November 25.

## **6. Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)**

There were no items referred from either the Community Wellbeing or Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committees.

## **7. Q2 Financial Forecast 2025-26**

Councillor Mili Patel (as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources detailing the financial forecast for the General Fund revenue budget, Housing Revenue Account, Dedicated Schools Grant and the Capital Programme as at Quarter 2 2025-26.

In presenting the report, Councillor Mili Patel, highlighted that despite the considerable efforts being made to manage the budget, the operating environment and wider economic and social context faced by the Council remained challenging with the latest forecast position reflecting an approach which it was felt continued to balance ambition with responsibility. In recognising the tough financial conditions faced by many councils across the country due to rising costs, high demand, and reductions in funding members were advised that through careful management and collective discipline Brent continued to prioritise its commitment towards balancing its budget. It was noted, however, that this reflected a determined and challenging process involving every service continuing to scrutinise spend, recover income and

seek innovation to ensure they were able to continue operating effectively and delivering the services relied upon by residents.

Whilst acknowledging the challenges identified, members were also reminded that the Council continued to seek opportunities to support the development of services. As an example, reference was made to the £1.5m secured through the Pride in Place fund that would support the Council in continuing to make tangible improvements to the boroughs high streets and public spaces, showing residents that financial discipline remained the foundation for ongoing progress.

Overall, it was felt the report demonstrated the way in which the Council continued to take its responsibilities seriously in seeking to meet immediate pressures whilst also seeking to protect services, innovate, collaborate and invest in long term community strength in order to remain financially sustainable.

In considering the forecast position, Members acknowledged the significant level of financial challenge faced by the Council given the scale and depth of the pressures identified whilst also expressing support for the efforts being made to uphold Brent's core values in seeking to prioritise the most vulnerable and invest in local communities and to continue lobbying for the necessary reform of local government finance in order to provide a fair allocation of resources reflecting need across the borough. Support was also expressed for the innovation and transformation being sought in service delivery, along with the efforts being made to treat staff with fairness and respect, acknowledging the work being undertaken across the Council to continue effectively delivering services in such challenging circumstances.

Given the significant pressures and challenges identified, members also felt it important to recognise the range of proactive measures being taken to transform and protect the delivery of services for residents. With the current forecast overspend at £14.5m these interventions included the introduction of additional spending controls along with efforts to alleviate pressures in relation to housing need, deliver a new model of resident support as well as drive additional savings in the way services were procured and commissioned. Members noted these interventions as being in addition to the progress in delivery of the £8.9m programme of savings already agreed and efforts being made to continue investing in people and infrastructure, working across departments, to transform how the Council was able to support residents and manage its finances.

In acknowledging the challenges identified in seeking to manage demand and address the pressures identified, members highlighted their commitment to continue the work with Corporate Directors in relation to the monitoring and management of budgets in each service area and to take the difficult decisions required in order to deliver and safeguard the council's reputation for financial sustainability.

Having noted the update provided the report and ongoing focus on delivery, Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To note the overall financial position and the actions being taken to manage the issues arising, as identified within the report.

- (2) To note the savings delivery tracker, as detailed within Appendix A of the report.
- (3) To note the prudential indicators for treasury management as detailed within Appendix B of the report.
- (4) To approve the virements as set out within section 9.21 of the report.
- (5) To note the discretionary Business Rates reliefs to be awarded as set out within Section 9.18 of the report.
- (6) To approve the amendments to the capital budget as set out in paragraph 12.2 of the report.
- (7) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Finance and Resources to agree the terms of the £40m loan facility to I4B as set out in paragraph 12.2 of the report.

## **8. Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-2028**

Councillor Grahl (as Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools) introduced a report from the Corporate Director, Children, Young People & Community Development providing an overview of the Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-28 for consideration and approval, prior to its formal submission to Full Council for adoption.

In presenting the report, Councillor Grahl advised the report provided an important opportunity to recognise the valuable nature of the service and support being provided for those children and young people who were at risk of, or had entered, the youth justice system in being able to turn their lives around. In highlighting the commitment and achievements of the Youth Justice Service and the wider partnership work being undertaken, including with schools and communities, members noted the overall progress being made in terms of the reduction in youth violence and reoffending with the 44% reduction in serious youth violence since 2016-17 welcomed as representing young lives steered away from harm, and communities that felt safer as a result.

Recognising that this success was founded on a commitment and successful approach towards partnership working, the opportunity was taken to pay credit to all organisations involved in supporting provision of the service, including the Youth Offending Service, police, parents, mentors and voluntary groups, with the process also reflecting a deliberate shift towards prevention and fairness based on treating young people as children first and offenders second. As a result, members were advised of the way in which the plan presented in the report sought to build on that foundation by seeking to embed prevention hubs, expand mentoring and deepen anti-racist practices to ensure that every child and young person (not matter what their background) was able to benefit from the support available. The opportunity was also taken by Councillor Grahl, supported by Nigel Chapman (as Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development) to pay tribute to all staff working in the Youth Justice service as well as wider children social care teams for the wraparound support being provided for young people and also to recognise and commend the multi-agency basis of the service being delivered.

In welcoming the report and commending the positive outcomes being achieved, members also recognised the positive feedback provided through young people and their parents and carers in relation to the service and support being provided (with it noted that 100% of young people responding to the young people, parent and carer survey had felt listened to by their case worker) along with the ongoing partnership work being undertaken. As specific highlights, reference was made to the Child First Approach identified within the Plan (including the welcome focus on neurodivergent children and young people) as well as the focus around Restorative Justice.

In supporting the approach outlined towards early intervention and prevention and in seeking to address the causes of criminal behaviour, ensuring young people were offered the support required, and recognising the balance to be managed between care and justice, members also paid tribute to the personal feedback provided by young people as well as their parents and carers in relation to the value of the service and positive outcomes being delivered.

In thanking all those working within the Youth Justice Service for their efforts, commitment and innovation in supporting young people and ensuring they were treated fairly and with compassion, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the Brent Youth Justice Plan 2025-28 for formal sign off and adoption by Full Council on 10 November 2025.

## 9. Youth Facilities Capital Investment Programme

Councillor Grahl (as Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools) introduced a report from the Corporate Director, Children, Young People & Community Development detailing proposals to establish a programme of capital investment in youth facilities across the borough, in partnership with youth sector providers, for which approval to the use of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) funding was being sought.

In introducing the report, Councillor Grahl began by outlining the way in which the proposed investment of £4m in SCIL funding would represent the largest single Council investment in youth provision and infrastructure for a generation, recognising the extraordinary work being undertaken by youth organisations across Brent to keep young people safe, inspired and connected whilst also providing them with the facilities they deserved. Highlighting the specific impact of austerity on the provision of youth services nationally, with 1200 youth centres closed between 2010-2023 and 4,500 youth workers losing their jobs, it was acknowledged that the investment was much needed and timely in seeking to address the previous period of neglect.

Moving on to focus on the support the investment would provide for local youth organisations, members were advised of the way in which the proposals had been shaped by young people themselves who had chosen where the investment should be allocated based on the evidence and priorities identified and with the selection therefore felt to reflect what young people valued most in terms of opportunity, belonging and purpose. The opportunity was also taken, in support of the approach outlined, to highlight that each of the organisations selected were already well known with an established record of delivery across the borough and the projects, ranging



from boxing and sports to education and creative arts, already providing significant impacts for young people and serving as hubs for energy and mentorship in seeking to further unlock potential.

In ending her introduction, Councillor Grahl took the opportunity to thank all those involved in the process as well as everyone supporting the youth sector for their efforts and contribution, with the proposals also highlighted as reflecting priorities identified by local residents in seeking support youth facilities and development of a thriving youth sector.

In welcoming and supporting the investment outlined, members were keen to recognise not only the way in which the programme had been designed to address the challenges as a result the reduction in funding available for youth services due to austerity but also demonstrated the advantages of placed based policy making and co-design with the engagement of young people key to development of the proposals.

The approach adopted was also identified as reflecting the positive benefits which the impact of the schemes included would have on young people across each of the specific local areas covered with reference, as examples, to the inclusion of Cricklewood Boxing Club, Jason Roberts Foundation in Stonebridge as well as the Roundwood and Anchor Youth Hub as empowerment in action and areas where the proposals were likely to make the most difference to young people and communities across the borough.

In recognising that the investment identified in youth facilities would also serve as an investment in the future of the borough and thanking those involved in developing and shaping the proposals, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Approve the youth facilities capital investment programme as set out within the report.
- (2) Approve the projects for the organisations detailed within paragraph 3.2.8 of the report and use of £4m of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy to fund the programme as detailed in Table 2, paragraph 5.1. of the report.

## 10. **Additional HMO Licensing Scheme**

Councillor Donnelly-Jackson (as Cabinet Member for Housing) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Resident & Housing Services seeking approval to the designation of a new additional HMO licensing scheme to the whole area of the borough, with effect from 2 February 2026 (or later date) in accordance with the statutory timescale required for the scheme to come into force. As part of the report, details were also provided on the outcome of the consultation process undertaken with landlords, tenants, residents, stakeholders and other interested parties to inform the process.

In presenting the report, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson advised that the designation being sought was for renewal (for a further five years) of the borough-wide Additional Licensing Scheme for smaller Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Highlighting that Brent's private rented sector now accounted for over a third of all homes, housing around 100,000 residents across the borough, the opportunity was

taken to remind members of the significant benefits delivered through the existing scheme. These had included a fall in complaints, stronger enforcement to address rogue landlords, with many landlords now working constructively with the Council, and improved compliance with fire-safety and energy standards.

Whilst recognising the provision of a safe, secure home as an essential foundation in life, and progress made in raising standards across Brent's private rented sector through introduction of the Additional Licensing Scheme a number of significant challenges were also identified as needing to be addressed with overcrowding, poor maintenance and unfair practices still acknowledged as affecting many tenants in the private rented sector. As such, it was pointed out that renewal of the scheme had been designed to enable the Council to maintain pressure on those neglecting their responsibilities while supporting landlords who upheld them in a way that recognised the need for fairness and dignity based on the principle that everyone, whatever their income or background, deserved to live in a safe, well-managed home. Through licensing, enforcement and education it was felt the approach outlined demonstrated how Brent was setting that standard and seeking to stand up and protect the rights of tenants in the private rented sector.

In support of the approach outlined and importance of the scheme in safeguarding the rights and living standards of private renters across the borough, members also welcomed the wider benefits identified in relation to the management and regulation of HMOs in terms of driving up standards particularly where HMOs were identified as posing a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of tenants or causing problems for neighbours in terms of litter and anti-social behaviour.

In noting the evidence base and response to the statutory consultation undertaken in relation to the proposed renewal of the scheme members also recognised its alignment with key priorities and objectives in the Borough Plan in terms of tackling poor housing conditions and improving the quality of the private rented sector. Whilst welcoming the ability the scheme provided to be able to hold landlords to account for those properties being managed in a substandard or potentially dangerous way, members were also keen to acknowledge the constructive engagement and work being undertaken through the scheme with the many responsible landlords across the borough in order to develop and provide a fairer housing market and deliver the security and safeguards required by tenants.

In commending the positive outcomes delivered by the scheme to date, all those involved in its delivery, renewal and support being provided to landlords were thanked for their efforts and having considered the report and supporting appendices, Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To note the outcome of the consultation process detailed in the Consultation Report (attached as Appendix 1 to the report), the representations received and the Council's consideration and response to those representations (attached as Appendix 2 to the report).
- (2) To note that the document to support undertaking the public consultation (consultation evidence pack - attached as Appendix 3 to the report) and Housing Conditions and Stressors Report (attached as Appendix 4 to the report) highlighted the scale of problems relating to poorly managed HMOs in the private rented sector, identified the objectives that the proposed additional

HMO licensing scheme would help the Council achieve and alternatives to licensing which had been considered.

- (3) Having considered and noted the matters at (1) and (2) above and using the powers under s.56 Housing Act 2004, to agree to designate a new Additional Licensing area of the whole of the London Borough of Brent from 02 February 2026 or at a later date in accordance with the statutory time required for the scheme to come into force as delineated and edged red on the map in the draft designation attached as Appendix 5 to the report.
- (4) To authorise the Corporate Director of Resident and Housing Services, subject to statutory notifications, to determine an alternative start date for accepting applications for selective licensing, if necessary.
- (5) To agree to the proposed licensing scheme objectives as set out in Appendix 6 of the report.
- (6) To agree the proposed HMO licensing conditions that would accompany any granted HMO licence as set out in Appendix 7 of the report.
- (7) To agree the proposed fee structure for licence applications made under the additional HMO licensing scheme as set out within Appendix 8 of the report.
- (8) Following on from (7) above, to agree to apply the same proposed fee structure to mandatory HMO licenses applications noting that for mandatory licensing, there is no statutory duty to consult on fees.
- (9) To note, in terms of the decisions made, that due regard had been taken of the Equality Analysis as detailed within Appendix 9 of the report.
- (10) To agree to delegate authority to the Director of Housing Services to issue the required statutory notifications in relation to the designation and, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to ensure compliance in all respects with all relevant procedures and formalities applicable to authorisation of the scheme; to keep the proposed scheme under review during the designation lifetime and agree any changes to the proposed implementation and delivery, including administration, fees and conditions as necessary for the effective administration of the scheme, and give all necessary statutory notifications.
- (11) To agree to delegate authority to the Director of Housing Services to approve the carry forward of any surplus or deficits to the established ring-fenced trading account as and when necessary, subject to consultation with the Chief Finance Officer.

#### **11. Authority to Proceed with New Energy Efficient Heating for The Oaks and Pharamond**

Councillor Donnelly-Jackson (as Cabinet Member for Housing) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Resident and Housing Services seeking approval to proceed with a project to install energy efficient heating to replace the existing system in the Council owned blocks of flats known as The Oaks and Pharamond, funded utilising a combination of The Warm Homes Social Housing Fund (WHSF),

previously known as the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, and a co-funding allocation from the Council's Carbon Offset Fund.

In introducing the report, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson advised members that the proposals outlined involved a £3.15m retrofit to replace the current oil, gas and electric systems at The Oaks and Pharamond with ground-source heat pumps and improved insulation. Highlighting the climate emergency as one of the biggest challenges faced by current and future generations, members noted that the scheme represented a practically and local example, involving the Council's own housing stock, of the contribution that could be made including the cutting of 6,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e over the schemes lifetime whilst also providing warmer homes and lower energy bills. In terms of the borough overall, it was noted this would also provide a measurable reduction in emissions and move the Council a step closer to its 2030 net-zero target. The investment in sustainable technology, which members were reminded would include a combination of national Warm Homes Social Housing funding supported by Brent's Carbon Offset Fund would also, it was pointed out, support the Council in not only reducing carbon but also future proofing its housing stock and supporting local green jobs.

In noting the timescales for delivery, as detailed within section 5.2 of the report, and expressing support for the scheme, members were keen to recognise the contribution being made to the Council's overall Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy as well as Brent's growing green-skills sector. The use of the Council's Carbon Offset Fund was also welcomed in contributing towards the overall viability of the scheme, with the opportunity taken to thank officer for their stewardship of the Fund.

In support of the way in which the scheme would contribute as part of the Council's ongoing commitment towards a fair green transition, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve adding the New Low Carbon, Energy Efficient Heating for Oaks and Pharamond housing to the Capital Programme.
- (2) To note that the budget of £3,150,911 would be funded by £1,082,353 Warm Homes Social Housing Fund grant and £2,068,558 Carbon Offset Fund.
- (3) To authorise the Director of Housing Services to enter the necessary procurements to deliver the scheme including a works contractor and a technical consultant.

## 12. **Corporate Performance Update & Q1 Performance Monitoring 2025-26**

Councillor Rubin (Cabinet Member for Climate Action & Community Power) introduced a report from the Corporate Director of Service Reform & Strategy, which provided Cabinet with an overview of corporate performance in Quarter 1 2025-26.

In presenting the report, Cabinet noted that the performance monitoring update provided a detailed assessment against the full suite of Key Performance Indicators developed to monitor delivery of the desired outcomes and corporate priorities within the new Borough Plan 2023-2027 focussed around the delivery of prosperity, sustainability, and thriving communities across Brent. In terms of a brief overview,

members attention was drawn to the 60 Borough Plan key indicators included with the performance scorecard of which 47% had been identified as green (on or above target) with strong performance identified across employment, skills, environment and community engagement.

In recognising the efforts outlined within the report to focus on performance in the delivery of key services and priorities within the context of the wider financial and demand led challenges faced by services across the Council, specific reference was made to the positive performance achieved over the latest monitoring period in relation to a number of targets. These included the number of residents being supported through Community Hubs, the percentage of jobs through Brent Works being paid at least the London Living Wage and reduction in carbon emissions.

Whilst keen to acknowledge the achievements outlined, reflecting the work being undertaken to make Brent cleaner, fairer and more inclusive, it was also recognised that there were areas in which the need for improvement had been identified with the Council committed to addressing these challenges despite the financial pressures identified.

In considering the report, members welcomed the performance data provided as a means of providing a clear foundation for action and as a basis for the effective targeting of resources and focus for improvement of services. Highlighting the open and transparent nature of the report and opportunity provided to ensure work continued to be undertaken jointly by Cabinet Members with their relevant Corporate Directors in seeking to manage delivery of the highest standards of service, whilst also seeking to mitigate against the financial challenges and strategic risks identified as part of the overall approach towards supporting local residents and in support of the priorities within the Borough Plan, Cabinet  
**RESOLVED:**

- (1) To note the Borough Plan 2025-26 performance reporting for Q1 as set out in section 3 and Appendix A of the report.
- (2) To note the current and future strategic risks associated with the information provided and agree the remedial actions on strategic risks identified as appropriate alongside the challenge on progress being provided with responsible officers as necessary.

### **13. Brent Purpose Built Student Accommodation Planning Position Statement**

Councillor Benea (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods & Regeneration outlining recent trends for purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) both delivered and within the pipeline across Brent, and seeking approval of a Brent PBSA Planning Position Statement for consultation.

In presenting the report, Councillor Benea began by highlighting the importance of balance in the approach outlined, not only in terms of listening carefully to residents but also in seeking to act with fairness and foresight. In welcoming the transformation of Wembley over the past decade into one of London's most dynamic growth areas, the significant role the provision of Purpose-Built Student Accommodation had played in that process was acknowledged given the

investment and vibrancy created, with the contribution made by students to Brent's economy and cultural offer and in enriching the fabric of the borough also recognised.

In considering feedback from residents, however, the need had now been identified for this balance to be recalibrated. With more than 3,800 student beds either having been delivered or approved, Councillor Benea advised the time was right to pause and reflect on the kind of development Brent now needed moving forward, reflecting the extent of housing challenges faced driven by the need for more family sized accommodation as well as homes for key workers, older residents and genuinely affordable housing. It had therefore been within this context that the temporary Planning Position Statement outlined within the report had been designed providing an opportunity, pending review of the Local Plan, to ensure that future development was able to support a mix of housing that met genuine local need. Whilst being clear that Brent continued to welcome students, investment and development, the Statement also provided a focus for development partners on the type of schemes the Council now required to assist in tackling the housing emergency.

In highlighting that Brent remained a world-class borough for investment and place of opportunity, diversity, and creativity the opportunity was also taken to recognise the tireless work of the planning team in seeking to balance the needs of residents and ambition of developers against the reality of an unprecedented housing crisis with it recognised that the borough and London as a whole could not stand still in the face of change. Referring to the government's target of delivering 1.5 million new homes nationally it was recognised this would require every Council to play its part but with the need identified to ensure this was delivered in a way that was sustainable, inclusive and fair, which members noted had been the aim of the approach adopted within the report and with Brent continuing to lead with balance, build with purpose, and plan with care.

In support of the approach outlined, members recognised the concerns being raised by residents not only within Wembley but across other parts of the borough regarding the trend experienced in relation to the level of purpose-built student accommodation when compared to conventional housing schemes and potential imbalance this was creating in addressing priority housing need across the borough as well as impact on the mix and make up of local communities in those areas. As a result, the clarity which it was felt the Statement would provide in advance of the Local Plan review was welcomed in terms of outlining what the Council considered to be an acceptable concentration of purpose build student accommodation in supporting the delivery of balanced and mixed communities across the borough and consistent framework it would provide in managing development to meet the Borough Plan priorities as well ongoing housing demand and to secure a better mix of homes and supporting infrastructure.

Having noted the recent trends of purpose-built student accommodation in Brent along with relevant planning policy provisions and need to ensure development remained focussed on delivering balanced and sustainable communities,  
**RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve the Brent Planning Position Statement for Purpose Built Student Accommodation as set out in Appendix A of the report for consultation.

- (2) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member Regeneration, Planning and Property to consider the consultation responses under (1) above, the need for any changes, and whether to adopt the Brent Planning Position Statement for Purpose Built Student Accommodation and for this to be a material consideration in respect of decisions on planning applications.

**14. Exclusion of Press and Public**

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public.

**15. Any other urgent business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 10.45 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT  
Chair

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## **List of Petitions to be presented at Cabinet - 17 November 2025:**

### **(1) ETO scheme between Kingswood Avenue and Salusbury Road**

**Lead Petitioner - Sanjay Nazerali petition contains 1251 signatures.**

#### **Statement:**

We the undersigned petition the council to withdraw the latest ETO scheme running between Kingswood Avenue and Salusbury Road until a plan is presented with clear benefits that prioritise the health, safety, equality, prosperity, and quality of life for the \*entire\* neighbourhood, based on majority community support, evidence-based planning, transparent decision-making, and value for money.


#### **Justification:**

Residents have in the past petitioned Brent to refrain from hyper-local traffic initiatives which risk displacing traffic from one street to its neighbours and, in effect, to create a two-tier ward. A recent example is the objection to the QPHN proposals, signed by 1401 residents.

The current ETO is a similarly unhelpful and divisive scheme, which unfairly prioritises a few streets, while displacing traffic at the busiest times of the day onto neighbouring streets. Those neighbouring streets include Chamberlayne Rd and Salusbury Rd, which - at the exact hours of the ETO - is where thousands of children go to school.

We petition Brent to remove the current ETO and to develop proposals which do not disproportionately and unfairly benefit one part of the community at the expense of other parts.

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|   |   |
|---|---|
|  | <b>Cabinet</b><br>17 November 2025  |
|   | <b>Report from the Corporate Director,<br/>Finance and Resources</b>  |
|   | <b>Lead Member -<br/>Deputy Leader &amp; Cabinet Member<br/>for Finance and Resources<br/>(Councillor Mili Patel)</b> |
| <b>Draft Budget 2026-27</b>   |   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>  | All   |
| <b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>   | Key   |
| <b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b><br><small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small> | Open  |
| <b>List of Appendices:</b>  | Three<br>Appendix A: Summary of new budget proposals for 2026/27<br>Appendix B: Detailed budget templates for new budget proposals for 2026/27<br>Appendix C: Brent Council Debt Recovery Policy  |
| <b>Background Papers:</b>   | None  |
| <b>Contact Officer(s):</b><br><small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>   | Minesh Patel<br>Corporate Director, Finance and Resources<br>Tel: 020 8937 4043<br>Email: minesh.patel@brent.gov.uk<br><br>Rav Jassar<br>Deputy Director, Corporate & Financial Planning<br>Tel: 020 8937 1487<br>Email: ravinder.jassar@brent.gov.uk<br><br>Amanda Healy<br>Deputy Director, Investment and Infrastructure<br>Tel: 020 8937 5912<br>Email: amanda.healy@brent.gov.uk |

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's draft budget proposals for 2026/27. It also provides a general update on the Council's overall financial position, including an overview of the current economic outlook.
- 1.2. This report will set out:
  - The National and Local economic context
  - Government funding outlook
  - Review of key budget assumptions
  - Other key budget themes
  - Budget requirement and new savings proposals
  - Risk management
  - Consultation, scrutiny and equalities
  - Overall financial position for the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Capital Programme

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1. That Cabinet notes the overall financial position.
- 2.2. That Cabinet agrees to consult on the new budget proposals, as set out in Appendices A and B.
- 2.3. That Cabinet agrees to consult on a Council Tax increase of 4.99% (consisting of a 2.99% general increase plus 2% for the Adult Social Care Precept) in 2026/27.
- 2.4. That Cabinet endorses the approach to the statutory process of consultation, scrutiny and equalities between November 2025 and February 2026, as set out in section ten of this report.
- 2.5. That Cabinet endorses the changes to the technical budget assumptions underpinning the budget, as set out in sections six and seven of this report.
- 2.6. That Cabinet notes the position with regard to the funding for Schools and the Dedicated Schools Grant, as set out in section eleven of this report.
- 2.7. That Cabinet notes the position with regard to the Housing Revenue Account, as set out in section twelve of this report.
- 2.8. That Cabinet notes the position with regard to the Capital programme, as set out in section thirteen of this report.
- 2.9. That Cabinet notes the revised Debt Recovery Policy, as set out in Appendix C.

## **3.0 Cabinet Member Foreword**

- 3.1. This year's draft budget sets out a clear and evidenced direction for Brent: fixing the foundations so that we can continue to run an efficient, fair, and future-focused council despite uncertain times
- 3.2. Across local government, the picture after 14 years of austerity, remains challenging. Thirty councils in England – including seven in London – have already required exceptional financial support to balance their immediate budgets. More are expected to follow. Yet here in Brent, thanks to many years of fiscal prudence and collaborative working between officers and Members, we remain in a robust position. Through years of judicious planning, careful

financial management and decisive early action, we remain a council committed to making every penny count.

- 3.3. At the heart of this budget is a simple but powerful belief: that restoring pride locally is the foundation for renewal nationally. That message runs through our recent Autumn Budget submission to the Chancellor: Building a Better, Bolder Brent - which set out six quick wins to help Government turn ambition into action. These include backing the West London Orbital rail line, reforming gambling laws to protect our high streets, giving councils powers to introduce a visitor levy on overnight accommodation, ensuring major events at Wembley contribute directly to local culture, creating a new long-term housing partnership with Government, and reforming local government finance once and for all.
- 3.4. In the meantime, the proposals set out in the following report and appendices, speak to a wider truth. When people see progress where they live - cleaner streets, safer town centres, better transport, fairer housing; it is there that we unlock pride in our borough. And that pride is fundamental to our social contract, it unlocks confidence, it unlocks investment, and it unlocks opportunity.
- 3.5. In advance of the Government's December settlement, we have written to the Chancellor setting out our asks for Brent clearly. Brent is ready to do its part in fixing the foundations of local government, provided we are given the right tools and the long-term funding certainty to plan for a better, bolder Brent.
- 3.6. Our focus remains on sound finances, strong services and fairness for residents. That is why Cabinet is proposing a 4.99% Council Tax rise in 2026/27 – consisting of a 2.99% general increase and 2% for the Adult Social Care precept. This is within the baseline we have maintained for several years. It is not a decision we take lightly, but it will raise £9.1 million in recurring income to protect vital frontline services, while continuing to provide support for those older and younger vulnerable people who need our support most. Through our Council Tax Support scheme and hardship funds, we continue to financially shield households from the sharpest pressures of the cost-of-living crisis.
- 3.7. Fixing the foundations means being honest about the challenges we face today – and to be realistic about how to meet them. The budget gap over the next three years stands at around £30 million, with £10 million falling in 2026/27. The full impact of national funding reforms will not be known until the provisional settlement in December 2025, but we cannot afford to wait for certainty before acting responsibly. Our proactive approach to cost control has already avoided over £8 million of expenditure in 2024/25, while 91% of agreed savings are on track for delivery. Where pressures have emerged, we have taken prompt mitigating action, ensuring that the council's overall financial position remains stable.
- 3.8. As has been expected of this administration, we continue to take a pragmatic approach to reserves – using them only for one-off pressures, not to paper over recurring gaps. If additional funding is forthcoming above our current assumptions, it will be used to strengthen our contingency and Future Funding Risks Reserve, not to expand day-to-day spending, beyond our means. Every pound from Brent taxpayers will be used with purpose and care.

- 3.9. The pressures we face are real and complex. Rising demand for temporary accommodation has placed immense strain on local housing services, with over 2,460 households now in temporary accommodation and a 36% increase in families in emergency placements over the past year. Brent has responded by expanding its housing portfolio – with 899 new properties due in 2025/26 and 2026/27, including new council homes and acquisitions through our capital programme, the Local Authority Housing Fund and i4B's street property purchases. Every new home delivered helps reduce our reliance on expensive temporary accommodation and gives more families the stability they deserve.
- 3.10. We are also taking decisive action in social care. Adult Social Care continues to face unprecedented demand, while the cost of children's placements - particularly those with complex needs - continues to rise. Our response is not to retreat from our responsibilities but to reform how we work: supporting families earlier, commissioning more efficiently, and focusing on prevention as much as care.
- 3.11. In education, Brent schools continue to deliver for our children despite financial headwinds. National reforms to school funding and early years entitlements will bring both opportunities and risks. Locally, 65% of maintained schools are forecasting in-year deficits, while demand for SEND support continues to grow, with an 8% increase in Education, Health and Care Plans this year alone. We will continue to press for sustainable national funding while doing everything we can locally to support inclusion and quality.
- 3.12. Our capital programme remains a cornerstone of Brent's long-term renewal. The regeneration of South Kilburn, where we expect to appoint a Single Delivery Partner in 2026/27, and the broader £800 million investment pipeline will deliver new homes, better public spaces and modern community facilities. Growth in capital financing has been carefully planned and externally reviewed to ensure affordability over the life of the programme.
- 3.13. Through it all, we are determined to keep running an efficient, modern council that works smarter, not just harder. That is why our budget proposals for 2026/27 are built around cross-cutting themes: commissioning and procurement, digital transformation, efficiency improvements, workforce productivity, income maximisation, resident experience, and service-specific proposals. Taken together, these will deliver over £10m of savings required to keep our budget balanced while improving how residents experience council services.
- 3.14. Fixing the foundations also means being clear about our priorities: so that where we spend, it must make a difference and where we save, it must be fair.
- 3.15. This is why we are also investing record-breaking sums into making visible improvements to our civic life - because creating pride, creates the condition for this borough to truly prosper. We continue to invest in Brent, and recently we announced a further £26.9 million investment package to improve parks, public spaces and youth centres across the borough. From better roads and greener parks to thriving local hubs, this is the biggest upgrade to local amenities in years. It reflects our belief that the small things - a clean street, a safe high street, a park that people want to visit - are the building blocks of community that a council is best placed to fix.

- 3.16. Brent has faced down many difficult budgets before and emerged stronger. This draft budget continues that record of resilience. It is cautious but ambitious, grounded in the values that have guided us for over a decade: fairness, responsibility and putting pride back into Brent.
- 3.17. Our task is not just to get through the next financial year but to ensure that we are ready to deliver for residents, to invest in our borough, and to make every decision count for the future of Brent.

#### **4.0 Background**

- 4.1. This report renews the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which is the Council's overarching financial planning document. The MTFS contains forecasts of the financial position of the Council's General Fund revenue budget, as well as providing a framework within which financial planning is undertaken for the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Capital Programme.
- 4.2. It should be recognised, however, that forecasting over the medium term is extremely difficult at any time but is particularly so currently as a result of the ongoing review of local government funding, which has created a high level of temporary uncertainty. As detailed in Section Five, the first multi-year local government finance settlement in a decade is expected to be delivered in December 2025. This will bring some much needed clarity, but without that it has been necessary to construct the Draft Budget on the basis of the current funding system, whilst highlighting the risks to the budget and setting out the actions that will be taken in the event of an adverse settlement to ensure that the Council can agree a balanced budget and sustainable MTFS in February 2026.
- 4.3. The report outlines the approach being taken to address the budget gap expected to result from demographic and inflationary pressures. The financial position for local authorities remains extremely challenging. The figures in this report are based upon best estimates and forecasts, which will be subject to change. The significance of the financial challenge cannot be underestimated; however, the measures outlined in this report aim to ensure that the Council continues to operate in a financially sustainable and resilient way.
- 4.4. As reported to Cabinet in July 2025, due to the issues identified above, the budget gap between 2026/27 and 2028/29 is estimated at £30m, with £10m of this falling in 2026/27, which was the central case based on current budget assumptions and scenario modelling at the time. Further details are set out in section eight of this report.
- 4.5. The Council has therefore now brought forward a series of new proposals totalling £10.4m, which, if approved following consultation and scrutiny, would be implemented in 2026/27. These new proposals, and the updates to budget assumptions set out in this report, will enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2026/27. The new savings proposals for 2026/27 are summarised in Appendix A and full details of each of the proposals are set out in Appendix B.
- 4.6. The unprecedented financial challenge faced by local authorities in England which has resulted in requests for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) from the Government remain unabated. EFS is a form of temporary financial

assistance provided by the UK Government to local authorities facing severe financial distress. It is designed to help councils avoid insolvency, meet immediate financial obligations, set legally balanced budgets, and continue the delivery of its statutory functions.

- 4.7. The UK Government has provided EFS to 30 local authorities in England (of which seven are London authorities) to help them manage severe financial pressures and set balanced budgets. This is up from 19 in 2024/25, with this number expected to continue to grow in 2026/27.
- 4.8. The rationale for the financial strain experienced by most of the councils currently accessing EFS is driven almost entirely by mandatory, high-cost, demand-led services that councils have little control over. Councils across the country continue to face growing financial pressures caused by decades of underfunding by central government and increasing demand for services such as social care and temporary accommodation. These pressures are further exacerbated by rising costs driven by higher inflation and interest rates.
- 4.9. The new savings proposals are designed to limit, as far as possible, service reductions and the impact on front line services particularly during these challenging times. This does not mean that delivering these planned savings, if approved, will be managerially straightforward, or that front-line services will be entirely unaffected, or that they can be achieved without staffing reductions.
- 4.10. In summary, the key features of the 2026/27 budget are:
  - A Council Tax increase of 4.99% (consisting of a 2.99% general increase plus 2% for the Adult Social Care Precept), making a Band D Council Tax of £1,724.76 (for the Brent element). The Greater London Authority (GLA) precept is unknown at this stage and is subject to their own decision making and consultation processes.
  - New budget savings proposals of £10.4m to be delivered in 2026/27, as set out in Appendices A and B.

## **5.0 Strategic Financial Overview**

### **Economic Environment**

- 5.1. Forecasts for growth in GDP for the UK in 2026 is expected to remain modest at 1.3%. This is similar to what is forecast for 2025 (forecast growth 1.3%), which may not be sufficient to significantly help many of those people still suffering from the cost-of-living crisis.
- 5.2. Forecasts for CPI inflation in 2026 is expected to average 2.5% which is lower than the 2025 current average of 3.4%. The high rate of inflation is driven by rising energy and utility bills.
- 5.3. Changes in global trade policies remains a source of uncertainty in the global economy though recent trade agreements mean there is less uncertainty than earlier in the year. The UK unemployment rate is forecast to rise to just over 5% by the first half of 2026, up from its current level of 4.8%. This projection is based on factors like decelerating economic growth and subdued hiring, though some recent data suggests the labour market is stabilizing and the pace of job cuts may have slowed from earlier estimates.



## **Fair Funding Review and Local Government Finance Settlement**

- 5.4. The Government has committed to fundamental reform of local government financing from 2026/27, with particular focus on diverting resources to authorities that need them most and delivering the first reset of the business rates retention system since it was created in 2013. As part of these reforms, the Government has confirmed its intention to deliver a multi-year funding settlement to local authorities from 2026/27. This will provide greater certainty within which to plan budgets for future years.
- 5.5. On 20 June 2025, the Government launched a consultation on the Fair Funding Review 2.0. This followed the Spending Review, which set the overall funding for local government from 2026/27 to 2028/29. The multi-year funding settlement for local government is expected to cover the same period.
- 5.6. The consultation ran until 15 August and a response was submitted by Brent officers, following a review of the proposals, utilising modelling from London Councils on the impact of the proposed reforms. The Government will provide a summary of the responses to the consultation in the autumn, followed by a policy statement ahead of the provisional local government finance settlement in mid-December 2025. The policy statement, while not including detailed allocations, is usually the first indication of what will be in the settlement and the two are closely aligned. This year, it will be particularly important as this is likely to be the first firm indication of what the final reforms will look like.
- 5.7. Unfortunately, the Government has not provided detailed models or provisional allocations at local authority level, so at the time of dispatch of this report, it is not possible to determine the specific impacts of the reforms on Brent's funding, in order to include this in the draft 2026/27 budget.
- 5.8. The main elements of the proposed reforms included in the Fair Funding Review 2.0 consultation are as follows:
  - Simplification of grants – rolling several grants into the settlement and creating a smaller number of consolidated grants.
  - Relative needs assessment – Redistributing the available funding according to a revised assessment of relative need based on up-to-date data.
  - Resources adjustment – Adjusting the allocation of funding to account for differences in the council tax bases between authorities.
  - Reset of the business rates system – resetting the baselines that have not changed since 2013 and redistributing growth according to relative need.
  - Transitional arrangements – implementing the reforms across a three year period to smooth out the changes.
  - Funding floors – Most authorities will not see a reduction in core spending power, but this is funded from reductions to the allocations to authorities who are not being protected by the funding floor.
- 5.9. Current budget assumptions are prudent and so it is recommended to continue with the agreed budget strategy to deliver savings of £30m over the next three years and continue to review through the autumn. Any amendments to the MTFS post the conclusion of the Fair Funding Review will likely impact from 2027/28.

### **Administration Priorities**

- 5.10. The budget process is designed to ensure that it is priority led so that resources are aligned with statutory responsibilities and Council priorities, which are set out in the four-year Borough Plan (2023-27).
- 5.11. The Borough Plan 2023-27 sets out the Council's vision for the four-year period covered by the plan. There is an emphasis on how the Council will work with others to support people through the cost-of-living crisis, realise climate change ambitions and harness the diverse range of communities. Central to these ambitions is making Brent the best it can be for everyone who lives and works in the borough.
- 5.12. The overarching theme of the plan is 'Moving Brent Forward Together'. The plan focuses on how the Council will take forward delivery in the five priority areas being of fundamental importance to Brent and its people. Each priority area has set outcomes the Council will work towards, building on the achievements so far with renewed focus and actions. It tackles cross-cutting issues such as homelessness and health inequalities.
- 5.13. The five priorities are:
- Prosperity and Stability in Brent
  - A Cleaner, Greener Future
  - Thriving Communities
  - The Best Start In Life
  - A Healthier Brent

### **Support for residents**

- 5.14. Whilst the challenging budgetary situation outlined throughout this report requires difficult decisions to be taken, the Council recognises that the cost-of-living crisis is continuing to have an impact on the lives of residents and remains committed to providing support where it is needed through multiple schemes.
- 5.15. The Brent Resident Support Fund (RSF) has been in place since August 2020. In the period August 2020 to October 2025, RSF has supported 22,170 households with a total of £20.5m. The support provided is for help with the cost-of-living. This can include, but is not limited to, household bills, arrears in rent, mortgage, Council Tax, food, fuel, digital equipment and emergency funds. Urgent assistance is provided when residents are at risk of losing their home and when an application to the RSF is unsuccessful, the applicant is referred to a credit union for help with an interest-free loan. Further support is provided through signposting to other internal (e.g. Brent Hubs) and external (e.g. Citizens Advice) services.
- 5.16. As of 1 October 2025, 22,925 households are supported through Council Tax Support (CTS), of which 14,279 are working age and 8,646 are pension age. Pension age residents are entitled to full Council Tax support depending on their income, savings and household composition. The total support given to households is around £26m per annum.
- 5.17. Brent Hubs work with residents who find it difficult to access the support they need through mainstream services. This includes issuing vouchers to residents for urgent food and fuel support, as well as making referrals to food aid

agencies and support schemes for utility costs. From January to September 2025, 1,627 residents were supported through Brent Hubs with food and fuel needs through referrals to food banks.

- 5.18. Brent Hubs has also played an active role in the Warm Spaces campaign, providing a welcoming social space for residents who may face difficulties heating their homes. This initiative includes a regular coffee morning in Kilburn, which typically attracts around 25 local residents each session. In 2025, the most common issues residents have sought support for at the Hubs include Council Tax (2,537 enquiries, 18%), Form Filling (2,472 enquiries, 17%), Housing and Homelessness (1,850 enquiries, 13%), Food and Fuel (1,627 enquiries, 12%), and General Enquiries (1,578 enquiries, 11%). The remaining 29% relate to a range of other needs such as employment, debt and money advice, and immigration support.
- 5.19. The Government's Household Support Fund (HSF) has been utilised to assist Brent households with the rising costs of food and fuel through the provision of vouchers, grants, and financial support to food aid organisations. Between 1 April and 30 September 2025, the Council supported 12,225 households with a total of £2.4m in assistance, with a further £2.5m projected to be allocated by the end of 2025/26. This support included school holiday food vouchers for the summer, half term, and Christmas periods, assistance for parents of children aged 0–4 years in receipt of Housing Benefit, as well as reactive support for households in urgent need. Additional activities are planned to extend assistance to residents claiming Housing Benefit only, disabled residents receiving Housing Benefit, and young carers, alongside continued funding for food banks, charities, and voluntary organisations that provide vital financial, food, and fuel support to local residents.

## **6.0 Review of Key Budget Assumptions**

### **Overview of current MTFS**

- 6.1. The General Fund revenue budget for 2025/26 was set at the Council meeting of February 2025, where savings of £4.5m were agreed, in addition to the £4.4m of savings agreed in February 2024. Further to this, there was an increase of £5m in Council Tax income resulting from changes to Council Tax Support from 1 April 2025 and £6.5m of operating efficiencies to be delivered by services in 2025/26, taking the total reduction in the net expenditure budget in 2025/26 to £20.4m.
- 6.2. At Quarter 2 (Q2), 91% of the savings are on track for delivery. Some savings have been flagged as being at risk, or delayed, and where this is the case, mitigating actions have been put forward. However, there is a risk that there will be a failure to deliver some savings in 2025/26 which will require the one-off use of reserves and without permanent mitigating actions, this will increase the pressure on the 2026/27 budget.
- 6.3. In 2025/26, there is a forecast overspend of £9.2m against the revenue budget at Q2. This is equivalent to 2% of the revised budget and is after growth of £53.3m was included in the 2025/26 budget to address expected inflationary and demand led pressures. The largest overspend is in the Housing Needs service (£5m), due to an extremely high level of demand for Temporary Accommodation and a lack of affordable Private Rented Sector (PRS) offers.

This is despite the £15m increase in the 2025/26 budget (£11.6m growth, £3.4m additional Homelessness Prevention Grant). There are also modest overspends in Adult Social Care (£1.2m), Strategic Commissioning & Capacity Building (£0.7m) and Children's Social Care (£2.2m).

- 6.4. If sustained until the end of the financial year, this would require a transfer from unallocated reserves. In turn, this would reduce the balance of unallocated reserves from £20m to £10.8m, significantly below what is considered by the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources to be an adequate balance for the Council. Equally, any overspending not dealt with in 2025/26 would, potentially, carry over into 2026/27, thereby increasing the requirement for further savings in that year, whilst at the same time providing no scope to draw on the Council's reserves.
- 6.5. The seriousness of the Council's financial position cannot be understated. Since 2023, spending controls have been introduced and a Budget Assurance Panel has been implemented, which has helped to facilitate a better grip of the Council's financial position and coordinated work to manage the pressures on services. This introduced a range of measures including proactive vacancy management, directorate led targeted non-essential spending controls including agency and interim spend, alongside department led management action plans, reflecting other actions being undertaken. These sensible, proactive and prudent measures are estimated to have led to cost avoidance of over £8m in 2024/25 and are providing more assurance over the Council's spending decisions.
- 6.6. However, it is clear from the current financial position at Quarter 2 in 2025/26 that further actions are now necessary. With the exception of maintaining health and safety, meeting a statutory requirement and fulfilling a contractual obligation, all other spending will be halted until further notice. In addition, controls on staff payments, recruitment and use of agency workers will be significantly enhanced.
- 6.7. While Brent is not currently in the financial situation of those Councils that have recently issued, or threatened to issue, a Section 114 notice (legally required when the Council cannot balance its budget, unlike the NHS and other parts of the public sector, councils are not allowed to carry a deficit) all efforts must be focused on positively changing the financial position.
- 6.8. In July 2025, the Medium Term Financial Outlook presented a revised budget gap of £30m from 2026/27 to 2028/29, profiled £10m per year.

Table 1: Budget gap 2026/27 to 2028/29 (July 2025)

|                       | 2026/27 (£m) | 2027/28 (£m) | 2028/29 (£m) |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| In year budget gap    | 10.0         | 10.0         | 10.0         |
| Cumulative budget gap | 10.0         | 20.0         | 30.0         |

- 6.9. This gap may change following the provisional local government finance settlement in December 2025. An adverse settlement may require a drawdown from reserves, but if additional funding is forthcoming above the assumptions included in the draft budget, the additional funding will be used to create a contingency budget and/or top-up the Future Funding Risks Reserve. The Future Funding Risks Reserve was set up to manage the in-year impact of funding reforms. Given the late nature of local government finance settlements relative to the budget setting cycle, it is impractical to determine the precise budget gap to then produce a set of reasonable, costed new savings/cost reduction measures before Full Council in the following February. The Council chooses to publish the savings proposals as early as possible to allow time for proper consultation, Equalities Impact Assessments (EIAs) and scrutiny in order to ensure delivery is on time and on budget.
- 6.10. The use of reserves to balance the budget can only be used as a short-term measure to address immediate pressures and must be dealt with through further savings or mitigating actions in future years. This is in addition to the existing budget gap in those years. It is clear that delivering this will be a significant challenge for the Council's services, but this is considered necessary to ensure that the Council can continue to deliver a balanced budget in future years, without having to rely on Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) from central government.

### **Departmental pressures**

- 6.11. Managing ongoing demand-led pressures remains a key aspect of the MTFS. The existing annual growth assumptions are in fact estimated increases in unavoidable expenditure. Those built into the MTFS cover areas such as contract inflation, pay inflation and demographics (by which is meant meeting the cost of providing existing services for a growing and changing population). These expenditure assumptions represent the annual costs that have to be incurred just to stand still.
- 6.12. As the two areas most affected by the changes in demography and increasing contractual costs, the Service Reform and Strategy (including Adult Social Care) and Children, Young People and Community Development (including Children's Social Care) departments undertook scenario and sensitivity analysis of the effects of different levels of inflation and demographic change. This determined a central case (that is a position between possible best and worst cases), which has been used as the basis of the contract inflation and demographic changes in these areas. The growth for Children, Young People and Community Development for 2026/27 includes £1.1m of growth relating to 2025/26 that is estimated as a recurring pressure going forward. Current pressures within Service Reform and Strategy at risk of slipping into 2026/27

are currently estimated at £1.8m, this includes £0.5m additional cost of moving to a new Community Equipment provider that was reported at Q2.

- 6.13. There are also substantial pressures in other areas. The continued unprecedented demand for temporary accommodation is putting considerable pressure on the budget for Residents and Housing Services. A further £8m of growth has been included in the Housing Needs budget, £4m to address the 2025/26 pressure and £4m for the projected increase required for 2026/27.
- 6.14. Updated modelling of the requirement for Capital financing has been undertaken. Whilst interest rates remain high, the impact of the Capital Programme on the revenue budget is increasing over time. However, work is ongoing to mitigate these increases and as a result the growth for Capital Financing in 2026/27 is currently low (£0.5m). There remains a high risk that if the mitigations cannot be achieved, the Capital Financing budget will either require more growth, or the Capital Programme will have to be reduced to ensure that it remains affordable to the revenue budget.
- 6.15. Concessionary fares continue to experience substantial increases as usage in London returns to pre-pandemic levels and fares increase. As the largest contributor to the Freedom Pass scheme, Brent faces a substantial increase in cost with the contribution forecast to rise by £1.8m in 2026/27, £1.4m in 2027/28 and £1.4m in 2028/29, although this is a small reduction on the forecast at the time of the Medium Term Financial Outlook in July. Concessionary fares are part of the Service Reform and Strategy budget.
- 6.16. Other significant growth requirements in the 2026/27 draft budget include growth for pressures on the waste/recycling contract, the variable element of the West London Waste Authority Levy and the 2026/27 pay award.
- 6.17. A summary of these growth and cost pressures are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Growth / Cost Pressures

| <b>GROWTH</b>                          |                |
|--|----------------|
|  | <b>2026/27</b> |
| <b>Brent Categories</b>                | <b>£m</b>      |
| Demographics - Adult Social Care       | 4.2            |
| Demographics - Children's Social Care  | 2.7            |
| Demographics - Temporary Accommodation | 4.0            |
| Demographics - Other                   | 0.2            |
|  | <b>11.1</b>    |
| Inflation - Adult Social Care          | 8.3            |
| Inflation - Children's Social Care     | 2.0            |
| Inflation - Temporary Accommodation    | 4.0            |
| Inflation - Other                      | 2.8            |
|  | <b>17.1</b>    |
| Capital Programme Financing            | 0.5            |
|  |                |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                     | <b>28.7</b>    |

- 6.18. The following sections provide commentary on the service pressures and other challenges faced by each department. The growth included in the draft budget of £28.7m is based on the central cases of the modelling produced by the service areas.

### **Service Reform and Strategy**

- 6.19. In addition to delivering excellent adult social care and public health services, the directorate leads the work across the council and with health partners to improve health and well-being outcomes for all our residents. This means improving health and care services but also recognising and tackling the social determinants of health (skills, work, leisure, housing) and ensuring that tackling health inequalities is at the core of everything we do as set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 6.20. The Directorate is also home to a number of enabling services that work across the council and with residents and partners to effect change. This includes communication and community engagement functions, ensuring residents are aware of things happening in the council and have their voices heard on the issues that matter most to them; change, insight and policy capacity to support services to understand their performance, identify areas of improvement and create opportunities for innovation, including through the digital programme where we embrace technology and explore the opportunities for AI to contribute to service redesign; and commissioning and procurement teams, ensuring that we get maximum value from the Brent pound.

6.21. The directorate has the highest net budget in the Council, and this budget is spent on a wide range of services. The highest spend area within the directorate is Adult Social Care, with a budget of over £140m, where packages of care are provided to vulnerable and elderly residents to allow them to maintain their wellbeing and independence. In addition, the Public Health provides services to reduce ill health and improve health and wellbeing to residents within a budget of £26.1m. The directorate also provides Leisure services, training to improve residents' digital skills, grants to the community and more with a budget of £14.4m. Collaboration with the NHS helps to reduce the pressure on budgets through joint funding of packages of care and through grant funding. The department also generates income for the Council through charging for conferences and events in the Civic Centre and advertising.

6.22. Services provided by the directorate:

- Provided vital social care support to 5,497 elderly and vulnerable residents
- Our sports centres welcomed 1.2m visitors
- 3,500 free exercises classes
- 740 free oral health checks for children
- 7,841 health checks
- 82k residents visited our Have Your Say portal – over 8,200 registered users, 120% increase since 2023
- Over £1.6m distributed to community projects
- Provided over 4,000 digital devices to residents to tackle digital exclusion
- More than £1.2million generated in income from advertising, filming and events
- Supported up to 15,000 visitors a month to access information and services via our accessible website
- Distributed YourBrent magazine to 140,000 households, regular e-newsletters to over 17,000 residents and engaged with around 40,000 followers via our social media channels

#### *Adult Social Care & Strategic Commissioning*

6.23. The department faces funding pressures mainly within Adult Social Care due to increasing demand for services and recruitment and retention challenges. There have been demographic pressures as the number of older people and working age adults requiring care increases. In Brent, as of October 2025, there has been a 4% increase in client numbers compared to the same period last year. There have been significant increases in service users requiring a Home Care package (8%) and those receiving care in Supported Accommodation (7%) which is partly due to Brent's strategy of reducing demand in residential settings (i.e. a 2% reduction in clients placed in residential & nursing settings) and promoting independence at home.

6.24. Chart 1 shows the number of adults accessing long term care (i.e. Residential, Nursing and Community Care such as Supported living, Home Care etc.) is



relatively high in Brent compared to the average across London. The reasons for the relatively higher numbers are due to factors such as an ageing population, more residents living with long-term conditions and a growing mental health need.

Chart 1: Number of adults accessing long term care in Brent compared to the London average

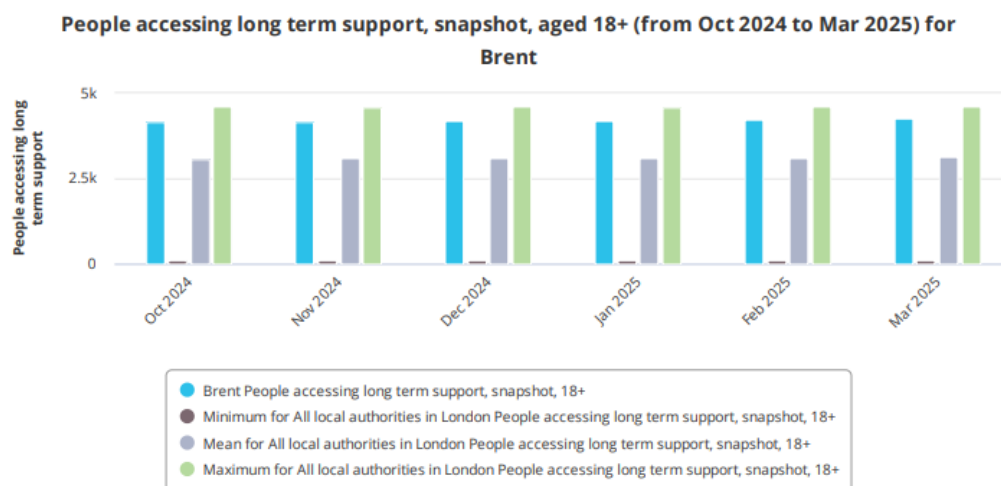


Chart Source: LG Inform Benchmarking data

- 6.25. Inflationary pressures are also having an impact on the budget with the overall average weekly cost increasing by 6% as of October 2025 when compared to September 2024. An increasing number of service users are presenting with multiple and complex health issues impacting their social care need and resulting in more expensive packages of care needing to be commissioned. Average weekly costs have increased across most service provisions, especially in Nursing Care (10% increase), Residential Care (6% Increase) and Supported Accommodation (6% increase).
- 6.26. Table 3 shows the current (Q2 2025/26) Nursing and Residential average weekly rates compared to the average for Northwest London (NWL) authorities. It is important to note that there are factors that can have an impact on the benchmarking data such as the size of the borough, where placements are being made (in borough or out of borough) and the number of placements, which is the case with residential placements. The data in Table 3 shows that Brent is higher than the average in NWL however Brent has a lower-than-average number of service users placed in residential care in line with the strategy to promote independence.

Table 3: Average Weekly Cost Benchmarking Data Q2 2025/26

| Borough                                  | Average Placement | Average Residential | Average Nursing |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Weekly Costs</b>                      |                   |                     |                 |
| <b>Brent</b>                             | <b>1,063</b>      | <b>1,244</b>        | <b>883</b>      |
| Average North West London Boroughs (NWL) | 1,027             | 980                 | 1,061           |
| Highest NWL                              | 1,061             | 1,001               | 1,099           |
| Lowest NWL                               | 993               | 952                 | 1,024           |

- 6.27. Various mitigation plans are in place to reduce the pressure on care costs. Emphasis is on assessing one-to-one/two-to-one care costs through timely assessments and interventions, evaluating short term packages, continuing engagement with Health in regard to Section 22 funding (where certain service provisions meet a health need and are eligible for Health Funding under the Care Act 2014), and reviewing CHC (Continuing Health Care Funding; fully funded by Health for adults who have significant ongoing health needs) and S117 funding (Joint funding agreements with Health; current agreement is 60:40 split, where Brent are liable to pay 60% of the total care costs).
- 6.28. Staffing remains a critical factor for Adult Social Care and managing recruitment, retention, and the costs associated with staffing will be key to maintaining the quality and sustainability of services. There is a continued reliance on the use of agency staff who are more expensive than permanent staff. Also, as care shifts towards more complex community-based services, investment in staff training and development will become increasingly important to ensure that the workforce have the skills required to deliver high-quality, person-centred care. The department currently has a retention strategy in place for hard to fill roles and has been successful in converting a number of agency staff to permanent staff. In 2024, 14 agency staff had converted to permanent. In 2025 so far, 17 have either converted or are in the process of converting.
- 6.29. The Council is also working closely with the care provider sector to manage challenges such as recruitment and retention and service quality.
- 6.30. The Social Care funding reforms planned for October 2025 will no longer go ahead and this introduces further risk and uncertainty as the sector is uncertain about any plans in place to address the funding pressures and unmet need in the system. Social care funding is reliant on the Adult Social Care Precept and various social care grants such as the Better Care Fund (BCF), the Social Care grant, the discharge grant and the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF), to support services. The budget assumes continuity of these funding sources, however a longer-term financial settlement for social care, incorporating the various grants that are provided, will reduce uncertainty and enable sustainable services.

#### *Public Health*

- 6.31. The ring-fenced Public Health grant contracts are also likely to be impacted by inflationary increases. Most public health services are commissioned from the NHS and the Government has commenced the 2026/27 NHS pay round and depending on the agreed rate of increase, there is the risk that the national Agenda for Change pay awards will again significantly outstrip uplifts in the

public health grant. There continues to be increasing levels of need for a number of public health services, notably sexual health services, as a result of demographic change, increased levels of infection and substance misuse where there is considerable unmet need.

- 6.32. The future of the additional time limited grant funding awarded by Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) mainly for drug and alcohol services in 2026/27 is currently unknown, with a decision expected later this calendar year. In the meantime, officers are preparing a contingency plan utilising public health grant reserve to avoid a “cliff edge” in services should the grants not be continued.

#### *Leisure Services*

- 6.33. The Leisure Service continues to face challenges due to factors such as increases in energy costs, the slow return to leisure centres following the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on residents, inflationary costs of running the centres, increases in the London Living Wage, reduced income and ageing facilities. The Council continues to work with leisure providers to ensure the continuity of an affordable service and review the required investment to enable the leisure assets continue to be financially viable in the long term.

#### **Children, Young People and Community Development General Fund**

- 6.34. The Children, Young People and Community Development directorate has responsibility for improving outcomes for all Brent's children, particularly the most vulnerable, as well as responsibilities for community safety, employment and skills delivery and refugee/migrant integration. The directorate works with children, parents and carers, schools and settings, and a wide range of partners to improve the life chances of children and young people as well as adults who require community safety, employment and skills and migrant support services.
- 6.35. The Council spends around £97m on children's social care, which encompasses a wide range of essential services including safeguarding vulnerable children, supporting foster care and adoption arrangements, and providing youth support services.
- 6.36. A further £255.5m funds children's education through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This funding supports early years education in nurseries, the operation and improvement of local schools, and targeted services for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It also covers costs related to school transport, ensuring pupils can access education safely, and contributes to wider educational support services such as inclusion initiatives, specialist teaching, and alternative provision for pupils who need additional support.
- 6.37. Across CYPCD, we are working together to:
- 6.38. Break down the cultural and structural divisions between service areas in the interest of improving outcomes for children and young people.
- 6.39. Look ahead to identify and plan for future changes and pursue continuous improvement.
- Deliver evidence based services and foster innovation and creativity.

6.40. We have established clear ways of working:

- We work in partnership with children and young people via Brent Care Journeys 2.0 and the Brent Youth Parliament. With partners this is achieved the Brent Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, the Children's Trust, the Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board and the Safer Brent Partnership.
- We are on a continuous journey of learning and development to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- We use evidence-based methodologies to inform our work including Signs of Safety and Trauma Informed approaches in line with the Brent CYPCD Ways of Working document, '*This is Brent, this is how we grow*'.

6.41. Services provided by the directorate:

- Brent Start helped 2,360 residents gain new skills
- Brent Works helped 231 residents find jobs and apprenticeships.
- £1.4m on community safety and tackling anti-social behaviour, with 2,295 penalty fines issued
- 950 people supported by our Violence against Women and Girls services.
- 298 new school places for children with special educational needs
- School holiday activity places for children
- 97% of Brent schools are judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted
- Took care of 295 children in care
- Supported 21,041 local people at our Family Wellbeing Centres.

*Placement costs for children in care*

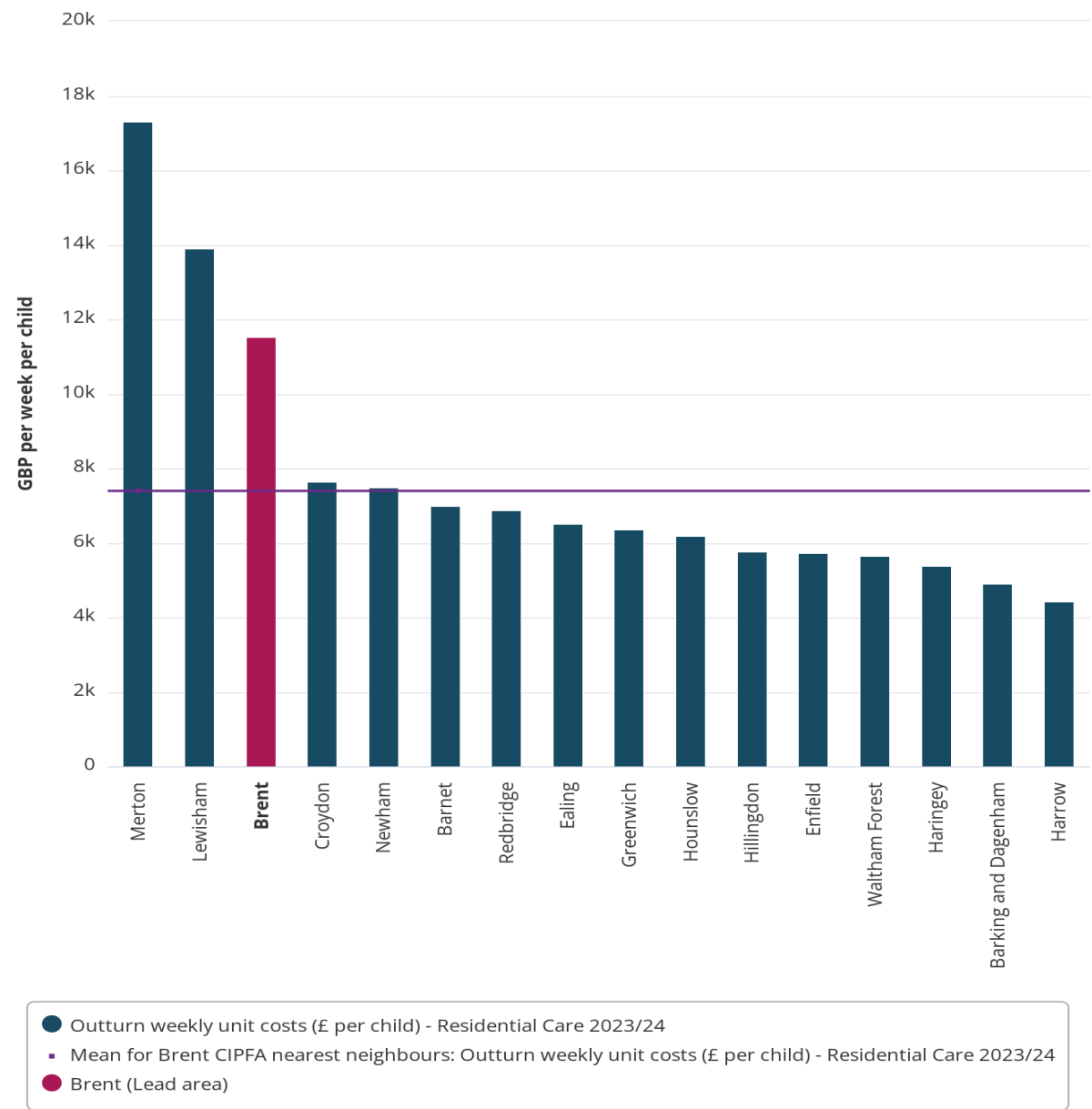
6.42. The challenges faced by the CYPCD directorate are largely in line with the national picture over the past few years. Pressures continue to arise due to the increased cost of placing children in care, particularly in residential and secure placements, although the overall number of children and young people receiving support in Brent has remained stable in the last year and the overall number of Looked After Children (LAC) has decreased as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Brent LAC children in residential homes

|                                      | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26<br>(forecast) | MTFS<br>2026/27 |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| No. of LAC (excluding mother & baby) | 319     | 307     | 298     | 298                   | 298             |
| No. of LAC in a residential home     | 23      | 22      | 38      | 39                    | 42              |
| % of LAC in a residential home       | 7.2%    | 7.2%    | 12.8%   | 13.1%                 | 14.1%           |
|                                      |         |         |         |                       |                 |
|                                      | £m      | £m      | £m      | £m                    | £m              |
| Outturn (Residential)                | 9.6     | 10.7    | 11.9    | 16.3                  | 19.2            |

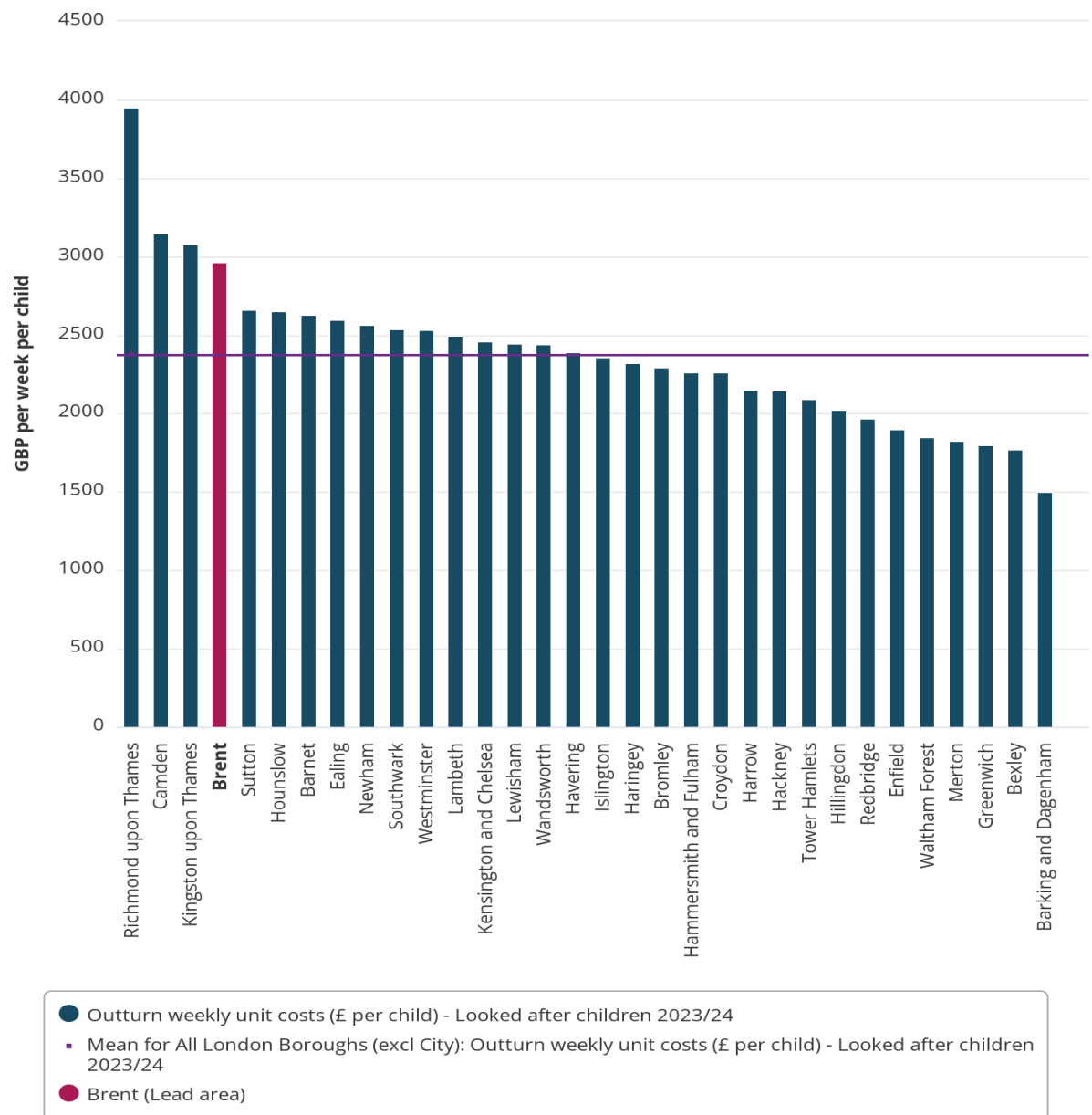
- 6.43. The projection for 2026/27 reflects the net impact of different types of LAC placements with the main cost driver being residential placements. Pressures against the placement budgets arise from a combination of the impact of inflation and increased rates, particularly as Brent's looked after children often enter care late, with complex needs and requiring higher levels of support.
- 6.44. A significant challenge is securing suitable placements, largely due to difficulties within the national residential market, as highlighted in a national review of children's social care. Consequently, placements with higher levels of support within them have been required, which can be extremely costly. A key factor driving these costs is staffing ratios, with providers often insisting on higher staffing levels, as a condition of accepting placements. The impact of inflation and the shortage of available placements is expected to further increase costs in 2026/27 by an estimated £3.6m. The new in-house care home is now expected to be open by the end of 2025/26. This would help alleviate some of the market pressures and achieve annual cost avoidance savings of circa £0.3m. Brent is also working closely with two neighbouring authorities to ensure greater sufficiency of residential placements in the local area.
- 6.45. A more recent development is the increase in the number of remand cases, with six young people in care at the start of 2025/26. The length of time of these placements is dependent on the speed of moving cases through the criminal justice system and beyond the local authority's control, further impacting projections for the next financial year.
- 6.46. As of August 2025, there were 291 (295 in August 2024) LAC in Brent. The directorate continues to effectively manage the number of children in care by supporting families to look after their children when it is safe to do so. The current average weekly cost for a residential placement in 2025/26 is £7,287 (£6,492 in 2024/25). Additionally, there are currently seven remanded clients in secure accommodation with an expected annual cost of £1.4m. The average weekly costs of the top six residential placements involving complex needs currently range between £9,870 and £13,190, with these costs set to see inflationary increases in 2026/27.
- 6.47. Chart 2 shows the outturn weekly unit costs in Residential Care across the "CIPFA nearest Neighbours" comparison group in 2023/24 (latest available) with Brent ranking the 3rd highest average spend of £11.5k.

Chart 2: Outturn weekly unit costs (£ per child) - Residential Care (2023/24) for Brent & Brent CIPFA nearest neighbours



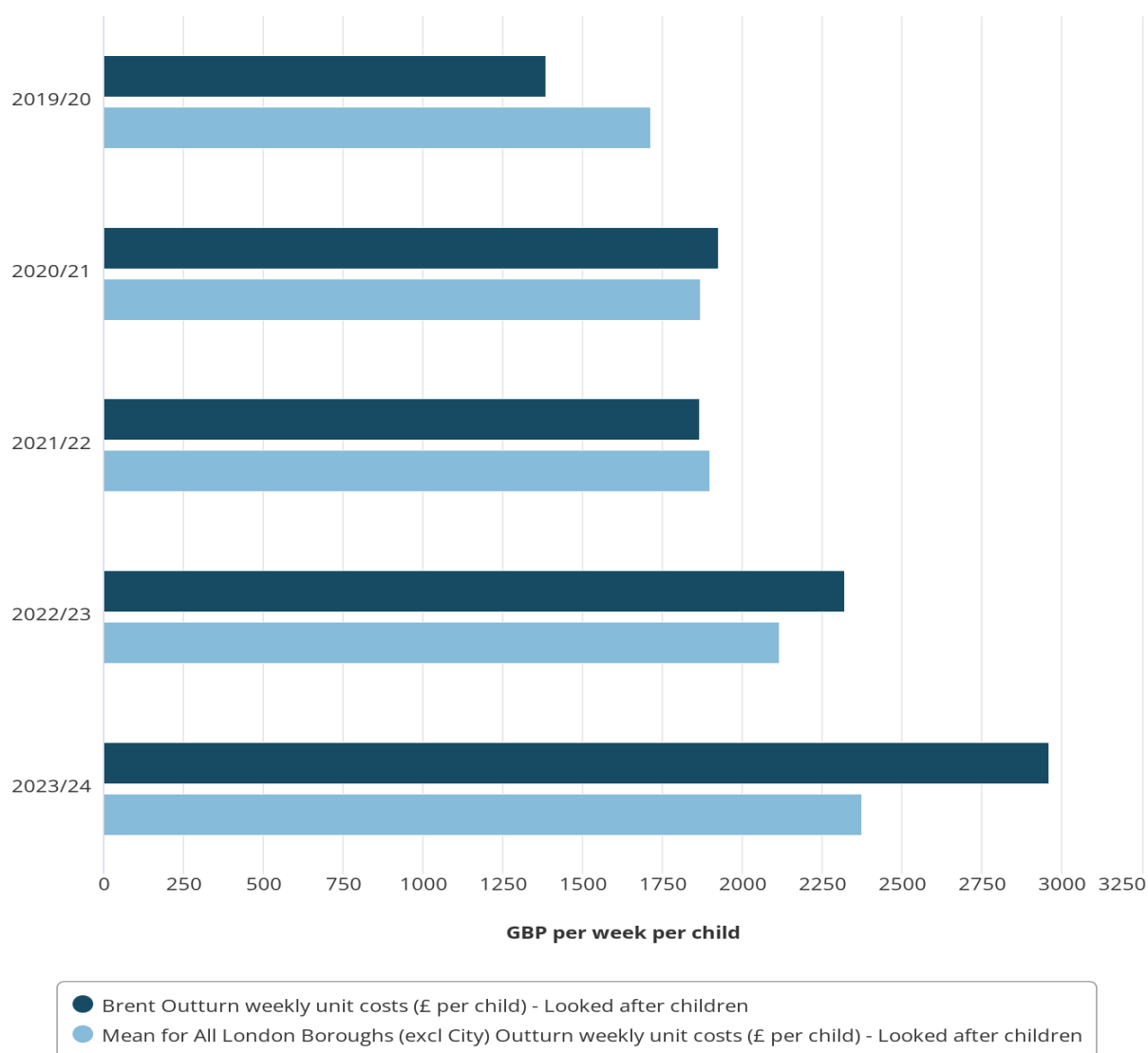
6.48. Chart 3 shows the weekly unit costs (£ per child) for Looked After Children in 2023/24 (latest available) for all London boroughs.

Chart 3: Outturn weekly unit costs (£ per child) - Looked after children (2023/24) for All London Boroughs (excluding City of London)



6.49. Chart 4 shows the weekly unit costs per child for Looked After Children (LAC) in Brent from 2019/20 to 2023/24. This shows that over the last few years, the LAC unit costs in Brent have been in line with the average unit costs when compared to statistical neighbours with a significant increase in 2023/24 due to meeting complex placement needs.

Chart 4: Outturn weekly unit costs (£ per child) - Looked after children (from 2019/20 to 2023/24) for Brent



- 6.50. These pressures against the placement budgets sufficiency challenge are a combination of the impact of inflation and increased costs because Brent's looked after children often enter care late, with complex needs and require higher levels of support and that is reflected in the increases in unit costs for the period reflected in the benchmarking charts. In this period the increase was particularly pronounced for the residential and the care leavers cohort in semi-independent placements (where a number of young people require high levels of additional support). Since then, the department has made progress in reducing the unit cost for clients in semi-independent accommodation through a number of initiatives implemented by the Strategic Commissioning Group. For the residential cohort, however, and in line with the national picture, the unit costs continue to increase due to the lack of available placements.
- 6.51. The directorate also provides support to Care Leavers, who are entitled to support from the local authority until the age of 25. The number of care leavers receiving support has risen in recent years and currently stands at 572 (567 at this time last year), with further increases anticipated in the new financial year.



### *Children with special needs*

- 6.52. The continued growth in the number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) may increase the pressure on some General Fund services, such as SEN Transport. Delivery of the new Travel Assistance Policy Implementation Plan (TAPIP) will be essential to managing transport costs in 2026/27, supporting young people to become more independent by reducing reliance on Council organised transport.
- 6.53. The CYP CD directorate relies on health contributions from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to fund health-related expenses associated with placement costs and the health component of a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) child's Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). Brent continues to collaborate with health partners to secure maximum contributions through a Joint Funding Panel which challenges placement decisions on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.54. Looking ahead to 2026/27, the Government's principal initiative for children's social care will focus on implementing the Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme. This reform seeks to develop a more integrated system by aligning early help and child in need functions. As part of the programme, the Government provided new funding in 2025/26, with Brent receiving £1.4m, to enable local authorities to invest in preventative support services. This includes targeted early help, child in need, and child protection activities. The intention is to reduce late interventions to support families, to maintain children living within their family network and to mitigate financial pressures within children's social care through transformation.
- 6.55. The Government has confirmed funding for the Families First Partnership Programme through the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant for the 2025/26 financial year. While formal grant determinations have only been published for this period, wider Spending Review commitments indicate that approximately £523m per year will continue to be made available for children's social care prevention throughout the Spending Review period (to 2028/29), with further Transformation Fund allocations expected in 2026/27 and 2027/28. Detailed allocations and grant conditions for future years are yet to be confirmed.

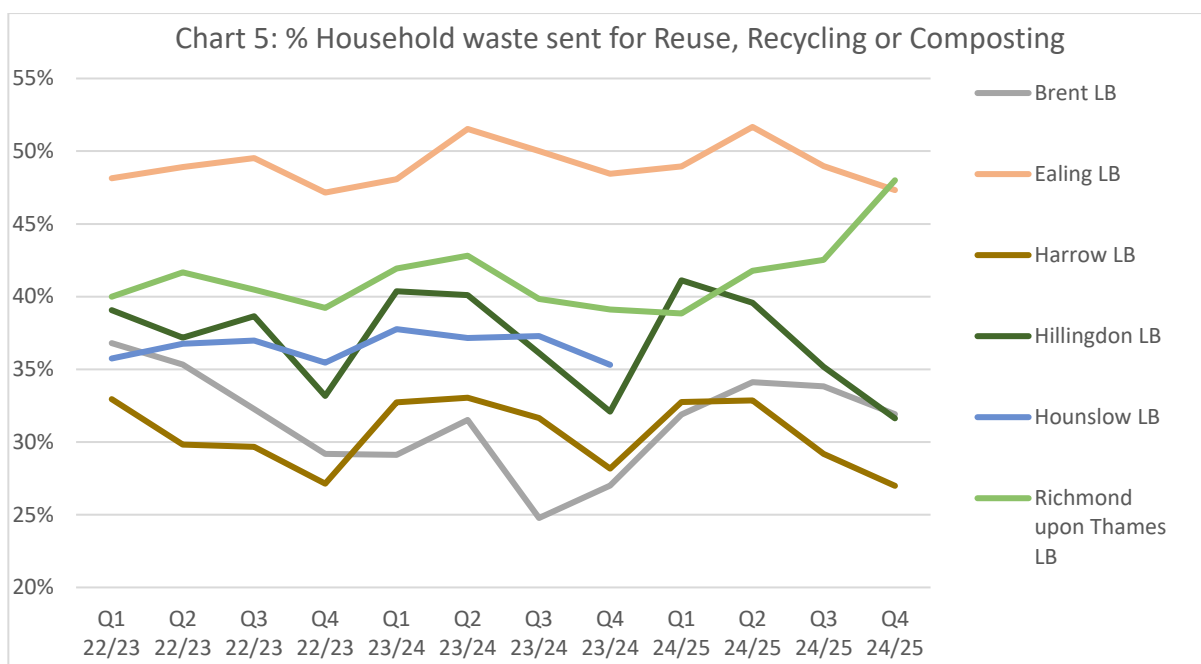
### **Neighbourhoods and Regeneration**

- 6.56. The Department is dedicated to enhancing Brent's quality as a place. Our goal is to improve the lived experience of residents, visitors, and businesses by facilitating new housing and job opportunities through careful planning and regeneration.
- 6.57. We also focus on maintaining and enhancing the public realm, ensuring that parks, public spaces, and community facilities are welcoming and functional. Our environmental enforcement team upholds standards by addressing waste management and pollution control.
- 6.58. Additionally, we manage the highway infrastructure, ensuring that roads, pavements, and transportation networks are safe, efficient, and well-maintained. By focusing on these areas, we strive to create a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive environment for all who live, work, and visit Brent.

- 6.59. The Directorate spends around £32m on the provision of waste collection and environmental services; including bin collection, waste disposal, recycling, street cleaning and environmental protection.
- 6.60. Through the provision of parking management and traffic enforcement, the Directorate is able to generate over £19m of income that is reinvested in highways improvements and meets the cost of the provision of the 'Freedom Pass' to Brent residents.
- 6.61. Services provided by the directorate:
- Cleared 21,000 fly tips
  - Repaired 7,229 potholes
  - Collected 31,000 tonnes of rubbish and recycling from 127,974 homes
  - Cut our carbon emissions by 71.1% since 2010
  - Kept 110 award-winning parks and open spaces flourishing
  - £9.3m looking after 315 miles of road and 529 miles of pavement
  - Determined 1,871 planning applications in the last year; including 20 Major applications and 1,851 Minor or other applications
  - Issued 122 Enforcement Notices in the year, and undertook "Direct Action" on 18 unlawful developments and commenced prosecution on 9 cases
  - Delivered 5 community centres, now leased to local organisations, strengthening local service delivery and community engagement.

#### *Public Realm*

- 6.62. New contractual arrangements for several key Public Realm services, including parking and waste management, commenced in 2023/24. The most significant of these is the waste management contract, which is currently facing some financial pressures. These issues stem from the challenges around reducing residual waste and increasing the amount of waste diverted for recycling.
- 6.63. The service continues to implement a range of engagement and enforcement activities aimed at reducing residual waste volumes. These measures have contributed to actual tonnages collected between April and August 2025 being at a better, lower level than originally forecast. This reduction is further evidenced by the 'Pay As You Throw' rebate received for Quarter 1 (Q1) 2025/26.
- 6.64. Based on current performance and trajectory, the service anticipates a continued helpful downward trend in residual waste tonnages for the remainder of the financial year. The revised forecast for 2025/26 reflects a 3% reduction compared to the original projection.
- 6.65. Chart 5 shows the percentage of household waste sent for recycling alongside the other London Boroughs making up the West London Waste Authority.



- 6.66. As is shown in Chart 5, Brent's recycling rate has been in the lower range amongst the West London Waste Authority boroughs, mainly due to contamination in communal bins. However, recent figures show signs of improvement, with recycling rates rising steadily over the past year before levelling off. This recent increase in recycling rates reflects the early impact of service changes and targeted engagement, which will remain a priority going forward.
- 6.67. An upgrade to the food waste recycling service at communal properties was introduced in 2024/25 which has seen performance improve. There is still work to do to improve recycling at flats above shops, such as rolling out food waste at these properties to further improve performance. In addition, the waste education team are running several small projects to combat negative behaviours and reduce rates of contamination.
- 6.68. A compounding problem is that the price per tonne disposal cost continues to rise significantly. In 2024/25 it was up by 8.5% compared to the previous year and in 2025/26 up by a further 1%. These costs are largely beyond the Council's control and reflect high levels of inflation in recent years.
- 6.69. In addition to this, the recycle reprocessing contract has seen fluctuations in material volumes, rejection rates, and market prices. In the first year of the contract some financial pressures were faced due to challenges around a lower tonnage collected for recycling and more loads were being rejected.
- 6.70. There has been a significant improvement however in the second year of the contract and processing costs have reduced. In 2023/24, 33% of recyclable material collected was downgraded upon arrival at the processor. Considering the high percentage of rejected loads, specific measures were introduced with a focus on trying to get better quality material to the reprocessing facilities. This can be seen in the reduction of processing costs for 2024/25 which has in turn helped the Council to achieve a higher rebate value, through the sale of recyclates.

- 6.71. Table 5 shows the improvement in tonnage and cost reduction from 2023/24 to 2024/25. Co-mingled tonnage refers to the weight of mixed recyclable materials collected together in a single stream, rather than being separated by type.

Table 5: Improvement in tonnage and cost reduction from 2023/24 to 2024/25

| Year    | Total Tonnage Collected | Co-mingled collected tonnage | % Co-mingled downgraded | Paper & Card collected Tonnage | % Paper & Card Downgraded | Processing costs | Rebate   |
|---------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|----------|
| 2023/24 | 19,822                  | 13,823                       | 23%                     | 5,999                          | 0%                        | £2,270,173       | £493,364 |
| 2024/25 | 20,629                  | 14,611                       | 18%                     | 6,018                          | 0%                        | £1,555,804       | £739,926 |

- 6.72. There is still work to be done to further improve the contamination in the accepted tonnage and further reduce costs. There has been a downturn in DMR (Dry Mixed Recycling) tonnage across the country, and this is largely due to a change in purchasing habits and manufacturers utilising less packaging.

- 6.73. Whilst there has been an upturn in recycling more of these materials than previously, rebate values are largely dictated by market material prices, which are not within service control. Table 6 highlights three different material types which have experienced the largest movements in terms of unit price.

Table 6: Material types with the largest movements in unit price (per tonne)

| Year    | Aluminium Cans |        | Pot, Tubs and Trays |        | PET Clear |        |
|---------|----------------|--------|---------------------|--------|-----------|--------|
|         | High           | Low    | High                | Low    | High      | Low    |
| 2023/24 | £17.22         | £6.41  | £4.61               | -£0.67 | £16.21    | £6.71  |
| 2024/25 | £31.34         | £13.84 | £4.15               | -£4.75 | £33.75    | £11.71 |

- 6.74. In 2025, the Extended Producer Responsibility policy was introduced which shifts the financial and physical responsibility for managing products, such as packaging, to the producers themselves after they have been used. The goal is to encourage more sustainable practices, by making producers pay the costs of collection and recycling. For 2025/26, local authorities will receive quarterly payments starting between October and December, followed by two instalments between January and March. Payments may be adjusted based on updated data, and while initial funding is Treasury backed, future income may decline as producers reduce packaging costs.

- 6.75. Additional waste reforms include the introduction of the Emissions Trading Scheme for energy-from-waste facilities from 2028, adding costs to fossil-based emissions to incentivise reductions, and the implementation of a Deposit Return Scheme encouraging container recycling through a refundable deposit scheme.

- 6.76. Parking continues to perform well, however, as it acts as a deterrent, its effectiveness may shift over time alongside behaviour changes. Ongoing monitoring and potential adjustments to enforcement measures, such as camera locations, will be important to maintain performance.

#### *Inclusive Regeneration & Climate Action*

- 6.77. Recent economic constraints have led to the reduction or cancellation of several significant development projects. This has had a direct effect in Inclusive

Regeneration & Climate Action, which is substantially reliant on revenue generated through commercial planning activities and associated functions, including Building Control. The challenges within Building Control have been compounded by regulatory changes introduced by the Building Safety Regulator (BSR), which now allocates the majority of key project work directly to Local Authorities. As a result, the department no longer has the opportunity to competitively bid for such work, further limiting its income-generating capacity. In addition, ongoing staff shortages are further restricting the service's ability to pursue additional work and generate income, placing increased pressure on existing resources and limiting operational flexibility.

- 6.78. Whilst it is hoped that the wider economy will recover, there remains uncertainty around when this will translate into an uplift in planning-related income. In the short term, an increase in planning fees may help to offset some of the financial impact. However, the changes introduced by the BSR present a more complex challenge that is not easily mitigated. In response, the department is actively exploring a range of mitigation strategies, including reviewing recruitment processes, enhancing career development pathways, increasing agency pay rates, and considering a commissioning-based delivery model to improve resilience and capacity.
- 6.79. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income is expected to decline in the coming years, primarily due to a reduction in housing delivery and planning approvals. As CIL income is directly linked to new development, any decrease in construction activity directly impacts income levels.
- 6.80. Furthermore, the implementation of new building safety regulations and ongoing delays within the planning system are contributing to a slower pace of housing development. These factors are contributing towards the challenges to maintaining a robust development pipeline, thereby reducing the potential for future CIL receipts.
- 6.81. CIL income includes a 5% administrative fee, which supports staffing costs within the Council. A continued decline in CIL receipts would place pressure on the services that rely on this funding, requiring alternative sources to maintain those services.

#### *Property & Assets*

- 6.82. Within Property & Assets, the Commercial Property team has experienced pressures on its income collection in recent years. The service is focused on mitigating these income risks by securing new tenants to replace those with expired leases and by actively marketing vacant assets. Post-pandemic shifts in working patterns have led to a sustained decline in demand for commercial space. To remain competitive, the Council has introduced rent-free incentives; however, this strategy has a direct impact on service revenue and requires careful financial oversight.

#### **Residents and Housing Services**

- 6.83. Resident and Housing Services is responsible for the council's Resident Services, Housing Needs and Support, and Housing Services. Its role is to make all of our services easier to access, to ensure that residents have access to secure, safe and decent housing, to ensure that support is available for those residents who are most in need and to lead work with our partners and

communities. We also provide library services, the Brent Museum and Archive service, and registrar and bereavement services for the borough.

- 6.84. The Housing Needs service is responsible for delivering the Council's statutory responsibilities on homelessness, developing viable options to meet residents' housing needs. The team provides a dedicated Domestic Abuse service as well as a specialist Rough Sleeper service, working with partners to deliver an outreach service, to support the most vulnerable. The team is also responsible for the allocation of social housing, either directly from the Council's own stock or through nomination to Registered Providers.
- 6.85. The Council spends £31m across Residents and Housing Services, including £16m on homelessness services and temporary accommodation and £15m on resident services including libraries, registration and bereavement, customer service and council tax services.
- 6.86. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) spends around £70m on the management and maintenance of the Council's 8,500 units of housing stock and 4,000 leaseholders, including repairs, improvements, and management costs.
- 6.87. Services provided by the directorate:
- Our Housing Needs Service assessed 8,800 homelessness approaches and are providing Temporary Accommodation for 2,400 homeless households.
  - Secure an average of 30 properties a month in the private rented sector to end homelessness.
  - Prevent and relieve 35% of the homelessness applications received
  - 892 new homes to be delivered under the New Council Homes Programme
  - 2 New Medical Centres
  - £4.3m in cost-of-living support
  - Helped 4,500 residents with housing, debt and more
  - Licensed 20,000 properties, driving up standards for renters
  - Our libraries welcomed 1,350,363 visitors
  - £1.3m for community projects
  - Approximately 4.7m visits to the website – up 12.5% from 2023/24
  - Our Contact Centre answered 242,543 phone calls
  - Housing benefit was processed for nearly 11,000 recipients
  - Council tax support provided for over 23,000 residents
  - Registered 3,800 births, 2,100 deaths, and 2,500 marriages and civil partnerships
  - 3,200 citizenship ceremonies were held

## Homelessness

- 6.88. Housing Needs and Support continues to be the most significant area of pressure for the Residents and Housing Services department. The service experienced a £15.3m overspend in 2024/25 and the continued pressure is forecast to result in a £5m overspend in 2025/26. In 2025/26, an additional £3.4m of funding was allocated through the main Homelessness Prevention Grant and £11.6m of growth built into the base budget resulting in an increase of £15m in the service budget in comparison to the previous financial year to deal with continuous pressures and demand. However, demand continues to increase and the associated costs remain high.
- 6.89. An extremely elevated level of demand for housing services and emergency accommodation is a national issue that is particularly acute in London. The Housing Needs Service in Brent has seen a 12% increase in the number of homelessness presentations received in 2025/26 (7,300) compared to 2024/25. The total number of households in temporary accommodation in Brent has increased to 2,460 (by 20%) over the same period, and the number of families in emergency temporary accommodation has increased by 36%. As at the end of quarter two in 2025/26, the total number of homeless households living in emergency type accommodation had risen to 1,474, with the service placing an average of 21 households every week. This is a 12% rise in comparison to April 2025 that had 1,318 households in stage 1 temporary accommodation. The service is expecting the number of households in emergency type accommodation to increase to 1,498 by the end of the year.
- 6.90. Tables 7 and 8 show the number of approaches and the number of subsequent applications the service has received over the past 3 years, and demand to date this year. An approach is recorded when a person applies for housing assistance, either online or physically presents to the Council. An application is only recorded if following a triage interview the case progresses.

Table 7: Number of approaches for temporary accommodation 2023-2025

| Year of approach | Actual approaches | Projected approaches | Total |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------|
| 2023             | 9113              |                      |       |
| 2024             | 8957              |                      |       |
| 2025             | 7073              | 2131                 | 9204  |

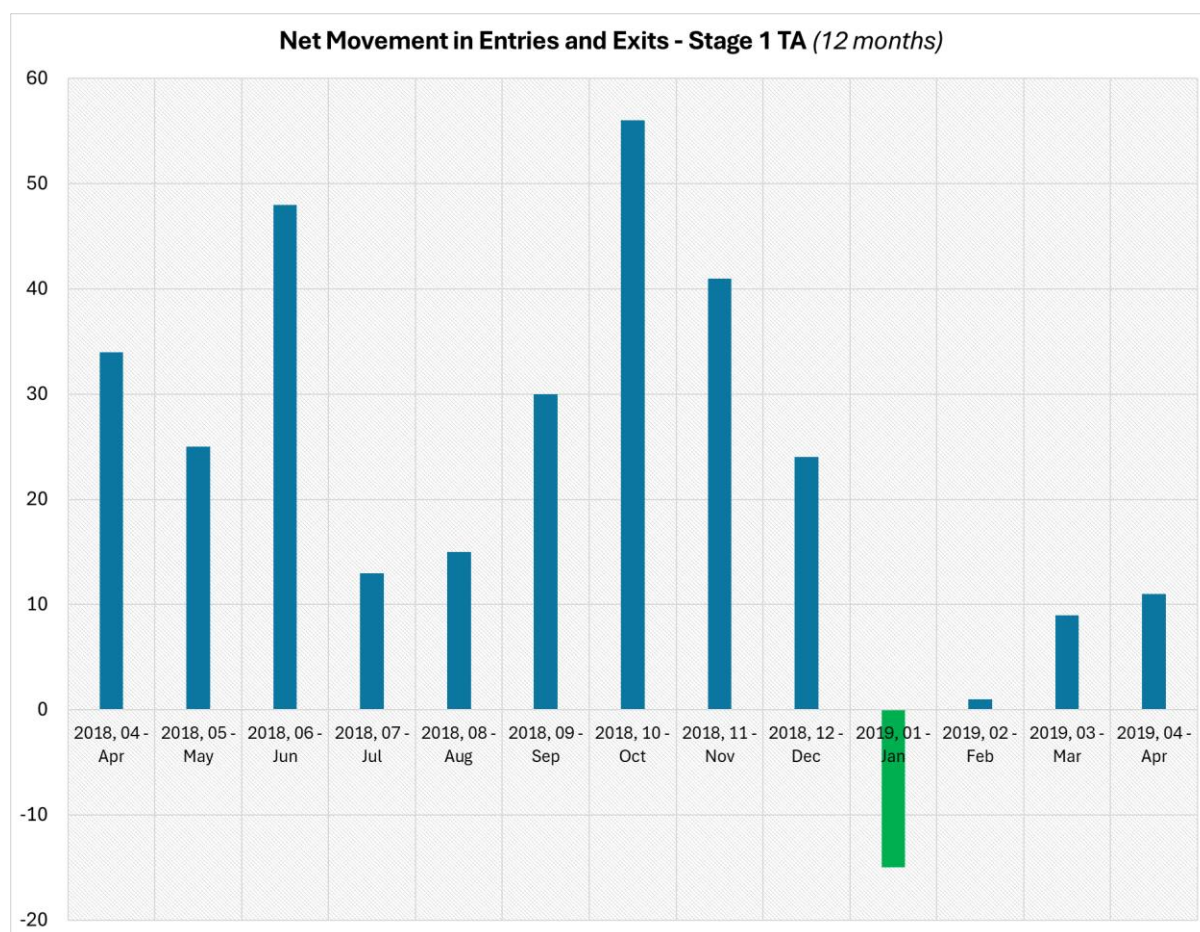
Table 8: Number of successful Homeless duties owed 2023-2025

| Year | Duty owed - actual | Duty owed – projection | Total |
|------|--------------------|------------------------|-------|
| 2023 | 2932               |                        | 2932  |
| 2024 | 2945               |                        | 2945  |
| 2025 | 2026               | 921                    | 2947  |

- 6.91. Chart 6 shows a net number of entries and exits from Stage 1 accommodation over the past 12 months. Following the influx of new build properties available to temporary accommodation households at the start of summer, there was a net decrease in Stage 1 figures. However, in other months, new entries exceeded exits, leading to a net increase in Stage 1 households.



Chart 6: Net Movement in Entries and Exits from Stage 1 temporary accommodation over the past 12 months



- 6.92. Homeless households placed in temporary accommodation who are entitled to it can claim Housing Benefit to go towards their housing costs. Local authorities pay the cost of that Housing Benefit upfront and then are paid back by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) through subsidy arrangements. Households can receive the full Housing Benefit they are entitled to, however the amount the Council can claim back is limited to 90% of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates from 2011. At Brent, rents charged to tenants are therefore calculated at 90% of the 2011 LHA rates in order to minimise subsidy losses. However, current LHA rates are on average 47% higher than 2011 rates, and the cost of nightly placements is considerably higher than what the Council is able to recover, therefore leading to a substantial net cost of the service. If the cap for how much the local authority can claim back from the DWP were to be removed and brought back in line with LHA rates for the current year, this could partially help alleviate the current pressure by around £3.8m.
- 6.93. London Councils conduct analysis and benchmarking of peers that helps to gauge the situation in London. The latest estimates show that Housing pressures are increasing rapidly compared to budgeted levels and that councils' net deficit on homelessness service spending was projected to be 124% (£410m) higher in 2025/26 than it was in 2024/25. The gross total monthly spend on temporary accommodation across London for April 2025



reached £94m. Based on the London Councils analysis, boroughs spent £5.5m a day on homelessness in 2024/25 – up from £4.2m a day in 2023/24.

- 6.94. As part of the Preventing Homelessness Programme the Council has a dedicated workstream focusing on reducing temporary accommodation spend and preventing homelessness among residents who have approached the Council as homeless. The programme contains a number of activities and workstreams, including improved private sector offer incentives, improving process for considering offers of properties to use as temporary accommodation from the private sector, developing MHCLG Bed & Breakfast elimination plan, enhancing the role of Housing Resolutions Officers, acquiring self-contained leased accommodation at scale and developing strategies aiming to discharge the 100 most expensive temporary accommodation placements. Council officers are proactively renegotiating contract prices and identifying alternative solutions to relocate some of the highest-cost cases, with the objective of reducing overall expenditure within the Housing Needs service. Officers continue to rigorously assess and manage homelessness applications to prevent or relieve demand where possible. In the 2024/25 financial year, 51% of homelessness approaches were successfully prevented or relieved.
- 6.95. The Council is continuously looking to increase supply of new temporary accommodation by seeking new accommodation via acquisition or leasing.
- 6.96. In 2026/27, the average number of homeless households living in emergency type accommodation is expected to increase to 1,575, resulting in a circa £6.7m additional pressure to the current Housing Needs and Support budget. A worsening of the situation in temporary accommodation is estimated to result in 1,654 households in stage 1 accommodation resulting in a £7.5m pressure to the budget. A best-case scenario is estimated to result in 1,497 households in stage 1 accommodation, resulting in a £5.5m pressure to the 2026/27 budget.
- 6.97. In addition, inflationary pressures arising from an increase in provider costs is expected to result in a further £1.4m cost to the 2026/27 budget. This is the central case based on scenario modelling, with the worst case being £2.3m and best case being £0.9m.
- 6.98. In both cases, the central case has been built into the MTFS, which is based on projecting forward the expected increase in homelessness presentations, the additional cost of temporary accommodation, projections on loss of Housing Benefit subsidy and factoring in the impact of various interventions being put in place to manage demand and costs. However, it is important to recognise that a lot of elements are subject to change, and unforeseen circumstances may arise. As such, these projections may not fully materialise in reality, and actual outcomes could differ significantly from those anticipated. If the worst case scenario materialised, corporate reserves would be utilised to cover the budget gap.

#### *Council's New Builds Programme*

- 6.99. The Council is expecting 892 new properties to be added to its portfolio during 2025/26 and 2026/27 as part of the Capital Programme. These are mostly HRA properties, some of which may house people in temporary accommodation, depending on allocations, therefore alleviating pressures on this service. Most

recently, out of 115 new units delivered, 66 were allocated to homeless households. Of the 66 social housing allocations, 26 were direct offers targeting individuals in the most expensive forms of temporary accommodation. These households were prioritised based on their placement in higher priority bands (A and B), with the aim of reducing overall accommodation costs. The remaining 40 properties were allocated through Locata via the Choice-Based Lettings (CBL) system. These were offered to households who submitted bids and are in the highest priority banding, with allocations made in order of longest waiting time.

- 6.100. If the remaining social housing homes within the current pipeline are used to target the households in the most expensive forms of temporary accommodation and similar allocation rates are seen, this could result in an annual cost avoidance of circa £5m - £8m. However, due to the increasing level of demand, the number of households in temporary accommodation and the associated costs, there is a risk that this benefit could be at least partially counterbalanced.

#### *Acquisitions*

- 6.101. Two grant-funded programmes are currently supporting the delivery of temporary accommodation: the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF), which aims to deliver 35 units for temporary accommodation alongside resettlement homes, and the Council Homes Acquisition Programme (CHAP).
- 6.102. The CHAP is part of the Mayor's Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 2021-2026 and the funding aims to enable councils to purchase properties and convert them into social rented housing or accommodation for homeless households (including temporary accommodation). The CHAP programme intends to part-fund the acquisition of homes at the following grant rates;
- For social rent, up to £200k per home
  - For accommodation for homeless households, up to £85k per home.
- 6.103. Officers have undertaken a financial appraisal to determine the feasibility of acquiring properties of the requisite specification and standard for this programme based on the grant funding levels noted above. At the levels of grant funding noted above, it was deemed that the programme was undeliverable, and officers have since been in dialogue with the GLA to demonstrate how/why additional grant funding is required. Following productive discussions, officers have now had a revised bid accepted, with grant funding increased to £120k per property, with the total grant amounting to £1.8m and a delivery target of 15 properties in the financial year.
- 6.104. The Deed of Variation (DoV) to the 2021-2026 Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) received Cabinet approval in September and officers have begun sourcing a pipeline of properties suitable for the programme. The Council currently has five properties in conveyancing and one in negotiation.
- 6.105. The LAHF is a £450m grant fund from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), with objectives to reduce local housing pressures and use of expensive and unsuitable accommodation, reduce temporary accommodation costs, provide sustainable settled housing to those on the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and support local

housing markets by assisting the delivery of new housing stock or new developments.

- 6.106. In August 2024, the Council successfully secured a capital grant allocation of £10.5m and a revenue grant allocation of £86k from the LAHF. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that has been signed with MHCLG is to acquire at least 42 properties. As per the MOU, the Council has agreed to deliver 25 properties in the 2024/25 financial year ('the Year 1 delivery target') and 17 properties in the 2025/26 financial year ('the Year 2 delivery target'). Officers have made significant progress acquiring against the full delivery target of 42 properties, with a total of 39 properties either completed, in conveyancing or awaiting valuation and an expectation that several properties currently in negotiation will soon follow suit. Where possible, officers have prioritised the acquisition of larger 3+ bedroom family homes as these property types would relieve the Council of several applicants within the current 25 costliest temporary accommodation placements.

#### *Leasing*

- 6.107. While various leasing options continue to be assessed to secure cost-effective nightly paid placements, progress in delivering new supply through this route has been limited. Since the completion of the 45 unit lease in March 2023, few opportunities have met the Council's affordability criteria. Negotiations for another lease to provide 40 units have experienced significant delays due to issues with the counterparty's solicitors, though the arrangement is now in its final stages. A new lease has recently been completed which is expected to deliver 192 units from April 2026. To help accelerate progress and strengthen commercial negotiations, Greenlight Commercial & Consulting have been engaged to support this workstream and a number of options are currently being negotiated, modelled and assessed.

#### *PRS - i4B Holdings Ltd Acquisitions*

- 6.108. i4B is continuing its street property acquisition programme with an initial target of acquiring 15 homes. i4B, a housing company wholly owned by Brent Council, was established to acquire, let, and manage a portfolio of affordable, high-quality PRS properties. These properties are leased to homeless families at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, enabling the Council to prevent or discharge homelessness duties, thereby reducing reliance on temporary accommodation and associated costs while ensuring families have access to secure and responsible landlords. i4B remains self-financing, with the current portfolio generating annual savings in temporary accommodation costs. This self-financing portfolio generates annual savings exceeding £4m-£6m by reducing reliance on temporary accommodation. While new builds and acquisitions alone will not fully resolve the homelessness challenge, the Council is actively utilising its available resources and powers to expand housing supply.

#### *Supported Exempt Accommodation*

- 6.109. Supported exempt accommodation properties continue to create financial pressures for the Council and represent a budgetary risk. Unlike other landlords, providers of supported exempt accommodation are not bound by Local Housing Allowance (LHA) caps and can charge higher rents once they

demonstrate that support services are being provided. Housing Benefit subsidy levels depend on Rent Officer determinations, which are based on the rent claimed by providers. This issue reflects a national challenge, highlighting the need for clearer regulation regarding the criteria that providers must meet to qualify as Supported Exempt Accommodation. Greater clarity on what constitutes minimal care would enable a more consistent approach to assessing individual support needs across the sector. Historically, costs associated with supported exempt accommodation have not posed a significant budgetary pressure for the Council and have been managed within corporate central budgets. However, an overspend of £4m occurred in 2024/25 and the overspend for 2025/26 is projected to be circa £1.8m.

- 6.110. A dedicated working group has been established within the Council with the objective of minimising opportunities for exploitative landlords to enter the Supported Exempt Accommodation market. The group has developed a clear strategy outlining the Council's processes for reviewing both new landlords seeking to join this market and those already operating within it. Senior managers have met with the providers with the greatest subsidy loss to the Council to discuss options to reduce this loss. The reviews process will also assess individuals' support needs and verify that providers are delivering the appropriate level of care. This strategy and reviews process should bring the cost of SEA under control and, in time, should lead to cost avoidance and/or savings.
- 6.111. A consultation on the implementation of the Supported Exempt Accommodation Act was launched in February 2025 seeking views on plans to implement measures set out in the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 and on the Government's proposal to introduce a locally led licensing regime for supported housing across England, and new National Supported Housing Standards for the support provided. Brent Council submitted a substantial response to this outlining the Council's broad support for the Act and areas where it could go further. As the Government analyses the responses to the consultation on standards and licensing, the Council is proactively preparing to develop and implement the new licensing team. At the same time, the Council continues to make sure its activities and strategies remain aligned with emerging regulatory requirements.

## **7.0 Other Key Budget Themes**

### **Employee Costs**

- 7.1. The local government pay award for 2025/26 has been agreed, with a flat percentage increase of 3.2% on all pay grades. This is a change from recent years, when the pay award has included a combination of a fixed absolute increase at lower pay grades and a flat percentage at higher pay grades. This is estimated to cost Brent's General Fund revenue budget £3.8m in 2025/26, which is contained within the growth that was included in the 2025/26 budget in February 2025.
- 7.2. The pay award for 2026/27 has yet to be agreed and the type of pay award is also unknown, which makes budgeting for future pay awards challenging. However, an estimate can be made based on inflation expectations. The MTFS for 2026/27 in respect of pay inflation does not include any growth, because of

an expected decrease in the employer's pension contributions following the pension fund valuation in March 2026. From 2027/28 onwards, the MTFs is assuming increases in line with a return to the Bank of England's 2% inflation target.

### **Fees and Charges**

- 7.3. The Council provides a wide range of services and the ability to charge for some of these services has always been a key funding source to support the cost of providing the service.
- 7.4. The Council provides both statutory and discretionary chargeable services. Where fees and charges apply to statutory services these are often set nationally, for example some planning and licensing fees. Discretionary services are those that an authority has the power to provide but is not obliged to. These cover a wide range of services such as Libraries, Waste, Culture, Sport & Recreation, and Parking etc.
- 7.5. Where the Council has discretion over charges for services provided, detailed advice and guidance will be issued. In setting fees and charges consideration needs to be given to the recovery of both direct costs (staffing, materials, bought in services) and indirect costs (office accommodation, back-office support) of the service.
- 7.6. Setting fees and charges at an optimum and fair level can be challenging due to all variables that needs to be considered. Whilst the Council is committed to supporting the borough's residents through the current economic challenges, a freeze on increases in fees and charges is not an affordable option.
- 7.7. The precarious financial situation that the Council has to contend with in 2026/27 require the Council to ensure maximization of its fees and charges. To this effect, a fundamental review of the fees and charges policy is to be undertaken in earnest as £0.5m has been proposed as financial savings to be achieved via changes to the fees and charges policy in order to contribute to the savings target for 2026/27 and beyond. Initial discussions are being held with a potential organisation that can assist the Council to undertake the review.
- 7.8. The Council will consider the likely impact of any increase in fees and charges, and to what extent these will be affordable to the customers it serves.

### **Council Tax**

- 7.9. Council Tax is one of the most significant sources of income for the Council, making up £178.4m (or 41%) of total core funding in 2025/26.
- 7.10. In the 2025/26 Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS), Central Government set the referendum limit at 3%, with a 2% adult social care precept. The Government's Council Tax policy for 2026/27 has not yet been confirmed, but the Spending Review and the Fair Funding Review both strongly implied that the current referendum limits will continue at least across the Spending Review period from 2026/27 to 2028/29.
- 7.11. The Government is also likely to continue its financing assumption that all councils will act on this and increase Council Tax by the maximum amount possible. It should be noted that the additional income generated through the

Adult Social Care precept alone does not cover the total growth requirement for Adult Social Care pressures.

- 7.12. Taking into account the unprecedented pressures within social care and housing and the financial position in the round, the budget has been prepared on the basis of a 4.99% increase in the Brent element of Council Tax. This will add £9.1m of recurring income to the Council's budget.
- 7.13. Substantial rises in Council Tax cause difficulties for some households and for that reason the Council continues to fund a Council Tax Support scheme for households who are financially vulnerable, supplemented by a Council Tax Support Hardship Fund, which in 2025/26 has made available £1.5m, (£1.1m from Brent, £0.4m from the GLA) and the Resident Support Fund, which has made available £1m of additional funds for residents who are having difficulty as a result of the cost-of-living crisis.
- 7.14. The Mayor of London's precept, which makes up about 23% of the overall bill, is unknown at this stage and is subject to their own decision making and consultation processes.
- 7.15. In 2024/25, by 31 March 2025, only 91.2% of the net collectable debit for 2024/25 had been collected, 1% lower than the equivalent figure for 2023/24. Based on the collection in the year to date, a similar level of collection can be expected at the end of 2025/26, although actions are currently being undertaken with the aim of improving collection in the short-term and enabling a sustainable growth in the collection in the long-term.
- 7.16. As a result of collection being low over a number of years, the decision was taken at General Purposes Committee in January 2025 to reduce the long-term collection rate target from 97.5% to 97%. The current low in-year collection does not necessarily mean that the target needs to be reduced, and every effort will be made by the Council to achieve this target if possible. However, if it is necessary to reduce the target, this will reduce the funding available to the General Fund from 2026/27 by approximately £0.95m for every 0.5% reduction.
- 7.17. The funding environment for local government, as detailed in Section Five and throughout this report, is uncertain, with a high degree of risk that the funding assumptions in the draft budget will not be sufficient to balance the budget for 2026/27 following the Local Government Finance Settlement in December. At the same time, Brent is experiencing significant overspends on services in 2025/26, following several years of similar overspends, which have depleted the useable reserves.
- 7.18. Low collection of Council Tax is therefore a significant risk to the Council's financial resilience. Any budget gap arising from reduced expectations for collection will have to be met either from additional use of reserves in the short term or from additional budget savings above the challenging programme of savings for 2026/27 proposed in this report.
- 7.19. Recent years have seen some of the pressure from the reduction in Council Tax collection be mitigated by higher than average tax base growth, which has been driven by the regeneration work ongoing within the borough. The current MTFS assumptions are based on the Local Plan and the housing targets set by central government, but there is some evidence that the speed of

housebuilding could be beginning to slow down. If this does materialise, it will represent a further loss of funding to Brent in future years.

- 7.20. Work will continue between now and the final budget in February 2026 to determine the future expectations for collection and tax base growth. The assumptions to be included in the February budget will be confirmed in the report to General Purposes Committee in December 2025.

### **Business Rates**

- 7.21. As set out in section Five, the Government is intending to carry out the first reset of the Business Rates Retention System since 2013 in 2026/27. At the same time as this, the valuations used to calculate how much businesses pay will be updated in April 2026, as part of the new three-yearly revaluation cycle. The Government will also legislate to introduce three new multipliers, increasing the total number of multipliers to five, to convert the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) relief into two new permanent multipliers for small and standard rated businesses, to be funded by a higher multiplier on large businesses.
- 7.22. Along with the other funding assumptions, the current MTFS assumptions for the 2026/27 budget in relation to the Business Rates Retention System (BRRS) are based on the current funding system. As a result of this, the following areas of the BRRS represent a risk ahead of the 2026/27 budget:
- Growth - Since the current BRRS was created in 2013, Brent has benefitted from growth in its NNDR income above the baseline assumed by Government, from developments such as the London Designer Outlet in Wembley Park, which have increased the tax base. The new BRRS will redistribute such growth as part of the new baselines to ensure funding is allocated according to need. Brent may receive a relative share of this funding back, but the exact proportion will not be known until the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in late 2025. Any growth generated after the reset of the BRRS is expected to be retained locally once again, so the incentive to drive growth in the borough will remain. However, the Government has indicated an intention to reform how levies are collected on growth, so that a levy is charged on all growth. This means that Brent will retain a smaller share of any growth in the new system than it did in the current system.
  - Pooling – Brent is currently a member of the 8 Authority Pool with seven other London boroughs, with the City of London as the lead authority. Brent is currently forecast to receive £3.7m from the pool in 2025/26. Previous analysis following the Fair Funding Review suggested that pooling would be unlikely to continue into 2026/27, however central government has recently invited authorities to confirm their intentions regarding pooling in 2026/27. Work is now ongoing to determine whether pooling is likely to continue to benefit the Council, either in its current form, or through a new structure. The final position is unlikely to be known until after the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in late 2025, but authority is delegated to the S151 officer to decide on the Council's participation in a pool in 2026/27. The decision taken will be reported to Cabinet in the final budget in February 2026.

- Retail, Hospitality and Leisure – Since the COVID-19 pandemic, retail, hospitality and leisure businesses have been particularly impacted by high inflation and the cost-of-living crisis impacting on customer behaviour. These businesses are highly affected by increases to the staff costs seen in recent years as a result of salary inflation and the increase to employer national insurance contributions, while at the same time energy prices have remained high and their contribution required to business rates bills was almost doubled in 2025/26. At the present time, it is not known whether the April 2026 revaluation will lead to a further increase in the business rates bills for these businesses, or a decrease, but there is a risk of further pressure on the sector that could lead to an increase in non-collection of business rates for Brent and business closures, with a consequent negative impact on the MTFS, Brent's high streets and the availability of leisure facilities for Brent's residents.

### **Reserves Strategy and Financial Resilience Assessment**

- 7.23. The Council adopts a risk-based approach to the management of useable reserves and as part of setting the annual budget, the S151 Officer undertakes a review of risks and known commitments to calculate a minimum level for the General Fund reserve. In 2023/24, this was increased to £20m, from £18m, to ensure that this reserve is adequate – this represented 5% of net expenditure, which is the minimum prudent level determined by the S151 Officer. In 2026/27, the £20m GF reserve balance may need to be increased in adherence to the 5% of net expenditure policy.
- 7.24. The overspends in 2023/24 and 2024/25 have reduced reserves in Brent, and the overspend projected in 2025/26 will further reduce reserves. As the ratio of reserves to income decreases the Council becomes more vulnerable to smaller financial shocks, therefore the Council needs to stabilise the level of reserves to income to help ensure its financial resilience.
- 7.25. The Council will undertake a review of its earmarked reserves in 2025/26 to ensure that no reserve is held which is no longer required for its original purpose. This review should assess the extent to which they could be repurposed to support the Council's budget; however, many earmarked reserves are already set aside to help fund expenditure to which the Council is already committed. The use of some reserves is also ring-fenced by statute to specific purposes (Community Infrastructure Levy and Public Health are examples of this).
- 7.26. The pragmatic approach on reserves is to use it only to fund one-off items as the reserves themselves are by nature single sums that can only be used once. According to CIPFA's Financial Management Code, running down reserves by persistent use to support the revenue budget would be a symptom of financial stress, indicating a financial position that is not sustainable in the long run.
- 7.27. Any draw down from reserves in the proposed budget and future forecasts in the MTFS needs to be stress tested to determine its effect on the level of usable reserves. Having insufficient reserves is not prudent and would expose the Council to considerable financial risk and would be likely to lead to an adverse external audit opinion on financial sustainability and resilience.



- 7.28. In the Financial Management Code, CIPFA recommends that local authorities undertake an annual Financial Resilience Assessment (FRA) to determine the long-term financial sustainability of the authority. The Financial Resilience Assessment looks at symptoms of financial stress (such as running down reserves as mentioned earlier) and effective financial management (for instance, having clear plans for delivering savings). The assessment will take place following the provisional settlement and will be included in the final budget to be presented to Cabinet in February 2026.

### **Investment in Debt Recovery**

- 7.29. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council has experienced a decline in collection rates across all lines of debt, most notably for Council Tax and Business Rates. As arrears become increasingly difficult to recover over time, improving both in-year and arrears collection is essential to support the medium-term financial position.
- 7.30. Overall Council debt has increased by over 28% over the last three years, reflecting the impact of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis on residents and businesses as well as under-resourced debt collection practices. Work is underway to strengthen debt management capacity, with a focus on consistency, fairness, and digital innovation. Enhanced data analytics and new communication tools are being introduced to improve debt profiling, increase customer contacts and reduce arrears, while maintaining a clear commitment to supporting residents in financial hardship. The aim is to increase overall collection rates while ensuring that recovery processes are proportionate and sensitive to individual circumstances.
- 7.31. Since April 2025, overall debt has reduced by 6%, which is more than double the reduction in the same period last year, reflecting the effectiveness of the investment and exceeding business case targets. Further improvements to the debt position are expected for the remainder of the financial year and the medium-term.
- 7.32. The debt recovery policy is critical to secure the necessary income to fund essential services while ensuring a fair and compassionate approach to collection. The Council's debt recovery policy was last updated in April 2021. This has been refreshed and is attached to this report in Appendix C to clearly set out the actions the Council will take for those individuals who can't pay and won't pay, including support for customers who are vulnerable or have problem or multiple debts.
- 7.33. Following revision of the policy, the Council will implement a more assertive approach to debt recovery. This will include earlier identification of deliberate non-payment and non-engagement, with a clear distinction made between those who are unable to pay and those who choose not to. In cases of wilful refusal or culpable neglect, the Council will escalate enforcement without delay, deploying legal remedies such as bankruptcy proceedings and charging orders (including enforced sale of property) where justified. This strengthened approach ensures enforcement resources are used effectively, public funds are protected and essential services are maintained. The revised policy reinforces the Council's commitment to financial accountability and makes clear that

individuals who have the means to pay but fail to do so will face firm and proportionate enforcement action.

## **8.0 Budget Requirement and new savings proposals**

- 8.1. In February 2025, Council agreed the revenue budget for 2025/26, which included £4.5m of savings, in addition to the £4.4m of savings agreed in February 2024. Further to this, there was an increase of £5m in Council Tax income resulting from changes to Council Tax Support from 1 April 2025 and £6.5m of operating efficiencies to be delivered by services in 2025/26, taking the total reduction in the net expenditure budget in 2025/26 to £20.4m.
- 8.2. In July, Cabinet received an update to the MTFS, at which time due to the high level of demand for services and inflationary pressures being experienced, scenario analysis suggested a central case budget gap of £10m in 2026/27. On that basis, the Council has brought forward a series of new proposals totalling £10.4m, which if approved following consultation and scrutiny, would be implemented in 2026/27.
- 8.3. Since the Medium Term Financial Outlook in July 2025, the Q2 financial forecast has been reported to Cabinet, which shows a £9.2m forecast overspend in 2025/26. Some of these pressures are expected to be recurring, which has resulted in a reduction in the contingency budget set aside to provide flexibility to respond to in-year pressures without having to use earmarked reserves. Any further increase in the recurring pressures between now and the end of 2025/26 will either have to be met by further operating efficiencies, or through the use of earmarked reserves to balance the 2026/27 budget, with additional savings required from 2027/28 to permanently close the budget gap.
- 8.4. The budget gap over the next three years from 2026/27 is currently estimated at £30m (£10m in each year). However, since the Spending Review was announced on 11 June 2025 and a consultation on the 'Fair Funding Review' was announced on 20 June 2025, the impact on the budget gap is currently uncertain.
- 8.5. Unfortunately, the Government has not released details of the potential impact of these announcements at individual council level. In addition, final decisions have yet to be taken on the transition mechanism and which grants will be in scope for consolidation. Analytical tools are being developed to model the implications; however these still rely on assumptions that are uncertain. In reality, there is unlikely to be any certainty over the 2026/27 budget, or the MTFS, until the provisional local government finance settlement in December, when the outcome of the funding reforms will be known.
- 8.6. Current budget assumptions are prudent and so it is recommended to continue with the agreed budget strategy to deliver savings of £30m over the next three years and continue to review through the autumn. Any amendments to the MTFS post the conclusion of the Fair Funding Review will likely impact from 2027/28. For the avoidance of doubt, the budget gap assumes that Council Tax will rise by 5% in each year from 2026/27.
- 8.7. Over the course of this year, a new collaborative approach has been developed to address the Council's medium-term financial challenge and identify sustainable savings. This approach focuses on identifying high-impact

opportunities, including cross-directorate working, improving productivity, better use of digital solutions, and increasing income generation.

- 8.8. This resulted in the identification of 11 priority savings opportunities for further development. These fall into two categories: service-specific savings, which can largely be delivered within the directorate, and strategic, cross-cutting programmes, which require coordinated, corporate-level oversight.
- 8.9. Throughout the process, in producing the draft budget proposals, the emphasis continues to be on delivering efficiency measures, service transformations, cost reductions and income generation with a view to protecting front line services and Council priorities as much as possible.
- 8.10. A summary of the proposals are set out in Appendix A and further details are set out in Appendix B. In contrast to previous years, the proposals have been developed with cross-cutting themes, with the detailed allocations to services to be confirmed in the final budget in February 2026.
- 8.11. Table 9 summarises the savings proposals.

Table 9: summary of savings proposals

| Themes                      | Total (£m)  |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Commissioning & procurement | 3.1         |
| Digital programme           | 1.4         |
| Efficiency                  | 3.2         |
| Workforce                   | 0.4         |
| Income Maximisation         | 0.5         |
| Resident Experience         | 0.7         |
| Service specific            | 1.1         |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>10.4</b> |

- 8.12. Detailed budget templates have been produced, set out in Appendix B, which set out further details of each proposal, while providing the overall current budget context, the key risks and mitigations and the equalities impact where relevant.
- 8.13. A summary of the overall draft 2026/27 budget is set out in Table 10.

Table 10: Overall summary of the 2026/27 draft budget

| <b>Proposed Budget</b>                             | <b>2026/27</b> |
|--|----------------|
|  | <b>£m</b>      |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                                 |                |
| Base Budget from 2025/26                           | 431.4          |
|  |                |
| <b>Growth</b>                                      |                |
| Demographics                                       | 7.1            |
| Inflation  | 13.1           |
| Temporary Accommodation                            | 8.0            |
| Capital Programme Financing                        | 0.5            |
|  | <b>28.7</b>    |
|  |                |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>                           | <b>460.2</b>   |
|  |                |
| <b>Income</b>                                      |                |
| Revenue Support Grant                              | (32.7)         |
| Specific Grants                                    | (96.5)         |
| Council Tax  | (190.5)        |
| Business Rates                                     | (130.1)        |
| <b>Total Income</b>                                | <b>(449.8)</b> |
|  |                |
| <b>Budget Gap (Expenditure less Income)</b>        | <b>10.4</b>    |
|  |                |
| <b>Savings</b>                                     |                |
| Savings Proposals (for agreement in February 2026) | (10.4)         |
|  |                |
| <b>Budget Gap (After Savings)</b>                  | <b>0.0</b>     |

- 8.14. It should be noted that this report reflects the position at this point in the budget preparation and these numbers will change as the budget develops between now and February 2026. The 2026/27 draft budget has been prepared under a high level of uncertainty regarding the future of local government funding as set out in Section Five, with the outcome of the Fair Funding Review still unknown at this time. On that basis, the funding figures included in the draft budget have been based on the current funding environment and will be updated following the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2025.
- 8.15. There is a high risk based on modelling undertaken during the Government's consultation on the Fair Funding Review that the upcoming changes to Local Government funding from 2026/27 will result in some loss of grant funding to Brent across the MTFS period, albeit with transition arrangements expected to limit the impact on the 2026/27 budget. However, the assumptions included in the MTFS in respect of funding have typically been prudent, with more grant funding being received in the settlement in December in previous years than was assumed in the draft budget in November, which has provided some

protection against the in-year overspends that have been experienced. It remains possible that the current funding assumptions will remain sufficient to balance the budget as set out in this report, or that the position for 2026/27 may still include a greater amount of core funding than has been assumed in the MTFS. Alternatively, there may be some loss of funding that would need to be mitigated in the final budget through further operating efficiencies or the use of earmarked reserves in 2026/27 and additional savings from 2027/28, but the gap would be lower than it would otherwise have been, had the existing assumptions been less prudent. In either case, in the absence of clarity from central government on the funding allocations for 2026/27, this is considered to be a balanced approach to setting the draft budget for 2026/27. Any revisions will be reflected in the budget to be considered by Cabinet in February 2026.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1. The Council adopts a risk-based approach to its financial planning with the expectation for budget holders to complete an MTFS Risk Register. The earlier the Council becomes aware of a potential risk to the achievement of its Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) or its annual budget, the sooner – and the more effectively – it can take action to address that risk and to mitigate its impact.
- 9.2. The pressures on social care and temporary accommodation spending detailed above mean that the risks of serious, sustained overspends has increased in recent years. The Council's risk management approach is shown by the forecast reduction in spending in 2025/26 to help offset overspends, and the significant savings proposed in this draft budget.
- 9.3. Through the financial planning and budget setting process risks have been identified and actions to control or mitigate those risks have been developed. The MTFS contains a risk register covering risks inherent in the MTFS assumptions and other factors both within the Council and externally that could have an impact on the Council's financial position. In the sections of the report covering service pressures (sections 6.11 - 6.88), risks were extensively explored and in the detailed savings proposals (Appendix B) risks and mitigating actions are also considered.

## **10.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

### ***Consultation***

- 10.1. The Council recognises consultation as a key part of policy formulation and makes considerable effort to ensure that the views of residents, businesses and other key stakeholders are considered. Legally, the results of consultation are something that Members must have due regard to, alongside other relevant considerations, when making decisions.
- 10.2. As in previous years, it is proposed to formally consult on the draft budget via the online consultation portal, where respondents will be invited to focus their attention on the new budget proposals for 2026/27.
- 10.3. There are a number of business forums and associations that the Council regularly engages with that include a wide range of both small and large local businesses. These include West London Business (a non-profit business

membership organisation), the Federation of Small Businesses, the Chamber of Commerce and a number of town centre business associations. The consultation on the budget will be published in a newsletter that is sent to a large number of Brent businesses, explaining why the views of local businesses are important and how they could have their say.

- 10.4. The local voluntary sector is closely engaged with Brent's communities and has considerable experience of the impact of the Council's difficult choices against a background of funding reductions. Engagement with the local voluntary sector will therefore play an important part of the consultation process and invitations to participate in the consultation will be sent to all Brent voluntary and community sector organisations.
- 10.5. Overall, the main aim of this approach to consultation is to raise awareness of the Council's financial position, inform residents of how the Council spends its budget and ensure residents, businesses and other key stakeholders are aware of the opportunities to have their say, by knowing how to respond and when the consultation events are taking place. This will be delivered through a variety of communication channels, for example through the local newspaper, publicity on the Council's website, e-Newsletters, posters, media briefings and use of the Council's social media platforms, including Facebook and X, to disseminate reminders and encourage residents to participate in the consultation process.

### ***Scrutiny***

- 10.6. In line with the Council's statutory scrutiny responsibilities, the Budget Scrutiny Task Group will review the draft budget through a series of evidence sessions. This will include scrutiny of the budget development process, the budget assumptions in the MTFS as well as the new proposals set out in appendices A and B. Following this, a report summarising the outcomes of the scrutiny process and setting out the Task Group's recommendations will be examined by the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee in January 2026. Pending approval, the report will then be presented to Cabinet in February 2026 for consideration as part of their decision-making.

### ***Equalities Impact assessments***

- 10.7. The Council has a duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who don't when making decisions. This duty is set out in more detail in the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations section of this report.
- 10.8. Each of the budget proposals attached in Appendix B have been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening to assess their potential or likely impact on service users and employees with protected characteristics. Where the EIA screening has identified any potential negative impacts, the proposal will be subject to a full EIA and may need to be changed or even rejected if no appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place. The consultation process outlined in this report will be an important source of information for these exercises. If a proposal involves a staffing restructure, an EIA will be conducted as part of that process, which forms part of the Managing Change policy.

## **11.0 Schools and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

- 11.1. Following the conclusion of the multi-year Spending Review in June 2025, the Department for Education (DfE) will publish the National Funding Formula (NFF) allocations and operational guidance in autumn 2025. DSG allocations based on the NFF are expected to be released in December 2025.
- 11.2. In 2026/27, the Council will continue to implement a locally determined funding formula for mainstream schools. However, the total funding envelope will be set by the NFF. In accordance with national policy direction, local authorities are required to progressively align their local formula with the structure and factors of the NFF, as part of the transition towards a fully centralised direct NFF model.
- 11.3. The 2025 Spending Review set out a national framework for increased investment in education, which will have direct implications for Brent's strategic planning and school funding allocations. The uplift of £4.7bn to the schools' budget by 2028/29, alongside targeted measures such as the extension of free school meals to families on Universal Credit, supports Brent's commitment to tackling child poverty and improving educational equity. A national allocation of £2.6bn has been made to support the provision of mainstream school places between 2026 and 2030. While Brent is currently experiencing a decline in primary school demand in some areas, due to falling birth rates, this funding may still offer opportunities to address localised pressures in secondary provision.
- 11.4. In May 2025 the Government announced the School Budget Support Grant (SBSG) to help schools manage the financial impact of the 2025 teacher pay award. The grant provided targeted support to mainstream schools, academies, and centrally employed staff, with over £470m allocated nationally for the 2025/26 financial year. From 2026/27, the SBSG will no longer be issued as a separate grant. Instead, it will be mainstreamed into the schools' block of the DSG, reflecting a shift toward simplifying schools funding through the NFF.
- 11.5. In 2025/26, the number of Brent schools experiencing financial difficulties remains high, with 65% of 54 maintained schools projecting an in-year deficit. The proportion of schools relying heavily on reserves has increased, with 43% of schools in deficit planning to use 50% or more of their reserves, compared to 42% in 2024/25. A few Brent Primary schools continue to experience falling rolls, and details of this will be set out in the 2024-2028 school place planning strategy refresh to be presented to Cabinet in November 2025. This leads to a reduction in per pupil funding and therefore schools must make strategic decisions to mitigate the financial impact, including the consideration of staffing restructures. Schools continue to face rising inflationary pressures, compounded by a 4% increase in teachers' pay from September 2025. The DfE expects schools to fund 1% of this increase from existing budgets through productivity gains and smarter spending. Funding has already been provided to support 1.3% of the pay award and additional funding will be provided to fund the remaining 1.7%.
- 11.6. Special Educational Needs and Disability demand pressures in Brent continue to rise, with an 8% annual increase in EHCPs as of January 2025 compared to January 2024. To set a balanced DSG budget for 2026/27, the local authority

will, as in previous years, seek approval from the Schools Forum for a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block. The ongoing pressures on the High Needs Block (HNB) budgets have resulted in a £13.6m deficit carried forward from 2024/25 and further forecasted pressures of £2.7m in 2025/26 are expected to increase the deficit to £16.3m. On 11 June 2025, as part of the Spending Review, the Government confirmed that its intended approach to SEND reform would be set out in a Schools White Paper in autumn 2025. However, in October 2025, the Government announced that this would be delayed until early 2026.

- 11.7. Since 2020, a 'statutory override' has been in place that allows local authorities to hold deficit balances on their DSG spending from their main revenue budgets, meaning that local authorities' DSG deficits could be separated from their wider accounts. This override has been extended to 2028, pending wider reform of the system.
- 11.8. Table 11 shows the year-on-year increase in EHCPs over the past 5 years compared to the national average. Between January 2021 and January 2025, the number of children with EHCPs increased by 1,007 (36%). This growth has placed a significant pressure on the HNB budget where funding has not increased at the same pace.

Table 11: Growth in EHCPs (SEN2 annual return to the DfE)

|                                  | January | January | January | January | January |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Financial year                   | 2021    | 2022    | 2023    | 2024    | 2025    |
| Number of EHCP                   | 2,784   | 2,938   | 3,251   | 3,500   | 3,791   |
| Brent Year on Year % increase    | 15%     | 6%      | 11%     | 8%      | 8%      |
| National Year on Year % increase | 10%     | 10%     | 9%      | 11.4%   | 11.5%   |

- 11.9. The Council continues to monitor its High Needs Block Deficit Recovery Management Plan, which outlines a series of long-term actions aimed at reducing the cumulative deficit. Since the plan has been in place Brent's annual EHCP growth has been below the national average. Depending on the outcomes of the SEND reform which has been pushed back to be announced early in 2026, and in the wider context of the Fair Funding review, the Council will continue to develop and, where necessary, strengthen its deficit recovery plan to ensure it remains fit for purpose and responsive to changing circumstances.
- 11.10. In the Spring Budget of March 2023, the Government announced a significant expansion of early years childcare entitlements, to be distributed to local authorities, including Brent, between April 2024 and September 2026. 2026/27 marks the first full year of the expanded 30-hour entitlement for children aged 9 months to school age in working families. At the Spending Review 2025, the Government said it would provide an additional £1.6bn a year by 2028/29, compared to 2025/26, to continue the expansion. Funding for the National Wraparound Childcare Programme is scheduled to end in March 2026 with no confirmed allocation for 2026/27. The increase in the pass-through rate from 96% to 97% in 2026/27 means Brent must allocate a larger proportion of its



early years funding directly to providers, leaving less available for central services. This reduces the borough's flexibility to fund essential support functions such as inclusion services, quality improvement, and provider engagement.

## **12.0 Housing Revenue Account**

- 12.1. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account, which contains the income and expenditure relating to the Council's landlord duties in respect of 12,538 dwellings, 8,698 Council properties and 3,840 leaseholders.
- 12.2. Each year, the HRA budget is set in the context of the 30-year business plan. The business plan is reviewed annually, allowing for horizon scanning and the identification and mitigation of risks in the short, medium and long-term. Early identification of risks enables planning and implementation of mitigations to ensure that the HRA can continue to remain financially secure and deliver on its commitments to:
  - Expand and accelerate the development of new Council homes
  - Continue to maintain and improve existing Council homes
  - Transform and continuously improve front line services to tenants and leaseholders
- 12.3. The HRA budget setting from 2016/17 to 2019/20 was principally directed by the Welfare Reform Act 2016, which imposed a 1% rent reduction for four years. This has resulted in a reduction of rental income and bottom-line surpluses previously assumed in the business plan. The resulting £23m loss of income, along with increased capital expenditure on major works, has led to the full utilisation of the major repairs reserve at the time in order to finance investment in the existing housing stock.
- 12.4. The rent cap of Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% has been in place since its introduction in 2020/21, with the exception of 2023/24, when the Government intervened with a rent rise limitation of 7%. This ceiling resulted in an estimated £2m reduction of income to the HRA when compared to the standard policy of CPI plus 1% policy. There was then a reversion to the standard rent setting arrangements in 2024/25, and the Government originally extended the current CPI plus 1% rent settlement by one year to cover 2025/26. Following a consultation, from April 2026, the Government has, for the first time, provided a 10-year settlement on social housing rent policy. From 1 April 2026, social housing rents will be allowed to increase by CPI plus 1% each year for 2026 - 2036. For 2026/27, CPI plus 1% is equal to 4.8%, allowing the potential to increase rental income by £3.6m. A £3.6m increase in rent has the effect of an additional £108m investment in the HRA over a 30-year period.
- 12.5. In addition, the Government confirmed at the Spending Review that it will implement a rent convergence mechanism as part of the new rent settlement. Convergence would allow rents for Social Rent properties that are currently below 'formula rent' to increase by an additional amount each year, over and above the CPI plus 1% limit, until they 'converge' with formula rent. Formula rent refers to the formula that is used to calculate the rent that may be charged for a given property when it is let to a new tenant. The details of precisely how, and at what level, this mechanism will be implemented are expected to be

confirmed at Autumn Budget on 26 November 2025. During the consultation the Government sought views on the rate of convergence (whether weekly rents should be allowed to increase each year by either £1 or £2 (over and above the CPI plus 1% limit) until they converge with formula rent) and the timing of convergence (whether convergence should be available to Registered Providers for the full period of the 10 year rent settlement, or only for part of it). The impact of the rent convergence is not yet factored into the HRA 30-year Business Plan, but a scenario planning exercise has been conducted, which indicates that if the Council was to inflate all of its social housing rent to formula rent tomorrow, it would mean an additional £3.7m per annum for the HRA.

- 12.6. HRA rent setting needs to be considered in the context of the ring-fence and the 30-year business plan. A 10-year rent settlement permitting to increase rents by the CPI plus 1% helps to provide some stability and certainty over planned investment in the stock, service improvement and new development. However, this alone is insufficient to keep pace with rising costs and will not return the national HRA projection to a cumulative surplus in 10 years, which is vital to enable local authorities to invest in improving the quality and supply of social and affordable housing. Local authorities' HRAs are facing significant financial pressures driven by escalating maintenance and repair costs and increasing demand for affordable housing. These challenges are compounded by rising borrowing costs, which have increased debt servicing expenses and limited the councils' capacity to finance new housing developments. Additional regulatory requirements related to building safety and energy efficiency standards are also resulting in considerable additional compliance costs. Rising inflation and supply chain disruptions have further exacerbated expenditure, while welfare reforms and demographic shifts continue to impact rental collection rates, increasing the risk of arrears. As a result, the councils are encountering considerable financial difficulties in balancing its obligations to provide safe, affordable housing while maintaining fiscal sustainability, necessitating urgent strategic financial planning and potential service adjustments.
- 12.7. It is illegal to set a budget that would result in negative balances on the HRA. If faced with this likely situation, significant savings will be required from the management and maintenance budgets. Brent's HRA is currently in a difficult financial position due to a combination of several challenging factors. Previous prolonged rent freezes and strict limitations on rent increases have significantly constrained revenue growth, making it difficult to keep pace with rising costs. As a result of four years of rent reductions, the HRA lost £23m in rental income. Over the next 6 years, the level of expenditure inflation (based on the Retail Price Index) was on average 0.47% higher than the CPI plus 1% rate. In addition, looking at the current HRA portfolio, 88% of social rent/formula rent properties are generating income at the level below the 'formula rent'. This reduces the possible rent roll by £3.7m per annum.
- 12.8. At the same time, the HRA has faced substantial expenditure requirements driven by increased compliance obligations, including building safety and environmental standards, which have necessitated costly upgrades and ongoing maintenance. The high cost of contracts and materials, exacerbated by inflation rates consistently outstripping permitted rent rises, has further strained the budget. The repairs and maintenance spend has increased by 20%

over the last year (and 35% over the last two years) against an 11% increase in income over the last year (and 20% over the last two years). The repairs and maintenance spend in 2024/25 was £21.1m against the turnover of £70.3m in the same year. The supervision and management spend was £13.4m.

- 12.9. Additionally, elevated borrowing costs have increased debt servicing expenses, reducing the funds available for essential housing investments. Debt financing costs have increased by 22% over the last year and 43% over the last two years. The interest charge in 2024/25 was £10.9m against the turnover of £70.3m in the same year.
- 12.10. In order to absorb these cost pressures, the fund has been required to meet significant savings targets in recent years. Over the last six years, the HRA had £6m deducted in savings from its budget, the majority in 2023/24 (£3m) due to the rent rise limitation. Together, these factors have contributed to the current challenging financial position in the fund, underscoring the need for a reassessment of funding strategies and expenditure priorities.
- 12.11. For September 2025 CPI is 3.8%, which means that rents will be allowed to be increased by 4.8% in line with the CPI plus 1% policy for 2026/27. The increase is essential for inflation led growth, service maintenance, contract obligations and to continue capital investment in the Council's existing housing stock. However, as highlighted above, it does not entirely mitigate other risks which are present in the current economic climate. Factors such as inflation on energy and material costs, repairs and maintenance contracts and anticipated wage increases, mean any decision to set rents at less than the maximum permitted, provides a significant risk to the sustainability of the HRA. Local authorities still need to cover the inflationary pressures within the HRA whilst delivering on their operational requirements and strategic priorities some of which are additional legislative requirements, from repairs and maintenance, to building safety, fire safety, damp and mould and decarbonisation. These pressures together with uncertainty around the inflation and interest rates pose significant financial pressures to the HRA and a risk that spend could exceed income generated through rent and service charge collection. There is a continuous requirement for the fund to make savings in order to deliver a balanced financial position. Any investment plans must be approached cautiously and allow for flexibility.
- 12.12. While the HRA's operating reserve currently stands at £4.5m (6% of the turnover, against the target level of 5%) and the fund has £5.9m set aside in earmarked reserves, this figure remains relatively low compared to the Council's peers. In absolute terms, the operating reserve balance is £9.6m lower than peer average. The average reserve balance per unit of stock for peers is also higher at £1,351 per unit, which is £807 higher than Brent at £544 per unit of stock.
- 12.13. This comparatively smaller reserve base presents a financial risk, limiting the Council's capacity to respond effectively to unforeseen financial pressures or emergencies. The level of reserves is currently not projected to increase while the fund is experiencing significant financial pressures and the tower block programme and affordable housing supply require significant investment. However strengthening reserve levels in future years will be important to

enhance financial resilience and ensure greater flexibility in managing future budgetary challenges.

- 12.14. Table 12 sets out the main draft budget movements and changes proposed for 2026/27.

Table 12 - HRA Draft Budget 2026/27

|   | £m         |
|---|------------|
| Rent (4.8% rise)  | (3.6)      |
| Additional rent from new builds   | (8.4)      |
| Service charges increase  | (0.2)      |
| Service charges increase based on profiled major works completion         | (0.6)      |
| Bad Debt Provision  | 1.0        |
| Repairs and Major works inflation, additional units and increased demand  | 5.3        |
| Void works  | 1.2        |
| Increase in debt financing costs  | 1.5        |
| Increase in depreciation charges  | 0.5        |
| Pay Award and other supervision and management costs                      | 2.0        |
| Increases in insurance costs, Council Tax, decant costs and other charges | 1.4        |
| <b>Total Impact</b>   | <b>0.0</b> |

#### *Income*

- 12.15. As part of the Council's capital programme, 892 properties are coming on stream during 2025/26 and 2026/27, most of which are HRA properties. 634 are expected to be added to the HRA portfolio in 2025/26 and 200 in the following year, generating additional rental income. The additional income from new builds and a 4.8% rent uplift are anticipated to be enough to cover all of the cost increases projected for the following financial year.

#### *Tenants Service Charges*

- 12.16. Service charges are recharges to tenants, which are based on the actual costs incurred for providing specific services, such as estate cleaning. For the purpose of the budget setting, individual service charge elements are adjusted to bring them in line with the estimated costs of providing these services to tenants. Service charges are adjusted if there is a projected over or under recovery of costs.
- 12.17. Unmetered communal lighting, heating and hot water charges are adjusted annually in line with the forecast energy supplier inflations. Unity Place in South Kilburn hosts the energy centre for the local district heat network for metered billing. It currently supplies heat and hot water to 235 properties and tenants are billed based on actual usage.

#### *Debt Financing Costs*

- 12.18. The ongoing high inflationary environment and high interest rates are exerting a pressure on both operational and capital costs. Inflation is driving up the price

of materials and labour associated with repairs and maintenance, while higher borrowing costs increase the expense of financing new build and improvement programmes. Further pressures stem from the Capital Programme, where insufficient Government funding has been allocated to meet key environmental priorities and statutory requirements, including carbon reduction initiatives and fire safety requirements for housing stock. The lack of adequate financial support to address these priorities places additional strain on the HRA's capital resources, complicating efforts to invest in sustainable and energy-efficient improvements while balancing other essential investment needs. In addition, the remediation programme as a result of the Council's self-referral represents a further risk to the HRA and results in financial pressures associated with addressing the identified compliance issues. As a result of these factors, the budget required for interest payable as a result of the HRA's borrowing is expected to increase by £1.7m.

#### *Bad Debts*

- 12.19. It is recognised that the current economic climate and increased rental charges can have an adverse impact on the level of rent collections. Whilst approximately a third of rental charges are covered through Housing Benefit payments, the remainder is expected to be paid directly by tenants who are in employment or in receipt of universal credit and are at risk of increased levels of non-collection. Collection rents currently stand at circa 93% for current year debt and 8% for prior years' debt. For every 1% drop in collection, the loss of income is estimated to be £0.7m. A requirement to increase the allowance for uncollected debt in 2026/27 is estimated to be £1m.

#### *Repairs and major works*

- 12.20. In 2025/26, the repairs contract for planned and responsive repairs that was previously outsourced to one contractor was re-procured. The new approach represents a hybrid model which consists of six lots and three contractors delivering responsive repairs, voids and planned works across the borough. The HRA is contending with elevated demand for repairs and maintenance services as a whole. A large volume of complex repairs, as well as increased instances of issues such as damp and mould, are placing substantial strain on budgeted resources. This heightened requirement for responsive maintenance is expected to continue into the next financial year, leading to cost pressures beyond previous expectations. Based on the cost of the new contracts, current trends and future projections, the repairs and maintenance budgets are expected to require a £4.6m increase.

#### *Pay Award and other supervision and management costs*

- 12.21. The HRA staffing budget for 2025/26 is £11.9m. The pay award for 2026/27 has not been agreed yet, but it is estimated to result in a budgetary requirement of circa £0.2m. Other supervision and management costs, such as Service Level Agreement arrangements, corporate overheads, direct IT costs, compensation and disturbance payments require a £1.8m increase in respective budgets.

#### *Voids*

- 12.22. The HRA is experiencing continued increases in cost associated with expenditure on void properties in order to bring them to lettable standards. Additional requirements such as measuring and dealing with damp and mould

could potentially require additional resources within the property management team. With the need to ensure sufficient staffing resource and requirements within the major works programme, the budgetary pressures identified for void and responsive works could require additional funding estimated at £1.3m.

12.23. Table 13 summarises the proposed draft budget for the HRA for 2026/27.

Table 13 - HRA 2025/26 Budget vs HRA Draft Budget 2026/27

| <b>HRA Budget 2025/26<br/>v Draft Budgets<br/>2026/27</b> | <b>(1)<br/>Budgets<br/>2025/26</b> | <b>(2)<br/>Draft<br/>Budgets<br/>2026/27</b> | <b>(2-1)<br/>Variance</b> | <b>(2-1)<br/>Variance<br/>Explanation</b>   |
|---|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Description</b>  | <b>£'000</b>                       | <b>£'000</b>                                 | <b>£'000</b>              |   |
| Rents and Service Charge                                  | (64.1)                             | (76.1)                                       | (12.0)                    | Tenant rents and service charges offset by rent loss through voids and RTB sales                          |
| Non-Dwelling Rents  | (0.3)                              | (0.3)  | 0.0                       | Garage rents  |
| Leaseholders' Charge for Services and Facilities          | (4.7)                              | (4.9)  | (0.2)                     | Uplift to reflect increased cost of rechargeable services   |
| Major Works and Other Contribution Towards Expenditure    | (0.8)                              | (1.4)  | (0.6)                     | Service charge increase based on profiled major works completion and other contributions                  |
| <b>Total Income</b>                                       | <b>(69.9)</b>                      | <b>(82.7)</b>                                | <b>(12.8)</b>             |   |
| Repairs and Maintenance                                   | 17.4                               | 23.9   | 6.5                       | Repairs contract uplifts, additional units, repairs delivery model and provision for disrepairs and voids |
| Supervision and Management                                | 17.3                               | 19.3   | 2.0                       | Operational cost inflations   |
| Rent and Rates and Other Charges                          | 5.7                                | 7.1  | 1.4                       | Council Tax and insurance contract inflation  |

|   |              |              |             |                                   |
|---|--------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Depreciation of Fixed Assets                    | 16.1         | 16.6         | 0.5         | Increase in depreciation costs    |
| Bad or Doubtful Debts                           | 1.4          | 2.4          | 1.0         | Provision for non-payments        |
| Capital Financing and Debt Management           | 12.0         | 13.4         | 1.4         | Increase in interest costs        |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>                        | <b>69.9</b>  | <b>82.7</b>  | <b>12.8</b> |                                   |
|   |              |              |             |                                   |
| <b>(Surplus)/or Deficit for the Year on HRA</b> | <b>0.0</b>   | <b>0.0</b>   | <b>0.0</b>  |                                   |
|   |              |              |             |                                   |
| <b>Housing Revenue Account brought forward</b>  | (4.5)        | (4.5)        | 0.0         | Operating reserve brought forward |
| (Surplus)/or Deficit on HRA                     | 0.0          | 0.0          | 0.0         |                                   |
| <b>Closing balance</b>                          | <b>(4.5)</b> | <b>(4.5)</b> | <b>0.0</b>  | Operating reserve closing balance |

12.24. The rent uplifts are being calculated and budgetary requirements, along with the required savings, are being finalised. The HRA draft budget and the 2026/27 HRA Business Plan will be updated accordingly to reflect the impact. Assumptions within the budget, including proposed changes to rents and service charges, will be subject to consultation and ongoing review. These updates will inform the final HRA budget for 2026/27 will be presented to Cabinet in February 2026 for approval by Full Council.

### 13.0 Capital Programme

13.1. The Capital Programme in Table 14 comprises of projects approved by Full Council at the February 2025 budget setting plus new projects and in-year budget adjustments to existing projects such as those approved by Cabinet in October 2025 as part of the Quarter 2 Financial Forecast report.

Table 14 – Current Capital Programme Budget and Financing

| Capital Programme Budget | Forecast | Budget  | Budget  | Budget  | Budget  | Total        |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|
|                          | 2025/26  | 2026/27 | 2027/28 | 2028/29 | 2029/30 | £m           |
|                          | £m       | £m      | £m      | £m      | £m      |              |
| Corporate Landlord       | 11.5     | 36.3    | 23.3    | 2.7     | 0.6     | <b>74.4</b>  |
| Housing GF               | 111.5    | 24.9    | 20      | 7.6     | 1.2     | <b>165.2</b> |
| Schools                  | 22.9     | 43.7    | 26.7    | 16.6    | 0.0     | <b>109.9</b> |
| Regeneration             | 98.6     | 3.9     | 12.5    | 0       | 0.0     | <b>115.0</b> |
| Public Realm             | 37.3     | 9.5     | 1.6     | 6       | 0.0     | <b>54.4</b>  |
| South Kilburn            | 31       | 24.7    | 5.8     | 5.3     | 0.0     | <b>66.8</b>  |
| St Raphael's             | 0.4      | 10      | 21.1    | 17.5    | 0.0     | <b>49.0</b>  |

|                                    |                 |                |                |                |                |              |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| HRA                                | 8.4             | 104.6          | 28.0           | 13.9           | 11.1           | 166.0        |
| <b>Total Capital Expenditure</b>   | <b>321.6</b>    | <b>257.6</b>   | <b>139.0</b>   | <b>69.6</b>    | <b>12.9</b>    | <b>800.7</b> |
|                                    |                 |                |                |                |                |              |
|                                    |                 |                |                |                |                |              |
| <b>Capital Programme Financing</b> | <b>Forecast</b> | <b>Budget</b>  | <b>Budget</b>  | <b>Budget</b>  | <b>Budget</b>  | <b>Total</b> |
|                                    | <b>2025/26</b>  | <b>2026/27</b> | <b>2027/28</b> | <b>2028/29</b> | <b>2029/30</b> | <b>£m</b>    |
|                                    | <b>£m</b>       | <b>£m</b>      | <b>£m</b>      | <b>£m</b>      | <b>£m</b>      |              |
| Grants & Other Contributions       | 76.9            | 23.6           | 9.2            | 5.7            | 0.6            | <b>116.0</b> |
| S106 & CIL                         | 48.7            | 32.0           | 21.2           | 14.4           | 0.0            | <b>116.3</b> |
| Capital Receipts                   | 6.3             | 9.8            | 33.9           | 2.1            | 0.4            | <b>52.5</b>  |
| Reserves                           | 5.3             | 2.4            | 1.0            | 0.9            | 0.1            | <b>9.7</b>   |
| Major Repairs Allowance            | 13.7            | 17.2           | 18.1           | 13.9           | 11.1           | <b>74.0</b>  |
| Revenue Contribution               | 6.3             | 3.8            | 0.6            | 0.6            | 0.6            | <b>11.9</b>  |
| Prudential Borrowing               | 164.4           | 168.8          | 55.0           | 32.0           | 0.1            | <b>420.3</b> |
| <b>Total Capital Financing</b>     | <b>321.6</b>    | <b>257.6</b>   | <b>139.0</b>   | <b>69.6</b>    | <b>12.9</b>    | <b>800.7</b> |

- 13.2. Whilst it has a less direct impact on revenue than revenue budgets, Brent's Capital Programme still significantly influences revenue outturn. On one hand, effective capital investment in invest to save projects, such as digital transformation or temporary accommodation, can lead to significant cost avoidance or income generation. On the other hand, capital spend funded by borrowing, results in interest costs and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) (a prudent charge for the repayment of borrowing).
- 13.3. Given the multi-year nature of capital projects, this budget is subject to significant volatility over the coming months and full details of the budget changes will be reported in the budget setting report in February 2026. The key challenges and risks of the Capital Programme are set out below.

## Housing

### *Challenges and key risks*

- 13.4. Brent's Capital Programme plays a key role in alleviating homelessness and temporary accommodation cost pressures by increasing the supply of homes. New social housing helps reduce waiting lists, whilst Brent will continue to use Government grant programmes, such as the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF), to purchase properties for use for temporary accommodation, reducing the need for costly leases or hotel placements. Brent's Capital Programme also includes loan facilities to i4B Holdings Ltd to enable them to purchase PRS accommodation to help reduce homelessness.
- 13.5. Brent's housing delivery programme has been very successful in providing new homes with 892 new homes expected to come into use in 2025/26. However, high build costs, rising interest costs and changes in grants are having a significant impact on viability across both General Fund and HRA schemes.
- 13.6. These factors make it extremely challenging to make delivery or acquisition of new housing viable. With the challenges many councils and registered providers are facing, many new financing products and deal structures are being offered, however these carry significant financial risks. For example, long-term leases could lock the Council into payments that increase in line with



inflation when rents could deviate from this based on Government decisions. Officers are considering alternative options such as taking advantage of new Government rules that allow Right-to-Buy receipts to be combined with grant from 2026/27 onwards.

- 13.7. Details of the announced £39bn Government housebuilding grant programme have not been published but changes in the design of grants, such as the relaxation in match funding requirements, will be required to enable viable schemes. The Council is working closely with the GLA to support the delivery of the remaining phases in South Kilburn to help maximise the delivery of affordable homes in the remaining phases being offered as part of the Single Delivery Partner phases.
- 13.8. A priority for the housing Capital Programme will be investing in fire safety and other improvements to our housing stock following the self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing in 2025/26. The current position of the HRA makes additional borrowing to fund these works unaffordable so officers are exploring alternative funding sources such as unrestricted Right-to-Buy receipts and disposals of vacant HRA sites. Other pressures on HRA capital budgets include the Granville Homes remediation and the enfranchisement of leases budget with some leasehold properties starting to expire.
- 13.9. The Government is also consulting on changes to the formula for Disabled Facilities Grant which could severely reduce Brent's funding. This would mean the need to scale back the current programme and would place additional pressure on the HRA capital budget to fund adaptation works currently funded from this Budget.

### **Corporate Landlord**

#### *Challenges, demand pressures and key risks*

- 13.10. The Corporate Landlord Board area includes the Civic Centre, Digital Strategy, Libraries and other Council properties. The focus of the 2026/27 capital budget will be on improving existing assets in line with the property strategy and invest to save opportunities such as digital transformation or energy efficiency. A key risk for the programme is that the Council does not secure the necessary Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grants or fails to meet the strict grant funding arrangements meaning that energy efficiency works need to be funded by our own resources.
- 13.11. A key part of the property strategy in 2026/27 will be identifying suitable properties to dispose of to generate much needed capital receipts and reduce the need for costly major repairs.

### **Children, Young People & Community Development**

#### *Challenges, demand pressures and key risks*

- 13.12. Schools is an area of the Capital Programme where there are significant invest to save opportunities supported by grant funding available from the DfE. Officers are developing proposals to use capital grant funding to deliver additional Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) places in the borough. The cost avoidance of placing a child in a Brent Special school as compared with placement in the independent sector is £36k per year per child.

- 13.13. Other priorities for the CYP capital programme in 2026/27 include the relocation of Islamia School, the Youth Facilities Programme, the Welsh Harp Post-16 Centre and the Schools' Asset Management Programme. A key challenge with schools' capital works is the potential for ground or building condition issues during building works which could increase the pressure on capital budgets.

### **Public Realm**

#### *Challenges, demand pressures and key risks*

- 13.14. Public Realm, which consists of improvements to community infrastructure in Brent such as roads, parks and CCTV, is an important part of the Capital Programme.
- 13.15. Affordability remains a significant challenge for public realm schemes as borrowing to fund investment in parks and other community infrastructure rarely leads to direct revenue savings. Given the financial pressure, the programme will focus on maintaining existing infrastructure and projects funded by grants. The Public Realm programme relies heavily on grants from Transport for London (TfL) but grant levels vary, which influence the amount of capital works that can be carried out.

### **Regeneration and South Kilburn**

#### *Challenges, demand pressures and key risks*

- 13.16. The focus of the Regeneration programme in 2026/27 will be major existing projects including the South Kilburn Regeneration, Wembley Housing Zones and the South Kilburn District Heat Network. With Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) and Carbon Offset Fund balances already committed and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund coming to an end, there is limited available funding for new schemes.
- 13.17. 2026/27 is an important year for the South Kilburn regeneration programme as Brent intends to appoint a Single Delivery Partner (SDP) and start on site on the Hereford and Exeter development. Capital budget will be focussed on buying out the remaining 33 leaseholders to obtain vacant possession of the sites and clearing the sites in preparation for the SDP, as well as progressing the Neville House, Winterleys, Carlton Hall and Carlton House and Carlton and Granville developments. The SDP model is a new way of the Council delivering a major regeneration programme intended to streamline delivery and improve co-ordination, but it also carries substantial risks and carries significant uncertainty for the budget. Officers are working with external development consultants to mitigate these risks, and it is essential to appoint the right partner that can ensure the programme achieves its aims including maximising returns for Brent.
- 13.18. Other existing regeneration programmes continue to progress. Wembley Housing Zones is set to complete in 2026/27, generating a significant land receipt for the Council and delivering 141 affordable homes. These affordable homes include 50 Shared Ownership homes. The Council does not have experience of selling or managing Shared Ownership properties, so Officers are working on a plan to mitigate the risks of these properties remaining vacant.

## **Capital Financing Budget**

- 13.19. The Capital Financing budget is the part of the Council's revenue budget that covers income and expenditure associated with financing the Council's Capital Programme. This budget covers interest payments on past loans taken to finance historical capital expenditure, interest payments on new loans required for the Capital Programme, loan premiums from prematurely refinanced loans, and MRP. Additionally, the budget includes forecast interest income from the Council's treasury cash balances and loans advanced to third parties, such as the Council's subsidiary companies.
- 13.20. A significant proportion of the Council's Capital Programme is forecast to be funded by borrowing, resulting in additional pressure to the Capital Financing Budget in future years. The Council can secure loans at a margin above gilts from the Public Works Loan Board. For example, the current cost of a 30-year maturity PWLB loan is 6.37%. This requires a higher return on investment or saving needed to cover any new investment by the Capital Programme and with income streams or other subsidy not increasing to reflect this, the programme will be streamlined to maximise delivery and impact on the limited resources available. As part of the Property Strategy, officers are developing a disposal strategy within the Council's asset management strategy to support with generating capital receipts to finance capital expenditure where possible.
- 13.21. The future demands of the Capital Programme mean that the capital financing budget will come under pressure in 2026/27 as well as any requirements to replenish the internal borrowing position of the Council. Internal borrowing is the difference between the Loan Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and external debt and occurs due to timing differences when capital expenditure that is meant to be financed through external debt is instead paid for through cash resources that are intended for other purposes. Cash is replenished at a later date.
- 13.22. Over £12m of growth has been added to the capital financing budget in the last three years in anticipation of the future demands on the capital financing budget. Given the many complexities involved in calculating the future financing requirement of an £800m Capital Programme, an external review will be commissioned and factored into a future budget process. For 2026/27, growth of £0.5m will be maintained as per previous financial modelling.
- 13.23. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This is the amount of the Capital Programme, past and present, that is funded by borrowing and has not been paid for by revenue or other resources. The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) could increase to £1.6bn by the end of 2026/27.

## **14.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

- 14.1. Consultation on the Council's budget is a statutory process. The approach to consultation on the Council's budget proposals with residents, businesses and other key stakeholders is set out in section ten of this report.

## **15.0 Financial Considerations**

- 15.1. The financial considerations are set out throughout the report. As the budget proposals are for consultation at this stage, not agreement, there are no direct costs associated with agreeing the recommendations, other than for consultation, the costs of which are built into existing budgets.

## **16.0 Legal Considerations**

- 16.1. A local authority must budget so as to give a reasonable degree of certainty as to the maintenance of its services. In particular, local authorities are required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to calculate as part of their overall budget what amounts are appropriate for contingencies and reserves. The Council must ensure sufficient flexibility to avoid going into deficit at any point during the financial year. The Corporate Director, Finance and Resources is required to report on the robustness of the proposed financial reserves.
- 16.2. Standing Order 19 sets out the process that applies within the Council for developing budget and capital proposals for 2026/27. There is a duty to consult representatives of non-domestic ratepayers on the Council's expenditure plans before each annual budget under Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The Council also has a general duty to consult representatives of Council Taxpayers, service users and others under Section 3 (2) Local Government Act 1999.
- 16.3. The Council is also required to comply with other statutory and common law consultation obligations relevant to particular options being considered and with the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Council must consult at a formative stage in the decision making process and adequate time must be given for public consideration and response. The consultation information must be accurate, fair and balanced, give sufficient reasons for proposals to permit of intelligent consideration and response and the information produced by the consultation must conscientiously be taken into account in finalising the proposals.

## **17.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 17.1. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the Equality Act 2010, Brent Council is required to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not, when making decisions. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Although socio-economic status (people on low income, young and adult carers, people living in deprived areas, groups suffering multiple disadvantages, etc.) is not a characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010, Brent Council is committed to considering the impact on socio-economic groups.
- 17.2. The PSED does not prevent decision makers from making difficult decisions in the context of the requirement to achieve a significant level of savings across all operations. It supports the Council to make robust decisions in a fair, transparent and accountable way that considers the diverse needs of all our local communities and workforce. Consideration of the duty should precede and inform decision making. It is important that decision makers have regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material, including relevant

equality analyses and consultation findings. If there are significant negative equality impacts arising from a specific proposal, then decision makers may decide to amend, defer for further consideration or reject a proposal after balancing all the information available to them. This may mean making up the shortfall from additional reductions elsewhere.

## **18.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 18.1. Climate change and environmental considerations have been considered for each of the savings proposals and are set out in Appendix B.

## **19.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations**

- 19.1. Where budget proposals involve staffing reductions, the Council's Managing Change policy will apply.

## **20.0 Communication Considerations**

- 20.1. A communications and engagement plan is in place to ensure the budget proposals and consultation channels are effectively communicated to residents, business and other key stakeholders as set out in section ten of this report.

### Related report(s) for reference

Medium Term Financial Outlook, Cabinet July 2025

#### **Report sign off:**

***Minesh Patel***

Corporate Director, Finance and Resources.

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| Reference             | Saving category                        | Brent Lead              | Service Areas Impacted | Lead Members   | Proposal name                            | Brief description  | 2026/27 |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|------------------------|--|--|--|---------|
| <b>CC01<br/>26-27</b> | <b>Commissioning &amp; procurement</b> | <b>Rhodri Rowlands</b>  | All                    | Cllr Jake Rubin<br><br>Remainder Cross Council                       | Holistic grant management                | Ensure a consistent charging methodology & community investment.   | £0.57   |
|                       |  |                         |                        |  | Tail spend rationalisation               | Reduce administration burden through consolidation of low value purchases with a target of 10% reduction in spend.   | £0.60   |
|                       |  |                         |                        |  | Review procurement and third party spend | A reduction in third-party spend is proposed through targeted contract reviews, improved supplier engagement, and strategic procurement planning.                                      | £1.56   |
|                       |  |                         |                        |  | Oxygen finance early payment             | Faster payment of supplier invoices to generate pre-agreed rebate fee.   | £0.33   |
| <b>CC02<br/>26-27</b> | <b>Digital programme</b>               | <b>Sadie East</b>       | All                    | Cllr Mili Patel - Oracle Optimisation<br><br>Remainder Cross Council | Optimising Oracle                        | Ongoing Oracle optimisation through assessing Oracle's current deployment and aligning to improvement opportunities.   | £0.33   |
|                       |  |                         |                        |  | Use of technology and AI                 | Digital transformation focused on unlocking productivity and building a more agile organisation based on successes of co-pilot and existing AI deployment roll out across Council.     | £0.45   |
|                       |  |                         |                        |  | Robotic Process Automation               | Expanding Brent's RPA programme by delivering 25 new automations focused on high-volume, rules-based tasks to improve efficiency where traditional system integration is not feasible. | £0.65   |
| <b>CC03<br/>26-27</b> | <b>Efficiency</b>                      | <b>Darren Armstrong</b> | All                    | Cross Council  | Council wide efficiency target model     | A standardised 1% efficiency target across the Council's controllable budget, equating to approximately  | £3.20   |

|                       |  |                      |     |                     |                                      |   |       |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------|-----|---------------------|--------------------------------------|---|-------|
|                       |  |                      |     |                     |                                      | £60k per Head of Service. It is designed to support consistent financial management, with an emphasis on local accountability and value-based practices.  |       |
| <b>CC04<br/>26-27</b> | <b>Workforce</b>                         | <b>Musrat Zaman</b>  | All | Cross Council       | Agency control                       | Strengthening internal recruitment and retention, supported by tighter controls on agency use and off-contract bookings.  | £0.40 |
| <b>CC05<br/>26-27</b> | <b>Income Maximisation</b>               | <b>Rav Jassar</b>    | All | Cross Council       | Strategic Review of fees and charges | This proposal sets out a focused programme to increase and safeguard income through targeted updates to fees and charges, stronger recovery processes, improved payment oversight, and higher collection performance. | £0.50 |
| <b>CC06<br/>26-27</b> | <b>Resident Experience Channel Shift</b> | <b>Kirsteen Roe</b>  | All | Cllr Promise Knight | Resident experience channel shift    | Channel Shift customers from face-to-face and phone to digital self-service channels to streamlining communication channels, and enhancing use of existing tools like CRM and telephony systems.                      | £0.65 |
| <b>NR01<br/>26-27</b> | <b>Service Specific</b>                  | <b>Chris Whyte</b>   | N&R | Cllr Krupa Sheth    | Lane Rental Scheme                   | Adopting a Lane Rental scheme to reduce disruption and improve coordination for works on high-traffic routes.   | £0.35 |
| <b>NR02<br/>26-27</b> |  | <b>Tanveer Ghani</b> | N&R | Cllr Teo Benea      | Asset utilisation                    | Optimising the use of physical assets to support the generation of recurring income and explore financially sustainable opportunities that enhance community access, activity and wellbeing.                          | £0.19 |



|                         |  |                            |      |                                    |  |  |               |
|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|------|------------------------------------|--|--|---------------|
| <b>PHRS01<br/>26-27</b> |  | <b>Laurence<br/>Coaker</b> | R&HS | Cllr Fleur<br>Donnelly-<br>Jackson | Reduce<br>subsidy loss                 | Reduction in supported exempt<br>accommodation subsidy loss through<br>utilising the Registered Provider First<br>Wave Housing.  | £0.13         |
| <b>PHRS02<br/>26-27</b> |  | <b>Laurence<br/>Coaker</b> | R&HS | Cllr Fleur<br>Donnelly-<br>Jackson | Homelessness<br>prevention             | Reduce homelessness using data-<br>driven indicators to identify households<br>under stress and intervening early with<br>tailored support.  | £0.20         |
| <b>PHRS03<br/>26-27</b> |  | <b>Kirsteen<br/>Roe</b>    | R&HS | Cllr Promise<br>Knight             | Housing<br>Benefits claim<br>reduction | Streamlining Housing Benefit and<br>Council Tax Support services through<br>automation and workforce optimisation,<br>in line with expected caseload<br>reductions as residents are moved to<br>Universal Credit | £0.27         |
| <b>Total</b>            |  |                            |      |                                    |  |  | <b>£10.38</b> |

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## Appendix B – Savings Proposals

### Contents

|  |       |
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## Commissioning and Procurement Savings Proposal

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | CC01 26-27   |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Cross-Council  |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | Cllr Rubin – Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | <p>The Council spends over £600m annually with third parties. This programme brings together four savings proposals that aim to reduce spend through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. direct supplier engagement / contract management</li> <li>2. reduction of spend on low value (under £25k) contracts,</li> <li>3. the consideration of a management overhead charge on applicable grants</li> <li>4. the introduction of stretch targets through the existing Fast Track payments initiative</li> </ol> <p>The programme will be aligned to the Procurement Improvement Programme (PIP).</p> |
|--------------------------|---|

### Financial and Staffing Information

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | Cross Council, spend was £631m on third parties in 23/24. |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | N/A – Cross Council contractual spend with third parties  |

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
|                                    | <b>2026/27</b><br>£'000   |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £3,060  |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | N/A – saving relates to reduction in third party spend, not staff |

| <b>Commissioning &amp; Procurement saving</b> | <b>Savings logic</b>   | <b>Estimated saving</b> |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| <b>Overall third party spend</b>              | Reducing overall spend with third parties.<br>Overall spend estimated at £631m, a 0.5% | £1,560,000              |

| <b>Commissioning &amp; Procurement saving reduction</b> | <b>Savings logic</b>   | <b>Estimated saving</b> |
|---|--|-------------------------|
|   | reduction is modelled.   |                         |
| <b>Tail spend reduction</b>                             | An estimated £60m - £90m is spent annually on purchases with a value of less than £25,000. A 10% reduction of spend through tighter management, more visibility and reducing duplication was modelled.   | £600,000                |
| <b>Grant management overhead</b>                        | The Council manages £648m of recurring grant funding per year. Initial, high-level analysis suggests £57m of this could be in scope to charge management overheads. Savings calculation is modelled on 1% of this amount for prudence, and would be realised by the Council utilising an element of the grant to reflect the true cost of delivering and administering these programmes. | £570,000                |
| <b>Greater use of Oxygen finance</b>                    | Increased use of Oxygen Finance for Fast Track payments. The Fast Track enables invoices to be paid ahead of contractual terms in exchange for a pre-agreed rebate.  | £331,000                |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>Savings estimates currently being</b>   | <b>£3.071m</b>          |

### **Proposed savings**

These proposals form part of a wider effort to strengthen the Council's oversight and management of its third-party spend. By reducing overall third-party expenditure, targeting tail spend under £25,000, and introducing an overhead charge on grants, the council can improve value for money, reduce duplication, and ensure internal resources are used more efficiently.

While each initiative targets a specific pressure point, together they represent a coordinated shift towards more consistent and commercially aware commissioning. To support delivery, these changes should sit within existing commissioning and procurement governance, covering the commissioning lifecycle to ensure that third party spending aligns with the council's financial strategy and service priorities, including:

- Understand the future pipeline of projects and potential procurements
- Optimise the use of different procurement methods (including e-auctions, repeat frameworks, dynamic purchasing systems, competitive procedures with negotiation) to deliver better value for money.
- Improve supplier management through the adoption across the Council of contract management toolkit and the support needed to deliver high quality commercial, procurement and sourcing strategies.
- Maximise the use of knowledge around market, supplier, demand and service

design to identify commercial opportunities and influence cost effective service redesign.

- More effective supplier engagement and performance management improving the performance and driving savings out of in-flight contracts and challenge affordability envelope of future commissioning intentions.

## **Delivery and governance**

The programme will be sponsored at Director level through the Director Strategic Commissioning, Capacity Building and Engagement.

The Programme will align with the Procurement Improvement Programme (PIP), enabling monitoring and reporting, as well consideration of appropriate service buy-in, collaboration and capacity to take place through existing governance, including the recently established DPGs.

In addition, this will also enable delivery to be supported by operational improvements being implemented to policies, procedures and processes through the PIP. Monitoring and reporting will also be at the CPCMAB which includes representatives from Finance, Legal and the Procurement Team.

### **1. Overall reduction in third party spend**

Estimated third party spend in 23/24 was £631m. Saving figure is modelled on a 0.5% reduction. This could be achieved through:

- Development of contracts and procurement dashboard to support discussion at DLTs
- Desktop review of contracts and engagement with contract managers to review service levels are being met. Review to focus on contracts with a value of over £500,000, with detailed follow-up action capped at 20 contracts. It is expected that ongoing construction contracts will not form part of this review.
- Review of service levels to review where scope could be reduced leading to savings.
- Review of future procurement pipeline with service and contract managers to identify opportunities for savings.
- More effective supplier engagement and performance management improving the performance and driving savings out of in-flight contracts.
- Challenge affordability envelope of future commissioning intentions.
- Active engagement with suppliers to discuss reduction in scope or discounts for continued service.
- Development of key strategic suppliers list for priority engagement. Based on 24/25 highest areas of addressable spend.

To deliver savings against these contract areas, the Commissioning and Procurement teams will need engagement and support from services and contract managers, alongside an openness from these colleagues to approach suppliers and approach re-negotiation collaboratively and creatively.

### **2. Holistic grant management**

Brent Council manages over £788m in grant funding each year, £648m of which are recurring, supporting a wide range of services and delivery partners across the borough. Administering these grants requires significant internal capacity — including legal input, procurement advice, financial processing, monitoring, and reporting. In recognition of this, many public sector bodies — such as the NHS and central government departments — routinely apply overhead or management charges to grant funding to recover these support costs.

This proposal recommends that Brent adopt a similar approach by applying a standard overhead charge of 10%. This would help ensure the council can sustainably resource the work required to manage grant programmes effectively. Where funders raise concerns, the council could negotiate exemptions or reductions on a case-by-case basis.

This overhead charge should apply to all new and recurring grants from April 2026 onwards, unless explicitly exempted. These savings could be realised by the Council retaining an additional portion of the grants received, to ensure the full costs of delivering the services in relation to the grant are covered by the grant.

### **3. Tail spend reduction**

Brent Council engages with hundreds of suppliers each year for purchases under £25,000, which collectively account for a significant share of procurement activity but often lack commercial oversight. This "tail spend" is typically fragmented across services, inconsistent in pricing, and resource-intensive to manage. Other organisations have achieved savings by consolidating spend with key suppliers, restricting off-contract purchasing, and simplifying low-value procurement through catalogues or frameworks.

This proposal recommends that Brent adopts a targeted approach to tail spend reduction, beginning with controls on new supplier setups and a push to consolidate purchases through preferred providers. This will help reduce duplication, improve value for money, and lower administrative effort across departments.

The policy should apply to all purchases under £25,000, with exemptions only in cases where a strategic or specialist need is clearly justified.

### **4. Use of Oxygen finance Fast Track**

With the development of the Procurement Pipeline and the Procurement Improvement Plan (PIP), there is a renewed focus and strategic framework to drive these efforts more aggressively, aiming for greater financial impact.

Several existing suppliers have expressed a proactive willingness to engage, providing a strong foundation to accelerate income growth.

There is significant potential to increase the current annual return from approximately £169k to an ambitious target of £500k in year one, rising to over £1 million by years two and three. Benchmarking against high performing Councils shows that achieving £1 million or more in income via supplier rebates is feasible.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

The proposed savings measures aim to improve efficiency in back-office operations and supplier management. There may be some adjustments in how services are

delivered, particularly during transitions or commissioning updates. To ensure continuity and minimise disruption, any changes will be carefully considered with input from service users and frontline staff where relevant.

### Impact

- Service quality or responsiveness may be affected if cost reductions lead to reductions in contract scope, or tighter commissioning specifications.
- Delays or disruptions could occur during transitions to new suppliers or processes, particularly where services are complex or involve multiple stakeholders.

### Risk Mitigation

- All savings initiatives will be reviewed through an equality and service impact lens to ensure that changes do not disproportionately affect vulnerable residents.
- Engagement with service users and front-line staff will be built into the commissioning cycle where relevant, particularly where there is a change to service delivery models.
- Where changes affect grant recipients or community organisations, impact assessments and transition plans will be developed to avoid service gaps and maintain continuity. All work will align with development work happening in parallel to review capacity building support required to enable resilient and effective VCS in the borough via Embrace Change Portfolio

### Opportunities

- By reducing inefficiency and focusing on value, the Council can free up resources to invest in areas that directly benefit users, such as improved service integration or digital access.
- Improved oversight and contract management may lead to better quality and consistency in commissioned services.

### Key risks and mitigations

| Risk  | Mitigation  |
|---|---|
| Reducing third party spend will require services to pull in the same direction and be open to challenging suppliers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early engagement with contract managers and a 'doing with' rather than 'doing to' approach.</li> <li>• Clear communication from senior managers to contract managers that third party spend reviews are a priority for the Council.</li> </ul>   |
| Procurement data quality and availability has been challenging during proposal development                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early engagement with procurement data team with clear ask on data on top suppliers and tail spend.</li> <li>• Data requests to come directly from Director for Strategic Commissioning, Capacity Building and Engagement to expedite</li> </ul> |



|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | analysis.  |
| Charging overheads on grants may disincentivise local organisations or reduce service delivery capacity           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate clearly the rationale — that overheads cover legitimate support costs (e.g. safeguarding, finance, legal).</li> <li>• Consider tiered or capped charges to avoid disproportionate impact on smaller organisations.</li> </ul>   |
| Reduction in tail spend limits flexibility for urgent or low-value needs  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce streamlined processes (e.g. dynamic purchasing systems or pre-approved catalogues) to preserve agility while reducing unmanaged spend.</li> <li>• Set a minimum spend threshold for intervention to avoid over-burdening low-risk purchases.</li> </ul>   |
| Supplier relationships are impacted by negotiation  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise strategic supplier engagement alongside savings efforts.</li> <li>• Focus on value, not just price — e.g. through contract consolidation or improved performance metrics.</li> </ul>   |
| Contract and supplier management capacity / skills limit the effectiveness of negotiation to release efficiencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing staff with effective skills and capability, conducting contract reviews and robust negotiation strategies will all lead to cash release savings and improved supplier performance. This will involve commercial and contract management skills development and knowledge transfer of contract management – improving capacity to realise efficiencies and contract savings (link to PIP)</li> </ul> |
| Capacity to deliver in Procurement  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Savings programmes to be aligned with Procurement Improvement Programme and timetables to reflect recruitment to service</li> </ul>   |

### **Equality Impact Screening**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below: |   |
|  |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.   | N |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.   | N |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | N |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.   | N |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.  | N |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.   | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.  | N |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.                                    | N |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.  | N |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.  | N |

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| EIA required?:          | No |
| EIA to be completed by: | -  |
| Deadline:               | -  |

### **Financial considerations**

The savings estimated at £3.071m are based on high-level modelling across several areas of spend. These include a 0.5% reduction in overall third-party expenditure (£1.56m), a 10% reduction in low-value tail spend through improved controls (£600k)

and applying a 1% management overhead to eligible grant funding (£570k). Additional savings are projected from increased use of early payment rebates via Oxygen Finance (£331k).

**Legal considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

**Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

**Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Rhodri Rowlands. Director, Strategic Commissioning, Capacity Building and Engagement |
|---------------------------------|--|

## **Digital Programme Saving Proposal**

|                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | CC02 26-27    |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Cross-council |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | All           |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | This proposal supports council-wide digital transformation focused on unlocking productivity, automating low-value tasks and maximising return on previous technology investments. It brings together three key strands – Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) optimisation, Artificial Intelligence (AI) deployment, and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) expansion - to drive efficiency, reduce manual workloads, improve productivity, and build a more agile organisation. |
|--------------------------|---|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | N/A |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | N/A |

|                                    | <b>2026/27</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                    | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £1,430         |
|                                    | FTE            |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | TBC            |

### **Proposed savings**

#### **1. ERP Optimisation (Oracle)**

There is significant scope to further optimise the use of Oracle Fusion. This includes streamlining core processes across finance, procurement, and HR by enhancing workflows within the ERP system and leveraging as many solution components as possible to drive efficiencies.

**Target Savings:** £330,000

#### **2. AI Deployment**

Use of technology and AI to automate processes and activity. Building on pilot work, new use cases for AI will be identified, prioritised and delivered with a view to launching into operational efficiency.

**Target Savings:** £450,000

### **3. Robotic Process Automation (RPA)**

Expanding existing RPA programme with each directorate delivering 5 new automations (25 in total). Focus will be on high-volume, rules-based tasks rules-based chasing processes, repetitive processes associated with reporting, transferring cases, documents or data between systems where a conventional systems integration is unfeasible.

**Target Savings:** £650,000

#### **How would this affect users of this service?**

#### **Resident Benefits and Service Impact**

- Faster turnaround times for complaints, FOIs, applications, assessments etc
- Quicker and more efficient supplier, procurement and payment processes.
- Reduced errors and duplication from manual input.
- Better targeting of resources to complex or high-need cases.

#### **Implementation resource**

Implementation resource will be required to support this work. There could be economies of scale across delivery resource, this could include programme management, delivery management and business analysis. Continued investment in digital transformation resource will also be required.

#### **Key risks and mitigations**

| <b>Risk</b>  | <b>Mitigation</b>   |
|--|---|
| Underusing digital tools.                                      | To mitigate this, set clear usage targets, provide comprehensive training, monitor adoption levels, and embed these tools into existing workflows.  |
| AI pilots may not deliver the expected savings.                | To reduce this risk, focus on proven use cases such as complaints handling, scale only those initiatives that demonstrate value, and conduct ongoing evaluations to ensure effectiveness.   |
| Challenges in converting efficiencies into to cashable savings | Brent has delivered RPA (automations) and AI pilots to date, but these projects have to date generated efficiencies but not cashable savings. To move this work to cashable savings will require governance, buy-in from relevant service areas (whose budgets the savings will come from) and a structured managed approach to realising benefits. |

| <b>Risk</b>  | <b>Mitigation</b>  |
|--|--|
| Capacity constraints in building Robotic Process Automation (RPA) solutions. | This can be mitigated by prioritising high-value automation opportunities and considering the use of shared services or external development partners to increase capacity.                                      |
| The programme could face delays during execution.                            | To prevent this, ensure thorough planning during the design phase, allowing adequate time and resources for smooth implementation.   |
| Low organisational buy-in and capacity                                       | Clear leadership commitment and active engagement from service areas (especially around AI and automation)   |
| Dependency on services to realise savings                                    | Realising savings depends on service areas actively using the efficiencies created to release cashable or capacity-based savings. Governance required to avoid double-counting and ensure benefits are realised. |
| Onboarding of new managed service provider                                   | The success of the ERP optimisation work relies on delivery of a thorough and timely diagnostic to identify actionable optimisation opportunities, including automation and AI use.                              |
| Risks of use of AI   | Governance processes and policies are already in place. Any use of AI will be considered by Brent's Data Ethics Board to consider any potential implications of use of AI.                                       |

### **Equality impact screening**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:    |   |
|   |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.  | Y |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.  | N |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | Y |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on  | N |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| maternity leave, or new parents.   |   |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.   | Y |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.  | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.                                 | N |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity. | N |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.                                 | Y |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.       | Y |

|                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| EIA required?:          | Yes          |
| EIA to be completed by: | Tony Afuwape |
| Deadline:               | February 26  |

### **Financial considerations**

Work is in progress to develop a detailed business case for the delivery of savings. Once completed, savings will need to be allocated to departmental budgets across the council where the savings will be realised. A risk is ensuring that appropriate user cases for ERP, RPA and AI development and that there is a robust process for agreeing benefits and ensuring they translate into cashable savings which will require process change and restructure processes within service areas. Delivery of savings will also require technical, project management and change management capacity and this capacity is being built into the proposal.

### **Legal considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

Artificial intelligence tools are powered by data centres, which provide the computational resources necessary for training and deploying AI models. Whilst some data centres are mindful of seeking to mitigate their environmental impact, these spaces do typically have adverse impacts on the environment – particularly with regards to energy usage (and therefore, higher carbon emissions), and the amount of water utilised on the site for cooling purposes. As AI workloads grow, so too does the demand for powerful servers and cooling systems, which contributes to environmental concerns such as higher greenhouse gas emissions and resource usage. However, it's important to note that the tech industry is actively addressing these challenges through a range of sustainability initiatives.

For example, Microsoft has committed to ambitious environmental targets, including aiming for net neutral by end of 2025 and net negative by 2030. By 2050 the aim is to remove all carbon that Microsoft has ever emitted. This includes the compute carbon cost of running AI workloads.

While the perception that 'more AI means more harm' is understandable, the reality is that with responsible management and ongoing innovation, the environmental impact can be significantly reduced. In fact, AI itself is being used to optimise energy use and reduce waste within data centres, making the technology part of the solution as well as the challenge.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Sadie East. Director, Communications Insight and Innovation |
|---------------------------------|---|



### **Service Efficiency Target Saving Proposal**

|                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | CC03 26-27    |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Cross-Council |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | All           |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | The proposal sets a standardised 1% efficiency target across the Council's controllable budget. It is designed to support consistent financial management, with an emphasis on local accountability and value-based practices. |
|--------------------------|--|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | N/A |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | N/A |

|                                    | <b>2026/27</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                    | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £3,200         |
|                                    | FTE            |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | N/A            |

### **Strategic Rationale**

This model promotes a shift from centralised budget control to a more service-led approach to identifying efficiencies. Services will assess core activities to identify low-value areas for simplification, cessation, or redesign. This includes reviewing spending patterns, minimising inefficiencies and duplication, and embedding value-for-money principles across all decision-making.

Distributing savings responsibility across services is intended to increase organisational ownership of financial challenges, enhance resilience for future budget planning, and support the identification of sustainable, service-specific efficiencies. Embedding this approach into routine operations is expected to enable faster implementation and more relevant solutions than a centrally led programme.

This savings model serves as a mechanism for promoting financial discipline and continuous improvement across services. It encourages budget holders to routinely assess spending decisions, increases the use of benchmarking and service comparisons, and embeds value-for-money considerations into service design,

procurement, and delivery. The approach prioritises low-cost, high-impact changes before pursuing large-scale transformation.

### **Approach overview**

A dedicated toolkit will be developed to support Services in identifying and delivering their share of the savings. This resource will outline key efficiency levers, provide practical examples, and offer guidance tailored to service-level contexts.

Collaborative workshops will be convened with the senior leadership representatives to provide constructive support and facilitate creative problem-solving, drawing on cross-service learning, peer reviews, and benchmarking insights from comparative data.

### **Governance and monitoring**

To ensure alignment with existing programmes and to prevent duplication, a strengthened governance and monitoring framework will be applied. A central group will coordinate and challenge service reviews using standard templates, regular checkpoints, and clear accountability. Departments will report progress consistently, with corporate-level scrutiny ensuring alignment with overall savings goals.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

This proposal does not mandate service reductions. Instead, it focuses on improving efficiency to safeguard service outcomes. Services will prioritise protecting frontline delivery, pursue internal efficiencies such as process simplification and contract reviews, and only consider frontline changes following local impact assessments and with SLT oversight. Where reductions are proposed, impacts must be assessed and mitigated through redesign or collaboration.

### **Key risks and mitigations**

| <b>Risk</b>  | <b>Mitigation</b>  |
|--|--|
| Inconsistent approaches across services                | Use benchmarking, templates and peer challenge to support comparability and fairness   |
| Hidden cuts to frontline services                      | Require impact assessments and SLT sign-off for any service changes  |
| Lack of monitoring                                     | Monthly financial reporting and clinic outcomes tracked centrally  |
| Fragmented transformation and siloed savings proposals | Three Es Clinics and Change Programme to provide corporate oversight, ensuring read-across and coordination. Mandate cross-service visibility of proposed changes to avoid duplication or conflicting initiatives. |
| One-off or non-recurring savings reported              | Focus on permanent change, not in-year underspends   |

### **Equality impact screening**

|   |
|---|
| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate |
|---|

| adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:  |   |
|---|---|
|   |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.  | <i>TBC - These efficiency savings have yet to be identified. As proposals are put forward, an individual EIA screening will be produced and reviewed as part of the approval process.</i> |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.  | As Above  |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | As Above  |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | As Above  |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | As Above  |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.   | As Above  |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.  | As Above  |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.   | As Above  |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.  | As Above  |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.                                    | As Above  |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic  | As Above  |

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| disadvantage.  |          |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans. | As Above |

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| EIA required?:          | TBC                                    |
| EIA to be completed by: | Respective service area as appropriate |
| Deadline:               | February 2026                          |

### **Financial considerations**

This proposal introduces a 1% efficiency target across the Council's controllable budget, with an estimated saving of £3.2m in 2026/27. The savings have been modelled based on a proportionate reduction applied consistently across services. The 1% assumption underpinning the savings is considered appropriate and achievable, with governance mechanisms in place to monitor delivery and ensure alignment with strategic priorities.

### **Legal considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

Any wider impacts in relation to the council's climate and ecological emergency commitments that may result as a result of proposed service efficiency savings will be assessed on a service-by-service basis.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Darren Armstrong. Deputy Director, Organisational Assurance and Resilience |
|---------------------------------|--|



### **Workforce Model Saving Proposal**

|                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | CC04 26-27    |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Cross-Council |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | All           |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | <p>This proposal supports the Council's ambition to modernise its operating model by establishing a leaner, more agile workforce - one that is structured around clear principles, aligned to demand, and designed to deliver services more efficiently. It aims to address inefficiencies embedded in legacy staffing models, particularly in management structures, administrative functions, agency usage, and vacancy control.</p> <p>This programme forms part of a wider organisational development strategy and offers a major opportunity to reduce cost while improving responsiveness, accountability, and staff deployment.</p> |
|--------------------------|--|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | N/A                        |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | 2,624 FTE (2500 headcount) |

|                                    | <b>2026/27</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                    | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £400           |
|                                    |                |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | TBC            |

### **How Savings Figures Were Reached**

| <b>Opportunity</b>               | <b>Target Saving (£)</b> | <b>How Saving Was Calculated</b>  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Agency Spend Reduction</b> | <b>£400,000</b>          | Midpoint modelled on a 2–4% reduction on £26.6m agency spend in 2024/25 to bring Brent closer to the London average (£25.3m). |

## **Proposed savings**

### **1. Agency Spend Reduction**

Despite previous programmes focusing on reducing agency spend and strong performance compared to other boroughs, the council's agency spend remains high. The current agency staffing contract has been re-tendered with Reed supplying all agency requirements. While some savings may be generated through rebates and improved commercial terms, the greatest opportunity lies in strengthening enforcement, improving internal controls, and investing in recruitment and retention to reduce long-term reliance on temporary staffing. The following actions will deliver this saving:

#### **Enforce Preferred Supplier Frameworks**

- Strictly prohibit off-contract or "off-framework" agency bookings.
- Require all bookings to go through the Reed's management system.
- Introduce automated flagging and exception reporting to reduce non-compliance.
- Align this with clearer communication to budget holders and team managers.

#### **Review and Align Rate Cards**

- Conduct a comprehensive benchmarking review of agency pay rates.
- Engage with regional partners to explore pan-London or sub-regional rate alignment, reducing supplier-driven inflation. Currently in place for social work roles with the London Agreement, with the opportunity to explore this approach across other roles
- Review uplifts or exceptions that may have become business-as-usual.

#### **Strengthen Internal Recruitment and Retention**

- Targeted recruitment campaigns for high agency use roles including interims.
- Improve retention through promoting flexible working, career pathways, and workforce development offers aligned to the People Strategy.

#### **Tighten Internal Processes**

- Leverage existing approval controls - where managers must confirm how the role is being filled and sign-off by Directors and Corporate Directors is required.
- Improve visibility and accountability by continuing quarterly reporting to senior managers and monthly agency dashboards for operational leads.
- Introduce targeted challenges or "deep dives" in high-spend services to drive behavioural change.

**Target Savings: £400,000**

### **2. Vacancy Review and Management**

A proactive review of current and future vacancies to determine if roles need to be filled, reprofiled, or removed will deliver savings

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

- Improved access to frontline services by removing duplication and admin bottlenecks.
- Better service agility as staff are deployed based on real-time demand.
- Reduced delays in service delivery due to overreliance on temporary staff.
- No impact to frontline provision where roles are removed through reallocation, vacancy management, or back-office consolidation.
- The focus is on improving value, not reducing quality.

### **Equality impact screening**

Once agreed it will be important to identify the groups affected by the proposals, although it is anticipated that there will be minimal impact. We will however engage with stakeholders for their insights and develop strategies to mitigate any potential negative effects.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:    |   |
|   |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.  | N |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.  | N |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | N |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.   | N |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.  | N |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.   | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.  | N |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual  | N |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| identity.  |   |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.                           | N |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans. | N |

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| EIA required?:          | No |
| EIA to be completed by: | -  |
| Deadline:               | -  |

### **Financial considerations**

The savings proposal from agency spend reduction is estimated at £0.4m based on a 2–4% decrease in the Council's 2024/25 agency expenditure of £26.6m. This target reflects a realistic midpoint aimed at bringing Brent closer to the London average.

### **Legal considerations**

The Council's policy and procedures adhered to in relation to all recruitment campaigns ensuring that the established equality diversity and inclusion framework is followed.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Musrat Zaman, Director HR & OD |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|

### **Income Maximisation Savings Proposal**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | CC05 26-27  |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | All Council services that raise income for fees and charges |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | Cross-Council   |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | This proposal sets out a focused programme to increase and safeguard income through targeted updates to fees and charges, stronger recovery processes, improved payment oversight, and higher collection performance. By updating pricing strategies, enforcing permitted charges, and strengthening post-payment controls, the Council can generate significant additional revenue while ensuring that public funds are protected and used efficiently. |
|--------------------------|--|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | N/A |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | N/A |

|                                    | <b>2025/26</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                    | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £500           |
|                                    | FTE            |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | 0              |

### **Evidence and Methodology Behind Savings Estimate**

| <b>Opportunity</b>   | <b>Target Saving</b> | <b>Evidence and Methodology Behind Estimate</b>   |
|--|----------------------|---|
| <b>Strategic review of fees, charges and traded services</b> | £500k                | The saving is based on benchmarking and outcomes from similar reviews in other authorities with additional review needed on Brent<br>The review will focus on income-generating services, apply full cost recovery principles, and develop pricing models and governance tools to support sustainable income growth. The outcome will inform the proposed fees and charges for 26/27. |

## **Proposed savings**

### **Strategic review of fees, charges and traded services**

The Council currently operates a range of traded services and chargeable functions, including school services, planning, parking, adult social care, and public protection. However, charging structures have evolved inconsistently, and in many cases:

- Fees are not aligned to full cost recovery.
- Pricing is not benchmarked against market comparators.
- Commercial models (e.g. bundling, premium services) are underdeveloped.
- Many charges are set at service level, leading to fragmentation and limited oversight.

A strategic, council-wide review presents an opportunity to standardise pricing principles, maximise income within legal and policy boundaries, and improve commercial performance across both traded and statutory services.

### **Scope and Focus Areas:**

The review will cover both statutory and discretionary services, focusing initially on the top 10 fees and charges areas. The review will benchmark the charges against other councils, refine the existing charging policy, and develop bespoke tools to support sustainable pricing decisions. A second phase will extend the review to the next 10 service areas, ensuring a consistent and evidence-based approach across the organisation.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

#### *Resident Impact and Service Outcomes*

The proposed review of fees and charges is designed to align pricing with the actual cost of service delivery while ensuring fairness and transparency for residents. Most changes will focus on standardising charges and bringing them in line with market comparators and policy objectives. To protect the most vulnerable, safeguards such as means-testing and hardship waivers will be built into the charging framework, ensuring that residents on low incomes or facing financial hardship continue to receive the support they need. Additionally, improvements to digital payment systems and clearer communication will enhance the overall user experience, making it easier for residents to understand, access, and manage their payments. The emphasis is on efficiency and recovery as no frontline service reductions are proposed.

### **Key consultations**

To be confirmed following mobilisation.

### **Key risks and mitigations**

| <b>Risk</b>   | <b>Mitigation</b>   |
|---|---|
| Capacity pressures across finance, revenues, and operational services may limit the ability to deliver reforms to fees, and traded services particularly where teams are supporting both business-as-usual and change activity. | Phase implementation timelines realistically, prioritise resource allocation through a central programme board, and consider short-term capacity support (e.g. external project management) to prevent delivery bottlenecks.  |
| There may be political or public resistance to the introduction of new charges  | To mitigate this, conduct benchmarking against other authorities to provide context, communicate clearly about the reasons and intended outcomes of the charges, and design exemptions or discounts for vulnerable groups to maintain fairness and public trust.                            |
| Traded services may be under-priced, resulting in lost income or unsustainable operations.  | To avoid this, conduct early-stage cost-benefit analysis and market research to ensure that pricing structures reflect the full cost of service delivery while remaining competitive and attractive to customers. Reviewing alternative service delivery models for underperforming offers. |
| Issues with data accuracy and weak governance could undermine decision-making and service performance.  | This risk can be reduced by strengthening data oversight and introducing regular monitoring and validation processes to ensure the integrity, consistency, and reliability of data used across the organisation.  |

### **Equality impact screening**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:    |   |
|   |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.  | N |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.  | N |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | N |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.         | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.                                      | N |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.   | N |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.  | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.                                 | N |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity. | N |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.                                 | N |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.       | N |

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| EIA required?:          | No  |
| EIA to be completed by: | N/A |
| Deadline:               | N/A |

### **Financial considerations**

The financial impact of this proposal is estimated at £500k savings, based on benchmarking and outcomes from similar reviews undertaken in other local authorities. As the review progresses, detailed allocations of savings across individual service areas will be scoped and refined. This will be informed by service-level analysis, cost recovery assessments, and market comparisons.

### **Legal considerations**

A more detailed understanding of the fees and charges that will be targeted however the Local Government Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act") introduced a general power to charge for the provision of any discretionary service. The discretionary charging powers do not apply to services which an authority is mandated or has a duty to provide. However, councils can charge for discretionary services (that is, services they have power to provide but are not obliged or have a duty to provide by law). The 2003 Act power cannot be used where charging is prohibited or where another specific charging regime applies. Charging is limited to cost recovery and statutory guidance published

in 2003.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

The proposal suggests a potential review of parking charges, including emissions-based pricing and enforcement fees. Environmental sustainability implications in relation to the council's climate goals should be considered as part of this review process.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Rav Jassar. Deputy Director, Corporate and Financial Planning |
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### **Resident Experience Channel Shift Saving Proposal**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | CC06 26-27  |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Cross-Council   |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | Cllr Promise Knight, Cabinet Member Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | <p>This proposal will deliver overall improvements to the customer experience whilst reducing the costs of handling customer interactions. It will focus on three key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Channel shift – further improving the online experience to ensure that those that can digitally self-serve are able to do so easily, making digital the channel of choice for many council interactions, particularly those that are simple or transactional.</li> <li>2) Reducing failure demand – improving and simplifying the customer journey by focusing on getting things right first time. This strand will focus on redesigning key processes and customer journeys across different services to reduce avoidable and repeat contact.</li> <li>3) Developing a strategic front door – simplifying and ensuring consistency across the different routes into the council for residents, in particular providing a joined-up person centred front door for residents with vulnerabilities or more complex needs.</li> </ol> <p>These three areas of focus will be underpinned overall by data, evidence and customer insight.</p> <p>The programme will also maximise return on investment in digital infrastructure that the council has already made, such as re-platforming the website, upgrading contact centre infrastructure, and launching self-serve tools.</p> |
|--------------------------|--|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <b>2025/26</b>                                |                                   |
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b> | This is a cross-council programme |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | N/A |
|---|-----|

|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                     | <b>2026/27</b> |
|                                     | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>             | £655           |
|                                     | FTE            |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction:</b> | TBC            |

### **Proposed Savings:**

The savings identified are estimates, based on work undertaken in other councils and on the current understanding of customer contact. A detailed business case is in development and this will provide a greater degree of certainty in relation to the level savings proposed.

#### **1. Channel Shift and self-service**

For those that can, self-serve should be the channel of choice. This will be achieved through a number of distinct, but complementary, approaches. High volume email communication will be replaced by structured, automated webforms for common reports and questions. The ongoing development of My Account will enable residents to have more access to information regarding their interactions with the council. Ongoing improvements to the website (including chatbots) and omni-channel communications (including for example texts or social media) will provide resident with simple and intuitive ways to find information and make requests, carry out simple transactions. And finally reviews of the council's telephony routing and messaging and written communications will be reviewed to ensure alignment.

#### **2. Reducing failure demand and developing the strategic front door.**

The council has already invested in the tools to enhance the customer experience such as the council's telephony system and CRM (customer relationship management) system. There is significant opportunity to now capitalise on this investment by developing the use of these tools and others to ensure that customers with more complex needs are able to access person-centred, joined up support and that the need for repeat contact or avoidable contact (such as need to follow up on a referral, needing to repeat the same information to different teams, etc) can be reduced. Improved use of the tools available can also reduce the need for staff to



rekey information and can provide opportunities for more proactive communication and support with residents. In addition, where there are still multiple routes into the council for different services, these will be reviewed to identify opportunities to streamline customer contact routes and ensure consistency across services.

**Target Savings: £655,000**

#### **How would this affect users of this service?**

Residents will experience a more accessible, responsive and reliable service, including:

- An intuitive, easy to use online experience
- Fewer follow-ups, complaints or delays due to clearer communications and streamlined processes and the ability of residents to view progress
- Improved support for vulnerable residents, as some colleague capacity is freed up to focus on proactive, targeted interventions.
- More inclusive services, informed by data on who is and isn't using digital channels and tailored support to address barriers.
- A digital offer that is user tested and iterates resulting in ongoing resident feedback identifying barriers and opportunities for improvements.
- Essential phone and face-to-face support will be preserved for those who need it most, with a stronger person centred offer for those with more complex needs

#### **Programme Workstreams and Opportunities**

##### **Workstreams:**

- **Channel Shift:** improving the online experience and increasing digital interactions
- **Failure Demand:** redesigning processes and services to reduce avoidable and repeat contact
- **Strategic Front Door:** developing a joined-up person-centred front door model for those with more complex needs

##### **Implementation resource**

Implementation resource will be required to support this work. This is likely to include programme management, delivery management and business analysis resource as well as input from subject matter experts within services. Whilst the council has already invested the core technology needed to improve the resident experience, there is likely to be further resource required to develop these tools. This may include specialist support from system providers. In addition, there is likely to be further investment needed in orchestrating resident data in a way that enables more streamlined and proactive interaction.

## **Inter-dependencies with other proposals**

It is likely that there will be some cross-over with the digital programme proposal as increased automation will be required to fully digitise and improve some resident journeys.

It is also anticipated that as the strategic front door model is developed there will be opportunities to consider how this can complement or directly contribute to the council's Radical Place Leadership approach.

## **Key consultations**

Where existing posts and structures are affected by the proposal, consultation with staff will need to be carried out according to the Council's policy and procedures.

Whilst formal consultation with residents will not be required, less formal engagement, user experience testing and co-creation with residents will ensure that services are designed with the residents who will use them in mind, responding to data, insight and resident feedback.

## **Key risks and mitigations**

| <b>Risk</b>  | <b>Mitigation</b>   |
|--|---|
| Low uptake of digital services   | Applying user-centred design principles and behavioural insights, improve usability, and conduct targeted engagement and campaigns to promote adoption.   |
| Technology gaps or delays  | Undertake technology design phase, early engagement with technical resource, phased delivery approach.  |
| Understanding our customers and what their barriers to digital and current experiences are | By working with partners and involving residents through user testing and co-production activities we will be able to ensure the resident perspective and experience is integral to the design of new tools and processes. This should be supplemented with data and insight wherever possible. |
| Programme execution delays   | To prevent this, ensure thorough planning during the design phase, allowing adequate time and resources for smooth implementation.  |
| Dependency on services to realise savings  | Realising some savings will depend on service areas, particularly those with customer facing functions, actively using the efficiencies created to release cashable or capacity-based savings. Strong governance will be required to ensure savings are realised and to avoid double-counting.  |
| Low organisational buy-in and capacity   | Clear leadership commitment and active engagement from service areas (especially where the customer journey crosses multiple services)  |

## **Equality Impact Screening**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:    |   |
|   |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.  | Y |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.  | N |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | Y |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.   | N |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.  | Y |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.   | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.  | N |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.                                    | N |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.  | Y |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.  | Y |

|                         |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| EIA required?:          | Y               |
| EIA to be completed by: | Latoya Phillips |

|           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| Deadline: | 01/12/25 |
|-----------|----------|

### **Financial considerations**

Work is in progress to develop a detailed business case for the delivery of savings. Once completed, savings will need to be allocated to departmental budgets across the council where the savings will be realised. To manage risk in relation to savings delivery, a robust process will need to be in place for agreeing benefits and ensuring they translate into cashable savings. This will require process change and potentially restructure processes within service areas. Delivery of savings will also require technical, project management and change management capacity.

### **Legal considerations**

This programme of work will result in staffing reductions. The final business case will identify the services affected. Restructures will need to follow the council's policies and procedures.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

Initial screening has identified that an Equality Analysis will need to be completed. There is the potential for both positive and negative impacts of the proposal, particularly for people with disabilities, for people on lower incomes and for those for whom English is not their first language. The programme will include user engagement and co-production aimed at maximising potential positive benefits and mitigating any potential negative impact.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

Physical natural resource usage (i.e. printing of letters to residents) is expected to decrease with enhanced digitisation of functions. There is likely to be a small associated reduction in related emissions. However, increasing the use of digital tools may increase energy consumption associated with data storage and the use of electronic devices. Therefore, the overall proposal is anticipated to have a neutral effect on climate change or the environment.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Kirsteen Roe, Interim Director for Resident Services |
|---------------------------------|--|

### **Lane Rental Scheme Savings Proposal**

|                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | NR01 26-27          |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Highways Management |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | Cllr Krupa Sheth    |

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | Lane Rental Scheme (LRS) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |        |
|---|--------|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | £2,845 |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | 30     |

|                                    | <b>2026/27</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                    | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £350           |
|                                    | FTE            |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | 0              |

### **Proposed savings**

£350k from the implementation of a Lane Rental Scheme to levy charges on works conducted on busy roads during peak hours. Charges can reach up to £2,500 per day, aimed at discouraging roadworks at critical times. Brent wishes to secure the option to implement a pan-London framework similar to an existing TfL scheme, with slight operational differences, including charges and the schedule of operational times.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

Brent Council is exploring the adoption of a Lane Rental Scheme (LRS) to manage street works more efficiently on its busiest roads. This initiative builds upon the National Permit Scheme, which already provides some level of control over street works by Local Authorities and utility undertakers. A Lane Rental Scheme, currently operational on Transport for London's (TfL) road network, is designed to reduce traffic delays, improve contractor behaviour, and promote innovation, aligning with the Traffic Management Act 2004's network management duties.

Brent's road network could be classified into bands high, medium, and low, determining the applicable charges and operational hours for works. If works are

carried out outside operational hours, no charges will apply. A balanced approach will be adopted to ensure that charges for utility and Council-maintained roadworks are aligned. For Brent's own maintenance works, the Council will adopt a procedure to ensure fairness, such as offsetting any charges against maintenance budgets and redistributing a portion of the income for reinvestment in road infrastructure.

The scheme can offer several exemptions: such as for emergency works, works with minimal disruption, or replacement of poles and lamp columns. There are also potential reductions in charges for collaborative works and major infrastructure improvements.

The financial implications are significant, with a potential first half year net annual income of approximately £350k after costs.

The scheme operates under the New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA), with legal provisions for charges based on the duration of works. The Council's participation in the scheme would support better coordination, reduce congestion, and facilitate more efficient road network management, benefiting both the local community and contractors.

A study should be commissioned via consultants to prepare options for the scheme, in terms of different sizes of network to which a scheme could apply, and options for the exemptions and discounts. Likely levels of income for each option will be calculated, and the likely resource levels to run the scheme determined.

### **Key consultations**

- TfL
- Utility providers
- DFT
- Elected Members

### **Key risks and mitigations**

- **Delays in application, consultation and implementation stages due to resistance from utility providers**  
Full and detailed consultation with collaborative negotiation to include exploration of appropriate and reasonable exemptions. The scheme options would have to be in accordance with the regulations and be compatible with the Pan-London Scheme which is being promoted by TfL.
- **Investment costs exceed those anticipated and /or options fail to generate expected income**  
Sensitivity analysis of network size will be tested to ensure optimal benefit realisation.

### **Equality impact screening**

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please

|   |   |
|---|---|
| indicate Y/N below:   |   |
|   |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.  | N |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.  | N |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | N |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.   | N |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.  | N |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.   | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.  | N |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.                                    | N |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.  | N |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.  | N |

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| EIA required?:          | No  |
| EIA to be completed by: | N/A |
| Deadline:               | N/A |

### **Financial considerations**

Modelling has indicated an anticipated half year income of circa £350k for 26/27 and an equivalent full year saving in future years of £700k. Operational costs can be deducted from the income from the Lane Rental Scheme. Additional coordination and inspections would be required if the scheme were to be adopted, so operational costs can include the funding for increasing team capacity.

50% of the surplus income from Lane Rental must be reinvested in our road network including potholes giving additional benefit other than reduced congestion.

The surplus funds can also be used for innovation and traffic disruption reduction, software development, rapid deployment cameras for long duration works, fixed CCTV for remote site monitoring from the office and extraordinary measures such as reconfiguring the road network.

### **Legal considerations**

Implementing a lane rental scheme in London involves several legal and regulatory considerations, primarily governed by UK transport and highways law. Lane rental schemes allow highway authorities to charge utilities and other companies for occupying the road network, particularly when roadworks disrupt traffic. Here are the main legal considerations and the relevant legislation:

Primary Legislation to enable the lane rental scheme includes:

*New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)*

- Section 74 enables the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring undertakers executing street works to pay a charge to the highway authority where
  - The duration of the works exceeds a prescribed period; and
  - The works are not completed in a reasonable period
- Section 74A Enables the Secretary of State to make regulations allowing highway authorities to impose charges for street works during certain periods (e.g., peak hours).

*Traffic Management Act 2004*

- Places a network management duty on local authorities (including Transport for London) to secure the expeditious movement of traffic.
- Section 16: Requires the local traffic authority to manage their road networks effectively, which supports the justification for lane rental schemes.

The Street Works (Charges for Unreasonably Prolonged Occupation of the Highway) (England) Regulations 2009 (SI 2009/303) enable the use of Section 74 of NRSWA and set out the relevant prescribed periods and charges that will be applicable.

Regulations to enable the lane rental scheme includes Street Works (Charges for Occupation of the Highway) (England) Regulations 2012, which are made under section 74A of NRSWA 1991, and provides the framework for authorities in England (including London boroughs and TfL) to apply to the Secretary of State for permission to run a lane rental scheme.



Key Provisions are that only certain authorities can apply to operate a lane rental scheme; scheme proposals must be approved by the Secretary of State for Transport, and charges can only be made for specific parts of the network and at specific times.

A local authority (e.g., Transport for London) must submit a detailed scheme for approval. It must include:

- Justification for the scheme.
- Proposed charging mechanisms.
- Consultation outcomes.
- Provisions for exemptions and discounts.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are several climate change and environmental considerations in implementing a lane rental scheme like Transport for London's (TfL):

- **Reduced Emissions:** By encouraging utility companies to complete roadworks more quickly or during off-peak times, lane rental schemes can reduce traffic congestion and idling, which in turn lowers vehicle emissions and improves air quality.
- **Improved Traffic Flow:** Smoother traffic flow means fewer stop-start conditions, leading to better fuel efficiency and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Behavioural Change:** The scheme can incentivize companies to use less invasive or more sustainable methods for roadworks, such as trenchless technology.
- **Support for Active Travel:** Fewer and shorter disruptions can encourage walking and cycling by maintaining access to safe and clear routes.

### **Communication considerations**

Key communications considerations if the London Borough of Brent implemented a lane rental scheme like TfL's:

- **Public Awareness:** Clear communication to residents and drivers about how the scheme works, its benefits, and how it may affect them.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Early and ongoing engagement with utility companies, contractors, local businesses, and transport operators to ensure buy-in and cooperation.
- **Transparency:** Regular updates on how funds from the scheme are used, especially if they support local transport or environmental projects.
- **Crisis Communication:** A plan for managing complaints, disruptions, or negative feedback during initial rollout or major roadworks.
- **Multichannel Messaging:** Use of local media, social media, signage, and council

communications to reach diverse audiences effectively.

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan.

|                                 |                                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Chris Whyte. Director, Public Realm |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

### **Asset Utilisation Savings Proposal**

|                        |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | NR02 26-27                    |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Neighbourhoods & Regeneration |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | Cllr Teo Benea                |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | <p>This programme seeks to increase net revenue by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Optimising off-street parking through market aligned tariffs and digital booking system(s);</li> <li>2) Commercialising Parks assets where financially sustainable and aligned to public health outcomes.</li> </ol> |
|--------------------------|--|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | n/a |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | n/a |

|                                    | <b>2026/27</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                    | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £190           |
|                                    | FTE            |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | N/A            |
| <b>Proposed Capital Receipt:</b>   | N/A            |

### **Proposed savings**

| <b>Opportunity</b>   | <b>Target Saving</b> | <b>Evidence and Methodology Behind Estimate</b>   |
|--|----------------------|---|
| <b>1. Review the parking policy to align off-street parking charges with market and set context for income generating opportunities.</b> | £60k                 | <p>Align off-street parking charges with market, enabling income generating options.</p> <p>Target: £0.06m recurring from FY 2026/27<br/> Method: A comprehensive review is being carried out on the off-street car-park portfolio to prepare site options.<br/> The findings from the review will help inform piloting of a car park payment booking system and development of a new parking policy.</p> |

| Opportunity   | Target Saving | Evidence and Methodology Behind Estimate   |
|---|---------------|--|
| <b>2. Review Parks assets to identify financially sustainable improvements to parks that encourage community wellbeing and increased activity</b> | £130k         | <p>Parks commercialisation (site specific business cases)</p> <p>Target: £0.13m recurring from court bookings</p> <p>Method: Per-site feasibility (planning, design, costs, delivery model), community engagement and operator options (self-manage vs partner concession). We will present the net revenue after any capital investment, staffing, maintenance, utilities, sinking fund, and operator shares have been considered as part of developing site-specific business cases.</p> |

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

#### **Resident Impact and Service Outcomes**

- Aligning off-street car park fees and charges with market rates may potentially result in residents having to pay more to use the Council's off-street car parks.
- Investment in our parks assets to provide facilities such as Padel Court provision will help achieve public health outcomes and diversify what our parks can offer to residents.

### **Key consultations**

An initial list of stakeholders has been highlighted below, and the consultation plan(s) will need to be tailored for each opportunity that has been identified.

- Cabinet/Lead Members
- Ward Councillors
- Residents
- SLT / SMG
- Communities/Friends of groups
- Sport England
- Private market

### **Key risks and mitigations**

| Risk  | Mitigation  |
|---|---|
| Resource pressures across the Council may limit the speed at which opportunities can be progressed. | <p>Identify lead officer(s) at SMG level for each opportunity.</p> <p>Prioritise resource allocation through a central programme board and consider</p> |

| <b>Risk</b>  | <b>Mitigation</b>  |
|--|--|
|  | short-term capacity support (e.g. external project management) to prevent delivery bottlenecks.  |
| Potential resistance to the introduction of new charges and/or the change of use(s) within our parks.  | To mitigate this, conduct benchmarking against other authorities to provide context, communicate clearly about the reasons and intended outcomes of the charges, and consider exemptions or discounts for vulnerable groups. |
| The council may not have sufficient capabilities and/or the private operator market is mature enough to manage/operate a sustainable playing facilities. | To mitigate this, invest/recruit appropriately skilled staff to manage this service provision or procure a delivery partner to manage new facilities as an 'arms-length' operation from the Council.                         |

### **Equality impact screening**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:    |   |
|   |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.  | N |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.  | N |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | N |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.   | N |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.  | N |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.   | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.  | N |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity. | N |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.                                 | N |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.       | N |

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| EIA required?:          | No  |
| EIA to be completed by: | n/a |
| Deadline:               | n/a |

### **Financial considerations**

A review of off-street parking charges is expected to generate a £60k saving, based on aligning fees with market rates and exploring new payment and booking systems. Additionally, a parks asset review is projected to deliver £130k through increased court bookings, supported by site-specific business cases that account for capital investment, operating costs, and partnership models. These estimates are based on early feasibility work and reflect prudent assumptions pending further development and engagement.

### **Legal considerations**

Any increase to fees and charges as set out above will require Cabinet approval. If approved by Cabinet, an Order pursuant to S35(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 is required to give notice of any changes in rates for Off-Street Parking. This will include a statutory consultation before making the Order and once made it will be subject to a six-week legal challenge period.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as part of bringing forward any specific proposals relating to the parking policy review and/or playing facilities investment in our parks.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Tanveer Ghani. Director, Property and Assets |
|---------------------------------|--|

### **Subsidy Loss Reduction Savings Proposal**

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | PHRS01 26-27   |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Housing Benefit, Housing Needs, Adult Social Care    |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Lead Member for Housing |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | Reduction in Supported Exempt Accommodation (SEA) subsidy loss |
|--------------------------|--|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | 1,800 (Current forecast for 2025/26) |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | 0                                    |

|                                    | <b>2026/27</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                    | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £130           |
|                                    | FTE            |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | 0              |

### **Proposed savings**

Supported exempt accommodation is a type of supported accommodation. It is exempt from locally set caps on housing benefit in recognition of the higher housing management costs that can accompany supported accommodation. Legally, SEA can only be provided by a county council, Housing Association, registered charity, or voluntary organisation.

Under current arrangements, if the SEA provider is not a registered provider, the Council experiences a gap in housing benefits subsidy received from DWP of 40% above rent officer determination for particular vulnerable groups, and 100% above this determination for other residents. This gap needs to be covered by the Council. Housing Benefit subsidy loss associated with SEA in 2024/25 was £3.95m, linked to 654 placements. In 2024/25, this was funded from council reserves.

In many cases, current non-commissioned supported exempt accommodation (SEA) provision in Brent neither represents value for money to the council or DWP, nor good quality care, support, or supervision for residents. Many of these residents originate with the council, either with adult social care or housing needs.

The council may not provide SEA, legally. However, the Council is considering using one of its subsidiaries to provide SEA and therefore reclaim the full costs from DWP.

Officers are therefore proposing to transform the delivery model for future referrals in the housing needs cohort. This should improve outcomes for residents, preventing them from needing to reapproach the council as homeless or in need of social care (i.e. demand management), and supporting residents back into independent living.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

This proposal should improve the quality of care, support, and supervision received by residents. It should do more to support residents into independent living and represent an improvement upon the reasonably poor quality of care, support, and supervision that some providers currently provide.

### **Key risks and mitigations**

| <b>Risk</b>   | <b>Mitigation</b>   |
|---|---|
| The Council would need to work with landlords that are already providing SEA, moving them away from their current SEA provider. | could focus on working with landlords where lease agreements are up for renewal, or where landlords have agreements with providers that fail Brent's review/licensing scheme.   |
| This proposal drives savings by shifting costs to DWP, which may strain LBB's relationship with DWP.                            | Many other local authorities have achieved savings by shifting costs to DWP. Moreover, the modelled additional costs to DWP appear very reasonable given the additional work the council has already done to reduce the number of accepted SEA referrals. |

### **Equality impact screening**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below: |   |
|  |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.   | N |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.   | N |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and   | N |



|   |   |
|---|---|
| mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.   |   |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.   | N |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.  | N |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.   | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.  | N |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.                                    | N |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.  | N |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.  | N |

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| EIA required?:          | No |
| EIA to be completed by: | -  |
| Deadline:               | -  |

### **Financial considerations**

The Council experienced a £4m loss of Housing Benefit Subsidy in 2024/25 and is forecast to lose £1.8m in 2025/26.

Provided the new provider is able to procure properties, including taking on the responsibility for care, support and supervision, and demonstrate compliance with DWP subsidy regulations, the Housing Benefit Subsidy loss the Council is currently facing can be avoided.

### **Legal considerations**

To act as a provider for SEA, in which the Council could fully recover housing benefit subsidy, the provider must be a registered provider of social housing.

To meet SEA requirements, the provider would be contractually obligated to provide a more than minimal level of care, support and supervision (CSS) in its occupational agreement.

Under s.189A of the Housing Act 1996 Brent must undertake a detailed housing needs assessment to support referrals for SEA and provide evidence of the CSS requirement.

Provided the provider leases properties from private landlords for SEA and the rents are set at local SEA market rates, the council should be able to reclaim the full amount as Housing Benefit. CSS costs are not eligible for subsidy under Housing Benefit and must be covered separately either by the resident or the Council, or a combination of both.

The provider should lease properties for SEA for a minimum term of 2 years and a maximum term of 30 years without the use of public funding for acquisition.

Counsel has strongly advised all documentation for the scheme should undergo comprehensive legal review prior to implementation, to mitigate the risk of non-compliance. Overall, there are no substantial legal barriers that would inhibit the progression of the scheme, but due diligence - particularly regarding contracts, compliance and governance - is required to ensure long-term viability.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Laurence Coaker, Director of Housing Needs and Support |
|---------------------------------|--|

### **Homelessness Prevention Savings Proposal**

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | PHRS02 26-27   |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Housing Needs  |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Lead Member for Housing |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | Prevention of homelessness – friends and family data insights |
|--------------------------|---|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | <b>13.1</b> |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | <b>109</b>  |

|                                    | <b>2026/27</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                    | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £200           |
|                                    | FTE            |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | 0              |

### **Proposed savings**

Friend and family evictions accounts for 30% of demand from homeless households. Unlike the other major drivers for homelessness around evictions from privately rented accommodation and domestic abuse, there is more scope to prevent homelessness by identifying the stress factors which contribute to the adult child being evicted from the parental home. These factors may range from financial stress to conflict or overcrowding. This proposal is to use effective 'at risk' indicators, e.g. debt, known to Children's service or other council services to identify families and engage in proactive communication to intervene early to provide tailored support and prevent the exclusion.

### **How would this affect users of this service?**

By using data analytics to identify families "at risk" and intervening at an earlier stage and providing the support required to prevent the exclusion, the family will benefit from having the support to address the underlying issues that are having a determinantal impact.

## **Key risks and mitigations**

**Risk** – There is a risk that this may contribute to increased demand, as this proactive approach will mean officers contacting households before they approach the council as homeless. The family may never have approached the council as homeless and if the intervention does not succeed, the applicant is likely to be placed into temporary accommodation.

**Mitigation:** The likelihood is that the family member being excluded would approach the council for assistance, and this approach would be at the point of crisis, diminishing the prospect of a successful intervention to prevent homelessness.

Other Key Risks Include:

- (a) reliance on accurate and timely data to generate alerts;
- (b) operational capacity to act promptly on alerts;
- (c) assumptions around temporary accommodation costs and lengths of stay, which may change;
- (d) the possibility that households do not engage with prevention offers.

Mitigations include strengthened data governance, allocation of dedicated prevention staff, quarterly refresh of financial assumptions and enhanced communication with residents.

## **Equality impact screening**

| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:    |   |
|---|---|
|   |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.  | N |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.  | N |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | N |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.   | N |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.  | N |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.  | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.                                 | N |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity. | N |
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.                                 | N |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans.       | N |

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| EIA required?:          | No |
| EIA to be completed by: | -  |
| Deadline:               | -  |

### **Financial considerations**

Based on the forecasts of outcomes it is projected that a yearly saving can be achieved under a central case scenario by adopting a data analytics approach to strengthen Brent's homelessness prevention work. It is important to note that this is anticipated to prevent new demand from arising but does not alleviate the current pressures resulting from existing Stage 1 households in temporary accommodation. If the level of demand next financial year is greater than budgetary expectations, there is a risk that this project could result in cost avoidance rather than a cashable saving.

### **Legal considerations**

The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 requires local authorities to intervene at an earlier stage and take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness (to those threatened with homelessness within 56 days) and/ or relieve homelessness (through sustaining or securing accommodation) for eligible applicants who become homeless or are threatened with homelessness.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

These considerations will be assessed as the work gets underway.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Laurence Coaker, Director of Housing Needs and Support |
|---------------------------------|--|

### **Housing Benefits Claim Reduction Savings Proposal**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Reference:</b>      | PHRS03 26-27  |
| <b>Service(s):</b>     | Council Tax and Financial Assessments   |
| <b>Lead Member(s):</b> | Cllr Promise Knight, Cabinet Member Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Savings Proposal:</b> | Staffing efficiencies within the Council Tax and Financial Assessments due to expected caseload decrease. |
|--------------------------|---|

### **Financial and Staffing Information**

| <b>2025/26</b>                                      |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Total budget for the service(s) £'000:</b>       | <b>£2.6m</b> |
| <b>Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):</b> | <b>48</b>    |

|                                    | <b>2026/27</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                    | £'000          |
| <b>Proposed saving:</b>            | £270           |
|                                    | FTE            |
| <b>Proposed staffing reduction</b> | 5              |

### **Proposed savings**

#### **Background**

Housing Benefits caseload at end of March 2026 is expected to be:

- 9500 HB caseload to remain. This includes Pensioner claims, Supported Exempt Accommodation and Emergency/Temporary Accommodation cases.
- 22, 908 Council tax Support case load to remain (no signs of any further reduction as this is based on the new scheme we have just implemented).

#### **Proposed savings for 2026/27**

- Total savings offered - £0.27m

#### **How would this affect users of this service?**

- The Housing Benefit caseload will reduce by 3000 in March 2026
- Efficiencies with IT enhancements including automation

- Service users should not be negatively affected, as we anticipate being left with right level of resources.

### **Key risks and mitigations**

- If caseloads do not reduce by March 2026, this proposal will have to be reconsidered.
- Mitigation is to increase the use of resilience till caseload with new pensioner work settles.
- Assessment teams in all areas are on the same job description allowing us to move resources depending on demand.

### **Equality impact screening**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Please indicate Y/N below:    |   |
|   |   |
| <b>Age</b> - People of different age groups.  | N |
| <b>Care Experience</b> - People who have been in care for any period of their childhood.  | N |
| <b>Disability</b> - People with physical, sensory, learning, and mental health disabilities, long-term conditions, and non-visible disabilities.                      | N |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b> - Transgender and non-binary people, including anyone who is proposing to, started, or who has completed a process to change their gender. | N |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> - Applies mainly in the workplace, people who are married or in a civil partnership.  | N |
| <b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> - People who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or new parents.   | N |
| <b>Race</b> - People of different ethnicity, nationality, and skin colour.  | N |
| <b>Religion or belief</b> - People of all faiths, and those with no religious belief.   | N |
| <b>Sex</b> - Men and women, including disparities in pay, career progression, and health outcomes.  | N |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> - People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or any other non-heterosexual identity.                                    | N |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Socio-Economic Status</b> – People who are experiencing poverty or socio-economic disadvantage.                           | N |
| <b>Other relevant groups</b> – Consider if any other groups are impacted, e.g. Carers, Refugees or Asylum Seekers, Veterans. | N |

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| EIA required?:          | No |
| EIA to be completed by: | -  |
| Deadline:               | -  |

### **Financial considerations**

There are currently 48 members of staff within the Council Tax and Financial Assessments that support Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support caseloads. It is anticipated that by March 2026, the Housing Benefit caseload will reduce by approximately 3,000 cases and that staffing resource required to support this function will be able to be reduced by 5 FTEs. The associated saving is estimated to be £0.27m.

### **Legal considerations**

This programme of work will result in staffing reductions. The final business case will identify the services affected. Restructures will need to follow the council's policies and procedures.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations**

None directly for staff or residents, but once case approved, there may be work to be undertaken.

### **Climate change and environment considerations**

There are minimal direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Communication considerations**

Initial internal and external communications considerations have been outlined and addressed within the Budget 2026-27 Communications & Engagement Plan. Further communications advice will be given as the detailed programme of work is developed for this cross-cutting theme.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Lead officer for this proposal: | Kirsteen Roe, Interim Director for Resident Services |
|---------------------------------|--|

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# **Debt Recovery**

# **Policy**



## 1.0 Introduction and Objectives

Brent Council has a statutory and fiduciary responsibility to safeguard public funds through the effective billing, collection, and recovery of all monies owed. This policy sets out a defined framework for debt management across all service areas, ensuring that recovery actions are fair, consistent, transparent, and proportionate.

The Council is committed to recovering outstanding debts in a fair, consistent, and proportionate manner. We recognise that some individuals may face genuine financial hardship, and, in such cases, support will be provided in line with the principles set out in this recovery policy. Enforcement measures will be used only where necessary and will always be carried out in a manner that is lawful and sensitive to individual circumstances.

Enforcement agents acting on behalf of the Council are expected to operate in accordance with recognised codes of practice, including the identification and appropriate handling of vulnerable customers.

This approach ensures that debt recovery contributes to the Council's financial sustainability while upholding its values of fairness, empathy, and accountability.

The Council is responsible for collecting:

- Council Tax
- Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates)
- Housing Benefit Overpayments
- Housing Rents and Temporary Accommodation Charges
- Parking and Road Traffic Penalty Charges
- Leasehold Service Charges and Major Works
- Sundry Debts
- Adult Social Care Charges

The objectives of this policy are:

- To maximise income collection through timely and accurate billing.
- To pursue all debts fairly, ensuring those with the means to pay do so.
- To support residents in financial difficulty through appropriate interventions.
- To apply consistent and proportionate recovery processes across all debt types.

## 2.0 Core Principles

Brent Council adopts the following principles in its debt management approach:

- **Clear Charging and Recovery Processes:** Customers will be informed of the nature and value of their debt and the consequences of non-payment. Disputes will be responded to within 21 days, with pending recovery suspended during resolution. This is a blanket approach across all lines of debt where those debts are not subject to other statutory processes.
- **Flexible Payment Options:** Direct Debit is the Council's preferred method of payment due to its reliability, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. It ensures regular and timely payments, reducing the risk of missed instalments and the need for manual intervention. This method also helps residents manage their finances more easily by spreading costs and offering flexible payment dates. A range of payment methods and frequencies will be offered; some services may require advance payment or Direct Debit to access.
- **Early Intervention:** Customers will be notified promptly when debts arise to prevent escalation. We expect customers to respond promptly to any contact we attempt to make with them.
- **Clear Communication:** We will use a range of communication methods to ensure that customers know how to make payments, and how to contact us if they are struggling to do so. Communication will primarily be through electronic means.

We expect customers to inform us promptly of any changes to their contact details. Brent Council expects its staff to be courteous and respectful to customers and expects customers to be equally courteous when dealing with Council staff and those working on behalf of the Council.

- **Support for vulnerable customers who demonstrate that they can't pay:** Customers identified as vulnerable will be referred to internal and external support services. In specific circumstances, we may consider writing-off and not pursuing all or a portion of an individual's debt in order to prevent exacerbating severe indebtedness. We expect customers to take ownership of their finances, to engage positively with any support provided, to provide any requested information within the specified timescale, and to comply with the terms of any agreement made
- **Firm Action for Non-Engagement/Payment (those who won't pay):** Where individuals have the means to pay but choose not to, robust Magistrate or County Court recovery proceedings will be pursued to ensure that public funds are protected, and essential services can continue to be delivered for the benefit of all residents.

### 3.0 Vulnerability and Debt Support

Brent Council recognises that vulnerability may affect a person's ability to manage finances. Vulnerability may include:

- Disabilities, including those with learning difficulties or serious illness.
- Language or literacy barriers - while translation services are available for interaction with the Council, those who may not have the support to speak or read English may be more broadly financially excluded.
- Bereavement, job loss, or homelessness.
- Those affected by economic or health impacts of war, pandemic or natural disaster.

Where vulnerability is identified, the Council will:

- Flag accounts for manual review.
- Suspend automated escalation.
- Offer tailored support (e.g. extended payment terms, benefit reviews).
- Refer to appropriate welfare schemes or third-party support.

The above does not constitute a list of reasons for automatic assessment as vulnerable, nor is it intended to be exhaustive. Assessment of vulnerability, and the steps taken to support a vulnerable customer, will be assessed by the Council on a case-by-case basis, based on the specific details provided by the customer.

The identification of vulnerability does not excuse someone from paying a debt which they are legally obliged to pay. It does, however, mean that the Council will provide additional support in understanding the debt, and aim to minimise undue distress.

#### 3.1 Breathing Space

The Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space), introduced in May 2021 provides individuals in financial difficulty with temporary legal protection from creditor action. It includes:

- Standard Breathing Space: Up to 60 days of protection, during which enforcement action, interest, and charges must be paused.
- Mental Health Crisis Breathing Space: Lasts for the duration of treatment plus 30 days, offering extended protections for individuals receiving certified mental health crisis care.
- To apply for the 'Breathing Space' scheme, you need to talk to a debt adviser. They will submit an application on your behalf if it's the right thing to do.  
***<https://www.gov.uk/options-for-dealing-with-your-debts/breathing-space>***

### Implications for Council:

- Upon notification, the Council will cease all recovery action for qualifying debts.
- Service areas must ensure compliance with notification timelines and accurate application of protections.
- Ongoing payments may still be required if the customer can afford them.
- Debts covered include council tax, rent arrears, housing benefit overpayments, parking enforcement debts, business rates, sundry debts (unsecured), student loans and secured debts are excluded.

### 4.0 Debt Recovery and Enforcement

Recovery action will be proportionate and cost-effective. Enforcement methods may include:

- Attachments to earnings or benefits.
- Charging orders and order of sale proceedings.
- Bankruptcy.
- Possession orders.
- Referral to appointed enforcement agents.
- Committal proceedings - applied when there is evidence of **wilful refusal or culpable neglect**, with potential imprisonment.

Robust enforcement performance monitoring and contract management processes will be implemented to ensure full compliance with relevant codes of conduct and recognised good practice. All enforcement services will operate in accordance with the National Standards for Enforcement, ensuring consistency, fairness, and accountability in all recovery actions.

| Enforcement Agent Fees set by central government |      |   |
|--|------|---|
| Fee  | Cost | Information   |
| Compliance fee                                   | £75  | Initial contact by the Enforcement Agent to the debtor to urge contact to discuss a payment arrangement.                                    |
| Enforcement fee                                  | £235 | The Enforcement Agent fee for attending the property. Plus 7.5% of the value of the original debt that exceeds £1500                        |
| Removal and Disposal Stage Fee                   | £110 | This fee reflects the uplift and disposal of goods to the value of the debt. Plus 7.5% of the value of the original debt that exceeds £1500 |

## **5.0 Write-Offs**

Debts may be written off for the following reasons in accordance with the Council's Debt Write Off procedure:

Insolvency, Unenforceable, Absconded, Uneconomical to Collect, \*Uncollectable or Deceased.

*\* Uncollectable / Hardship write-offs will be considered following completion of customer consented open banking financial assessment.*

## **6.0 Council Members and Staff**

It is not acceptable for Council members, employees or contractors to have outstanding debts owed to the Council. Where such debts exist, the Council will utilise internal information systems to support recovery efforts, including the implementation of salary deductions where appropriate.

In accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, any Council member with payments overdue by two months or more is legally required to declare this and must abstain from voting on matters related to financial decisions until the debt is resolved.

## **7.0 Monitoring and Performance**

The Council will:

- Monitor debt levels and recovery performance as part of the Council's Budget Assurance Panel.
- Review aged debt and write-off recommendations regularly.
- Set performance targets for collection rates and Direct Debit uptake.

## **8.0 Customer Care and Advice**

The Council will treat all customers with respect and fairness. Those in financial difficulty will be:

- Invited to provide consent for digital income and expenditure verification.
- Offered confidential support and referred to advice services.
- Encouraged to prioritise essential debts (e.g. rent, council tax)



## **Advice services include:**

### **Citizens Advice Brent**

- **Address:** 270–272 High Road, Willesden, London, NW10 2EY
- **Phone:** 020 8438 1249
- **Email:** [ca.brent@cabrent.org.uk](mailto:ca.brent@cabrent.org.uk)
- **Website:** [www.citizensadvicebrent.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicebrent.org.uk)

### **National Debtline**

- **Address:** Tricorn House, 51–53 Hagley Road, Birmingham, B16 8TP
- **Phone:** 0808 808 4000 (Freephone)
- **Website:** [www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)
- **Services:** Free, confidential, and independent debt advice via phone, webchat, and online tools

### **StepChange Debt Charity**

- **Address:** 123 Albion Street, Leeds, LS2 8ER
- **Phone:** 0800 138 1111 (Freephone)
- **Email:** [client.service@stepchange.org](mailto:client.service@stepchange.org)
- **Website:** [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)
- **Services:** Free and impartial debt advice, online and by phone, including support with debt management plans and budgeting



**Brent**



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# **Council Tax and NNDR Policy**

## **1.0 Introduction**

There are over 135,000 domestic properties and 9,000 non-domestic properties within Brent for which the Council is responsible for collecting Council Tax and Business Rates due for each of these properties. The Revenue generated from Council Tax collection forms a significant proportion of the Authority's overall Revenue budget and as such the Council recognises its responsibility in maximising collection to protect the overall financial health of the Authority.

The Council also recognise the diverse nature of Brent as a Borough, with pockets of affluence and large areas of deprivation. The Council aim to take account of differing customer needs and circumstances and to reflect these in our policies for recovering Council Tax. In overall terms, the Council aim to deal robustly with those who are wilful nonpayers and to deal sensitively with those who are willing to pay but are experiencing difficulties in doing so, ensuring that payment arrangements are fair. The Council will always seek to ensure that entitlement to benefit is identified wherever possible and those with genuine hardship have the opportunity to discuss and review their payment arrangement options. Furthermore, the Council adheres to the Citizens Advice Brent Council Tax Protocol to ensure customers are encouraged to seek help in the management of their debts and the conduct of the Enforcement Agents.

From 1 April 2025 a revised Council Tax Support Scheme was implemented for those of working age, with the national scheme for pensioners remaining in place.

## **2.0 Council Tax Instalment Dates**

2.1 In 2013/14 changes which enabled council customers to pay their Council Tax by 12 instalments were adopted.

The default continues to be 10 instalments. Instalment dates are as follows:

- Direct Debit payers  
1<sup>st</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, or 28<sup>th</sup> depending on the date selected by the Direct Debit payer. If no date is selected, the instalments will be due on the 1<sup>st</sup>. Instalments commence on the selected date in the April of the financial year and end the following January, unless the payer has requested 12 instalments in which case the last instalment will be due in the March.
- Non-Direct Debit payers  
First instalment is on the 1 April 2020, then on the first of each month to 1 January or 1 March if the customer has requested 12 instalments. The Council will offer alternative dates within the month in order to meet the needs of the customer.

### **3.0 BRENT POLICY FOR COUNCIL TAX RECOVERY (SI 1992/613)**

3.1 The following documents are currently used for Council Tax Recovery up to enforcement agent stage:

- Reminder(s)
- Summons for a Liability Order Hearing
- Pre Enforcement Letter including a means enquiry form
- Telecommunication campaigns.

#### **3.2 Reminders**

These are usually issued immediately after 14 days of an instalment becoming due where full payment of the instalment has not been received. If the instalment is not paid within 10 days, then the right to pay by instalments is lost and the full unpaid balance for the year becomes due.

At the start of the financial year when volumes of reminders are highest, the issue of reminders will be prioritised for those not in receipt of Council Tax Support.

#### **3.3 Summons for a Liability Order Hearing**

This document is issued in accordance with legislation. Summonses are issued under regulation 34 (2) and 14 days must have elapsed between the Summons Service and the hearing. (SI 1998/295).

Note that the summons contains all the requirements of a legal summons. It also contains notification that summons costs of £90.00 have been incurred and that the payment must include the costs.

#### **3.4 Inserts enclosed with a Summons**

Two inserts are included with the summons; one has been designed to answer many of the questions that are often asked when summonses are received by the customer. The other insert provides details of available debt advice and agencies that can assist such as Citizens Advice Brent, Law Centres etc.

#### **3.5 Process for inhibiting Reminders and Summonses**

A pre-summons vetting stage is in place. This additional process has been established to ensure that customers are not summonsed whilst they have outstanding matters with the Council. A pre-summons list is produced containing the names and addresses of potential summons cases. The list is then cross checked against the items of work appearing in workflow including outstanding benefit claims, benefit appeals, complaints and Council Tax correspondence. Where appropriate a summons is not issued allowing time for enquiries to be resolved.

This process does not mean that a summons cannot be issued to a customer that has an outstanding matter. A summons will still be issued in circumstances where:

- there has been a delay by the customer in providing the necessary supporting documentation with their benefit or Council Tax discount.

- application or information required to assess the claim. Unless there is very good reason for the delay.
- the customer is late in making an application and therefore all the arrears would not be cleared by an award of benefit
- where it appears that there will not be any or full entitlement to benefit
- the issue raised is frivolous with the intention of delaying the payment of Council Tax
- the issue raised is not connected to the Council Tax liability.

Where the taxpayer has been identified as vulnerable, these cases will usually be excluded from summons action. Where appropriate a summons will be issued to enable recovery from Income Support, Universal Credit and Job Seekers Allowance. Summons costs will be reviewed in these cases.

- Potentially vulnerable customers include:
- Customers who are 80 years or more in age
- Customers with physical disabilities that significantly impair their mobility
- Customers who may find it difficult to manage their own affairs because of mental health difficulties or substantial literacy difficulties.
- Homeless customers
- Those affected by domestic violence
- Customers with severe/registered sensory impairments

This is not an exhaustive list; each circumstance will be reviewed on its merit.

### **3.6 Summons Arrangements**

Once a customer has been summonsed, they will be offered the opportunity to contact the Council to make an arrangement. The summons includes a pre- determined arrangement which they may follow. Should the customer make contact they will be offered any of the following arrangements:

- Normally payment of the balance by three equal monthly instalments. This can be paid by cash or cheque to the Council. This arrangement must include summons and liability order costs of £120.00; these may be waived once the arrears are clear.
- As Direct Debit is the preferred payment method arrangements by Direct Debit can have a greater number of monthly instalments. This arrangement must include total costs of £120.00, which includes those for a liability order. The Council may waive costs once the arrears are paid.
- Consideration will be given to extending payment arrangements and re- instating instalments where financial hardship is demonstrated. This extension is at the discretion of the Council. This also includes cancelling the court costs and a requirement for direct debit.

Customers who have multiple Liability Orders spanning multiple years' debt will be given the opportunity to agree an affordable payment agreement, to cover all outstanding arrears. They will be expected to pay their current year liability with additional amounts in respect of their arrears in order to prevent their arrears from accumulating. This may be subject to completion of a means enquiry form and payment by direct debit depending upon the reasons for the customer falling into arrears and their circumstances. We reserve the right to take further action including charging orders and bankruptcy proceedings in order to protect the council's interests.

### **3.7 Attachment of Earnings Orders**

Where employment details are available for customers at any stage from a liability order being obtained to the point where enforcement agent action is commenced, an attachment may be applied. It may also be applied after a case has been returned by the enforcement agent if a debt remains outstanding. Deductions are made in accordance with current legislation, which determines the amount that can be deducted from the individual's salary based on the appropriate percentage of salary received. Employment details are always asked for before any payment arrangement is agreed so that in the event of the customer defaulting on the arrangement the balance can be collected by deductions from the customer's earnings.

### **3.8 Benefit Deductions**

A Liability Order must be obtained before deductions can start. Benefit deductions can be applied to state benefits such as Income Support, JSA, Employment Support Allowance and Universal Credit, where the customer is in receipt of those benefits a deduction from those benefits will be considered. For those persons in receipt of the maximum council tax support and in receipt of a qualifying benefit this is the preferred method of recovery. In these cases, consideration will be given to reducing or cancelling the court costs.

In vulnerable cases deductions from benefit may be made. The Council Tax Team has liaison arrangements with Social Services and other welfare agencies to help identify vulnerable individuals and ensure that their situations are taken into consideration.

### **3.9 Pre-Enforcement Agent Notice**

This non-statutory additional notice is a personalised notice issued within the first week following a Liability Order hearing. It is issued to all customers who have failed to pay in full or make an arrangement for payment, and where other methods of recovery are not appropriate. The notice advises the customer that the account will be passed to the enforcement agent within the next 14 days for collection if no arrangement is made to clear the balance or the account is not paid in full. The back of this notice gives details of charges incurred at the three different enforcement agent stages: compliance, enforcement and removal. Information is also given in relation to total costs, which includes the summons and liability order costs. An arrangement for payment can still be made at this stage.

A means enquiry form is also enclosed for completion by the taxpayer if they require an extended arrangement. The Pre-Enforcement notice is also issued to customers defaulting on arrangements where a liability order has previously been granted. In practice there is a big response to this notice. The Council will deal with before enforcement agents are instructed.

### **3.10 Enforcement Agents Action for Council Tax**

The following cases will be subject to Enforcement action following the issue of the pre-enforcement notice:

- No payment arrangement made.
- No employer details known so unable to seek attachment of earnings
- No contact made.
- Where a customer has defaulted on a payment arrangement and no employment details are known.

Any cases in receipt of Council Tax Support will only be referred to enforcement agents if there is a large balance outstanding and we have been unable to make contact with the customer. Enforcement Agents have been instructed to take a considered collection approach to any cases in receipt of Council Tax Support.

### **3.11 The Enforcement Agent operates under the Association of Civil Enforcement Agencies Code of Conduct.**

The enforcement agent may make charges in accordance with the Regulations. The Council closely monitors agent conduct to ensure compliance with both the codes of practice and the legislation. The enforcement agent has discretion and is encouraged to agree repayment arrangements. They are requested to return the Liability Order back to the council within four months if they are unable to collect unless otherwise authorised.

### **3.12 Bankruptcy, Charging Orders and Committal to prison**

In cases where all other recovery methods have failed, the Council will seek to obtain a charging order which may result in the enforced sale of the customer's property, a bankruptcy order or to seek the customer's committal to prison. Which course of action is taken will depend upon individual circumstances, their payment history and the balance outstanding. In all cases checks will be made to ensure there are no known vulnerability issues or any other circumstance that may cause severe distress prior to commencing such proceedings. This includes:

- Gathering and consideration of information about a customer's circumstances.
- Recording of steps taken and the outcome. All cases are passed to our Senior Officers for consideration.
- Assessing whether the customer's failure to pay and to respond to other recovery measures was as a result of disability and mental impairment.
- Pursuance of bankruptcy is a fair and proportionate action.

### **3.13 Other Methods**

Other methods have been trialled to assess their effectiveness in collecting unpaid Council Tax. These include outbound telephoning and visits to those properties where there have been no payments for greater than 3 months with comparisons made between the various methods. Where mobile telephone numbers and email addresses are held customers are sent text messages to remind them of missed instalments and debts owed. Customer telephone numbers and email addresses are captured in order to facilitate contact; private companies are being used to help increase the number of accounts for which we hold this detail. Campaigns are used to target debtors with outbound calls, texts and email to facilitate contact, identify vulnerability and collect debt.

### **3.14 Section 13a Policy**

Customers can apply for a discretionary reduction of their Council Tax. The application should usually relate to the current Council Tax year and subject to some criteria being met. Information is provided on the Council's website for this purpose: <https://www.brent.gov.uk/council-tax/help-paying-your-bill/council-tax-hardship-fund>



## **4.0 BRENT POLICY FOR NNDR RECOVERY**

The following documents are currently used for NNDR up to enforcement agent stage:

- Reminder(s)
- Summons for a Liability Order Hearing
- Pre-Enforcement Letter
- Summons for a Liability Order Hearing
- This document is issued in accordance with legislation. Summonses are issued under the Collection and Enforcement Regulations (SI 1989/1058), and 14 days must have elapsed between the Summons Service and the hearing.

Note that the summons contains all the requirements of a legal summons and also contains notification that summons costs of £145.00 have been incurred and that the payment must include the costs.

### **NNDR Instalment Dates**

Ratepayers may pay by 10 or 12 instalments. The default remains 10 instalments these being due on the 1st of each month from 1 April to 1 January.

### **Pre-Enforcement Agent Letter**

This notice is a personalised notice issued within the first week following a Liability Order hearing. It is issued to all ratepayers who have failed to pay in full or make an arrangement for payment. The notice advises the ratepayer that the account will be passed to the enforcement agent within the next 14 days for collection if no arrangement is made to clear the balance or the account is not paid in full. The back of this notice gives details of charges incurred at the three different enforcement agent stages: compliance, enforcement and removal. Information is also given in relation to total costs, which includes the summons and liability order costs. An arrangement for payment can still be made at this stage.

### **Enforcement Agents Action for NNDR**

The following cases will be subject to Agent action:

- No payment arrangement made
- Ratepayers who have defaulted on existing arrangements
- The Enforcement Agent operates under the Association of Civil Enforcement Agencies Code of Conduct.

The enforcement agent may make charges in accordance with the Regulations. As from 1 April 2014 the charges that enforcement agents can make has been simplified as a result of major reform to enforcement agent law. The Council closely monitor agent conduct to ensure compliance with both the codes of practice and the new legislation.

The Enforcement Agent has discretion and is encouraged to make arrangements. He/she is requested to return the Liability Order within three months if he/she is unable to collect unless otherwise authorised. The Enforcement Agents are selected through a procurement process and change from time to time. For the current Enforcement Agents, see the website.

## **Bankruptcy and Committal to prison**

In cases where all other recovery methods have failed, the Council may seek to undertake insolvency proceedings or to seek the ratepayer's committal to prison. Which course of action is taken will depend upon whether it is a limited company or an individual, their circumstances and their payment history.

## **Summons and Liability Order Costs**

Summons costs are applied for when the complaint is laid and the costs debited to the account when the issue of the summons has been agreed. Both the summons and the summons insert give details of these costs.

These summons costs will only be cancelled if the summons is withdrawn or in special circumstances where the costs are waived. Summons costs for Council Tax are £90 and Non-Domestic Rates £145. Liability Order costs for council tax are £30.00 and for non-domestic rates £25.00. They are incurred when a Liability Order is granted. These costs can be requested at Court even where the remaining balance outstanding relates to costs only.

Customers who therefore pay before the hearing date without settling Summons Costs may incur further costs. Liability Order Costs will be applied for in all cases where a balance remains outstanding on the Court list. Both summons and liability order costs are calculated in accordance with regulation 34 5(b) and 7(b) of the Council Tax (Administration & Enforcement) Regulations 1992 (SI 1992 No 613) and Regulation 12 6(b) the Non-Domestic rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) Regulations 1989 (SI 1989 No 1058). The level of costs are reviewed annually, they have remained unchanged since January 2009.





# **Housing Benefit** **Overpayment** **Debt Recovery** **Policy**

## **Aims of the Policy**

The aims of this policy are:

- to ensure we minimise overpayments and reduce them as much as possible when raised
- to take timely, appropriate recovery action when necessary
- to ensure we meet all statutory requirements
- to ensure we maintain a balance between effective debt recovery of and avoiding the causing of financial hardship, especially in light of the changes to welfare benefits
- to ensure that budget requirements are met as far as possible by maximising collection.

## **Legal Framework**

The regulations governing overpayments of Housing Benefits are set out in statute. It is also governed by case law and increasingly by Commissioners' decisions.

### **Definition of an Overpayment**

An overpayment is an amount of Housing Benefit received by a customer or landlord to which they are not entitled under the regulations.

### **Recoverable or Non-Recoverable**

Most overpayments are legally recoverable. The exception to this is in cases where the overpayment is caused by an error by Brent. Where the person receiving the payment could not, at the time of receiving the payment, reasonably have been expected to know they were being overpaid.

If it is decided that the person receiving the payment could not, at the time of receiving the payment, reasonably have been expected to know they were being overpaid, then that overpayment is non-recoverable.

In coming to a decision consideration must be made as to:

- The information and advice that has been provided to the customer
- The nature of the overpayment e.g. if someone moves off Job Seekers Allowance into work, it is reasonable to expect that they knew their benefits would reduce or stop
- The help and assistance normally available to the customer (if someone is normally managing their affairs it is reasonable to believe they would have received advice they were being overpaid)
- In coming to a decision that a customer reasonably knew they were being overpaid, this means that it is recoverable and therefore can be legally recovered, but not necessarily that it should be recovered. See paragraph 6.

### **Obligation to Minimise and Reduce**

We must take steps to reduce the amount payable as far as possible by granting underlying entitlement.

We must take steps to minimise the incidence of overpayments, and these are largely through:

- Suspending incoming work if it is felt that it is likely to lead to an overpayment
- Payment of Housing Benefit in arrears
- Encouraging customers and landlords to report changes in good time
- Attention to quality so that errors are kept to an absolute minimum

- Regular monitoring and reporting of Local Authority Error overpayments.

### **Discretion to Recover**

Local Authorities have the power to recover overpayments, but that power is discretionary. The decision to recover should be arrived at by careful consideration of the facts and circumstances of each case and each debtor.

In deciding whether to recover, the following factors must be considered:

- The customer's age and state of health
- Their vulnerability
- The customer's financial position in terms of ability to pay any debts at all
- The effect of the welfare changes on the customer and the customer's family
- The culpability of the debtor
- Any risk of a negative impact to the Council by recovering
- Is it an overpayment caused by the customer moving out but still accepting Housing Benefit payments
- If the customer's personal circumstances lead to a decision to recover, consideration should be given to the best method by which to recover.

### **From Whom to Recover**

The law has changed considerably over the years in this aspect of overpayment recovery. If the monies have been paid to the Customer directly, the overpayment can only be recovered from:

- The Customer
- The partner or former partner of the Customer (if the partner was the Customer's partner at the time relevant to the overpayment and are still the Customer when recovery is made).
- If the monies have been paid directly to a landlord or Landlord's agent, the overpayment can be recovered from this party if, for example, the landlord could be reasonably expected to know when a customer had moved out or if a partner had moved out (e.g. with a resident Landlord).
- If the Landlord is not culpable for the overpayment, the Customer will be pursued for the Overpayment. There are no prescribed rules for this, and each decision should be made on its own circumstances and the reasoning recorded on the system.

Once the decision process has been followed, where there is doubt as to liability between landlord and tenant, due consideration must be given to the means to pay and the necessity to recover as efficiently as is possible.

### **Method of Recovery**

As a general rule, recovery methods should be used in the following order of preference:

- Clawback from ongoing entitlement
- Invoice (minimum amount is £15.00)
- Composite recovery (Often referred to as Blameless Tenant recovery. This is recovery of debt from a landlord from the Housing Benefit of another of that landlord's tenants)
- Deduction from other DWP/ Universal Credit benefits.

As a general rule, decisions require careful thought in the context of individual circumstances and culpability. For example, if a customer has some culpability in not reporting a change, which gives rise to a large overpayment, but the customer is still receiving Housing Benefit, then an invoice with subsequent recovery action might be the correct decision in the interests of the Council's financial position and the taxpayers of the Borough.

Where the overpayment is due from a former Council Tenant, the tenant's rent account may be debited for Benefit paid beyond the period of the rental liability. Cases like this must be identified and dealt with in a timely fashion.

Where the overpayment is as a result of the debtor moving out but continuing to accept payments of Housing Benefit from Brent, culpability in that overpayment is high. We will invoice in such circumstances, and our policy will be to accept nothing less than full payment.

Where an invoice has been issued and remains unpaid, this should be followed by a Reminder and a Final Notice.

Where composite recovery does not apply, if the debt remains unpaid, the following choices can be made according to the size of debt and circumstances of the debtor.

- Debt Collection Agency
- County Court Judgement
- Bankruptcy
- Charging Order and Order for Sale
- Third Party debt Order
- Direct Earnings Attachment (Where we are unable to recover an overpayment and the debtor is no longer in receipt of Housing Benefit, we may recover that debt from their earnings. We can approach an employer without the requirement to go to court as per Welfare Reform Act 2012.

In making these decisions, appropriate enquires will be made of online systems that the Council has access to. Recovery in appropriate cases can proceed to Order for Sale culminating in the sale of any property and the realisation of the Council's debt from the proceeds.

At any time in the process, we will consider accepting an arrangement for payment and at all times be alert to any indications of financial hardship.

## **Fraud**

Fraud cases must always be dealt with robustly in terms of the choice or recovery and in the consideration of offers of payment. The Council Taxpayers of the Borough must be considered when deciding on the payment terms. Where we have been successful in recovering a large fraud case, we must always seek to publicise the success to deter others. At this stage we would involve the Council's Communications Team.

## **Recovery or Write Off**

All avenues of effective recovery must be pursued but at any time, if the costs of pursuing appear to be out of proportion to the debt and the probability of collecting, the cost-effective solution must be considered in terms of writing the debt off.

## **Recovery Rates**

From 2nd October 2000 the DWP introduced new legislation to set a maximum rate of recovery for different types of claims. The maximum rate of recovery is not discretionary but prescribed by the DWP.

The rate of recovery must always be determined in respect of the individual circumstances of the claim and may be lower but not higher than the rates set by the DWP.

It is important to reach a balance between maximising recovery against preventing extreme financial hardship. When deciding to lower the rate of recovery, the Council's interest must be considered too in terms of the length of time taken to recover.

However, where the overpayment is due to fraud or there is major culpability on the part of the customer, our policy will be to invoice as first choice where there is still an active claim.

An example of such a case would be where a customer has neglected to declare some capital over a number of years giving rise to a large overpayment. It is decided not to pursue a fraud prosecution, and there remains an active claim. In such circumstances it will be in the best interests of the Council's finances to recover quickly through invoice rather than allow a much slower repayment through clawback. Such a decision would also be morally justifiable given our responsibilities to the council taxpayers of the Borough.

If a customer contacts the Council following issue of an Overpayment notice and advises that they cannot meet the payment demanded in full, consideration will be given to the provision of a repayment arrangement over an agreed period of time following submission of financial statements verifying non-essential expenditure.

Where a customer indicates that they will require longer than 36 months to repay the Overpayment, the repayment arrangement will be referred to the Team Leader for consideration and authorisation.

Breathing Space – From May 2021 approved breathing space moratorium is received on behalf of customers will be subject to cessation of recovery activities for 60 days + 30 with interest frozen for people with problem debt. The Council will amend its processes to reflect this requirement.

## **Notification**

There are very specific legal requirements placed on a Local Authority in relation to the content of the notification letter. Details must include the following:

- The fact there is a recoverable overpayment.
- The reason for the overpayment.
- The amount of the recoverable overpayment.
- How that amount has been calculated.
- The period of the overpayment.
- Where recovery is to be made from future entitlement the notification must state this and the amount that will be deducted from each payment.
- The person's right to appeal against the decision or decisions that have been made.
- The person's right to ask for a written statement of reasons.
- The notification is a legal pre-requisite to recovery.

When possible, we will seek to enclose the invoice with the overpayment notification letter but emphasise that this does not affect the customer / landlord's right to appeal.



## **Appeal**

It is good practice and complies with DWP guidance that recovery action be suspended should a debtor appeal.

Such recovery action should remain suspended until the appeal has been decided and the appropriate parties to the appeal have been notified.

Appealable decisions are:

- Is the overpayment correct?
- Is it recoverable?
- Can we legally recover from the person identified as liable?

## **Fraud Overpayments**

Fraudulent overpayments will be dealt with and recovered with maximum priority.

## **Debt Management, Analysis and Targeting**

This area is dealt with in more detail in the Overpayments Strategy, but our policy will be to recover our largest, newest debts first.

Debt profile will be analysed at least monthly so that the efforts of the Overpayments Team resource can be best directed to give value for money.

## **Court**

In order to enable further proceedings to be taken, and to act as a deterrent to other customers and landlords' cases will be brought to Court to secure the ability to undertake additional recovery activities such as charging orders or third-party debt orders.

Once an award is obtained from the Court, consideration will be given to the most appropriate next step. Identifying the debtor's assets will be a priority and the results of those investigations will influence the decision on the next course of action.

## **Bankruptcy and Charging Orders**

These steps can be expensive to the Council so they must be decided upon with best information in terms of assets and ability to pay to hand.

They are also very effective and should be used whenever appropriate.

## **Write Offs**

All avenues of effective recovery must be pursued but at any time, if the costs of pursuing appear to be out of proportion to the debt and the probability of collecting, the cost-effective solution must be considered in terms of writing the debt off. Write-offs will be done in accordance with Council procedure.

## **Bad Debt Management**

It is a requirement to assess levels of bad debt each year and take necessary steps and decisions to manage that debt appropriately. This policy document reflects the current

initiatives employed and is not prescriptive. It is recognised that policies and the wording of documents are subject to change to meet changing circumstances and legislation.

|   |   |
|---|---|
|  | <b>Cabinet</b><br>17 November 2025  |
|   | <b>Report from the Corporate Director<br/>of Neighbourhoods &amp; Regeneration</b>                      |
|   | <b>Lead Member - Cabinet for<br/>Regeneration, Planning<br/>and Property<br/>(Councillor Teo Benea)</b> |
| <b>Willesden Green Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub</b>                        |   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>  | Cricklewood and Mapesbury   |
| <b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>   | Key   |
| <b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b><br><small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small> | Part Exempt: Appendix 2 Valuation is not for publication as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)". |
| <b>List of Appendices:</b>  | Three<br>Appendix 1: Site Plan<br>Appendix 2: (Exempt) Valuation<br>Appendix 3: Building Inspection Report  |
| <b>Background Papers:</b>   | None  |
| <b>Contact Officer(s):</b><br><small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>   | Denish Patel, Head of Property<br>020 8937 2529<br>Denish.Patel@brent.gov.uk<br><br>Tanveer Ghani, Director Property and Assets<br>020 8937 1722<br>Tanveer.Ghani@brent.gov.uk  |

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval for the redevelopment of the Gladstone Park Youth and Community Centre site to deliver a new Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub. The Hub will provide modern health services, community amenities, and wellbeing spaces for some of Brent's most disadvantaged communities, while supporting growth in nearby regeneration areas.

- 1.2 The scheme will transform a council-owned building that is beyond economic repair into a flagship integrated health and community facility, jointly funded with NHS partners. It will help tackle health inequalities, promote active lifestyles, and make better use of underutilised public land, while creating jobs, training opportunities, and inclusive community spaces.
- 1.3 Approximately 60% of the total project cost will be funded through confirmed NHS and Willesden Green Surgery sources, representing significant external investment leveraged for Brent.
- 1.4 The scheme will deliver substantial health, social, economic, and environmental benefits, including new community spaces, local employment, and carbon-neutral design, fully aligned with the Borough Plan, Local Plan, and Brent's long-term Integrated Neighbourhood and Estates Strategy.
- 1.5 Cabinet approval is sought for the SCIL funding allocation, and for delegated authority to enable disposal and lease arrangements for delivery of the scheme.

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

That Cabinet;

- 2.1 Approves an allocation of up to £2.97m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) funding to support the redevelopment of the Gladstone Park Youth and Community Centre site into the Willesden Green Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub, as set out in section 3.14 (Option 1), subject to the conditions in Recommendation 2.2.
- 2.2 Approves the release of SCIL funding in staged payments, aligned to delivery milestones and contingent upon:
  - Planning consent being granted;
  - Confirmation of the full external funding; and
  - Completion of the agreement to lease with Willesden Green Surgery.
- 2.3 Approves the granting a 150-year peppercorn lease to Willesden Green Surgery to enable delivery of the Hub, with the Council retaining the freehold and securing lease clauses to protect health and community uses in perpetuity.
- 2.4 Authorises the Director of Property and Assets to agree the detailed terms of the agreement to lease and long lease disposal and to enter into the necessary legal agreements to facilitate the disposal and development and to take all necessary steps to complete the transaction.
- 2.5 Notes the intentions to relocate Kilburn Cosmos Rugby Football Club (KCRFC) from the Gladstone Park Youth & Community Centre to the Gladstone Park Pavilion to secure suitable alternative premises for KCRFC and full vacant possession of the site to enable on-site delivery.
- 2.6 Notes that *Willesden Green Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub* is a temporary working name for the new facility. The permanent name will be

determined following discussions with key stakeholders, to reflect the hub's location within the Cricklewood and Mapesbury wards and to ensure the name is appropriate and inclusive.

### 3.0 Detail

#### Cabinet Member Foreword

3.1 The Willesden Green Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub will turn an underutilised, deteriorating building of the Gladstone Park Youth and Community Centre site into a modern, sustainable space for health, community, and wellbeing services. Working in partnership with the NHS and GP practice, this flagship scheme will bring new GP and primary care facilities, a community pharmacy, flexible spaces for local activities, and opportunities for sport and physical activity, all within a carbon-neutral healthcare centre. This is a real investment in the community, improving access to care, creating training opportunities, supporting healthier lifestyles, and enhancing the local environment. It is a scheme that makes the most of external funding, revitalises an underused public asset, and delivers lasting benefits for residents. The proposal directly supports the Brent Borough Plan (2023–27) priorities as follows:

- **A Healthier Brent:** improving access to primary care and co-locating integrated health and social care services.
- **Thriving Communities:** providing inclusive community spaces and services tailored to local needs.
- **A Cleaner, Greener Future:** delivering a low-carbon, energy-efficient building with active travel incentives/facilities.
- **Prosperity, Pride and Belonging:** creating training and volunteering opportunities, and offering safe, welcoming spaces that bring people together.

#### Background and Proposal

3.2 The Gladstone Park Youth and Community Centre is located on Anson Road, NW2, within the Cricklewood and Mapesbury wards. The single-storey building, constructed around 1940, is in poor structural condition, with a single-skin brick construction lacking adequate thermal and structural integrity. The Council holds the freehold of the site of outright (see Appendix 1).

3.3 Previously leased to a nursery and a gym, the building has one remaining occupier, Kilburn Cosmos Rugby Football Club (KCRFC,) on a tenancy at will. The building is therefore substantially vacant. A recent independent condition survey confirmed the overall building is in significant disrepair, with essential works to bring it up to lettable standard estimated at a minimum of £410,000. Given the low potential rental yield and its designation as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), the property has little prospect of attracting viable long-term

tenants or generating a positive financial return due to the planning use restrictions.

- 3.4 The wider site also contains the Gladstone Park Pavilion, built in 2007 with Lottery funding to provide changing facilities and a café for park users. The café is currently let on a commercial lease, with vacant possession expected by February 2026 to support the proposed redevelopment.
- 3.5 The section of the Gladstone Youth and Community Centre building, known as the Gladstone Sports Club, also suffers from structural deterioration. KCRFC occupies the Gladstone Sports Club premises on a tenancy-at-will basis, and initial discussions have taken place with KCRFC about the prospects for relocating to the Gladstone Park Pavilion.
- 3.6 This report sets out the case for redeveloping the Gladstone Park Youth and Community Centre site into the Willesden Green Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub. The project would provide essential infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing local population, including residents in the borough's most disadvantaged areas and those expected from major planned developments in nearby Church End, Neasden Stations, and Staples Corner growth areas.
- 3.7 The proposal would replace a dilapidated council-owned building, which is beyond economic repair, with a landmark scheme under Brent's Integrated Neighbourhood Model.
- 3.8 This project is Brent Integrated Care Board's top estates priority and has strong backing from the Brent Strategic Estates Group and Primary Care Executive Group. It supports borough priorities to improve access to care, reduce health inequalities, promote active lifestyles, and make better use of underutilised public land.
- 3.9 The site's location makes it ideally suited to deliver the Integrated Neighbourhood Model, serving a catchment area that includes some of the borough's most deprived neighbourhoods as well as major planned growth areas forecast to deliver over 6,500 new homes. Co-locating GP services with neighbourhood health, mental health, housing, and social care teams will provide a single point of access for over 13,000 patients in an area which currently lacks sufficient medical and GP surgeries. There is therefore a strong case in terms of meeting an acute need for primary healthcare within a currently deprived area, and a lack of alternative sites within a one-mile catchment area.
- 3.10 Pre-planning engagement by the Willesden Green Surgery with the planning department in 2024 was positive, acknowledging the acute local need for primary healthcare and the lack of suitable alternative sites. The proposal is likely to be considered under 'Very Special Circumstances' to justify development on MOL, subject to full planning assessment by the Council and the Mayor of London.
- 3.11 One eligibility risk relates to the use of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) funding for leisure elements such as the proposed padel court. While

the core health and community facilities clearly meet the statutory definition of infrastructure, the Council will ensure SCIL contributions are allocated to elements with a demonstrable community infrastructure function, with separate external funding provided for ancillary leisure components.

- 3.12 Beyond its health and wellbeing benefits, the Hub would generate substantial local economic and social value, creating jobs, providing training placements for clinicians, and offering safe, inclusive spaces for vulnerable groups, including refugee and migrant women. It will target BREEAM Excellent certification and carbon-neutral healthcare centre, representing a strategic and sustainable investment in Brent's future.

3.13 **Options Appraisal, Risks and Strategic Fit**

3.14 **Option 1 – Redevelop the site to provide a new Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub.**

- 3.15 This option would involve demolition and redevelopment of the building into a purpose-built facility incorporating clinical, community, sports, wellbeing facilities, community hall and possibly a Padel Court (subject to planning). The hub will be run by the medical centre on a not-for-profit basis, with the aim of providing the community hall for free to voluntary and charitable organisations/uses. Should the Padel Court be included within the scheme, this will be funded separately by the Willesden Green Surgery with the aim of providing discounted use for Brent residents and free for children and vulnerable groups. The scheme would be funded primarily by NHS and Willesden Green Surgery investment, with up to £2.97m SCIL contribution from the Council. The Council would retain the freehold and grant a 150-year fully repairing and insuring lease to the surgery, subject to detailed heads of terms being agreed. Benefits include delivering modern health infrastructure for over 13,000 patients, co-locating key health and social care services, creating jobs, regenerating a deteriorating site, and securing project costs from external sources.

Subject to Cabinet approval and securing the necessary planning consents, the scheme would deliver the following uses (approximate sqm values):

- A 670 sqm health centre for Willesden Green Surgery and Integrated Neighbourhood Teams.
- A 50 sqm community pharmacy.
- A 20 sqm café with flexible community space.
- A 200 sqm community padel court.
- 230 sqm community hall (which avoids loss of existing community asset)

One-off costs with community hall:

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Brent CIL:              | £2.97m        |
| Health Funding Streams: | £5.05m        |
|                         | <b>£8.02m</b> |

There will be an agreement regarding cost overruns on the project to ensure the Council's contribution will not exceed the SCIL ask of £2.97m.

KCRFC is the sole remaining occupier of the building and occupies it under a tenancy at will, which may be terminated by either party without prior notice. This provides flexibility to secure vacant possession to support future redevelopment, while appropriate relocation plans are agreed with KCRFC. Given the deteriorating condition of the overall building, KCRFC's long term occupation of the Gladstone Sports Club is unsustainable.

**3.16 Option 2 – Refurbish and Let the Existing Building or Dispose of the Site on the Market.**

- 3.17 Based on an independent building surveying report, the building requires a minimum of £410,000 for essential repair work to bring to a lettable standard. Even with this investment, projected rental income is estimated at £12,500–£18,000 per annum, equating to an average of around £13,500 per annum once arrears, risk and rent-free period incentives are factored in. A net present value (NPV) analysis over 25 years confirmed that the income generated would not recover the initial capital outlay, resulting in a negative financial return in all realistic modelled scenarios. The property's designation as Metropolitan Open Land further restricts commercial redevelopment potential. Disposal of the site is similarly unlikely to generate a meaningful capital receipt given these constraints and condition (see Appendices 2 and 3). This option is therefore financially unviable and fails to meet strategic priorities.

**3.18 Option 3 – Do Nothing**

- 3.19 This would avoid immediate capital expenditure but result in exponentially increasing deterioration, rising liabilities, unused community hall, and missed opportunities to secure one-off significant NHS and private investment to build a state-of-the-art health and community facility. The core elements of the building would remain vacant, attracting anti-social behaviour and creating a long-term security liability for the Council. While it might be suggested that alternative funding sources, such as Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL), could be sought, even if such funding were secured, it would not unlock the substantial external investment from the NHS or deliver the same breadth of social, health, and economic outcomes as the proposed partnership scheme. This option would therefore fail to address health inequalities, deliver integrated services, or maximise value for money, and is not considered a viable or responsible use of public funds.

**3.20 Recommended Option**

Of the options considered, redevelopment into a Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub (Option 1) is the preferred option. It represents the most financially viable and strategically aligned approach, delivering long-term health, social, and environmental benefits while leveraging circa 60% of the capital cost from external sources. The scheme directly addresses urgent infrastructure needs in some of Brent's most deprived areas, supports planned housing growth, and transforms a deteriorating and underused asset into a modern, multi-purpose facility. With strong NHS and GP partner support, an established delivery partnership, and a clear funding and governance



framework, Option 1 offers the highest value for money and the greatest potential to improve outcomes for local communities.

### **3.21 Planning**

The main delivery risks for Option 1 include securing planning consent for development on MOL, SCIL eligibility challenges (see para 3.30) for leisure components, and construction or programme delays. These risks are being mitigated through early engagement with Brent Planning and the GLA (for MOL related issues), clear articulation of 'Very Special Circumstances', robust alignment with borough priorities, and targeted allocation of SCIL funds to eligible elements. Early engagement with Brent planners and the Mayor of London has been encouraging for the healthcare related facilities. There is also an expectation that the community hall will be built to prevent loss of the existing community asset. A full planning application is in the process of being prepared.

### **Risks and Mitigations**

- 3.22 Programme risks such as inflation and supply chain pressures will be managed by the NHS delivery partner through early procurement, contingencies, and flexible design. The Council's exposure is minimal, limited to enabling delivery through land and funding, with no direct delivery risk. Furthermore, the release of SCIL will be linked to delivery milestones and the Council will not be responsible for any project overspend. Council will not be responsible for the appointment of contractors, consultants, or the procurement of construction services related to the development. The Council would grant an agreement to lease prior to start on site, and the long lease would be granted on successful completion of the redevelopment. This further protects the Council's position. Where required, the Council may procure legal or property advisory support to support lease negotiation, title review, or to confirm statutory compliance (e.g. in relation to best consideration under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972). Any such services will be procured in accordance with Brent Council's Contract Standing Orders and are expected to fall within the very low or low value contract thresholds.

### **3.23 Strategic Fit and Compliance**

The scheme is fully aligned with Brent's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Borough Plan (2023–2027), and Local Plan (2019–2041), which identify a pressing need for enhanced social and health infrastructure to support over 46,000 new homes expected during the plan period. It directly advances the Borough Plan priorities of "A Healthier Brent" and "Thriving Communities" by delivering co-located health, social care, and community services. It meets statutory requirements for SCIL funding under Regulation 59 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), with the core facilities qualifying as necessary infrastructure to support development. It addresses a core statutory function of the Council to promote health and wellbeing and responds to pressures arising from population growth and housing development. Failure to deliver adequate infrastructure would risk non-

compliance with the Council's legal obligations to its residents and could undermine the effective delivery of the Local Plan

- 3.24 Financially, the scheme delivers exceptional leverage of external funding, with significant costs covered by NHS and GP partners. The Council's one-off SCIL investment will secure long-term public benefit, retain freehold ownership, and enable more efficient service delivery. The Hub responds directly to local demographic pressures, serving some of the borough's most deprived communities and accommodating growth from over 4,000 new homes in the immediate catchment. Without this intervention, deficits in health provision may widen, undermining the delivery of the Local Plan and missing a time-limited opportunity to secure substantial external investment.
- 3.25 The scheme also advances Borough Plan priorities across all outcome areas as set out in the Cabinet Member's foreword.
- **The Best Start in Life** – increased clinical capacity for safeguarding and early intervention, and active lifestyle opportunities for children.
  - **Thriving Communities** – integrated health, housing, and social care in one accessible location, alongside inclusive community spaces.
  - **A Healthier Brent** – modern facilities for over 13,000 patients, integrated with mental health and social care services.
  - **A Cleaner, Greener Future** – BREEAM Excellent and carbon-neutral design.
  - **Prosperity, Pride and Belonging** – new jobs (the proposal aims for 50-100 jobs), safe spaces for vulnerable groups, and inclusive economic participation.

### 3.26 Programme and Delivery

Subject to Cabinet approval in November 2025, the programme anticipates submitting a planning application in the following months. An indicative high-level timeline for the programme is as follows:

| Milestone  | Target Date |
|--|-------------|
| Submit planning, and enter Agreement to Lease and SCIL Grant Agreement | Jan 2026    |
| Secure Planning approval   | Jun 2026    |
| Complete tender drawings and specification for contractor procurement  | Aug 2026    |
| Appoint contractor   | Oct 2026    |
| Secure vacant possession/start on site                                 | Dec 2026    |
| Estimated Practical Completion date and grant of 150-year lease        | Dec 2027    |

- 3.27 Delivery and procurement will be led by the NHS and Willesden Green Surgery (WGS) delivery partner. Brent Council's role would focus on enabling the scheme through securing vacant possession, granting a 150-year lease, entering into supporting legal agreements while retaining the freehold interest,

and administering the SCIL funding. Any necessary legal or property advisory support for lease negotiations, title review, or statutory compliance will be procured in accordance with Council procedures and within low-value thresholds, but is anticipated to be predominantly managed in-house.

3.28 Key programme assumptions are as follows:

- Feasibility reports produced for the works accurately reflect the project requirements.
- Cost estimates are reliable and sufficient to complete the works.
- Adequate SCIL budget will be available to meet the Council's contribution throughout the life of the project.
- The facilities will provide appropriate access for consultants and contractors to complete works.
- There will be sufficient market interest from technical consultants and contractors to deliver within the required timeframe.
- Planning permission, including for development on Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), will be granted without significant delay, based on 'Very Special Circumstances'.
- Key stakeholders including Brent ICB, Council departments, ward members, Kilburn Cosmos, GLA, and FoGP (Friends of Gladstone Park) will continue to support the project and cooperate to enable delivery.
- The project will not be materially impacted by further inflation or economic shocks during procurement and construction.
- Service providers (GPs, INT, community café, pharmacy) will remain committed to occupying the new facility upon completion.
- No major unforeseen ground conditions, contamination, or utilities issues will materially impact cost or timescales.
- It is assumed that the site has good and marketable title, free from any undisclosed encumbrances.

3.29 **SCIL Funding Compliance and Governance**

3.30 The Council will ensure that SCIL funding is allocated only to elements of the scheme that clearly meet the statutory definition of infrastructure under Regulation 59 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). The SCIL contribution will therefore be directed exclusively towards the construction and fit out of eligible components, including the health centre, pharmacy, café, and flexible community space, all of which directly support the delivery of integrated health and community services to meet the needs arising from population growth in the borough.

3.31 Leisure-focused elements, such as the proposed community padel court, will be funded through alternative external sources or, if retained in scope, justified as incidental to the primary infrastructure purpose. This separation of funding will be clearly set out in project budgets and delivery plans to ensure transparency and compliance. Any revenue arrangements from the padel court will be agreed through the lease heads of terms, ensuring the Council retains a proportionate benefit from commercial use of its land.

- 3.32 The Hub is located within the catchment area for major growth zones at Church End, Neasden Stations, and Staples Corner, together expected to deliver over 6,500 new homes, in addition to 4,000 new homes already in the pipeline locally. Population modelling undertaken by the NHS and Council shows that this level of growth will generate significant additional demand for primary healthcare, mental health, social care, and accessible community facilities. The Hub's co-located services are designed to address this growth-driven demand, ensuring adequate infrastructure provision in line with the Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 3.33 The Council will track the use of SCIL funding through existing governance processes, including internal monitoring, quarterly financial reporting, and end-of-project review. This will confirm that SCIL funds are spent solely on eligible infrastructure and that the infrastructure is delivered as approved. Compliance reports will be submitted to the Council's relevant boards to provide assurance and transparency in the use of public funds.
- 3.34 The Council's proposed contribution of £2.97m, drawn from Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) funding, will unlock a total capital investment of up to £8.02m, with significant costs funded by NHS and Willesden Green Surgery partners. This represents a leverage ratio of almost 3:1 and ensures that limited SCIL resources deliver maximum public benefit. No alternative current project has been identified that would achieve this level of external funding match while directly addressing urgent infrastructure needs arising from population growth.
- 3.35 The Council's financial exposure is limited to the agreed SCIL allocation. This funding will be released in staged payments aligned to key delivery milestones and contingent upon:
- Planning consent being secured;
  - Confirmation of full external funding; and
  - Execution of the agreement to lease.
- 3.36 Should the scheme not proceed, the SCIL allocation will remain available for reallocation to other eligible infrastructure projects. This ensures that funds are not committed without delivery certainty.
- 3.37 The Council will retain the freehold of the site and grant a 150-year peppercorn lease (fully repairing and insuring) to the Willesden Green Surgery, with clauses to safeguard the site's use for health and community purposes. The lease will include provisions allowing the Council to take appropriate action if the intended use ceases, ensuring the long-term protection of the public interest.
- 3.38 While construction costs will be managed by the NHS and delivery partner, the agreed SCIL allocation will be fixed to the amount approved by Cabinet. Any cost increases above the agreed figure will be met from external funding sources, ensuring no additional financial burden to the Council. The funding agreement will specify that SCIL contributions are capped and cannot be used to offset overspends.

- 3.39 The Hub proposal responds to pressing infrastructure needs identified in the Borough Plan, Local Plan, and Infrastructure Delivery Plan, serving some of Brent's most deprived areas and supporting growth from new homes in the catchment. In the context of competing SCIL demands, the scheme's combination of health, community, environmental, and economic benefits, secured with minimal Council capital, represents one of the most impactful uses of available funds.

#### **4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

- 4.1 The proposal has strong support from lead and ward members, the Brent Integrated Care Board, the Brent Strategic Estates Group, and the Primary Care Executive Group. The NHS has confirmed the Hub as its top estates priority in Brent, with delivery partners committed to co-funding and operating the facility.
- 4.2 Engagement to date has also involved local stakeholders, including the Friends of Gladstone Park (FoGP), KCRFC and neighbouring residents. While there is broad recognition of the need for improved local health services, FoGP and some local residents have expressed concerns about the redevelopment, particularly in relation to the loss of the existing community centre and the desire to retain or expand purely community-based facilities on the site. There is therefore a strong desire to ensure that community activities remain a key part of the site's future.
- 4.3 Officers recognise these concerns and will continue to work with the WGS, KCRFC, FoGP and other community representatives to identify opportunities within the scheme to support community priorities. This includes the proposed flexible-use space and exploring shared use of certain facilities. However, the existing building is beyond economic repair, and no funding is currently available to deliver a standalone community redevelopment without the NHS partnership. The integrated approach proposed is the only viable route to secure significant investment in new facilities that will benefit the wider community.
- 4.4 As the scheme progresses, the Council and NHS partners will maintain open dialogue with stakeholders, ensuring that the Willesden Green Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub serve both as a centre for excellent health and care and as a welcoming space for the wider community. The proposed design includes flexible-use areas, a café, and opportunities for shared use of facilities, ensuring the site continues to host a variety of social, cultural, and wellbeing activities. Programming of these spaces will be developed in partnership with local groups, including FoGP, so that the Hub reflects community priorities and remains a valued local asset.
- 4.5 Potential effects on the surrounding area, such as traffic, parking, and integration with the park, will be fully considered through the planning process. The development will include active travel facilities, sensitive landscaping, and measures to manage parking demand, helping to maintain the park's character while enhancing public access.

- 4.6 The NHS and Willesden Green Surgery bring significant experience in delivering modern primary care and community health projects, supported by established governance and project management frameworks. The Council's role is to enable delivery, retain the freehold, and ensure that the scheme is completed on time and within budget. A joint governance board will oversee progress and maintain transparency.
- 4.7 A coordinated communications plan will ensure that stakeholders are kept informed throughout the project. This will highlight the Hub's combined health and community offer, the environmental improvements, and the significant external funding secured for Brent. Updates will be provided at key stages, with opportunities for the community to see how feedback has influenced the final design.
- 4.8 A key component of the proposed scheme is the inclusion of both a pharmacy and a community hall within the new development.
- 4.9 The WGS has confirmed that the space allocated for the pharmacy will be restricted in use and is specifically designated for pharmacy provision only. Advanced discussions are underway with several potential pharmacy operators who have expressed interest in occupying the unit, and the WGS has provided assurance that the space will be brought into active use as a pharmacy upon completion.
- 4.10 In relation to the community hall, the Council and WGS recognise the importance of ensuring that this facility serves the needs of the local community, including the Friends of Gladstone Park and other local groups. The WGS has committed to working collaboratively with the FoGP to agree arrangements for the design, use and management of the hall. It is proposed that the hall will be operated as a social enterprise, ensuring it is run for community benefit.
- 4.11 Discounted hire rates will be made available to local charitable and voluntary organisations, with further engagement planned with the FoGP to shape the final management approach and community access arrangements.
- 4.12 These measures will help ensure that both the pharmacy and the community hall deliver lasting community benefit and support the Council's wider objectives around health, wellbeing, and social inclusion.

## **5.0 Financial Considerations**

- 5.1 As at the 30 August 2025, Brent had uncommitted SCIL balances of £76.9m meaning there is sufficient SCIL available to fund Brent's £2.97m contribution.
- 5.2 The total estimated cost of the new Health and Wellbeing Integrated Hub scheme is £8.02m. The scheme will deliver a modern, purpose-built healthcare and community facility at the Gladstone Park site, enabling the co-location of GP services, integrated neighbourhood teams, community amenities, and wellbeing infrastructure.

### *Funding Breakdown*

The scheme will be financed through a combination of one-off public contributions and private sector investment:

- Brent Council is expected to contribute £2.97m through the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), with funding required at the start of construction planned in 2026.
- Northwest London Integrated Care Board (NWL ICB) and the Willesden Green Surgery GP Partnership will provide the remaining capital of £5.05m through a combination of direct investment (cash) and borrowing.
- Willesden Green Surgery to cover any capital funding shortfall.

5.3 Although the asset will be leased to the Willesden Green Surgery with Brent retaining the freehold, the £2.97m Brent contribution is valid capital spend under local authority accounting requirements. As Brent is simply providing a contribution and will not generate any income, there are no VAT implications of the SCIL element.

5.4 The proposed community padel court is a commercial element of the wider scheme. While it will be operated with a strong community focus, including discounted access for local residents and young people, it will not be funded from SCIL contributions. Arrangements for any revenue sharing from the padel court will be subject to negotiation as part of the heads of terms for the lease between the Council and Willesden Green Surgery, ensuring that the Council retains a proportionate benefit from income generated on Council-owned land. The accounting and VAT implications of this will be reviewed separately ahead of the negotiations.

#### *Lease Terms*

5.5 To ensure the long-term financial viability and security of tenure for NHS services, the Council proposes to grant a 150-year lease at a peppercorn rent to the Willesden Green Surgery (proposed tenant). The Council (landlord) will retain the freehold of the site, and this long lease structure enables the necessary investment to be secured while maintaining public ownership of the land. The property team will work with Finance to ensure appropriate accounting for the lease. Disposals of assets via peppercorn leases have no impact on capital or revenue outturn.

5.6 This diverse funding package reflects a strong public-private partnership approach, unlocking significant value for Brent residents through integrated services and new community infrastructure.

### **6.0 Legal Considerations**

6.1 SCIL is a levy that allows the Council to raise funds from developers in recognition of the fact that new development creates pressure on the borough's

infrastructure. CIL must be used by authorities for funding infrastructure to support the development of its area as set out in Regulation 59 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) ("The CIL Regulations"). Infrastructure is defined in The Planning Act 2008. It has a broad definition including transport, flood defences, schools, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities, open spaces. As such CIL can be used to fund a wide variety of facilities such as play areas, parks, and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities and district heating. This flexibility gives local areas the opportunity to choose what infrastructure they need to deliver their relevant plan (the Development Plan and the London Plan in London).

- 6.2 The Council holds the freehold interest in the entire Gladstone Park site affected by this proposal. However, there are existing third-party occupiers, including Kilburn Cosmos Rugby Football Club, which currently occupies part of the site under a tenancy at will.
- 6.3 In accordance with section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has a duty to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable in any disposal of land, unless consent is obtained from the Secretary of State or a specific exemption applies (e.g. General Disposal Consent 2003). Legal advice will be sought to ensure that any grant of lease, licence, or disposal linked to this scheme complies with these statutory obligations, while also considering broader social and community value considerations.
- 6.4 The procurement and award of any contracts (e.g. consultancy, construction, or services) associated with the scheme must be conducted in accordance with Brent Council's Constitution and Contract Standing Orders. Authority to approve such procurements is expected to fall within the delegated powers of the Director of Property and Assets, subject to the value thresholds set out in Standing Orders.
- 6.5 Although the Council owns the land, the proposed development is situated within designated Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). The Council will ensure that planning permission is obtained by the NHS or delivery and ensure SCIL funding is released in accordance with agreed milestones.
- 6.6 The Council may be required to enter into formal funding agreements or partnership arrangements with NHS bodies and/or other funding providers. These agreements will be subject to legal review to ensure the Council's interests are protected and all parties' roles, responsibilities, and liabilities are clearly defined.
- 6.7 Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the Council to appropriate its land and therefore use the property for an alternative purpose. In this instance the Property would be appropriated to planning purposes.
- 6.8 Pursuant to Section 235 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the Council may develop land held for planning purposes.



6.9 The Council must follow the procedures set out in 122 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 before appropriating land which is held as open space. Section 122 (2A) requires that the Council must have both:

- advertised its intention to do so in a Newspaper circulating within its area for two consecutive weeks; and
- considered any objections made to the proposed appropriation.

## **7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

7.1 The proposed redevelopment of the Gladstone Park site into a Health and Wellbeing Hub directly supports Brent Council's commitment to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion across the borough. The scheme will target some of Brent's most deprived and underserved communities, many of whom face significant barriers to accessing healthcare. By co-locating GP services, community health, and social care, it will help reduce health disparities and improve outcomes for vulnerable groups.

7.2 The Hub will provide culturally responsive services, offering tailored support in a safe and welcoming environment. This is particularly important where language and cultural barriers have historically limited access to public services. It will also promote inclusive employment, creating up to 50–100 local jobs across sectors including healthcare, hospitality, and facilities management, with all Willesden Green Surgery staff already earning above the national living wage. Opportunities for training and development, including placements for GP and nurse trainees, will be embedded into the operational model.

7.3 Designed to be fully accessible, both the building and surrounding public realm will offer safe, inclusive spaces for all users. Ongoing involvement of residents and community groups will be integral to the design and delivery process, ensuring the Hub continues to reflect and respond to the needs of the community it serves. These commitments will help ensure that the Hub is inclusive, accessible, and representative of the diverse communities it serves.

## **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

8.1 The proposed development has been designed with strong environmental credentials at its core. The new Health and Wellbeing Hub will be built to BREEAM Excellent standards, ensuring high levels of energy efficiency, the use of sustainable materials, and a low operational carbon impact. The scheme includes electric vehicle charging points, secure bicycle storage, and active travel incentives for staff and visitors, supporting the Council's broader climate goals. In addition, the redevelopment will enhance the local environment through landscaping, tree planting, and improved public access, contributing positively to the site's location on Metropolitan Open Land and aligning with Brent's ambition to become a carbon-neutral borough by 2030.

## **9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

- 9.1 There are minimal direct staffing or accommodation implications for the Council arising from this project.
- 9.2 The primary requirement will be project management and coordination support, which will be absorbed within the existing capacity of the Council's Property, Planning, and Capital Delivery teams. The programme will also require input from relevant departments for approvals, governance, and stakeholder engagement at key stages, all of which are expected to be managed within current staffing structures. Arrangements will be put in place for the monitoring and reporting of spending of SCIL funding to ensure this is reported back to the Council's relevant boards. No additional permanent staffing or accommodation changes are anticipated because of this scheme.
- 9.3 The property implications are set out in the main body of the report.

## **10.0 Communication Considerations**

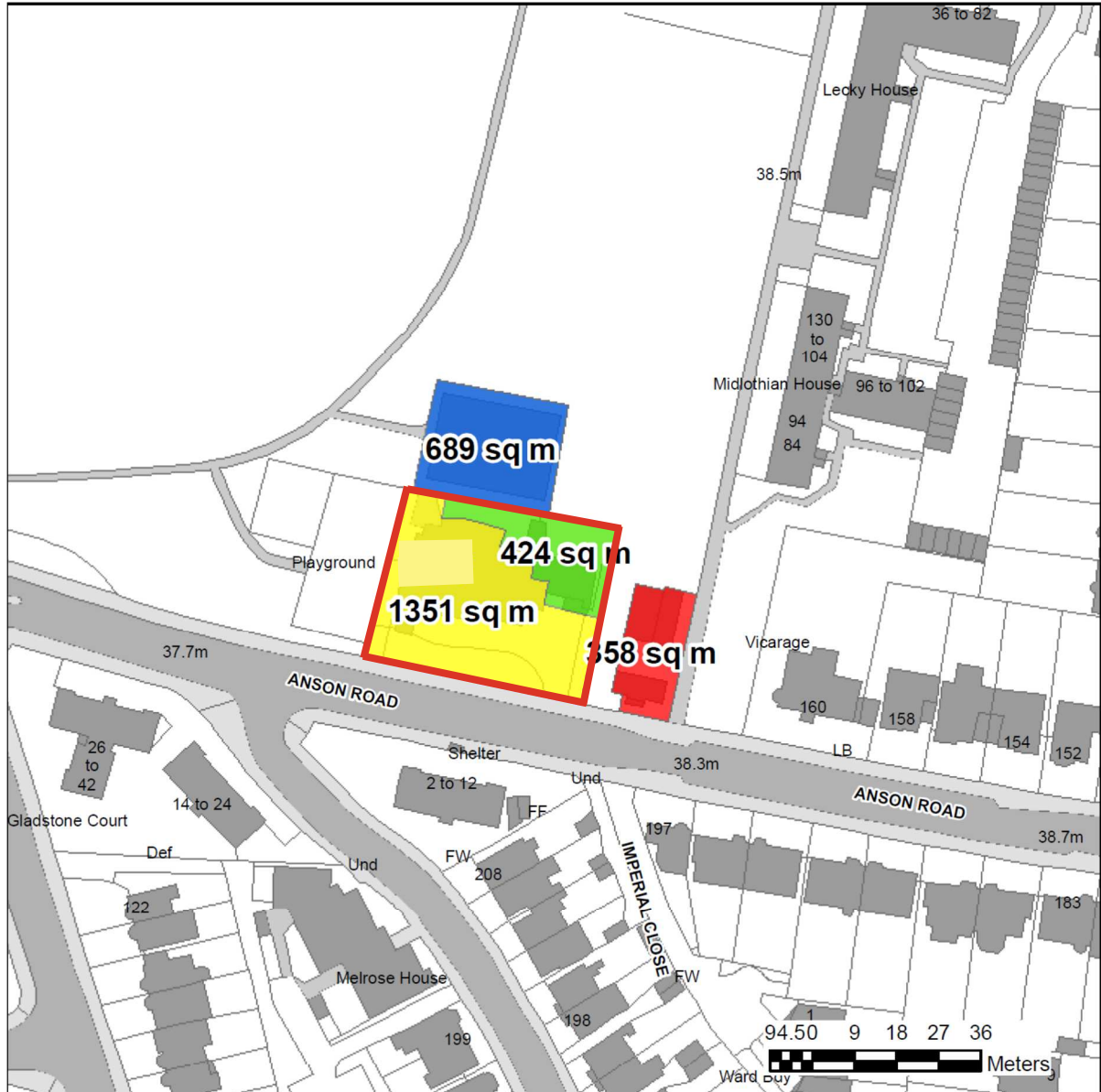
- 10.1 These are set out in the main body of the report.

**Report sign off:**

**Jehan Weerasinghe**

Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods &  
Regeneration

# Gladstone Park Sports Club, Pavilion, Youth & Community Centre & Sub Station, Anson Road, London, NW2 6BH.



**1:1,250**  
Plan to stated scale if printed at A4.

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**BUILDING SURVEYING**

# **Gladstone Park Community Centre Building Inspection Report**

Gladstone Park Community Centre  
162 Anson Road  
London  
NW2 6BH

**Version**  
A

**Report Date**  
23 August 2024

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# Project Preface

## Client Name and Address

London Borough of Brent, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA09 0FJ

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## Watts Details

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**Director Responsible:**

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**Prepared at:** 42 Trinity Square,  
London, EC3N 4TH

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**Document Prepared by:**

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**Job Reference:** 201777

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**Reviewed by:**

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## Further Assistance

This report raises a number of issues, if you would like to discuss any aspect of this report, or for assistance in developing a strategy for the resolution of these issues please contact the author:

Or the Director Responsible:

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**Identification photograph**

View of the Property from Anson Road

## Executive Summary

The table below sets out our principal findings and comments. For ease of reference, we have adopted a red/amber/green/number coding to illustrate the relative importance, urgency or significance of the observation in question; red **1** being the most significant and green **3** being the least.

The property is a detached community centre constructed over basement and ground level. The ground floor is largely unoccupied, a section to the west of the building (much of this are additions post original construction) is occupied by Kilburn Cosmos RFC and has been excluded for this report. The basement is occupied and used as a gym and plant room.

The property is constructed of traditional load-bearing masonry (painted) in Flemish bonding with supporting concrete frame and metal casement single glazed (Crittall style) windows. The flat roofs to the east and west sections of the property, and the barrel roof to the central section, are laid in mineral felt.

We understand that London Borough of Brent would like to procure a short-term letting until the property is redeveloped in the medium to long term. Our report and observations have been written with this in mind.

The materials and forms of construction employed in the building have resulted in a property characteristically requiring high levels of maintenance.

Section 3 of this report gives details of the general condition of the property. **From a Building Surveyor's perspective, the property appears in poor condition.** The more significant defects are stated below:

1. Mineral felt roofing throughout has expired and should be renewed.
2. Internal ceilings, walls and floors to the ground floor are in poor condition and should be repaired/restored/renewed and redecorated.
3. There is significant weed, plant and grass overgrowth which should be treated and removed from site. Temporary structures and leftover former tenant fittings should also be removed from site.
4. Joinery throughout is in poor condition, some of which should be replaced for modern equivalents.
5. Ventilation to the property throughout is inadequate, as evidenced by the extensive mould growth. Mechanical ventilation should be added to comply with Approved Document F.

Section 4 of this report gives details of any significant concerns in relation to sustainability, the environmental, legal and regulatory including any suspected deleterious and problematic materials. We have highlighted concerns regarding:

1. We have not seen documentation relating to gas safety, electrical safety, asbestos, fire, accessibility, water hygiene, or other similar such reports. Asbestos tags were observed onsite.
2. We have sourced an EPC which we believe is for this property, however we are unable to confirm this due to discrepancies with the address. The EPC assessor should be contacted and, if necessary, a new EPC undertaken.

Section 5 of this report provides approximate costings. In our view the likely value of repair works needed to place the building in repair will be in the region of **four hundred and ten thousand pounds (£410,000)** on the value of repair works sufficient to put the building into good repair over the next ten years, highlight any items of significant expenditure.

N.B. The above summary highlights the main points only of this report. We advise you to read this Report in full for a detailed understanding of our findings, opinions and advice

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Instructions and Brief

Denish Patel of London Borough of Brent instructed us to proceed with an inspection of 162 Anson Road, London, NW2 6BH on 13 August 2024. Our brief was confirmed in an email / Service and Fee proposal dated 13 August 2024 and in summary was to make a visual inspection of the property and to report our findings as to its general features, forms of construction and state of repair. A copy of the scope of service and the limitations that apply to this report are attached at Appendix BIR1. Our inspection was limited as follows; we were unable to walk all external areas due to the extensive overgrowth (notably brambles and nettles), our inspection internally was limited in places due to prior tenants belongings left, we did not gain access to the Kilburn Cosmos RFC let areas, we could not access to test operation of windows.

### 1.2 Site Inspection

| Personnel Inspecting                  | Date of Visit | Weather Conditions at the time | If accompanied and by whom |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Matt Jeeves Eng (Hons)<br>CEng MCIBSE | 13/08/2024    | Dry and sunny, circa 24°C      | Unaccompanied              |
| Hayley Coles BSc (Hons)<br>MRICS      | 13/08/2024    | Dry and sunny, circa 24°C      | Unaccompanied              |
| Andrew Peartree BSc MSc               | 13/08/2024    | Dry and sunny, circa 24°C      | Unaccompanied              |
| David Izunna PhD MSc BEng             | 13/08/2024    | Dry and sunny, circa 24°C      | Unaccompanied              |

### 1.3 Identification and Terminology

For the purposes of description and identification we have described the front elevation of the property as facing south. Descriptions such as “left” and “right” are given as if facing the particular element in question

Where the expressions immediate, short term, medium term, long term and very long term are used they generally mean the following:

**Immediate:** Within 1 year

**Short Term:** Within the next 1 to 3 years

**Medium Term:** Within the next 4 to 10 years

**Long Term:** Within 11 to 20 years

**Very Long term:** Over 20 years

Appendix BIR2 contains additional information and guidance on a number of the issues that are relevant to this report.

## 2 General Description of Property

### 2.1 Generally

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Type of Building</b>                        | Community Centre  |
| <b>Nature of Building</b>                      | Conversion  |
| <b>Location</b>                                | The property is located within the boundaries of Gladstone Park, to the southeast of that park, beside a children's play area. Located within Cricklewood in the London Borough of Brent. The main entrance faces south. To the south is Anson Road and residential properties, to the east are residential properties. |
| <b>Access and Parking</b>                      | Pedestrian and vehicular access is achieved via Anson Road.<br>Limited parking is available within the boundaries of the property.<br>On street parking within a 5-minute walk of the property is available outside of the permit holder only hours which are generally Monday to Friday 10am to 3pm.                   |
| <b>Approximate Age or Date of Construction</b> | Thought to be pre-world war II, circa 1940's.   |
| <b>Number of Storeys</b>                       | Basement and ground.  |

### 2.2 Structure

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Foundation Type</b> | We did not excavate or carry out a ground investigation to confirm the foundation profile or subsoil characteristics. However, we envisage that these will be brick spreader or concrete strip (and pad to columns) based on the nature and age of the property. |
|------------------------|--|



|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Structural Form</b> | Traditional loadbearing masonry external walls with a concrete structural frame. |
|------------------------|--|

## 2.3 External Fabric

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Roofs and Rainwater Disposal</b> | <p>A high-level concrete barrel roof to the central section and the concrete flat roofs to the east and west sections, are all laid in mineral felt. To the west section loose chippings have been spread over the flat roof coverings. A brick chimney projects from the front section of the barrel roof.</p> <p>To the front west of the property is a projecting lightweight corrugated PVC canopy roof supported by a timber frame.</p> <p>To the rear of the west elevation of the property is a stair to the basement. The stair is protected by a timber pitched roof with ply board covering.</p> <p>Rainwater is dealt via a mixture of PVC and painted cast-iron gutters and downpipes. Downpipes discharge into gullies or onto the surrounding ground.</p> |
| <b>Elevations</b>                   | External walls are of traditional solid brick construction in Flemish bond. All elevations have been painted.   |
| <b>External doors and windows</b>   | <p>The property features timber single and double doorsets.</p> <p>The main entrance door is varnished timber with Georgian wired vision panels and a single latch lock. Two emergency exit doors are painted timber at ground floor.</p> <p>There are two basement access doors. To the front is a louvred timber door, to the rear is an emergency exit door.</p> <p>The property features painted single glazed metal casement (Crittall style) windows which have had security features installed such as metal box grilles and/or bars.</p>  |

## 2.4 Structure and Fabric Internally

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Ceiling Types</b> | Predominately painted concrete soffit with areas of painted plaster, with painted timber board over the hall stage. |
|----------------------|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Floor Finishes</b>                        | Predominately vinyl sheet and tiles, together with areas of carpet tile and to the hall is timber.  |
| <b>Internal Walls and Partitions</b>         | The internal walls and partitions are generally solid masonry which has been painted, plastered and painted, or papered.  |
| <b>Internal Joinery</b>                      | <p>A mixture of timber doors, frames and architraves. Skirtings appear to have been removed throughout. Some doors feature vision panels and self-closers.</p> <p>The door to the staff office in the west section (accessible via the entrance foyer) has been cut into two sections to form a “Dutch door”.</p> <p>Painted timber and brick create the cubicles and doors. Worktops and cupboards fit out a kitchen area.</p> |
| <b>Sanitary and Staff Welfare Facilities</b> | <p>There are two separate sex toilets with ceramic sanitaryware with high level wall hung cisterns. The male toilet has two WC cubicles, two urinals and two sinks. The female toilet has four WC cubicles and four sinks (two at a lower children’s level) plus a cleaner’s sink. A prior shower room has been stripped out to create a storeroom, leaving two sinks only.</p> <p>There are no WCs to the basement.</p>        |
| <b>Staircases</b>                            | <p>A metal staircase with painted steel handrails and balustrades accessible via the entrance foyer provides access between ground and basement level.</p> <p>There are two external concrete staircases with metal steel handrails, one at the front and one to the rear of the west elevation which provide direct external access to the basement.</p>   |
| <b>Fire Compartmentation</b>                 | The Fire strategy has not been seen and fire compartmentation strategy is not clear to allow us to comment.   |
| <b>Internal Decorations</b>                  | Predominately painted masonry or plastered and painted masonry. Ceramic tiles are present in the WCs.   |

## 2.5 Land and Boundaries

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Characteristics of Site</b> | The building is constructed on a level site. |
|--------------------------------|--|

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Features</b>       | The site features macadam to the front elevation and soft landscaping to all elevations, with concrete paving to the areas around the rugby club are we presume to be demised to the Kilburn Cosmos RFC tenant. |
| <b>North Boundary</b> | The north boundary is defined by a chain link fence with concrete posts.  |
| <b>South Boundary</b> | The south boundary is defined by concrete fencing.  |
| <b>East Boundary</b>  | The north boundary is defined by a chain link fence with concrete post and metal security fencing.  |
| <b>West Boundary</b>  | The west boundary is defined by a chain link fence.   |

## 2.6 Services Installations

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Heating and Cooling</b> | <p>Radiators supported by conventional boilers is the primary source of heating to the building.</p> <p>Two gas fired boilers in the basement boiler room generate low temperature hot water (LTHW) for heating. The boilers are model CXA/H as manufactured by Ideal, with a combined heat output of 120kW. Stainless-steel flues from both gas-fired boilers combine before connecting to a Chimney which vents above roof level. The LTHW is circulated by individual shunt pumps for each boiler to a low loss header from which a variable temperature circuit serve the radiators installed throughout the property i.e. basement area and ground floor. Distribution pipework to the radiators runs exposed at high level. Secondary pipe works are insulated only in the boiler room. The distribution pipework incorporates a traditional feed/expansion tank installed in the ceiling void above the entrance lounge which maintains system at the required pressure.</p> <p>Radiators are original (old) with some missing thermostatic radiator valves (TRV) which are required for localised heating controls</p> <p>There is no mechanical cooling provision in the property. We found a condenser installed to the external area, but it is assumed that the condenser serves an area of the property that is outside of the scope of our inspection.</p> |
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| <b>Ventilation</b>                        | <p>Ventilation is achieved by natural means through openable windows with mechanical ventilation installed only in areas with specific need such as the basement gym area and the Male toilet on the ground floor.</p> <p>Windows are all single glazed.</p>  |
| <b>Fire Fighting Systems</b>              | <p>Apart from fire extinguishers, there are no other fire-fighting system installed in the building. The overall height of the property does not necessitate the installation of fire-fighting lift, AOVs and dry risers.</p>   |
| <b>Domestic Water</b>                     | <p>The mains cold water supply enters the development via the basement boiler room where the property's water is metered.</p> <p>The incoming portable pipe feeds the basement area (hot water cylinder, boilers, water fountain etc.), via a branch run, and then proceeds to supply into 2 No CWS storage tank installed within the ceiling void on the first floor. The cold-water storage tanks are circa 1500 Litres each.</p> <p>From the storage tanks, water is supplied to sanitary fittings i.e. toilets and kitchens by gravity.</p> <p>The basement area houses a hot water cylinder but access to the hot water cylinder is very limited. We believe the DHW system is a Calorifier fed from the main heating boilers. It is recommended that the calorifier be relocated or access provided to enable water sampling in compliance with ACOP L8 requirement</p> |
| <b>Utilities</b>                          | <p><b>Gas</b></p> <p>A single low pressure natural gas main has been provided to serve the property. The supply enters the property via basement boiler room. A solenoid valve is provided and linked to a mechanical control panel for automatic shut off. The gas intake room/boiler room is natural ventilated via a louvered door.</p> <p><b>Water</b></p> <p>Incoming mains water enters the development via the basement boiler room, with utility company meter.</p>   |
| <b>Electrical supply and distribution</b> | <p>The incoming electricity supply to the buildings is provided by the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) at low voltage. The electrical supply enters the basement electrical room, where the 100A TP&amp;N service head and utility company CT meter is located. Electricity</p>   |

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|  | <p>usage at the property is billed by the utility provider based on readings taken from this meter. The service head is old but appear to be in good condition.</p> <p>Low Voltage Electrical Power is distributed via SP&amp;N distribution boards installed at a number of locations throughout the building, including the staff office, kitchen and basement electrical room. The distribution boards do not incorporate RCD/surge protection. We did not see an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) for the property.</p>  |
| <b>Lighting and Emergency Lighting</b> | <p>The Lighting installation within the building comprises of Linear fluorescent luminaires with sealed diffusers and fluorescent lamps. Lighting control is achieved via wall mounted manual switches.</p> <p>Emergency lighting is installed throughout the property including the staff office, Hall, offices, kitchen and basement areas and comprises self-contained, non-maintained 3-hour emergency luminaires.</p> <p>The LED status indicator to some emergency lighting on the ground floor and basement areas are showing red which suggests that the battery may not be charging.</p> <p>Some of the Fluorescent Lighting do not glow when switched on.</p> |
| <b>Fire Alarm</b>                      | <p>A fire detection and alarm system are installed in the building to provide early warning and to raise the alarm in the event of a fire.</p> <p>The system comprises a fire alarm control panel located in the basement electrical room, manual call point and alarm sounders/beacon provided at different locations throughout the property. AFDs are only installed at the ground floor main entrance/exit route and kitchen</p>  |
| <b>Ancillary systems</b>               | <p>CCTV is provided throughout the property with coverage of the building perimeter, entrance/exit points and main access routes throughout the property. A monitor is provided in the main staff office to allow staff to view each camera.</p> <p>A PIR-based intruder detection is installed with sensors strategically positioned to detect movement within the property. The system is complete with a panel installed within the staff office</p> <p>The CCTV video recorder has been removed as the cables are seen hanging in the staff office near the monitor.</p>  |

### 3 General Condition of Property

The following section details our observations and opinions on the condition of the building. A flag system has been used to identify points which need urgent attention, or which are significant in terms of the proposed transaction. For an explanation of the flag system please refer to the executive summary.

#### 3.1 Structural Condition

|   | Observation   | Recommendation   |
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| 2 | Horizontal and parallel vertical cracking was observed to a concrete post to the rear of the barrelled roof central section west elevation (by the basement door), it appeared to be a moderate crack (circa 5mm to 15mm thick). Fine cracking was evident vertically down a few concrete columns to the barrel-vaulted roof block. | Repair cracking to concrete columns and monitor for reoccurrence. Redecorate as part of redecorations to elevations. |
| 2 | Diagonal cracking emanates through the external wall (from opposing corners of the window) and opposite internal wall that surround what was the shower room (to the southeast corner of the central barrel roofed block), a moderate sized crack circa 5-10mm.   | Repair cracking through brickwork allow to install stainless steel ties.   |

#### 3.2 Condition of External Fabric

|   | Observation   | Recommendation  |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | The mineral felt roof coverings are believed to be circa 30 years old throughout and life expired. The mineral felt is in poor condition, tearing, detaching, blister, sections overlaid, sections missing with evidence of water | The existing roof coverings should be stripped, slab/screed inspected and repaired as necessary and treating exposed corroding rebar prior to concrete repairs, and a new insulated high performance felt |

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|   | <p>ingress to the west flat roofs and the barrel roofs.</p> <p>We noted localised spalling and corroding rebar to exposed edges of concrete roof deck where mineral felt has failed notably at the edge to the gulleys formed to the barrel roof and east flat roof.</p>  | <p>roofing system installed to the west flat roofs and barrel roofs.</p> <p>Whilst the roof over the east area is also in poor condition (poor patch repairs, missing section and blisters) it may be possible to patch repair and provide solar coating to extent its life long-enough for the intended short-term letting.</p>   |
| ① | <p>The lightweight corrugated PVC canopy roof is damaged beyond repair.</p>   | <p>Consideration should be given to one of the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Treat and repair as necessary the timber support frame, replace the PVC roof sheets with new, or</li> <li>2) Remove and dispose of PVC canopy roof and timber support frame.</li> </ol> <p>For cost minimisation purposes, we recommend proceeding with option 2.</p>  |
| ① | <p>The roof over the west basement access stair is in poor condition with no weathering over the ply the ply is degraded, open and section missing and rotten. There is drainage to the bottom of this, it's unclear the reason the shelter may have been erected, whether to minimise water if the drainage was not sufficient or just to simply provide cover for when using the stair.</p> | <p>Consideration should be given to one of the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Treat and repair as necessary the timber support structure, remove and replace the failed timber roof, the roof to be finished with mineral felt.</li> <li>2) Remove and dispose of the failed timber roof and support structure. Allow to test drainage is adequate.</li> </ol> <p>For cost minimisation purposes, we recommend proceeding with option 2.</p> |
| ③ | <p>Rainwater goods are in varying condition. The downpipe to the northwest corner of the barrel roof has detached and has been twisted and rested on the flat roof in a poor ad hoc way. A downpipe is missing to the southeast corner of the east flat roof. Paint is flaking from the cast iron rainwater goods.</p>  | <p>Overhaul rainwater goods, refixing and repairing, redecorating and replacing where missing.</p>   |

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|   | <p>The pvc gutter to the west edge of the west flat roof has detached and dropped slightly one end leading to water ingress.</p> <p>Gutters/gulleys in the felt are choked with silt and vegetation.</p>  |  |
| 3 | <p>To the flaunching of the chimney stack there is weed growth and cracking.</p> <p>The chimney pot is loose and potentially liable to be blown off in a heavy gust of wind.</p> <p>To the stack, there are areas of severe receded mortar and failing masonry paintwork.</p> <p>The flashing detail to the stack is mineral felt. It is likely this was laid in conjunction with the mineral felt to the roofs and has therefore exceeded its design life.</p> <p>All of the above may result in penetrating dampness manifesting internally and should therefore be remediated.</p> | <p>Remove weeds, mortar repair flaunching, refix chimney pot, repointing where necessary (in conjunction with repointing to the external elevations), redecorate (conjunction with redecoration to the external elevations) and renewal flashing detail in conjunction with roof work.</p> |
| 3 | <p>The brickwork to elevations is generally in satisfactory condition albeit in need of some maintenance.</p> <p>Moss/plant growth was observed in some locations.</p> <p>Areas of severe receded mortar were noted, predominately at high level.</p> <p>Perishing masonry paintwork was observed in several locations. Most notably to the southeast corner where a downpipe is missing and water is therefore running down and soaking the elevation.</p>   | <p>Treat and remove moss/plant growth to external elevations.</p> <p>Repoint where necessary. Following repairs to rainwater and mortar joints, prepare and redecorate elevations with suitable external breathable masonry paint.</p>   |
| 3 | <p>The metal box grilles over windows have been damaged in several locations.</p> <p>Decorations to windows have cracked</p>  | <p>Remove all box grilles.</p> <p>Replace broken pane, renew cracked putties. Ease and adjust windows to ensure</p>  |



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|   | exposing timber of sub-frames and cracking putties to the glazing. One broken pane. | all operable. Redecoration is required to all windows. |
| 2 | All doors to the property were deteriorating, decayed or damaged.                   | Replace all external doors.                            |

### 3.3 Condition of Internal Fabric

|   | Observation  | Recommendation  |
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| 2 | <p>A loft to the barrel-vaulted roof resides over the entrance hallway accommodating the water tanks. Localised spalling concrete soffit was evident.</p> <p>It was accessible via an access hatch which did not have an in-built loft ladder.</p>   | Monitor spalling concrete for any signs of further deterioration. Repairs are not considered necessary if the building is to be redeveloped in the medium to long term.   |
| 1 | <p>Ceilings are in poor decorative condition throughout. At ground floor there is mould growth widespread throughout (a hazard to respiratory health) including to walls. Water damage was observed to the west and central sections of the property, indicating penetrating rainwater ingress, including localised spalling to the concrete soffit.</p> <p>The southwest corner of the west flat roof soffit appears to slump in the middle, this appears to have been poured insitu concrete so consider this most likely a as built deformation rather than deflection. Observation only.</p> | <p>Specialist treatment to remove all mould growth throughout, must be undertaken in tandem with increased ventilation as noted under the building services section.</p> <p>Repair spalling concrete. Clean, prepare and redecorate throughout.</p> |
| 3 | Water ingress to the basement plant room appears to be emanating from a manhole, running down a chute and ponding to the basement floor.   | Further investigation required to confirm source of water ingress (via water testing), allow for repairs.   |

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| 1 | <p>Walls are in poor decorative condition throughout. Cracking as noted under section 3.1 to the east block. Peeling and stained paper, flaking and stained paintwork, damaged and missing tiles were observed throughout.</p> <p>Finishes were generally found to be tired and worn.</p>   | <p>Repair brick and plaster as necessary, fully prepare walls and redecorate. Replace all wall tiles (where welfare to be retained).</p>  |
| 3 | <p>Floors are in poor decorative condition throughout ground floor. Basement floor finishes are generally sound.</p> <p>Floor finishes to ground floor are stained, mismatched, lifting in places; notably so to the timber in the central hall where water damaged and swollen.</p>  | <p>Renew all floor finishes to ground floor.</p> <p>It may be feasible to replace only the affected areas of timber to the hall, however you will not obtain a true match (which may not be necessary depending on the type of tenancy you seek).</p> |
| 1 | <p>Fire stopping is lacking and poor. Compartmentation design is not clear, and fire doors are dated with limited provision and some may have been removed.</p>   | <p>We recommend a detailed fire audit is undertaken to establish correct fire strategy and compartmentation and allow to make improvements, fire stop where necessary and upgrade fire doors.</p>   |
| 3 | <p><u>Internal joinery – ground</u></p> <p>Internal joinery is in poor decorative condition throughout. Doors found to be ill-fitting in places.</p>  | <p>Ease and adjust (non-fire doors) and redecorate all previously painted joinery.</p>  |
| 3 | <p>The kitchen is significantly dated and worse for wear.</p>   | <p>Allow to replace kitchen fittings and appliances.</p>  |
| 3 | <p>Toilets are dated, worn and would benefit updating however for the short-term letting it may be feasible to retain the sanitaryware assuming the plumbing is suitably serviced and overhauled as may be necessary.</p> <p>The provision will need to be checked against the potential letting needs and if the number is sufficient.</p> | <p>Deep clean sanitaryware and leave in working order. Depending on the letting you aim to target, consider either reinstating the removed shower as toilets or shower as may be needed.</p>  |

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|   | <p>There appears to have previously been showers that have since been removed, or this was a female toilet converted at some point to a washroom.</p> <p>Currently the finishes are in poor condition (as noted in above items).</p>        |  |
| 3 | <p>Prior tenant has left behind belongings, chattels, furnishing including tables, chairs, boards, desks, paperwork, cupboards, shelves, and other miscellaneous equipment and general fixtures and fittings to suit the nursery needs.</p> | <p>Clear and remove from site all prior tenant items and fittings.</p> |

### 3.4 Comments on Land and Boundaries

|   | Observation   | Recommendation   |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | <p>External temporary structures (including sheds) and items considered to be general waste (including tires) are present onsite and generally in poor condition.</p>                     | <p>All temporary structures and waste to be fully cleared and removed from site.</p>   |
| 3 | <p>Overgrown grass and weed growth to all garden areas. Soft landscaping has been neglected.</p>  | <p>All weeds to be fully treated, cleared and removed from site.</p> <p>Grass to be trimmed as necessary and landscaping maintained including cutting back of trees.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Macadam surfaces are uneven and cracked throughout, this has heaved presenting trip hazards. Weeds have taken root in minor fissures in macadam and will lead to potholes forming.</p> | <p>Remove weeds. A sizable section of macadam where cracking has heaved will need to be renewed, other areas of cracking and wear can be repaired.</p>                   |
| 3 | <p>The paving slabs to rear elevation of the west section were not level and are a trip hazard.</p>   | <p>Relay or replace paving slabs.</p>  |

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| <p>3</p> | <p>The boundary fencing is a mismatch of materials and design. This is unlikely to be of concern to a prospective future tenant.</p> <p>To Anson Road, there is fencing comprising of concrete posts and pales, the pales are detaching and loose with some pales replaced in timber and some posts are leaning, the inner shorter timber fencing is generally sound.</p> <p>The chain-link fence and metal posts from the gate to the children's playground in the park running to the front (Anson Road) is in poor condition with leaning posts and torn chain-link and corrosion to the posts and frame of the gate.</p> <p>A short timber lap fence that runs up the lawn and shrubbery dividing the carpark from the nursery playground to the front of the property has detached and loose panels.</p> <p>Fencing and gate to the front stair has entirely failed decorations.</p> | <p>Repair concrete fence posts, resiting those that are leaning and replace timber and damaged pales and resecure all loose pales.</p> <p>Renew damaged chain-link and resite leaning posts, treat corrosion.</p> <p>Redecorate fence and gate to the front stair.</p> <p>Replace damaged and refix loose timber panels to the dividing fence of the front yard.</p> |
| <p>3</p> | <p>Spalling to the concrete stairs evident and paint to mark nosings heavily faded.</p>   | <p>Undertake concrete repairs and remark nosings.</p>  |
| <p>3</p> | <p>Vehicular gates are generally sound, decorations are wearing and some corrosion evident.</p>   | <p>Allow to redecorate.</p>  |

### 3.5 Condition of Services Installations

|          | Observation   | Recommendation   |
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|          | <b>Heating, Cooling and Ventilation</b>   |  |
| <p>1</p> | <p>We believe the incoming gas supply to the property is live to the utility company meter (located within the basement boiler room).</p> | <p>A registered commercial gas safe engineer will need to inspect and test the gas service pipework and all the connected appliances</p> |

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|   | The gas supply serves the gas fired boiler and catering equipment (oven/hob) in the ground floor kitchen area.   | and gas boiler.<br><br>Pipework should be pressure tested and systems purged before the building is reoccupied.   |
| 1 | The property is served by 2nr gas fired boilers located within the basement boiler room. The boiler generates low temperature hot water (LTHW) feeding the heating distribution pipework. The boilers have been dormant and not operational for a few years.   | The gas service, boiler and flue will need to be inspected, tested and recommissioned by a registered commercial gas safe engineer.<br><br>It is likely the boilers will fail an inspection/test and components might be obsolete, therefore the boilers may need to be replaced.<br><br>Gas safe engineer to complete a validation service / inspection to confirm the extent of works required.                               |
| 2 | The boiler is manufactured by Ideal, model CXA/H, we believe the boiler installation is circa +30years old, but other components, distribution pipework and heat emitters predate the boilers.<br><br>Domestic boilers of this type have a general life cycle of circa 20 years, unless well maintained.   | The boiler should be inspected/tested and recommissioned as they have not been operational for a few years.<br><br>The servicing to include chemical cleaning and flush of the LTHW system, full inspection of the discharge flue.<br><br>Boilers might need to be replaced due to spare components being obsolete.<br><br>, clean out of the combustion chamber. Get the contractor to check the flow rate through the boiler. |
| 2 | The LTHW pipework and a number of the heat emitters are aged and some parts of the system are likely to date +60years. Some modifications have been carried out, with heat emitters replaced in some rooms, but connected back to the original LTHW distribution pipework.<br><br>Some signs of leaks on the system. Areas of timber flooring in the main hall have raised/bowed with the smell of damp in the | LTHW system to be pressure tested to confirm location and if leaks are present on the LTHW system.<br><br>The LTHW distribution and heat emitters will need to be chemical cleaned and flushed and appropriate water treatment added to the LTHW system, inhibitor etc.   |

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|   | area, this might be due to leaks from the distribution pipework.  |   |
| 2 | The LTHW circulation pumps have been dormant of serval years. The pumps were not operational at the time of our survey.   | Operational condition of the LTHW pumps will need to be inspected and flow rates and index runs on the LTHW system checked and recommissioned.  |
| 2 | Heat emitters vary in age, some are old cast iron radiators that may have been operational +60 years.   | No sign of leaks from the old cast iron radiators and these are robust, but replacement should be considered due to age   |
| 2 | Low surface temperature (LST) radiators have been installed within the main hall area, these have been connected to the existing distribution pipework at low level, the LST housing does not cover the low-level connections, leaving high surface temperature components exposed. | The user group for each area should be considered and LST heat emitters and associated pipework provided, if required.  |
| 2 | Mould / fungus is present in a number of rooms, generally growing on the external walls / ceilings due to the lack of heat and ventilation throughout the property while vacant.  | Review background ventilation in all rooms and ensure the heating controls have a frost protection setting to maintain a minimum internal temperature.  |
| 2 | The property is provided with natural fresh air ventilation via manually openable windows.  | We did not operate the windows, anticipate some refurbishment works will be required.   |
| 1 | Mechanical extract ventilation is provided to the Gents toilet, but the extract is now obsolete. The Ladies toilet has four cubicles with no mechanical extract ventilation installed.  | Install new extract fans in each toilet block, as a minimum the extract volume shall comply with AD Part F. Fans to be controlled via presence detector with run on timer and (integral) humidity sensor. |
| 1 | Mechanical extract ventilation in the kitchen area is via an inline fan through a window, the housing has been covered and the fan  | The ventilation strategy for the kitchen area should be reviewed and appropriate provision provided, this may include the   |

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|   | was not operational at the time of our survey.  | installation of a kitchen canopy over the hob/oven appliances.  |
|   | <b>Controls</b>   |   |
| 2 | Basic domestic timeclock programme is provided to serve the boiler / heating system. The system was not operational at the time of our inspection.  | Anticipate replacement of the controls, consider installation smart thermostat with different temperature set points throughout the day / week with frost protection setting when not occupied. |
|   | <b>Domestic water services</b>  |   |
| 1 | The property is served by an incoming mains water supply that enters the building via the basement plantroom.<br><br>The water supply is live but has been dormant for several years with limited turnover of water.<br><br>The domestic water systems are typical and appropriate for a building of this size. | Take water samples and flush / chlorinate the domestic services if required.  |
| 1 | The domestic water storage tanks in the roof void appeared in good condition but have been dormant.   | Carry out a visual inspection of the tanks, take water samples, clean and flush / chlorinate the domestic storage tanks.  |
| 2 | Some lead pipework is in use on the domestic water systems.   | Replace lead pipe with either copper or multi layered plastic pipework to remove lead from the domestic water system.   |
| 1 | Hot water is generated by a hot water Calorifier, we believe this is served by the LTHW system, however access to the hot water cylinder is limited and fully extent of the provision was not confirmed.  | We recommend access to the hot water cylinder is improved to enable water sampling and/or routine temperature checks in compliance with ACOP L8 requirement                                     |
| 2 | No thermostatic mixing valves seen, to limit the risk of scalding.  | Carry out a risk assessment considering the user groups that will be in the property and provide TMV's as required/recommended.   |

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| 1 | No water hygiene risk assessment has been seen. This is required for compliance with H&SE COP L8  | A water hygiene management scheme should be put in place.   |
|   | <b>Above ground foul &amp; surface water drainage</b>   |   |
| 3 | <u>Above ground foul</u><br>The above ground drainage is provided to each sanitary outlet, pipework is PVC.   | We did not test / operate the waste / soil drainage.  |
| 2 | <u>Above ground foul</u><br>The pipework material for the waste and foul water drainage differs and has been modified/repared with different materials. Some of the pipework is lead and deformed, so no longer laid to a fall. | Inspect all above ground foul and wastewater pipes, replace all old lead pipework and carry out other repair works.   |
| 3 | <u>Above ground foul</u><br>A sump pump is provided in the basement boiler room   | We did not test / operate the sump pump and associated installations i.e. discharge line and check valve  |
| 1 | <u>Surface water</u><br>Missing outlets and downpipes were observed to roof level. This coincides with areas of receded masonry paintwork and is likely to result in internal damp staining.                                    | All missing outlets should be identified, with the requisite rainwater goods installed and the downpipe discharging into the nearest rainwater gully.<br><br>Where no gully is available to discharge into, the downpipe is to terminate with a shoe directed away from the building.   |
| 2 | <u>Surface water</u><br>To the cast iron downpipes, severe receding/flaking paintwork was observed.   | To the cast iron downpipes, consideration should be given to their replacement with PVC equivalents which require less maintenance.<br><br>If they are to be kept, they should be flood tested and any leaks identified and repaired. Following this they should be sanded so that any flaking paintwork is removed, and a smooth finish is achieved, then redecorated. |



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| 2   | <p><u>Surface water</u></p> <p>A downpipe from the central roof level has been poorly installed and discharges directly onto the west section flat roof.</p>   | <p>Remove poorly installed pipework, redesign and refix to discharges into a ground level gully. If no gully is available to discharge into, the downpipe is to terminate with a shoe directed away from the building.</p>                     |
| 2   | <p><u>Surface water</u></p> <p>To the west section we observed staining which appears to be caused by failed PVC gutter, most likely a failed end piece and/or an inadequate fall. To the same gutter run, the end piece to the other end of missing.</p>  | <p>Review falls of PVC guttering and replace failed and missing end pieces.</p>  |
| 3   | <p>Manholes have not been lifted as part of this inspection, no flow tests have been undertaken nor have any cctv drainage surveys carried out.</p> <p>Manholes should be cleaned and rodded on a regular basis to prevent blockages</p>   | <p>Instruct a CCTV drainage survey to identify defects with the foul and rainwater drainage. Undertake remedial works as required.</p>   |
| <b>Electrical supply and distribution</b> |  |  |
| 1   | <p>The property is served by a 100A three phase (TP&amp;N) DNO incoming electricity supply. The DNO LV supply and meters are located within the basement electrical switch room.</p> <p>The service head is old, but appeared in a reasonable operational condition and is owned / maintained by the DNO.</p> <p>We did not see an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) for the property.</p> | <p>Carry out a EICR test/inspection, anticipate some remedial works.</p> <p>Electrical contractor to test / survey the installation and provide a more detailed distribution board schedule/referencing to assist with future maintenance.</p> |
| 1   | <p>The electrical distribution boards are provided with MCB protective devices.</p> <p>The boards and MCB protective devices are aged, and replacement components are expensive and might be obsolete due to age that will hinder future maintenance works.</p>  | <p>We recommend replacing the distribution boards with split load boards that incorporate RCD protection to ensure all small power and lighting circuits are protected.</p>  |

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| 2 | The distribution boards do not incorporate surge protection, RCD, AFDD protective devices.   | Carry out a risk review and provided the recommended protective devices, as a minimum this shall include, surge protection and RCD protective devices.  |
| 2 | Socket outlets and other accessories appeared aged, none were tested at the time of our survey.  | Carry out a EICR test/inspection, anticipate some remedial works.   |
|   | <b>Lighting and emergency lighting</b>   |   |
| 2 | Lighting varies in age, but is generally in a varying state of disrepair, with broken fittings, ad hoc repairs, diffusers and lamps missing.<br><br>Fittings are either fluorescent or GLS lamps, with the majority not operational.   | Replace non-functional lamps and damaged fittings in the immediate term.<br><br>Anticipate replacement of all aged fittings with new energy efficient LED fittings in the short term.   |
| 1 | The emergency lighting installation has been dormant for a number of years.<br><br>The LED status indicator to some emergency lighting on the ground floor and basement areas are showing red which suggests that the battery may not be charging.<br><br>Coverage of emergency lighting in some areas is limited.<br><br>No emergency lighting test log nor test/inspection certificate seen. | Carry out a full review of the emergency lighting provision at the property.<br><br>Provide additional fittings where required.<br><br>Anticipate replacement of all the existing emergency lights due to age/faulty components.<br><br>Provide test certificate upon completion and introduce regular testing/inspection regime. |
|   | <b>Fire alarm</b>  |   |
| 2 | The fire detection system and alarm is in a poor condition.<br><br>Coverage of automatic fire detection devices is limited.  | Review the fire strategy / fire risk assessment and provide fire detection / alarm to comply with the report's recommendations and the requirements of BS 5839.   |

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| 2 | Manual call points are mounted at heights above that currently recommended to suit all users.   | Considered relocating devices to the appropriate height as part of any repair / replacement works.   |
| 1 | No annual Fire Alarm testing and inspection record was seen on site.  | As the property has been dormant for +1year, annual fire alarm testing should be carried out and report provided for review.   |
| 2 | The main fire alarm control panel is located within the basement electrical room.   | Fire detection and alarm panel should be relocated to the ground floor main entrance lobby for easy access for both staff and firefighters, in event of an alarm condition.                            |
| 3 | We do not believe the fire detection system is provided with offsite remote monitoring capability.  | For information.   |
|   | <b>Ancillary systems</b>  |  |
| 2 | A CCTV system is installed with fixed cameras mainly installed on the ground floor and external areas of the building.<br><br>The main control equipment has been removed and the system was not operational at the time of our survey. | Replace system to suit the new tenant and/or landlord business requirements.   |
| 2 | The intruder alarm system was not operational at the time of our survey.  | Replace system to suit the new tenant and/or landlord business requirements.   |
| 3 | Incoming telecoms / data comprises of an Openreach fibre optic service.   | Maintain for future tenants use.   |
| 3 | No provision for systems to assist persons with physical disabilities.  | Subject to the use of the property, consider the provision or option for, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance call system,</li> <li>• Audio frequency induction loops,</li> </ul> Etc. |

## 4 Sustainability, Legal and Regulatory

Sustainability involves topics that extend beyond the environment to include human, social and financial issues at the same time. This section concentrates on a number of factors that are relevant to sustainability with particular bias towards the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' "Property Lifecycle" approach.

Please note that the comments are based upon general observations rather than detailed studies and are not intended to be exhaustive. Several of the sections involve legislative issues which are often based upon audit or risk assessment, something that is beyond the scope of this report.

Background notes on certain topics have been included at Appendix BIR2.

### 4.1 General Property

|   | Item                             | Observation and Recommendation   |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| 3 | Building and site sustainability | We have sourced an EPC which appears to be for this property however we are unable to confirm (refer to section 4.3). If the EPC rating is correct, the property falls within the required energy efficiency band and no actions are required in the immediate term or short term. It should be confirmed that there is a EPC for this property / the one we found is for this property. Whilst improvements could be made to the property, as it's evidently not been improved (single glazing minimal to no insulation to walls or roof etc.) improvements are not considered viable if the plans are to redevelop the site in the medium to short term. |
| 3 | Building services sustainability | There is no renewable energy installation on site. Improvements are not considered viable if the plans are to redevelop the site in the medium to short term.  |
| 3 | Locality, crime and security     | We are not aware of any specific crime issues related to the site. According to the Metropolitan police crime statistics map for Cricklewood and Mapesbury, 301 crimes were reported between March and May 2024. The most reported crime was "anti-social behaviour" (98), "violence and sexual offences" (62) was the second most reported crime, and "vehicle crime" (22) was the third.<br><br>As per section 2.6 of this report, the site features perimeter CCTV which is currently not in operation.   |

## 4.2 Environmental

|   | Item  | Observation and Recommendation  |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Pollution, contamination, land use and subsidence | We have not been provided with any Client commissioned reports or anecdotal information relating to pollution, contamination or subsidence with the building or to the land.<br><br>We have no specific concerns based upon visual inspection.  |
| 3 | Waste   | We have not been provided with a waste management plan for review. We would expect the on-site staff of any future tenant to ensure adequate waste disposal.  |
| 3 | Flood risk  | Gov.UK published flood risk summary for this area reports:<br><br>Surface Water – High (means that this area has a chance of flooding of over 3.3% each year).<br><br>Rivers and Sea – Very Low Risk (means that this area has a chance of flooding of less than 0.1% each year).<br><br>Groundwater – Flooding from groundwater is unlikely in this area.<br><br>Reservoirs – Flooding from reservoirs is unlikely in this area.   |
| 3 | Radon risk  | The property is in an area within the lowest band of radon potential. Less than 1 % of properties are above the Action Level.   |
| 2 | Trees, invasive vegetation and vermin             | There are various trees, many mature, within the boundaries of the property. There are no significant concerns regarding the proximity of trees to the property in respect of tree roots, although their presence may have been a contributing factor to the failure of the macadam.<br><br>Planning data suggests that the specimens within the site boundary are not subject to TPOs.<br><br>We did not note the existence of any Knotweed or Hogweed at the property during our inspection. However, due to the excessive weed and plant growth making some areas of the gardens inaccessible, only a limited inspection could be undertaken. A plant survey should be undertaken when all areas |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | of the gardens are accessible to confirm no invasive/toxic plant species. |
|--|--|---|

### 4.3 Statutory

|   | Item       | Observation and Recommendation   |
|---|------------|--|
| ① | EPC or DEC | <p>A search for the property on the Government's online EPC register produces two results:</p> <p>1) Gladstone Park Pavilion, Anson Road, London, NW2 6BH (0710 0013 1119 0296 7006)</p> <p>2) Gladstone Park Sports Pavilion Cafe, Anson Road, London, NW2 6BH.</p> <p>It is thought that the former relates to the property (providing a EPC rating of C 61 valid until 22 June 2027), however we cannot be certain. This should be confirmed, a EPC is required in order to let the property. We have allowed in our cost table for an additional EPC assessment and a provisional sum for works which may result.</p> <p>The associated full report made some recommendations on how to improve the EPC rating and is available via the Government's EPC database.</p> <p>Under the provisions of the Energy Act 2011 it became unlawful from 1 April 2018 to let commercial properties to new tenants where they had a poor energy rating currently considered to be F or G.</p> <p>The Government has confirmed in the Energy White Paper that it intends to make it unlawful to continue to let commercial property with an EPC rating of <b>below B by 2030</b> and on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021, it issued its proposed framework forming part of its "<i>package of measures</i>" to reduce carbon emissions. The proposed framework sets out a phased implementation with the introduction of compliance windows as follows:</p> <p><i>First Compliance Window: EPC C (2025-2027)</i></p> <p>1 April 2025: Landlords of all commercial rented buildings in scope of MEES must present a valid EPC.</p> |

|   |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
|   |                                    | <p>1 April 2027: All commercial rented buildings must have improved the building to an EPC <math>\geq</math> C or register a valid exemption.</p> <p><i>Second Compliance Window: EPC B (2028 – 2030)</i></p> <p>1 April 2028: Landlords of all commercial rented buildings in scope of MEES must present a valid EPC.</p> <p>1 April 2030: All commercial rented buildings must have improved the building to an EPC <math>\geq</math> B or register a valid exemption.</p> |
| 3 | Planning and Building Control      | <p>The local authority planning register does not contain record of any planning applications or building control applications for this building within the last 10 years.</p> <p>We have not seen or reviewed whether planning consents obtained have had any conditions discharged. Nor have we seen or reviewed consents or conditions for the original construction or any subsequent redevelopments or additions.</p>   |
| 3 | Fire precautions                   | <p>We did not observe any firefighting equipment, the fire audit recommended under section 3 should inform the necessary provisions required. A fire risk assessment should be undertaken.</p>   |
| 1 | Accessibility and social inclusion | <p>Accessibility throughout the building is poor.</p> <p>None of the access doors to the property provide level access. The basement does not have accessible access either internally or externally. The ground floor is not fully level. It features steps to the west section. Depending on the potential tenant lined up reasonable improvements may need to be made.</p>  |

## 4.4 Problematic Materials

Certain materials are considered by the construction industry to be deleterious or problematic. Please see Appendix BIR2 for further details. Unless stated otherwise, this section contains comments that are based upon visual inspection only as opposed to physical testing.

| Deleterious or hazardous materials | Location | Recommendation |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------------|
|------------------------------------|----------|----------------|

|   |                            |  |  |
|---|----------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Asbestos                   | Asbestos Containing Material was observed in the basement plant room. Based on the age of the building, asbestos is likely to be present in other locations. | An asbestos register and management plan will be required to comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.<br><br>An asbestos R&D survey will be required prior to any works being undertaken. |
| 3 | Machine Made Mineral Fibre | Not seen, but the presence of MMMF for insulation is expected in a property of this age.   | Appropriate PPE to be worn if disturbed.   |

#### 4.5 Enquiries of the Legal Team

|   | Item                | Observation and Recommendation   |
|---|---------------------|--|
| 1 | Tenancy of basement | <p>We understand the basement area is currently leased out as a gym. We have not been provided details or documentation regarding the terms of the lease.</p> <p>The terms of the basement tenancy should be reviewed in respect of any impact they may have on a new tenancy for the ground floor only and/or the whole building. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What access rights are the gym entitled too regarding car parking and ground floor access doors?</li><li>• There is no WC facility in the basement. It is assumed the gym uses the ground floor men's WC. Is this facility included as part of their lease?</li><li>• What are their yield up requirements of their lease?</li><li>• When does their lease conclude and what notice period is required? Etc.</li></ul> |

#### 4.6 Review of Documents

|   | Item          | Observation and Recommendation                    |
|---|---------------|---|
| 2 | Documentation | We have not been provided with any documentation. |



|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | <p>We do not expect with a building of this age that any O&amp;M manuals will exist, nor do we consider it likely a H&amp;S file has been maintained for any prior works.</p> <p>We expect any fire risk assessment they may have would be outdated, and we understand the gym tenant does not have one. A fire risk assessment is required.</p> <p>We would expect there to be an asbestos management survey, we have made allowances in our costings for this and a pre-refurbishment and demolition survey prior to the works we have recommended.</p> |
|--|--|---|

## 5 Approximate Costings

This section summarises the various defects that we have identified together with the approximate cost of rectification and its priority.

The schedule is intended to illustrate the approximate cost of placing the building into repair including the future cost of repair or replacements where reasonably foreseeable, but it does not constitute a planned maintenance schedule and should not be treated as such.

We have not included refurbishment work of a capital nature unless otherwise indicated.

| Item/defect |   | Repair  | Approximate costs £(k) |             |              |              |
|-------------|---|---|------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
|             |   |   | Within 1 Year          | 1 - 3 Years | 4 - 10 Years | TOTAL        |
|             | <b>External</b>   |   |                        |             |              |              |
| 1           | Main roofs  | Renew expired mineral felt. Allowance slab/screed repairs.  | 31.50                  |             |              | <b>31.50</b> |
| 2           |   | Remedial repairs and solar coating.   | 7.20                   |             |              | <b>7.20</b>  |
| 3           |   | Allowance for slab/screed repairs.  | 12.00                  |             |              | <b>12.00</b> |
| 4           |   | Allowance for scaffolding/edge protection.  | 14.00                  |             |              | <b>14.00</b> |
| 5           | Projecting canopy roof and timber support structure to front elevation (west section) | Provisional allowance for disposal.   | 1.50                   |             |              | <b>1.50</b>  |
| 6           | Timber roof and support structure to rear basement access stair                       | Provisional allowance for disposal.   | 1.50                   |             |              | <b>1.50</b>  |
| 7           | Chimney   | Remedial repairs to pot, flaunching, stack and flashing detail.   | 1.00                   |             |              | <b>1.00</b>  |
| 8           | Elevations  | Allowance for remedial repairs to elevations including repointing where necessary and remedial repair to cracked concrete post. | 3.00                   |             |              | <b>3.00</b>  |

|    |                           |   |       |  |  |              |
|----|---------------------------|---|-------|--|--|--------------|
| 9  |                           | Prepare and redecorate throughout.  | 12.10 |  |  | <b>12.10</b> |
| 10 | Rainwater goods           | Overhaul rainwater goods, refixing and repairing , redecorating and replacing where missing.  | 5.00  |  |  | <b>5.00</b>  |
| 11 | Windows                   |   | 0.75  |  |  | <b>0.75</b>  |
| 12 |                           | Redecorate in conjunction with external elevations & clean glazing.   | 2.50  |  |  | <b>2.50</b>  |
| 13 | Concrete stairs           | Undertake concrete repairs and remark nosings   | 1.00  |  |  |              |
| 14 | Doors                     | Replace with modern equivalents including new locks.  | 4.80  |  |  | <b>4.80</b>  |
|    | <b>Internal</b>           |   |       |  |  |              |
| 15 | Ceilings - ground         | Clean (including mould specialist mould removal), smooth skim plaster finish areas with painted concrete panels and repairs to existing plaster finishes, prepare and decorate. | 9.40  |  |  | <b>9.40</b>  |
| 16 | Internal walls - ground   | Remedial repairs (including to cracking), clean prepare and redecorate throughout. Replace bathroom tiles with modern equivalents.  | 18.00 |  |  | <b>18.00</b> |
| 17 | Floors - ground           | New finishes throughout.  | 27.00 |  |  | <b>27.00</b> |
| 18 | Windows                   | Allowance for remedial repairs and internal decoration  | 5.00  |  |  | <b>5.00</b>  |
| 19 | Internal joinery - ground | Allowance for replacement of all existing doors with modern equivalents.  | 16.50 |  |  | <b>16.50</b> |

|                                       |                            |   |               |             |             |               |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| 20                                    | Fixtures and fittings      | Provisional allowance to remove prior tenant's items from site.<br>Provisional allowance to deep clean WC/bathroom sanitaryware.  | 10.00         |             |             | <b>10.00</b>  |
| 21                                    | Misc.                      | Provisional allowance for works resulting from FRA, asbestos survey, accessibility audit, EPC inspection, etc.  | 60.00         |             |             | <b>60.00</b>  |
| <b>External Areas/Boundaries</b>      |                            |   |               |             |             |               |
| 22                                    | Temporary structures.      | Allowance for clearing from site  | 3.00          |             |             | <b>3.00</b>   |
| 23                                    | Grass/plant life           | Allowance to treat/clear/trim   | 4.00          |             |             | <b>4.00</b>   |
| 24                                    | Tarmac/tarmacadam surfaces | Localised repairs   | 4.00          |             |             | <b>4.00</b>   |
| 25                                    | Block paving slabs         | Relay to provide a level finish   | 1.00          |             |             | <b>1.00</b>   |
| 26                                    | Boundary fencing           | Repairs to fencing including concrete fence posts and chain-link and leaning posts. Treat corrosion. Redecorate fence and gate to the front stair. Replace damaged and refix loose timber panels to the dividing fence of the front yard. | 5.00          |             |             | <b>5.00</b>   |
| 27                                    | Vehicular gates            | Allow to redecorate   | 1.00          |             |             | <b>1.00</b>   |
| <b>Structure and fabric sub total</b> |                            |   | <b>261.75</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>261.75</b> |

| Item/defect | Repair                        | Approximate costs £(k) |             |              |       |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------|
|             |                               | Within 1 Year          | 1 - 3 Years | 4 - 10 Years | TOTAL |
|             | <b>Services Installations</b> |                        |             |              |       |
|             | <b>Mechanical</b>             |                        |             |              |       |

|    |                             |  |           |  |  |              |
|----|-----------------------------|--|-----------|--|--|--------------|
| 28 | Gas Installation            | Carry out gas safe testing on the gas installation and all appliances, including boiler and catering equipment                       | 1.50      |  |  | <b>1.50</b>  |
| 29 | Gas Installation            | Pressure test and purge gas pipework   | Inc above |  |  | <b>0.00</b>  |
| 30 | Heating                     | Carry out a full validation survey on the existing boiler plant and associated circulation pumps/controls etc.                       | 2.00      |  |  | <b>2.00</b>  |
| 31 | Heating                     | Subject to validation survey (as above), allowance to replace the two existing boilers with flues connected back to existing chimney | 15.00     |  |  | <b>15.00</b> |
| 32 | Heating                     | Allow for replacement/ repair of leaking heating pipes in the short term   | 3.00      |  |  | <b>3.00</b>  |
| 33 | Heating                     | Replace aged radiators. Allowance may need to increase for LST radiators   | 25.00     |  |  | <b>25.00</b> |
| 34 | Heating                     | Flush primary and secondary pipework, re-commission heating system, chemical dosing  | 1.50      |  |  | <b>1.50</b>  |
| 35 | Ventilation                 | Replace aged extract in male toilet. Provide toilet extract in female toilet, one wall mounted fan per cubicle                       | 4.50      |  |  | <b>4.50</b>  |
| 36 | Ventilation                 | Provide mechanical ventilation to the kitchen area   | 10.00     |  |  | <b>10.00</b> |
| 37 | Controls                    | Validate, overhaul / repair existing controls  | 3.60      |  |  | <b>3.60</b>  |
| 38 | Hot and Cold water services | Take water sample and flush/chlorinate water services prior to use   | 1.50      |  |  | <b>1.50</b>  |

|    |                              |  |       |  |  |              |
|----|------------------------------|--|-------|--|--|--------------|
| 39 | Hot water Services           | No access to the hot water cylinder in the basement area. Provide access and allowance for minor repairs   | 1.30  |  |  | <b>1.30</b>  |
| 40 | Hot and Cold water services  | Allowance for minor repairs and removal of lead pipework   | 2.00  |  |  | <b>2.00</b>  |
| 40 | Above ground drainage        | Remove aged/fault waste water pipework (lead) and replace with new plastic   | 1.20  |  |  | <b>1.20</b>  |
| 41 | Basement Sump Pump           | Allowance for test and/or replacement of the standalone sump pump  | 2.80  |  |  | <b>2.80</b>  |
|    | <b>Electrical</b>            |  |       |  |  |              |
| 42 | Incoming LV and distribution | Carry out a full Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) of the LV electrical services at the property   | 2.40  |  |  | <b>2.40</b>  |
| 43 | Electrical services          | Allowance for repairs following the above installation test/inspection   | 5.00  |  |  | <b>5.00</b>  |
| 44 | Distribution Boards          | Replaced the main switch gear and three phase distribution board due to age, provide surge protection and MCB protective devices, test and reuse existing wiring | 4.00  |  |  | <b>4.00</b>  |
| 45 | Distribution Boards          | Replace aged DBs with split load boards with MCB / RCD protective devices, test and reuse existing wiring  | 6.00  |  |  | <b>6.00</b>  |
| 46 | Small Power                  | Replace aged outlets, reuse existing containment   | 10.00 |  |  | <b>10.00</b> |
| 46 | Lighting                     | Replace damaged / faulty light fittings with energy efficient LED fittings   | 5.00  |  |  | <b>5.00</b>  |

|                          |                    |   |               |             |             |               |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| 47                       | Lighting           | Replace all aged light fittings with energy efficient LED   | 20.00         |             |             | <b>20.00</b>  |
| 48                       | Emergency Lighting | Test/recommission and repair / replacement works to faulty emergency lights. Allow for replacement of some luminaires   | 7.50          |             |             | <b>7.50</b>   |
| 49                       | Fire Alarm System  | Carry out fire risk assessment to determine the fire alarm system installation is adequate for the property/business use  | 1.50          |             |             | <b>1.50</b>   |
| 50                       | Fire Alarm System  | Test/recommission the fire alarm system. An allowance for the increase in the number of detection devices to improve coverage                                   | 10.00         |             |             | <b>10.00</b>  |
| 51                       | CCTV               | Allowance for a new controller/hard drive recorder, test/commission with existing cameras, no allowance for repair/replacement on cameras and associated wiring | 2.50          |             |             | <b>2.50</b>   |
| 52                       | Intruder Alarm     | No Allowance, future tenant to provide as part of their fit out to suit business requirement  |               |             |             | <b>0.00</b>   |
| 53                       | Telecoms / data    | Maintain existing provision, any changes to form part of the tenants fit out to suit their business requirement   |               |             |             | <b>0.00</b>   |
| <b>M&amp;E Sub total</b> |                    |   | <b>148.80</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>148.80</b> |

|              |               |             |             |               |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>410.55</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>410.55</b> |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|

**Footnotes:**

With regard to each of the figures contained in the attached schedules please note that the costings are based upon the notes listed below.

1. The figures include allowances for preliminaries, main contractor's overhead costs and profit.
2. The figures are based on approximate quantities estimated from the visual inspection we carried out on the day of our inspection and are not based on detailed measurements.
3. We have not corroborated any of the figures by comparison with tenders from the marketplace and it should be noted that market conditions and tender factors are likely to produce figures which might differ from those given.
4. The figures have been prepared on the basis of general rates prevailing in the marketplace at present and are exclusive of:
  - Financing Charges, if any
  - Value Added Tax
  - Professional Fees
  - Statutory Fees
5. We have assumed that all building work will be undertaken to similar details and using materials similar to those existing.
6. We have assumed that each item of work will be carried out under separate building contracts with appropriate contractors and at different times. It should be noted however that, if some works are carried out together under a single building contract, certain savings might accrue due to economies of scale. However, where a set of works under a particular cost column all necessitate access scaffolding it is assumed that all items in the set of works will be undertaken simultaneously using the same scaffolding.



## 6 Photographs



1. Front elevation. The “east” section is to the left, the “central” section is in the middle and the “west” section is to the right.



2. Projecting canopy PVC roof to front elevation east section.



3. East section, mineral felt flat roof.





4. Central section, mineral felt barrel roof.



5. West section, mineral felt flat roof.





6. To basement access stair, timber pitched roof to rear.



7. Central section, chimney.





8. Central section, chimney.



9. Central section (roof level), indicative failed pointing.





10. Central section, rear basement door, crack to concrete support.



11. Front elevation east section.

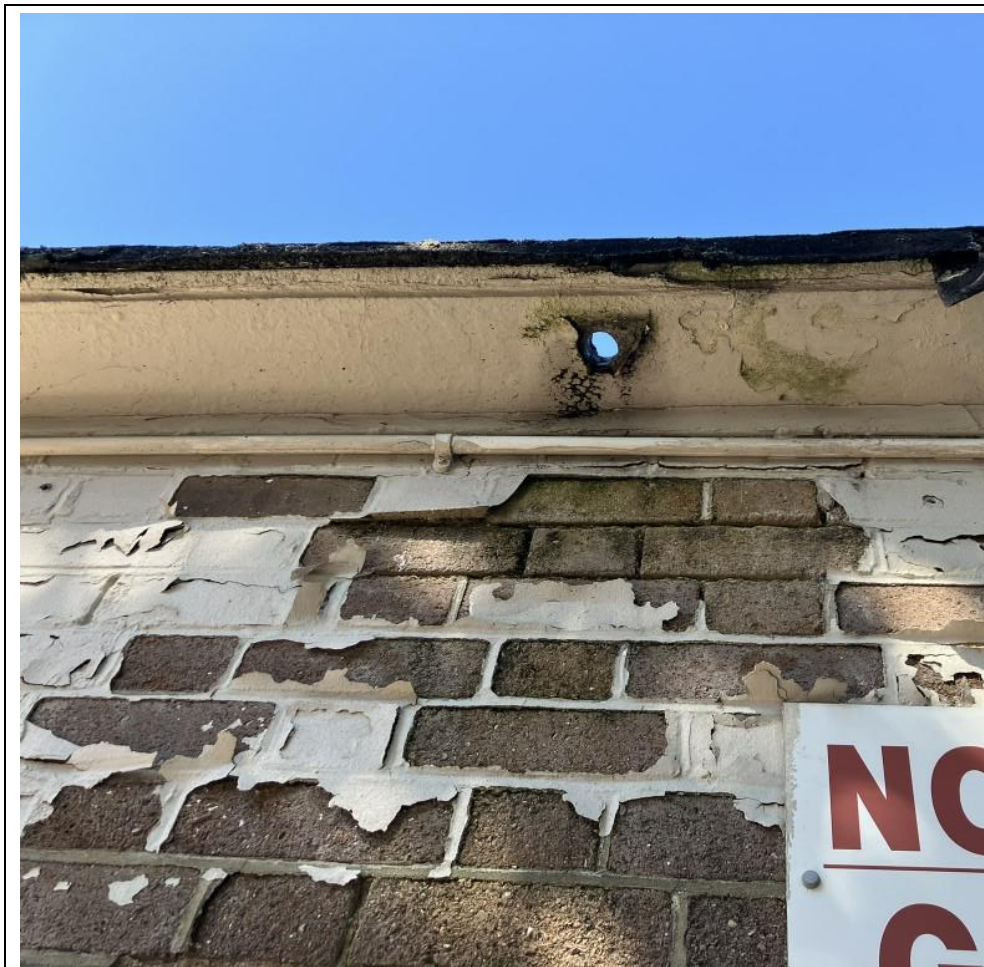




**12.** Rear elevation central section and rear emergency exit door.



**13.** Rear elevation west section, missing rainwater outlet.



**14.** Front elevation east section, missing rainwater outlet.





**15.** Front elevation central section, cast iron downpipes and window bars.

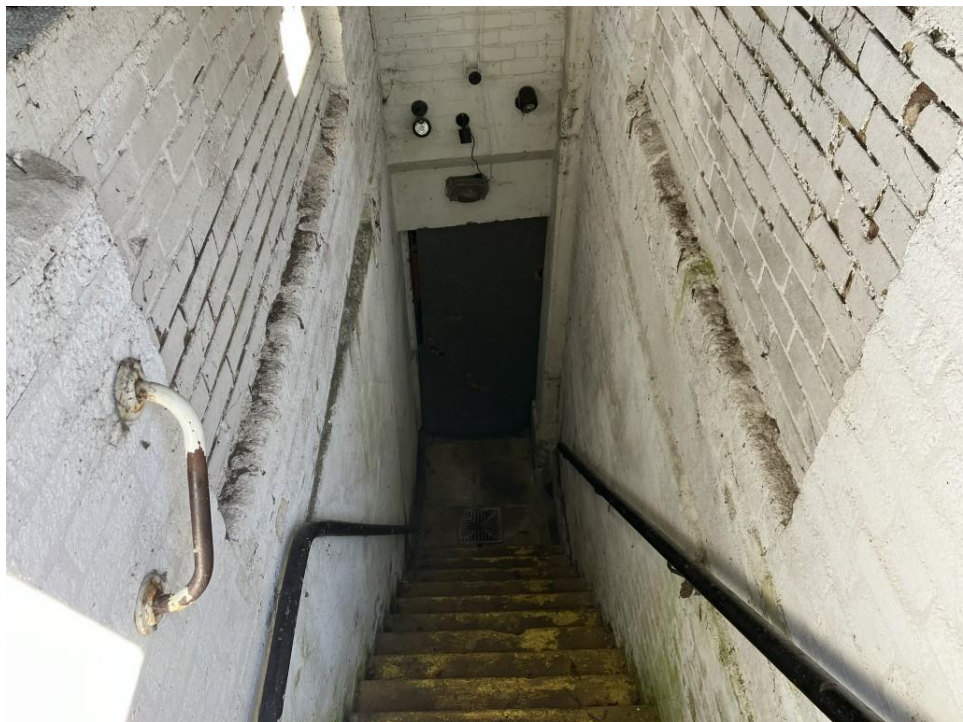


**16.** East section (roof level), PVC pipework.





17. Side (left) elevation east section, PVC gutting and window grilles.



18. Rear elevation central section emergency exit basement.



19. Front elevation central section, main access doors.



20. Front elevation west section, emergency exit door.





21. Central section, Loft access hatch to entrance foyer.



22. Loft space.



**23.** Loft space, spalling concrete.



**24.** Ground floor east section, typical painted concrete board ceiling.

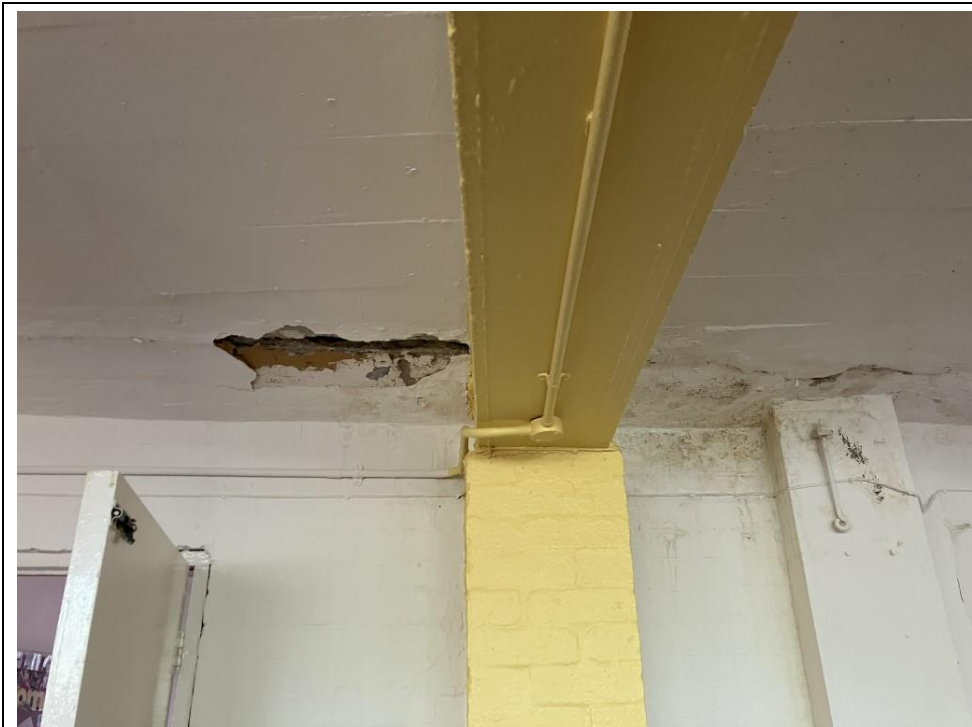




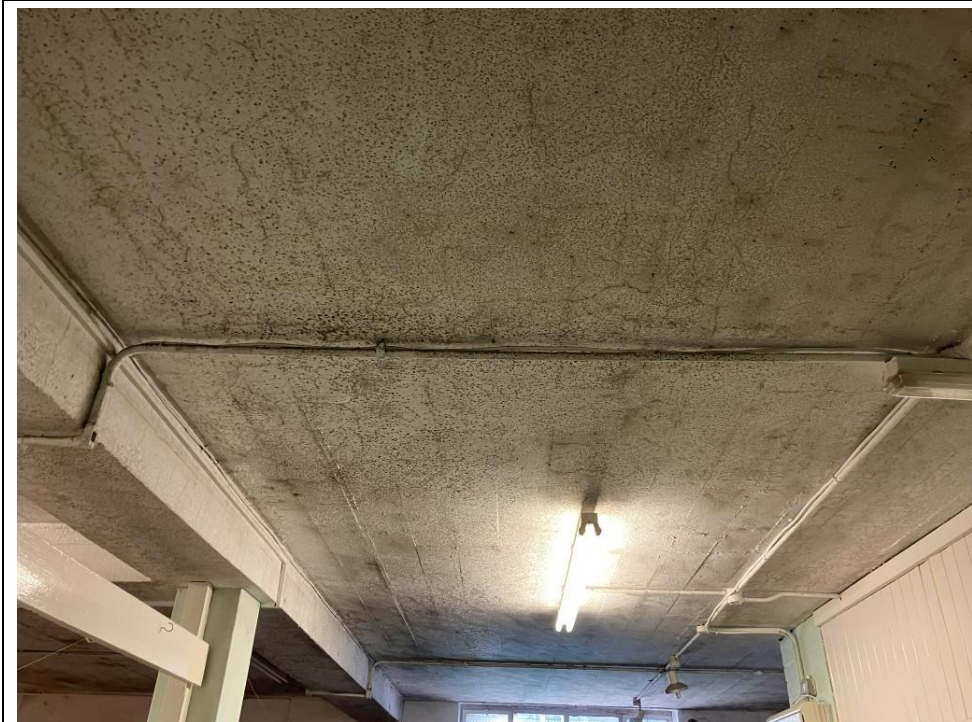
**25.** Ground floor east section, typical mould growth.



**26.** Ground floor east section, typical water ingress stain.



**27.** Ground floor east section, indicative ceiling failure.



**28.** Ground floor west section, typical mould growth.





**29.** Ground floor east section, stained painted masonry wall.



**30.** Ground floor east section, stained painted masonry wall.





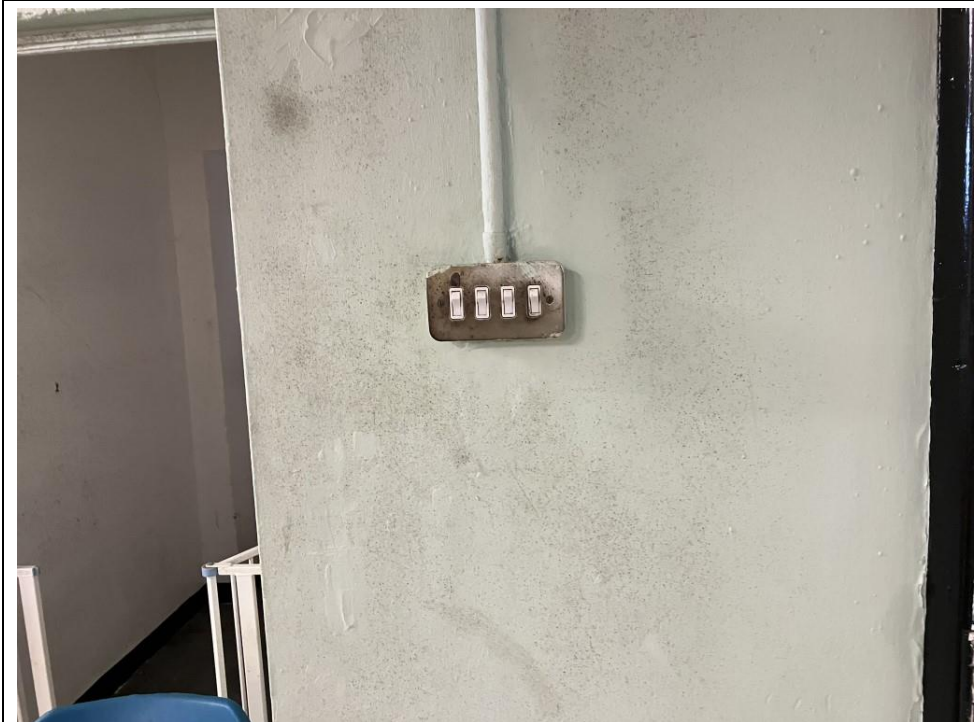
**31.** Ground floor central section, stained and flaking paint finish.



**32.** Ground floor central section, moderate crack.



**33.** Ground floor central section, failed wall tiles.



**34.** Ground floor west section, indicative mould growth.



**35.** Ground floor west section, indicative mould growth and cracking.



**36.** Ground floor west section, indicative mould growth and staining.





**37.** Ground floor west section, indicative cracking.



**38.** Ground floor east section, indicative carpet staining.



**39.** Ground floor central section, timber floor.



**40.** Ground floor west section, indicative mismatching floor.

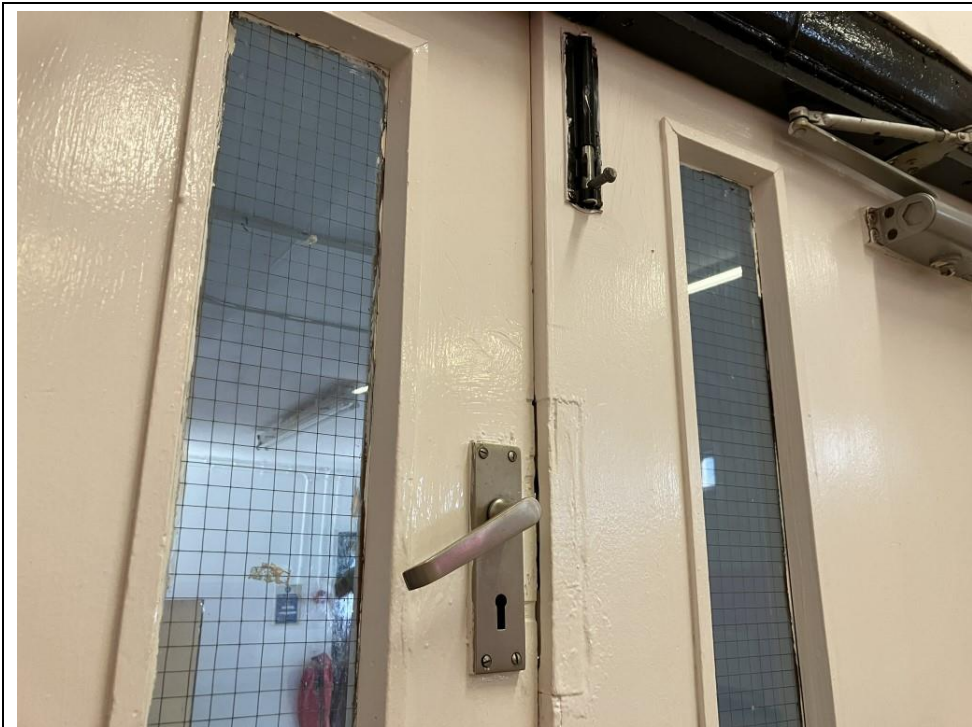




**41.** Ground floor central section, typical Crittall style window.



**42.** Ground floor east section, fire door compromised to form a "Dutch" Door.



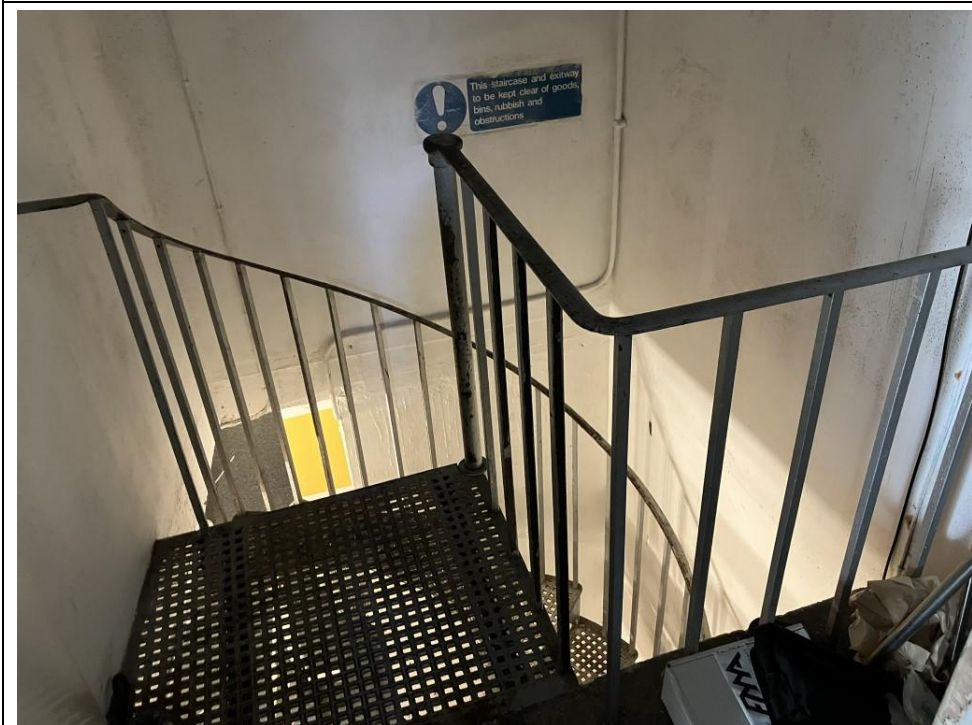
**43.** Ground floor central section, door ill fitting.



**44.** Ground floor west section, example of prior tenant's abandoned fittings.

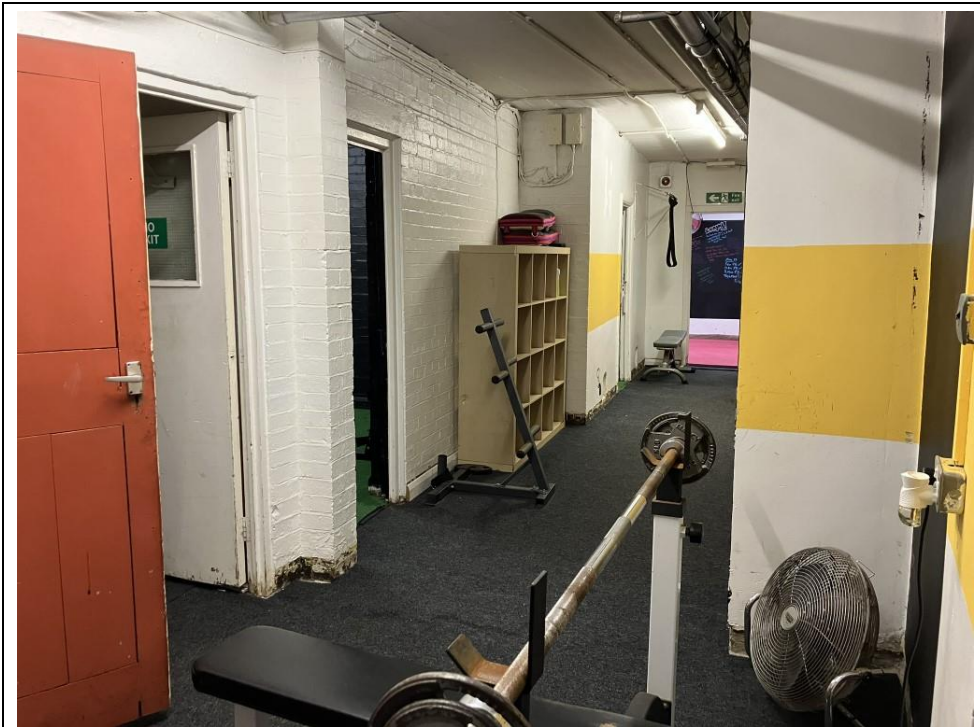


**45.** Ground floor east section, example of prior tenant's abandoned fittings.

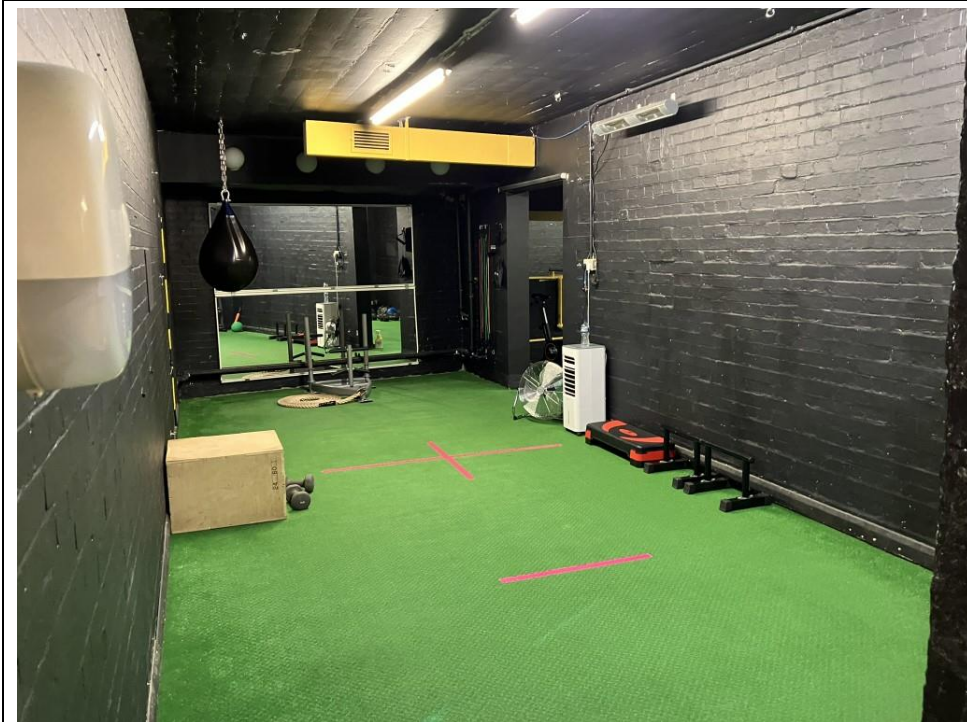


**46.** Ground floor to basement stairwell.





47. Basement, indicative condition photo.



48. Basement, indicative condition photo.



49. Basement, indicative condition photo.

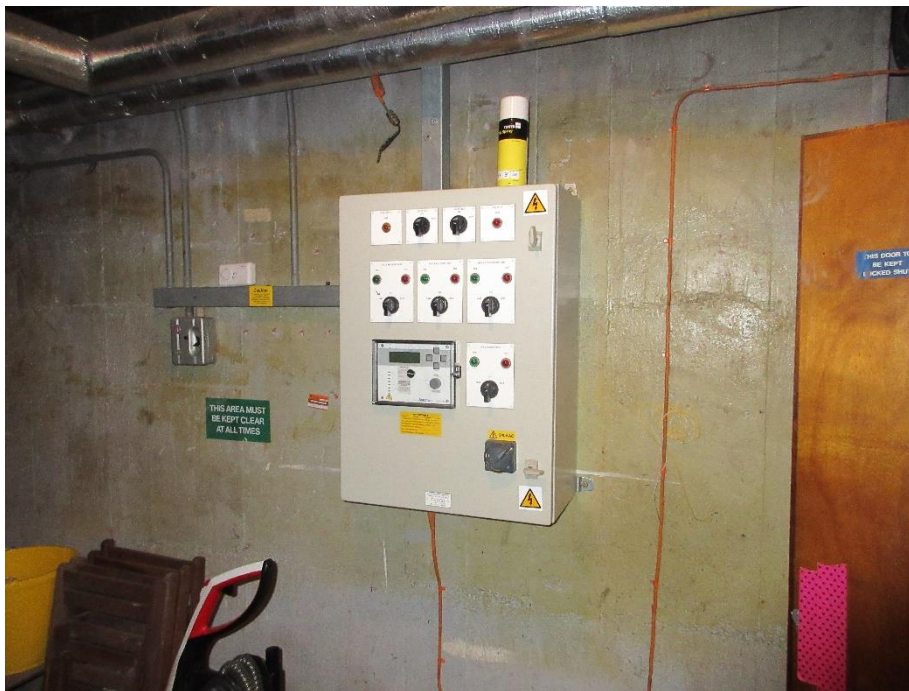


50. Gas fired boilers in the basement plant room, isolated and not operational at the time of our survey.





**51.** Incoming gas service, utility meter and solenoid valve within the basement plant room.



**52.** Control panel serving the mechanical services, all isolated.



**53.** Extract fan serving the basement



**54.** Extract fan serving the WC



**55.** Typical radiator in the main hall, provided with LST cover





**56.** LTHW connections on the LST radiators are exposed and some are show signs of leaks / corrosion



**57.** Other signs of leaks / corrosion on the LTHW system



**58.** Aged cast iron radiator



**59.** Poorly supported check meter on the mains water service at basement level, resulting in excessive pressure applied to connections



**60.** Cold water storage tank in the roof void





**61.** Mixture of pipework materials, lead, copper, steel



**62.** Lead pipework on the domestic and waste services. Waste pipe is unsupported and now not laid to a fall



**63.** Kitchen extract fan is isolated and temporarily covered



**64.** Incoming electrical supply, utility meter and distribution board





**65.** Typical aged distribution board, no circuit schedule



**66.** Typical aged fluorescent lighting and emergency lighting

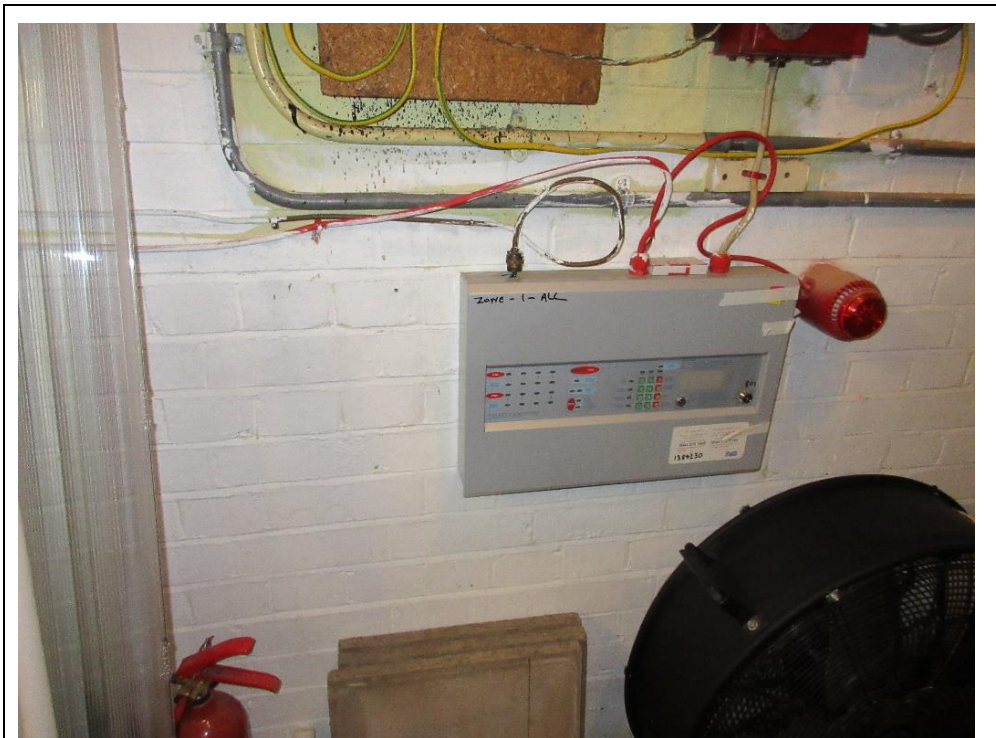


**67.** Typical poor lighting modification / repair on site

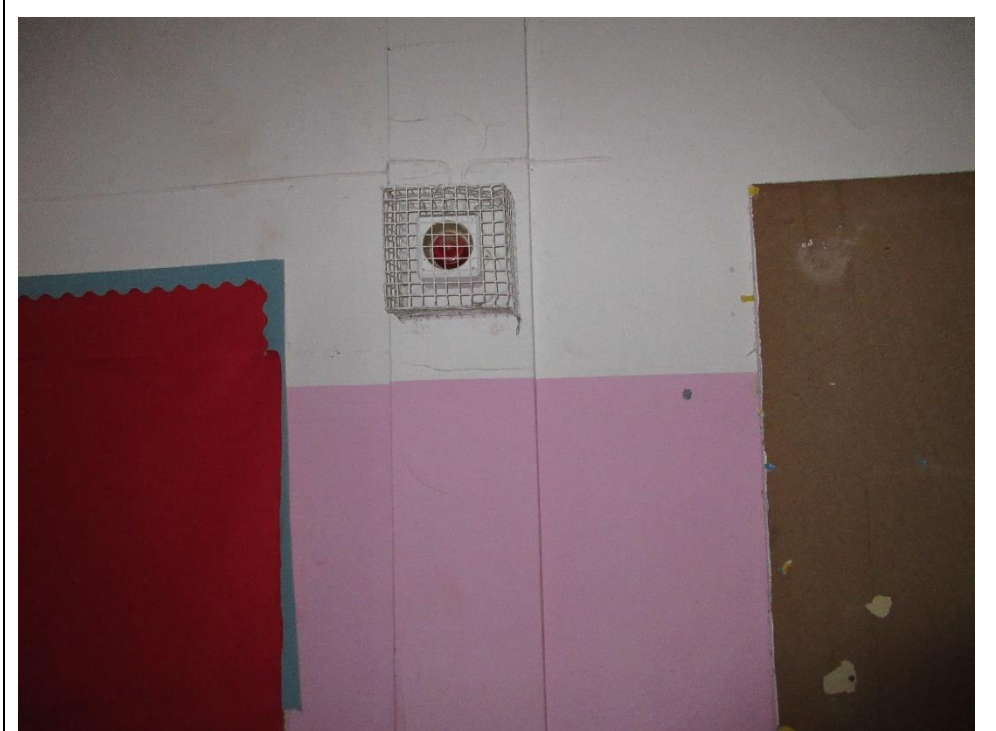


**68.** Typical emergency light, emergency lighting and signage should be reviewed on site and additional service provided where required





**69.** Fire detection and alarm panel at basement level



**70.** Fire alarm sounder/beacon

## Appendix BIR1

### Scope of Service and Limitations

The Limitations applicable to our work have already been confirmed to you. These Limitations are repeated on the pages that follow.

## Appendix BIR2

### Background Information

This section sets out general information to assist understanding of some of the technical issues within the report. Further information may be found in Watts Pocket Handbook.

#### Deleterious or Problematic Materials

The presence of deleterious materials in a building may affect its market value and could, in severe cases, result in element failure or affect the health of persons working or living there.

The reaction of investing institutions to these materials depends on a number of factors and often the presence of a deleterious substance will not prevent a purchase. However, great care must be taken to assess the actual risks or consequences involved, so that a value judgment can be made.

Over the years a variety of building materials have been shown to perform in ways that are hazardous to people or, in the alternative, ways that were not anticipated. The property industry has, often unfairly, tagged these materials as deleterious – a concept that can be shown to be flawed in many cases. Without doubt, materials such as asbestos and lead can be hazardous, but other materials, when used in accordance with their known working parameters can perform perfectly well.

#### Materials Hazardous to Health

The more common hazardous materials, and associated risks, are identified in the following table.

| Materials              | Common Use   | Use Risk   |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Lead                   | When used in water pipes and lead paint (lead roofing materials pose little or no risk). | Risk of contamination of drinking water in lead pipes, or from lead solder used in plumbing joints. Risk of inhalation of lead dust during maintenance of lead-based paint. Risk to children of chewing lead painted surfaces (Pica). Concentration of lead in paint now generally much reduced. Beware of lead content in brass fittings. |
| Urea Formaldehyde foam | Cavity wall insulation. Some insulation boards but rare in UK.                           | There is some evidence that UF foam may be a carcinogenic material although this is not proven. Vapour can cause irritation. Poorly installed insulation can lead to passage of water from outer leaf of brick to  |

|          |   |   |
|----------|---|---|
|          |   | inner leaf in cavity wall situation. There are some worries over formaldehyde used as an adhesive in medium density fibreboard and chipboard, but this is likely to be a problem only in unventilated areas with large amounts of boarding. |
| Asbestos | Commercial and residential buildings as boarding, sheet cladding, insulation and other uses particularly in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. | Airborne asbestos fibres may be inhaled and eventually lead to asbestosis, lung cancer or mesothelioma.   |

### Materials Damaging to Buildings

Those materials which may affect building performance or structure are identified in the following table.

| Materials                     | Common Use   | Use Risk  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Aluminium Composite Materials | Rainscreen cladding systems  | Depending upon the type of core, it is unlikely that the panels will satisfy a requirement for non-combustibility; this is particularly relevant for buildings >18m high that contain sleeping accommodation. The type of insulation used behind the panel is of critical importance; insulation composed of phenolic foam or polyurethane materials have been shown to perform badly in fire simulation tests. |
| Calcium silicate brickwork    | Used in lieu of concrete or clay bricks, often as an inner leaf in cavity work. Often cited as deleterious but if used | Calcium silicate brickwork shrinks after construction with further movement due to wetting. Construction must provide measures of control to distribute cracking. Concrete bricks may display a similar propensity to   |



|                                    |  |   |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
|                                    | correctly will perform well.   | shrinkage and again care must be taken in the design of movement joints, etc.   |
| Calcium chloride concrete additive | Commonly used in in-situ concrete as an accelerator and often added in flake form. Often found in buildings constructed before 1977. (May also be present from atmospheric or traffic exposure).   | Reduces passivity of concrete in damp conditions. Subsequent risk of corrosion of steel reinforcement.  |
| Composite Cladding panels          | Usually of steel or aluminium with a core of mineral wool or thermosetting foam. Some panels contain polystyrene foam. Of the rigid foam types, there are two varieties- PUR and PIR. Only PIR is likely to satisfy insurance companies. | Combustible cores such as polystyrene and PUR can, in the event of a fire, result in total loss situations and are generally discouraged by insurance companies who may impose high deductibles or refuse cover altogether. Mineral wool cored panels or those with PIR cores are more likely to satisfy Loss Prevention standards. Since 2000 PIR is more likely to have been used; prior to this most foams were PUR. |
| High Alumina Cement (HAC)          | Mainly used in the manufacture of precast X or I roof or floor beams together with some lintels, sill members, etc. between 1954 and 1974. HAC was first produced commercially in the UK in 1925.  | Strength of concrete can decrease significantly, often when high temperatures and/or high humidity is involved. Defects may be due to faulty manufacture.   |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Sea dredged aggregate not in compliance with BS EN 1260 (previously BS 882) | In-situ concrete or precast concrete.   | May contain salts such as sodium chloride. If salts are not properly washed out, there is a risk of corrosion reinforcement. Provided the aggregates are properly washed and controlled in accordance with British Standard requirements, the indications are that there are no greater risks involved than with the use of aggregates from inland sources. Risk of inclusion of reactive aggregates that could contribute to ASR, although this is unlikely with most UK-sourced aggregates. |
| Mundic blocks and Mundic concrete   | Concrete blocks and concrete manufactured from quarry shale commonly found in the West Country. | Loss of integrity in damp conditions. Further research required to identify level of risk across the country.   |
| Woodwool slabs (also woodcrete and chipcrete)                               | Often used as (a) decking to flat roofs, or (b) as permanent shuttering.                        | Use in (a) may be considered acceptable. Use in (b) as a permanent shutter may result in grout loss (honeycombing) or voiding of concrete near to or surrounding reinforcement, particularly with ribbed floors. May result in reduced fire resistance, reinforcement corrosion or in extreme cases loss of structural strength. May be repaired by application of sprayed concrete. Condition investigated by cut-out removal of woodwool in many locations.                                 |
| Brick slips   | Typically, 1970s and 1980s to conceal flow nibs in cavity walls.                                | Risk of poor adhesion, lack of soft joints can transfer load to slips and cause delamination.   |

### Materials that can have harmful effects on buildings

Materials that have not been classed as hazardous or deleterious, but which can have harmful effects on a building are identified in the following table.

| Materials             | Common use   | Use risk   |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Clinker concrete      | Typically, late 19th and early 20th century construction for fire resisting floors reinforced with steel joists. | In damp conditions, produces sulphuric acid from combustion products and unburnt coal in the clinker concrete has corrosive effect on steel joists leading to loss of section.   |
| Masonry encased steel | Typically, late 19th and early 20th century construction.  | Corrosion of steel frame due to poor protection against moisture and corrosion. Results in cracking and possible dislodgement of building stone.   |
| Marble cladding       | Late 20th century construction using thin stone panels as cladding (does not affect ashlar).                     | Natural characteristics of calcitic and dolomitic marbles lead to anisotropic movement and thermal hysteresis. Bowing and sugaring of marble panels is prevalent leading to eventual failure. Process is irreversible. |

### Composite Cladding Panels

Insurance companies may take a cautious view of the use of composite panels in buildings and weight their premiums accordingly. In some cases, insurance cover may be refused, or offered only on specific terms and so it is important that the existence of these panels be disclosed as soon as is practicable and before contract.

Certain forms of insulation (mainly thermoplastic materials such as expanded polystyrene) can contribute to a serious fire that has already developed in a building and can, if insecurely fixed, permit facing panels to delaminate explosively. Such problems are more likely to occur with large, self-supporting panels such as are found in food stores than with external wall or roof panels which are mechanically fixed to sheeting rails, but unless the panels can be shown to have approval to LPS 1181, the panels may attract adverse attention.

A variety of different cores are available, but of these only those containing mineral wool or PIR are likely to prove compliance with LPS 1181.

Testing of the core is usually sufficient to draw a distinction between the types of core material (e.g. PUR or PIR) but it is unlikely to confirm that the panel has been manufactured in conformity with the standard.

It is important not to judge the performance of a building during a fire simply by reference to the use of composite panels even if these do not comply with LPS 1181. A number of risk mitigation measures can be deployed such as:

- A sprinkler system
- Management of arson risks
- Management of pallet or cardboard storage
- Battery charging areas are located remote from panels
- Replacement of damaged or perforated panels.
- Good housekeeping
- Welding or heat-producing processes take place in areas remote from the cladding

## **Radon**

Radon is a radioactive gas that occurs naturally in the ground. It occurs when uranium decays. Uranium is found in small quantities in all soil and rocks. Decaying uranium turns into radium and when radium, in turn, decays, it becomes radon. Uranium can also be found in building materials derived from the rocks.

Radon rises through cracks and fissures in the ground into the air. Outdoors, radon is diluted and the risk it poses is negligible. Problems occur when it enters enclosed spaces, such as a building, where concentration levels can build up. When this happens, it can cause a significant health hazard to the occupants of a building by increasing the risk of lung cancer.

Radon is everywhere, but usually in insignificant quantities. General technical information on Radon can be obtained from the Health Protection Agency (HPA). Their website address is [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

A copy of the report containing the Indicative Atlas of Radon of England and Wales with place names can be downloaded from the following website address:

[http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAwebFile/HPAweb\\_C/1204186227787](http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1204186227787)

Information on radon in Scotland may be found at:

[http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb\\_C/1240386976401?p=1197637096018](http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1240386976401?p=1197637096018)

Data concerning levels of Radon in Ireland has been available from the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII) since the late 1990's. Their website address is <http://www.epa.ie/radiation/radonmap/#.Vt8vZk3cuUk>

## **Electromagnetic Fields (overhead and buried cables)**

There has been concern that electromagnetic fields from both natural and artificial sources can cause a wide range of illnesses such as blackouts, insomnia and headaches to depression, allergies and cancer. Artificial sources commonly comprise overhead or subterranean high voltage electrical power cables.

It is suggested that the electrical discharges from these high voltage cables upset the balance of minute electrical impulses employed by the human body to regulate itself in much the same way as television and radio signals can be disrupted.

Controversy and uncertainty prevail with regard to this matter; no strong evidence that is generally accepted to be conclusive has been developed to prove or disprove this alleged hazard. More information is available from the Health Protection Agency:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/electromagnetic-fields>

### **Microwave Exposure**

Health concerns exist with regard to microwave emissions from transmissions masts forming mobile phone networks. Conclusive guidance is not available at present regarding the health risks.

Ofcom provides information regarding the location of each operational externally sited mobile phone base station in the UK. This and other information can be accessed by their website address <http://www.sitefinder.ofcom.org.uk>

### **Invasive Vegetation (Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed)**

Japanese Knotweed was introduced into the UK/Ireland (Eire) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It grows vigorously and can cover large areas to the exclusion of most other plant species. It has been known to grow through bitumen macadam, house floors and sometimes through foundations.

Japanese Knotweed is a highly invasive plant and is not easy to control due to its extensive underground rhizome system, which enables the plant to survive when all above ground parts of the plant are removed. It grows to a height of about 3 metres and is formed from stiff purple speckled stems or canes resembling bamboo. The canes grow densely in the summer and die back in the autumn with white flowers appearing late in the season. The costs incurred in control of the plant are significant.

In the UK it is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to cause the growth of Japanese Knotweed in the wild. Any waste material arising from attempts to control this plant should be disposed of in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Duty of Care) Regulations.

Giant Hogweed closely resembles Common Hogweed (excepting for its size) and can only grow up to 7 metres in height. The plant is perennial, flowering from mid-May through to July with white umbrella shaped clusters of flowers up to 0.8 metres in diameter. Stems of the plant can grow up to 10 centimetres in diameter and are generally dark reddish purple in colour. Leaves are deeply incised whilst leaf stalks are hollow, spotted and bristled.

More information regarding Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed can be obtained from <https://www.gov.uk>

### **Workplace Health and Safety Legislation**

European directives on workplace health and safety are legally binding and have to be transposed into national laws by the Member States.

These directives set out minimum requirements and fundamental principles, such as the principle of prevention and risk assessment, as well as the responsibilities of employers and employees.

[Council Directive 89/654/EEC](#) of 30 November 1989 sets the minimum safety and health requirements for the workplace. Individual member states have implemented specific legislation and whilst there are variations, the subject headings in this report deal with the subject matter in broad detail. For details of national legislation, please refer to the Europa website:

<http://osha.europa.eu/data/legislation/2>

### **Asbestos**

European legislation has sought to prohibit the use of asbestos, and to set strict standards for the protection of workers when they may be exposed. Individual member states also have their own specific requirements. Further general detail may be found at:

<http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/factsheets/51>

### **Disability Discrimination**

Disability covers both physical and mental impairments and covers all employees and members of the public with long term or progressive conditions as well as people with more stable disorders.

Policies relating to people with disabilities reflect the diversity of cultures and legislative frameworks in the EU Member States: the definitions and the criteria for determining disability are currently laid down in national legislation and administrative practices and differ across the current Member States according to their perceptions of, and approaches to, disability.

The general comments given in this report are based upon guidance within the UK which has well developed standards. Country specific legislation can be referenced at:

[http://oshea.europa.eu/en/good\\_practice/priority\\_groups/disability/faq.php](http://oshea.europa.eu/en/good_practice/priority_groups/disability/faq.php)



#### CONTACT DETAILS

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|   |   |
|---|---|
|    | <b>Cabinet</b><br>17 November 2025  |
|   | <b>Report from the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration</b>  |
|   | <b>Lead Member – Cabinet Member for Climate Action &amp; Community Power</b><br><b>(Councillor Jake Rubin)</b>  |
| <b>Approval to Proceed with Alternative Heat Supply for Willesden Green Library- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 4</b>                  |   |
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>  | Willesden Green   |
| <b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>   | Key   |
| <b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b><br><small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small> | Open  |
| <b>List of Appendices:</b>  | One<br>Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment   |
| <b>Background Papers:</b>   | N/A   |
| <b>Contact Officer(s):</b><br><small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>   | Neil Luscombe, Energy Manager<br>0208 937 5027<br><a href="mailto:neil.luscombe@brent.gov.uk">neil.luscombe@brent.gov.uk</a><br><br>Jakob Kupferberg, Energy Projects Manager<br>020 8937 1313<br><a href="mailto:jakob.kupferberg@brent.gov.uk">jakob.kupferberg@brent.gov.uk</a><br><br>Tanveer Ghani, Director of Property & Assets<br>020 8937 1722<br><a href="mailto:Tanveer.Ghani@brent.gov.uk">Tanveer.Ghani@brent.gov.uk</a> |

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report considers the recommendation for the installation of an alternative, low carbon heating solution at Willesden Green Library and other energy conservation measures following Brent Council's successful bid for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 4 (PSDS P4). The project aims to deliver significant carbon savings, improve energy efficiency, and reduce operational costs.

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves a total capital budget of £917,628, which includes £807,000 for installation, £111,000 contingency, and staff capitalisation costs.
- 2.2 Cabinet notes that the total capital budget of £917,628 will be sourced from £667,628 Salix grant and £250,000 from the Carbon Offset Fund. The budget will be split across delivery of the following two projects: Willesden Green Library and Willesden New Cemetery.
- 2.3 Cabinet acknowledges the findings of an Equality Impact Assessment (at Appendix 1) regarding the installation of an alternative heat supply at Willesden Green Library that includes the results of a public consultation undertaken.
- 2.4 Cabinet notes the grant spend timeline stipulated by Salix and its implication on the delivery of the project, particularly when it comes to the requirement to spend all grant funding by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026, as set out in points 5.3 – 5.4.
- 2.5 Cabinet notes the significant financial, energy and carbon savings that the delivery of an alternative heat supply at Willesden Green Library will provide as set out in point 3.7.

## **3.0 Detail**

### **Cabinet Member Foreword**

- 3.1 This report sets out proposals to proceed with the installation of a new low carbon heating system at Willesden Green Library. The existing heating arrangement is not fit for purpose and has presented ongoing operational challenges. The proposed works will deliver a reliable and energy-efficient solution through the installation of an Air Source Heat Pump, supported by other energy-saving measures.
- 3.2 These proposals align with the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Borough Plan 2023 - 2027, notably:
  - **A Cleaner, Greener Future:** delivering a low-carbon, energy-efficient building with active travel facilities.

### **Background**

- 3.3 Linden Homes and Galliford Try (contractor) achieved Practical Completion in June 2015 for the design and construction of the new Willesden Cultural Centre, which includes a new library and 95 residential units. Under the development agreement between the Council and Linden Homes, heating and hot water were to be provided via the Energy Centre. The Council attempted to formalise a heat agreement on two occasions, but negotiations with the Right to Manage (RTM) company, Newman Close, did not result in a resolution.

- 3.4 The RTM has since indicated that Brent Council should explore alternative heating solutions for Willesden Green Library and has expressed a willingness to support the Council during any transition period for a new system.
- 3.5 To this end, Brent Council sought a separate route for the provision of heat at Willesden Green Library. In November 2024, the Council's Energy Team therefore proceeded to apply for PSDS P4 to fund energy efficiency works at two of the Council's corporate sites, one of them being Willesden Green Library of which the primary measure is an alternative heat supply.
- 3.6 On 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025, it was confirmed that Brent was successful with its bid for PSDS P4. In total, £668K of government grant-funding was secured to fund works at the two sites, which is being match-funded by a minimum of £139K (up to a maximum of £250K) through Brent's Carbon Offset Fund. The majority of the total project value (£807K excl. contingency) will go towards an Air Source Heat Pump at the library (£715K). The summary of measures across the two sites are:
- **Willessden Green Library:** Air Source Heat Pump, Building Management System (BMS), LED lighting.
  - **Willessden New Cemetery:** Insulation measures, Air Source Heat Pump, Point of Use water heaters.
- 3.7 Installing an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) at Willesden Green Library will deliver three key benefits:
- a) Internalise heat production and management, enabling the Council to directly oversee energy operations at the site and ensure long-term reliability and control.
  - b) A reduction in energy usage as well as significant reductions in maintenance and service charge costs.
  - c) Support Brent's decarbonisation goals, contributing to the Council's 2030 Net Zero target. The proposed measures are expected to reduce carbon emissions by approximately 2,708 tonnes over their lifetime, representing a 5% annual reduction across the corporate estate.
- 3.8 While the project offers substantial benefits in terms of energy efficiency, financial savings, and carbon reduction, officers undertook consultation to give residents an opportunity to express any concerns they might have about the project.
- 3.9 To ensure meaningful engagement, the Energy Team issued letters to all 95 flats at Newman Close, inviting residents to attend two in-person public consultation meetings held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August and Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August. In parallel, an online consultation was launched, and residents were invited to participate via a follow-up letter.

- 3.10 Following the conclusion of the consultation on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2025, the initial EIA submitted in May 2025 has been updated to reflect the input and feedback from residents. The outcome of the consultation is that most responses to the consultation (80%) are in favour of the Council's departure from the Energy Centre to set up its own heating source as proposed by Brent's successful bid for PSDS P4. One respondent mentioned they prefer the Council stay connected to the Energy Centre as they are concerned it will affect their bills.
- 3.11 In order to mitigate these concerns, the Council has referred residents to its 'Brent Well and Warm' service which provides free energy savings advice (<https://london.greendoctors.org.uk/mailto:GreenDoctorsLDN@groundwork.org.uk>), as well as the 'Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES)' which can help fund heat network optimisation studies and secure capital funding for the improvement measures identified, which in turn would help improve efficiency and lower bills at the Energy Centre.
- 3.12 Following the outcome of the consultation and the reasons outlined above, officers' recommendation is to proceed with the project and deliver the works at both sites.

#### **4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

- 4.1 A member briefing session was undertaken by officers on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025 to inform them of the project proposals, the success of the PSDS P4 bid and the intention to engage residents prior to Cabinet.
- 4.2 Residents have been consulted via a formal public consultation. The Energy Team issued letters to all 95 flats at Newman Close, inviting residents to attend two in-person public consultation meetings held on Saturday 9 August and Thursday 21 August. In parallel, an online consultation was launched, and residents were invited to participate via a follow-up letter.

#### **5.0 Financial Considerations**

- 5.1 The capital budget request is £917,628. This covers £742,016 for the heat pump at Willesden Green Library including fitting costs plus £64,523 for insulation measures at Willesden New Cemetery. There is £111,000 contingency in the budget that will also cover staff capitalisation costs.
- 5.2 The budget will be funded by £667,628 Salix grant and £250,000 contribution from Brent's Carbon Offset Fund. Both these funding sources have appropriate approvals in place.
- 5.3 A key condition of the grant is that the grant funding from Salix is spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. Failure to meet this condition will result in any unspent grant having to be forfeited. Brent Council officers are currently expecting an updated Grant Offer letter to reflect a delayed completion of the project which has been accommodated by Salix, meaning as much of the grant funding is committed to being spent by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 as possible, after which the remaining costs must be covered by the £250k from the Carbon Offset Fund.

- 5.4 Given the tight timescales until year end and that project completion is not expected until June 2026, there is a risk that Brent will not be able to spend the grant in line with Salix's conditions. Once approval is obtained, officers will work with consultants to progress the project as quickly as possible including obtaining appropriate planning permission.

| Item                                     | Target Completion Date        |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Investment Grade Proposal (Construction) | 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2025 |
| Construction Contract Agreement          | 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2026 |
| Procurement of all parts complete        | 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026   |
| Grant invoicing deadline                 | 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026   |
| Completion on-site / commissioning       | 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2026    |

## 6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 The Council has successfully secured £668,000 in grant funding under Phase 4 of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) for energy efficiency improvements at two corporate sites. This funding is subject to a match funding requirement and compliance with the grant conditions. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, including its Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders, all expenditure and delivery of works must be undertaken in accordance with the terms of the grant and the Council's approved procurement procedures. Failure to comply may result in the requirement to repay the funding and could expose the Council to reputational and financial risk.
- 6.2 As referenced in paragraph 3.2.3, the Council has received correspondence from the entity managing the existing heat supply infrastructure at Willesden Green Library, indicating that alternative arrangements should be considered for future heat provision. The Council is not the contracting party for the current heat supply and has no formal agreement in place. In light of this, and in accordance with its general powers under the Constitution to manage and secure energy provision for its assets, the Council is entitled to pursue alternative heating solutions to ensure continuity of service and value for money.
- 6.3 In considering whether to approve the use of grant funding for the installation of a new Air Source Heat Pump to provide heating and hot water services at Willesden Green Library, Cabinet must take into account the Equality Impact Assessment provided at Appendix 1. This assessment evaluates the potential impact of the proposed decision on library users, staff, and residents of the adjacent flats who currently share the existing heat source with the library. This is in line with the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.4 Subject to Cabinet approval, officers are authorised to proceed with a variation to an existing contract to enable delivery of the proposed works. This approach is permitted under Regulation 72 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015,

which allows for modification of contracts without a new procurement procedure under certain conditions, including where the variation does not alter the overall nature of the contract and remains within the financial thresholds. Officers will ensure that the variation is compliant with both PCR 2015 and the Council's Contract Standing Orders, and that the grant funding is safeguarded through timely implementation.

## **7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted to consider the impact on protected characteristics of the local community. This assessment considers a public consultation which has been held to understand any equalities impacts that may arise as a result of the proposed works. The EIA has concluded that 1) there will be minimal impact on the users of the library and its staff as the vast majority of the works will not impact normal working hours 2) the majority (80%) of respondents to the consultation (4 out of 5 responses) have indicated that they prefer the Council leave the energy centre and set up its own alternative heating source.
- 7.2 No specific equality concerns have been raised through the consultation, and no disproportionate impacts on protected groups have been identified as a result of this proposal. As a matter of courtesy to the residents of Newman Close, recommendations have been made to residents and the RTM regarding free energy savings advice and avenues to explore external funding to help increase the energy efficiency of its heat network in order to lower any operational inefficiencies or cost rises.

## **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 8.1 The project is in line with the Council's environmental objectives and climate emergency strategy. It is estimate that the work package of PSDS P4 will save the council 2,708 tonnes CO2 equivalent over a lifetime.

## **9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

- 9.1 It is anticipated that the installation of the Air Source Heat Pump at Willesden Green Library may result in some temporary physical disruption on site. From a property and operational standpoint, appropriate planning is underway to minimise any impact on staff and service users. Consultations are currently taking place with relevant environmental and planning officers to ensure that all necessary permissions and mitigations are in place.

## **10.0 Communication Considerations**

- 10.1 A carefully considered communication strategy will be required to:
- Accommodate the works and transfer of heat supply itself, and
  - For continued engagement with residents connected to the Energy Centre, as well as users and staff of the library.

**Report sign off:**

***Jehan Weerasinghe***

Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

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## EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>POLICY/PROPOSAL:</b> | <b>Air Source Heat Pump at Willesden Green Library</b> |
| <b>DEPARTMENT:</b>      | <b>Property &amp; Assets</b>                           |
| <b>TEAM:</b>            | <b>Energy Team</b>                                     |
| <b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>    | <b>Jakob Kupferberg</b>                                |
| <b>DATE:</b>            | <b>26<sup>th</sup> September 2025</b>                  |

*NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.*

### SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

As part of the Energy Team's bid for Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 4 (PSDS P4), government grant-funding has been secured worth £668K with additional match-funding to fund and deliver, among other projects, an Air-Source Heat Pump at Willesden Green Library.

The proposed works at the library will achieve three things:

1. Transfer the responsibility for heat and hot water production and management at the site back to the Council;
2. Reduce the Council's energy bills with measures funded by PSDS P4 expected to deliver annual energy bill savings of approximately £60-70k.
3. Support the decarbonisation of Brent's Corporate Estate in line with the Council's 2030 Net Zero target.

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

The residents at the residential development (Newman Close), who are also responsible for managing the Energy Centre, that currently provides heating to the Library, will be directly affected. The financial impact of this has not been determined as the Council does not hold the data it requires to make an accurate calculation.

A 6-week public consultation was carried out. This included two mailouts to Newman Close and two separate in-person resident consultation meetings (on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> of August 2025 at the Library) as well as an online consultation form. The latter was

launched on [haveyoursay.brent.gov.uk](https://haveyoursay.brent.gov.uk) which the residents were invited to fill in and respond to via the mailouts sent to their addresses.

It is anticipated that the proposed works will not disrupt the daily operation of the Library. Employees and local users will continue to access the site as normal. While there may be occasional minor inconveniences during construction, these are expected to be minimal as most works will take place outside of operating hours. It is anticipated that the proposed works will not disrupt the daily operation of the Library. Employees and local users will continue to access the site as normal. While there may be occasional minor inconveniences during construction, these are expected to be minimal as most works will take place outside of operating hours.

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

It is not expected that the proposal will create any equality implications under the Council's public sector equality duty. The majority of works will take place outside standard business hours, so there should be no disruption to the library's normal services or accessibility for staff and users. In the unlikely event of works taking place during normal hours, the impact is anticipated to be minimal and not affect regular use of the library.

While residents connected to the Energy Centre may be financially affected by the Council's exit from the heat network, extensive consultation and scenario analysis have been carried out to understand these impacts. The consultation showed strong resident preference for the Council and the Energy Centre to part ways, and the decision has been made in the wider interests of both the Council and the Borough.

No specific equality concerns have been raised through consultation, and no disproportionate impacts on protected groups have been identified as a result of this proposal.

4. Please indicate with an "X" the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

| Characteristic      | Impact Positive | Impact Neutral/None | Impact Negative |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Age                 |                 | X                   |                 |
| Sex                 |                 | X                   |                 |
| Race                |                 | X                   |                 |
| Disability          |                 | X                   |                 |
| Sexual orientation  |                 | X                   |                 |
| Gender reassignment |                 | X                   |                 |

|                        |  |          |  |
|------------------------|--|----------|--|
| Religion or belief     |  | <b>X</b> |  |
| Pregnancy or maternity |  | <b>X</b> |  |
| Marriage               |  | <b>X</b> |  |

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an “X”.

### **Screening Checklist**

|   | <b>YES</b> | <b>NO</b> |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council’s public sector equality duty? |            | <b>X</b>  |
| Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?  |            | <b>X</b>  |
| Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?                       | <b>X</b>   |           |
| Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?         |            | <b>X</b>  |

**If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B.**

**If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.**

## SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis.  
If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

In order to understand if the proposed works would impact people with protected characteristics, a formal public consultation has been undertaken. Whilst the majority of resident responses to the consultation have been in favour of the proposed decision for the Council to leave the Energy Centre and procure its own energy source, one resident did seem to suggest they believe a departure is not preferable, due to the potential for rising costs.

To mitigate potential rising costs, the Council has signposted residents to its free energy savings advice service ‘Brent Well and Warm’ at <https://london.greendoctors.org.uk/mailto:GreenDoctorsLDN@groundwork.org.uk>, as well as the ‘Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES)’ which can help fund heat network optimisation studies and secure capital funding for works to undertake the improvement measures once a study has been completed.

The public consultation has involved two mailouts, two in-person resident meetings, setting up an email address to deal with any queries or concerns, an online public consultation form lasting 6 weeks and in total 5 responses (one by mail, 2 by email and 2 via the online submission form). The low response rate to the consultation may be due to indications that most flat owners reside abroad as well lack of awareness and understanding of different types of heating systems and arrangements.

In order to mitigate a low response turnout, the Council sent an initial letter detailing the proposed project and invitation to in-person resident meetings, and a follow up letter once again informing of the proposed project, inviting residents to the outstanding in-person meeting and the online public consultation. All proposed measures and options have been described in detail both at the in-person meetings through flyers and printouts and on the online consultation webpage, of which all residents have been invited to participate in. The public consultation has not established any impact by the proposed works to people with protected characteristics.

2. For each “protected characteristic” provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state “not applicable”.

### **AGE**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Details of impacts identified</b> | This project is not expected to have any negative or positive impacts on this group. |
|--------------------------------------|--|

### **DISABILITY**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Details of impacts identified</b> | This project is not expected to have any negative or positive impacts on this group. |
|--------------------------------------|--|

### **RACE**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Details of impacts identified</b> | This project is not expected to have any negative or positive impacts on this group. |
|--------------------------------------|--|

### **SEX**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Details of impacts identified</b> | This project is not expected to have any negative or positive impacts on this group. |
|--------------------------------------|--|

### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Details of impacts identified</b> | This project is not expected to have any negative or positive impacts on this group. |
|--------------------------------------|--|

### **PREGANCY AND MATERNITY**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Details of impacts identified</b> | This project is not expected to have any negative or positive impacts on this group. |
|--------------------------------------|--|

### **RELIGION OR BELIEF**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Details of impacts identified</b> | This project is not expected to have any negative or positive impacts on this group. |
|--------------------------------------|--|

### **GENDER REASSIGNMENT**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Details of impacts identified</b> | This project is not expected to have any negative or positive impacts on this group. |
|--------------------------------------|--|

### **MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Details of impacts identified</b> | This project is not expected to have any negative or positive impacts on this group. |
|--------------------------------------|--|

3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No.

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

The protected characteristics apply to 1 of the respondents who are from a minority ethnic background, however, it was not concluded that the proposed works would impact this protected characteristic in any manner. For three of the responses, no Equalities Monitoring Form was submitted.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

No areas requiring further data or analysis have been identified.

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

As there is no expectation of negative impacts, we cannot comment on the impact of the action plan on people with protected characteristics.

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

The relevant Brent project manager and senior officers leading on the project will monitor the situation and relationship with both the RTM and residents closely, as the project gets the full go-ahead and the installations of the proposed works commences. As part of the public consultation, which indicates the majority of residents taking part support the option of Brent Council leaving the Energy Centre and procuring its own heat source, the Council has sign posted residents at Newman Close (which includes the Director of the RTM) to suitable mitigating options such as free energy savings advice and the HNES which can help improve heat network efficiencies and lower any financial impact of the Council's exit from the Energy Centre.

## **SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

The planned proposal to install a heat pump at Willesden Green Library is expected to reduce the Council's costs, improve energy efficiency, lower carbon emissions and improve overall air quality in the area. Meanwhile, Brent Council has signposted residents at Newman Close to suitable mitigating options such as free energy savings advice service through 'Brent Well and Warm', as well as the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES) which can support in managing and mitigating the potential financial impact of the Council's exit from the Energy Centre.

## SECTION D – RESULT

Please select one of the following options. Mark with an “X”.

|          |  |  |          |
|----------|--|--|----------|
| <b>A</b> | <b>CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED</b> |  |          |
| <b>B</b> | <b>JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL</b>    |  | <b>X</b> |
| <b>C</b> | <b>CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL</b>         |  |          |
| <b>D</b> | <b>STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL</b>         |  |          |

## SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.


| <b>Action</b>   | <b>Expected outcome</b>  | <b>Officer</b>  | <b>Completion Date</b>      |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Liaise with library managers  | A carefully managed project delivery with minimal obstruction to normal library services and operations                | Jakob Kupferberg  | 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2026  |
| Liaise with senior and legal officers overseeing the situation with the RTM.  | Achieve an amicable outcome in which Brent Council leaves the Energy Centre to install its own low-carbon heat source. | Jakob Kupferberg, Shawkat Kohestani, Tanveer Ghani, Neil Luscombe | 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2026  |
| Sign post residents and the RTM Director to free energy savings advice and external funding opportunities such as the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme. | Receive free energy savings advice and improve heat network efficiency and lower bills for residents.                  | Jakob Kupferberg, Neil Luscombe                                   | 9 <sup>th</sup> August 2025 |

## SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>OFFICER:</b>   | Jakob Kupferberg, Energy Projects Manager 26/9/2025<br>Jakob S. Kupferberg |
| <b>REVIEWING<br/>OFFICER:</b><br><i>* the manager with<br/>oversight of the project</i> | Neil Luscombe, Energy Manager, 26/9/2025                                   |
| <b>HEAD OF SERVICE<br/>/ Operational<br/>Director:</b>                                  | Russell Burnaby, Head of Facilities Management, 26/9/2025                  |



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <br><b>Brent</b> | <b>Cabinet</b><br>17 November 2025   |
|   | <b>Report from the Corporate Director of Children, Young People &amp; Community Development</b>      |
|   | <b>Lead Member – Cabinet Member for Children, Young People &amp; Schools (Councillor Gwen Grahl)</b> |
| <b>School Place Planning Strategy 2024 – 2028 Second Refresh</b>                                  |  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>  | All   |
| <b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>   | Key   |
| <b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b><br><small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small> | Open  |
| <b>List of Appendices:</b>  | One<br>Appendix 1: Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024 - 2028 2 <sup>nd</sup> Refresh November 2025   |
| <b>Background Papers:</b>   | N/A   |
| <b>Contact Officer(s):</b><br><small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>   | Shirley Parks, Director, Education, Partnerships and Strategy<br>020 8937 4259<br><a href="mailto:Shirley.parks@brent.gov.uk">Shirley.parks@brent.gov.uk</a><br><br>Michelle Gwyther, Head of Forward Planning, Performance and Partnerships<br>020 8937 2499<br><a href="mailto:Michelle.Gwyther@brent.gov.uk">Michelle.Gwyther@brent.gov.uk</a> |

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report provides Cabinet with a second refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028, approved by Cabinet in October 2023 following a refresh received by Cabinet in November 2024.

## 2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves the second refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028, as provided in Appendix 1.

- 2.2 Notes the continued focus on planning for the sufficiency of places and the sustainability of schools, based on varying demand patterns impacting on school planning areas in Brent.
- 2.3 Notes the very early signs of a reversal of declining pupil numbers in the borough and that a requirement to accommodate higher demand in some planning areas may be required in the future.
- 2.4 Notes there continues to be increasing demand for places that meet the needs of children and young people with SEND aged 0-25 and the intention to further develop the SEND estate capital investment programme as Brent's strategy to address this need, as set out in Section 3.7.
- 2.5 Notes the school place planning actions completed in the first year of the strategy and the actions planned for the coming academic year as set out in section 4 of this report.
- 2.6 Notes the update on the success measures set out in the original strategy in section 3.1.3 of this report.

### **3.0 Detail**

#### **3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword**

- 3.1.1 The Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024–2028 directly supports Strategic Priority 4 of the Borough Plan: The Best Start in Life. Through proactive planning and delivery of sufficient and appropriate early years and school places, the Council fulfils its statutory responsibilities and enables all children and young people in Brent to access high-quality education within their local communities.
- 3.1.2 Approved by Cabinet in October 2023, the Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024- 2028 Strategy sets out a clear framework of objectives and guiding principles to shape the Council's approach to school organisation over the next four years. It reflects a strategic response to demographic trends, including declining demand in some areas and projected growth in others. The Strategy prioritises both the sufficiency of school places and the long-term sustainability of Brent's education infrastructure, ensuring that provision remains responsive, equitable, and financially viable across the borough.
- 3.1.3 The Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028 sets the following success measures and the updated position is also provided:
  - All Brent schools are good or outstanding (*as per applicable Ofsted gradings at the time*).

This was 98.8% at the end of the 2022/23 academic year, 95.3% at the end of the 2023/2024 academic year and 96.5% of Brent schools at the end of the 2024/2025 academic year (based on where current Ofsted single word

judgements still apply). This success measure will be updated as and when appropriate to take into account the new framework for Ofsted inspections replacing the 'single word' judgements.

- Children are able to access education close to home (under two miles for children under 8 and 3 miles for children up to Year 6; within 75 minutes travel time for secondary aged children).

This position was established in November 2023 and remains unchanged in both November 2024 and November 2025

- Brent net exportation of secondary school pupils reduces over the duration of this strategy to 25% with a stretch target of below 25%.

The baseline was 25.8% for the 2023 Year 7 intake and 25.1% for the 2024 Year 7 intake. The figure for the 2025 intake is 23.8%, showing an improving position. The initial target has been achieved, and the ongoing objective is to maintain this level of performance throughout the duration of the strategy. This sustained success reflects strong parental confidence in Brent's education offer, with families actively choosing Brent schools as their preferred setting for their children's education.

- An increase in local SEND places in the borough will lead to a reduction in the use of out-of-borough placements and placements in independent non-maintained special schools.

The percentage of placement spend on the independent, non-maintained special school (INMSS) (Lower is better) was 18.8% at the end of the 2024/2025 financial year which is consistent with 18.5% at the end of the 2023/2024 financial year.

- The take-up rate of free childcare entitlements in the borough increases over the course of the strategy to 70% for two-year-olds and 80% for 3 and 4-year-olds.

The latest figures indicate take-up in Brent as of January 2025 for the two-year entitlement for low/no income families lowered to 53.4%. This reflects a decrease of 6.2% on the take up in 2024 and is below the London average of 61.1% which has also reduced by almost 6%. The take up for 3 – 4 year olds was 80.4%. This is a decrease of 4.4% on the previous year (84.8%) and is approximately 5% lower than the London average. Brent remains ambitious in increasing the uptake of early years entitlements and the strategy outlines steps to achieve this.

## **3.2 Background**

- 3.2.1 The Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028 refresh provides the latest assessment of school place demand across the borough based on pupil projections from the Greater London Authority (GLA). The GLA population projection models are updated and revised annually as new methods or data

become available, for example the 2021 census, which ensures projections provide the best estimates of future population.

- 3.2.2. The GLA projections are informed by centrally held demographic data, such as the Office of National Statistics (ONS) census data and fertility and birth rates, as well as locally held information such as migration patterns and planned housing growth provided by the Local Authority. The methodology also takes account of the percentage of children who historically move into the following academic year in an area and are therefore driven by the number of pupils on roll in the January 2025 school census. The GLA projections also take into account changes in housing growth, so the impact of new housing developments in the borough and those just outside borough borders are reflected in the strategy.
- 3.2.3 A report in 2025 published by London Councils called 'Managing school places and admissions in London' <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/news-and-press-releases/2025/managing-school-places-and-admissions-london-report> analysed the four year school places forecasts of all 33 London local authorities (from 2024) and revealed that a collective predicted drop of 3.6 per cent in demand for reception places and 2.9 per cent in Year 7 places. There are some boroughs predicting growth, but the large majority are forecasting cumulative drops in demand. The latest projections for Brent mainstream school demand indicate that the birth rate is starting to rise again, and this will lead to increasing numbers on roll over the medium to long term.
- 3.2.4. The principles of sufficiency and sustainability continue to underpin the refreshed School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028. Primary schools with falling rolls are being supported through a number of measures as outlined in the strategy. Where there is unused school built capacity or vacant school sites, these will continue to be retained and repurposed for educational use, with a stronger focus on increasing the number of specialist school places for Brent children and young people. A school closure will only be pursued when all other viable options have been exhausted and is deemed necessary to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of educational provision.

### **3.3 Early Years**

- 3.3.1 Under the Childcare Act 2006, local authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare for the needs of most working parents/carers in their area. Brent continues to meet this duty through a diverse childcare market for children aged 0–5, comprising private, voluntary, independent (PVI), and maintained sector providers.
- 3.3.2 While there has been a gradual decline in the number of childminders since 2015 mirroring national trends, Brent's childcare market remains dynamic. Some closures have occurred, often linked to rising operational costs or shifts in local demand. However, this has been offset by new market entrants and existing providers expanding or relocating to larger premises, signalling continued demand and confidence in Brent's early years sector and ensuring sufficient local capacity to meet demand.

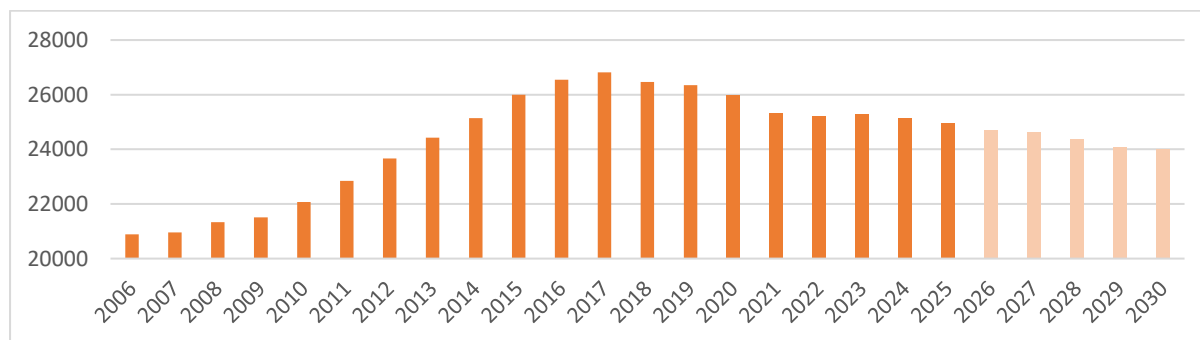
3.3.3 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee received a detailed report on 18 September 2024 titled '[Early years provision and progress towards meeting the expansion of childcare entitlements](#)'. This report outlined Brent's progress in delivering expanded entitlements and deploying capital investment to support growth and sustainability across the sector.

3.3.4 As of August 2025, Brent had a strong network of 284 registered providers including private, voluntary and independent nurseries (PVI), childminders, nursery classes in schools and maintained nursery schools. The borough retains sufficient capacity within the system, particularly in the PVI and childminding sectors, which are the primary providers of places for children aged two and under.

### 3.4 Primary Place Need

3.4.1 Primary school demand has been reducing since September 2017. The latest GLA projections (based on the 2021 population census and the January 2025 school census) and which run to 2029/2030 (because for later years children have yet to be born), indicate demand at primary age will continue to decrease over the next few years (Chart 1). This reduction in demand reflects a falling birth rate across London. The number of births across Greater London fell from 134,037 in 2011/12 to 115,735 in 2019/20.

*Chart 1: Brent Primary numbers on roll and projections as of January each year up to 2030*



3.4.2. At a borough level, Brent has sufficient capacity to meet forecast demand for mainstream primary places and maintain a level of 5% spare places. This ensures the borough has the flexibility to respond effectively to in-year movement, migration, or any unforeseen increases in demand.

3.4.3. However, there are differences across the primary planning areas. One area (Planning Area 3) is expected to experience a significant increase in demand. In contrast, three areas (Planning Areas 2, 4 and 6) are showing sustained lower demand than the number of available places, resulting in a substantial surplus of capacity. Schools in these areas with spare places will help to support those in Planning Area 3 to meet the rising demand.

- 3.4.4 While lower demand means parents have an increased choice of places in some parts of the borough, reduced pupil numbers present organisational and financial challenges for schools. Falling primary demand means that some schools in Brent are operating as one form of entry when they have the built capacity for two, as is the case in many other London authorities, and this trend is likely to continue in the context of reducing demand for places. School funding is received via the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and is driven by pupil numbers. Therefore, the impact of vacant school places causes financial pressures for school as some overheads remain the same despite reduced income. This can impact on the quality of the teaching and learning offer.
- 3.4.5 Over the past few years, the local authority has been working with individual schools to manage changing demand and to support schools to ensure the sustainability of local provision. Measures include temporarily reducing admission numbers or placing an informal cap on admission numbers in specific year groups in schools. A more recent strategy has been to repurpose some spare built capacity to provide a small number of Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) places for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).
- 3.4.6. The sustained reduction in primary demand and the resulting level of spare places in three planning areas alongside limited spare capacity in another, means individual measures are no longer an adequate response. The second refresh of the strategy outlines a range of proactive and coordinated options, also recognising that schools through their active participation in the School Place Planning Working Group have a key role in identifying emerging challenges and co-developing sustainable solutions.
- 3.4.7 Longer term forecasting, which is less reliable, indicates that reception demand will rise after 2029/2030 (led by a rise in birth rate from 2023/2024) and that this increased birth rate will also lead to a higher level of demand for school places in Brent from 2030/31. This demand will not be evenly distributed. Some planning areas are likely to retain high numbers of surplus places, which means that action may still need to be undertaken to address this, while ensuring the sufficiency of places to meet any sustained future demand.

### **3.5 Secondary Place Need**

- 3.5.1 The latest GLA secondary forecasts project a stable demand for Year 7 places after the falling demand of recent years, and there will be sufficient capacity to meet this forecast demand. However, the latest projections indicate the level of surplus capacity across the borough may fall below the target of 5% in some higher year groups from 2028/29. (Secondary forecasts are for a longer timescale than primary, as they are more reliable because children are already attending nursery or primary school).
- 3.5.2 A key challenge is in-year demand for secondary places which is expected to remain high in some planning areas and year groups, especially Year 11. This increased demand is caused by inward migration to the borough and population mobility levels. Brent will continue to work with secondary schools to ensure in-

year demand can be met, but secondary schools cannot swiftly increase teaching capacity even if they have the building capacity to do so and to increase pupil numbers takes time. Where necessary, Fair Access Protocols are being and will continue to be employed to place children who are out of school and who have not been offered a school within 4 weeks of their application.

### **3.6 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision Need**

- 3.6.1 Brent is a borough that has high aspirations for all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This was recognised by Ofsted during Brent's SEND Area Inspection in January 2025 who wrote *"Leaders across the partnership understand very well the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families. They have high ambitions and a relentless focus to continue to improve services for children and young people who have SEND"*.
- 3.6.2 Brent and its schools acknowledge that Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are not necessarily fixed or lifelong characteristics. At different points in time, a child may experience additional learning needs that require tailored or enhanced support to enable full participation in school life. For some children, this may involve access to specialist provision throughout their education.
- 3.6.3 There is a range of high-quality provision for children with SEND in Brent encompassing 3 enhanced pre-school providers, 1 primary special maintained school, 1 primary special academy school, 2 special all through academy schools and 2 secondary special school academies, and a number of Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARP) in both primary and secondary mainstream schools. An ARP is designed to provide specialist and targeted support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who can function well in a mainstream school. ARPs provide specialist environments which support the learning needs of each pupil, and many young people with additional learning needs can make better and more sustained progress when they attend mainstream schools.
- 3.6.4 Brent currently provides 977 places in special schools and 246 places in Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs), reflecting year-on-year increases of 1.5% and 2.8% respectively. This growth demonstrates the positive impact of phase one of the SEND Capital Programme, which has successfully expanded specialist provision to meet rising demand. The increase in capacity not only supports Brent's commitment to inclusive education but also ensures that children and young people with complex needs can access high-quality, tailored support closer to home.
- 3.6.5. As with other London boroughs, Brent schools may educate children and young people with SEND from outside the borough, just as some Brent-resident pupils attend special schools elsewhere. Consequently, the proportion of out-of-borough pupils placed in Brent's special schools and Additionally Resourced

Provisions (ARPs) fluctuates annually. Currently, 12% of Brent's total specialist provision is occupied by pupils from other boroughs, an increase of 1% compared to the previous academic year. As a result, Brent currently accesses 860 of the 977 special school places and 216 of the 246 ARP places available within the borough

### **3.7 Demand for specialist provision**

- 3.7.1 As of August 2025, there are 4025 children and young people living in Brent aged 0-25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Of these, 2414 are statutory school age, or 5.5% of the school population (similar to national levels, which currently sit at 5.3%). 12% of pupils are identified with additional needs that can be met at SEN support where a need is identified but does not meet threshold for an EHCP (compared to 14.2% nationally).
- 3.7.2 In the last year, the number of EHCPs has increased across all age groups, but not consistently. The age groups with the highest increases in EHCP numbers were the 5-10 and 16-19 age groups, which saw increases of 8.2% and 7.4% respectively.
- 3.7.3 Targeted and ongoing support for schools and early years settings has contributed to a modest but meaningful increase in the proportion of children with an EHCP attending mainstream provision in Brent, rising by 1% to 48%. This reflects growing confidence and capability within the mainstream sector to meet the diverse needs of children and young people with SEND. Alongside this, Brent has made significant capital investment to expand specialist provision within special schools and ARPs. However, demand continues to outpace supply. Based on current projections within the SEND Sufficiency Strategy, Brent requires an additional 212 primary and 150 secondary special school places beyond those already planned through the current capital expansion programme. This shortfall is expected to grow year-on-year, underscoring the need for sustained investment and strategic planning to ensure all children and young people with SEND can access appropriate, high-quality education within the borough.

### **4.0 School place planning strategy actions undertaken and planned**

- 4.1. A number of school place planning actions have been completed that support Brent's school place planning strategy to provide both sufficiency and sustainability of mainstream school places.
- Carlton Vale Infant School and Kilburn Park Junior School joined together in a hard federation in April 2024 and are now in the planning stages to become a single school on one site as part of the South Kilburn Regeneration Programme. This is in response to demand increasing in the longer term beyond the 5-year forecasts in the strategy.
  - Following Cabinet's decision in May 2024 to proceed with the closure of the Gwenneth Rickus site of Leopold Primary School, the LA is providing



support for the school to plan for the phased closure of the Gwenneth Rickus site in July 2027.

- The Malorees Infant School and Malorees Junior School Governing Board have consulted on amalgamating the schools, which are currently federated, as a single community school. Formal amalgamation of the schools was agreed by Cabinet in Spring 2025, and amalgamation will take place in April 2026 to form Malorees Primary School.
- Islamia Primary School is scheduled to relocate to the Gwenneth Rickus building in September 2027 following the school's eviction from its current site. This secures the long-term future of the school and will provide improved facilities for its pupils.

4.2. In January 2022 Cabinet approved £44m of capital investment for additional specialist places in a new secondary special school, Wembley Manor School that opened in Brent in September 2024 and moved to its new buildings in September 2025, expansions of existing special schools and new ARPs in mainstream schools. As many of these projects have either been delivered, are close to delivery or have been reconsidered, a new 'phase two' SEND Capital strategy is currently under development. The key projects within this strategy and the timescale for delivery are detailed in the table below. Academy expansions will be subject to school consultation with the DfE Regional Director. Development of the Strathcona site will be subject to local consultation.

| School             | Places                                 | Phase                                      | Delivery timescale               |
|--------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Strathcona site    | 50                                     | Primary                                    | September 2026                   |
| The Manor School   | 88                                     | Primary                                    | September 2026                   |
| Woodfield School*  | 40                                     | Secondary                                  | January 2027                     |
| The Avenue         | 34                                     | All-through                                | September 2027                   |
| The Village School | 80 (but net gain of 40)                | All-through (but places are for secondary) | TBC (modelled for delivery 2028) |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>212 (138 primary, 74 secondary)</b> |  |                                  |

*\*Woodfield places are being delivered during the Phase 2 Capital works programme but were agreed as part of Phase 1. Therefore, these 40 places do not count towards the Phase 2 total.*

## 5.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 5.1 Ward members will be kept informed of the outcome of actions taken under this strategy particularly where mainstream planning area capacity is reviewed and where additional specialist provision is under consideration.
- 5.2 The Lead Member has been and will continue to be regularly briefed on school place planning issues and associated actions.
- 5.3 School representatives have been and will continue to be actively involved school place planning discussions through the School Place Planning Working Group

- 5.4 Any proposed changes to provision will be subject to public consultation with parents and key stakeholders in line with statutory guidance and legal frameworks.

## **6.0 Financial Considerations**

- 6.1 Mainstream school places are funded from the annual Dedicated School Grant (DSG) based on pupil numbers as per the October school census in the preceding year. This means that, although there is a time lag, the revenue cost of mainstream pupil growth is recognised and funded by the DfE.
- 6.2 School budgets are devolved to respective school governing boards but are under pressure due to rising cost of inflation and falling rolls. As schools are funded on the basis of pupil numbers, it is likely small schools and those with falling numbers on roll will find it most difficult to balance their budgets. Larger schools are more likely to successfully manage the impact of these pressures.
- 6.3 Expanding funded High Needs provision will have revenue implications, as it is funded from the High Needs Block of the DSG. In order to help manage the financial pressure on the High Needs Block, new in-borough provision must replace current out-of-borough arrangements at a lower cost. Reducing out-of-borough provision will also help mitigate the financial pressure on the transport budgets held in the General Fund to transport children and young people to out-of-borough provisions.
- 6.4 Basic Need Capital Grant and the Special School Capital Grant are not time-bound or ring-fenced and can be used for any capital purpose. However, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) expects this funding to be used for investment in schools, joining up with other capital resources when it is beneficial to do so.
- 6.5 The development of additional places for children and young people with SEND presents greater complexity and higher associated costs than mainstream primary school expansions. These increased costs are influenced by the nature of the construction required, the specific needs of the cohort of children and the constraints of site location and layout. As and when proposals to meet the forecast SEND demand need to be brought forward, further reports will be submitted to Cabinet, accompanied by financial information to support informed decision-making.

## **7.0 Legal Considerations**

- 7.1 The Council has a general statutory duty under Education Legislation to ensure there are sufficient school places available to meet the needs of the population in its area. The Council must promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and increase parental choice. To discharge this duty, the Council has to undertake a planning function to ensure the supply of school places balances the demand for them. (Section 13 and 14, Education Act 1996) and (Education and Inspections Act 2006).

- 7.2 In addition to securing school places for pupils aged five to 16, the local authority has related statutory responsibilities in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) up to the age of 25, where the Council has to make suitable provision to meet their needs and early years provision pursuant to the Children and Families Act 2014. The Council has responsibility for childcare sufficiency for provision for children aged 9 months to 5 years from September 2025 and ensuring it overlaps coherently with school provision.
- 7.3 The Council has additional statutory duties under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to provide education for pupils needing alternative education.
- 7.4 As a contingency to support the admission to school of children as quickly as possible, the In Year Fair Access Protocol allows for the admission of children over schools' planned admission numbers in the event a school place is not available. Schools are not required to maintain classes over the planned admission number (PAN) but revert to the usual admission number when children leave.
- 7.5 Statutory processes should be followed for any proposed enlargement of the school premises that would increase the capacity of the school by both more than 30 pupils and 25 per cent or 200 pupils (whichever is the lesser).
- 7.6 Statutory processes should be followed for the reduction or removal of capacity from any school. These processes are set out in the School Admissions Code 2021 for the reduction of a school's Published Admission Number and in the statutory guidance 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools October 2024'.

## **8.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 8.1 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty when exercising its public functions to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not. This duty is known as the public sector equality duty (PSED). The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. All providers commissioned to deliver public services on behalf of or in partnership with Brent Council are required to comply with the PSED and the Council's Equality and Diversity policies.
- 8.2 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

- 8.3 There is no prescribed manner in which the Council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary.
- 8.4 The School Place Planning Strategy 2024-28 aims to ensure there are sufficient, sustainable and suitable school places for all Brent children, and their diverse and changing needs are met including those with special education needs. It also aims to raise the education standards for all and address inequality due to social disadvantage, disability (including multiple complex needs) and/or other protected characteristics and contributes to the delivery of the Council's equality duties.
- 8.5 The findings and the equality analysis screening of the School Place Planning Strategy 2024-28 show a slowdown in demand for primary school places and a stable outlook for secondary school places. Demand for places for children and young people with SEND in the borough is also increasing and the strategy identifies the need for additional local places to meet their needs.

## **9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 9.1 The strategy sets an expectation for the school estate to be used efficiently to provide for current and future educational needs. The approach of sustainability and utilising the school estate for other educational provision reduces the use of construction materials and waste production and encourages efficiency in the use of existing resources.
- 9.2 The strategy sets out the need to create additional capacity for SEND provision in Brent reducing the need for children to travel outside of the borough to receive their education. Travelling shorter distances closer to home will reduce emissions and reduce air pollutants from private cars, minibuses and taxis.

## **10.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations**

- 10.1 Through delivering the strategy there could be some changes to the current use of school capacity, for example an increase in SEND provision through utilising existing spare capacity in the mainstream primary school estate.
- 10.2 School reorganisation proposals that reduce capacity across the school estate could impact on school staff. This could have the potential effect of the need to consider redundancies.

## **11.0 Communication Considerations**

- 11.1 Any proposed changes to provision would be subject to public consultation with parents and stakeholders in accordance with statutory guidance, legal frameworks and the Council community engagement process.

**Report sign off:**

**Corporate Nigel Chapman**

Corporate Director of Children, Young People &  
Community Development

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A photograph of two young girls in a chemistry laboratory. They are both wearing white lab coats and clear safety goggles. The girl on the right is holding a large Erlenmeyer flask filled with a dark liquid, looking at it intently. The girl on the left is looking at the flask with interest. The background shows laboratory shelves with various bottles. The entire image has a yellowish tint.

# London Borough of Brent School Place Planning Strategy

**2024 – 2028**

***2<sup>nd</sup> Refresh – November 2025***

*Working in partnership with schools in Brent to ensure  
the sustainability and sufficiency of school places*



**Brent**

**London Borough of Brent**  
**School Place Planning Strategy 2024 – 2028**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Refresh**

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## **1. Introduction**

Brent Council is focused on equipping Brent children and young people for the future. The Borough Plan 2023 – 2027 sets out the Council's priority to support young people to achieve the best start in life and receive the support they need when they need it. Working with schools and partners we will make sure access to education is fair and equal, and our children and young people receive a quality education which develops their skills and enables them to realise their aspirations.

Brent Council holds the statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places for Brent children (Education Act 1996, Section 14). This strategy sets out how Brent will deliver sufficient school places in the context of these statutory duties, ensuring school place planning delivers the best quality of education provision and achievement of the best outcomes for Brent children.

The Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024-28 sets out the Council's priorities and the principles that underpin the Council's approach to school organisation. The focus is to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet demand for all pupils who require a place, while also maintaining the sustainability of provision where schools may be experiencing falling demand. For the purposes of school place planning, the borough is split into six primary and three secondary school planning areas. This strategy provides the likely demand in each planning area, alongside details about the measures available or necessary to support areas experiencing falling demand or under pressure for more places.

The strategy was first published in October 2023 and will receive an annual refresh update each autumn term until the end of 2026. This is to ensure any new factors that impact on pupil forecasts are considered and refine the Council's understanding of future need. This edition is the second refresh, dated November 2025, and it highlights recent changes in school capacity and demand, and a continued need to address the sufficiency of local places for Brent children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in both primary and secondary age ranges.

### **1.1 The Brent Context**

Brent is one of the most culturally diverse areas in England. The dynamic mix of communities continues to enrich and inform the social, economic and cultural make-up of the borough. The largest defined ethnic groups of compulsory school in Brent age are: Asian Indian (19.1%), White British (8.8%), White Eastern European (6.6%), Black Somali (5.8%), Black Caribbean (4.5%), Asian Pakistani (3.4%) and Afghan (2.9%). Undefined ethnic groups include Other – Any Other (4.5%), Arab other (3.6%), Asian – Other Asian (3.3%) and White – White Other (3.2%) (Source: January 2025 School Census).

In addition to new arrivals, socio-economic pressures placed on many of Brent's families combined with a housing stock which relies heavily on privately rented accommodation and increasing levels of homelessness, contribute to relatively high levels of pupil turnover in many of our schools. The proportion of Brent pupils in primary and secondary schools classed as disadvantaged is 24.3% (2024/25), below the national figure of 25.7% and the London average

of 27.9% (based on pupil premium allocations). A cross-Council working group has established and embedded the auto enrolment of primary and secondary aged Brent residents attending Brent schools who are eligible for Free School Meals but are not accessing this support. This project generated a 1.6% rise in the number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in the last financial year.

## **1.2 School Effectiveness**

Over the last seven years, Brent's self-improving system has become firmly embedded in the borough, with a shared responsibility for school effectiveness and improvement between the Local Authority and schools.

There are 89 state schools in Brent. This includes 4 Nursery Schools, 2 all-through schools, 60 primary schools, 14 secondary schools, 6 special schools, 2 Pupil Referral Units and 1 Alternative Provision School.

The quality of education provision in the borough is high. At the end of the 2024-25 academic year, Ofsted had judged the overall effectiveness of 96.5% of Brent schools as good or outstanding and 97.5% of pupils continue to attend a Good or Outstanding school in Brent (both based on where current Ofsted single word judgements still apply).

In 2023, Brent's Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board approved a revised 'Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness in Brent 2023-2027'. The Framework sets the following priorities which will be supported by the delivery of this Place Planning Strategy:

- Sustaining Ofsted 'good' and 'outstanding' judgements for all schools
- Raising the attainment of vulnerable children and priority groups to address disproportionate educational outcomes
- Supporting pupil wellbeing and mental health to support educational achievement
- Ensuring that school governance meets national quality expectations, and that governing boards are equipped to challenge school leaders to address the underperformance of groups in their schools
- Building leadership capacity across the borough including headteacher succession planning

## 2. Background Summary

The Education Act 1996 requires that local authorities shall secure sufficient school places to provide primary and secondary education in their area. In exercising this duty, local authorities should have a view to securing diversity in the provision of schools and increasing opportunities for parental choice.

Brent Council has overarching responsibilities for school admissions in the borough, co-ordinating admissions at Reception, Year 3 (transition from infant to junior school) and at secondary transfer in Year 7. This is as well as processing in-year admissions and ensuring a school place is offered for any child not already on roll at a suitable school.

In addition to securing school places for pupils aged five to 16, Brent Council has related statutory responsibilities in relation to:

- **Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)** where the Council has to make suitable provision to meet their needs
- **Early years provision**, where the Council has responsibility for childcare sufficiency and for children aged nine months to statutory school age
- **Post-16 education and training** where the Council leads the local 16 to 19 partnership and takes overall responsibility for the sufficiency and suitability of provision, so all young people can stay in education or training until at least their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Brent Council works with schools and multi-academy trusts to deliver its statutory duties, as well as local trusts and Dioceses and the Department for Education Regional Director where this involves academies and free schools.

Planning for places for children in Brent falls under these five separate strands.

- Childcare and early years provision
- Mainstream primary school provision
- Mainstream secondary school provision
- Post-16 provision
- SEND places and Alternative Provision

### 2.1 Childcare and Early Years Provision

Alongside the statutory duty to provide school places, Brent Council has a duty to secure sufficient childcare and early education. Existing entitlements for parents and carers include 15 hours of free early education for children 9+ months in working families, two-year-olds in low/no-income households or who are vulnerable and 30 hours for 3 and 4-year-olds from working families.

In March 2023 the previous government announced an expansion of these entitlements to include 15 hours free early education for children aged 9 months upwards from September 2024, with all children aged 9 months upwards from working families able to access 30 hours

of free early education by September 2025. This was a significant change for the sector which has adapted, and many providers have already started delivering these new entitlements.

Since September 2017, the Council's early years team has administered the free entitlement for schools and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers. This enables a full overview of early years provision, monitoring the take up both at ward level and across the borough. Detailed sufficiency monitoring takes place each autumn in order to achieve a comprehensive picture of demand and availability of places for the new entitlements and identify where demand may outstrip supply. This exercise informs future sufficiency activity to target issues and gaps in provision.

The childcare sector is diverse within the borough, operating in the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sectors, as well as through maintained provision. Provision for children before they reach statutory school age can include self-employed childminders operating from home, preschool play groups (often run by voluntary management committees), day nurseries (mainly privately run) and school-based provision. Childcare which supports school-age children (often known as 'out of school' or 'wraparound' childcare), can be offered by childminders, voluntary or private groups, and schools. In Brent, this mixed economy of 0-5 childcare provision currently sees 58% of free entitlement places delivered by the PVI sector and 42% by the maintained sector.

## **2.2 Demand for Primary Places**

Following consistent growth in the need for primary school places in Brent from 2006-2015, demand for primary school places across the Borough peaked in 2017 and has been declining since then. The latest Greater London Authority (GLA) projections indicate demand will continue to fall until at least 2029 where it will reach a level last seen in 2013. Longer term forecasts suggest that demand will rise again after this point, but for the purposes of this strategy primary projections are provided up to 2029. This is because projections are less reliable after this time due to uncertainty over future birth rates.

The fall in demand is a result of a number of factors including lower birth rates across the whole of London, the impacts of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to some migration away from the area, and more recently the cost of living crisis where families are finding they are unable to afford to move into or remain living in the borough.

Projections take into account growth in demand as a result of new housing developments in the borough and those just outside the borough border. Brent's housing target as set by the London Plan requires the delivery of 23,250 new homes by 2028/29. This is equivalent to one new home being built for every five that currently exist. Growth areas where new housing is focused are expected to increase demand for local schools.

While projections indicate overall falling primary demand across the borough with a high number of spare places as a result (around 16%), distribution of demand is not equal across the 6 primary school planning areas. Some areas of the borough may still see demand

exceeding availability of places, whilst others have low demand at the same time. The local authority will continue to support individual schools and groups of schools in managing the impacts of reduced pupil numbers.

### **2.3 Demand for Secondary Places**

Demand for places in Year 7 has been increasing steadily since 2013. This is in response to increased numbers that have been coming through the primary phase and following through into the secondary phase. The local authority has responded to this growth in demand by overseeing expansions in secondary schools, and the North Brent School has also added new capacity to the secondary estate. It is expected this growth will now stabilise.

Secondary demand is also affected by inward migration to the borough, population mobility levels and parental choice. The latter is supported by the availability of free school transport for secondary aged children in London. Due to Brent's proximity to other boroughs, parents have a choice to send their children to secondary schools in Brent or further away. Brent engages with neighbouring boroughs to understand their planning assumptions about cross-border movement, which will impact on demand for places in Brent. Where and where neighbouring boroughs face increased demand for secondary school places, Brent parents will find it increasingly difficult to access places in out-of-borough secondary schools.

Figures in the January 2025 school census showed an unexpected increase in the number of pupils on roll in Year 7 to 3,446 compared to a projected figure of 3,134 (increase of 312 pupils). This increase was an even distribution of higher offer numbers on National Offer Day 2024 and subsequent co-ordinated and in-year offers. Numbers on roll in years 8 – 11 were comparable to the 2024 projection figures. This higher number of pupils in Year 7 has informed our latest set of projections. This in turn has resulted in the overall secondary projections suggesting a lower surplus of capacity than previously forecast and as a result capacity may start to fall below 5% from 2028/29. This may mean measures could need to be taken to increase capacity. However, it is likely this would be managed with the use of bulge classes rather than permanent expansions.

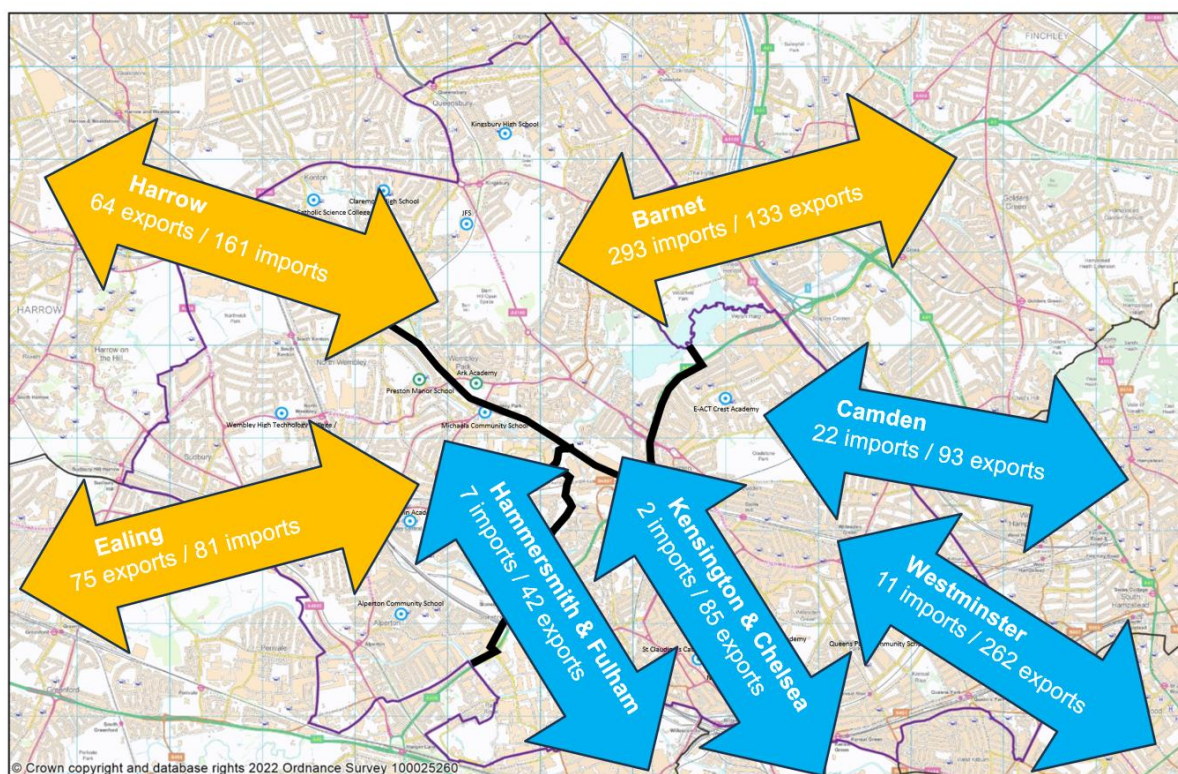
In 2025 798 out-of-borough offers were made to Brent residents, whereas 657 offers at Brent schools were made to out-of-borough residents (net -141). While Brent remains a net-exporter of secondary pupils, this is the smallest percentage of offers made to out-of-borough schools (23.8%) and the second smallest net difference recorded over the past thirteen years. This indicates more parents are recognising the quality of Brent secondary educational provision. Table 1 shows the number of Year 7 children living in each secondary planning area by the local authority of the school they were offered on national offer day in 2025.

Table 1: Secondary offers by secondary planning area for Brent residents (Sept 2025)

| LA of offered school 2025 | Brent resident planning area |              |              |              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                           | PA North                     | PA West      | PA South     | Total        |
| Brent                     | 592                          | 995          | 965          | <b>2552</b>  |
| Brent %                   | <b>84.2%</b>                 | <b>91.0%</b> | <b>62.1%</b> | <b>76.2%</b> |
| Barnet                    | 57                           | 13           | 63           | <b>133</b>   |
| Bromley                   |                              |              | 1            | <b>1</b>     |
| Camden                    | 4                            | 2            | 87           | <b>93</b>    |
| Devon                     |                              |              | 1            | <b>1</b>     |
| Ealing                    |                              | 30           | 45           | <b>75</b>    |
| Enfield                   |                              |              | 1            | <b>1</b>     |
| Essex                     | 1                            | 1            |              | <b>2</b>     |
| Hammersmith and Fulham    |                              | 2            | 40           | <b>42</b>    |
| Haringey                  |                              |              | 1            | <b>1</b>     |
| Harrow                    | 37                           | 22           | 5            | <b>64</b>    |
| Hertfordshire             | 2                            | 3            | 4            | <b>9</b>     |
| Hillingdon                |                              | 3            |              | <b>3</b>     |
| Hounslow                  |                              | 2            | 5            | <b>7</b>     |
| Kensington and Chelsea    | 3                            | 4            | 78           | <b>85</b>    |
| Richmond Upon Thames      |                              |              | 1            | <b>1</b>     |
| Slough                    | 2                            | 7            |              | <b>9</b>     |
| Southwark                 |                              |              | 1            | <b>1</b>     |
| Sutton                    | 1                            | 3            | 3            | <b>7</b>     |
| Tower Hamlets             |                              |              | 1            | <b>1</b>     |
| Westminster               | 4                            | 6            | 251          | <b>261</b>   |
| Non-Brent Total           | 111                          | 98           | 588          | 797          |
| Non-Brent %               | <b>15.8%</b>                 | <b>9.0%</b>  | <b>37.9%</b> | <b>23.8%</b> |
| <b>Grand Total</b>        | <b>703</b>                   | <b>1093</b>  | <b>1553</b>  | <b>3349</b>  |

Figure 1 shows Year 7 allocation cross-border flows with directly neighbouring authorities (based on national offer day data 2025). Blue is where more children leave Brent to be educated in another local authority, whereby amber means more children come into Brent from outside the borough to be educated in a Brent school.

Figure 1: Secondary children being educated across border for Year 7 in 2025/26



\*Imports are children who come into Brent to be educated and exports are those who live in Brent and are educated in out of borough schools.

## 2.4 SEND places and Alternative Provision

Demand for places that meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is increasing. This is due to a rise in the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) being issued, which set out the support for children and young people with SEND between the ages of 0 – 25 years of age.

The annual SEN2 analysis (January 2025) stated an annual growth rate in the number of maintained EHCP Plans of 8% between 2024 and 2025. This number has been approximately 10% over the last three years. As of August 2025, there are 4025 children and young people living in Brent aged 0-25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Of these, 2414 are statutory school age equating to 5.5% of the school population (similar to national levels, which currently sit at 5.3%). 12% of pupils are identified with additional needs that can be met at SEN support where a need is identified but does not meet threshold for an EHCP (compared to 14.2% nationally).

In the last year, the number of EHCPs has increased across all age groups, but not consistently. The age groups with the highest increases in EHCP numbers were the 5-10 and 16-19 age groups, which saw increases of 8.2% and 7.4% respectively. Addressing the sufficiency of local places for Brent children with SEND of both primary and secondary age, and for the 16-25 age group is a Council priority, not only to meet demand but to reduce dependency on out-of-borough and independent special schools that are not close to families support networks. Brent Council has committed investment of over £44m to develop additional specialist places across mainstream and specialist provision, including a new secondary special school that occupied brand new premises in September 2025 and a Post-16 Skills Resource Centre for young people with SEND projected to open in early 2027. In line with these commitments, Brent delivered a 1.5% increase in special school places and a 28% increase in additionally resourced provision (ARP) places in the 2024/25 academic year.

Despite these delivered increases and the planned capital investment, continually increasing demand means that more local specialist places are needed, especially for primary aged pupils with SEND. To this end, the Council is now developing a 'Phase 2' capital investment programme for specialist provision, to include a new specialist primary school site, alongside significant expansion of existing specialist settings.

## **2.5 Post-16 Provision**

The Education and Skills Act 2008 require all young people in England to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday. The Council does not have a duty to manage places in this phase, but nevertheless works in partnership with schools and local colleges to ensure young people aged 16-18 (and up to the age of 25 for those who have an Education, Health and Care Plan) have access to a range of opportunities to continue their education or training at a wide range of post-16 providers or through apprenticeships. This supports young people with their preparation for adulthood.



### **3. The Strategic Approach to Place Planning**

Between 2005 and 2017, demand for school places in Brent rose dramatically. This led to a widespread expansion programme which saw the creation of nearly 8000 additional permanent primary school places. In January 2006, there were 20,882 children attending a Brent primary school, which rose to a peak of 26,823 in January 2017. Since then, the number on roll has continued to decrease to 24,963 in January 2025 (a reduction of 179 children since January 2024) and is forecast to continue falling over the next five years to around 24,000 by 2029/30 (200 lower than predicted in the first refresh of this strategy). As a projection, these forecasts are subject to change but are based on existing and historical attendance and migration patterns in the borough.

The rise in demand for primary school places has followed through into the secondary phase, where a number of school expansions have taken place to ensure a sufficient provision of places. The new North Brent School opened in 2020 and started to operate to its full capacity as a six-form entry school from September 2024 on its permanent new site on Neasden Lane, Neasden.

Demand for school places is cyclical and therefore it is expected that after a period of sustained growth there will be a period of falling demand. London is experiencing a declining birth rate and this, in combination with migration 'shocks' brought about by Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic and the number of Brent residents who find them homeless or at a risk of being homeless, is contributing to the current trend of falling demand across most of London and within Brent.

The focus of the 2019 – 2023 School Place Planning Strategy was to ensure there was sufficient demand to meet supply in the borough. When it was published in November 2018, it referred to the development of two new primary schools, one of which was proposed in response to housing developments in Wembley Park to be delivered when demand indicated it would be required. Neither of these schools were progressed as during the lifespan of the previous strategy, (which was refreshed annually), as updated forecasts indicated insufficient demand. In response to lower pupil projections, the local authority has implemented both informal and formal measures to reduce or remove capacity in Brent Primary Schools

The focus of the School Place Planning Strategy 2024 – 2028 is to ensure the sustainability of school places as and when populations fall, and the sufficiency of places when there is growth, working in partnership with Brent schools to achieve this. Longer term general population forecasts suggest the population of Brent is projected to rise by between 17% and 27% between 2023 and 2041, and the child population aged under 16 is projected to rise by around 12% over the same period. Projected changes in the child age group are more uncertain as they are very sensitive to assumptions about future migration and birth patterns.

Brent aims to have a minimum of 5% spare places to manage in-year migration and to ensure the authority can respond to any sudden increase in demand. This avoids the need to open temporary provision or bulge classes, which is neither educationally desirable nor cost

effective. Based on current forecasts, there will be around 16% spare primary places at borough level over the next few years. Secondary capacity is forecast to have around a 5% surplus capacity in the short term, although this begins to fall towards 1-2% surplus capacity in seven years.

### **3.1. Place Planning Projections**

Regularly updated place planning projections underpin the school place planning process. The projections Brent and most other London authorities use to inform place planning are provided by the Greater London Authority (GLA) which are informed both by centrally held demographic data, such as census, fertility rate and birth rate data provided by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), together with locally held information on migration patterns and planned housing growth (ward level housing development data provided by the Borough). The projection methodology and model:

- calculate the number of children resident in each ward who are expected to attend each school by each national curriculum year from Reception to Year 11. The number of children projected for each new intake is calculated as an average of the proportion of children in those wards that attended the school in the previous 3 years multiplied by the ward level age population data. This helps to smooth out any unusual variations that are unlikely to reoccur each year. For other year groups the model calculates the current proportion of children in the ward attending the school and applies this to the ward level population data. School level projections are then aggregated to planning area projections and Borough totals.
- take account of the percentage of children who historically move into the following academic year in an area. This is particularly important in Brent where there is a high level of pupil mobility and migration to schools in other boroughs.

The GLA projections are a good indicator of place need, but they remain a statistical model which should be seen as a valuable tool rather than a definitive position. There are a number of factors which can lead to the projections being revised up or down:

- Underlying data, such as birth rates and migration patterns and the impact of local regeneration projects can change significantly in a short period of time.
- Secondary projections are more secure as they largely take account of children already in the education system. However, the percentage of children who historically move into the following academic year is a particularly important factor in Brent which is currently a net exporter of secondary pupils. This may change if pressures on secondary places in neighbouring boroughs lead to an increase in demand beyond those in the current projections.
- The Local Authority monitors both current and emerging local and national factors, such as post Brexit implications and the COVID-19 pandemic that can impact on school place demand by changing migration patterns. It is difficult to predict the impact of these factors on demand for school places and in particular demand from families of Eastern European origin. Demand at schools that serve these communities are closely monitored.

### **3.2 Ensuring sufficiency of places during periods of growth in demand**

Where an area is projected to experience a sustained growth in demand, generally it is more cost effective to provide permanent places if they are needed for the longer term. However, there are times where site and time constraints mean this is not possible and there are also occasions where the bulge in numbers only applies to one cohort of students. In these circumstances, it is better to provide a temporary bulge class.

Expansion in the secondary phase is more complex than primary, partly because specialist facilities (e.g. sport, science or technology) may need to be provided alongside standard classrooms. Students may also need to access these facilities during building processes which makes expansion more challenging and can impact on cost.

Where additional school places are needed, the Council seeks to provide places that provide high quality provision. This could be through expanding existing schools or through new schools. There are benefits to both approaches:

- Expanding existing schools that are judged to be delivering a high quality education by Ofsted gives the Council greater confidence that additional provision will be good and it will be popular. It also helps to maintain stability in the existing school system. School expansion projects need to be well managed to avoid impacting on standards and on any particular groups of children and young people who are under-achieving. Expansions of existing provisions are funded by the Council from Basic Need grant funding or the Special Provision Capital Fund for Additionally Resourced Provision and SEND units for pupils with EHCPs.
- New schools offer a chance to provide new learning environments. However, identifying sites for new schools is difficult because of space constraints and lack of suitable available options.

### **3.3 Supporting schools and planning areas with falling demand.**

When demand for school places falls significantly and the number of spare places increases, this can cause difficulties for individual schools in particular in managing staffing requirements and school budgets. Where this occurs, the Council analyses a range of local data, including but not limited to recent intakes, parental preferences, availability of places within the local planning area, school standards and building condition and recent/required investment, before recommending strategies to support the sustainability of school provision in a given area. A School Place Planning Working Group, comprising officers and headteachers was established in the 2022/23 academic year and undertakes reviews of place planning within individual planning areas and thematic school place planning when this is required.

A range of options may be employed to support schools or groups of schools with falling demand as set out below. Any decision to reduce capacity has to be carefully considered in the context of the medium and long-term need for school places for all children, including those with SEND. The current cost of developing a new, medium sized primary school in

London ranges from £10 - £20 million and is dependent on the site and existing facilities. Brent Council has already invested significant money into developing new and expanded primary and secondary school provision across the borough in response to the most recent episode of rising demand, which needs to be protected for when demand increases in the future.

### **3.3.1 Reductions to Published Admission Numbers (PAN)**

A reduction to a school's Published Admission Number (PAN) reduces their official intake, normally by one or more forms of entry. This can help undersubscribed schools to manage their budgets more efficiently, with the aim that of the revised PAN being in line with demand. PAN reductions are subject to formal consultation and therefore can take up to two years to implement. They cannot be employed for every undersubscribed school in an area as the local authority needs to maintain some spare capacity for in-year admissions.

There are currently a number of primary and secondary schools in Brent with Published Admission Numbers below their built or net capacity. This means that we currently have the option to negotiate with schools to increase PANs if there is sustained rising demand in a planning area.

### **3.3.2 Informal capping arrangements**

Informal caps can support schools by limiting their intake in a particular year group where demand is below PAN. However, implementing informal caps is not a long-term sustainable solution nor does it allow for good school organisation planning. Informal caps could be a possible solution in an arrangement where two schools work together to manage admissions. For example, where there is agreement to limit admissions in one school to actively facilitate fuller classes in the other. The advantage of informal capping arrangements is that they can be implemented quickly in response to a current situation and can easily be removed if there is an increase in demand in an area. For example, a three-form entry school that has only made 55 offers for a new Reception cohort may request to operate as a two-form entry for the cohort. This would mean any subsequent in-year offers would stop once the cohort reaches 60 pupils. The informal CAPs in place in Brent are kept under review to support the utilisation of spare capacity for primary SEND provision where possible.

### **3.3.3 Utilising spare capacity for SEND and Alternative Provision**

Spare classrooms that are unlikely to be required in the longer-term can be used for alternative use, such as Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) for children with SEND or primary special satellite provision. Any long-term alternative use of spare capacity must be agreed by the local authority, to ensure the places are not likely to be required to support either local demand or demand in neighbouring planning areas. The use of spare capacity in the mainstream school estate for additional SEND places has been explored through the SEND capital programme. This involves repurposing spare capacity within existing school buildings in agreement with school leadership teams to meet increased SEND place demand.

### **3.3.4 Hard Federation**

A Hard Federation is where two schools formally join in partnership under one governing board and one leadership team. This arrangement can provide the opportunity for schools to share best practice and resources and can assist the budgets of small schools. A hard federation does not necessarily address the issue of reduced demand but could be used in conjunction with other strategies to manage the impacts of falling demand on school budgets.

### **3.3.5 Amalgamation**

An Amalgamation is where two schools join together to form one school. Typically, this involves infant and junior schools merging to become one primary school. However, an amalgamation can also be used to join two schools together in the same area where the existing schools are undersubscribed. Amalgamated schools benefit from the same opportunities as federated schools, but also benefit from operating from only one site, which offers additional economies of scale.

### **3.3.6 Removing capacity from the Primary Estate**

Brent works collaboratively with schools in identifying solutions for a local area where a school reorganisation is considered to be the best way to ensure the sustainability of local provision. Legislation provides the Council with the authority to close community schools or to require them to amalgamate (and to instruct community schools to expand). It does not have the same authority over academies, Foundation or Voluntary Aided schools, as this sits with the DfE's Regional Director. The School Place Planning Working Group has supported with decision making when the removal of capacity is required by conducting reviews of individual place planning areas to inform proposals. Following Cabinet approval. The local authority undertakes informal consultation with stakeholders on proposals to cease provision to ensure their views are considered before any decision to proceed to formal consultation is taken in line with the relevant statutory guidance.

## **4. School Place Planning Strategy Priorities and Principles**

Brent's priorities over the course of this strategy are:

- To continue to monitor and support those planning areas experiencing or anticipated to experience growth and high demand to ensure the sufficiency of local places is maintained.
- To support the sustainability of individual schools and planning areas experiencing falling demand.
- To ensure any measures taken that remove capacity from Brent schools do not negatively impact on the need to ensure sufficient places in the future.
- To continue to develop and implement strategies for increasing the level of SEND provision within the borough to meet children's needs.

#### 4.1. Brent's operating principles for school organisation

The following operating principles underpin Brent's approach to school place planning:

- 1: The local authority works in partnership with all schools to meet the sufficiency and sustainability of school places in Brent, putting in place effective strategies to manage changing demand.*
- 2: The needs of all children and young people, including those with SEND and vulnerable groups, underpin all school place planning activity.*
- 3: The delivery of sufficient school places enables the achievement of the aims and objectives of the Brent Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness 2023-2027 and inclusive schools.*
- 4: School leaders are supported to manage the challenges of school reorganisations where there are expansions or reductions to capacity.*
- 5: Inclusive provision will be considered in all school organisation proposals, and the local authority will work with neighbouring authorities on the planning of special school places.*
- 6: All school buildings will be of good quality and safe. Any changes to school buildings should meet government guidance on space standards but innovative design solutions will also be considered where it is value for money to do so.*
- 7: Any expansions of school places, including in academies and voluntary aided schools, will only be supported where there is agreed local Brent demand.*
- 8: The local authority works to develop local capacity Including proposing or supporting the development of new schools, where necessary.*
- 9: How the community can benefit from school facilities will be considered in all school organisation proposals.*
- 10: Local communities will be consulted as part of the planning process to minimise/mitigate the impact of school organisation proposals*
- 11: After assessing educational suitability, any reorganisation proposals will be judged in terms of value for money, ability to deliver and strategic fit with wider investment programmes.*

## 5. School Place Planning Strategy Measures of Success

The impact of this strategy will be measured by the following outcomes:

- All Brent schools are good or outstanding (*as per applicable Ofsted gradings at the time*).

This was 98.8% at the end of the 2022/23 academic year, 95.3% at the end of the 2023/2024 academic year and 96.5% of Brent schools at the end of the 2024/2025 academic year (based on where current Ofsted single word judgements still apply). This success measure will be updated as appropriate to match reporting on the new framework for Ofsted inspections which replaced 'single word' judgements.

- Children are able to access education close to home (under two miles for children under 8 and 3 miles for children up to Year 6; within 75 minutes travel time for secondary aged children).

This outcome measure was met in November 2023 and remains unchanged in both November 2024 and November 2025

- Brent net exportation of secondary school pupils reduces over the duration of this strategy to 25% with a stretch target of below 25%.

The baseline was 25.8% for the 2023 Year 7 intake and 25.1% for the 2024 Year 7 intake. The figure for the 2025 intake is 23.8%, showing an improving position.

- An increase in local SEND places in the borough will lead to a reduction in the use of out-of-borough placements and placements in independent non-maintained special schools.

The percentage of placement spend on the independent, non-maintained special schools (INMSS) (Lower is better) was 18.8% at the end of the 2024/2025 financial year which is consistent with 18.5% at the end of the 2023/2024 financial year.

- The take up rate of free childcare entitlements in the borough increases over the course of the strategy to 70% for two-year-olds and 80% for 3 and 4-year-olds.

|                         | 2-year entitlement | 3 and 4 years |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| January 2023 (baseline) | 65.4%              | 79.3%         |
| January 2024            | 59.6%              | 84.8%         |
| January 2025            | 53.4%              | 80.4%         |

## 6. Childcare and Early Years Provision

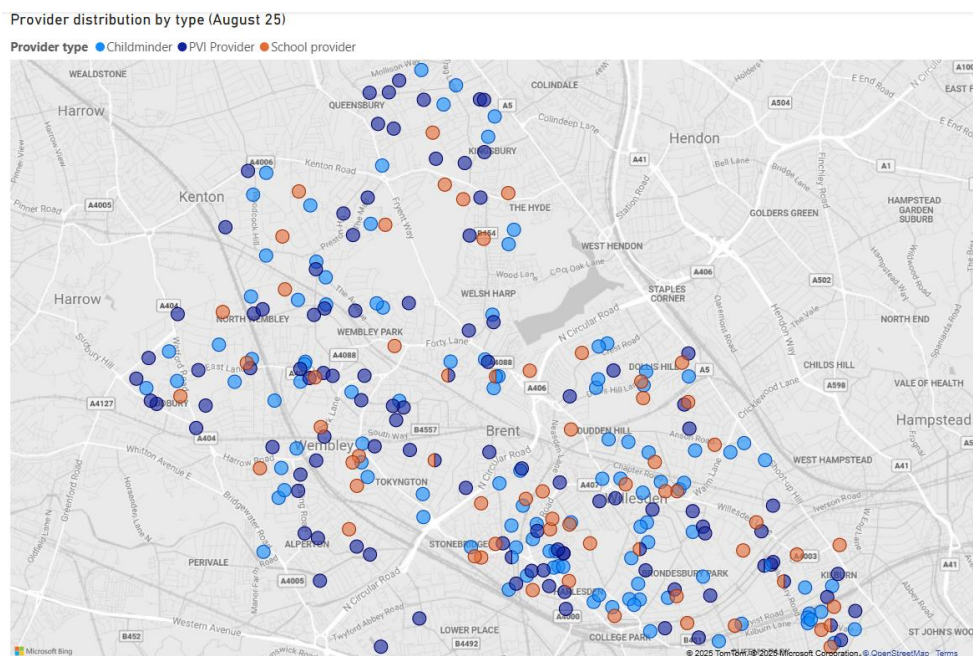
### 6.1 Early Years Provision

Under the Childcare Act 2006 local authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare for the needs of most working parents/carers in their area. Brent has a mixed economy of 0-5 childcare provision in the borough that includes private, voluntary, independent (PVI) and maintained settings.

The Brent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) 2021-2023 showed an overall increase in the number of PVI providers in the borough and a reduction in places in maintained and childminder provision. As of August 2025, there were 284 providers including private, voluntary and independent nurseries (PVI), childminders, nursery classes in schools and maintained nursery schools in Brent. Places for children aged two and under are largely delivered by the PVI sector and childminders.

There has been an overall decrease in the number of childminder providers in the borough since 2015 with some moving out of the borough and others resigning as registered childminders. This decrease in provision is reflective of a nation-wide trend. Closures have also been seen amongst group providers in the last 12 months, some quoting rental increases and reduction in demand. Nonetheless there have been other providers who have moved premises to expand and new providers entering the market, indicating an ongoing demand for places.

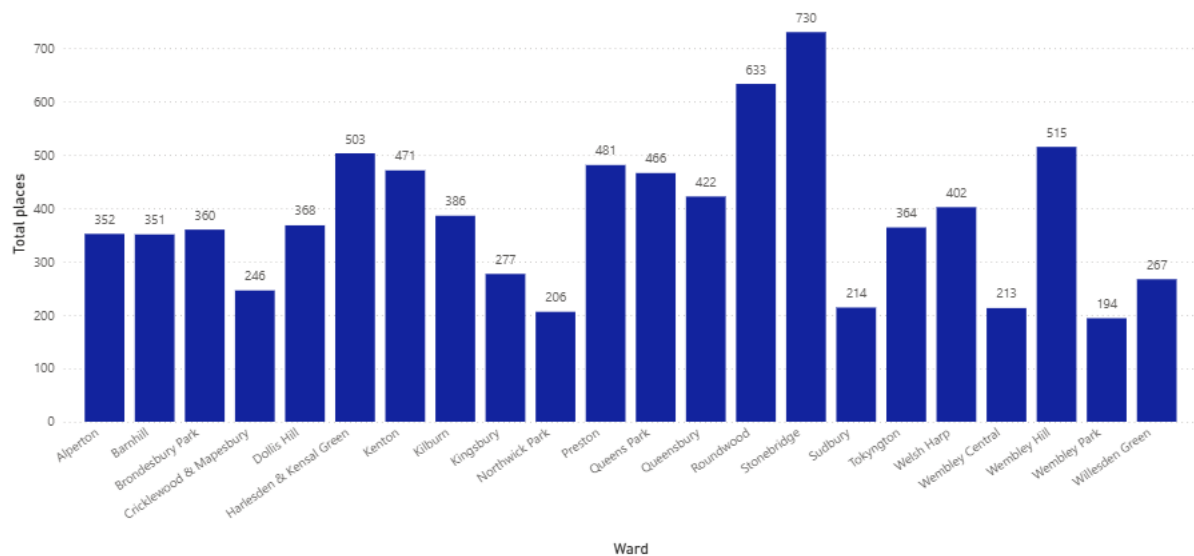
*Figure 2: 0-5 childcare providers in Brent as of August 2025*



*Figure 3: Distribution of childcare places in Brent*



0-5 registered places (August 2025)



## 6.2 Take up of Early Years Entitlements

Promotion to increase the take-up of the free entitlements to childcare for 3 and 4-year-olds focuses on ongoing marketing and promotion. This includes raising awareness of entitlements with partners and highlighting the benefits for both the child and for the parent who can use the time for training or employment opportunities.

Figures on take-up are provided by the Department for Education on an annual basis in the summer of each year based on January census returns. The latest figures from June 2025 indicated take-up in Brent as of January 2025 was 80.4% for 3 and 4-year-olds. This is a decrease of 4.4% on the previous year (84.8%) and is approximately 5% lower than the London average. The percentage take-up of the two-year entitlement for low/no income families lowered further to 53.4%. This reflects a decrease of 6.2% on the take up in 2024 and is below the London average of 61.1% which has also reduced by almost 6% this year.

The decrease in take-up since 2024 of the two-year entitlement for families in receipt of additional support (FRAS), is attributed to two main factors in Brent which also mirror national trends: i) the transition to universal credit from legacy benefits, and ii) income thresholds for the eligibility criteria remaining unchanged whilst average incomes have risen in recent years.

Alongside this, falling birth rate in recent years has reduced the numbers of children eligible for all entitlements nationally. Furthermore, as there are a small number of low-income families who are eligible for both the FRAS and the working family entitlement for two year olds, it is likely that we will see further shifts in take-up of the FRAS entitlement in coming years, as some of these families choose to apply through the working family route in order to access 30 hours rather than 15 hours.

### **6.3 Expansion of Early Years Entitlements**

In March 2023, the previous government announced a significant expansion of early years childcare entitlements to take effect between April 2024 and September 2025. The first phase of implementation began with the introduction of 15 hours for 2-year-olds in working families in April 2024 and was followed by 15 hours for children 9+ months in working families from September 2024. In September 2025 this has expanded further to offer 30 hours of funded childcare for children between nine months and five years in working families.

Brent Council has been in ongoing contact with early years providers to identify their intentions regarding their offer in the context of the new entitlements. As at Summer 2025 headcount, there were 682 9-23 months and 774 in working families accessing funded places. The Children and Families Information service did not receive any reports of families unable to take up their entitlement, however, some families who have accessed an eligibility code have subsequently chosen not to use it.

Detailed sufficiency mapping takes place each term monitoring take-up borough-wide and at ward level. This tracks demand for, and availability of, places for the new entitlements and identify where demand may outstrip supply and gaps in provision in the borough.

The impact of the introduction of these additional entitlements will continue to be monitored, especially the possible impact on the availability of places for the two-year entitlement (15 hours) for disadvantaged children in low/no-income families. There are concerns that providers may prioritise working families eligible for 30 hours, and that SEND provision may become more limited.

The promotional campaign continues across the borough to ensure parents and carers are aware of the new entitlements, understand the eligibility criteria and the process for accessing the entitlements. This activity will be part of the on-going drive to increase the take-up rate of free childcare entitlements in the borough.

With the national focus on the importance of the earliest years in shaping future life chances, through programmes such as Family Hubs & Start for life, the wider childcare expansion and now Best Start in Life there is a clear emphasis on the early years as a key priority for the government. All London boroughs have been set a target for 76% Early Years children to achieve a GLD (an increase of 9%) by 2028.

For Brent, this focus builds on the strong foundations laid through the multi-agency Family Hubs and Start for Life programme, enabling coordination of services and the development of a universal and targeted framework of support from pre-birth to aged five, working towards reducing inequalities and improving the outcomes of all children and families in Brent.

To develop the council's overarching ambition for our youngest children in Brent, underpinned by desired outcomes for children across health, school readiness, safeguarding and inclusion, work has begun on drafting an Early Years Strategy. The initial launch took place in October, which was well attended by both external and internal partners, with the final draft of the strategy expected to be completed by March 2026.

## 7. Primary School Place Planning

A borough-wide fall in demand for places is projected to continue over the next five years as shown in Graph 1. Longer term projections, although less reliable for primary forecasts, indicate reception demand will rise after 2029/2030 (linked to a rise in the birth rate from 2023/24 and as seen in table 4).

Graph 1: Primary numbers on roll and projections as of January each year up to 2030

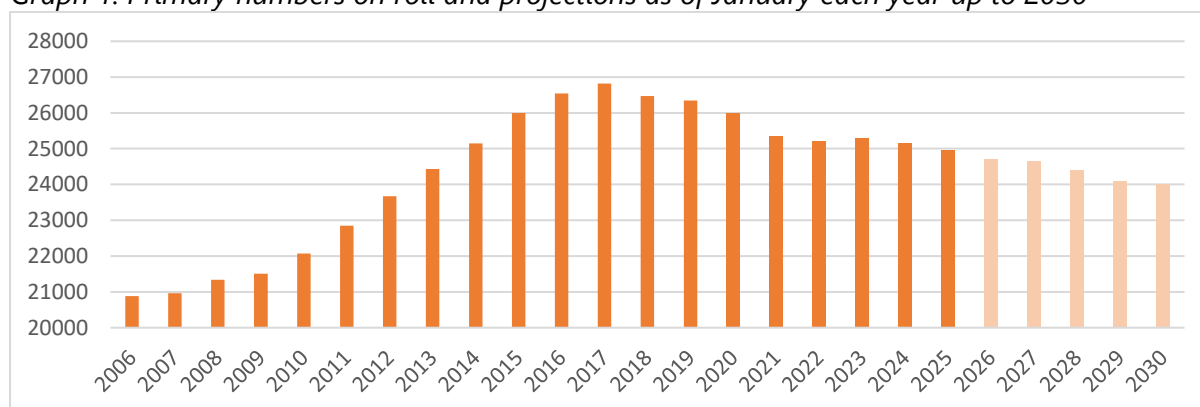


Table 2 shows that borough-wide there is sufficient capacity to meet anticipated demand across all primary year groups up to 2029/30 and to manage in-year pupil mobility.

Table 2: Primary forecasts 2025 (Green means more than 5% capacity)

| Whole borough | Dataset            | Rec   | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
|---------------|--------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2025/2026     | Capacity           | 4,187 | 4,187  | 4,187  | 4,187  | 4,187  | 4,187  | 4,187  |
|               | Projection         | 3395  | 3444   | 3538   | 3565   | 3613   | 3576   | 3564   |
|               | Surplus            | 792   | 743    | 649    | 622    | 574    | 611    | 623    |
|               | Surplus Percentage | 19%   | 18%    | 16%    | 15%    | 14%    | 15%    | 15%    |
| 2026/2027     | Capacity           | 4,187 | 4,187  | 4,187  | 4,187  | 4,187  | 4,187  | 4,187  |
|               | Projection         | 3569  | 3369   | 3413   | 3522   | 3567   | 3617   | 3585   |
|               | Surplus            | 618   | 818    | 774    | 665    | 620    | 570    | 602    |
|               | Surplus Percentage | 15%   | 20%    | 18%    | 16%    | 15%    | 14%    | 14%    |
| 2027/2028     | Capacity           | 4,127 | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  |
|               | Projection         | 3423  | 3521   | 3341   | 3402   | 3518   | 3566   | 3618   |
|               | Surplus            | 704   | 606    | 786    | 725    | 609    | 561    | 509    |
|               | Surplus Percentage | 17%   | 15%    | 19%    | 18%    | 15%    | 14%    | 12%    |
| 2028/2029     | Capacity           | 4,127 | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  |
|               | Projection         | 3416  | 3388   | 3491   | 3307   | 3390   | 3522   | 3579   |
|               | Surplus            | 711   | 739    | 636    | 820    | 737    | 605    | 548    |
|               | Surplus Percentage | 17%   | 18%    | 15%    | 20%    | 18%    | 15%    | 13%    |
| 2029/2030     | Capacity           | 4,127 | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  | 4,127  |
|               | Projection         | 3489  | 3399   | 3376   | 3464   | 3322   | 3406   | 3538   |
|               | Surplus            | 638   | 728    | 751    | 663    | 805    | 721    | 589    |
|               | Surplus Percentage | 15%   | 18%    | 18%    | 16%    | 20%    | 17%    | 14%    |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity and red = shortfall

Table 3 shows forecast Reception intakes against capacity. This suggests over the next five years that Reception cohorts will remain stable (with intermittent fluctuations) at a lower demand level than has been seen in recent years. This is consistent with the falling birth rates levelling off as seen in Table 4. The indicated level of spare capacity across the system will place budgetary strain on some schools. Section 3 of this strategy outlines the options available to schools and the borough to promote the sustainability of schools under budgetary pressures due to falling demand.

*Table 3: Reception forecasts against capacity*

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Reception projected intake</b> | <b>Reception capacity</b> | <b>Spare places</b> | <b>% spare places</b> | <b>Spare places as forms of entry</b> |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2025/26     | 3395                              | 4187                      | 792                 | 18.9%                 | 26                                    |
| 2026/27     | 3569                              | 4187                      | 618                 | 14.8%                 | 20                                    |
| 2027/28     | 3423                              | 4127                      | 704                 | 17.1%                 | 23                                    |
| 2028/29     | 3416                              | 4127                      | 711                 | 17.2%                 | 23                                    |
| 2029/30     | 3489                              | 4127                      | 638                 | 15.5%                 | 21                                    |

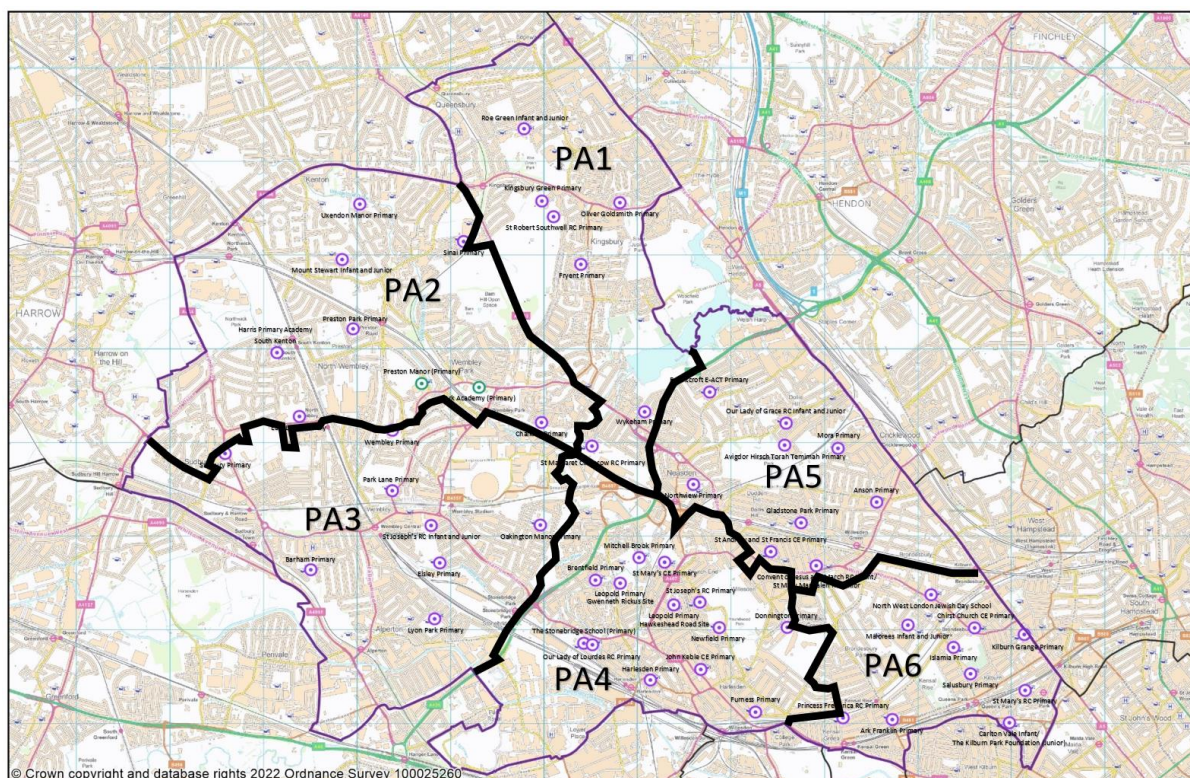
*Table 4: Births in Brent (by academic year)*

| <b>Academic Year</b> | <b>Number of births in Brent (Source ONS mid-year estimates/GLA Projections)</b> | <b>Reception entry (September following 4<sup>th</sup> birthday)</b> |
|----------------------|--|--|
| 2018/19              | 4814   | 2023/24  |
| 2019/20              | 4794   | 2024/25  |
| 2020/21              | 4437   | 2025/26  |
| 2021/22              | 4476   | 2026/27  |
| 2022/23              | 4387   | 2027/28  |
| 2023/24              | 4406   | 2028/29  |
| 2024/25              | 4513   | 2029/30  |
| 2025/26              | 4586   | 2030/31  |
| 2026/27              | 4661   | 2031/32  |
| 2027/28              | 4718   | 2032/33  |
| 2028/29              | 4795   | 2033/34  |
| 2029/30              | 4913   | 2034/35  |

The number of on-time applications for Reception in 2025 fell for the first time after two consecutive years of increased on-time application numbers, which had been counter to the trend of reduced timely applications across London. On time applications are important for all normal points of entry as they provide the greatest opportunity for parents to receive an offer for a preference school and schools are better placed to manage forms of entry, classroom and staff numbers.

The local authority uses planning areas to identify local trends in demand which help to inform place planning decisions to ensure children can attend a school within a reasonable distance. (In the primary phase a "reasonable offer" is a school offer that is made within 2 miles of home for children under 8 years old, and 3 miles for older children). The borough is divided into six primary planning areas to help ensure places are provided near to where children live. However, in reality children can travel across planning areas to attend school, particularly when they live close to the borders.

Figure 4: Brent Primary Planning Areas



For each of the primary and secondary projection tables in each of the planning area, the shading relates to the percentage of surplus places available.

|  |                   |                             |                     |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| More than 5% capacity (Red text = 15%+ spare capacity) | 5% spare capacity | Less than 5% spare capacity | Shortfall of places |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|



## Primary Planning Area 1

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Wards</b>   | Kingsbury, Queensbury and Welsh Harp   |
| <b>Schools</b> | Fryent Primary School, Kingsbury Green Primary School, Oliver Goldsmith Primary School, Roe Green Infant School, Roe Green Junior School, St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School, St Robert Southwell RC Primary School, Wykeham Primary School |

**Demand:** The January 2025 projections indicate Reception demand in Planning Area 1 will fall slightly over the next 5 years. It is projected that some year groups will continue to see the number of spare places fall below the 5% margin the LA aims to maintain, resulting in a small deficit in some year groups. It is anticipated places in the neighbouring planning areas (2, 4 and 5) will accommodate these pressures. Some mainstream capacity in the planning area is being used to provide SEN Alternative Resource Provision (ARP) places.

**Planned action:** Primary Planning Area 1 has been subject to a review in January 2023 by the School Place Planning Steering Group in Brent to identify strategies to ensure sufficient supply of places in some year groups, while identifying strategies to manage excessive surplus capacity in others. No area wide action is considered necessary and individual schools will continue to be supported as need arises. The Planning Area will remain under review to determine if any longer-term changes are required as part of the annual refresh of this strategy.

Table 5: Planning Area 1 2025 projections and capacity

| PA 1      | Dataset            | Rec | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
|-----------|--------------------|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2025/2026 | Capacity           | 510 | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    |
|           | Projection         | 471 | 499    | 485    | 497    | 512    | 507    | 466    |
|           | Surplus            | 39  | 11     | 25     | 13     | -2     | 3      | 44     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 8%  | 2%     | 5%     | 3%     | 0%     | 1%     | 9%     |
| 2026/2027 | Capacity           | 510 | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    |
|           | Projection         | 497 | 471    | 492    | 475    | 499    | 511    | 497    |
|           | Surplus            | 13  | 39     | 18     | 35     | 11     | -1     | 13     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 3%  | 8%     | 4%     | 7%     | 2%     | 0%     | 3%     |
| 2027/2028 | Capacity           | 510 | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    |
|           | Projection         | 453 | 495    | 464    | 479    | 475    | 496    | 498    |
|           | Surplus            | 57  | 15     | 46     | 31     | 35     | 14     | 12     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 11% | 3%     | 9%     | 6%     | 7%     | 3%     | 2%     |
| 2028/2029 | Capacity           | 510 | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    |
|           | Projection         | 461 | 456    | 488    | 456    | 478    | 476    | 485    |
|           | Surplus            | 49  | 54     | 22     | 54     | 32     | 34     | 25     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 10% | 11%    | 4%     | 11%    | 6%     | 7%     | 5%     |
| 2029/2030 | Capacity           | 510 | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    | 510    |
|           | Projection         | 464 | 461    | 451    | 481    | 457    | 478    | 463    |
|           | Surplus            | 46  | 49     | 59     | 29     | 53     | 32     | 47     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 9%  | 10%    | 12%    | 6%     | 10%    | 6%     | 9%     |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

## Primary Planning Area 2

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Wards</b>   | Barnhill, Kenton, Northwick Park and Preston  |
| <b>Schools</b> | Ark Academy, Chalkhill Primary School, East Lane Primary School, Harris Primary Academy South Kenton, Mount Stewart Infant School, Mount Stewart Junior School, Preston Manor Lower School, Preston Park Primary School, Sinai Jewish Primary School, Uxendon Manor Primary School. |

**Demand:** The January 2025 projections indicate demand in the planning area will remain relatively stable over the next four years. Projected surplus places are well above the 5% margin across all year groups and parents in this planning area have increased choice of provision. Planning Area 2 includes the Northwick Park growth area, and this may generate additional demand at some point in the future.

**Planned action:** There is no current requirement to make any changes to the provision in this planning area and in the short term, surplus places could be managed with the use of strategies to manage surplus capacity, for example agreeing informal capping arrangements with individual schools, as well as supporting any pressures in planning areas 1 and 3. The Planning Area will remain under review to determine if any longer-term changes are required.

Table 6: Planning Area 2 2025 projections and capacity

| PA 2      | Dataset            | Rec | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
|-----------|--------------------|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2025/2026 | Capacity           | 870 | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    |
|           | Projection         | 659 | 645    | 718    | 705    | 717    | 715    | 700    |
|           | Surplus            | 211 | 225    | 152    | 165    | 153    | 155    | 170    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 24% | 26%    | 17%    | 19%    | 18%    | 18%    | 20%    |
| 2026/2027 | Capacity           | 870 | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    |
|           | Projection         | 711 | 666    | 640    | 716    | 705    | 716    | 715    |
|           | Surplus            | 159 | 204    | 230    | 154    | 165    | 154    | 155    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 18% | 23%    | 26%    | 18%    | 19%    | 18%    | 18%    |
| 2027/2028 | Capacity           | 870 | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    |
|           | Projection         | 685 | 715    | 668    | 651    | 712    | 697    | 711    |
|           | Surplus            | 185 | 155    | 202    | 219    | 158    | 173    | 159    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 21% | 18%    | 23%    | 25%    | 18%    | 20%    | 18%    |
| 2028/2029 | Capacity           | 870 | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    |
|           | Projection         | 684 | 692    | 711    | 668    | 648    | 709    | 700    |
|           | Surplus            | 186 | 178    | 159    | 202    | 222    | 161    | 170    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 21% | 20%    | 18%    | 23%    | 26%    | 19%    | 20%    |
| 2029/2030 | Capacity           | 870 | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    | 870    |
|           | Projection         | 702 | 694    | 689    | 714    | 672    | 643    | 711    |
|           | Surplus            | 168 | 176    | 181    | 156    | 198    | 227    | 159    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 19% | 20%    | 21%    | 18%    | 23%    | 26%    | 18%    |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

### Primary Planning Area 3

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Wards</b>   | Alperton, Sudbury, Tokyngton, Wembley Central, Wembley Hill and Wembley Park   |
| <b>Schools</b> | Barham Primary School, Elsley Primary School, Lyon Park Primary School, Oakington Manor Primary School, Park Lane Primary School, St Joseph's RC Infant School, St Joseph's RC Junior School, Sudbury Primary School, Wembley Primary School |

**Demand:** Planning Area 3 includes two major growth areas in Wembley Central and Alperton and the latest projections are similar to previous years, indicating a rising demand. They suggest that over the next 5 years, most year groups will be below the 5% surplus margin, with an increasing number of year groups operating with no surplus capacity.

**Planned action:** Short term forecasts now indicate there may be a continued increase in demand in this planning area, which would be consistent with pre-pandemic projections. The planning area will be reviewed to identify if strategies to ensure sufficient places are needed, beyond using spare capacity in adjacent Planning Areas 2 and 4. Surplus capacity in other planning areas would be used first to accommodate excess demand before any consideration to expand provision in Planning Area 3.

Table 7: Planning Area 3 2025 projections and capacity

| PA 3      | Dataset            | Rec | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
|-----------|--------------------|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2025/2026 | Capacity           | 820 | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    |
|           | Projection         | 770 | 817    | 797    | 803    | 805    | 827    | 829    |
|           | Surplus            | 50  | 3      | 23     | 17     | 15     | -7     | -9     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 6%  | 0%     | 3%     | 2%     | 2%     | -1%    | -1%    |
| 2026/2027 | Capacity           | 820 | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    |
|           | Projection         | 832 | 782    | 810    | 798    | 809    | 820    | 837    |
|           | Surplus            | -12 | 38     | 10     | 22     | 11     | 0      | -17    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | -1% | 5%     | 1%     | 3%     | 1%     | 0%     | -2%    |
| 2027/2028 | Capacity           | 820 | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    |
|           | Projection         | 822 | 847    | 777    | 817    | 803    | 827    | 832    |
|           | Surplus            | -2  | -27    | 43     | 3      | 17     | -7     | -12    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 0%  | -3%    | 5%     | 0%     | 2%     | -1%    | -1%    |
| 2028/2029 | Capacity           | 820 | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    |
|           | Projection         | 835 | 834    | 839    | 783    | 821    | 816    | 836    |
|           | Surplus            | -15 | -14    | -19    | 37     | -1     | 4      | -16    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | -2% | -2%    | -2%    | 5%     | 0%     | 0%     | -2%    |
| 2029/2030 | Capacity           | 820 | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    | 820    |
|           | Projection         | 869 | 853    | 831    | 846    | 797    | 836    | 829    |
|           | Surplus            | -49 | -33    | -11    | -26    | 23     | -16    | -9     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | -6% | -4%    | -1%    | -3%    | 3%     | -2%    | -1%    |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall



## Primary Planning Area 4

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Wards</b>   | Harlesden & Kensal Green, Roundwood and Stonebridge  |
| <b>Schools</b> | Brentfield Primary School, Donnington Primary School, Furness Primary School, Harlesden Primary School, John Keble CE Primary School, Leopold Primary School, Mitchell Brook Primary School, Newfield Primary School, Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School, St Joseph's RC Primary School, St Mary's CE Primary School, The Stonebridge School. |

**Demand:** Planning Area 4 continues to have high levels of surplus places and the latest projections indicate there will be a further reduction in demand. In the long term the area will serve new housing being built as part of the Old Oak and Park Royal redevelopment scheme.

**Planned action:** Brent has started to address excess capacity in the area to mitigate impacts on schools with reduced pupil numbers. Measures include the reduction of the PAN at Mitchell Brook Primary School from September 2025 and the phased closure of the Gwenneth Rickus site of Leopold Primary School in July 2027. The Gwenneth Rickus site will be used to relocate Islamia Primary School from Primary Planning Area 6 in September 2027, and it is anticipated the majority of children already attending Islamia Primary school will transfer to the new site.

Further action is being considered which may include utilising spare capacity for the creation of Primary SEND places as part of the SEND capital programme. As there is a projection of higher demand in the adjacent Planning Area 3, it is also expected some capacity may be taken up by children from this planning area.

Table 8: Planning Area 4 2025 projections and capacity

| PA 4      | Dataset            | Rec | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
|-----------|--------------------|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2025/2026 | Capacity           | 855 | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    |
|           | Projection         | 527 | 526    | 575    | 576    | 601    | 570    | 621    |
|           | Surplus            | 328 | 329    | 280    | 279    | 254    | 285    | 234    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 38% | 38%    | 33%    | 33%    | 30%    | 33%    | 27%    |
| 2026/2027 | Capacity           | 855 | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    |
|           | Projection         | 540 | 508    | 518    | 576    | 579    | 598    | 582    |
|           | Surplus            | 315 | 347    | 337    | 279    | 276    | 257    | 273    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 37% | 41%    | 39%    | 33%    | 32%    | 30%    | 32%    |
| 2027/2028 | Capacity           | 855 | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    |
|           | Projection         | 522 | 512    | 501    | 516    | 577    | 577    | 615    |
|           | Surplus            | 333 | 343    | 354    | 339    | 278    | 278    | 240    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 39% | 40%    | 41%    | 40%    | 33%    | 33%    | 28%    |
| 2028/2029 | Capacity           | 855 | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    |
|           | Projection         | 510 | 496    | 509    | 497    | 515    | 580    | 598    |
|           | Surplus            | 345 | 359    | 346    | 358    | 340    | 275    | 257    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 40% | 42%    | 40%    | 42%    | 40%    | 32%    | 30%    |
| 2029/2030 | Capacity           | 855 | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    | 855    |
|           | Projection         | 517 | 493    | 501    | 509    | 503    | 520    | 603    |
|           | Surplus            | 338 | 362    | 354    | 346    | 352    | 335    | 252    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 40% | 42%    | 41%    | 40%    | 41%    | 39%    | 29%    |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

## Primary Planning Area 5

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Wards</b>       | Cricklewood & Mapesbury, Dollis Hill and Willesden Green   |
| <b>PA5 Schools</b> | Anson Primary School, Avigdor Hirsch Torah Temimah Primary School, Braintcroft E-ACT Primary Academy, Convent of Jesus and Mary Infant School, Gladstone Park Primary School, Mora Primary School, Northview Primary School, Our Lady of Grace Infant and Nursery School, Our Lady of Grace RC Junior School, St Andrew & St Francis CE Primary School, St Mary Magdalen's RC Junior School. |

**Demand:** The latest projections show that there will be a small drop in demand over the next five years, but surplus capacity is comfortable for place planning purposes. Longer term projections, although less reliable, indicate a sustained rise in demand starting from 2028/29.

**Planned action:** There are no current or planned actions in Planning Area 5. The planning area will remain under review to determine if any longer-term changes are required.

Table 9: Planning Area 5 2025 projections and capacity

| PA 5      | Dataset            | Rec | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
|-----------|--------------------|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2025/2026 | Capacity           | 557 | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    |
|           | Projection         | 511 | 515    | 505    | 520    | 505    | 510    | 507    |
|           | Surplus            | 46  | 42     | 52     | 37     | 52     | 47     | 50     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 8%  | 8%     | 9%     | 7%     | 9%     | 8%     | 9%     |
| 2026/2027 | Capacity           | 557 | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    |
|           | Projection         | 524 | 507    | 514    | 509    | 519    | 502    | 510    |
|           | Surplus            | 33  | 50     | 43     | 48     | 38     | 55     | 47     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 6%  | 9%     | 8%     | 9%     | 7%     | 10%    | 8%     |
| 2027/2028 | Capacity           | 557 | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    |
|           | Projection         | 502 | 515    | 503    | 511    | 508    | 515    | 503    |
|           | Surplus            | 55  | 42     | 54     | 46     | 49     | 42     | 54     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 10% | 8%     | 10%    | 8%     | 9%     | 8%     | 10%    |
| 2028/2029 | Capacity           | 557 | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    |
|           | Projection         | 491 | 496    | 511    | 489    | 509    | 502    | 514    |
|           | Surplus            | 66  | 61     | 46     | 68     | 48     | 55     | 43     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 12% | 11%    | 8%     | 12%    | 9%     | 10%    | 8%     |
| 2029/2030 | Capacity           | 557 | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    | 557    |
|           | Projection         | 496 | 484    | 492    | 498    | 486    | 506    | 500    |
|           | Surplus            | 61  | 73     | 65     | 59     | 71     | 51     | 57     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 11% | 13%    | 12%    | 11%    | 13%    | 9%     | 10%    |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

## Primary Planning Area 6

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Wards</b>       | Brondesbury Park, Kilburn and Queens Park   |
| <b>PA6 Schools</b> | Ark Franklin Academy, Carlton Vale Infant School, Christchurch CE Primary School, Islamia Primary School, Kilburn Grange Primary School, Malorees Infant School, Malorees Junior School, North West London Jewish Day School, Princess Frederica CE Primary School, Salusbury Primary School, St Mary's RC Primary School, The Kilburn Park Foundation School |

**Demand:** Projections for Planning Area 6 show a slight decline in demand over the next four years. In the longer term, housing developments are expected to impact on demand in this area.

**Planned action:** Carlton Vale Infant School and Kilburn Park Junior School have formed a Hard Federation as a first step towards becoming a single primary school on one site as part of the South Kilburn Regeneration Programme. The size of the school will conform to the principles of sustainability and sufficiency of school place planning. The relocation of Islamia Primary School to Primary Planning Area 4 in September 2027 is likely to see an increase in demand for other local schools in the area. There will be enough local capacity for local children who might have attended Islamia Primary School to access spare places in other schools. As part of the South Kilburn regeneration programme, school places in the Planning Area will remain under review.

Table 10: Planning Area 6 2025 projections and capacity

| PA 6      | Dataset            | Rec | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
|-----------|--------------------|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2025/2026 | Capacity           | 575 | 575    | 575    | 575    | 575    | 575    | 575    |
|           | Projection         | 457 | 442    | 458    | 464    | 473    | 447    | 441    |
|           | Surplus            | 118 | 133    | 117    | 111    | 102    | 128    | 134    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 21% | 23%    | 20%    | 19%    | 18%    | 22%    | 23%    |
| 2026/2027 | Capacity           | 575 | 575    | 575    | 575    | 575    | 575    | 575    |
|           | Projection         | 465 | 435    | 439    | 448    | 456    | 470    | 444    |
|           | Surplus            | 110 | 140    | 136    | 127    | 119    | 105    | 131    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 19% | 24%    | 24%    | 22%    | 21%    | 18%    | 23%    |
| 2027/2028 | Capacity           | 515 | 515    | 515    | 515    | 515    | 515    | 515    |
|           | Projection         | 439 | 437    | 428    | 428    | 443    | 454    | 459    |
|           | Surplus            | 76  | 78     | 87     | 87     | 72     | 61     | 56     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 15% | 15%    | 17%    | 17%    | 14%    | 12%    | 11%    |
| 2028/2029 | Capacity           | 515 | 515    | 515    | 515    | 515    | 515    | 515    |
|           | Projection         | 435 | 414    | 433    | 414    | 419    | 439    | 446    |
|           | Surplus            | 80  | 101    | 82     | 101    | 96     | 76     | 69     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 16% | 20%    | 16%    | 20%    | 19%    | 15%    | 13%    |
| 2029/2030 | Capacity           | 515 | 515    | 515    | 515    | 515    | 515    | 515    |
|           | Projection         | 441 | 414    | 412    | 416    | 407    | 423    | 432    |
|           | Surplus            | 74  | 101    | 103    | 99     | 108    | 92     | 83     |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 14% | 20%    | 20%    | 19%    | 21%    | 18%    | 16%    |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

## 8. Secondary school place planning

Year 7 demand over the next seven years is expected to remain steady with the latest forecasts projecting slight fluctuations each year. Demand is projected to be below the level of available capacity with only 2027/28 showing a surplus of under 5%, indicating sufficient capacity to meet Year 7 demand.

Brent has traditionally been a net exporter of secondary pupils, but the borough has seen a recent increase in parental preference for Brent secondary schools due to the sustained quality of Brent schools. The percentage of Brent pupils offered an out-borough school on National Offer Day has fallen from a high of 28.3% in 2017 to 23.8% in 2025. These factors have been taken into consideration in the projection figures for secondary schools and it is possible future demand for individual schools could increase further.

Table 11: Year 7 projections and planned capacity

| Year    | Year 7 projected intake | Year 7 places available | Surplus | Surplus |
|---------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------|---------|
| 2025/26 | 3386                    | 3688                    | 302     | 8.92%   |
| 2026/27 | 3443                    | 3688                    | 245     | 7.12%   |
| 2027/28 | 3519                    | 3688                    | 169     | 4.80%   |
| 2028/29 | 3433                    | 3688                    | 255     | 7.43%   |
| 2029/30 | 3378                    | 3688                    | 310     | 9.18%   |
| 2030/31 | 3374                    | 3688                    | 314     | 9.31%   |
| 2031/32 | 3432                    | 3688                    | 256     | 7.46%   |

Table 12 shows borough wide forecasts for all year groups and indicates a comfortable operating margin of at least 5% spare places in all year groups up to 2027/2028, then capacity reducing below 5%.

Table 12: Secondary projections 2025 and capacity

| Whole borough | Dataset            | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|---------------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| 2025/2026     | Capacity           | 3,688  | 3,688  | 3,745  | 3,766   | 3,779   |
|               | Projection         | 3446   | 3330   | 3366   | 3356    | 3373    |
|               | Surplus            | 242    | 358    | 379    | 410     | 406     |
|               | Surplus Percentage | 7%     | 11%    | 11%    | 12%     | 12%     |
| 2026/2027     | Capacity           | 3,688  | 3,688  | 3,688  | 3,745   | 3,766   |
|               | Projection         | 3386   | 3470   | 3360   | 3417    | 3419    |
|               | Surplus            | 302    | 218    | 328    | 328     | 347     |
|               | Surplus Percentage | 9%     | 6%     | 10%    | 10%     | 10%     |
| 2027/2028     | Capacity           | 3,688  | 3,688  | 3,688  | 3,688   | 3,745   |
|               | Projection         | 3443   | 3414   | 3506   | 3411    | 3491    |
|               | Surplus            | 245    | 274    | 182    | 277     | 254     |
|               | Surplus Percentage | 7%     | 8%     | 5%     | 8%      | 7%      |
| 2028/2029     | Capacity           | 3,688  | 3,688  | 3,688  | 3,688   | 3,688   |
|               | Projection         | 3519   | 3466   | 3448   | 3559    | 3478    |
|               | Surplus            | 169    | 222    | 240    | 129     | 210     |

|           | Surplus Percentage | 5%    | 6%    | 7%    | 4%    | 6%    |
|-----------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2029/2030 | Capacity           | 3,688 | 3,688 | 3,688 | 3,688 | 3,688 |
|           | Projection         | 3433  | 3536  | 3497  | 3501  | 3632  |
|           | Surplus            | 255   | 152   | 191   | 187   | 56    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 7%    | 4%    | 5%    | 5%    | 2%    |
| 2030/2031 | Capacity           | 3,688 | 3,688 | 3,688 | 3,688 | 3,688 |
|           | Projection         | 3378  | 3463  | 3575  | 3554  | 3585  |
|           | Surplus            | 310   | 225   | 113   | 134   | 103   |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 9%    | 6%    | 3%    | 4%    | 3%    |
| 2031/2032 | Capacity           | 3,688 | 3,688 | 3,688 | 3,688 | 3,688 |
|           | Projection         | 3374  | 3417  | 3511  | 3642  | 3658  |
|           | Surplus            | 314   | 271   | 177   | 46    | 30    |
|           | Surplus Percentage | 9%    | 8%    | 5%    | 1%    | 1%    |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

## 8.1 Actions to respond to changes in demand

The North Brent School, which was approved by DfE in 2016 to provide 180 places per year (6 Form Entry), opened in September 2020 on a temporary site in Wembley, and then moved to its permanent site in Neasden operating at full capacity in September 2024.

Some Brent secondary schools have previously expressed an interest in expanding should additional places be required to meet demand. It is unlikely this will be required during the life of this current strategy for Year 7 but is not something which has been formally ruled out and may need to be revisited for higher year groups. The local authority employs the strategy of working with schools with existing spare built capacity to open up that capacity where needed to ensure a sufficiency of places to meet in-year demand, and this will be fully explored before any consideration is given to build new provision.

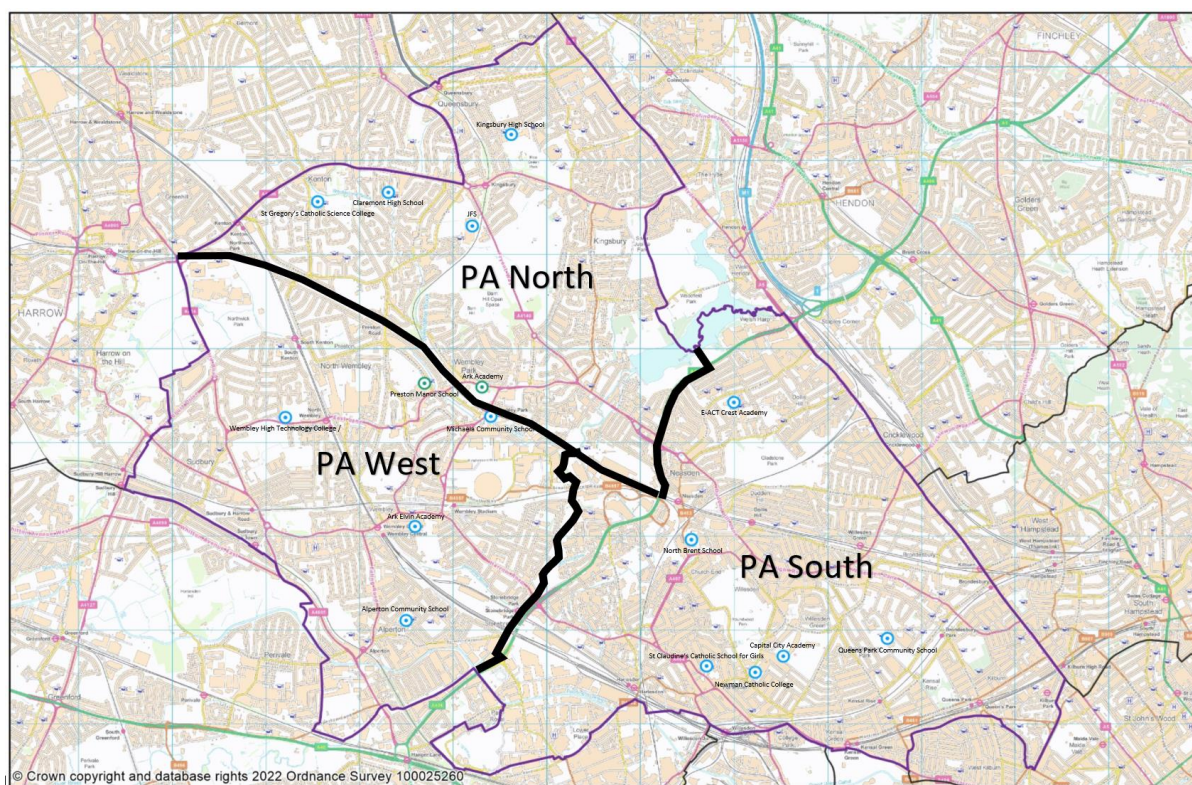
## 8.2 Secondary Planning Areas

Brent divides its secondary schools into 3 planning areas that reflect geographical groupings of schools – Secondary Planning Area North, Secondary Planning Area West and Secondary Planning Area South (Figure 5). As with primary planning areas, all secondary planning areas are aligned with the 2022 ward boundaries. This provides a clearer picture of demand as GLA projections are also based on these wards.

Secondary aged children can be expected to travel longer distances to school. A reasonable offer for a secondary place is one within 3 miles of home, which given the size of Brent and the good transport links mean children can travel to any school. However, secondary planning areas allow localised pressures for schools to be taken into account and where additional places would help more children attend a school near to where they live.



Figure 5: Secondary Planning Areas



## Secondary Planning Area North

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Wards</b>   | Barnhill, Kenton, Kingsbury, Queensbury and Welsh Harp                       |
| <b>Schools</b> | Ark Academy, Claremont High School, JFS, Kingsbury High School, St Gregory's |

**Demand:** Schools in Planning Area North are usually oversubscribed. The latest projections indicate a deficit in almost every year group over the next seven years. This is a different position to the previous forecast, which indicated a small surplus in some year groups. The revised projections are based on a higher than expected number of children attending Year 7 in January 2025, as explained in section 2.3. Planning Area North includes the Burnt Oak Colindale and Northwick Park growth areas.

**Planned action:** There are no planned actions and demand will be kept under review. Spare places in Planning Area South will accommodate pressures in demand in this planning area, and the Fair Access Protocol will be implemented if required to manage demand for in-year places that cannot be fulfilled through normal admissions processes.

Table 13: Secondary Planning Area North 2025 projections and capacity

| PA 7 - North | Dataset            | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|--------------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| 2025/2026    | Capacity           | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278   | 1,278   |
|              | Projection         | 1335   | 1360   | 1298   | 1279    | 1263    |
|              | Surplus            | -57    | -82    | -20    | -1      | 15      |
|              | Surplus Percentage | -4%    | -6%    | -2%    | 0%      | 1%      |
| 2026/2027    | Capacity           | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278   | 1,278   |
|              | Projection         | 1347   | 1346   | 1367   | 1317    | 1306    |
|              | Surplus            | -69    | -68    | -89    | -39     | -28     |
|              | Surplus Percentage | -5%    | -5%    | -7%    | -3%     | -2%     |
| 2027/2028    | Capacity           | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278   | 1,278   |
|              | Projection         | 1379   | 1356   | 1352   | 1387    | 1338    |
|              | Surplus            | -101   | -78    | -74    | -109    | -60     |
|              | Surplus Percentage | -8%    | -6%    | -6%    | -9%     | -5%     |
| 2028/2029    | Capacity           | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278   | 1,278   |
|              | Projection         | 1357   | 1385   | 1363   | 1373    | 1411    |
|              | Surplus            | -79    | -107   | -85    | -95     | -133    |
|              | Surplus Percentage | -6%    | -8%    | -7%    | -7%     | -10%    |
| 2029/2030    | Capacity           | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278   | 1,278   |
|              | Projection         | 1325   | 1363   | 1391   | 1382    | 1398    |
|              | Surplus            | -47    | -85    | -113   | -104    | -120    |
|              | Surplus Percentage | -4%    | -7%    | -9%    | -8%     | -9%     |
| 2030/2031    | Capacity           | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278   | 1,278   |
|              | Projection         | 1321   | 1333   | 1374   | 1411    | 1414    |
|              | Surplus            | -43    | -55    | -96    | -133    | -136    |
|              | Surplus Percentage | -3%    | -4%    | -8%    | -10%    | -11%    |
| 2031/2032    | Capacity           | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278  | 1,278   | 1,278   |
|              | Projection         | 1336   | 1330   | 1343   | 1392    | 1442    |
|              | Surplus            | -58    | -52    | -65    | -114    | -164    |
|              | Surplus Percentage | -5%    | -4%    | -5%    | -9%     | -13%    |

## Secondary Planning Area West

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Wards</b>   | Alperton, Northwick Park, Preston, Sudbury, Tokyngton, Wembley Central, Wembley Hill and Wembley Park                          |
| <b>Schools</b> | Alperton Community School, Ark Elvin Academy, Michaela Community School, Preston Manor School, Wembley High Technology College |

**Demand:** Secondary Planning Area West includes two major growth areas in Wembley Central and Alperton. Despite this, demand for Year 7 places is expected to remain at or around capacity. Some schools in the area operate a lower PAN than their build capacity will allow, which means there is a short-fall of places to meet in-year demand.

**Planned action:** Longer term forecasts indicate there may be increasing demand in Planning Area West, which will remain under review to determine whether any longer-term interventions are required to increase capacity. This may include putting into use all available existing built capacity or additional bulge classes. Spare places in Planning Area South can accommodate pressures in demand across the borough in the short to medium term. Fair Access Protocols will be implemented if required to manage demand for in-year places that cannot be fulfilled through normal admissions processes.

Table 14: Secondary Planning Area West 2025 projections and capacity

| PA 8 - West | Dataset            | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|-------------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| 2025/2026   | Capacity           | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,233   | 1,254   |
|             | Projection         | 1116   | 1157   | 1154   | 1212    | 1202    |
|             | Surplus            | 60     | 19     | 22     | 21      | 52      |
|             | Surplus Percentage | 5%     | 2%     | 2%     | 2%      | 4%      |
| 2026/2027   | Capacity           | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176   | 1,233   |
|             | Projection         | 1141   | 1134   | 1185   | 1188    | 1253    |
|             | Surplus            | 35     | 42     | -9     | -12     | -20     |
|             | Surplus Percentage | 3%     | 4%     | -1%    | -1%     | -2%     |
| 2027/2028   | Capacity           | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176   | 1,176   |
|             | Projection         | 1184   | 1157   | 1162   | 1219    | 1231    |
|             | Surplus            | -8     | 19     | 14     | -43     | -55     |
|             | Surplus Percentage | -1%    | 2%     | 1%     | -4%     | -5%     |
| 2028/2029   | Capacity           | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176   | 1,176   |
|             | Projection         | 1152   | 1201   | 1185   | 1194    | 1262    |
|             | Surplus            | 24     | -25    | -9     | -18     | -86     |
|             | Surplus Percentage | 2%     | -2%    | -1%    | -2%     | -7%     |
| 2029/2030   | Capacity           | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176   | 1,176   |
|             | Projection         | 1149   | 1175   | 1231   | 1219    | 1244    |
|             | Surplus            | 27     | 1      | -55    | -43     | -68     |
|             | Surplus Percentage | 2%     | 0%     | -5%    | -4%     | -6%     |
| 2030/2031   | Capacity           | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176  | 1,176   | 1,176   |
|             | Projection         | 1153   | 1173   | 1207   | 1269    | 1278    |



|            |                    |       |       |       |       |       |
|------------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 20301/2032 | Surplus            | 23    | 3     | -31   | -93   | -102  |
|            | Surplus Percentage | 2%    | 0%    | -3%   | -8%   | -9%   |
|            | Capacity           | 1,176 | 1,176 | 1,176 | 1,176 | 1,176 |
|            | Projection         | 1187  | 1177  | 1203  | 1243  | 1319  |
|            | Surplus            | -11   | -1    | -27   | -67   | -143  |
|            | Surplus Percentage | -1%   | 0%    | -2%   | -6%   | -12%  |
|            |                    |       |       |       |       |       |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (*red text = 15%+*); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

### **Secondary Planning Area South**

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Wards</b>   | Brondesbury Park, Cricklewood & Mapesbury, Dollis Hill, Harlesden & Kensal Green, Kilburn, Roundwood, Queens Park, Stonebridge and Willesden Green            |
| <b>Schools</b> | Capital City Academy, E-ACT Crest Academy, Newman Catholic College, North Brent School, Queens Park Community School, St Claudine's Catholic School for Girls |

**Demand:** Planning Area South includes the Neasden Station, Staples Corner, Church End and South Kilburn growth areas. Projections for this planning area remain steady for the next 7 years and there is sufficient availability of places to meet demand. The availability of places in this planning area means that children living in the North or West Planning Areas, who may not have been successful in gaining a place at schools closer to home, may be offered schools in the South, particularly if the applications are made in-year.

**Planned action:** The local authority will continue discussions with schools in the area that have spare built capacity to increase in-year provision given demand across the borough in Years 9-11. Due to the nature of transport links in Brent, it is possible for pupils to easily travel between planning areas to attend school within recommended journey times when there is no local in-year availability. The Planning Area will remain under review to determine if any longer-term changes are required.

Table 15: Secondary Planning Area South 2025 projections and capacity

| PA 9 - South | Dataset            | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|--------------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| 2025/2026    | Capacity           | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234   | 1,234   |
|              | Projection         | 935    | 953    | 908    | 926     | 954     |
|              | Surplus            | 299    | 281    | 326    | 308     | 280     |
|              | Surplus Percentage | 24%    | 23%    | 26%    | 25%     | 23%     |
| 2026/2027    | Capacity           | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234   | 1,234   |
|              | Projection         | 955    | 934    | 954    | 906     | 932     |
|              | Surplus            | 279    | 300    | 280    | 328     | 302     |
|              | Surplus Percentage | 23%    | 24%    | 23%    | 27%     | 24%     |
| 2027/2028    | Capacity           | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234   | 1,234   |
|              | Projection         | 956    | 953    | 934    | 953     | 909     |
|              | Surplus            | 278    | 281    | 300    | 281     | 325     |
|              | Surplus Percentage | 23%    | 23%    | 24%    | 23%     | 26%     |
| 2028/2029    | Capacity           | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234   | 1,234   |
|              | Projection         | 924    | 950    | 949    | 934     | 959     |
|              | Surplus            | 310    | 284    | 285    | 300     | 275     |
|              | Surplus Percentage | 25%    | 23%    | 23%    | 24%     | 22%     |
| 2029/2030    | Capacity           | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234   | 1,234   |
|              | Projection         | 904    | 925    | 953    | 953     | 943     |
|              | Surplus            | 330    | 309    | 281    | 281     | 291     |
|              | Surplus Percentage | 27%    | 25%    | 23%    | 23%     | 24%     |
| 2030/2031    | Capacity           | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234   | 1,234   |
|              | Projection         | 900    | 911    | 930    | 962     | 966     |
|              | Surplus            | 334    | 323    | 304    | 272     | 268     |
|              | Surplus Percentage | 27%    | 26%    | 25%    | 22%     | 22%     |
| 2031/2032    | Capacity           | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234  | 1,234   | 1,234   |
|              | Projection         | 909    | 908    | 920    | 943     | 978     |
|              | Surplus            | 325    | 326    | 314    | 291     | 256     |
|              | Surplus Percentage | 26%    | 26%    | 25%    | 24%     | 21%     |

Key: Green = 5%+ spare capacity (red text = 15%+); yellow = 5% spare capacity; amber = less than 5% spare capacity; red = shortfall

## 9. SEND and Alternative Provision place planning

### 9.1 Brent SEND Overview

Brent is a borough that has high aspirations for all children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). This was recognised by Ofsted during Brent's SEND Area Inspection in January 2025 who wrote "Leaders across the partnership understand very well the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families. They have high ambitions and a relentless focus to continue to improve services for children and young people who have SEND". Services, schools and settings are needs-led and follow the ethos of early identification and early intervention. Brent and local schools recognise SEND is not a fixed or permanent characteristic. At a specific time, a child might have additional learning needs that require tailored or additional support to fully participate in everything the school has to offer, or they may require more specialist support in school for the whole of their education.

All schools in Brent are inclusive and where possible a child or young person should be educated in their local mainstream school. A child with 'special' listed as Type in Section I of their EHCP is entitled to a place at a special school whilst ARPs have a mainstream designation. Therefore, children with 'special' named as type in Section I should not be placed in an ARP unless parental preference is for mainstream. ARP places are for children who can access, and will benefit from, significant engagement with a mainstream school offer. The majority of pupils' additional needs can be met within one of the following contexts listed in Table 16 with only those not able to access their education in a mainstream school being met through a special school.

*Table 16: The range of provision in Brent*

| A FULL RANGE OF PROVISION            |                         |   |                                |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Fully inclusive mainstream provision | Mainstream with support | Additionally resourced mainstream provision | Brent special school provision |

There is a range of high-quality provision for children with SEND in Brent encompassing 3 enhanced pre-school providers, 1 primary special maintained school, 1 primary special academy school, 2 special all through academy schools and 2 secondary special school academies, and a number of Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARP) in both primary and secondary mainstream schools.

An ARP is designed to provide specialist and targeted support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who can function well in a mainstream school, and where the school has appropriate teaching and learning strategies and staff with the skills and knowledge in a particular area of SEND. ARPs also provide specialist environments which support the learning needs of each pupil, and many young people with additional learning needs can make better, and more sustained progress when they attend mainstream schools. Table 17 details Brent's special school places and Table 18 details Brent's ARP places.

Table 17: Special School PANs 2025/26

| School  | Type of Provision | Type of School | Special Need   | Specialist places 2025/26                               |
|---|-------------------|----------------|--|---|
| *The Manor School                               | Special           | Primary        | Communication and Interaction                                    | 212 (220 from January 2026)                             |
| *The Avenue                                     | Special           | All-through    | Communication and Interaction                                    | 116   |
| Phoenix Arch School                             | Special           | Primary        | Communication and Interaction                                    | 55  |
| +The Village School and Hope Centre             | Special           | All-through    | Communication and Interaction and additional learning difficulty | 310   |
| *Wembley Manor (satellite provision in 2024/25) | Special           | Secondary      | Communication and Interaction and additional learning difficulty | 84 (94 from January 2026, then 150 from September 2027) |
| +Woodfield School                               | Special           | Secondary      | Communication and Interaction                                    | 200   |
|   |                   |                | <b>Total</b>   | <b>977 (995 from January 2026)</b>                      |

\*The Manor, Wembley Manor and The Avenue schools form the RISE Academy Trust. Children attending satellite provision of

+The Village and Woodfield schools form the Compass Learning Partnership Multi-Academy Trust.

Table 18: Additionally Resourced Provision places 2025/26

| School                         | Type of Provision | Type of School | Special Need                  | Places 2024/25              |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Kingsbury Green Primary        | ARP               | Primary        | Hearing Impairment            | 30                          |
| Oakington Manor Primary School | ARP               | Primary        | Communication and Interaction | 25                          |
| Fryent Primary School          | ARP               | Primary        | Communication and Interaction | 42                          |
| Preston Manor High School      | ARP               | Secondary      | Communication and Interaction | 12                          |
| Preston Manor High School      | ARP               | Secondary      | Communication and Interaction | 12                          |
| Kingsbury High School          | ARP               | Secondary      | Hearing Impairment            | 2                           |
| Carlton Vale Infant School     | ARP               | Primary        | Communication and Interaction | 10                          |
| Kilburn Park Junior School     | ARP               | Primary        | Communication and Interaction | 16                          |
| Newfield Primary School        | ARP               | Primary        | Communication and Interaction | 15                          |
| St Margaret Clitherow          | ARP               | Primary        | Communication and Interaction | 16 (opening January 2026)   |
| Newman Catholic College        | ARP               | Secondary      | Communication and Interaction | 25                          |
| Preston Park                   | ARP               | Primary        | Communication and Interaction | 21                          |
| Ark Elvin                      | ARP               | Secondary      | Moderate Learning Difficulty  | 10 (25 from September 2026) |
| Elsley                         | ARP               | Primary        | Communication and Interaction | 10                          |
|                                |                   |                | <b>Total</b>                  | <b>246</b>                  |

There are 977 places currently in Brent special schools and 246 ARP places (61 in secondary, 185 in primary). These represent increases of 1.5% and 28% respectively since the 2024/2025

academic year. Other boroughs can apply for places in Brent schools (in the same way that Brent children and young people occupy spaces in special schools in other boroughs). The percentage of out of borough (OOB) children and young people with SEND placed in Brent special schools and ARPs will vary year on year. However, the current figure stands at 12% of Brent's total capacity (an increase of 1% since this time last year). As a result, Brent currently only has access to 860 of the 977 local special school places and 216 of the 246 ARP places in Brent schools.

## 9.2 Demand for special provision

As of August 2025, there are 4025 children and young people living in Brent aged 0-25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Of these, 2414 are statutory school age, or 5.5% of the school population (similar to national levels, which currently sit at 5.3%). 12% of pupils are identified with additional needs that can be met at SEN support where a need is identified but does not meet threshold for an EHCP (compared to 14.2% nationally).

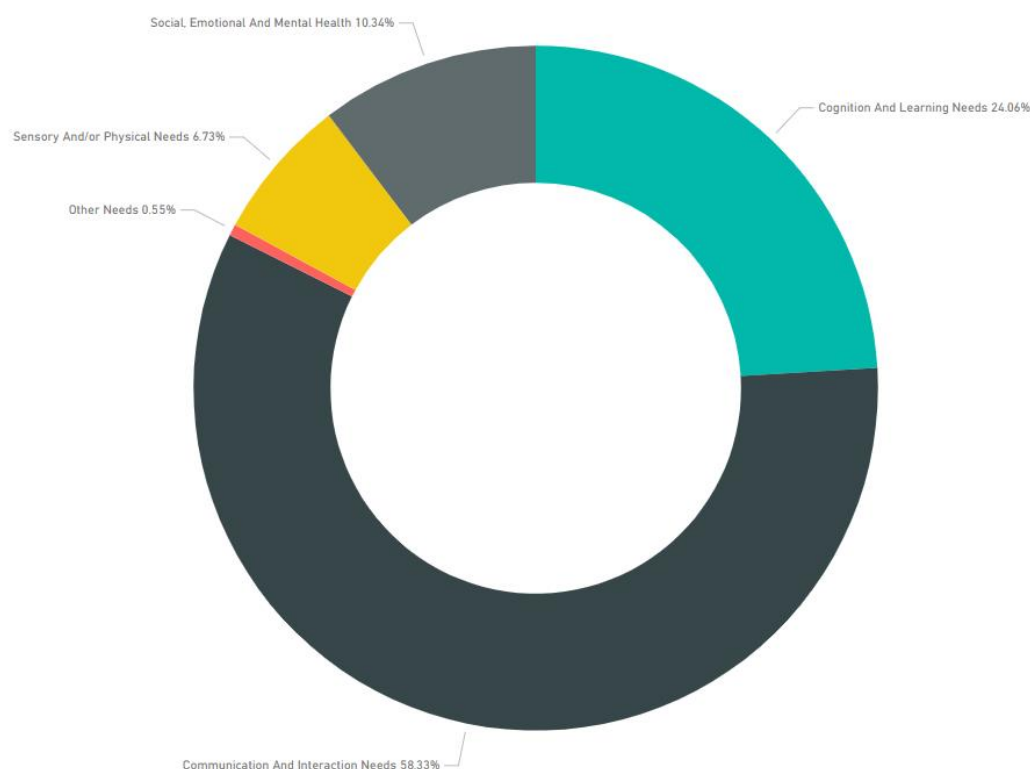
In the last year, the number of EHCPs has increased across all age groups, but not consistently. The age groups with the highest increases in EHCP numbers were the 5-10 and 16-19 age groups, which saw increases of 8.2% and 7.4% respectively. Table 19, below, gives the EHCP % increases between 2024 and 2025 broken down by age group. It should be noted, though, that in 2024, EHCNAs for children aged 0-5 accounted for 41.3% of all new requests to assess, children aged 5-10 accounted for 39% of new requests and children/young people aged 11-25 accounted for the remaining 19.7%.

*Table 19: % increases of EHCPs for Brent residents by age group*

| Age Group    | 2024 | 2025 | Increase % |
|--------------|------|------|------------|
| Under 5      | 159  | 164  | 3.1        |
| Age 5 to 10  | 1374 | 1486 | 8.2        |
| Age 11 to 16 | 1161 | 1222 | 5.3        |
| Age 16 to 19 | 676  | 726  | 7.4        |
| Age 20 to 25 | 399  | 402  | 0.8        |

The breakdown by area of needs for Brent's current 0-25 cohort of CYP with an EHCP is shown in Figure 6. Needs associated with communication and interaction (CI), which includes children with autism spectrum condition (ASC), predominate with 58% of the cohort having CI as their primary area of need. This is an increase of 2% in this category within the last calendar year. The predominance of CI as the most commonly occurring primary need in Brent's EHCP cohort looks set to continue with the Early Years SEND team reporting 75-85% of their referrals over a 12-year period being for concerns regarding CI development. This is a national trend and is not unique to Brent.

Figure 6: A breakdown of the percentage of CYP with an EHCP for each primary area of need in Brent, August 2025



### 9.3 Where Brent children with special needs and EHC Plans attend school

Ongoing targeted work to support schools and settings to better meet the needs of children with SEND has seen an increase in the number of children remaining within mainstream education in Brent. However, despite increasing confidence in the mainstream sector to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND, and significant investment by Brent to increase the capacity within special educational settings and ARPs in the borough, additional special school places are required. Key numbers are as follows:

- 48% of all children with an EHCP in Brent attend a mainstream school provision. This is an increase of 1% since this time last year.
- However, in terms of age-groups, 37% of primary aged children and 49% of secondary aged children with an EHCP require a special school place. Numerically this is expressed as 634 and 587 children respectively.
- Communication and Interaction is the area of need most strongly correlated with placement in special for both primary and secondary aged children with an EHCP in Brent, followed by Cognition and Learning for both age groups.

Brent currently has 136 children in mainstream schools awaiting a place in special (an increase of 16% since this time last year). Of these 136, 128 are primary age and 8 are secondary age. Additionally, Brent currently has 16 children unplaced and receiving home tuition whilst a

placement is sought (a 6% decrease since this time last year). Of these 16, 8 are primary aged and 8 are secondary aged. The primary need of the majority of these children is communication and interaction (most commonly ASC), accompanied by cognition and learning needs.

199 Brent pupils with EHCPs attend out-of-borough maintained special schools (an increase of 2% since this time last year), at a cost of £5.6m per annum. This represents 8% of Brent's school age children with an EHCP. Additionally, 197 children attend independent schools (an increase of 1.5% since last year), at a cost of £11.9m per annum. This also represents 8% of Brent's school age children with an EHCP. The use of independent places has increased along with the cost of each place meaning that cost pressures associated with independent places have increased disproportionately to the percentage increase in places used. The transport costs for Brent children with an EHCP attending out of borough and independent provisions is circa. £6m per annum.

Given the above, if all Brent children were to access a place at a maintained, in-borough special school, Brent would require a total of 1221 places (634 primary and 587 secondary), with the majority of these places being for children who have either communication and interaction or cognition and learning as their primary area of need. Brent currently has 480 places in primary age special school classes and 497 places in secondary age special school places. Of these places, 12% are occupied by children from other boroughs, leaving 422 primary places available and 437 secondary places available. Given this, Brent has a current shortfall of 212 primary places in special and 150 secondary places in special. As outlined above, to prevent Brent children with EHCP being unplaced, the independent sector, home tuition, out of borough schools and the mainstream sector are all currently being utilised.

The number of forecast primary special places required is similar to last year's predictions. The latest forecasts for secondary special places are, however, higher than last year's predictions by 50 places. This means that additional secondary places may be required sooner than previously anticipated due to increased demand:

- In August 2024, 42% of secondary age pupils were described as requiring a place in a special school. In August 2025, that percentage has risen 7% to 49%, representing a difference of circa. 41 children.
- The increase in secondary aged children requiring a place in special is attributed to rising levels of need in Brent's younger children as they reach secondary age.
- Permanent exclusions in the last academic have had a disproportionate impact on children with SEND, reflecting pressures in capacity and mainstream schools' ability to meet pupil's needs.
- In the 2024 School Place Planning Strategy it was predicted that Wembley Manor school would open with 150 places in September 2025. Instead, Wembley Manor has opened with 84 places in September 2025, increasing to 94 in January 2026 but not reaching 150 until September 2026. This is a difference of circa. 60 places in the 25/26 academic year as compared to modelling in 2024.

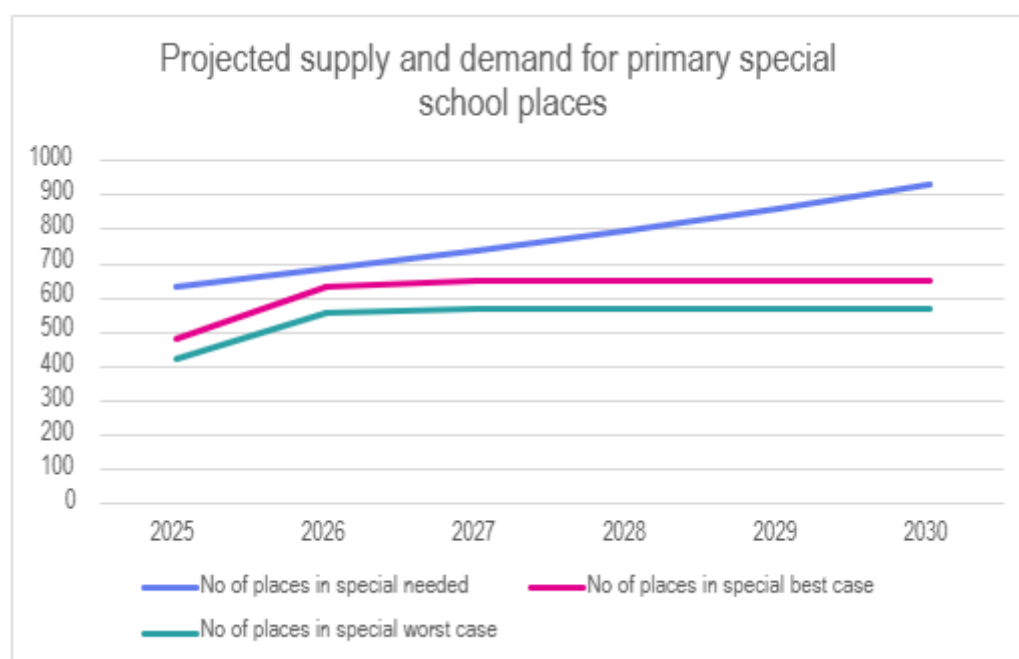
Table 20 and Figure 7 below, depict the current and projected need for primary special school places (all areas of need) within Brent over the time period of 2025-2030. In terms of demand, Table 20 and Figure 7 assume 8% annual growth in EHCP numbers (based on current annual growth trends and agreed mitigations) and 37% of primary aged children with an EHCP requiring a place in special.

In terms of supply, Table 20 and Figure 7 model a best-case scenario (whereby all of Brent special school places are available to Brent children) and a worst-case scenario (whereby 88% of Brent special school places are available to Brent children). The worst-case scenario is more reflective of current occupancy levels by out of borough children.

*Table 20: Current and projected demand and supply of primary school special places in Brent*

|                                    | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| No of places in special needed     | 634  | 685  | 740  | 799  | 863  | 932  |
| No of places in special best case  | 480  | 632  | 649  | 649  | 649  | 649  |
| No of places in special worst case | 422  | 556  | 571  | 571  | 571  | 571  |
| Shortfall best case                | 154  | 53   | 91   | 150  | 214  | 283  |
| Shortfall worst case               | 212  | 129  | 169  | 228  | 292  | 361  |

*Figure 7: Current and projected demand and supply of primary school special places in Brent*



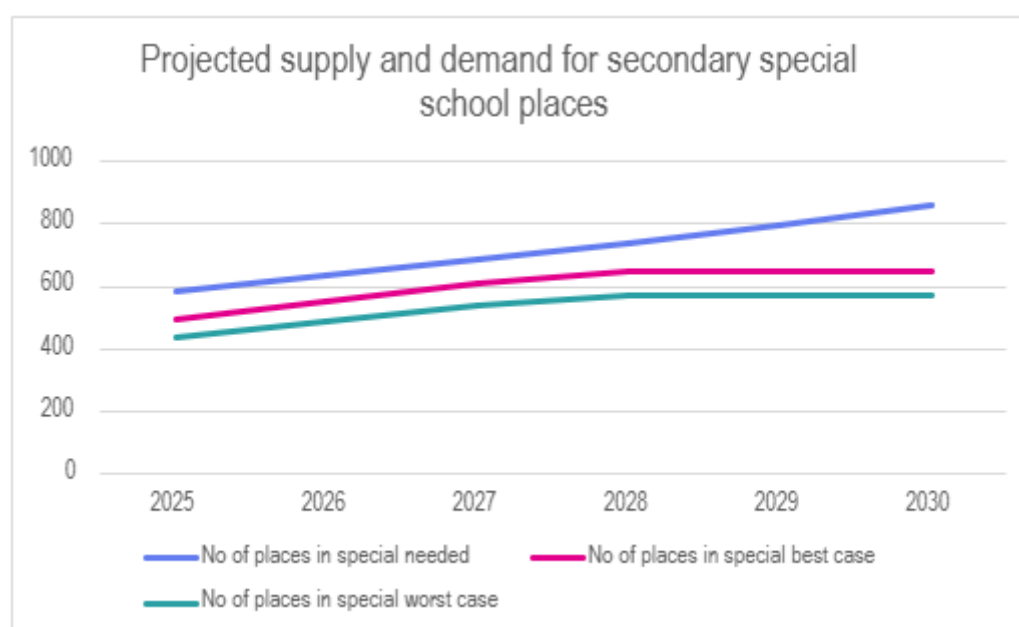
Current and projected (until 2030) need for special school places at secondary are shown in Table 21 and Figure 8 below. The same assumptions are made for this data set as for the primary age data set (with the exception that an assumption of 49% of total secondary aged EHCP cohort requiring special is made).



Table 21: Current and projected demand and supply of secondary school special places in Brent

|                                    | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| No of places in special needed     | 587  | 634  | 685  | 740  | 799  | 863  |
| No of places in special best case  | 497  | 553  | 610  | 650  | 650  | 650  |
| No of places in special worst case | 437  | 487  | 537  | 572  | 572  | 572  |
| Shortfall best case                | 90   | 81   | 75   | 90   | 149  | 213  |
| Shortfall worst case               | 150  | 147  | 148  | 168  | 227  | 291  |

Figure 8: Current and projected demand and supply of secondary school special places in Brent



#### 9.4 Planned action

In January 2022 Cabinet approved £44m of capital investment for additional specialist places in a new secondary special school, expansions of existing special schools and new ARPs in mainstream schools. As many of these projects have either been delivered, are close to delivery or have been reconsidered, a new 'phase 2' SEND Capital strategy is currently under development. The key projects within this strategy are identified in Table 22, below. This table details the planned expansion of special school places in Brent 2025-2027, subject to relevant consultations. Academy expansions will be subject to school consultation with the DfE Regional Director. Development of the Strathcona site will be subject to local consultation. (note: places that will be available in the 25/26 academic year are already captured in Table 17, above, and so are not also stated in Table 22 to prevent duplication).

Table 22: Additional special school provision for Brent 2025-2027

| School             | Places                                     | Phase                                      | Delivery time scale              |
|--------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Woodfield school*  | 40   | Secondary                                  | January 2027                     |
| The Avenue         | 34   | All-through                                | September 2027                   |
| Strathcona site    | 50   | Primary                                    | September 2026                   |
| The Manor School   | 88   | Primary                                    | September 2026                   |
| The Village School | 80 (but net gain of 40)                    | All-through (but places are for secondary) | TBC (modelled for delivery 2028) |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>212<br/>(138 primary, 74 secondary)</b> |  |                                  |

\*Woodfield places are being delivered during the Phase 2 Capital works programme but were agreed as part of Phase 1. Therefore, these 40 places do not count towards the Phase 2 total.

## 9.5. Summary of need

As can be seen from Tables 20, 21 and 22 and Figures 7 and 8, the planned expansion of specialist school places in Brent, even if delivered on time, do not meet Brent's current or projected need for places in special for either primary or secondary cohorts, and so will not keep pace with levels of demand anticipated by 2026/2027 (as modelled in Tables 21 and 22). The modelling indicates that Brent has a need to plan for further special school places (over 300 across primary and secondary) to reduce further spend on out-of-borough placements, and officers will continue to work to develop further options to expand.

## 9.6 Alternative provision

The Council has a statutory duty to arrange suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who because of illness or other reasons would not receive suitable education without such provision. In Brent there are two pupil referral units (PRUs) that are maintained by the local authority to provide sufficiency and meet statutory duties. These are Brent River College (BRC) for permanently excluded pupils and Ashley College, for pupils who require alternative provision due to medical needs.

For pupils in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 at risk of a permanent exclusion who have complex needs, Brent Council commissions two providers, Brent River College and The Pears Family School for pupils requiring time limited placements. Roundwood School and Community Centre, an alternative provision free school is also another provider who adds to the sufficiency of alternative provision in the borough. Brent River College is heavily over-subscribed at primary level (Key Stages 1 and 2) offering 7 spaces intended for short-term respite, but which are currently occupied by primary aged children with an EHCP and who have significant SEMH needs. At the end of the 2024 – 2025 academic year, there were 4 young people on the waiting list for an additional support placement at BRC.

The overall exclusion figures for all Brent pupils for the academic year 2024/25 remains low with 26 students permanently excluded. This is a decrease of 13% since the 2023/24 academic year and highlights the strong positive impact of Brent's inclusion support teams. The increasing number of children with complex social, emotional and mental health issues (SEMH) and pupils experiencing Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) has highlighted a shortfall in provision for this cohort, especially for primary aged pupils for whom there is no provision, and the offer is to be taught within their home. This need will be considered as part of wider school place planning considerations.

## **9.7 Post-16 Provision**

The government drive for improved engagement post-16 in supported employment and more paid employment opportunities has placed an additional focus on local authorities to drive forward an expansion in supported internships and opportunities for young people to prepare for adulthood through employability skills and work experience. As the number of young people with an EHCP continues to grow, the demand in this area will continue.

There is an expectation in the 2014 SEND Code of Practice that a full range of opportunities must be provided to support young people to become visible, active members of society. The Council has recently committed to developing post-16 SEND provision to meet this demand for places for young people with SEND, in particular young people aged 16-25 with complex learning difficulties. A new Post-16 Skills Resource Centre located at Welsh Harp was agreed by Cabinet in May 2023 and is aimed at addressing the current lack of in-borough provision for young people aged 16-25 with complex learning difficulties. The Welsh Harp facility is projected to open in early 2027.

A partnership wide Supported Employment Forum has been established to ensure that the offer developed for young people is meaningful and sustainable. The Council, working with anchor organisations, has expanded the offer of supported internships. In the 2024/25 academic year, 22 Brent students enrolled on the supported internship scheme, across 9 different placements. Plans are being developed as part of the SEND strategy re-refresh to further increase the breadth of placement opportunities available to Brent students.

## **10. Conclusion**

This strategy has set out the responsibilities the Council holds with regards to school place planning for early years, mainstream and special provision. The second refresh maintains the focus on the sustainability of provision that can adjust to both increases and decreases in demand for mainstream and specialist places.

The first-year refresh included a deeper dive into Special Education Needs and Alternative Provision place planning which concluded additional provision is required to secure sufficient local places for children with SEND and children who need alternative provision. This more detailed focus on sufficiency of specialist school places continues.

The second-year refresh of the strategy considers the actions that may be required to cope with an increased demand for mainstream school places in some areas, following eight years of consistently falling pupil numbers.

The Local Authority will continue to work in partnership with schools to develop and implement actions identified as necessary to respond to both identified need and changes in demand to ensure the Brent school estate can support current and future educational use.

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**Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024 – 2028**


First edition – Published October 2023

First refresh – Published November 2024

Second refresh – Published November 2025

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|   |   |
|---|---|
|  | <b>Cabinet</b><br>17 November 2025  |
|   | <b>Report from the Chief Executive</b>  |
|   | <b>Lead Member - Deputy Leader and<br/>Cabinet Member for Finance and<br/>Resources<br/>(Councillor Mili Patel)</b> |
| <b>Adopting the Socio-Economic Duty</b>   |   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>  | All  |
| <b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>   | Key  |
| <b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b><br><small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small> | Open   |
| <b>List of Appendices:</b>  | One<br>Appendix A: Action Tracker – Adopting the Socio-Economic Duty   |
| <b>Background Papers:</b>   | <a href="#">2024-2028 EDI Strategy, Anti-Racism Action Plan</a>  |
| <b>Contact Officer(s):</b><br><small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>   | Sarah Milner-Barry, EDI Strategy Lead<br>020 8937 2891<br><a href="mailto:sarah.milner-barry@brent.gov.uk">sarah.milner-barry@brent.gov.uk</a> |

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposal for the council to formally adopt the Socio-Economic Duty (SED) as part of its commitment to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). Adoption of the duty would ensure that policy and programme decisions give due regard to the potential impacts on people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. This would have the effect of adding socio-economic status to the list of characteristics considered within Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs).

## 2.0 Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to:

- 2.1. Approve the Council's formal adoption of the socio-economic duty.

## 3.0 Detail

### **3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword**

- 3.1.1 As Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, this report marks a significant step forward in Brent Council's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. The proposed adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty demonstrates the Council's determination to ensure that every decision we make is informed by a clear understanding of its impact on the lives of our residents.
- 3.1.2 The adoption of the duty is a landmark milestone for our borough. It ensures that the needs of residents facing poverty or financial exclusion are central to our strategic decisions. In doing so, we are strengthening our response to the cost-of-living crisis and deepening our ability to tackle the root causes of inequality in Brent.
- 3.1.3 I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of this refreshed approach, particularly the EDI team and all colleagues who provided invaluable feedback during the process. Together, we are building a fairer and more compassionate Brent, one where every resident has the opportunity to thrive.
- 3.1.4 The adoption of the SED directly ties into the Borough Plan's Priority 1: Prosperity and Stability in Brent, by embedding a requirement to consider the needs of residents experiencing socio-economic disadvantage across the council's activities. In particular, the duty will help sharpen the council's response to the cost-of-living crisis by ensuring that financial support schemes, debt advice, and welfare interventions are targeted towards those most at risk. The duty also contributes to achieving the Borough Plan's wider ambitions, for example by strengthening our ability to address the social determinants of health, recognising that low income interacts with other inequalities to drive poor outcomes.
- 3.1.5 Adopting the SED is reflected in Objective 2 of the council's 2024-2028 EDI Strategy, which commits to improving our EIA process, and exploring adoption of the SED as a mechanism for identifying and addressing disadvantage more effectively.

### **3.2 Background**

- 3.2.1 There has been growing momentum both within the council and from external stakeholders for Brent to formally adopt the Socio-Economic Duty. This reflects a shared recognition that socio-economic disadvantage is a significant and often overlooked driver of inequality, and that adopting the duty is a vital step in our ambition to treat all groups equitably. The duty will embed a requirement to consider the impacts of decisions on residents experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, aligning with Brent's broader commitment to inclusive policymaking.

- 3.2.2 The adoption of the socio-economic duty involves the addition of socio-economic status to Equality Impact Assessment templates and guidance, which is being completed as part of the Equality Impact Assessment refresh.

### **3.3 Adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty**

3.3.1 Brent Council has committed to adopting the Socio-Economic Duty, as stated in our EDI Strategy, and reflected in our integration of socio-economic status into the refreshed EIA guidance and template. Adopting the SED reflects a growing recognition, both locally and nationally, that systemic disadvantage often occurs along lines that are not currently reflected in legislation. The government has committed to enacting the duty, which is set out in Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010. Although Section 1 has not yet been brought into force in England, as of November 2024, [47 councils](#) including Hackney, Manchester, and Newcastle, had voluntarily adopted the duty. Brent's proposed adoption places the council alongside other forward-looking authorities, demonstrating leadership and readiness ahead of anticipated national legislation.

3.3.2 Adopting the duty means Brent will formally treat socio-economic disadvantage as a key consideration in strategic decision-making, equivalent to a protected characteristic in how it is assessed and addressed. In practice, this means officers will be expected to consider the impact of proposals on individuals and groups experiencing poverty, financial exclusion, or housing insecurity, and to reflect this in Equality Impact Assessments and service design.

3.3.3 The council's adoption of the duty is based on the principles laid out by [JustFair's 1forEquality campaign](#), which advocates for the effective enactment, implementation, and enforcement of the SED. Key principles of the campaign include:

- Promoting meaningful impact assessments that go beyond box-ticking and help decision-makers understand and mitigate socio-economic disadvantage.
- Supporting transparent and evidence-informed decision-making, using data to identify and address inequalities.
- Providing practical resources, training, and case studies to support implementation.
- Advocating for participatory approaches, including lived experience panels and community engagement, to shape fairer policies.

Further detail on the council's actions toward each of these areas can be found in Appendix A, which lays out each element and the lead team(s) responsible for progressing it.

3.3.4 Local evidence from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Brent's Cost-of-Living Outcome Based Review, and the Social Progress Index all demonstrate that socio-economic inequality compounds other forms of marginalisation and

drives poorer outcomes across health, housing, education and employment. According to the [2025 English Indices of Multiple Deprivation](#), Brent's average score makes it the 41<sup>st</sup> most deprived local authority in England, with neighbourhoods like Stonebridge, Roundwood, Harlesden, Kensal Green, Dollis Hill, and Welsh Harp experiencing particularly acute disadvantage. The income deprivation affecting children index score is 58.7%, the fifth highest in the country.

- 3.3.5 According to the [Trust for London](#), poverty affects 33% of Brent residents, the seventh highest rate in London, with 12% of households in fuel poverty and over 2,400 households living in temporary accommodation. On employment, Brent's 6% unemployment rate is among the highest in London, while 17.3% of working-age residents rely on out-of-work benefits. The Social Progress Index further highlights structural barriers in areas such as housing affordability, access to healthcare, and civic participation, underscoring that socio-economic disadvantage in Brent is multidimensional and entrenched.
- 3.3.6 The adoption of the duty strengthens the council's accountability to address these disparities by ensuring that programmes designed to support residents are explicitly targeted at those most affected by deprivation. Current initiatives already provide a strong foundation. For example, Brent Works and Brent Start play a role in tackling high unemployment and low skills, offering tailored support to residents furthest from the labour market. Commissioned services such as BEAM and StepUp provide additional pathways for people facing homelessness or mental health challenges. Similarly, the Council's digital inclusion programme addresses Brent's documented digital divide, which otherwise risks compounding inequalities in access to jobs, education and essential services. On health, targeted programmes addressing obesity, diabetes and oral health are vital in tackling the borough's disproportionately high rates.
- 3.3.7 The council is also adapting community-facing services to respond to the cost-of-living crisis. Brent Hubs, in partnership with Sufra NW London, have expanded their offer as part of the new Community Wellbeing Service launched at the New Horizons Centre. This integrated model combines Brent Hubs advice and support with hot meals, wellbeing services and discounted shopping for members. By embedding the socio-economic duty, these initiatives can be better aligned with the Borough Plan priorities, ensuring that resources are consistently directed to where disadvantage is most acute and that progress is measured against the lived realities of Brent's residents.
- 3.3.8 The council is already tracking relevant actions through its 2024-2028 EDI Strategy, helping to embed the duty into existing governance. This includes monitoring the impact of the Community Wellbeing Service and using health inequality KPIs and needs assessments to understand how deprivation affects outcomes. These mechanisms will support more targeted decision-making and ensure accountability in tackling socio-economic disadvantage.
- 3.3.9 To embed the socio-economic duty across the organisation, Brent is positioning it as a shared responsibility for all staff. This means socio-economic



disadvantage will be considered in the same way as a protected characteristic when making decisions, designing services, and engaging with residents. HR is incorporating the duty into mandatory EDI training to ensure staff understand how to apply it in their roles, and Members training will reinforce leadership accountability.

3.3.10 To fulfil the requirement of the duty to collect data on residents' and service users' socio-economic background, a series of four best practice questions have been identified from the Social Mobility Commission and added to the newly developed EDI Question Bank. In addition, a question has been developed in collaboration with Research and Intelligence colleagues to help identify individuals from low-income households, which asks about means-tested benefits as a proxy for socio-economic disadvantage. In addition, officers completing Equality Impact Assessments will now be asked to draw on a range of local and national data sources (e.g. Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Brent Open Data, and internal service data) to help assess and identify actions to mitigate against socio-economic impacts.

3.3.11 Overall, the council is promoting a culture that recognises the importance and impact of adopting the SED, with the EDI strategy and Borough Plan already reflecting strong leadership commitment to tackling socio-economic disadvantage.

#### **4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

4.1 No stakeholder or ward member consultations have taken place, but internal engagement has occurred around the proposed adoption of the SED. This includes input from the EDI Board, Director Management Teams, and other internal stakeholders.

#### **5.0 Financial Considerations**

5.1 There are no financial considerations arising from this report.

#### **6.0 Legal Considerations**

6.1 Section 1 of the Equality Act was passed in 2010. To date, it has not been brought into force in England, although in April 2018 and March 2021 it was brought into force in Scotland and Wales respectively. Accordingly, public authorities may seek to voluntarily adopt the provisions of Section 1 which contain the Socio- Economic Duty alongside the existing nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.

6.2 Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 provides that "an authority to which this section applies must, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage".

- 6.3 The Explanatory Notes makes clear that Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 requires specified public bodies, when making strategic decisions such as deciding priorities and setting objectives, to consider how their decisions might help to reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Such inequalities could include inequalities in education, health, housing, crime rates, or other matters associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Further, that it is for public bodies subject to the duty to determine which socio-economic inequalities they are in a position to influence.
- 6.4 The duty applies to the listed public bodies, which have strategic functions – which includes Government departments, local authorities and NHS bodies. In addition, the duty applies to other public bodies which work in partnership with a local authority to draw up the sustainable community strategy for an area.
- 6.5 The duty does not require public bodies to consider how to reduce inequalities resulting from people being subject to immigration control.
- 6.6 Section 3 of the Equality Act 2010 provides that individuals have no recourse to private law because of a failure by a public body to comply with the duty imposed by Section 1. Accordingly, individuals who feel this duty has been breached, are statutorily barred from claiming damages although they are still permitted to bring a claim for Judicial Review proceedings against a public body who is covered by the duty, or if they believe the public body has not considered socio-economic disadvantage when taking decisions of a strategic nature.
- 6.7 It should be noted that where a ‘duty’ had been adopted on a voluntary basis it did not have the same standing and force as other provisions within the Equality Act 2010. The body of the report set out the steps and measures proposed to ensure processes are in place to avoid the adoption being a tick box exercise and or exposing Council decisions to challenge on the basis consideration of the SED has not been properly taken into account.

## **7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a “protected characteristic” and those who do not share that protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The council also passed a motion on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to internally recognise care experience as a protected characteristic.
- 7.2 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising

disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

- 7.3 The recommendations of this report are intended to reduce inequalities of outcome for socio-economically disadvantaged residents and communities.

## **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 8.1 There are no climate change or environmental considerations.

## **9.0 Communication Considerations**

- 9.1 A communications plan will underpin the council's adoption of the SED, ensuring staff and Members understand its significance for decision-making and service delivery. To support this, awareness-raising activities will include updates to mandatory EDI training, refreshed intranet content, and targeted messaging.

**Report sign off:**

***Chief Executive Kim Wright***

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## Appendix A: Action Tracker – Adopting the Socio-Economic Duty, last updated 28 October 2025

Brent will implement the socio-economic duty (SED) as outlined by the JustFair campaign. The actions contained in the [6 key components](#) to consider when adopting the SED are broken down below:

| Component   | Lead(s)            | Action(s)   | Is this already happening?   | Key milestones & timeline  |
|---|--------------------|---|--|--|
| 1. Meaningful impact assessments to understand the consequences of socio-economic disadvantage. | Corporate EDI team | 1.1 Integrate socio-economic status into EIA template, Cabinet report, and other key decision-making process documents.                                 | Yes, this will be added as a component of the new Equality Impact Assessments, and will be formally built into the EDI section of the Cabinet report template.   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updated template &amp; guidance shared with legal and HR for review.</li> <li>2. SED integrated into EIAs, scheduled for launch in November 2025.</li> </ol> |
| 2. Use data effectively as a tool for decision making and accountability.                       | Corporate EDI team | 2.1 Relevant data sources will be integrated into the refreshed EIA guidance and template.  | Yes, we will integrate relevant data sources including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessments, Indices of Multiple Deprivation, and relevant service level data sources into the updated guidance and template. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updated template &amp; guidance shared with legal and HR for review.</li> <li>2. SED integrated into EIAs, scheduled for launch in November 2025.</li> </ol> |
|   | Corporate EDI team | 2.2 Develop clear success criteria and measures so that the impact of the socio-economic duty on inequality of outcomes can be collected and monitored. | Yes, we already measure impacts around SED as part of relevant projects, programmes, and proposals.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify relevant commitments from EDI strategy that relate to SED.</li> <li>2. Presented to EDI Board as part of</li> </ol>                                 |

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|  |                                  |   | There are also relevant commitments in the EDI strategy linked to the SED which can be used to monitor progress.   | EIA Refresh paper on 12.6.   |
|  |                                  | 2.3 Transparent and accountable consideration of socio-economic disadvantage should be built into annual budget setting and all key decision-making processes, including scrutiny arrangements. | <p>Yes, we already consider socio-economic status as part of the cumulative budget EIA, and all reports include EDI considerations which encompasses the SED.</p> <p>There is also a scrutiny task group on the budget for members, which considers a range of criteria including socio-economic status.</p> | <i>No further action needed.</i>   |
|  | Corporate EDI Team & HR EDI Team | 2.4 Develop a collective responsibility for the duty among all staff members within the local authority.  | <p>Yes, the SED is a part of the collective responsibility shared by all staff to progress the EDI strategy.</p> <p>In addition, we can add the SED into the EDI trainings for all staff</p>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet with HR around integrating the SED into staff EDI training.</li> <li>2. HR exploring mechanisms to integrate SED into existing EDI e-learning.</li> </ol> |

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|  |  |   | which will be mandatory from April.   | 3. SED integrated into anti-racism and inclusive practices training which launched in October 2025.                    |
| 3. Encourage strong and visible leadership. This should be achieved through a cultural shift that embeds the priority to tackle socio-economic disadvantage within all levels of decision-making in the local authority. | Corporate EDI Team, Lead Councillors             | 3.1 Secure cross-party support for the SED.   | Yes, our political leadership are committed to tackling deprivation. The Borough Plan and EDI strategy both contain relevant objectives, with commitments specific to the SED. To determine how to secure cross-party support, possibly via a council motion. | 1. Put forward cabinet paper formally adopting the SED.  |
|  | Corporate EDI team                               | 3.2 Extract socioeconomic duty section from the EIA Refresh paper as a standalone item to go to Cabinet for approval. |   | 1. Presented EIA Refresh to EDI Board on 12.6.<br>2. Extract socioeconomic duty section into standalone Cabinet paper. |
| 3. Embed principles of working in partnership with people with lived experience of socio-  | Corporate EDI team, Resident Services, Community | 4.1 Collect relevant information from Resident services and Community Wellbeing Service                               | Yes, this is part of Brent's interactions with residents, including through Brent Hubs,   | 1. Corporate EDI team collecting information from relevant colleagues  |

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| economic disadvantage.   | Wellbeing Service Coordinators | Coordinators to discuss partnership working.   | <p>Family Wellbeing Centres and through the Cost-of-Living Outcome Based Review.</p> <p>We have direct contact with residents through the Community Wellbeing Service, which was co-designed with residents.</p> <p>The EDI Strategy also commits us to expanding our use of partnership models that involve socio-economically disadvantaged people.</p> | to document the different types of co-design and co-production work being done in partnership. |
| 4. Engage with residents, civil society, and voluntary and community sector organisations. |                                | 5.1 Consideration should be given to how people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage can inform and shape policy and practice through a permanent forum (for example a socio-economic scrutiny forum). This could build on existing time-limited engagement activities (such as Poverty Truth Commissions) and | People who are socio-economically disadvantaged help shape services via the council's community engagement and outreach work, through the Community Engagement Team, Brent Connects, and work within individual service areas.  | <i>No further action needed.</i>   |



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|  |                                 | should be supported by, but independent from, the local authority. The scrutiny forum should consist of substantive and formal processes of engagement and guidance on the socio-economic duty.   | Resident Services as a whole use an approach of learning and engaging to inform the needs of the service as well as enhancing the resident experience.   |   |
|  | Corporate EDI team, HR EDI team | 5.2 Arrange internal training for local authority representatives and staff to build skills in participatory approaches and engagement with the public and people with lived experience of socio-economic disadvantage.   | The SED can be integrated into the mandatory EDI training for all staff and members  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corporate EDI team integrated SED into member EDI training in September 2025.</li> <li>2. HR exploring mechanisms to integrate SED into existing EDI e-learning.</li> </ol> |
|  |                                 | 5.3 Create collaborative dialogue between local authority representatives and staff, and the public about socio-economic disadvantage and inequality, and the steps the local authority is taking to address socio-economic disadvantage in decisions and strategies. | Yes, we communicate the range of support we offer for socio-economically disadvantaged people via the Resident Support Fund, Household Support Fund, and the Community Wellbeing Service. These programmes are set up to be adaptable in | <i>No further action needed.</i>  |

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|  |  |   | approach, so that if needs change, the approach can change.   |                                  |
|  |  | 5.4 Facilitate understanding of people's lived experience across council members and staff, voluntary and civil society organisations, residents, and other stakeholders.                                     | Yes, we do this via the Cost-of-Living Outcome Based Review, the Radical Place Leadership programme, and Brent Health Matters, among other programmes which are informed by understanding lived experiences.  | <i>No further action needed.</i> |
|  |  | 5.5 Engage in participative consultation and problem-solving with socio-economically disadvantaged people and relevant stakeholders to effectively strategise about how to tackle socioeconomic disadvantage. | Yes, this is part of how programmes like the Community Wellbeing Service and Brent Hubs are set up.<br><br>This also links to our Radical Place Leadership activity which seeks to embed a more localised council delivery approach that is tailored to different | <i>No further action needed.</i> |

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|   |                    |  | communities and localities.   |   |
|   |                    | 5.6 Where structures and an agreed engagement strategy is already in place, people with lived experience of socio-economic disadvantage should review these structures.          | Engagement strategy is in development and will include engagement with all groups to help shape it, including socio-economically disadvantaged people.  | <i>No further action needed.</i>  |
| 6. Ensuring access to justice and monitoring impact and compliance.<br>Collecting evidence about the impact of implementing the duty. | Corporate EDI team | 6.1 Monitor compliance on an ongoing basis and assess at regular intervals whether change has happened and is being sustained. Any assessment should be made publicly available. | <p>Yes. We don't specifically report on actions taken to support each protected characteristic, but as part of broader EDI reporting we share updates on actions and progress made toward our commitments, some of which are targeted at socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Monitoring impact will also be achieved in part through the updated EIA approach.</p> <p>The Social Progress Index tool that is in</p> | 1. Continue to integrate socio-economic status into existing EDI reporting mechanisms, on an ongoing basis. |

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|  |  |   | development will also be useful to monitor our compliance with the SED.  |                                  |
|  |  | 6.2 Meet with other local authorities who have adopted the duty to learn and share best practice.   | Yes, we will continue to engage with the London Equalities Network around best practices in the adoption of the SED.   | <i>No further action needed.</i> |
|  |  | 6.3 Consider mechanisms which provide access to justice where the council has failed to comply with the SED and has increased socioeconomic disadvantage. | Yes, we have existing complaint mechanisms which can be used for this purpose. The SED is also embedded within our EDI strategy, which is open for scrutiny. | <i>No further action needed.</i> |

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| <br><b>Brent</b>                               | <b>Cabinet</b><br>17 November 2025   |
|   | <b>Report from the Director of Public Health</b>   |
|   | <b>Lead Member - Cabinet Member Adult Social Care, Public Health &amp; Leisure</b><br><b>(Councillor Neil Nerva)</b> |
| <b>Authority to Participate in Collaborative Procurement in respect of contract for the provision of sexual health services</b> |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>   | All  |
| <b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>  | Key  |
| <b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b><br>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act) | Open   |
| <b>List of Appendices:</b>   | One<br>Appendix 1: Brent Sexual Health Need Assessment 2025  |
| <b>Background Papers:</b>  | None   |
| <b>Contact Officer(s):</b><br>(Name, Title, Contact Details)   | Ruth du-Plessis, Director of Public Health<br>0208 937 3411<br><a href="mailto:ruth.du-plessis@brent.gov.uk">ruth.du-plessis@brent.gov.uk</a><br><br>Isoken Aiyanyo Aigbekaen, Sexual Health Commissioner<br>0208 937 6258<br><a href="mailto:Isoken.aigbekaen@brent.gov.uk">Isoken.aigbekaen@brent.gov.uk</a> |

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Sexual health services are a mandatory public health function and are essential to population health and resilience. Brent, Ealing, and Harrow Councils have jointly commissioned these services through the Outer North West London (ONWL) Sexual Health Programme since 2015, with London North West University Healthcare Trust (LNWHT) as provider. The current contract ends in July 2026.

- 1.2 This report seeks Cabinet authority to make a direct award to the current provider, London North West University Healthcare Trust (LNWHT), under the same collaborative arrangements with Ealing and Harrow. This will be undertaken in line with the Provider Selection Regime Regulations 2023, specifically Direct Award Process C, which allows continuation with the incumbent provider where they have demonstrably met performance requirements, delivered value, and ensured continuity of service for residents.
- 1.3 The total estimated value of the new contract over the potential nine-year term (5+4 years) is £21,489,734 based on a 4.15% year on year uplift from the current baseline. The contract is for 5 years with an option to extend for another 4 years
- 1.4 The recommendation is based on clear outcomes already delivered under the current contract, including:
- Sustained high service activity supporting early diagnosis and treatment.
  - Low and stable under-18 conception and abortion rates compared with national levels.
  - Improved access to Prep ((pre-exposure prophylaxis), and long-acting reversible contraception (LARC).
  - High user satisfaction and consistent achievement of key performance indicators.
  - Strong outreach delivered via youth centres, faith organisations, and voluntary sector partners such as Spectra and Brook, helping to reach high-risk and underserved groups.

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approve a direct award of the sexual health contract to the current provider, London North West University Healthcare Trust (LNWHT), under the existing collaborative procurement arrangements with Ealing and Harrow, for an initial period of 5 years with an option to extend for a further 4 years.”
- 2.2 Approve the Council’s participation in a collaborative procurement with Ealing and Harrow Councils.
- 2.3 Approves an exemption from the usual tendering requirements of Contract Standing Orders 84(a) to agree that Ealing Council act as the lead authority in the collaborative procurement detailed in 2.1 for the reasons detailed in section 3.2.11 and accordingly that the collaborative procurement is undertaken in accordance with its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

- 2.4 Delegate authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Culture & Leisure, to agree the award of contract on completion of the procurement process for a period of 5 years with an option to extend for a further 4 years to (a total of 9 years) to London North West University Healthcare Trust (LNWHT).

### **3.0 Detail**

#### **3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword**

- 3.1.1 Sexual health is fundamental to the overall health and well-being of individuals, couples, and families, and contributes significantly to the social and economic development of communities and nations. The World Health Organization defines sexual health as a state that requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free from coercion, discrimination, and violence.
- 3.1.2 The sexual health service will enhance access to high-quality, inclusive sexual and reproductive health services, which is a key strategy for addressing health inequalities and the specific challenges faced by Brent's diverse communities. The proposal outlined in this report supports Brent's ongoing commitment to improving sexual health outcomes, reducing stigma, and meeting the needs of residents across all age groups, with particular focus on young people, LGBTQ+ individuals, and communities experiencing deprivation.
- 3.1.3 The commissioning of open-access sexual health services is a statutory responsibility for local authorities under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This proposal ensures that Brent meets its statutory obligations efficiently and strategically, securing service continuity and value for money. It aligns with Brent's public health priorities and maintains a delivery model that is responsive to both current and emerging community needs. Given the interconnectivity of London, this collaborative procurement approach best meets the needs of this London level issue.
- 3.1.4 The sexual health service aims to deliver inclusive and targeted sexual health services, which meet local need and reduces health inequalities in accessing health services. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted long-standing disparities in access to healthcare and further exacerbated risks for populations already experiencing poor sexual health outcomes. The services are designed to reduce health inequalities and through co-designed approaches support local communities including Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups, men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers, and young people.

#### **3.2 Background**

- 3.2.1 Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unwanted pregnancies have a significant impact on individual and public health, with wider societal and financial implications. Prompt, open-access testing, treatment, and contraception provision are essential prevention strategies, and under the

Health and Social Care Act 2012, local authorities are statutorily responsible for commissioning these services. Brent, Ealing, and Harrow Councils jointly commission sexual health services through the Outer North West London (ONWL) Sexual Health Programme, with London North West University Healthcare Trust (LNWHT) as the provider since 2015.

3.2.2 Brent's strategic approach aims to reduce stigma, improve access, and target provision where need is greatest.

Sexual health services contribute directly to these priorities by offering:

- Early diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Preventive services including vaccinations and contraceptives
- HIV prevention through education,
- PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis), and outreach
- Support for high-risk and vulnerable groups.

3.2.3 LNWHT currently delivers a comprehensive model of care, including STI screening and treatment, contraception, HIV prevention (including PrEP), targeted outreach, clinical support to the wider health system, and training for primary care providers. Sexual Health London (SHL), a pan-London collaborative hosted by the City of London Corporation, supports integrated GUM provision and manages digital services, including home testing kits introduced in 2018. These digital pathways have improved flexibility, uptake, and referrals, contributing to over 43,000 activity by Brent residents in 2023/24.

3.2.4 Sexual health services are a mandatory public health function and essential to population health and system resilience. In Brent, 1,587 new STI diagnoses were recorded in 2023 (rate per 100,000), with chlamydia (41%) and gonorrhoea (20%) the most common infections. Although rates are above the national average, they align with London-wide patterns influenced by deprivation, population mobility, and behavioural factors.

3.2.5 High diagnosis rates indicate effective access, testing, and early intervention rather than poor service quality. Positive outcomes such as low under-18 conception and abortion rates demonstrate the impact of Brent's integrated approach. Continued investment, including expansion of long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) within primary care, is essential to meet demand and maintain service quality.

3.2.6 The collaborative commissioning model supports stability, efficiency, and targeted provision for high-risk groups, including sex workers, men who have sex with men (MSM), Black and minority ethnic communities, homeless individuals, and people affected by substance misuse. The updated service specification will formalise these targeted interventions and protect associated funding.

**3.2.7 Key Trends and Service Impact (Brent & London)**

This section summarises the latest sexual-health trends and performance, drawing from Brent's Sexual and Reproductive Health Needs Assessment



(2023/24), and the GOV.UK Spotlight on Sexually Transmitted Infections in London (2023 data). It highlights Brent's strong outcomes compared to London and England averages.

### **3.2.8 Brent Epidemiology and Service Access (2023–2024)**

- STI prevalence: 1,587 new diagnoses in 2023 with 8.1% positivity (excluding under-25 chlamydia), slightly below London (8.5%) and above England (7.3%).
- Chlamydia detection (15–24 years): 2,365 per 100,000, higher than London (2,028) and England (1,962). Screening coverage among young women was 25.3% (England 20.4%).
- HIV testing and treatment: 6,202 tests per 100,000, 21 new diagnoses per 100,000, with 99% ART coverage, 86.4% initiating treatment within 3 months, and 96.9% viral suppression — exceeding national targets.
- Access and digital transformation: 46.7% of users accessed online services, 23% used Brent clinics, and 30.2% used out-of-borough services, demonstrating flexible, open-access provision.
- Service activity: Over 43,000 activities delivered in 2023/24, including more than 7,000 home-testing kits with a 6% positivity rate, supporting early diagnosis and treatment.

### **3.2.9 London Context (2023 data – GOV.UK Spotlight)**

London reported over 128,000 new STI diagnoses in 2023 (rate of 1,448 per 100,000) — more than twice that of any other English region. Brent's outcomes compare favourably, reflecting the effectiveness of its targeted commissioning model within a high-prevalence areas.

### **3.2.10 Local service achievement and Impact**

- Service performance continues to meet or exceed London averages across key indicators, including testing coverage, chlamydia detection, and HIV treatment outcomes.
- High ART coverage (99%) and viral suppression rates (96.9%) demonstrate the strength and consistency of local HIV care pathways.
- A lower STI positivity rate (8.1% compared with 8.5% across London), despite sustained high testing volumes, highlights effective prevention measures and strong community engagement.
- Digital access continues to expand, with nearly 50% of residents now using online sexual health services.
- Between April 2022 and March 2023, over 8,044 Brent residents accessed the borough's contraceptive services.
- Since April 2025 to date, more than 10,475 residents have attended contraceptive clinics, demonstrating a strong upward trend in utilisation and the positive impact of recent service enhancements and outreach efforts.
- Community outreach through partners such as Spectra, Brook, and local faith-based networks continues to improve equity, inclusion, and access for underserved population groups.

3.2.11 The current contract ends in July 2026. As the supplier has met performance requirements in the contract, commissioners recommend a direct award under the Provider Selection Regime Regulations 2023 (PSR), specifically Direct Award Process C. This requires assurance that the provider meets the following five criteria:

- (a) **Quality and Innovation** – LNWHT consistently delivers high-quality, evidence-based services meeting national standards and key performance indicators. Clinical governance is robust, with regular audits and patient feedback informing continuous improvement. Service innovation includes early adoption of e-services, targeted outreach to high-risk groups, and integration of online triage with clinic care. These clinicians are also national leaders who chair key clinical groups and contribute to innovative pilots developed locally in Brent, such as the Chemsex pilot, while influencing national sexual health policy for example through their role on the National Sexual Health Advisory Board.
- (b) **Value** – The joint commissioning arrangement between Brent, Ealing, and Harrow has consistently achieved improved outcomes for residents while reducing costs compared to alternative models. By pooling resources, the councils benefit from economies of scale across procurement, legal, and financial functions, resulting in significant savings and enhanced operational efficiencies. The provider has over 30 years' experience delivering sexual health services in Brent, and a deep understanding of the borough's diverse communities and public health priorities. This local knowledge enables targeted use of resources, strong community engagement, and swift responses to emerging trends. Services under the integrated sexual health tariff make effective use of digital platforms to reduce clinic demand, and work in partnership with the voluntary sector to extend reach.

Savings have been sustained through efficient patient flow management and community-based delivery models.

- (c) **Integration, Collaboration, and Sustainability** – The provider operates within a sub-regional and pan-London framework, working closely with primary care, community services, and voluntary sector partners. This includes in-reach and outreach activities, LARC training for GPs, and shared care protocols. They maintain strong partnerships with third sector organisations, which bring their own specialist expertise, community connections, and extended reach helping to engage harder-to-reach populations and complement clinical delivery. Workforce stability, adaptability to changing demand, and strong integration within the wider health system further support the long-term sustainability of the service.
- (d) **Improving Access, Reducing Inequalities, and Facilitating Choice** – Services are open-access, with extended clinic hours, multiple sites, and digital options. Targeted support is provided to communities disproportionately affected by poor sexual health outcomes. E-services

which is integrated with London North West University Healthcare Trust (LWNTHT).

- (e) expand reach for those unable to attend in person, while clinics maintain provision for complex cases. Service data is used to adapt interventions and ensure equitable access.
- (f) **Social Value** – The provider supports local health improvement and resilience by training health professionals, running public health campaigns, and partnering with community organisations. They create local employment and training opportunities and engage volunteers and peer educators, aligning with the Council's wider objectives.

The current provider has consistently met performance requirements and delivered measurable outcomes for Brent residents. Our teenage pregnancy rates have reduced, we have expanded access to digital services, and successful outreach to high-risk groups.”

### 3.3 Core Service Offer

#### **London North West University Healthcare Trust (LNWHT) provides:**

- Comprehensive STI testing and treatment – available through both walk-in clinics and booked appointments.
- Emergency and routine contraception – including same-day LARC provision for clinically eligible patients.
- Targeted outreach – delivered via voluntary sector partners (e.g. Spectra, Brook) with specific focus on disproportionately affected populations such as men who have sex with men (MSM), Black ethnic groups, and young people aged 16–24.
- Community-based interventions – for example, pop-up clinics in youth centres and faith-based venues.
- Professional training and clinical governance – supporting GPs, pharmacists, and community practitioners to maintain consistent quality standards.

#### **Activity in 2023/24:**

- 43,000+ activities by Brent residents at LNWHT GUM clinics.
- Over 10,000 Brent resident attended our local clinic in Central Middlesex Hospital
- 68% of all service activity related to STI testing.
- 19% from referrals, largely due to expansion of online testing and self-sampling services.
- Over 7,000 home-testing kits distributed to Brent residents, with a positivity rate of 6% — ensuring earlier detection and treatment.

### **3.4 Population Health Needs**

- 3.4.1 The 2025 Brent Sexual Health Needs Assessment, undertaken to inform the procurement of services, highlights key priority areas that align with the council's commitment to reducing health inequalities, particularly among underserved and high-risk groups. These include Black African, Pakistani, and other ethnic minority communities, people with Severe Mental Illness (SMI), men who have sex with men (MSM), LGBT individuals, and residents of deprived areas. The identified priorities include:
- STI prevalence – Rates of gonorrhoea and syphilis remain significantly above the national average, disproportionately impacting underserved communities.
  - HIV – Despite improvements in testing coverage, late HIV diagnoses continue to be higher than desired, especially among high-risk groups facing unequal access to services.
  - Contraception – Uptake of HIV PrEP and Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) is increasing; however, primary care provision of LARC remains inconsistent, particularly in deprived areas.
  - Young people – Under-18 conception rates remain low, yet ongoing investment in prevention efforts is essential, with a focus on vulnerable youth populations to maintain
- 3.4.2 Additionally, a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) undertaken in 2025 involved residents and clinicians and demonstrated that pharmaceutical provision in Brent is currently adequate to meet local sexual health needs .
- 3.4.3 The Brent Sexual Health Needs Assessment (2025) was informed by:
- Service user focus groups
  - Consultations with VCSOs
  - Clinical feedback from local GPs and pharmacist
  - Strategic board input
- 3.4.4 The feedback strongly supports continuity of care, investment in digital services, and culturally sensitive outreach

### **4.0 Stakeholder and ward members consultation and engagement**

- 4.1 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure and the Leader of the Council have been consulted regarding the procurement strategy and proposed direct award.
- 4.2 A Brent Sexual Health Needs Assessment was published in June 2025, which included consultation with Brent service users and key stakeholders. The recommendations from this assessment have been used to inform and update the service specification. This ensures that the future service is inclusive, responsive to community needs, and designed to reduce inequalities.
- 4.3 Stakeholder engagement has included internal governance bodies, local providers, NHS commissioners, and regional partners via the London Sexual

Health Programme. This engagement has informed the updated service model and commissioning approach.

## 5.0 Procurement Timeline

- 5.1 The procurement strategy supports continuity of care and service stability. The provider's delivery model includes outreach, training, and system leadership.
- 5.2 The collaborative approach strengthens sub-regional planning and integration, while ensuring that Brent retains sovereignty over service delivery. The contract will incorporate flexible commissioning to respond to emerging needs and challenges, such as post-pandemic
- 5.3 The new contract is expected to commence on 1 August 2026, immediately after the expiry of the current contract. The procurement milestones are as follows:

| Task   | Start       | End           |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| Pre-Authority Briefings                      | 8 May 2025  | 1 Nov 2025    |
| Draft Commissioning Documents                | 2 June 2025 | 1 Nov 2025    |
| Final Service Specification & Contract Terms | 2 June 2025 | 15 Jan 2026   |
| Joint Evaluation with Harrow and Ealing      | Jan 2026    | March 2026    |
| Contract Award Governance                    | May 2025    | Dec 2025      |
| Provider Notice Issued                       | 31 Jan 2026 | -             |
| Contract Start Date                          | -           | 1 August 2026 |

## 6.0 Financial Considerations

- 6.1 This service will continue to be funded through the Public Health Grant. The projected annual uplifts are expected to be contained within the grant, so no additional financial pressures are expected. The projections include inflation and the planned introduction of new tests and treatments, such as for trichomoniasis (TV).
- 6.2 Sexual health services are statutory and demand-led, meaning the Council must provide them and costs depend on how many people use them. Because they are open access and shaped by changing needs, it is difficult to predict future demand with certainty. Current estimates use a 4.15% annual growth rate, based on NHS financial planning guidance.
- 6.3 The total estimated value of the new contract over the potential nine-year term (5+4 years) is £21,489,734 based on a 4.15% year on year uplift from the current baseline.

Table 1: Estimated baseline contract values for first 5 years till 2031.

| Year                       | Contract Value (£) |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 2025/2026-Current Contract | 1,962,083          |
| 2026/2027                  | 2,018,183          |
| 2027/2028                  | 2,101,938          |
| 2028/2029                  | 2,189,168          |
| 2029/2030                  | 2,280,019          |

Note: Inflation is assumed at 4.15% annually, in line with the cost uplift factor (CUF) used in the NHS financial planning guidance. It is expected that this will cover Agenda for Change (AfC) uplifts and tariff updates reflecting population growth.

## 7.0 Legal Considerations

- 7.1 Local Authorities have a duty under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to improve public health of their local population and that includes their sexual health, and Regulation 6 of the Part 2 of the Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and Entry to premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013 requires local authorities to provide, or make arrangements to secure the provision of open access sexual health services in their area.
- 7.2 The contract is a light touch services contract under the Procurement Act 2023 ('the PA23') and the estimated value of Brent Council's element of the procurement is £20,893,083 million which is above the threshold for light touch services under the PA23. It is deemed a High Value Contract under the Council's Contract Standing Orders ('CSO') and Financial Regulations and would ordinarily be procured in accordance with the requirements for High Value Contracts under the CSO. Officers propose participating in a collaborative procurement of the services with Harrow and Ealing Councils to be led by Ealing Council and accordingly that the procurement be undertaken in accordance with Ealing Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- 7.3 The Council's Contract Standing Order 84(a) provides that subject to compliance with procurement legislation, Cabinet may agree an exemption from the requirement to procure in accordance with Contract Standing Orders where there are 'good operational and/or financial reasons'. Officers have provided the reasons in paragraph 3.25 for the proposal for the collaborative procurement.

## 8 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 8.1 Pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010 (the "Public Sector Equality Duty"), the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,

8.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

8.3 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

8.4 There is no prescribed manner in which the council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary. The Council has considered its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. A screening exercise was completed, which found no adverse impacts for people with protected characteristics. The service is designed to reduce health inequalities by targeting high-risk and vulnerable groups. The updated service specification ensures that services are inclusive and equitable, in line with Brent's commitment to equality and diversity.

## **9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

9.1 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no adverse impacts on the Council's environmental objectives and climate emergency strategy. The e-services is an online service cutting the need for unnecessary journeys.

## **10.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

10.1 The services are currently provided by an external provider and there are no implications for Council staff arising from collaborative procurement of the services.

## **11.0 Communication Considerations**

11.1 There are regular strategic board meetings and commissioner meetings attended by Directors of Public Health, Commissioners and delegated staff on the London e-service and the wider sexual system, which includes risk review and management.

**Report sign off:**

***Ruth du-Plessis***

Director of Public Health



**BRENT COUNCIL  
SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE  
HEALTH  
NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

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## Abbreviations/ Glossary

| Abbreviation | Definition   |
|--------------|--|
| A&E          | Accident and Emergency   |
| AIDS         | Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome   |
| ART          | Antiretroviral Therapy   |
| BBV          | Blood Borne Viruses  |
| CD4 count    | Blood test that measures number of CD4 cells, a key indicator of immune function |
| EHC          | Emergency Hormonal Contraception   |
| GBMSM        | Gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men                                |
| GP           | General Practitioner   |
| HIV          | Human Immunodeficiency Virus   |
| HPV          | Human Papillomavirus   |
| HSV          | Herpes Simplex Viruses   |
| ICB          | Integrated Care Boards   |
| IUDs         | Intrauterine Methods   |
| LARC         | Long-Acting Reversible Contraception   |
| LARC         | Long-Acting Reversible Contraception   |
| LGBTQ+       | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (or Questioning)                   |
| LGV          | Lymphogranuloma Venereum   |
| LNWH         | London Northwest University Healthcare NHS Trust                                 |
| MG or Mgen   | Mycoplasma Genitalium  |
| MSOA         | Middle Lower Super Output Area   |
| NAATs        | Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests   |
| NCSP         | The National Chlamydia Screening Programme                                       |
| NHS          | National Health Service  |
| NSGI         | Non-Specific Genital Infections  |
| OHID         | Office for Health Improvements and Disparities                                   |
| ONWL         | Outer Northwest London   |
| PCC          | Patrick Clements Clinic  |
| PCR          | Polymerase Chain Reaction  |
| PHOF         | Public Health Outcomes Framework   |
| PID          | Pelvic Inflammatory Disease  |
| PrEP         | Pre-exposure Prophylaxis   |
| SHAPE        | Strategic Health Asset Planning and Evaluation                                   |
| SPLASH       | The Summary Profile of Local Authority Sexual Health                             |
| SRH          | Sexual and Reproductive Health   |
| STI          | Sexually Transmitted Infection   |
| TV           | Trichomonas Vaginalis  |
| UNAIDS       | Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS                                       |

## Executive Summary

Supporting sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and wellbeing of residents is a key priority for local authorities. All services should address inequalities in access, uptake and quality of care whilst being data driven to ensure they are both cost effective and tailored to local need. The Local Authority Sexual Health commissioning key priorities are to:

1. Promote healthy sexual behaviour and reduce risky behaviour
2. Reduce sexually transmitted infection (STI) rates with targeted interventions for at-risk groups
3. Reduce unintended pregnancies
4. Continue to reduce under-18 conceptions
5. Work towards eliminating late diagnosis and onward transmission of HIV

Brent Council aims to improve the sexual health of the whole resident population by developing a service that has the greatest impact on vulnerable groups, who disproportionately experience poor sexual health. As part of the overall aim, this needs assessment has reviewed data on sexual and reproductive health, has collaborated with London Sexual Health services to analyse user perception data and has completed local engagement with some high risk groups and healthcare professionals to understand perceptions about sexual and reproductive health, access barriers and user thoughts on how the service offer can be improved.

Analysis of existing data shows that new STI diagnoses in Brent follow a similar trend to London, with Brent having a marginally higher diagnosis rate. STI testing is crucial to improve STI diagnosis, early detection and treatment, and to reduce possible long-term consequences. In 2023, the STI testing positivity rate (excluding Chlamydia under 25) was 8.1% in Brent. This was slightly below London (8.5%) and higher than England (7.3%).

The five most diagnosed STIs in Brent are chlamydia, gonorrhoea, genital herpes, genital warts and syphilis, all totalling to 1,587 new STI diagnoses in 2023 (rate per 100,000). Chlamydia accounted for 41% of those and gonorrhoea for 20%. From 2012 to 2023, there has been an upward trend in diagnoses for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, and syphilis. For herpes and warts, the trend has been downwards.

The gender split for new diagnoses of STI was 65% male to 35% female in 2023. There is some variation by individual STI, with a higher proportion of females for genital herpes, and a higher proportion of males for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis and genital warts. Among gay and bisexual men, numbers of gonorrhoea, chlamydia and syphilis diagnoses have increased from 2018 to 2023, for. A high proportion of syphilis and gonorrhoea diagnoses are in gay and bisexual men (79% and 65% respectively in 2023).

The ethnic profile of the population diagnosed with STIs was compared with the Brent population census data. Asian ethnic backgrounds were underrepresented, which could be due to a lower incidence and/or lower testing rate. Further qualitative primary research is required to establish the reasons. The low rate of diagnosed STIs in Asian communities is not just a local issue. For specific STIs, white ethnic groups are overrepresented in syphilis and gonorrhoea. Black ethnic groups are overrepresented in chlamydia and genital herpes and Mixed ethnic groups in chlamydia, and genital warts. The ethnic profile of new HIV diagnoses broadly matches the Brent census population (except for underrepresentation of the Asian ethnic group).

The most deprived areas of Brent had the highest new STI diagnosis rate overall and for chlamydia, genital herpes, gonorrhoea and both HIV prevalence and new HIV diagnosis. However, there was not a clear association between deprivation and syphilis or genital warts diagnosis rates.

In addition to the overall inequality based on demographic data presented above, below are some key highlight findings for sexual and reproductive health service specific data for Brent:

- A chlamydia diagnostic rate per 100,000 of 2,365 in women aged 15-24 in 2023. There is a growing proportion of chlamydia diagnoses among the male gay/bisexual group (at circa 30% in the last two years, up from 15% in 2018).
- HIV late diagnosis in people first diagnosed with HIV in the UK is an indicator related to morbidity and short-term mortality. Between 2021-23, Brent was at 51%, considerably above London (41%). Late diagnosis rates are relatively high for heterosexual men, and heterosexual and bisexual women.
- For those diagnosed with HIV infection who are linked into specialist services, 99% are on effective treatment after one year which compares very favourably to London and England and is above the UNAIDS target of 90%. However, there are missed opportunities to access HIV testing and thereafter specialist services.
- Lower initiation and continuation of HIV PREP for Brent (71%), compared to London (78%) and England (73%).
- Brent human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination coverage for both teenage boys and girls was considerably below London and England rates in 2023.
- At 53%, the cervical screening coverage in the 25–49-year-old group was considerably below London and England and the national target (80%) in 2023.
- Home testing has increased from almost zero in 2017 to 47% of sexual health service activity in 2023. Despite the growth and value in home-testing, qualitative research reveals concerns in how instructions and results are being communicated, as well as the full range of testing options for those who may not want to test at home.
- Clinics outside the borough perform more in-person tests than clinics inside the borough (30% vs 23% respectively).
- Under 18 conceptions have been on a downward trend for Brent, London and England over the last 2 decades. However, the rate of under 18 conceptions leading to abortion is higher in Brent than England.
- Total abortions per 1,000 declined between 2012 and 2021 but remain higher in Brent (24.8) than London (20.9) and England (19.2). The abortion rate in the over 25s is on an upward trend, with Brent above London and England. This could indicate a lack of appropriate, accessible contraception. Repeat abortions for under 25s in Brent shot up from 27.7% in 2020 to 34.6% for 2021, higher than London and England
- Total prescribed long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) excluding injections rate/1,000 in Brent followed a downward trend between 2014 to 2022, with a steeper decline in Brent compared to London and England. The latest 2022 rates per 1,000 show Brent at 27.4, London at 33.2 and England 44.1.
- Attendance at specialist contraceptive services have been on a downward trend since 2017 for both males and females, with a slight increase for females in the latest two years of data. The attendance rate per 1,000 for males in 2022 was 9.9 in Brent compared with 15.9 in London

The London-wide Sexual and Reproductive Health Needs Assessment<sup>1</sup> that was published in February 2025 highlights several key recommendations including aligning sexual and reproductive health service's values across London, focusing on prevention, providing inclusive services, and engaging with the most underserved and marginalised communities. Across London, services are to optimise clinic and online provision, strengthen referrals and pathways between settings and between local and subregional services, and improve accessibility and coordination.

The newly formed Brent Sexual and Reproductive Programme Board, after having reviewed the findings of both the London-wide and the Brent needs assessments, have agreed on the following priorities in order to translate the documents into a shared direction of travel:

- Work across the system to ensure services are equitable, based on user's views and involve service users in design, and meet the needs of those who are more vulnerable and at risk specifically young people, gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM), people with learning and or physical disabilities, Black communities, migrants and others with varying needs.
- Evaluate service user and resident views of their SRH needs and service access and undertake more in-depth local analyses on the reasons for high abortion rates and low HPV vaccination rates.
- Build on the successful collaborative working across London Councils, through the London Sexual Health Programme, including co-commissioning of the SHL E-service expanding the online offer to include PrEP to allow local Face to Face services to focus on those with more complex needs.
- Strengthen collaborative working between local government and the NHS to ensure that primary care, SRH, abortion, urology and gynaecology services work collectively to improve access and outcomes.
- Continue to raise awareness of SRH issues with the public and amongst professionals.
- Sustain support for London's HIV Fast Track Cities Initiative by implementing the National HIV Plan, including the piloting on HIV testing in A& E and increased awareness in primary care.
- Improve access to local services so that residents are able to access care including HIV prevention and treatment within borough.
- Continue collaborative working with LNWH and partners to continue to implement the National syphilis action plan and the forthcoming National SRH action plans.
- Given the low HPV vaccination coverage for both teenage boys and girls in Brent, the Sexual Health programme board will support a system response to increase HPV vaccination.

---

<sup>1</sup> London Sexual & Reproductive Health Needs Assessment 2024, London Sexual Health Programme

## Introduction

This needs assessment summarises patterns and trends in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and reproductive health. It uses data from across London and England to show where Brent is an outlier, identify service gaps, highlight differential levels of sexual health need that reflect the impact of wider determinants of health, and where a service response and focus may be needed. The report aims to support tailored sexual health services to mitigate some of the challenges in Brent according to the local population needs.

## Policy and Regulations

Local government has a statutory obligation under the Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013 to provide or make arrangements for the provision of sexual health services in its area. This includes specialist contraception services and the prevention, treatment, testing and notification (for partners) of STIs<sup>2</sup>. As such, Brent council are responsible for commissioning the sexual and reproductive health services, with costs met from their ring-fenced public health grant. The 2023 'Integrated Sexual Health Services'<sup>3</sup> national specification is a guide for local authorities in recommended provision of services required to meet sexual health needs. This specification ensures providing users with access to 'confidential, non-judgemental services including sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and blood borne viruses (BBV) testing (including HIV), treatment and management; HIV prevention including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)'.

In March 2023 the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities published the Integrated Sexual Health Service Specification. The update followed the pandemic with the intention of informing the development of local service provision. Included in the specification are detailed objectives, guidelines and quality outcome indicators<sup>4</sup>. For the quality outcome indicators, the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) has been developed. The sexual and reproductive health profiles cover key STIs, HIV, teenage pregnancy, abortion, and contraception<sup>5</sup>.

There are government publications for specific STIs. The National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) published an updated policy paper in June 2021. There was a change in focus on reducing reproductive harm of untreated infection in young women and that screening should focus on women aged 15-24 years old (in addition to reducing time for testing and treatment, improved partner notification and re-testing). A target was set of 3250/100 k for the detection rate for 15–24-year-old females<sup>6</sup>.

For HIV a policy was published in 2021; Towards Zero, the HIV Action Plan for England 2022 to 2025. This included UNAIDS targets of 95:95:95 by 2025 for people living with HIV being diagnosed (95%),

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<sup>2</sup> [The Local Authorities \(Public Health Functions and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives\) Regulations 2013](#), accessed October 2024

<sup>3</sup> Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (2023) Integrated Sexual Health Services: A suggested national service specification

<sup>4</sup> [Integrated sexual health service specification](#), accessed October 2024

<sup>5</sup> [Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Changes to the National Chlamydia Screening Programme \(NCSP\) - GOV.UK](#), accessed October 2024



of those diagnosed being on treatment (95%) and of those on treatment having an undetectable viral load (95%)<sup>7, 8</sup>.

A summary of HIV, sexual and reproductive health services that outlines commissioning responsibilities is outlined by the UK Health Security Agency and clarifies roles among Local Authorities, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and NHS. In detail<sup>9</sup>:

Local authorities commission:

- Comprehensive sexual health services including specialist contraceptive services and all prescribing costs, but excluding GP additionally-provided contraception
- STI testing and treatment, chlamydia screening and HIV testing
- specialist services, including young people's sexual health, teenage pregnancy services, outreach, HIV prevention, sexual health promotion, services in schools, college and pharmacies
- delivery of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)

ICBs commission:

- most abortion services
- sterilisation
- vasectomy
- non-sexual-health elements of psychosexual health services
- gynaecology including any use of contraception for non-contraceptive purposes
- adult specialist services for people living with HIV (from April 2025)

NHS England currently commissions:

- contraception provided as an additional service under the GP contract
- promotion of opportunistic testing and treatment for STIs and patient-requested testing by GPs
- sexual health elements of prison health services
- sexual assault referral centres
- cervical screening
- specialist fetal medicine services

## Sexual Health & Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

The World Health Organisation defines sexual health as 'a state of **physical, emotional, mental and social well-being** in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity<sup>10</sup>' and that it is '**fundamental** to the overall **health and well-being** of individuals, couples and families and to the **social economic development** of communities and countries.' 'A Framework for Sexual Health Improvement in England' (2013) emphasises that sexual health encompasses the 'provision of advice and services related to contraception, relationships, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (including HIV), and abortion<sup>11</sup>'. This needs assessment covers STIs and sexual health service provision in Brent.

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<sup>7</sup> [Towards Zero - An action plan towards ending HIV transmission, AIDS and HIV-related deaths in England - 2022 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#), accessed October 2024

<sup>8</sup> [2025 AIDS TARGETS - UNAIDS](#), accessed October 2024

<sup>9</sup> [Commissioning local HIV sexual and reproductive health services - GOV.UK](#), accessed February 2025

<sup>10</sup> [Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research \(SRH\)](#), World Health Organisation, accessed November 2024

<sup>11</sup> [A Framework for Sexual Health Improvement in England](#), UK Government (2013), accessed November 2024

STIs are either bacterial and/or blood borne infections that are spread predominantly by unprotected sexual contact. Some of these infections can also be transmitted during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding and through infected blood or blood products.

STIs have a profound impact on health. If untreated, they can lead to serious consequences including neurological and cardiovascular disease, infertility, ectopic pregnancy, pelvic inflammatory disease, stillbirths, neonatal infections, and increased risk of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and cervical cancer. They are also associated with stigma, domestic violence, and lower quality of life.

The majority of STIs have no symptoms. When they are present, common symptoms of STIs are vaginal or urethral discharge, genital ulcers and lower abdominal pain<sup>12</sup>.

A major public health concern is the rapidly increasing prevalence of STIs. Early diagnosis and treatment are key to reducing the risks of complications and future infection rates. However, the large proportion of asymptomatic cases and stigma around STIs contributes to an increased risk of delayed diagnosis and treatment. This needs assessment focuses on the following STIs: a) chlamydia, b) gonorrhoea, c) syphilis, d) genital herpes, e) genital warts, f) HIV, and g) Other STIs (such as *Trichomonas Vaginalis*).

### **Chlamydia**

Chlamydia, or chlamydia trachomatis, is the most commonly diagnosed bacterial STI in the UK<sup>13</sup>. Chlamydia predominates in younger people and the NHS recommendation is for regular (once a year) tests for under 25-year-olds if condoms have not been used with new or casual partners. Chlamydia is often asymptomatic, with this being the case with at least 70% of women and 50% of men.

In 2021 the primary aim of the national chlamydia screening programme (NCSP) changed in order to focus on reducing the health harm caused by untreated infection and with a focus on young women and other young people with a womb or ovaries.

Due to the asymptomatic nature of chlamydia, increases in the number of infections detected and treated in young women is interpreted as an indication of improved chlamydia control. Most testing for chlamydia is done with a urine or swab test and a positive case can usually be treated with antibiotics.

### **Gonorrhoea<sup>14</sup>**

Gonorrhoea is the second most prevalent bacterial STI in the UK. It is becoming increasingly resistant to antibiotic regimens with high rates of resistance to tetracycline, penicillin and quinolone in recent years. Gonorrhoea can facilitate the transmission of HIV and may coexist with other STIs, especially chlamydia.

Gonorrhoea infections are asymptomatic in 50% of females and 10% of males. Testing for gonorrhoea can include a swab to remove a sample or a urine test for men<sup>15</sup>. There are several diagnostic options such as Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests (NAATS), microscopy and culture.

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<sup>12</sup> [Sexually transmitted infections \(STIs\) \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sexually-transmitted-infections-(stis)-key-facts), accessed August 2024

<sup>13</sup> Melville C. (2015), *Sexual and Reproductive Health at a Glance*, Wiley-Blackwell

<sup>14</sup> Melville C. (2015), *Sexual and Reproductive Health at a Glance*, Wiley-Blackwell

<sup>15</sup> [Gonorrhoea - Diagnosis - NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/gonorrhoea/), accessed September 2024

### **Syphilis<sup>16</sup>**

Syphilis is caused by infection with the spirochete bacterium *Treponema Pallidum*. Transmission is by direct contact with an infectious lesion. This transmission can be sexual, via infected blood or needle sharing or vertical transmission.

Testing should always include serology, and dark ground microscopy and PCR can also take place where appropriate. Treatment will usually include penicillin.

### **Genital Herpes<sup>17</sup>**

Genital herpes is a lifelong viral infection that has periods of latency and reactivations. The infection is caused by the herpes simplex viruses (HSV) and there are two types: HSV-1 and HSV-2. HSV-1 is often acquired in childhood and exhibits as cold sores. Post childhood HSV-1 is usually acquired in the genital or oral areas. HSV-2 is usually associated with sexual transmission and genital infection.

There are a number of methods of diagnosis including virus detection and typing (specimens collected), Herpes serology (testing for type specific antibodies), and dark ground microscopy. The management of first episode genital herpes includes saline bathing and antiviral drugs. For recurrent episodes management strategies include supportive therapy and antiviral therapy.

### **Genital Warts<sup>18</sup>**

Anogenital human papilloma virus is also known as anogenital warts, condylomata acuminata or genital warts. Genital warts are the most frequent sexually transmitted viral infection and is caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV). The peak age for incidence is 25-34 years for men and 20-24 years in women.

Transmission is mainly through sexual contact and HPV is highly contagious with a transmission rate of 60%. More than 90% of infected individuals will have no visible lesions. For the management of visible warts, removal tends to be cosmetic rather than an eradication of HPV as spontaneous resolution is likely. The HPV vaccine has been offered to 12- to 13-year-old boys (since 2019) and girls (since 2008) to protect against genital warts and some cancers<sup>19</sup>.

### **HIV<sup>20,21</sup>**

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) was first detected in 1983. HIV is incurable but is treatable, and prompt diagnosis and treatment improve outcomes. The most advanced stage of HIV infection is Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and this may take 2 to 15 years to develop. Not all HIV cases will progress to AIDS, with early diagnosis and treatment resulting in normal life expectancy.

The virus is found in the blood and body fluids and most transmission is acquired sexually (but also through sharing injecting equipment, transfusion of infected blood and vertical transmission). There are numerous diagnosis and screening tests available including rapid point of care testing, which involves a finger prick or mouth swab and provides results in minutes. In the UK, home testing kits are also available.

The management of HIV is complex and will usually involve antiretroviral treatment (ART). This is a combination of antiretroviral medicines to slow the rate of HIV replication. When the viral load in

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<sup>16</sup> Melville C. (2015), *Sexual and Reproductive Health at a Glance*, Wiley-Blackwell

<sup>17</sup> Melville C. (2015), *Sexual and Reproductive Health at a Glance*, Wiley-Blackwell

<sup>18</sup> Melville C. (2015), *Sexual and Reproductive Health at a Glance*, Wiley-Blackwell

<sup>19</sup> [Genital warts - NHS](#), accessed September 2024

<sup>20</sup> Melville C. (2015), *Sexual and Reproductive Health at a Glance*, Wiley-Blackwell

<sup>21</sup> [HIV - Risk, Tests & Treatments](#), accessed September 2024

the blood gets extremely low, this is termed an undetectable viral load and having this for 6 months or more means it is not possible to pass on the virus during sex. The NHS refer to this as ‘treatment as prevention’<sup>22</sup>. PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, is an option for those who are HIV negative but at high risk (i.e. partner of person with HIV) and is available as a tablet.

## Contraception

The provision of specialist contraception services is a statutory obligation for Brent Council. There are five main groups of reversible contraception<sup>23,24</sup>; intra-uterine methods (IUDs), injectables, implants and short-acting hormonal methods (combined oestrogen and progestogen pills, patches and rings) and progestogen only pills. Male and female sterilisation should be regarded as permanent. Examples of barrier methods are male (external) condoms and female (internal) condoms. The creation of a physical barrier may reduce STI transmission. Diaphragms are not currently in use due to lack of marketed spermicide in UK.

Long-acting methods (IUDs and implants) provide the best protection against pregnancy and are the most cost effective. An increase in the provision of Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) is used as an indicator of wider access to the range of possible contraceptive methods which should also lead to a reduction in rates of unintended pregnancy<sup>25</sup>.

## Groups at-risk of STIs

The highest risk to contracting an STI is behavioural, namely having unprotected sex, having multiple partners, having anonymous sex partners or having sex under the influence of drugs or alcohol as it can lower inhibitions and result in greater sexual risk taking<sup>26</sup>. Certain groups are more at risk of STIs and so may require more regular testing and more information on sexual health.

- Gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men can be at higher risk of contracting STIs, especially HIV, gonorrhoea and syphilis<sup>27</sup>.
- Young people including adolescents<sup>28</sup> and further education and university students are a high-risk group. Young women aged 15-24 are at higher risk of harm if they contract chlamydia.
- Commercial sex workers have an increased risk of contracting an STI.
- People with ongoing connections to the UK from specific countries with higher rates of STIs, and migrants<sup>29, 30, 31</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> [HIV and AIDS - Prevention - NHS](#), accessed September 2024

<sup>23</sup> Melville C. (2015), *Sexual and Reproductive Health at a Glance*, Wiley-Blackwell

<sup>24</sup> [Contraception Methods | Birth Control Options](#), accessed November 2024

<sup>25</sup> [Sexual and reproductive health profiles: statistical commentary, March 2025 - GOV.UK](#), accessed March 2025

<sup>26</sup> [How to Prevent STIs | STI | CDC](#), accessed December 2024

<sup>27</sup> [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sexually-transmitted-infections-\(stis\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sexually-transmitted-infections-(stis)), accessed November 2024

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sexually-transmitted-infections-\(stis\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sexually-transmitted-infections-(stis)), accessed November 2024

<sup>29</sup> [What Works? Prevention and Control of Sexually Transmitted Infections and Blood-Borne Viruses in Migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia Living in High-Income Countries: A Systematic Review - PMC](#), accessed April 2025

<sup>30</sup> [Sexually transmitted infections and migration in Uganda: a population-based study - PubMed](#), accessed April 2025

<sup>31</sup> [Sexually transmitted infections \(STIs\): migrant health guide - GOV.UK](#), accessed April 2025

- Deprivation is also a consideration; there are higher levels of diagnosis of some STIs in the most deprived areas.
- Ethnic and racial disparities in STIs and other sexual health outcomes in the UK are well recognised, but the drivers of these disparities are not fully understood<sup>32, 33</sup>.

## Brent Population overview

This section provides a brief overview of the population of Brent. The borough is very diverse and matches some of the risk groups, in particular its high numbers of young adult residents and students, high numbers of ethnically diverse communities either born in the UK or outside and being ranked as the fourth most deprived borough in London. Although demographic factors alone don't constitute risk, the population profile and intersectionality of segments highlight the potential risk. In triangulation with the inequalities and barriers section, an understanding of the Brent population should underpin the sexual and reproductive health service delivery.

On census day in 2021, the population of Brent was estimated to be 339,800. This makes Brent the 5th largest London borough in terms of population size. The Brent population has grown by 28,600 since the last census in 2011, a rise of 9%. This compares with an increase of 8% across London and 6% across England & Wales.

The Brent population is 49% male and 51% female. Brent has a younger age profile when compared with England & Wales, characterised by more adults aged 20-44 and fewer older residents. However, in line with wider trends, the population is ageing; 29% of residents are now aged 50 or over, up from 25% in 2011.<sup>34</sup>

Of the respondents that chose to answer the census sexual orientation question, 96.4% identified as straight or heterosexual and 3.6% identified as LGBTQ+. Brent's LGBTQ+ population has a younger age profile when compared to the population generally; 4.6% of the residents aged 16-24 identified as LGBTQ+ compared with 0.6% of those aged 75 and over. Men were more likely than women to identify as LGBTQ+ (3.6% vs. 2.8%)<sup>35</sup>.

Brent has one of the most ethnically diverse populations in the country<sup>36</sup>. One in three are from Asian/Asian British groups. Almost one in five (18%) are from Black/Black British groups, with Somali residents making up the highest proportion of these, followed by the Nigerian and Ghanaian populations. Around 5% of residents are from mixed/multiple ethnic groups and the remaining 10% are from other groups (including the Arab population). Just over one in three (35%) of residents are from White ethnic groups, including 16% from 'Other White' groups including Eastern and Western European (e.g. Romanian) residents.

Over half (56%) of the borough's population were born in countries outside the UK – the highest rate across all local authority areas in England & Wales, and considerably above the London average (41%)<sup>37</sup>. Around 18% of residents were born in Asian countries, 16% in European Union countries

<sup>32</sup> [Drivers of ethnic disparities in sexual health in the UK - The Lancet Public Health](#), accessed February 2025

<sup>33</sup> [Examining the role of socioeconomic deprivation in ethnic differences in sexually transmitted infection diagnosis rates in England: evidence from surveillance data - PMC](#), accessed February 2025

<sup>34</sup> [2021 Census first release - Brent Summary](#), accessed August 2024

<sup>35</sup> [LGBTQ+ population in Brent - 2021 Census topic report - revised](#), accessed August 2024

<sup>36</sup> [2021 Census - Ethnicity topic report \(brent.gov.uk\)](#), accessed August 2024

<sup>37</sup> [2021 Census - Country of birth topic report \(brent.gov.uk\)](#), accessed August 2024

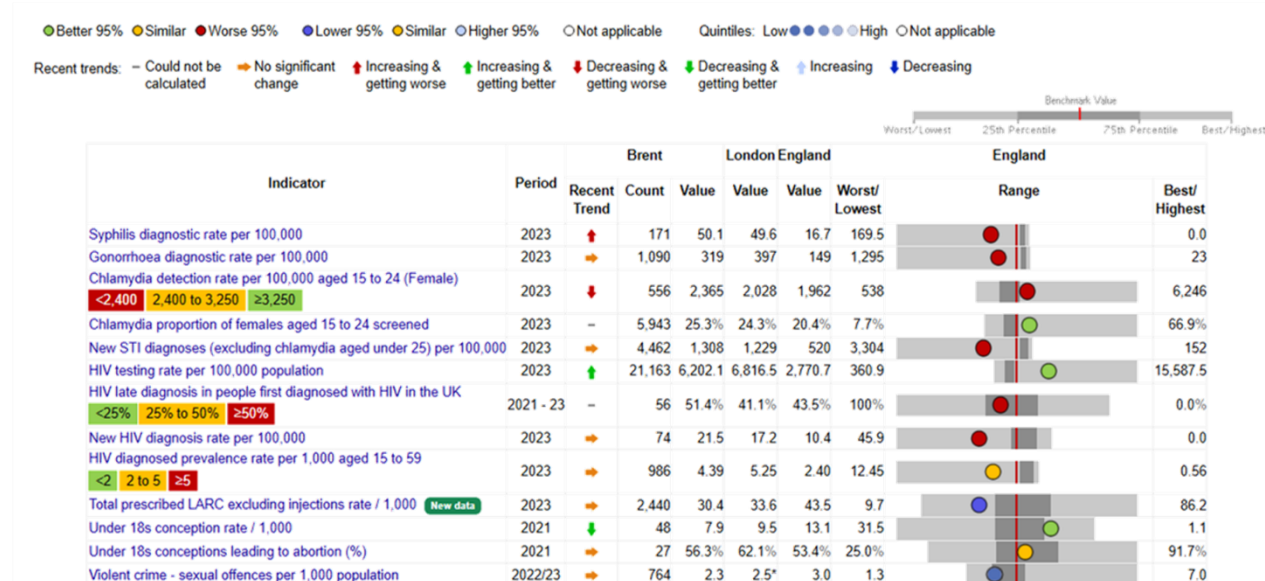
(16%), and 10% in African countries, the 5th largest nationally. India, Romania and Poland are the three main countries of origin for Brent residents born outside the UK.

For a detailed overview of Brent population and key insights on wider determinants of health, please visit [Brent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\) 2023](#) | [Brent Open Data](#).

## Sexual Health Outcomes

Figure 1 provides a summary of the key sexual and reproductive health indicators in Brent compared to national averages and London<sup>38</sup>. Subsequent sections provide more detail on each indicator.

Figure 1 - Sexual & Reproductive Health Indicators in Brent compared to London and England



Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles

## Overall STI Rates

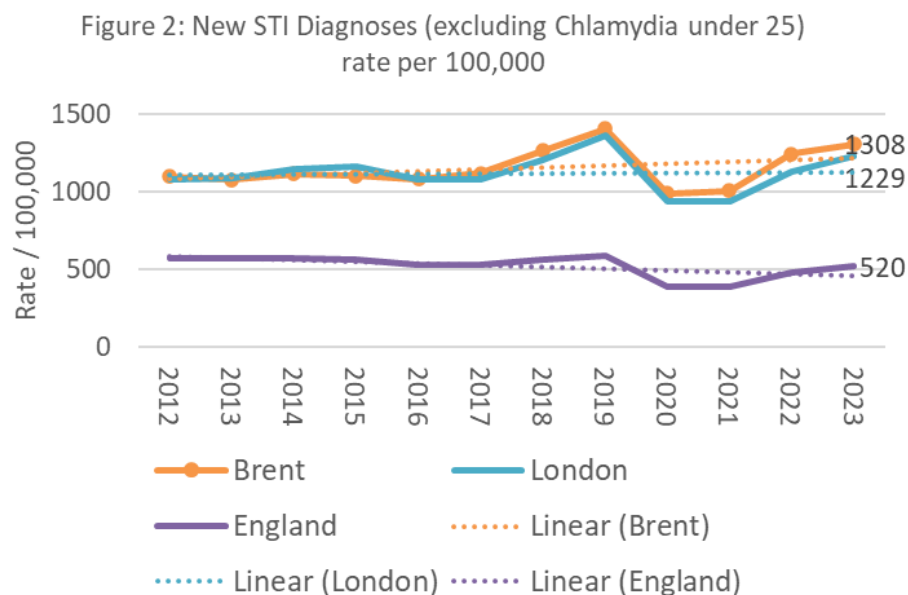
A key indicator is new STI diagnoses per year. For new STI diagnoses (excluding Chlamydia under 25), the rates per 100,000 for Brent (1,308) and London (1,229) are well above England. Brent and London follow a similar trend over time, with Brent slightly higher (Figure 2). The new STI diagnoses rate per 100,000 (including Chlamydia), follows a very similar trend; in 2023 there were 1,594 new STIs per 100,000 in Brent, with this representing a 5.4% increase on the previous year<sup>39</sup>. In London there were 1,448 new STI diagnosis per 100,000. The impact of the pandemic is clear on all graphs (Appendix Outcomes-1).

STI testing is important for the early detection, treatment and transmission of STIs and for reducing any possible long-term consequences. The STI testing rate (excluding Chlamydia under 25) per 100,000 for Brent was 8,296 in 2023. Brent, London, and England all follow a similar upward trend

<sup>38</sup> [Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#) Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles, accessed August 2024

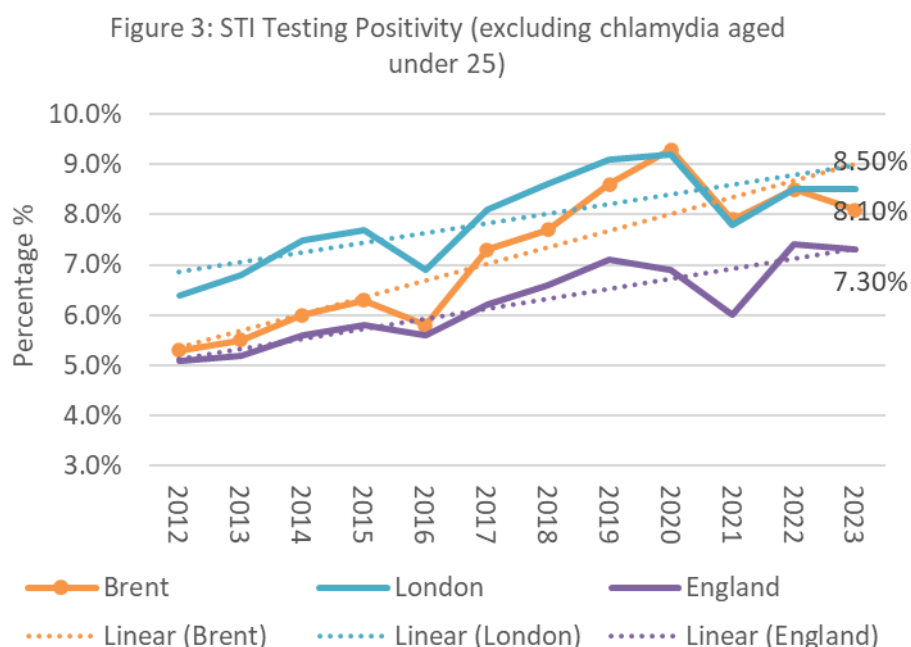
<sup>39</sup> New STI diagnoses are reported as two different rates, namely including and excluding chlamydia under 25, as there is a dedicated National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) targeting this age group with the aim to proactively diagnose people aged 15 to 24 years (especially girls/young women) via active screening. The two different indicators help to review all new STI diagnoses overall as well as without any possible distortions caused by the implementation of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP).

over time, with rates for both Brent and London having returned to pre-pandemic levels (Appendix Outcomes -2).



Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles

The STI testing positivity rate (excluding chlamydia aged under 25) for Brent in 2023 was 8.1% (Figure 3). This was slightly below London (8.5%) and higher than England (7.3%). There is an upward trend for all. Historically Brent was below London levels, but rates are now closer to those seen for London.








Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles.



The five most commonly diagnosed STIs in Brent are chlamydia, gonorrhoea, genital herpes, genital warts and syphilis, and these make up the majority of new STI diagnoses in 2023<sup>40</sup> (Appendix Outcomes-3). For chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis, long term trends are upwards and for the latter two STIs rates are now higher than pre-pandemic levels. Genital warts have a downward trend, likely due to the HPV vaccine. Figure 4 summarises the trends based on short term trend (year on year) and long-term trends from 2012 to 2023 (Appendix Outcomes- 4,5). These trends are described in more detail for each STI in later sections.

Figure 4 - STI Trends Brent

| STI Name   | Trend Vs Previous Year (2023 vs 2022)<br>% change (based rate / 100000) | Long Term Trend (2012 to 2023)<br>Trend Line (Graphs)                                 |
|------------|---|---|
| Chlamydia  | +7.4%   |    |
| Gonorrhoea | +5.6%   |    |
| Herpes     | +7.4%   |    |
| Warts      | +4.8%   |   |
| Syphilis   | -3.8%   |  |

The gender split of new STIs in Brent was 65% male to 35% female in 2023<sup>41</sup> (Appendix Outcomes-6). There is some variation by individual STI, with a higher proportion of females for genital herpes, and a higher proportion of males for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis and genital warts. In 15-24-year-olds, females outnumber males in new STI diagnoses. For the older age groups (25-64 years), males exceeded females (Appendix Outcomes-7).

### Ethnic and socioeconomic inequalities in STIs

The ethnic profile of the population with newly diagnosed STIs (overall and for specific STIs) was compared with the Brent population on census day (March 2021), (Figure 5). Where there is a higher than five percentage points difference, this is highlighted in darker colour to highlight overrepresentation of a specific STI within a specific ethnic group. Similarly, a lower than five percentage points difference, highlighted in lighter colour, aims to highlight an underrepresentation of the specific ethnic group. For all new STIs and for each specific STI, people from Asian ethnic backgrounds are underrepresented. This could be due to a lower positivity rate for STIs within that segment, a reluctance or cultural barriers for this segment to get tested, poor understanding of the risks of contracting an STI, or poor user experience of sexual health services<sup>42</sup>. It is also possible that

<sup>40</sup> UK Health Security Agency; Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs

<sup>41</sup> UK Health Security Agency, Totals Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs

<sup>42</sup> Dhairyawan R, Shah A, Bailey J, et al., "Factors associated with bacterial sexually transmitted infections among people of South Asian ethnicity in England", Sex Transm Infect, 2024;100:17–24.



people from south Asian communities seek sexual health advice and testing outside of specialist sexual health services (e.g. from the GP) and this is therefore not captured in the GUMCAD<sup>43</sup> data presented here.

People from white ethnic groups are overrepresented in all new STIs, gonorrhoea and syphilis. People from Black ethnic groups are overrepresented in all new STIs, chlamydia and genital herpes. Mixed ethnic groups are overrepresented in all new STIs, chlamydia, and genital warts. Data on new HIV diagnosis is shown under different ethnic categories (Figure 6). The Indian/ Pakistani/ Bangladeshi Asian subgroup is underrepresented compared with the census population. There are no other differences larger than 5%, hence broadly similar.

|              | % of Brent Population | Figure 5: % of diagnosed population |           |            |          |                |               |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------|----------------|---------------|
| Ethnic Group | Census                | All new STIs                        | Chlamydia | Gonorrhoea | Syphilis | Genital Herpes | Genital Warts |
| Asian        | 33.3                  | 12.6                                | 11        | 14         | 14.9     | 14.2           | 14.2          |
| Black        | 16.9                  | 25.9                                | 31        | 20.4       | 13.1     | 27.8           | 21.7          |
| Mixed        | 4                     | 9.6                                 | 10.8      | 8.2        | 8.9      | 8.8            | 9.6           |
| White        | 36.4                  | 42.6                                | 38.8      | 48.4       | 54.8     | 39.3           | 39.1          |
| Other        | 9.3                   | 5.7                                 | 5.6       | 4.9        | 3.6      | 5.1            | 12.1          |
| N/A          |                       | 3.5                                 | 2.9       | 4.1        | 4.8      | 4.7            | 3.2           |

Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent; Census data, Brent

| Figure 6 New HIV Diagnosis | Black African | Black Caribbean | Black Other | Chinese | Indian/ Pakistani/ Bangladeshi | Mixed | White |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------|---------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|
| % of Brent Population      | 8.4           | 6.7             | 1.8         | 8.1     | 25.2                           | 13.4  | 36.4  |
| % of diagnosed population  | 12.6          | 2.4             | 3.7         | 8.1     | 11                             | 14.2  | 37.8  |

Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent; Census data, Brent

The highest proportion of STI diagnosis by country of birth comes from people born in the United Kingdom for all STIs other than Syphilis, where most people diagnosed were born in Brazil. In general, UK and Brazil were consistently the top two countries of birth, followed by some variation with mostly other European countries (Figure 7). A more detailed breakdown of STI diagnosis by country of birth is shown in Appendix Outcomes 8 to 14.

<sup>43</sup> GUMCAD data relates to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) HIV and STI data exchange. Previously known as the Genitourinary Medicine Clinic Activity Dataset (GUMCAD), now known as the GUMCAD STI surveillance system.

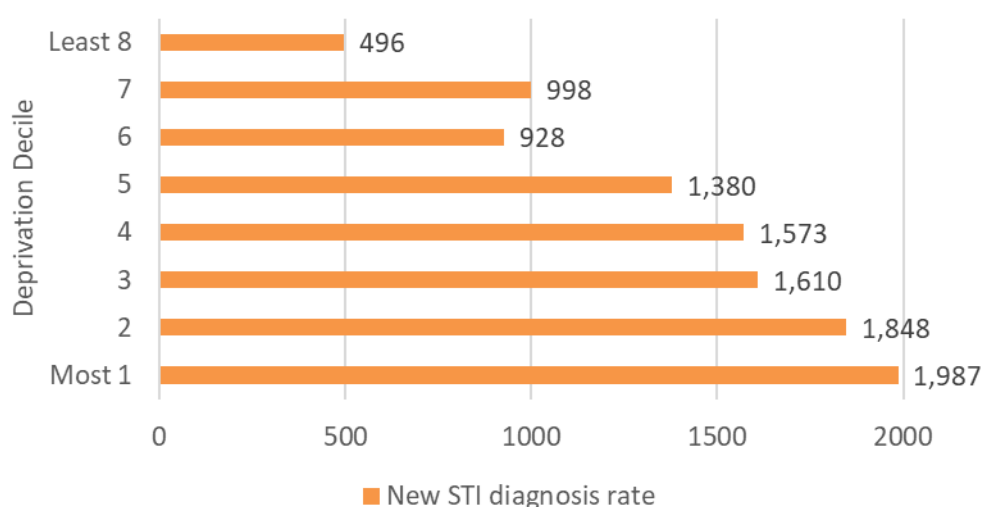
Figure 7: STI Diagnosis by Country of Birth, Top 2 countries

| STI     | Chlamydia |      | Gonorrhoea |      | Syphilis |      | Herpes |      | Genital Warts |      |
|---------|-----------|------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|------|---------------|------|
| Country | N         | %    | N          | %    | N        | %    | N      | %    | N             | %    |
| UK      | 1001      | 59.2 | 549        | 50.6 | 31       | 18.5 | 137    | 46.4 | 113           | 40.2 |
| Brazil  | 101       | 6    | 76         | 7%   | 41       | 24.4 | 26     | 8.8  | 14            | 5    |

Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent

In 2022, the most deprived areas (based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation) had the highest overall new STI diagnosis rates (per 100,000), and the least deprived areas had lower rates (Figure 8).

Figure 8 - New STI Diagnosis Rate By Deprivation Decile - Brent

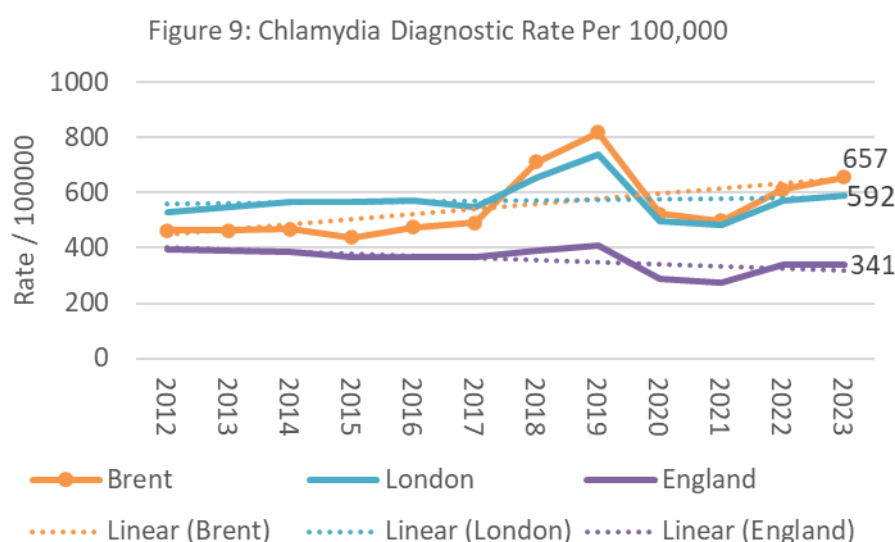


Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

This association between higher deprivation and higher new STI diagnosis rate was also seen for chlamydia, genital herpes, and gonorrhoea. HIV prevalence and new HIV diagnosis rates were also highest for the most deprived and lowest for the least deprived parts of Brent. However, there was not a clear association between deprivation and either syphilis diagnosis or genital warts diagnosis rates.

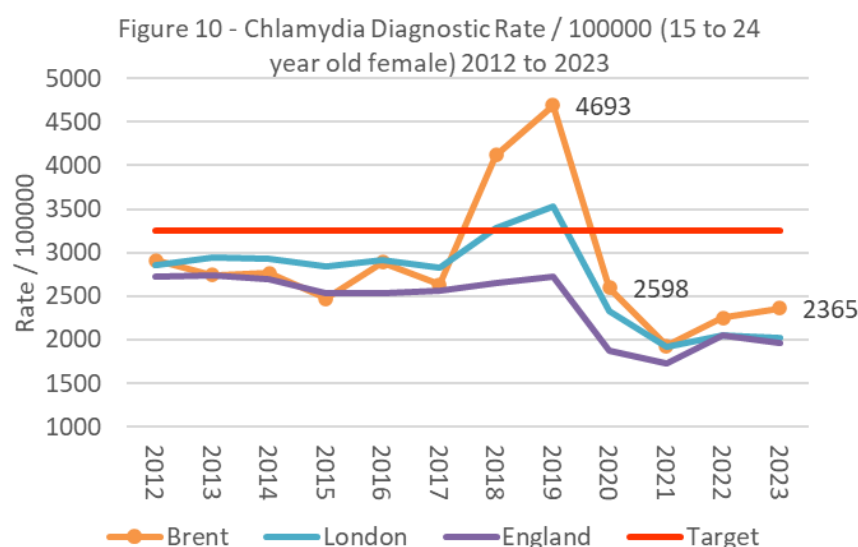
## Chlamydia

Chlamydia is the most diagnosed STI for Brent, with over twice the number of new diagnoses compared with other STIs. The Chlamydia diagnostic rate per 100,000 (all ages) was 657 in 2023 for Brent, higher than London (592) and England (341). Despite the pandemic drop-off, the long-term trends for Brent show an upward trend (Figure 9).



Source: Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data

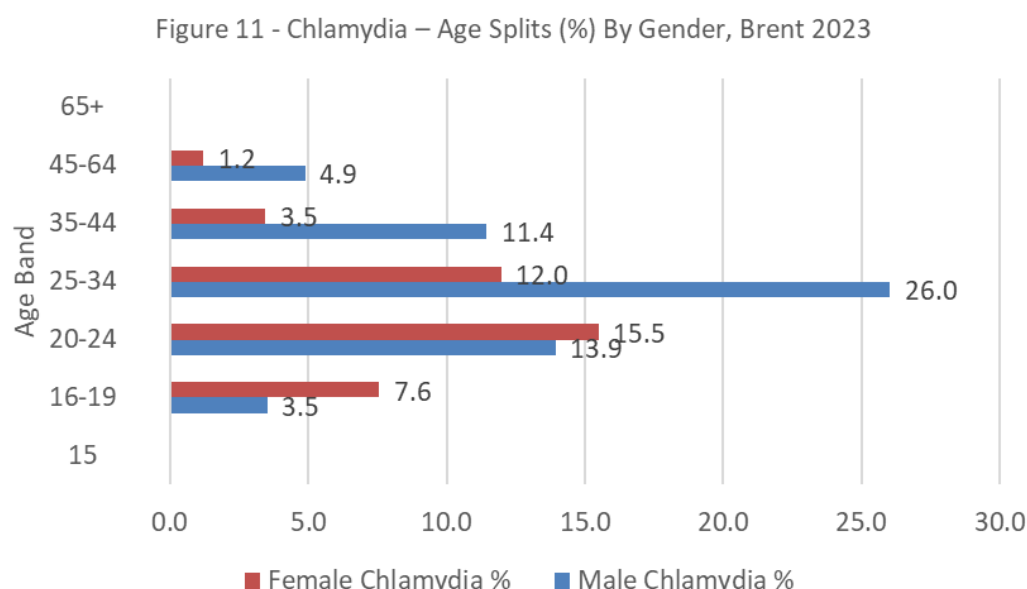
The chlamydia diagnostic rate per 100,000 for 15- to 24-year-old females was also higher in Brent (2,364.9 per 100,000), above the London (2,027.8) and England (1,961.7) detection rates (Figure 10, Appendix Outcomes 15). In 2023, 25.3% of female 15-24- year-olds were screened for chlamydia in Brent, similar to London levels and above England (20.4%).



Source: : UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data

The chlamydia diagnostic rate per 100,000 for males 15 to 24 years old is lower than for females (Brent 1,736, London 1,397) England (1,042). The diagnostic rate per 100,000 for chlamydia for over 25's in Brent was 543 in 2023, much lower than the female and male rates for 15- to 24-year-olds in Brent (Appendix Outcomes 16). Gender differences in chlamydia diagnoses have increased since 2019; in 2023, 57% of diagnoses were in males versus 43% in females (Appendix Outcomes 17). In

2023, 26% of chlamydia diagnoses were in males aged 25-34 years and 15.5% were in females aged 20-24 years. These two segments comprise the highest proportions of chlamydia diagnoses (Figure 11).



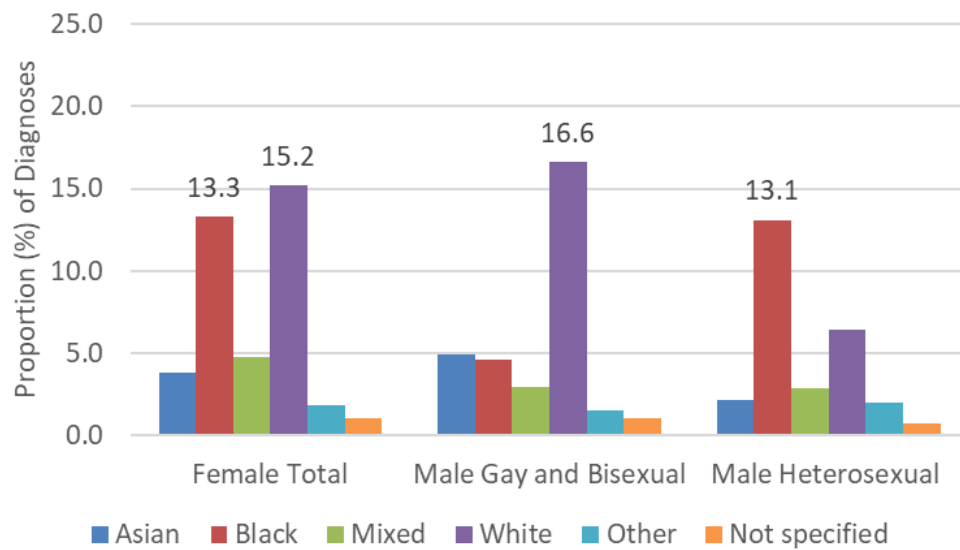
Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent

The majority of new chlamydia diagnoses are in people who are heterosexual although chlamydia has recently increased in the gay/ lesbian community. For the period 2018 to 2023, the heterosexual proportion declined (from 82.9% in 2018 to 62.4% in 2023). Among people who are heterosexual, there are more diagnoses in females than males; among people who are gay/lesbian, there are more diagnoses in males (Appendix Outcomes 18).

People from Black ethnic groups are overrepresented in the population with newly diagnosed chlamydia (Figure 5 above). Within the female segment<sup>44</sup>, a higher proportion of chlamydia diagnoses are seen in Black ethnic groups and white ethnic groups (13.3% and 15.2% respectively in 2023). Within the male gay and bisexual segment, the highest proportion of diagnoses are seen in white ethnic groups. At 16.6%, this was over three times the size of the next largest ethnic group. Within the male heterosexual segment, the highest proportion of diagnoses are seen in Black ethnic groups. Diagnoses in Asian ethnic groups were relatively small in all the segments (Figure 12).

<sup>44</sup> The female segment has been grouped into one, as numbers are too small to allow for further break-downs

Figure 12 - Chlamydia Brent - Proportion (%) Of Diagnoses By Ethnicity & Sexual Orientation 2023

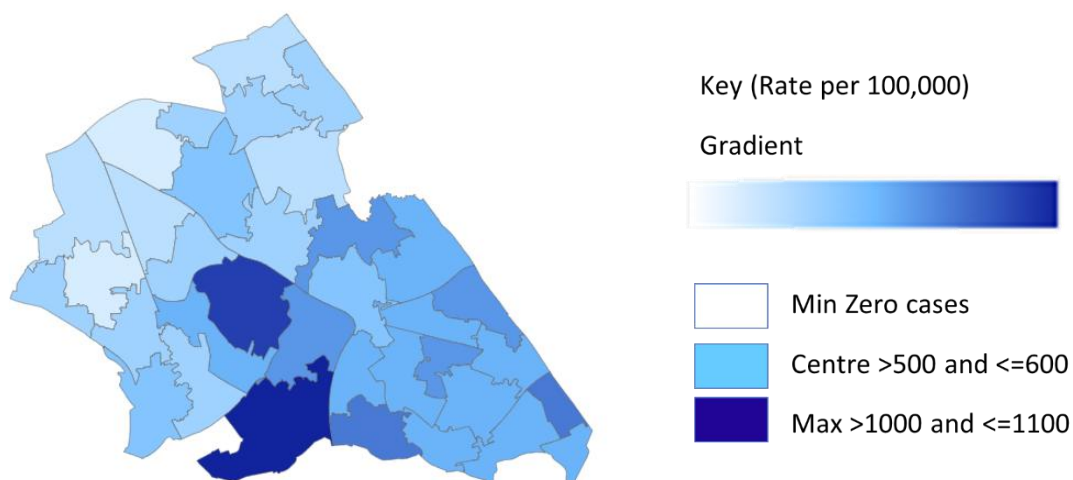


Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent

Chlamydia diagnosis rates were higher in the most deprived parts of Brent. As shown from Figure 13, the highest diagnosis rate for residents was in Stonebridge, an area of high deprivation, followed by areas around Wembley Park and Tokyngton.

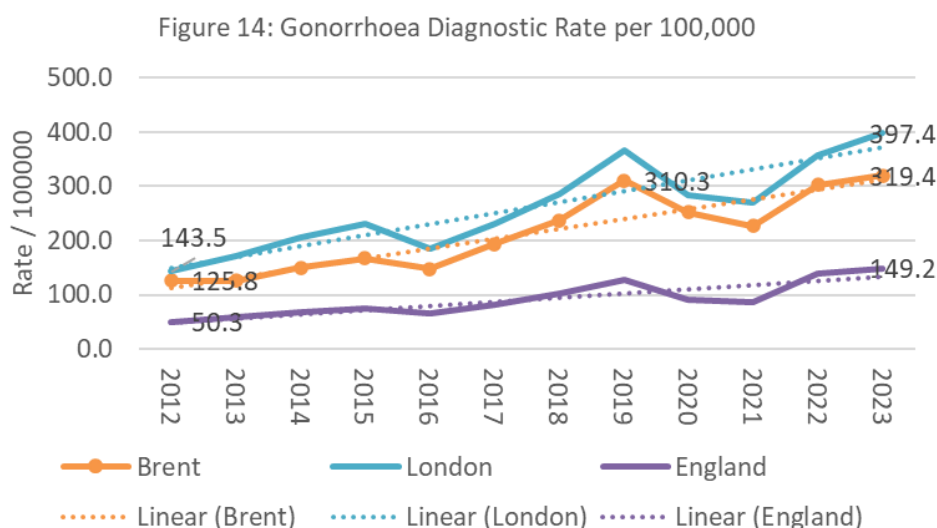
Figure 13 – Chlamydia Diagnosis (Rate per 100,000) MSOA 2022

Source: UK Health Security Agency, GUMCAD, CTAD



## Gonorrhoea

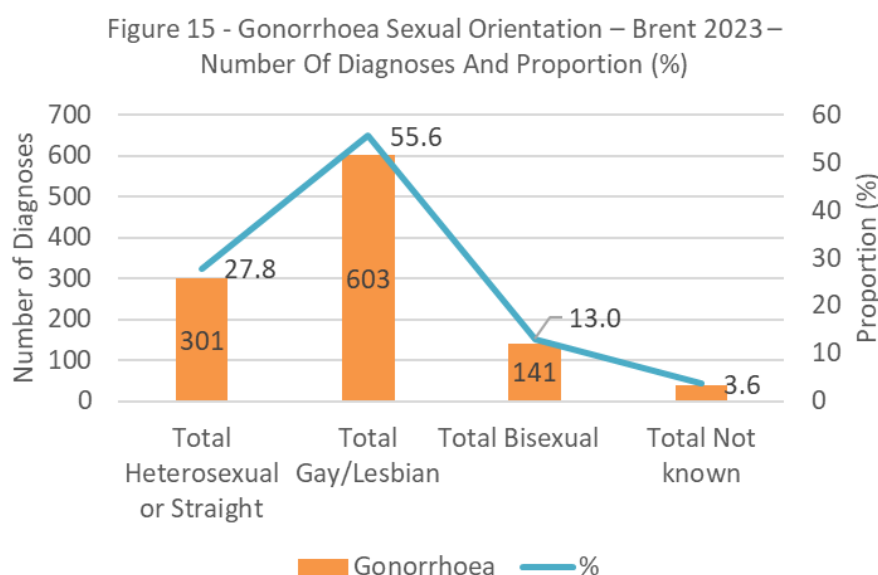
There has been a long-term trend of increasing gonorrhoea diagnostic rates for Brent, London, and England. Both London and Brent noted higher rates than England. Brent is consistently below London, but with an almost identical pattern (Figure 14, Appendix Outcomes 19).



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) - fingertips published data

The proportion of gonorrhoea diagnoses seen in males is consistently higher than in females (Appendix Outcomes 20). The highest proportion of diagnoses are seen in the 25-34 age group (44.3%), followed by the 20-24 and 35-44 age groups (21.5% and 20% respectively) (Appendix Outcomes 21). Gonorrhoea is an STI mostly presenting in the gay/ lesbian group (55.6%), compared to heterosexual (27.8%), and bisexual (13%) (Figure 15, Appendix Outcomes 22).

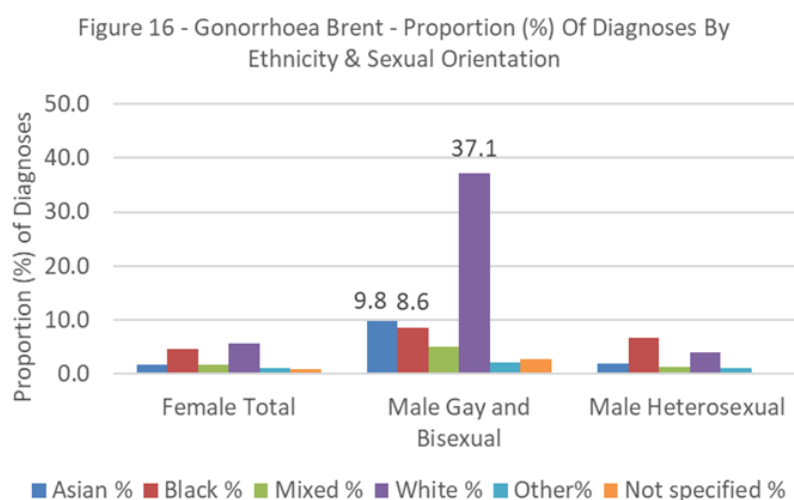
Figure 15: Gonorrhoea Sexual Orientation, Brent 2023, Number of diagnoses and proportion (%)



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent

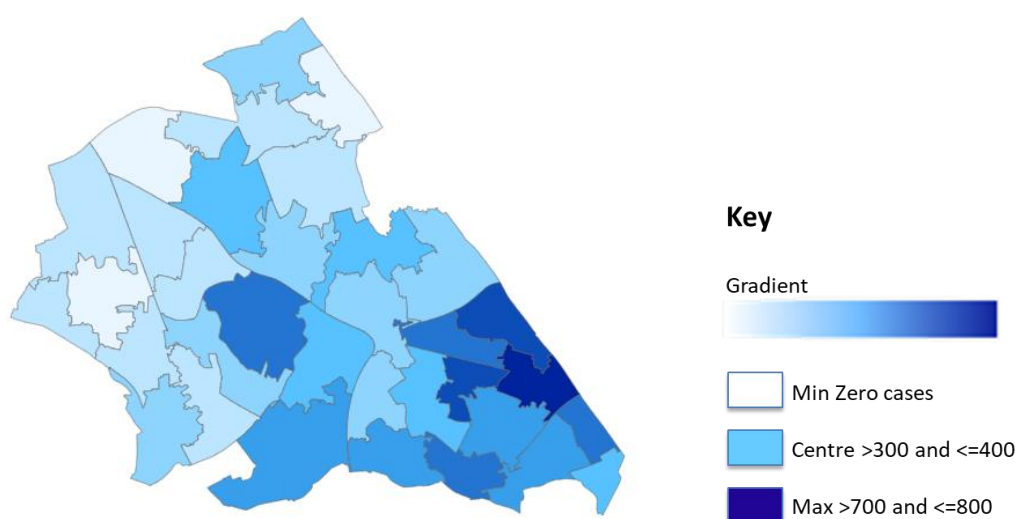
For the period 2018 to 2023 the proportion presenting in people who are heterosexual has fallen from 49% to 28%, whilst the gay/ lesbian and bisexual proportions have increased from 50% to 69% (Appendix Outcomes 23). 65.8% of gonorrhoea diagnoses are in gay and bisexual males.

As shown earlier in the document, people from white ethnic groups are overrepresented in the population diagnosed with gonorrhoea (48.4%) compared with the census population (36.4%). This figure has increased from 42% in 2018 in white ethnic groups and decreased in Black ethnic groups (from 35% in 2018 to 20% in 2023) (Appendix Outcomes 24). Looking at the intersection of gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity, Figure 16 shows that most of the new gonorrhoea diagnosis (65.8%) were within the male gay and bisexual segment and within this, the white ethnic group was by far the largest segment, with 37% in 2023<sup>45</sup>.



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent; Census data, Brent

Figure 17– Gonorrhoea Diagnosis (Rate per 100,000) MSOA 2022



Source: UK Health Security Agency, GUMCAD, CTAD

As shown earlier in the document, gonorrhoea diagnosis rates were lower in the least deprived areas and higher in the more deprived areas, although the most deprived area did not have the highest

<sup>45</sup> The female segment has been grouped into one as numbers were too small to allow for further break-down.

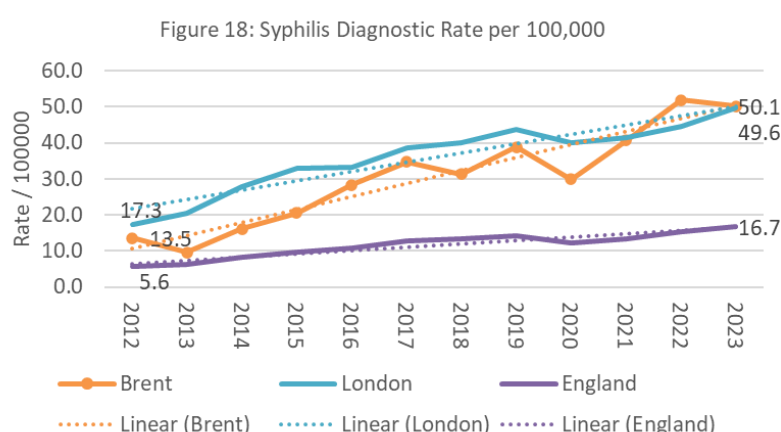
rate (Figure 5 above). The highest rate (between 700 and 800 per 100,000) is found in Brondesbury Park. Rates in Cricklewood & Mapesbury and Willesden Green were also relatively high (Figure 17).

Given the rising prevalence of Gonorrhoea across UK and London, on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025, the NHS announced a joint NHS and local government roll out of a world-first vaccine programme for gonorrhoea, helping to overcome antibiotic resistant strains. Eligible patients, including gay and bisexual men who have a recent history of multiple sexual partners or an STI, will start to be offered the vaccine through local authority-commissioned sexual health services from early August<sup>46</sup>.

## Syphilis

Syphilis has relatively small numbers when compared to other STIs, however, the growth rate for syphilis is strongly upwards and so warrants close attention. Both Brent (50.1) and London (49.6) rates per 100,000 were well above the England rate (16.7). The rate in Brent exceeded the rate in London for the first time in 2022 (Figure 18). Although the 2023 rate is marginally lower than in 2022, the long-term trend and forecast is upwards with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) describing it as 'increasing and getting worse' (Appendix Outcomes 25).

There is an ongoing outbreak of Syphilis in London in GBMSM, and a slow increase in heterosexual populations. Brent has excellent rates of Syphilis testing in Antenatal Services (>99%), a key activity in preventing congenital syphilis.



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data

Gender splits for syphilis have remained relatively constant over time, with substantially more males (90% of the cases in 2023) than females (10% in the same year) (Appendix Outcomes 26). Almost 50% of new syphilis infections occur in the over 35s age segment (Appendix Outcomes 27).

Syphilis is predominantly seen in the male gay/ bisexual segment (comprising 78.6% of all cases<sup>47</sup>), followed by 16.7% of heterosexual men and women in 2023 (Figure 19). Between 2018 to 2023 these proportions have remained relatively similar. Within the male gay and bisexual segment, 44% of

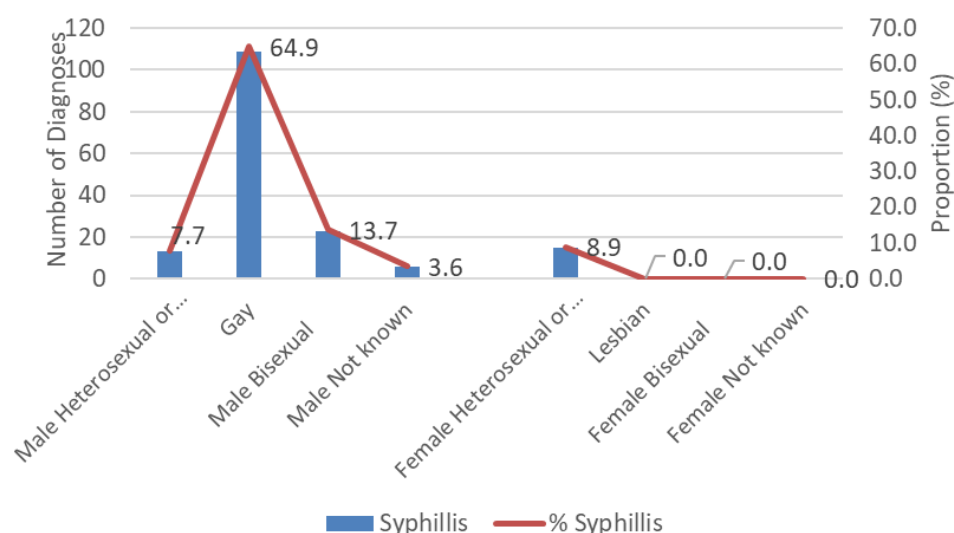
<sup>46</sup> [NHS England » NHS and local government to roll out world-first vaccine programme to prevent gonorrhoea](#), accessed 29 May 2025

<sup>47</sup> Some numbers in the graph above have been suppressed due to small numbers.



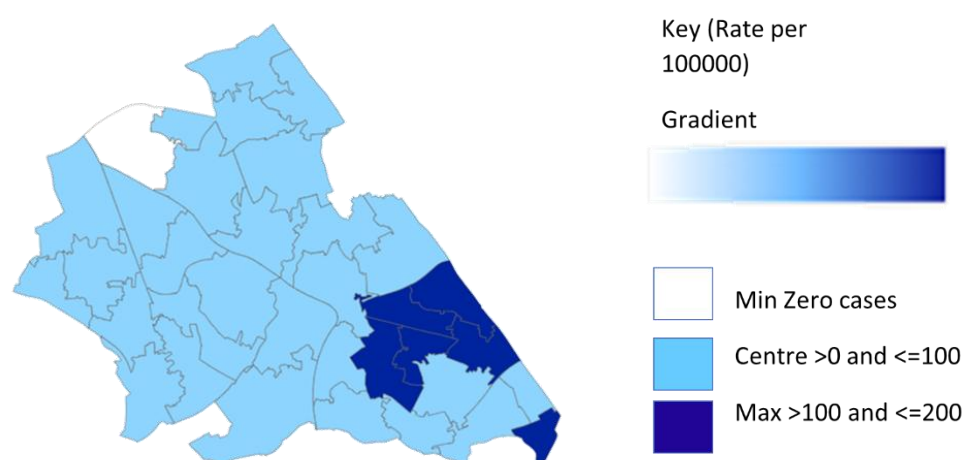
syphilis diagnoses in 2023 are from white ethnic groups<sup>48</sup>. In summary, syphilis is mostly diagnosed within the slightly older, White, Gay/ Bisexual intersection. Higher levels of syphilis diagnosis were identified in Kilburn, Brondesbury Park, Cricklewood & Mapesbury, and Willesden Green (Figure 20).

Figure 19 - Syphilis Sexual Risk & Gender – Brent 2023 - Number Of Diagnoses And Proportion (%)



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent

Figure 20 – Syphilis Diagnosis (Rate per 100,000) MSOA 2022

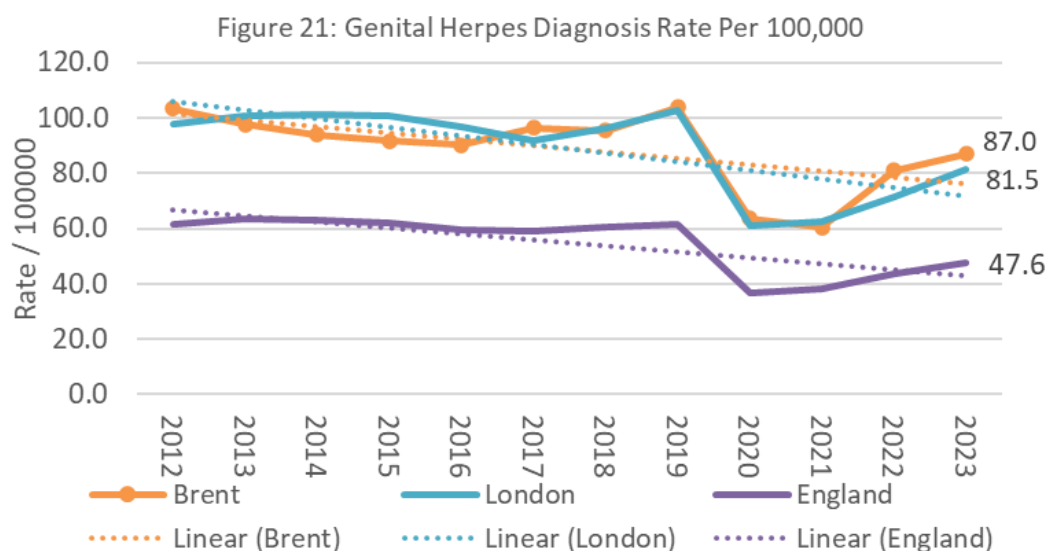


Source: UK Health Security Agency, GUMCAD, CTAD

## Genital Herpes

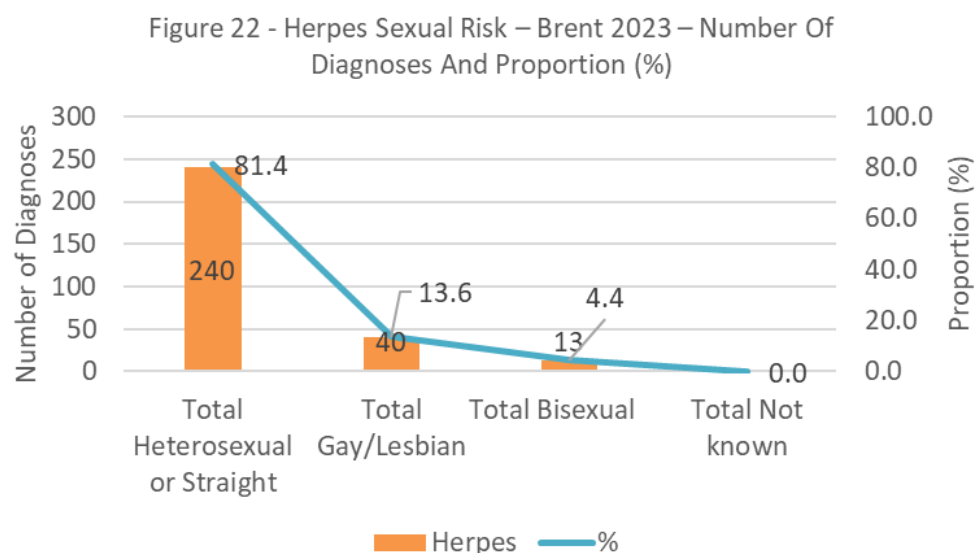
Up till 2023, there has been a gradual downward trend over the long term for new genital herpes diagnoses, described by OHID as ‘decreasing and getting better’. Brent and London follow a very similar trend although both are well above England rates. Although the long-term trend is decreasing, the short-term year on year growth was up by 6 percentage points for Brent (Figure 21).

<sup>48</sup> Both male and female heterosexual segment numbers have been suppressed due to small numbers, so it is not possible to show in the graph.



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) - fingertips published data

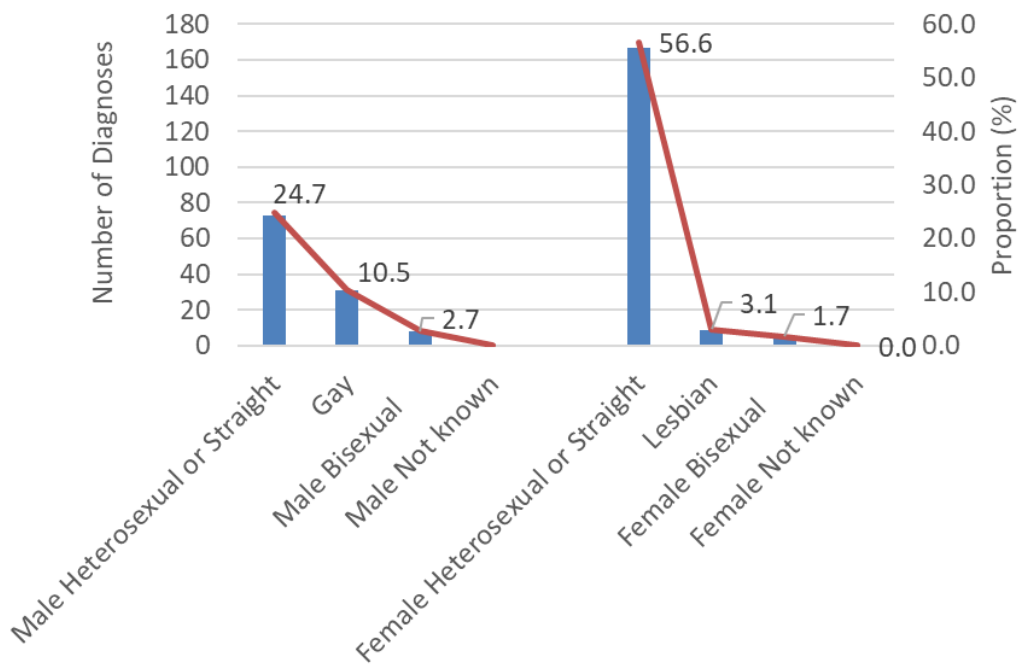
Gender splits for genital herpes have remained relatively constant over time, with a higher proportion seen in females (62%) than males (38%) in 2023 (Appendix Outcomes 28). 41.4% of genital herpes diagnoses are in 25-34 year olds, 22% in 20-24 year olds, and smaller proportions in other age segments. Almost three quarters of new diagnoses were less than 35 years old in 2023 (Appendix Outcomes 29). A higher proportion of genital herpes diagnoses are in females at every age (Appendix Outcomes 30). In 2023, 81.4% of genital herpes diagnoses are in people who are heterosexual, 13.6% in people who are gay or lesbian, and a further 4.4% in people who are bisexual (Figure 22).



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent

In 2023, a higher proportion of genital herpes diagnoses were in the female heterosexual segment (56.6%) compared with the male heterosexual segment (24.7%) (Figure 23).

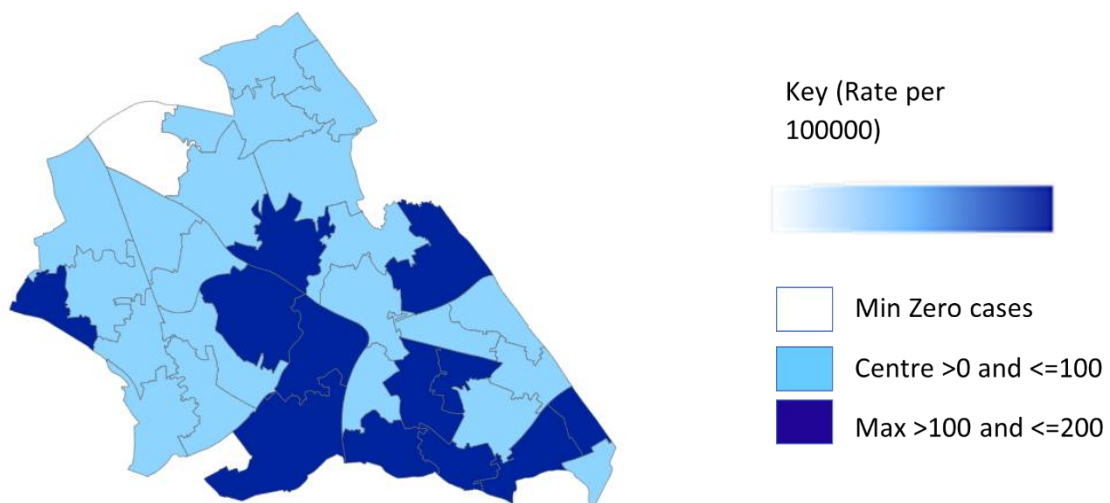
Figure 23 - Herpes Sexual Risk & Gender – Brent 2023 - Number Of Diagnoses And Proportion (%)



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent

Genital herpes diagnosis rates are higher in the more deprived parts of Brent. Higher diagnosis rates in 2022 were seen in Sudbury, Barnhill, Tokyngton, Wembley Park, Stonebridge, Harlesden & Kensal Green, Queens Park, Kilburn, Willesden Green, Dollis Hill compared with other parts of Brent (Figure 24).

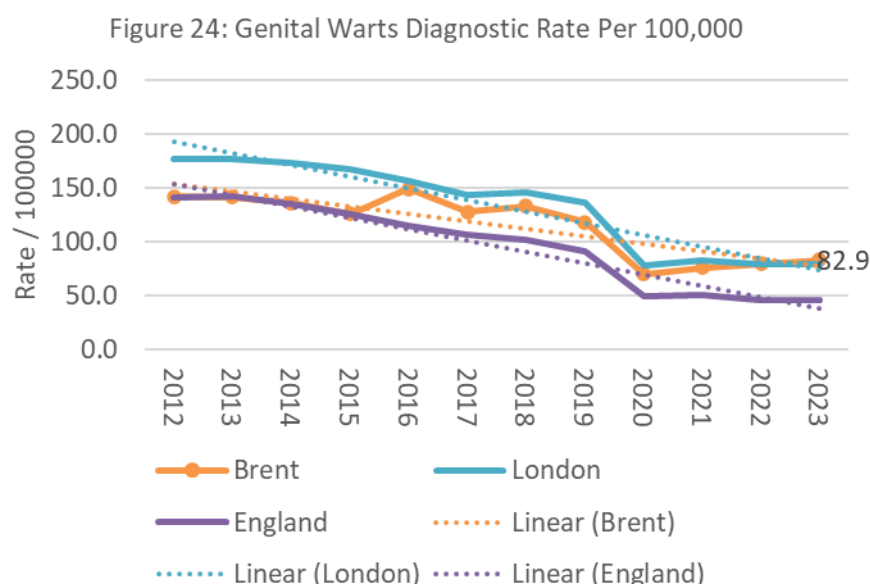
Figure 23 – Genital Herpes Diagnosis (Rate per 100,000) MSOA 2022



Source: UK Health Security Agency, GUMCAD, CTAD

## Genital Warts

The rate per 100,000 for genital warts was 82.9 in Brent in 2023, almost identical to London and above England. Overall, there has been a downward trend since 2012, although rates have plateaued in the last few years (Figure 24 and Appendix Outcomes- 31).



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data

A higher proportion of genital wart diagnoses are in men (average 2017-2023, 62%) compared with women (38%) (Appendix Outcomes-32).

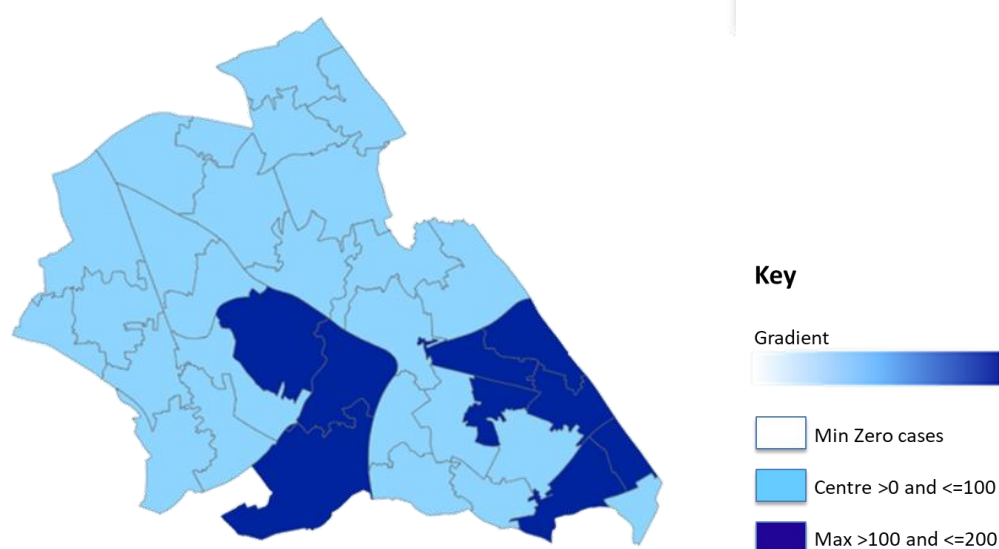
The largest proportion of genital warts is seen in the 25-34 age bracket (48%), followed by the 35-44 age bracket (22.8%) and 20-24 age bracket (16.4%). There were more males than females in each of these segments (Appendix Outcomes- 33). The only age segment where there were more females than males was the 16-19 age bracket.

There are more diagnosed with genital warts in the heterosexual segment (77.2% in 2023), followed by a further 21% in the gay, lesbian or bisexual segment (Appendix Outcomes-34 to 36).

People from white ethnic backgrounds made up the highest proportion of people diagnosed with genital warts in all years, but this has dropped from 50% in 2018 to 39% in 2023. The white segment is followed by people from Black ethnic backgrounds (Figure 5 earlier). Looking at the intersection of ethnicity and sexual orientation, the white female and male heterosexual segments are more prevalent (Appendix Outcomes- 37).

Higher prevalence was seen south of the borough in Wembley Park, Tokyngton, St Raphaels and down to Stonebridge. Then in the southeast of borough the second area covered areas from Dudden Hill to Queens Park (Figure 25).

Figure 25 – Genital Warts Diagnosis (Rate per 100,000, MSOA)



Source: UK Health Security Agency, GUMCAD, CTAD

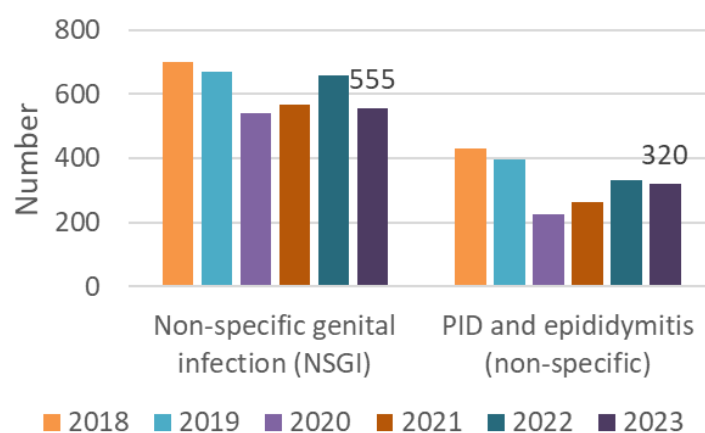
### Other STIs

In addition to the most common STIs that have been presented, there are non-specific STIs and some smaller STIs that need to be monitored, including hepatitis.

### Non-Specific STIs

The largest numbers relate to non-specific STIs, firstly non-specific genital infection (NSGI) and PID (Pelvic Inflammatory Disease) (Figure 26). Non-specific genital infections are where chlamydia and gonorrhoea tests are negative, but inflammation or infection exists. PID (Pelvic Inflammatory Disease) and epididymitis comprises a spectrum of inflammatory disorders from the lower genital tract<sup>49</sup>.

Figure 26 - Non-Specific STI's Impacting On Brent 2018 to 2023



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Numbers of all diagnoses and services, Brent

<sup>49</sup> Melville C. (2015), Sexual and Reproductive Health at a Glance, Wiley-Blackwell

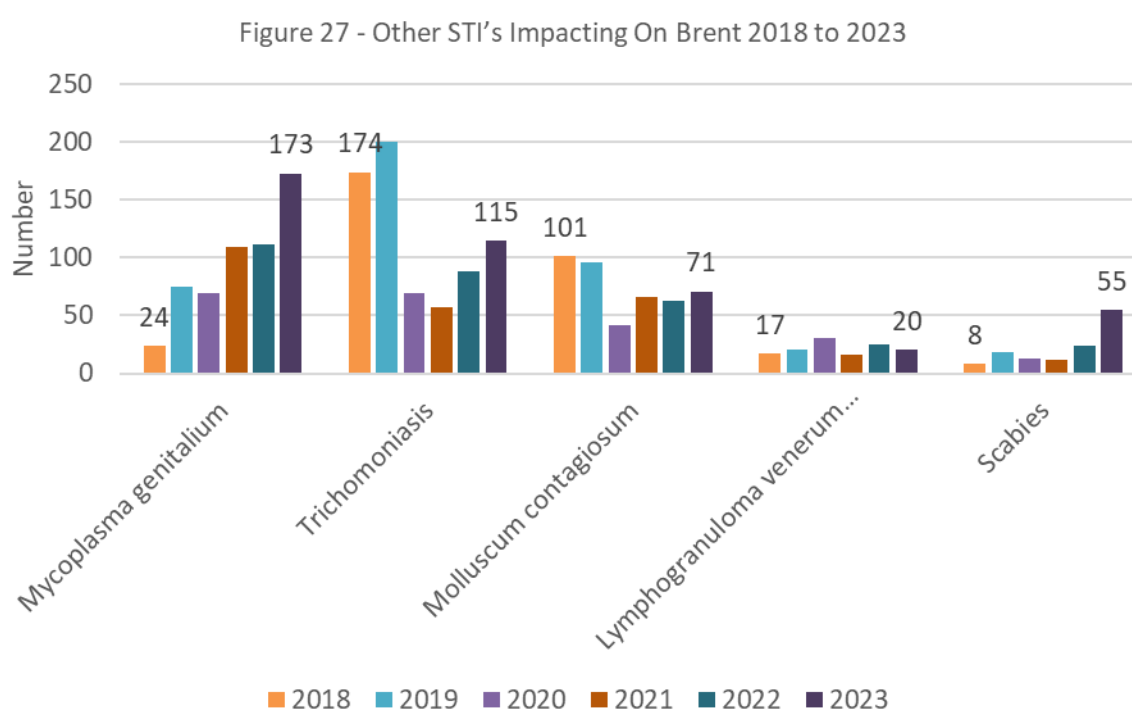
New diagnosis of NSGI impacted mainly males, whilst PID and Epididymitis (non-specific) was split on average 71% female and 29% males across the 6-year period in Brent.

In terms of gender and sexual orientation, NSGI impacted mainly heterosexual men, with 72% of new diagnoses in 2023 in this segment. The proportion seen in gay and bisexual men has grown progressively from 10% in 2018 to 25% in 2023. PID and Epididymitis (non-specific) mainly impacts on heterosexual females (63% of new diagnoses are in this segment) and lesbian or bisexual women (9%) in 2023.

### Other Smaller New STI Diagnosis

Some smaller STIs in Brent require consideration due to their increase in 2023 (Figure 27).

Mycoplasma genitalium also known as MG or Mgen, is a sexually transmitted bacterium that infects the urinary and genital tracts, or the rectum<sup>50</sup>. Trichomoniasis is an STI caused by a parasite called Trichomonas vaginalis (TV)<sup>51</sup>. Molluscum contagiosum is an infection that causes spots on the skin; it is usually harmless and rarely needs treatment<sup>52</sup>. Lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV) is a type of chlamydia bacteria that attacks the lymph nodes. LGV is very rarely seen in heterosexual men and women in the UK<sup>53</sup>. Human scabies is caused by an infestation of the skin by the human itch mite usually spread by direct contact with a person who has scabies.



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Numbers of all diagnoses and services, Brent

<sup>50</sup> [Home | Terrence Higgins Trust](#), accessed November 2024

<sup>51</sup> Melville C. (2015), Sexual and Reproductive Health at a Glance, Wiley-Blackwell

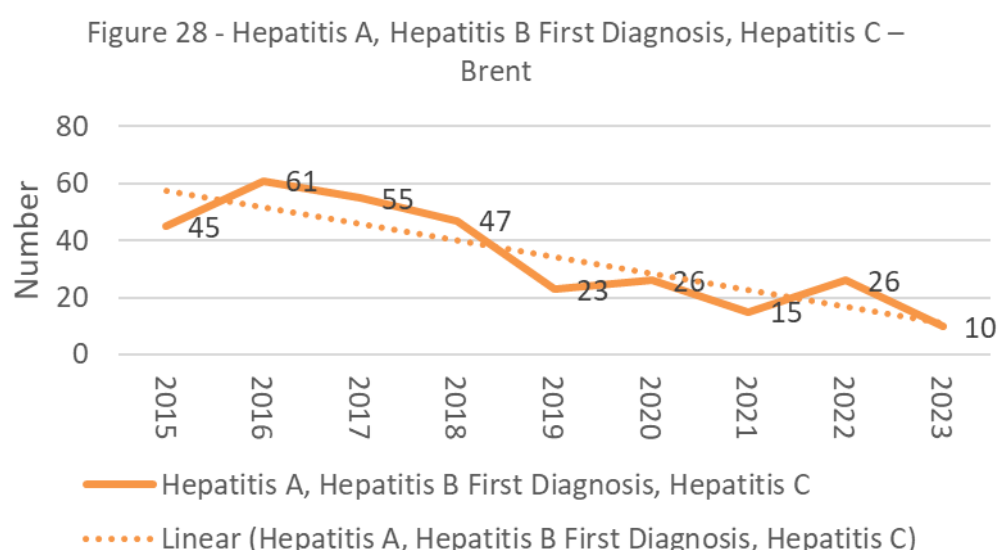
<sup>52</sup> [Molluscum contagiosum - NHS](#), accessed November 2024

<sup>53</sup> [Lymphogranuloma venereum \(LGV\) | NHS inform](#), accessed November 2024

The gender split for mycoplasma genitalium was approximately 70% male to 30% female for new diagnoses. Mycoplasma genitalium has seen an increase in the male gay and bisexual segment over the period 2018 to 2022, whilst the proportion in the heterosexual male segment fell from 54% in 2018 to 32% in 2022. The 2023 data however countered this trend.

New LGV diagnoses were predominately seen in males, especially the gay and bisexual male segment (85% of new diagnoses in 2023). New scabies diagnoses were also seen more commonly in males, predominantly heterosexual males (53% of new diagnoses in 2023), whilst gay and bisexual men and females accounted for 31% and 14% of new diagnoses. Trichomoniasis predominately impacted heterosexual females. Molluscum contagiosum was approximately split two thirds' males to one third female in terms of new diagnosis by gender and impacted both heterosexual men and women (58% and 27% respectively in 2023).

Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B First Diagnosis and Hepatitis C numbers have declined progressively from 61 cases in 2016 to 10 in 2023 (Figure 28). The most common form of Hepatitis was Hepatitis B first diagnosis and this was predominantly seen in males (62% males and 38% females in 2023) and in heterosexuals (both male and female). Hepatitis C comprises 15% of overall Hepatitis diagnoses and most people acquire hepatitis C through injecting drug use.



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Numbers of all diagnoses and services, Brent

## HIV

Figure 29 (overleaf) outlines the HIV public health profiles and represents the latest published data by OHID, comparing Brent against London and England. The Brent result is shown as a circle and those coloured in red signal possible under-performing indicators. The table shows that Brent is on track in terms of overall testing rates, the proportion of tuberculosis (TB) cases offered an HIV test, and antiretroviral therapy (ART) coverage in people accessing HIV care.

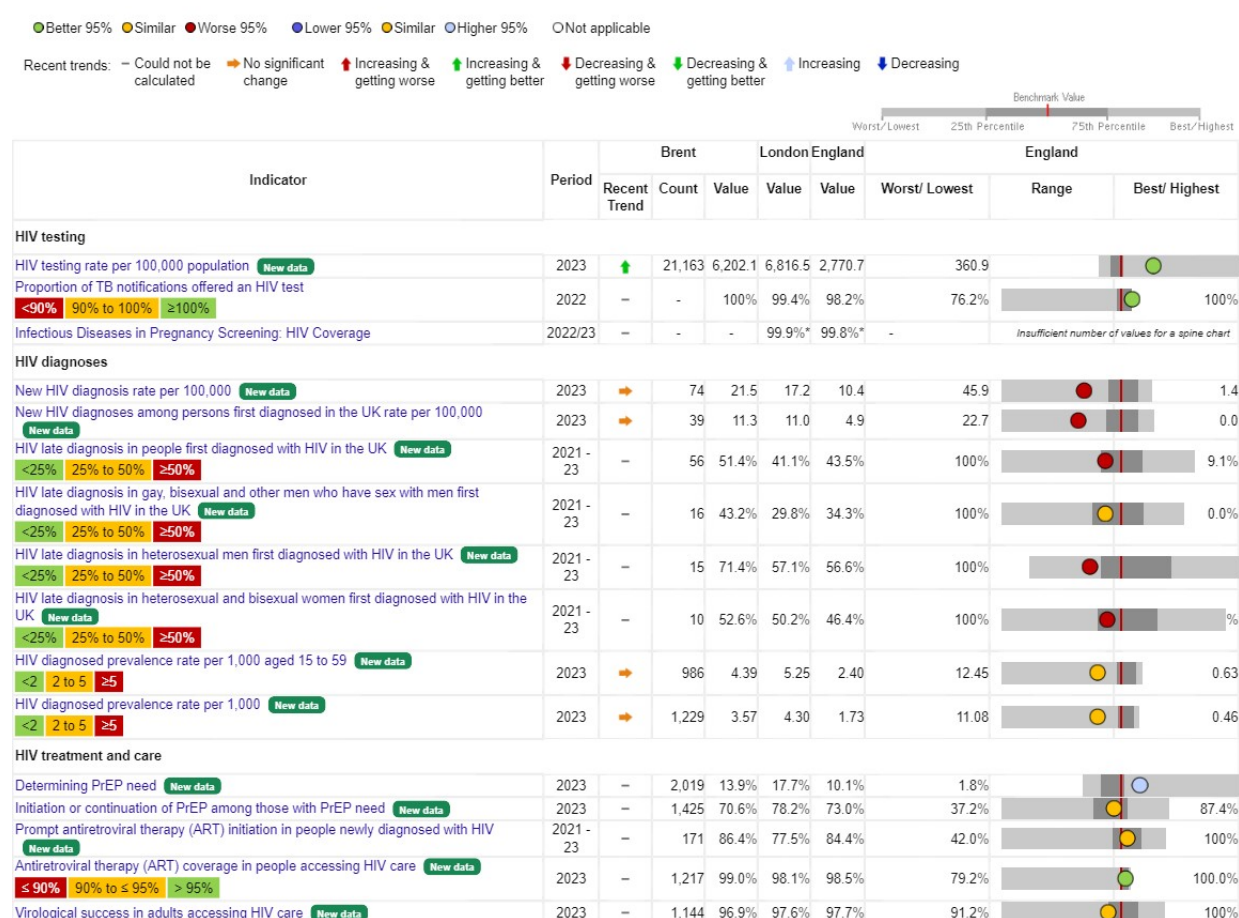
There are two indicators that could signal under-diagnosis in Brent, namely, new HIV diagnosis rate per 100,000, and new HIV diagnoses among persons first diagnosed in the UK (taken to be a more reliable indicator than the former). There are three indicators that signal concern over late diagnosis,



namely, late HIV diagnoses in persons first diagnosed in the UK, late HIV diagnoses in heterosexual men first diagnosed in the UK, and late diagnoses in heterosexual and bisexual women diagnosed in the UK. More work needs to be in place for earlier diagnosis for heterosexual men who are then more likely to transmit HIV to heterosexual or bisexual women. Further research is needed to understand whether the latter group are offered PrEP and do not take it up or are not offered at all.

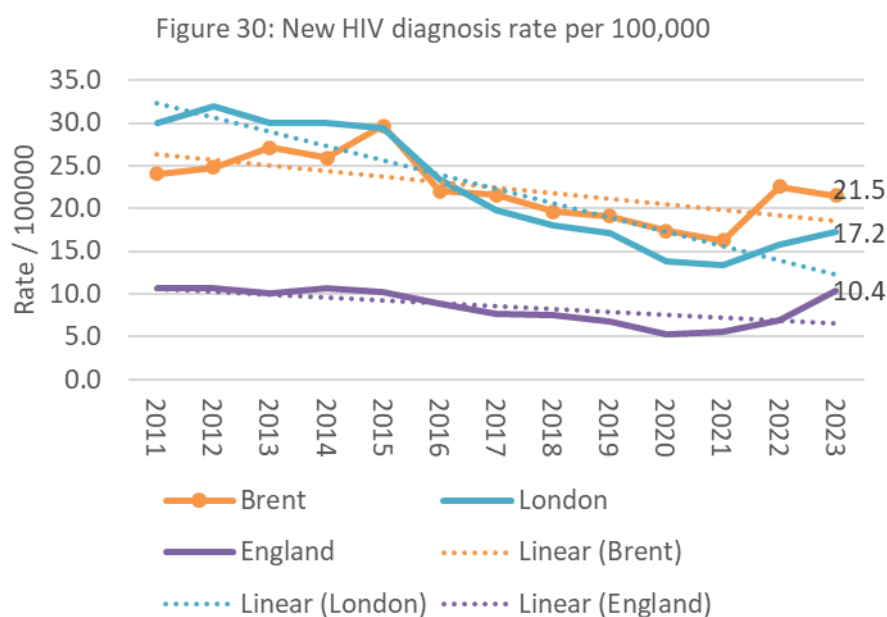
The HIV diagnosed prevalence rate per 1,000 aged 15 to 59 has remained relatively constant over the last 10 years (Appendix Outcomes 38). The rate of new HIV diagnosis per 100,000 was 21.5 for Brent in 2023 and this was above London (17.2) and considerably above England (10.4) (Figure 30). Although higher, it is still below benchmark value (Figure 29). Brent is now ranked as the borough with the 10<sup>th</sup> highest new HIV diagnosis rate per 100,000 (Appendix Outcomes 39).

Figure 29- Public Health Profiles HIV



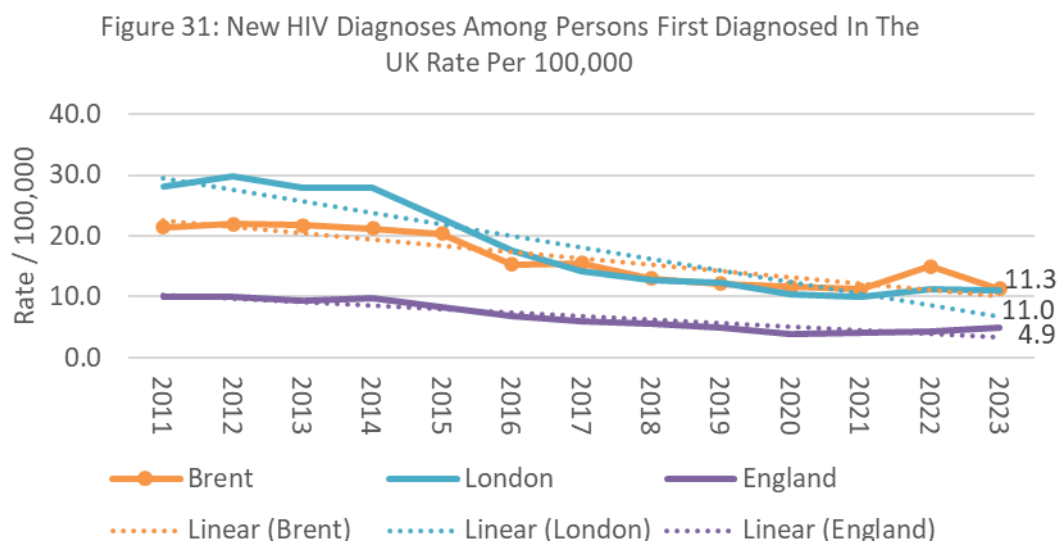
Source: Public health profiles - OHID (phe.org.uk)





Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

A more accurate measure of HIV transmission is the New HIV Diagnosis among persons first diagnosed in the UK which covers new diagnosis with HIV in the UK regardless of country of first HIV test<sup>54</sup>. Brent and London were well above England rates, although all areas are on a downward trend (Figure 31).



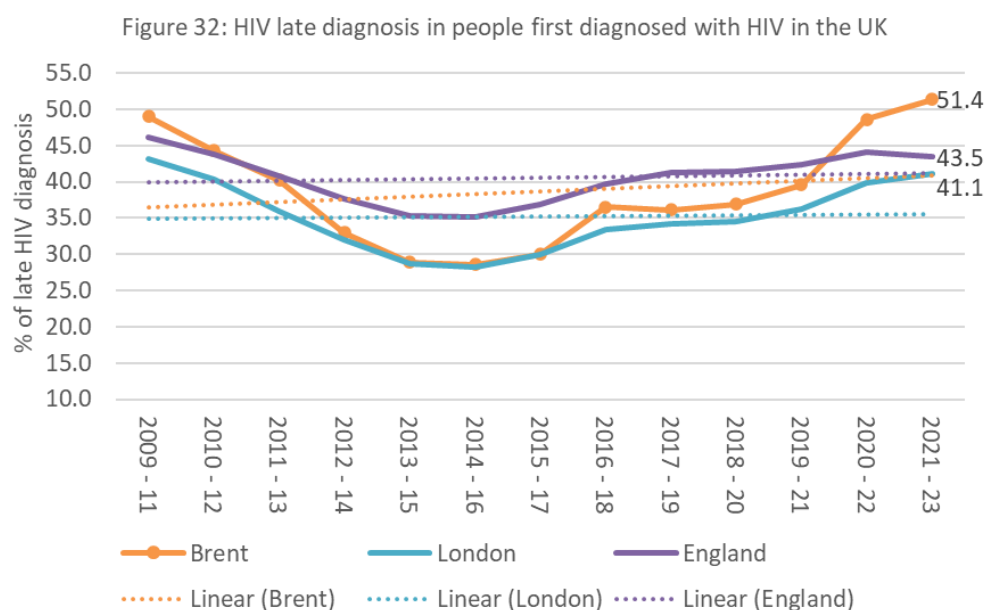
Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

Late diagnosis is an important predictor of HIV related morbidity and short-term mortality and is impacted by the success of local HIV testing efforts<sup>55</sup>. In 2023, this was 51.4% in Brent, 41.1% in London, and 43.5% in England (Figure 32). The OHID target is for this indicator to be below 50% but the level in Brent is now above this. As shown earlier, a higher proportion of people with late diagnosis are heterosexual men. This is the case for Brent, as well as London and England. The group

<sup>54</sup> [SPLASH Brent 2024-07-10](#), accessed July 2024.

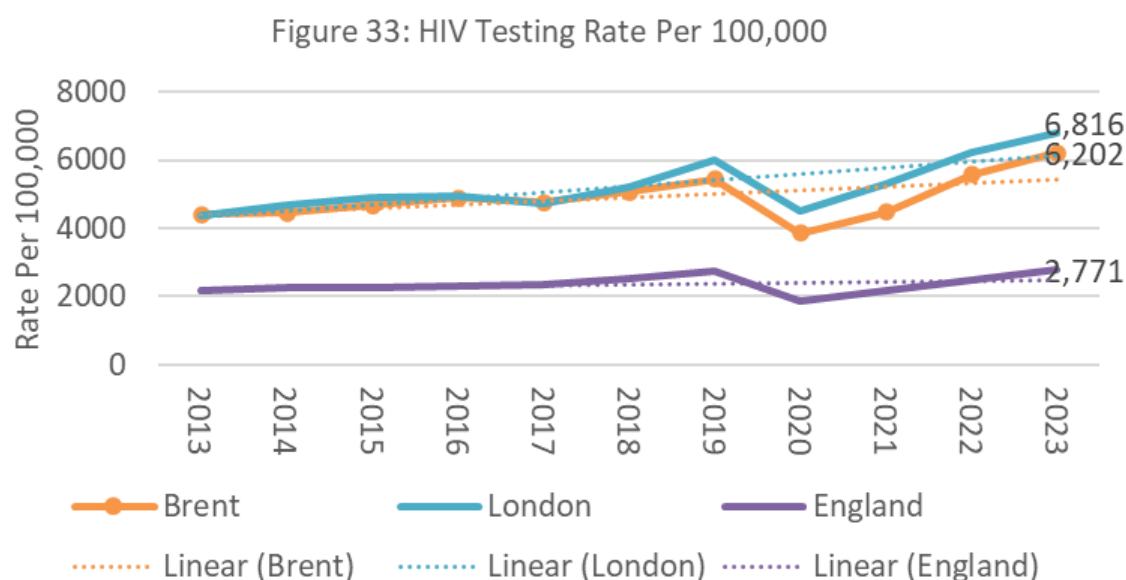
<sup>55</sup> Late diagnosis is defined as being a CD4 count <350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> within 91 days of first HIV diagnosis in the UK

with the second highest proportion of late diagnosis is heterosexual and bisexual women (Appendix Outcomes 40)<sup>56</sup>.



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – Fingertips published data

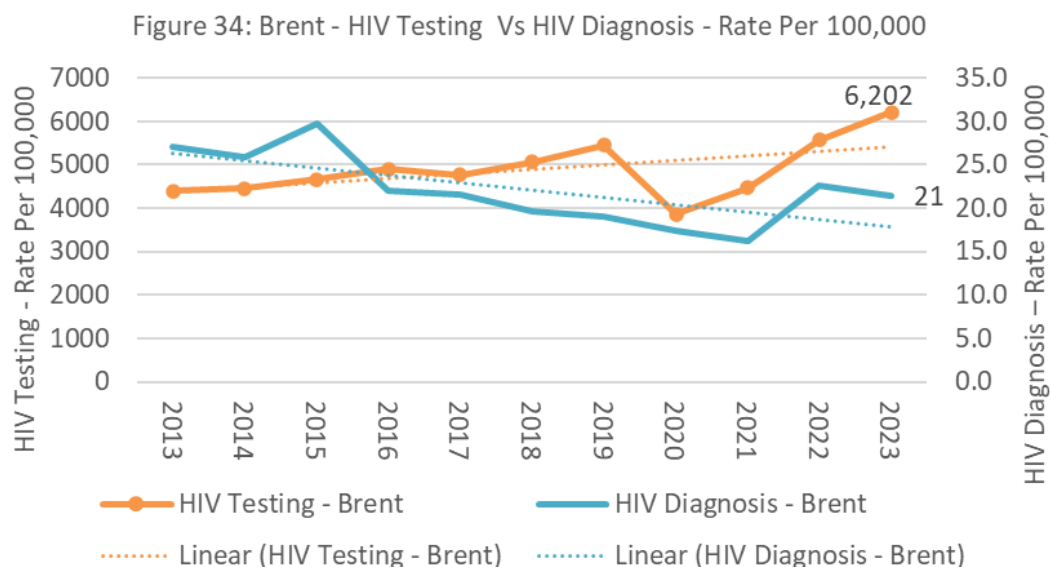
HIV testing is integral to the treatment and management of HIV. Knowledge of HIV status increases survival rates and reduces the risk of onward transmission through aiding early diagnoses and treatment. Testing and diagnosis rates are closely linked, and the testing rate indicator serves as a valuable complement to the 'HIV diagnosis rate per 100,000' indicator. Brent and London follow a similar trend and are well above England rates per 100,000. There was an upward trend for all and testing levels for Brent and London now exceed pre-pandemic levels (Figure 33).



Source: UK Health Security Agency, UKHSA, Fingertips published data

<sup>56</sup> Figure 29 and Appendix Outcomes 40; Brent total is edging above 50%. The Brent gay, bisexual men, MSM was below the 50%, but there was a big jump in 2021-23 to 43.2% from the previous period. For heterosexual men as well as heterosexual and bisexual women this was above 50%. Actual numbers are relatively small.

A comparison of HIV Testing and Diagnosis per 100,000 rate provides context on volumes tested against diagnosed. In 2023, in Brent, there were 6,202 tests (per 100,000) to give an HIV diagnosis of 21 (per 100,000). The testing trend is upwards, whilst the diagnosis trend is downwards (Figure 34).



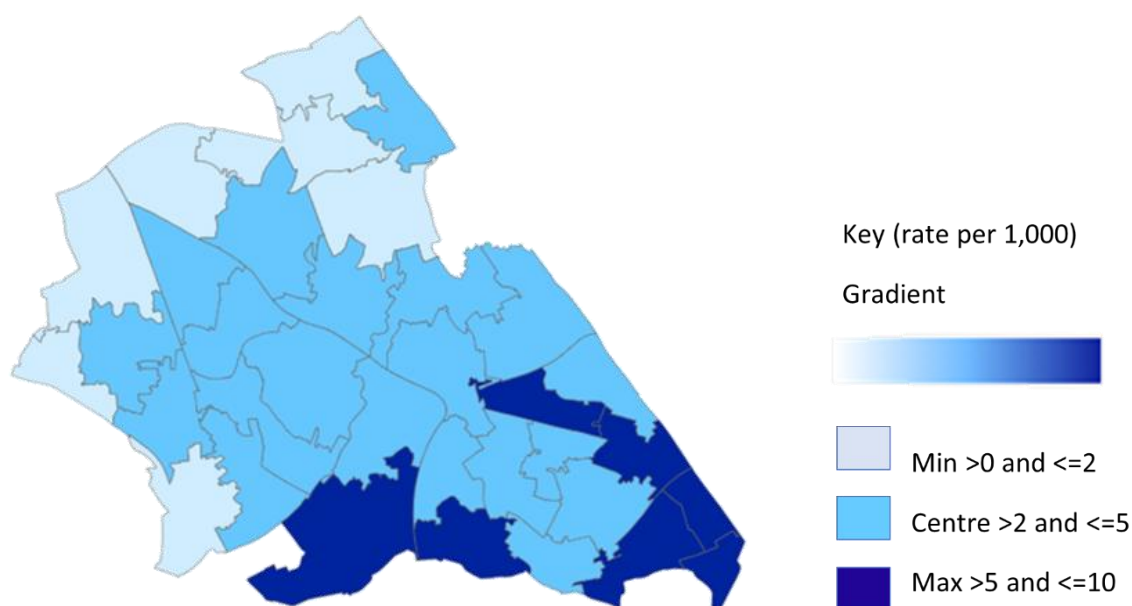
Source: UK Health Security Agency, UKHSA, Fingertips published data

Between 2018 to 2023, (excluding 2021<sup>57</sup>), the average split of new HIV diagnosis by gender was 77.8% males and 22.3% females (Appendix Outcomes 41). Breaking this down further into gender and sexual orientation, the average for 2018 to 2023 was 50.1% male gay and bisexual; 23.4% male heterosexual and 22.7% female (Appendix Outcomes 42).

For both HIV prevalence and new HIV diagnosis, rates were highest for the most deprived and lowest for the least deprived parts of Brent (Appendix Outcomes 43). In 2022, the highest prevalence was in Stonebridge, Harlesden & Kensal Green, Queens Park, Kilburn, Brondesbury Park and Willesden Green (Figure 35).

<sup>57</sup> 2021 data was distorted by the 'not specified' selection and so has been excluded

Figure 37– HIV Diagnosis (Rate per 1,000), per MSOA

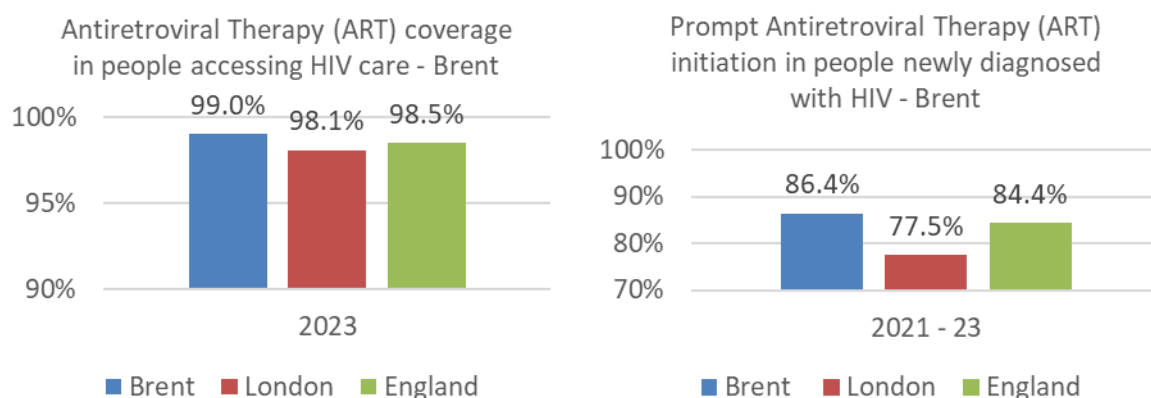


Data sources: HARS, ONS population estimates for 2020; UKHSA

#### HIV Treatment & Care

The treatment and care for HIV includes ART (antiretroviral treatment) and PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis). In 2023, 99% of those accessing HIV care in Brent were prescribed ART, above both England and London rates. 2021-23 data for Brent indicated that 86.4% of those newly diagnosed with HIV started ART within 3 months of their diagnosis. This was above both London and England (with 77.5% and 84.4% respectively) (Figure 38). London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust and Chelsea & Westminster Hospital have been collaborating on prioritising rapid access to Specialist Care for newly diagnosed in NW London, to take a whole sector approach and pool resources.

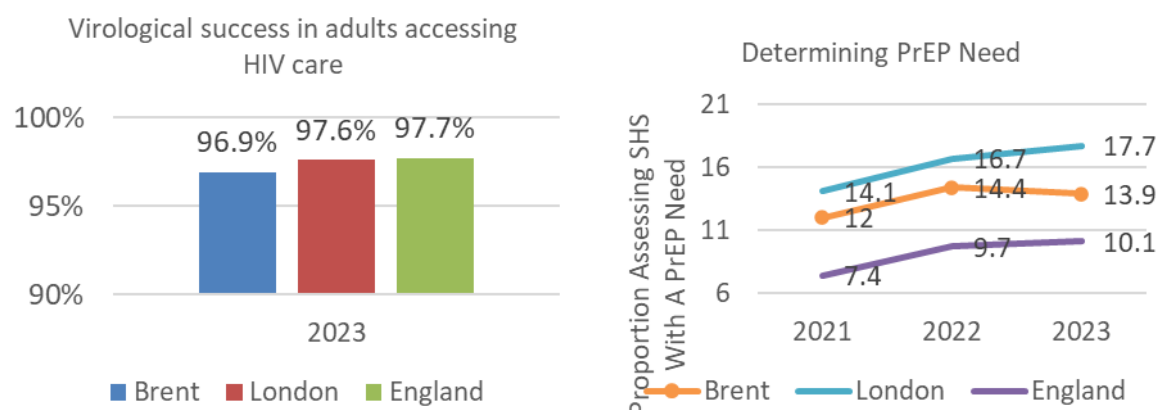
Figure 38 – ART Coverage in People Accessing HIV Care & ART Initiation in People Newly Diagnosed with HIV



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

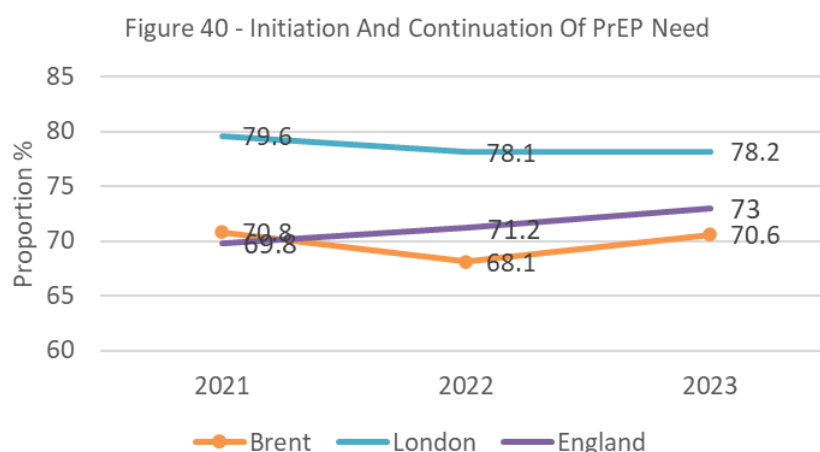
The percentage of adults in Brent accessing HIV care in 2023 who were virally suppressed<sup>58</sup> was 96.9%, slightly below London at 97.6% and England at 97.7%. In 2023, 13.9% of HIV negative people accessing specialist sexual health services in Brent were flagged as having a PrEP need and this was slightly down from 14.4% in 2022. Brent rates in both years were below the London rates and above England rates (Figure 39).

Figure 39 – Virological Success In Adults Accessing HIV Care and determining PrEP need



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

In addition to determining PrEP need, another indicator assesses the proportion of individuals who start or continue PrEP (with lower proportions indicating that more people with a need are leaving the service without PrEP<sup>59</sup>). Figure 40 shows that Brent levels are lower than London and England. The population accessing PrEP at London North West University Hospital (LNWH) includes a high proportion of those from minority ethnic and migrant communities, those with English as an additional language, and women whose care needs are more complex. An online PrEP offer would create more capacity in face-to-face services for those who need that support.



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

<sup>58</sup> Prompt ART initiation in people newly diagnosed along with 'Proportion with undetectable viral load (%)', supports the wider monitoring of UNAIDS 90:90:90 target; 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status, 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy and 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression. These targets will increase to 95:95:95 by 2025. (Source: OHID Fingertips, Prompt ART Initiation In People Newly Diagnosed With HIV, definitions).

<sup>59</sup> Fingertips, Initiation and continuation of PrEP need, definitions

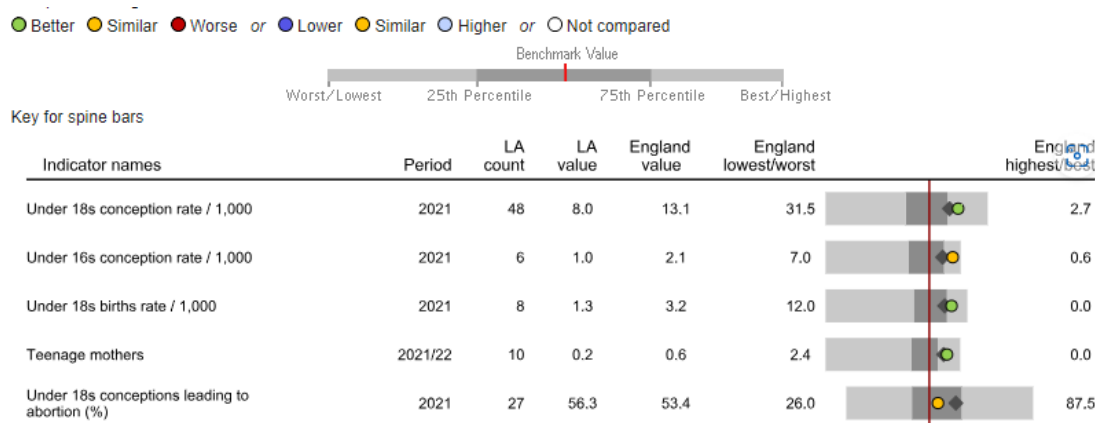
## Reproductive Health

This section covers abortions, conceptions and contraception for Brent compared to London and England as a whole.

### Conception

Under 18 conceptions are a public health concern and a concern for child poverty. Teenage pregnancy is a cause and consequence of low educational attainment, and teenage mothers are at higher risk of living in poverty and of not being in education, employment or training<sup>60</sup>. Figure 41 shows that for the under 16s and under 18s conception rate per 1,000, Brent is doing better than England. Over the last two decades, both the under 18 conception and under 16 conception rates have been on a downward trend for Brent, London and England. This links to the introduction of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy in 1999<sup>61</sup> (Appendix Outcomes 44, 45).

Figure 41- Under 18 Conception Health Indicators in Brent compared to London and England



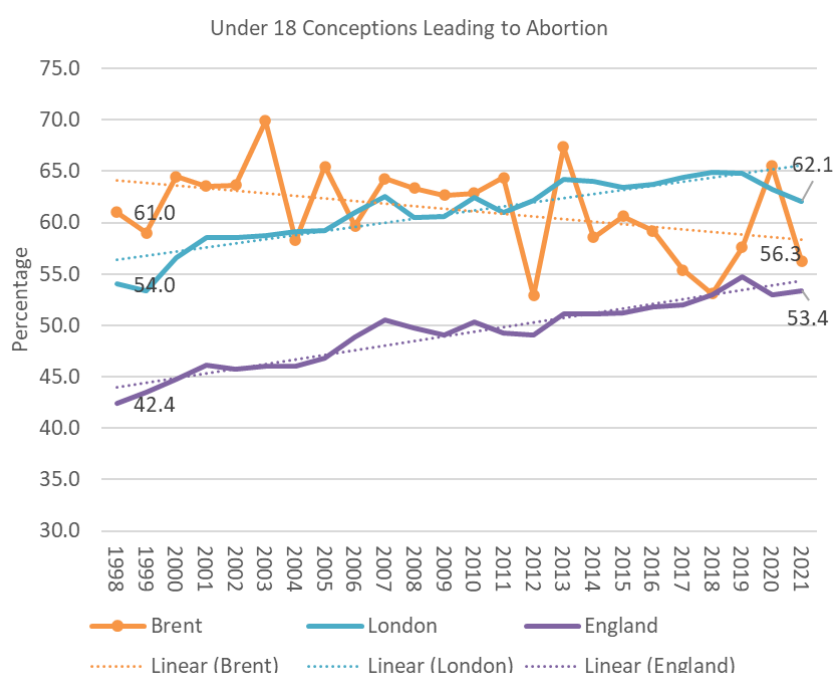
Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles

For under 18 conceptions leading to abortion, there was more variability in the Brent trend than London and England, with England (53.4%) below Brent (56.3%) and London (62.1%). The Brent long term trend was downwards, whilst London and England had a slightly upward long-term trend (Figure 42).

<sup>60</sup> [SPLASH Brent 2024-07-10](#), accessed July 2024

<sup>61</sup> [SPLASH Brent 2024-07-10](#), accessed July 2024

Figure 42 –Under 18 Conceptions Leading To Abortion % – Brent, London, England

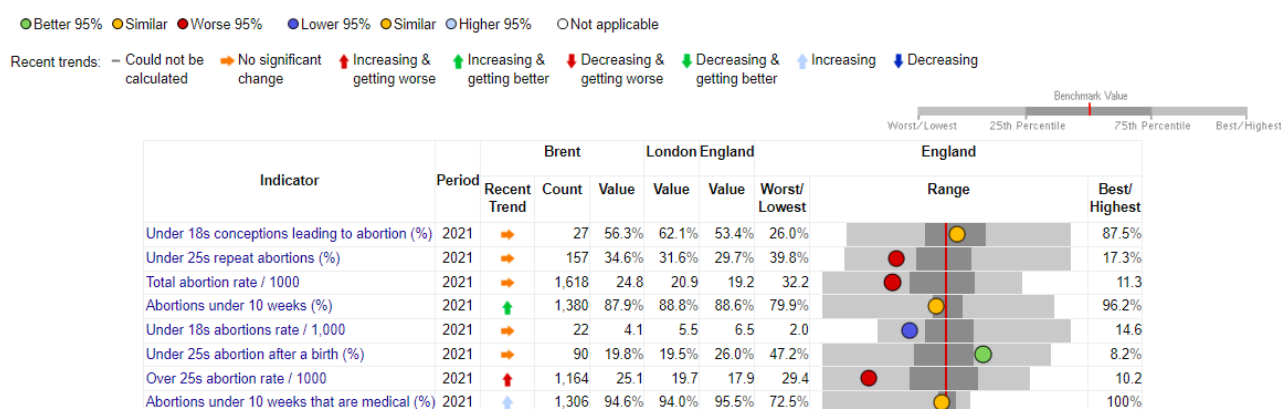


Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), fingertips published data

## Abortion

According to the SPLASH report<sup>62</sup>, the total abortion rate, under 25 years repeat abortion rate, under 25s abortions after a birth and over 25 abortion rates may be indicators of lack of access to good quality contraception services and advice and may also indicate problems with individual use of contraception methods. Figure 43 below suggests that Brent was under-performing on three of these measures in 2021, namely, under 25s repeat abortions, total abortion rate per 1,000 and over 25s abortion rate per 1,000.

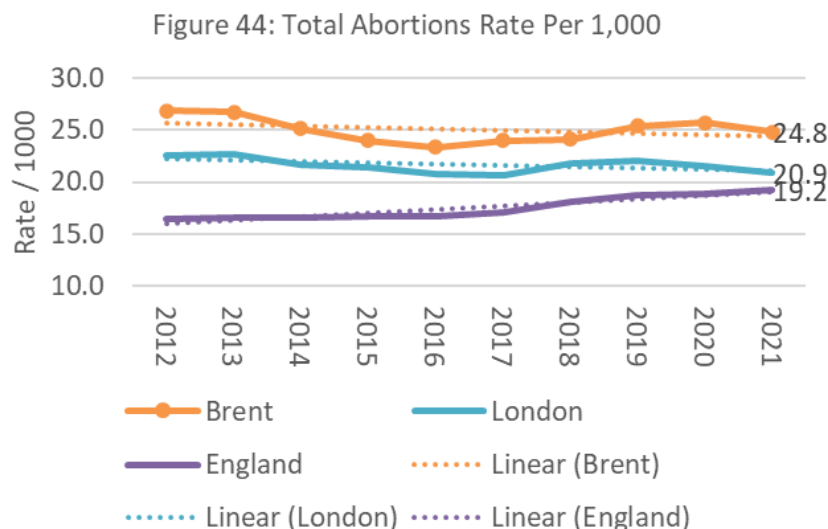
Figure 43 – Abortion Health Indicators in Brent compared to London and England Averages



Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles

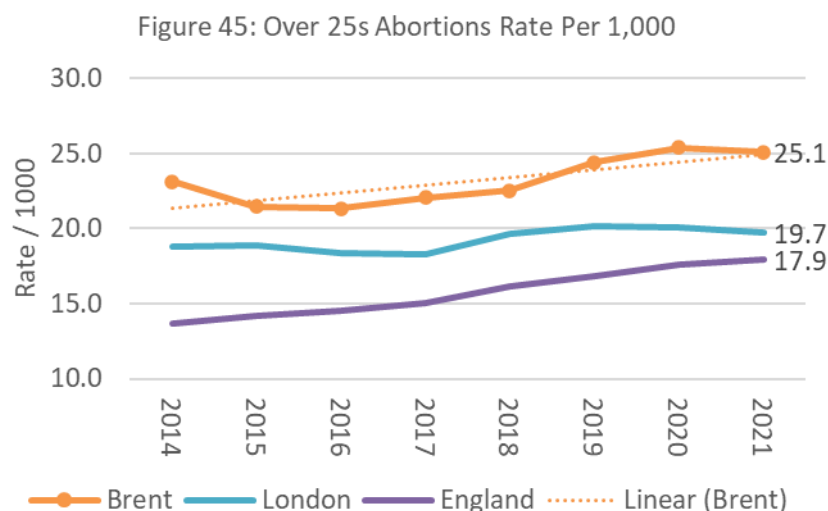
<sup>62</sup> [SPLASH Brent 2024-07-10](#), accessed July 2024

There was a total of 1,618 abortions in Brent in 2021, with a rate of 24.8 per 1,000 females aged 15 to 44 years. This was higher than both London (20.9) and England (19.2) and has been consistently higher (Figure 44). There was a similar pattern for other indicators, except for under 25s abortion after a birth, where Brent was lower than England (19.8% vs 26%) and under 18s abortions rate per 1,000, where Brent was also lower (4.1 vs 6.5).



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), fingertips published data

Brent abortion rates were ranked 6<sup>th</sup> highest out of all London Local Authorities in 2021. The over 25s abortion rate is showing an upward trend and the per 1,000 rate for Brent (25.1) is above London (19.7) and England (17.9). As outlined in Figure 43 above, this is an underperforming measure for Brent (Figure 45).

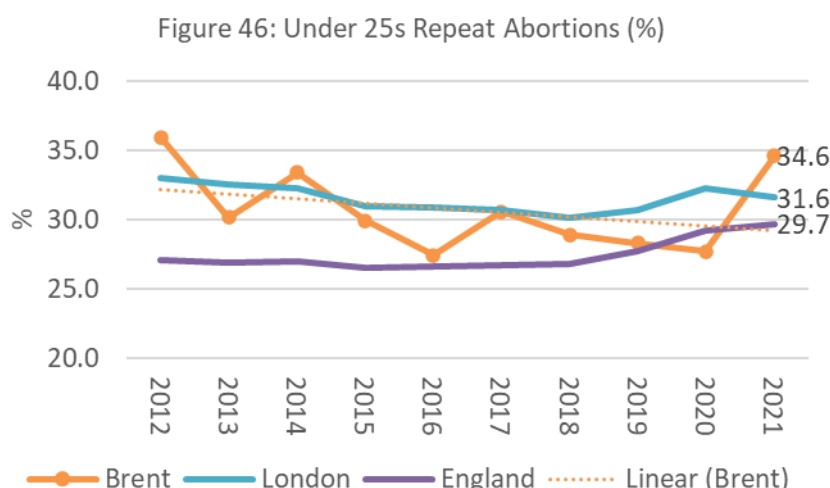


Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), fingertips published data

Brent is doing better for the under 18s abortion rate (Brent at 4.1, London at 5.5 and England at 6.5 per 1,000). The trend over time is downward in Brent, London and England (Appendix Outcomes 46).



Repeat abortions for under 25s in Brent shot up from 27.7% in 2020 to 34.6% for 2021, higher than London and England<sup>63</sup> (Figure 46). For under 25 abortions after a birth, Brent was generally below London across the period 2012 to 2021 and almost the same as London in 2021 (Brent 19.8% and London 19.5%). Both Brent and London were below England (26%) and there was a downward trend over time for all.

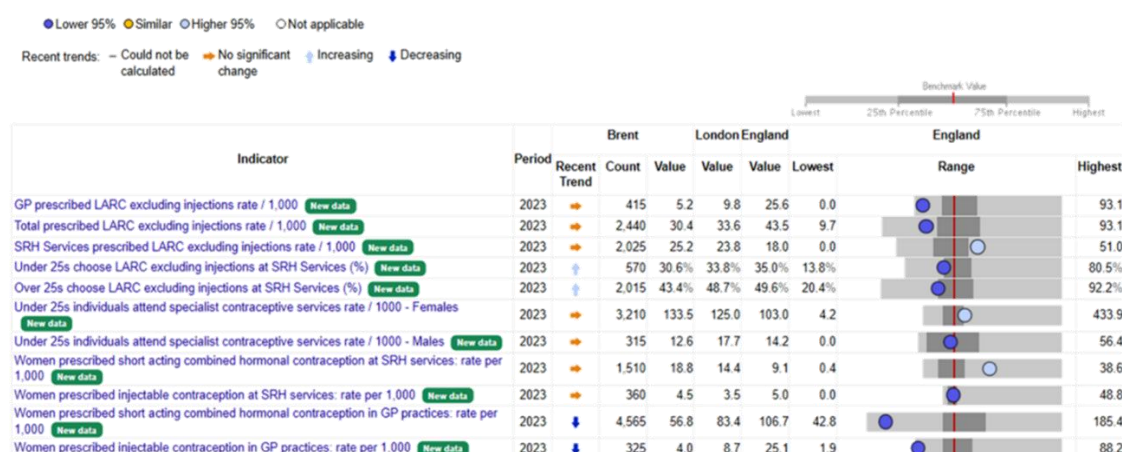


Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

## Contraception

Contraception is important to help reduce unwanted pregnancies. Effective, accessible contraception services result in lower rates of teenage conceptions<sup>64</sup>. There are various free contraception options available via the NHS and sexual and reproductive health services<sup>65</sup>. According to OHID (Figure 47), most contraception indicators for Brent are lower than England. The exceptions to this are sexual and reproductive health services prescribed LARC (excluding injections), under 25s individuals attending specialist contraceptive services, and women prescribed short acting combined hormonal contraception at sexual and reproductive health services.

Figure 47 - Contraception Health Indicators in Brent compared to London and England Averages



Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles

<sup>63</sup> This measure is highlighted in PHOF as underperforming, this however could reflect variability rather than an underperformance and more data is required.

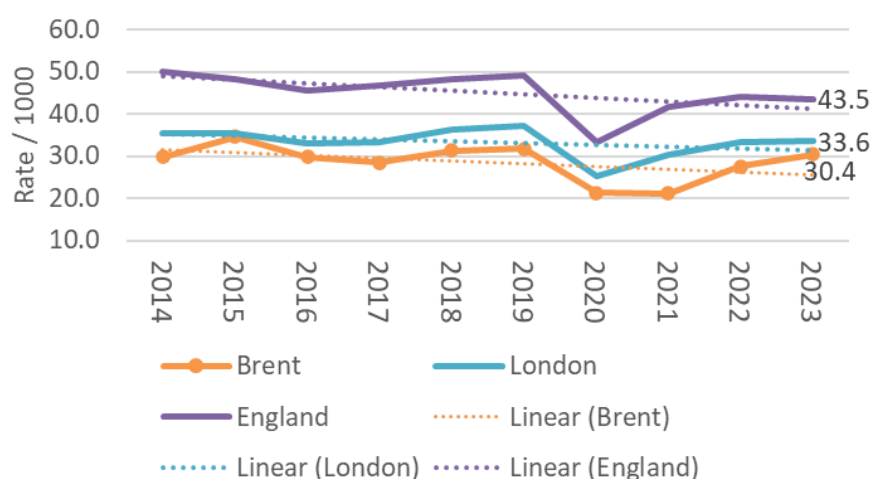
<sup>64</sup> [SPLASH Brent 2024-07-10](#), accessed July 2024

<sup>65</sup> [SPLASH Brent 2024-07-10](#), accessed July 2024

For total prescribed LARC excluding injections, Brent was below London and England rates, with a downward trend for all areas over the period 2014 to 2023. Brent followed a similar pattern to London, with a drop off during pandemic and levels were still not back to pre-pandemic levels in 2023. Brent was ranked 23rd out of all London Local Authorities in 2023, below the London average of 33.6 per 1,000 (Figure 48).

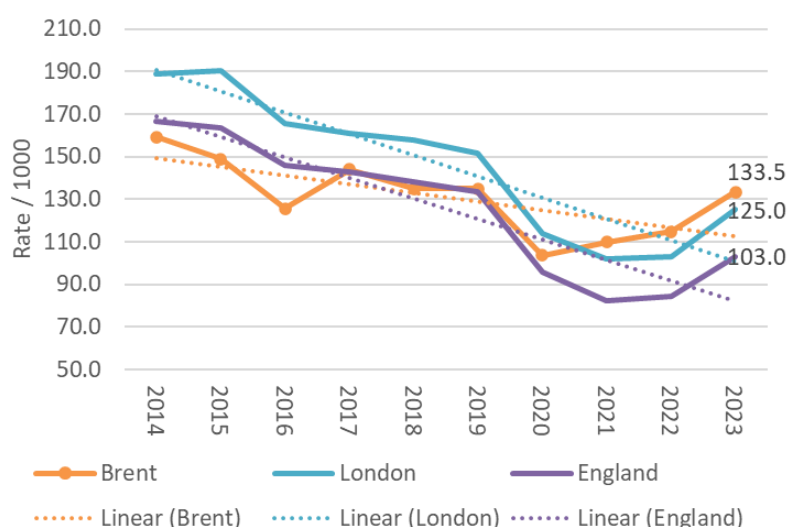
Attendance indicators provide a measure of young people's access to specialist contraceptive services<sup>66</sup>. For female attendance, there was a downward trend for all areas from 2014 to 2023. At the start of the period Brent was below London and England. In contrast, in the last 3 years, Brent has been above both London and England with 133.5, 125 and 103 per 1,000 respectively (Figure 49). Male attendance is lower than for females, with Brent at 12.6 per 1,000 in 2023, compared to 17.7 for London. There is a downward trend for both genders (Figure 50).

Figure 48 - Total Prescribed LARC Rate Per 1000



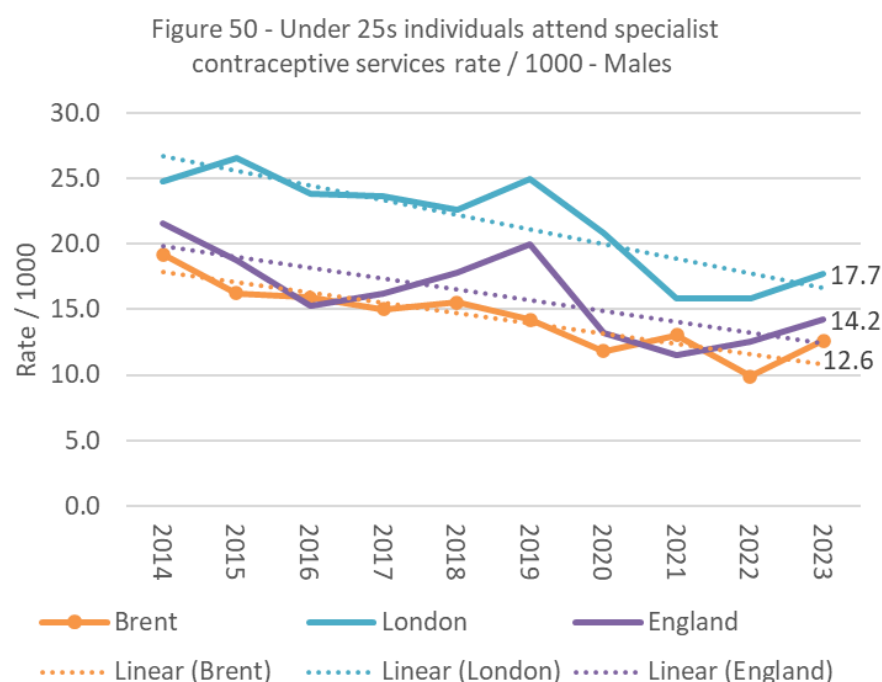
Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

Figure 49 - Under 25s individuals attend specialist contraceptive services rate / 1000 - Females



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

<sup>66</sup> [SPLASH Brent 2024-07-10](#), accessed July 2024



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

Data on conception, abortion and contraception, although informative, do not provide the full picture due to fragmentation of data sets and no data nationally for contraceptive provision in Maternity Units prior to discharge, by abortion services, pharmacists or on-line services, especially with a view to highlight pregnancies within 12 months of delivery.

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) has been awarded funding to provide post-delivery contraception. This provides an opportunity to expand the services and ensure outcomes for pregnancies within 12 months of delivery are further improved.

## Other Sexual Health Issues

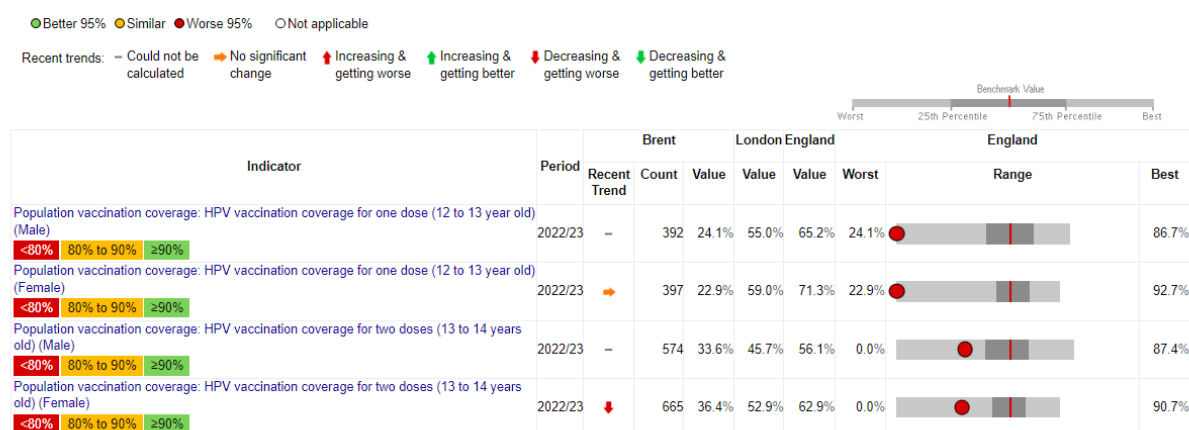
This section covers other sexual health issues that require consideration for Brent, namely, HPV vaccination, cervical screening, and sexual offences.

### Human Papillomavirus Virus (HPV)

Many types of the Human Papillomavirus Virus (HPV) affect the mouth, throat and genital area. It can get transmitted by skin-to-skin contact of the genital area, penetrative or oral sex. HPV can cause genital warts and high-risk types of HPV increase the risk of some cancers<sup>67</sup>. The HPV vaccine protects against HPV and is usually administered to children between the ages of 12 to 14 years old. OHID data (Figure 51) show that Brent is significantly below the England average on all male and female vaccination coverage.

<sup>67</sup> [Human papillomavirus \(HPV\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk), accessed August 2024

Figure 51 – HPV Vaccination Coverage In Brent compared to London and England Averages

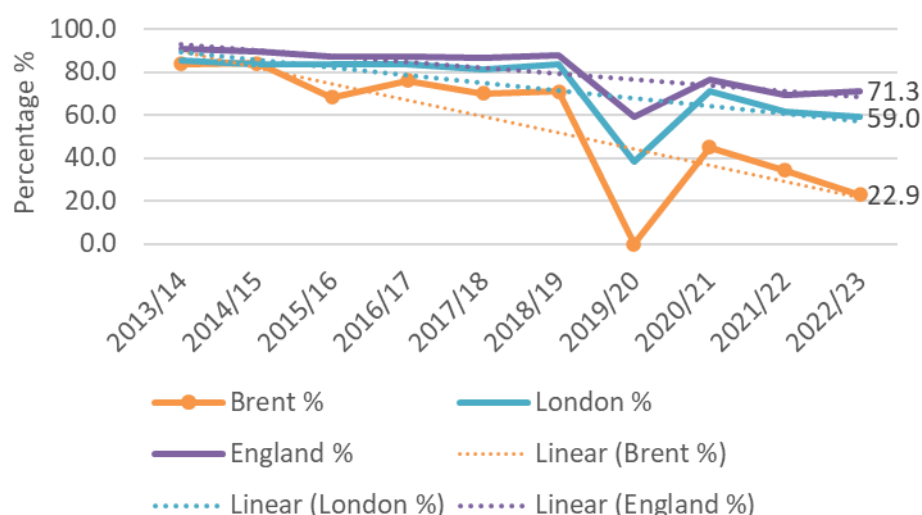


Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles

For HPV vaccination coverage for females in the 12-13 age bracket, Brent, London and England experienced a similar downward trend, with a coverage drop off since the pandemic. Brent experienced a steeper decline over the last decade. In 2022/23 coverage in Brent was 22.9%, lower than London (59.0%) and England (71.3%) (Figure 52), with Brent having the lowest coverage of all London Local Authorities in 2022/23 (Appendix Outcomes 47).

A similar trend was apparent for the HPV vaccination coverage for females 13 to 14 years old and boys 12 to 13 years old and 13 to 14 years old. In all cohorts, coverage in Brent was below London and England averages and, in the case of 12- to 13-year-old boys, Brent again ranked lowest of all London Local Authorities.

Figure 52: HPV Vaccination Coverage For One Dose (12-13 yr old) Female, Brent Proportion %



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

## Cervical Screening

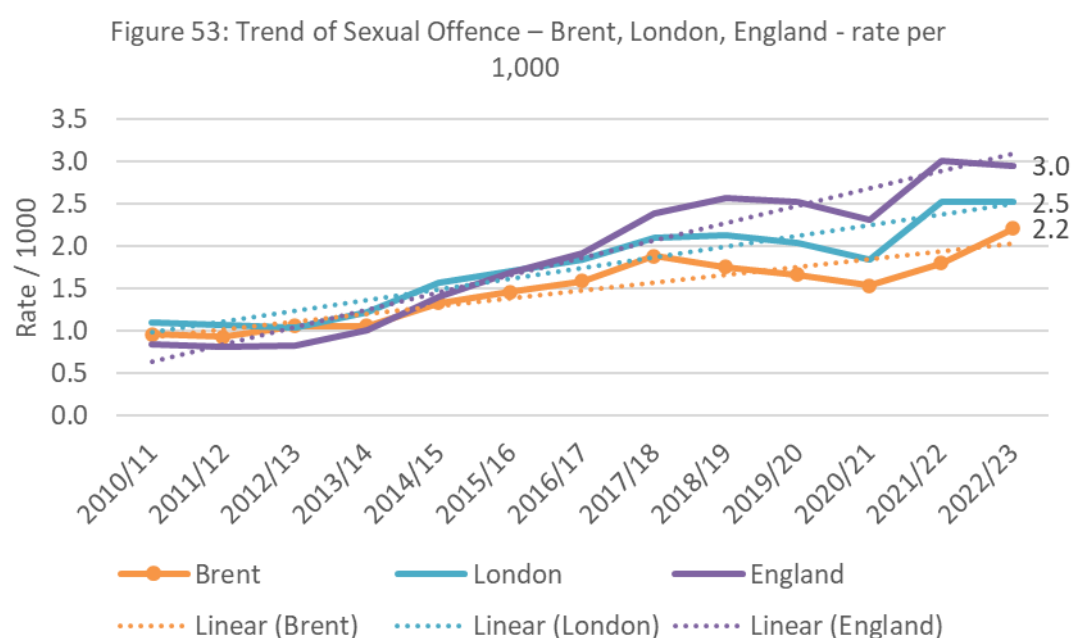
Cervical screening is a test to check the health of the cervix, help detect HPV and prevent cervical cancer. It is offered to women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 64<sup>68</sup> in England, with a national target of 80% coverage.

There was a downward trend for 25-49-year-olds and 50-64-year-olds both were well below target. For the 25- to 49-year-olds, Brent was at 52.8% in 2023, below London (58%) and England (65.8%). For the 50- to 64-year-olds, Brent was considerably below England and similar to London, with all areas below target (Appendix Outcomes 48, 49).

## Recorded sexual offences

People who are victims of a sexual assault are at high risk of acquiring a sexually transmitted infection. Literature shows that reported rates of gonorrhoea and syphilis in adult victims range from 6% to 12% and from 0% to 3%, respectively. The risk of acquiring other STIs cannot be quantified, although the risk of infection with *Chlamydia trachomatis* appears highest. In abused children, gonococcal and chlamydial infections are the most frequent findings. In both adults and children, post-assault infections with viral agents of STIs, including herpes simplex viruses, hepatitis B virus, and human immunodeficiency virus, have been described<sup>69</sup>. Other publications discuss the increased rates for some infections like trichomoniasis and bacterial vaginosis and although routine testing for STIs may not be performed in many cases, prophylactic treatment is often recommended<sup>70</sup>.

The trend for sexual offences has increased for all areas but the rate in Brent remains below rates in both London and England. In 2022/23 Brent was 2.2, London 2.5 and England 3.0 (rate per 1,000) (Figure 53).



Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

<sup>68</sup> [Human papillomavirus \(HPV\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk), accessed August 2024

<sup>69</sup> [Sexual assault and sexually transmitted diseases: detection and management in adults and children - PubMed](#), accessed January 2025

<sup>70</sup> [Sexual Assault Infectious Disease Prophylaxis - StatPearls - NCBI Bookshelf](#), accessed January 2025

## Current Service Provision

### Aims of the service

Brent Sexual and Reproductive health services aim to improve the sexual health of the population, particularly those most at risk of adverse outcomes, and to prevent transmission of STIs. They aim to reduce late diagnosis of HIV and reduce unplanned pregnancies. They aim to promote access to effective contraception, increase self-management, and improve quality of care and the client experience. They provide these services free of charge, open access (without the need for referral and without restriction on age or place of residence), and confidentially. Open access can enable anonymity whilst also ensuring rapid access to treatment, preventing complications, onward transmission of disease or unplanned pregnancy. Some people may choose to travel to services away from their area of residence, perhaps for convenience or for anonymity. Standards of confidentiality over and above other health services are important in addressing stigma associated with poor sexual health and to encourage people to come forward for testing and treatment. Individuals do not need to give their personal details in order to access services.

Brent, Ealing and Harrow collaborated as the Outer North West London (ONWL) Sub Regional group of the London Sexual Health Transformation Programme. Over the last few years, ONWL set out to coordinate services across these three boroughs and to link with pan London services. One aim has been to reduce in-clinic capacity and to divert service users to the Pan London e-Service or primary care.

### The organisation of STI services in Brent

In 2022, London Northwest Healthcare Trust (LNWHT) contract was originally for 5 years and then extended by 4 years as part of the tri borough Outer North West London arrangement to deliver sexual health services in Brent. This contract covers two sexual health clinics.

1. Patrick Clements Clinic at Central Middlesex Hospital. This clinic is for all and is separated into the following main streams: a) Sexual Health (testing, treatment and information on STDs), b) contraception and c) HIV. Walk-in services are available daily at PCC for those aged 25 years and under.<sup>71</sup>
2. The Community HUB Clinic. The clinic offers community support for people affected by HIV in Brent, testing and treatment, and free condoms among others.<sup>72</sup>

### Outreach services are also provided for Brent residents.

1. Terrance Higgins Trust and Spectra. These are community venues-based services providing HIV testing service, sexual health advice, free condoms, referrals to GUM clinics and Sexual Health London services and also sexual health training.
2. Brooks Young people's service. LNWT subcontracts this charity provider to help provide education for young people. They provide support and training in relationship and sexual education for schools. Schools can access resources, training, advice or bespoke support to audit, plan, implement and evaluate relationship and sexual education.

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<sup>71</sup> Contact details: tel: 020 8453 2221, email: [lnwh-tr.PCCGENERAL@nhs.net](mailto:lnwh-tr.PCCGENERAL@nhs.net) . Lines open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday: 8.45am to 5pm, Wednesday: 10.30am to 5pm and Friday: 8.45am to 4.45pm.

<sup>72</sup> Contact details: tel: 07900 134 941, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm; appointment only.



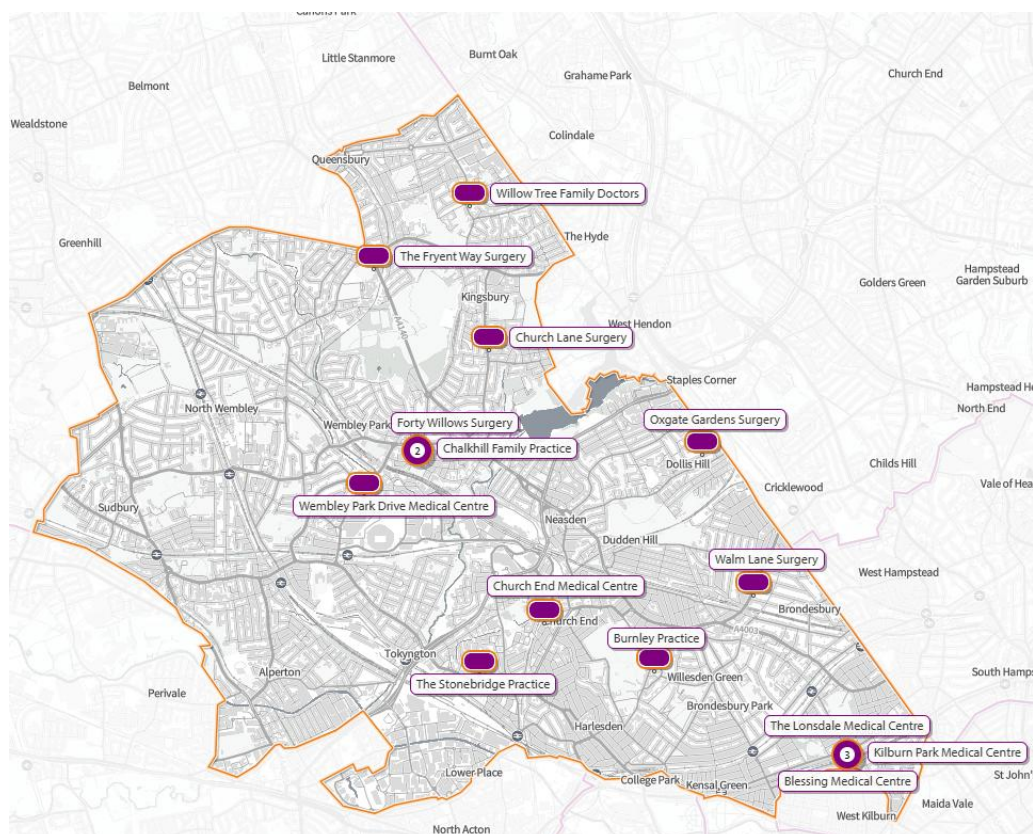
3. The C Card Scheme<sup>73</sup> is an online service that offers free condoms for young people aged 13 to 24.
4. The Sexual Health London<sup>74</sup> (SHL) is an online STI testing service for Londoners who have mild or no STI symptoms but would like a check. Contraception can also be requested.

### General Practice

General Practices (GPs) are the main service providers for cervical screening. They are also subcontracted by London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) to deliver provision of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARC). Furthermore, they are contracted to provide sexual health advice and provide other contraceptive services, including the emergency hormonal contraceptive pill.

At the time of publication, there were 14 GP practices within Brent that had contracts to deliver LARC provision<sup>75</sup>, namely, Willow Tree Family Doctors, Burnley Practice, Church End Medical Centre, The Fryent Way Surgery, The Lonsdale Medical Centre, Oxgate Gardens Surgery, Wembley Park Medical Centre, Church Lane Surgery, Blessing Medical Centre, Walm Lane Surgery, The Stonebridge Practice, Kilburn Park Medical Centre, Forty Willows Surgery and Chalkhill Family Practice. The practices are depicted on the map below (Figure 54).

Figure 54: Brent GP practices commissioned to deliver LARC



<sup>73</sup> [www.comecorrect.org.uk](http://www.comecorrect.org.uk)

<sup>74</sup> [www.shl.co.uk](http://www.shl.co.uk)

<sup>75</sup> The website Strategic Health Asset Planning and Evaluation (SHAPE) has been used to produce the map below that shows the location of these practices in Brent. SHAPE is managed by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) within the Department of Health and Social Care.

Outcomes indicators show low uptake on LARC provision through Primary Care. Possible reasons for low uptake of this service provided by GP practices include:

- A number of GPs that are trained and experienced in delivering LARCs are retiring/have retired or left the profession.
- GP practices have a high demand and are short staffed so may not have the ability to take time out of clinical work for training in LARC fitting and provision

## Pharmacy

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) sub-contracts community pharmacies to provide Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC), and condom cards.

At the time of publication, there were seven (7) pharmacies within Brent providing emergency hormonal contraception free at the point of use, namely Greenfield Pharmacy, Hyperchem Pharmacy, Peace Pharmacy, Queens Park Pharmacy, and 3 WellCare Pharmacies (Figure 55). Currently these pharmacies are clustered, leaving some parts of the borough with no pharmacy in close proximity providing free EHC. Although the number of pharmacies providing free NHS EHC is not big, one is open 24/7 and overall, the number of doses of EHC issued is increasing significantly year on year (Figure 56).

Figure 55: Brent community pharmacies commissioned to deliver Free NHS EHC

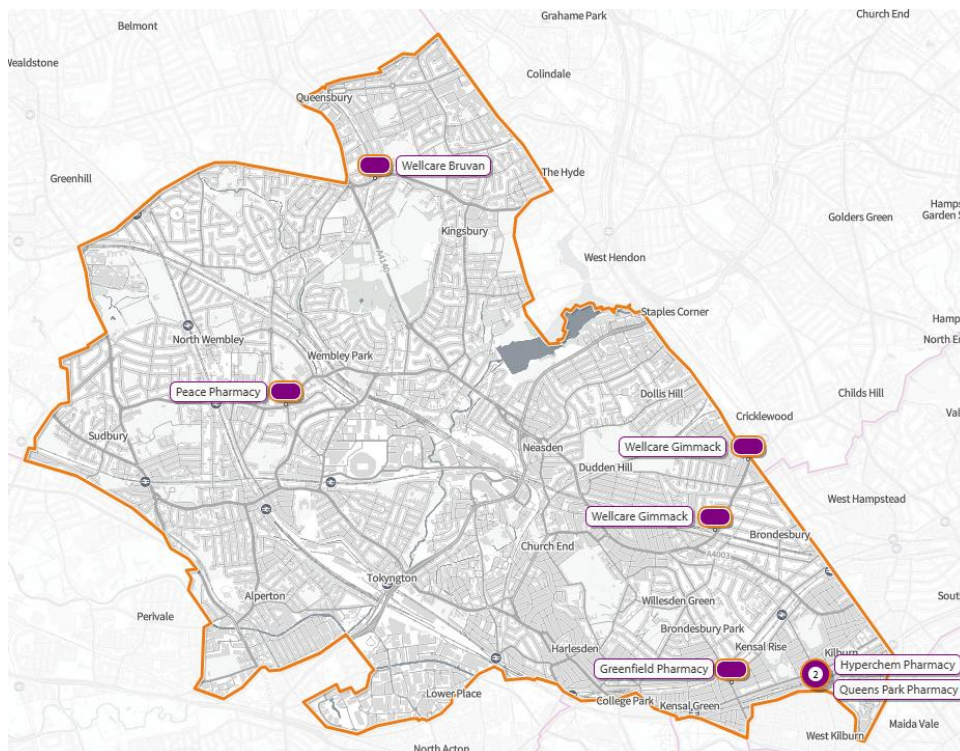
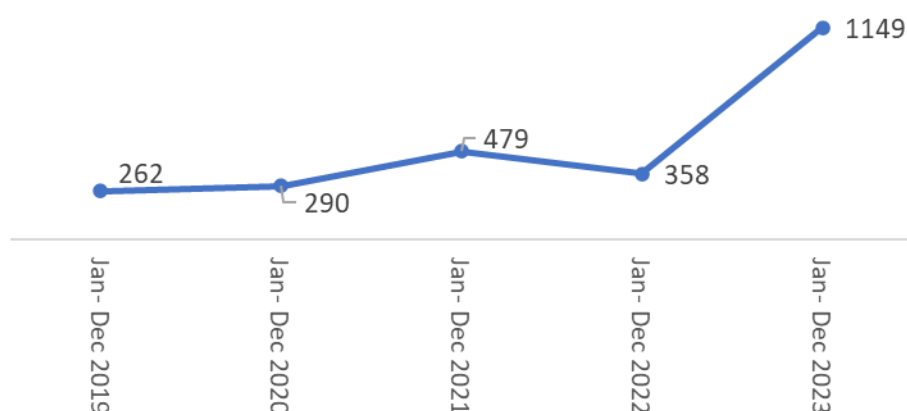




Figure 56: Doses of EHC since inception of LNWH Pharmacy Scheme for Brent



In England, as of April 2025, the government announced plans to make the emergency contraceptive pill free at pharmacies, aiming to narrow the inequality gap where access varies widely<sup>76</sup>. It is scheduled to come into effect in October 2025 and it will enable women across England to get the pill for free at pharmacies, along with current free access at GPs and sexual health clinics. Along with improving access by providing free emergency contraceptive pill, the pharmacist can check for potential contraindications or discuss options with the patient. Lastly, London is one area that is piloting online consultations for emergency contraception<sup>77</sup>.

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) will continue to deliver the Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) and condom cards described above, for as long as required, to ensure the transition to the national scheme does not adversely affect the offer in Brent.

### Brent Services activity

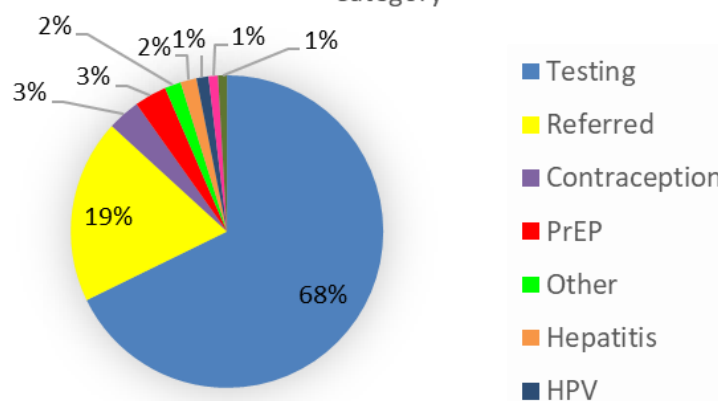
Testing activity accounted for 68% of all activity or 106,300 service activities in 2023 and referrals accounted for 19%. This mostly relates to referrals from the home testing and sampling service, which has increased from 0% in 2017 to 19% in 2023.

Contraception services exclude condom provision. PrEP relates to the uptake and prescription of PrEP, whilst HPV and hepatitis are vaccine services. Patient group refers to particular segments, the main one being sexual and reproductive health patients not accessing STI care. Finally, partner relates to partner notification in the event of an STI diagnosis (Figure 57, 58 and appendices service delivery 1 and 2 for the historical numbers of activities and percentages from 2017 to 2023). These show the continued prevalence of testing activity and the growth in referrals due to the emergence of online testing. Both testing activity and referrals have increased progressively over time.

<sup>76</sup> [Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework: 2024 to 2025 and 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

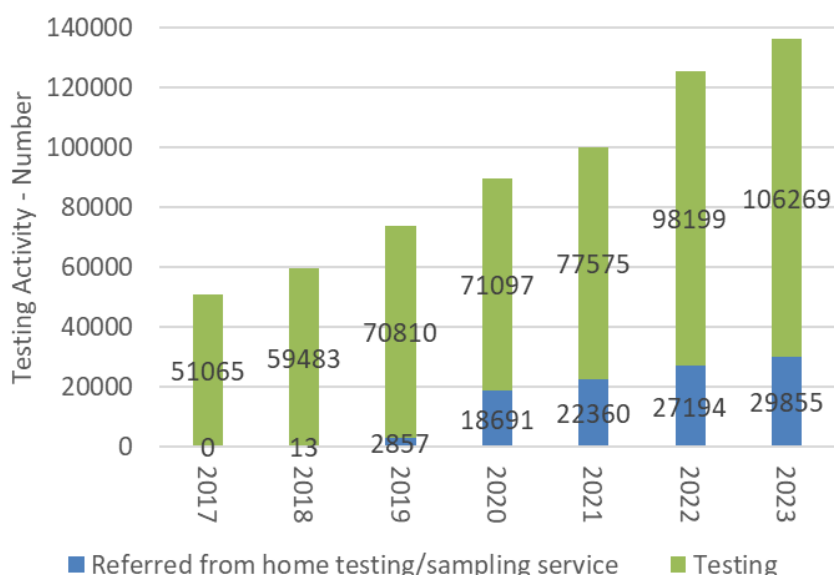
<sup>77</sup> [Emergency contraceptive pill • SHL.UK](#)

Figure 57: Brent Services 2023, Broad Service Category



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Numbers of all diagnoses and services, Brent

Figure 58 - Brent Testing Activity – 2017 to 2023

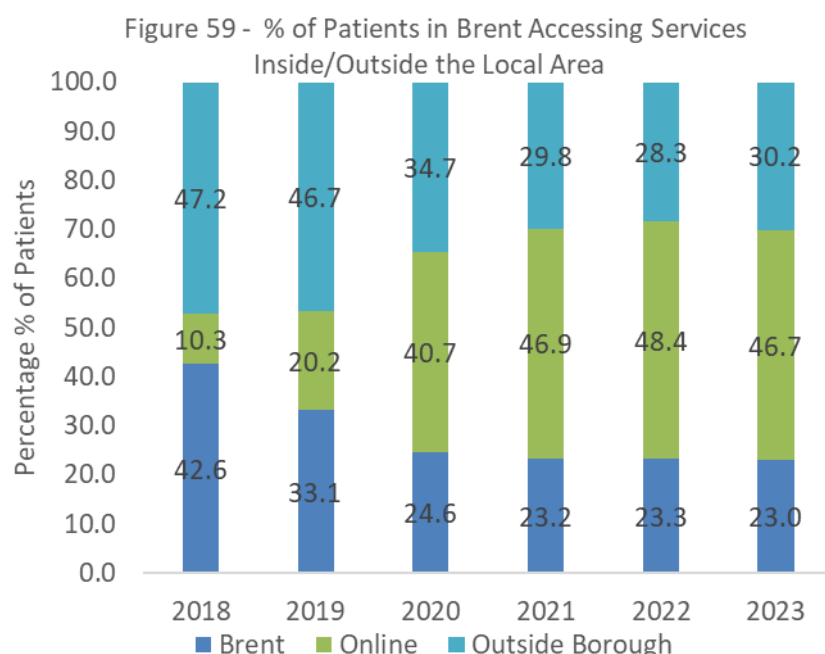


Source: UK Health Security Agency, Numbers of all diagnoses and services, Brent

Brent has been promoting local options to inform residents of the offer. Despite this, some Brent residents use sexual health services in other locations and similarly other Londoners use Brent services. In 2023, 23% of patients visited services inside the borough (this includes both GUM and non-GUM services), 46.7% use online access services and the remaining 30.2% of patients chose services outside. In 2018 the splits were 42.6% inside the local area, 10.3% online and 47.2% outside (Figure 59).

The increase in STI online testing is an achievement to celebrate. The significant uptake of online testing has both encouraged more asymptomatic testing as well as allowed for those with symptoms but less complex needs to test more efficiently. This has allowed face to face services to respond to rising levels of need and has delivered significant cost avoidance for commissioners. User satisfaction with the online offer is very high.

Although the online offer has reduced the proportion of local residents accessing services outside the borough, the location of services and transport links where South East Brent is geographically closer to and has easier transport links to clinics in Paddington and North Brent is geographically closer to with easier transport links to Harrow as well as residents accessing services closer to their place of work has meant that a significant number of residents access services out of borough.



Source: UK Health Security Agency, Patient Consultations, Brent

Despite the success of online testing discussions with healthcare professionals reveal concerns about reduced access to services by teenagers. This is a complex issue to be resolved within limited resources. Professionals recognise the need to permit more flexible access for the under 20s with further promotion of online testing as this can provide an entry to services and allow access to services which would not be otherwise possible. However online services are limited in their contraceptive offer and may not be suitable for those with non-clinical complexity. There is an ongoing need to balance an online and face to face offer for teenagers.

Understanding testing location is important both for commissioning but also to highlight testing behaviour and how this can be improved. Overall, chlamydia and gonorrhoea are mostly tested online and at Central Middlesex Hospital. For syphilis, herpes and genital warts though, testing is mostly done face to face. Although again, Central Middlesex Hospital is the main testing location, a higher proportion also tests out of the tri borough Outer North West London service provision.

In detail, 42% of Chlamydia services were online in 2023; this is a significant growth prompted by the pandemic (Appendix Service Delivery- 3 and 4). The Central Middlesex hospital which is on the border between Brent and Ealing was the second largest service provider at 22% and the Jefferiss Wing and the GUM clinic in Dean Street were the next largest providers at 9% each. The top 4 service providers accounted for over 80% of the new chlamydia diagnoses in 2023.

Gonorrhoea testing is now also frequently done online (27% in 2023 for Brent). The Central Middlesex Hospital and the GUM clinic in Dean Street were the second and third largest service providers both at 19%. The Jefferiss Wing Centre for sexual health was the fourth largest at 14% and

the top 4 service providers accounted for 78% of the new gonorrhoea diagnoses in 2023 (Appendix Service Delivery- 5).

For syphilis, after Central Middlesex Hospital (42%), the GUM clinic in Dean Street was the second largest service provider at 18% and the Jefferiss Wing Centre for sexual health was third with 11% (located in St Mary's hospital near Paddington). The top 4 service providers accounted for 79% of all syphilis service providers in 2023. There is no online provision for syphilis (Appendix Service Delivery- 6).

For herpes, after Central Middlesex Hospital (47%) the Jefferiss Wing Centre for sexual health was second largest provider with 15%. The top 4 service providers accounted for 81% of all herpes service providers in 2023 (Appendix Service Delivery- 7).

For genital warts, following Central Middlesex Hospital (42%), the Jefferiss Wing Centre for sexual health was second largest provider with 24%. The third was 10 Hammersmith Boardway with 6% of service provision and the fourth was the Caryl Thomas Clinic, again at 6%. The top 4 service providers accounted for 78% of all genital warts services in 2023 (Appendix Service Delivery- 8).

## Service Users Perceptions of Brent Services

*"Patrick Clements is a saving grace."  
- Peer support group member to drug and alcohol service users in Brent*

Brent Council Public Health conducted in-depth interviews with Patrick Clements professionals to understand service provision and perceptions. The clinic receives positive feedback from patients. The staff are reported to be extremely dedicated and place great importance in putting patients at ease, building relationships, and sharing their specialist knowledge. The team see a vast mix of people – many who have been coming for a long time and with whom they have maintained long-standing and trusted relationships. As a service, it is generally agreed that Patrick Clements is welcoming and well set-up to receive patients. However, the clinic struggles with raising its own profile and raising awareness of the services they provide. Though they are set up at Central Middlesex Hospital, staff raised concerns that even colleagues in other hospital departments did not know that there was a sexual health service based there, let alone Brent residents.

*"When I go to university in Wembley, I do not know where the clinic is. There is nothing advertised on campus or anything. I've never heard it spoken about on campus."  
- Student*

*"We've been open for decades! But nobody knows about us. Even staff don't know what we are here."  
- Patrick Clements Staff Member*

*"People tend to find out through their GP that we're here, but people in the hospital might not know. We have people coming here through urgent care for emergency contraception, because they don't know we're here!"  
- Patrick Clements Staff Member*

*"You've got more reassurance if someone else is doing it, but you might feel embarrassed and want to just do it yourself. I'd probably prefer to do it myself."  
- Student*

Qualitative interviews and focus groups on home-testing and Sexual Health London (SHL.uk) revealed there is value in home-testing options, but concerns remain in how instructions and results are being communicated, and whether we are communicating the full range of options available to people who may not want to test at home. Both users and health professionals had concerns that tests could be done incorrectly without professional help and that much more could be done to make instructions clearer. Some also raised concern that at-home testing often means finding out the results on your own and without professional support, which can be daunting.

*“We don’t know if people are doing it properly or if they understand what they are doing. Many people don’t know there is a window period and that that affects test results. At least, if they can include the information in a leaflet or something...I’ve tried ordering a SHL kit myself, and it doesn’t say anything.”*

**- Patrick Clements staff member**

*“How are we managing the most anxious? Do we tell them that they can go to a clinic if they don’t want to test at home? What are we doing to answer the questions people might have?”*

**- Patrick Clements staff member**

*“I think it’s more dangerous to do it at home. That’s how I found out about my HIV. It was scary because I was just on my own, with no one to talk to. My head went a bit crazy. If I had done it at the hospital, then I would have had the support that I need.”*

**- Peer support group member to drug and alcohol service users in Brent**

*“At-home testing is good in some respects, but if you do not speak the language, it becomes easier to make a mistake. And playing around with blood is not ok...”*

**- Brent Council’s Public Health Community Support Officer**

*“One of the biggest challenges is getting people to complete the pathway of testing. And the bloods, from a user experience, are the worst thing. This is what we have to do about communication – it’s all to do with the blood flow in your body at that moment. If you know how it works and when best to do it, it’s not hard.”*

**- SHL.uk Commissioner**

A Sexual Health survey was conducted with Londoners in 2024 by City of London Sexual Health Service (SHS) to understand perceptions of clinical and online sexual health services ([www.shl.uk](http://www.shl.uk))<sup>78</sup>.

Respondents were asked to state their level of satisfaction on four aspects of sexual health services. Brent scored higher than London on ease of access, with 88% and 83% respectively either agreeing or strongly agreeing that access was easy. A higher proportion of users across London agreed or strongly agreed that they felt respected compared with Brent (92% and 88% respectively) (Figure 60).

An open-ended question on suggestions to improve SH services was also included in this survey. Together with the above, this highlights areas of focus for Brent including access, staff people skills,

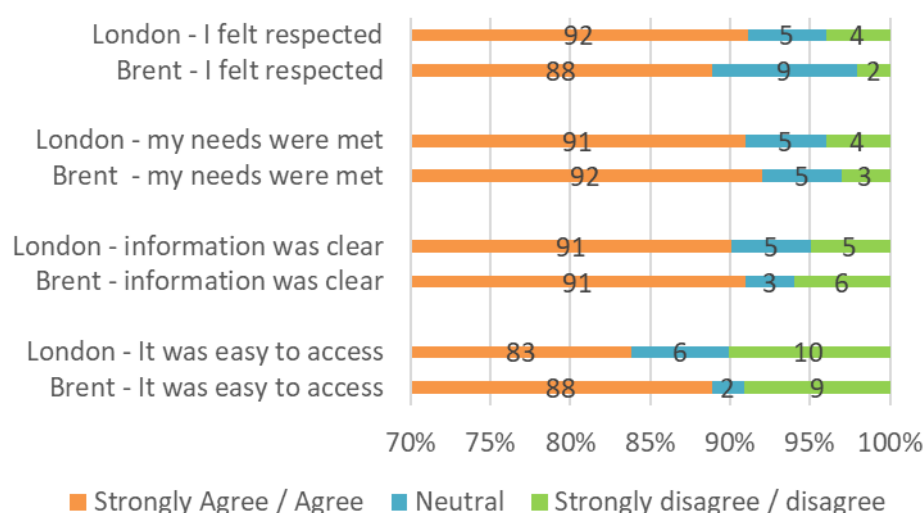
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<sup>78</sup> There were more responses for the in clinic offer (in clinic, 65% used in the past 12 months and a further 18% used more than 12 months ago; this is against 36% in the last 12 months for online and 9.9% using more than 12 months ago). Brent Council numbers for online usage from Brent residents were too small and have not been included. The overall London online results however provide interesting insight, especially in terms of 94% using the service for SH testing in the main (testing no symptoms 69%, SH testing symptoms 19% or chlamydia testing 6%). When we refer to Brent data, this is based on respondents selecting Brent as their local authority as part of the survey, NOT based on sexual health services usage locally, in the borough. Respondents could have accessed any clinic in London.

facilities, and other issues (Appendix Service Delivery- 10). On access, comments related to overall service accessibility, appointments, more clinics and extension of opening times to include evening and weekend options, and re-introduction of walk-in options that hasn't returned since the COVID-19 pandemic. On people-centred skills, comments related to improvements on phone service, like not having to wait a long time before you can speak to someone, a more personable approach and cultural aspects.

Responses to the open-ended question from people across London (Appendix Service Delivery- 11) also focussed on access and appointment issues and people-skills related and process related improvements (long waiting times, more appointments and more clinics, longer opening hours, walk-ins and weekend opening, wanting it to be easier to book). Other improvements suggested were mainly around information, education, communication, issues of confidentiality, stigma, and facilities.

Figure 60: Brent & London Perceptions of SH Services



## Service Inequalities, Gaps and Barriers

To further our understanding on service inequalities, gaps and barriers, public health conducted interviews and focus groups with healthcare and public health staff as well as representatives of some of the high-risk groups. The findings echo some of the service outcomes and user perception findings. It has to be noted that although those findings represent the user views, the wider NWL sexual and reproductive health services are not unaware of the barriers and challenges outlined below. The wider NWL sexual and reproductive health services need to be acknowledged for their dedicated and continuous work towards bridging those gaps, despite sometimes the conflicting objectives.

## Staffing and recruitment issues

*“Our teams are under-resourced, very small and under pressure. We have big remits and the days are long.”*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

One of the biggest issues flagged by the team at Patrick Clements was the need for more clinical staff. Though no staff member believed services at Patrick Clements were oversubscribed, they recognised that without greater clinical capacity, they would be unable to offer services to some of the community's most vulnerable. Despite all residents interviewed agreeing on the importance of walk-in availability for sexual health, Patrick Clements are unable to officially offer this due to staff constraints.

*“We need more cash as we can't serve the communities without more staff, even as we are trying to do better outreach...We close at 5pm, and we haven't fully re-opened walk-in...we don't have staff working at the times people most need. And it's hard for recruitment too as we can't offer overtime.”*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

*“There is a standard of how many patients should be seen, but patients are becoming far more complex and need a lot more time – and we can't be prescriptive and say 'patients should be seen in 20/30 minutes', because sometimes, they will need longer...but we are not reimbursed for the time we might have to spend with complicated patients.”*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

The challenge for recruiting more members of staff also extends beyond budgeting constraints and reflects two wider problems: the lack of nurses who specialise in sexual health, and the cost of living in London.

*“We are a specialist service so you can't just go and get a band 5 nurse and train them up just because we are short of nurses. Here, we are so specialist that it will take a year or two to get the nurse to a level when they can see independently. And what we found is that we've invested lots of time in training nurses, and then they can't afford to live in London, and they move out.”*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

## Location and Infrastructure

*“It's probably not so easy for a woman or a young person to pop by here”*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

In general, the location of Patrick Clements as the main provider for sexual health services may not be the most suitable or the easiest to get to for most Brent residents. Across interviews, it was repeatedly recognised that many people did not know the service existed, and that the clinic even lacked clear signage within the hospital itself.

Many also raised concern that the service may not be as accessible as it could be – particularly to single mothers who may not be able to travel that far to get tested or leave their children for long enough to undergo procedures for contraception. A suggestion was made to open a creche within the hospital to allow more flexibility for mothers.

*"We have lots of single parents coming in with young children who can't get the procedures they need. They can't come to get the coil put in, because they can't get childcare...so they end up having to take emergency contraception again and again."*

**- Patrick Clements Staff Member**

*"Some mums cannot travel that far for an appointment at Patrick Clements when they have young children they need to pick up from school"*

**- Brent Council's Public Health Community Support Officer**

Furthermore, the lack of suitable technical infrastructure frustrated both patients and staff members. While service users were generally frustrated with the difficulty of booking appointments and getting through to speak to staff, staff members simultaneously found that long waiting times led to patients taking their frustration on them, driven by an unfair perception that long waiting times meant the team were not working as hard as they should be.

## Stigma

*"Don't underestimate the amount of stigma that exists in society"*

**- Patrick Clements Staff Member**

Indicative of the stigma that many feel exists around sexual health, all interviewees agreed that it was rarely an easy conversation to have with anyone, and most felt some level of discomfort when the topic came up. Many relate this difficulty in being able to talk about sexual health to the fact that they were never really taught about it and so it has remained 'taboo' to talk about it. There was little disagreement that formal sex education tends to be poor, with many noting that teaching about sex itself is often skipped over. Interviews with residents and health professionals alike show that the gap in basic information sharing on sex and sexual health often leaves people learning by themselves and susceptible to misconceptions and pressure.

*"I don't think my school taught me anything about, like, the proper act of sex"*

**- Peer support group member to drug and alcohol service users in Brent**

*"You hear people talk about sexual acts, but you don't hear them talk about sexual health..."*

**- Student**

*"I mean, I remember in like high school or something, I think we had like one lesson on it"*

**- Student**

*"Everyone is taught about the physiology and anatomy. But they are not actually told about sex and consent, contraception, and all that."*

**- Patrick Clements Staff Member**

*"For me, I knew about STDs, but you never really think that it will happen to you. I just didn't really take any steps to protect myself until I actually got an STD. I didn't expect that to happen, and then it did – and it was like a big warning."*

**- Student**

Stigma also results in an environment where people feel scared asking for help. Issues arising from sex tend to feel more embarrassing than other health issues. Associations with any issues arising from sex can feel negative, and can deter patients from even acknowledging a problem or dealing with it – possibly putting themselves and others at greater risk.



*"I was in the waiting room and I recognised this girl from school and we kind of looked at each other and we're like 'that's a bit awkward, isn't it.'"*

- **Student**

*"I'll go alone, for sure. I think it's that element of embarrassment. I don't want anyone to say oh you know 'he's got this' or 'he's got that.'"*

- **Student**

*"It's just scary to talk about. I've had signs of a few sexual health issues, but I didn't think that it would be a big issue. I mean, it cleared up anyways. But yeah, I didn't reach out to the doctor because I was embarrassed. I didn't want to speak about it because of how my friends would have viewed it at the time as well. The second time the pain got so serious I had to go. I didn't know what was going to happen to me."*

- **Student**

*"I think people have a perception on it – like you're dirty, or, you know, you must be sleeping around or whatever for that to happen to you. I feel it's just like a negative perception of it which would probably stop people from feeling comfortable to go to these places and get checked out."*

- **Peer support group member to drug and alcohol service users in Brent**

Stigma is also a key reason why some people prefer to travel to clinics further away from home, including out of the borough, and why people would prefer to deal with any issues as privately as they can.

*"Too many people know me around here."*

- **Peer support group member to drug and alcohol service users in Brent**

*"The general 'fudgery' around people not knowing we are an STI service dissipates stigma, because anyone can be in the hospital for any reason."*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

For some communities, anonymity and discretion are essential elements of sexual health services. This is especially the case among communities whose cultural beliefs do not condone same-sex relationships. The online service, Sexual Health London, were only able to capture an emerging high risk group of South Asian men sleeping with men through their partnership with Grindr, the world's largest social network app for LGBTQ+ communities. They noticed that men ordering kits through the social media app were largely from South Asian communities, differing from the usual profile of gay men ordering through SHL.uk, who tended to be from White British backgrounds. They also found that when the South Asian men were then registering through SHL.uk for the kit, they would register their sexual orientation as 'heterosexual.'

Some gay and bisexual men experience homophobia within their ethnic communities and may also experience racism within gay spaces, which potentially reduces the effectiveness of health promotion within these spaces. Trusted, confidential and discreet services allows for individuals from these communities to access much-needed support, while offering health providers unique insight into trends that are more difficult to follow – and the chance to better prevent and tackle sexually-transmitted diseases.

*"HIV is still heavily stigmatised. Many of the people we see don't want to give their names, they don't want anyone to know they are here. If we put up a sign up saying that*

*this is the 'HIV' service, they would rather not take any treatment than be seen anywhere within the vicinity of the place."*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

*"They will travel here because nobody knows them. This is a place they can blend in - where they can be on the 'down-low'. As a consequence, we have an insight into what minority communities think of sexual health. This is a daily convo we are having with people."*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

For some interviewees, another barrier was the clinic space itself. Many agreed that the location and design of these places were often off-putting, reflecting the negative connotations associated with the need to visit a sexual health clinic. Please note that the comments below do not necessarily reflect current experiences or experiences of sexual health clinics in Brent.

*"It looked like an old building with overgrown plants, and you had to go through the iron gates and it was like eurgh. It didn't look welcoming. God forbid that anything untoward happens because you would feel as if you were dirty you know?"*

- **Peer support group member to drug and alcohol service users in Brent**

*"It's a bit depressing when you go in, the environment is not very nice"*

- **Student**

Challenging stigma is not only relevant at a societal level, but also at the professional level. Some of the most common complaints revolve around a bad experience with a health professional - leaving patients feeling judged and unsupported in some of their lowest moments.

*"They could improve by better feedback, especially when someone has life changing results, you're meant to be supportive and give all the knowledge and support and comfort".*

- **Sexual Health London Online Survey**

*"I needed a coil removed for cancer diagnosis and I was met with a rude individual at the end of the phone"*

- **Sexual Health London Online Survey**

On the other hand, positive individual reactions which build the foundations for trust are often the primary reason people will listen to the advice of professionals and feel comfortable sharing sensitive information that can be life-saving.

*"Overall they have sessions there where you can actually speak to somebody if you have any worries or queries with regards to something that may have happened to you sexually. They will take the time out to sit with you and go through that information with you and advise you"*

- **Peer support group member to drug and alcohol service users in Brent**

*"I think here, it's quite a warm and friendly environment, so we do get patients who are quite open. And those who don't want to talk on the first occasion, they tend to make reappearances in attendance. Some may have had a bad experience at another service so it takes more time to build a rapport with the patient."*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

## Language and culture

Another big challenge for sexual health services, particularly in Brent, is the range of languages and cultures they come across among the patients they see. This has an impact on staff's ability to see patients efficiently and effectively, as appointments will take longer for those who cannot speak English, and interpreters may struggle to deliver sensitive news in the appropriate way. Many misconceptions around sexual issues also tend to be closely tied to cultural beliefs, which can slow down treatment processes.

*"Some people don't believe that STIs are real or that HIV is real. We have lots of patients who don't believe that they have it, and taking the treatment becomes an issue. But they are being sent here because they are going to their GPs feeling unwell and testing positive."*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

*"There is a lot of influence from men in some of these cultures and we do have women who say they don't want their partners to know [they are going on contraception], but they actually tend to be more empowered women..."*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

## Lack of appropriate outreach

Beyond a desire to raise awareness that a sexual health service exists for Brent residents at Patrick Clements, it was also acknowledged that not enough was being done in the communities to reach the people who would benefit most from information on sexual health - and in a way that best resonated with them. In large part, people find it more difficult to ask open questions on sex and sexual health. This often means they try to look online for answers, in the hope of privately finding the right information. It is worth noting that this can include looking for practical information like the closest sexual health clinic - which may not always be the one the council would prefer residents to go to. High quality online resources that provide information and tackle misinformation are needed for certain groups of people.

*"I feel like with students, there should be a lot more awareness and stuff because it's kind of a prime place where it can happen. I know a few times people have come into our university accommodation and they've just been in a room and then if you pass, they try to get you to come in and have a little talk and they do on-site testing stuff. But I think they came in once, and they're in the psych backroom and no one really knows. Like that's not enough – not proactive enough."*

- **Student**

*"You don't want to make it really cringe where people think it's childish. I've seen those cartoons – they're just like childish"*

- **Student**

*"The only way to break the stigma is to get young people talking about it and keeping it real. Because I think when they get confident in talking about it then they're just able to relate more and able to express how they feel towards it. But when you just put an advertisement campaign or you just put a little poster, it's not effective because you're not actually getting people to actually share their views about it."*

- **Student**

*"If we could invest more staff to do the outreach in schools, universities etcetera, it would make the patient experience better – because they'd know our faces, they'd know who*

*they're coming to see, they'd know these are the nurses that work at the clinic. There's more trust there.*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

## Knowledge and awareness

*"It doesn't help that sex education is not fantastic in this country"*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

All staff raised some concern about the level of public knowledge around 'sexual health' topics and how a lack of common education can lead people susceptible to misinformation. The most common topics that the team at Patrick Clements find themselves having to demystify and clarify include:

- **Severity of sexually transmitted diseases**
  - o *"We need to do better about herpes. It is the one thing that people come in and they have such shame.... But people are blasé about chlamydia. With that, they don't care enough."*
- **How sexually transmitted diseases are cured or passed on**
  - o *"People come here thinking they're going to have HIV from kissing, people coming here thinking they have all sorts of stuff even though they haven't had sex. I had a patient thinking they could cure their BV by pouring on baking soda."*
  - o *"Some people believe they can be healed of HIV through spirituality or by praying or fasting..."*
  - o *"We get a lot of people coming to us saying 'if he pulls out, or if it's oral, I won't get an STI'"*
- **Impact of contraceptive methods**
  - o *"There is a general hormone aversion across the board."*
  - o *"The biggest misconception is fertility. There isn't a day that goes by that I'm not asked 'will my fertility return?'"*
  - o *"People think 'if I have a termination, I'm never going to be able to get pregnant again'"*

## Zoom in on: Contraception

*"It's very difficult to understand the high numbers of teenage pregnancy because we have free contraception here..."*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

It was evident across all conversations that more could be done to raise awareness on contraception – both to raise awareness of different methods available and promote prevention, but also to challenge misinformation by addressing people's concerns. Attitudes towards contraception varied across different groups interviewed – older participants generally recounted not really thinking about using contraception at all while our younger female participant was more likely to consider whether the impact of using contraception on her body was worth it.

*"By the time they're here, they've had four or five babies. I often have gynae calling me saying 'please, we need to help her to stop having babies, she doesn't understand.' When they're here, it's easier, because they understand [the options]. But the journey here is very difficult because they don't know. We don't have information in their languages. We do use interpreters very competently but it's not the same."*

- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

*"I'm not saying I never [used contraception], but I was very blasé"*

- **Peer support group member to drug and alcohol service users in Brent**

*"It never really entered my mind. It was just spur of the moment"*  
- **Peer support group member to drug and alcohol service users in Brent**

*"I've been on the pill for 6-7 years, and I'm thinking what would I be like if I wasn't on it? And starting to think I want to come off it. But then I've got a partner so I'm like it's a bit risky...but to me, it's like – is it worth the change in your mood and your hormones and stuff? Or should I just use something else that doesn't?"*  
- **Student**

Health professionals were concerned about the low numbers of uptake for contraception, especially considering high numbers of abortion and teen pregnancies in Brent. However, this also appears to be linked to the role of GPs and the confusion surrounding their remit, as well as their capacity to help. It was noted across many interviews, that GPs in Brent are not currently providing enough services for Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) and that it was very difficult for Sexual Health services to pick it all up. In addition, the fragmented nature of how service delivery is funded can mean that patients (often female patients) must attend several appointments and examinations, the reasons for which may or not make sense to them.

*"If you're a woman and you come to my clinic, I can give you an IUD for contraception. But if you are bleeding heavily and you are not having sex, I can't give you an IUD. And if you want a smear, I can't do a smear for you. So you go back to your GP, who says 'ok, I will do your smear, but I can't fit an IUD.' So then, you're referred to gynaecology that has a year waiting-time. **This woman has opened her legs three times, this is not fair.** And imagine, culturally, this is difficult is for her. The language is difficult. Commissioners know about this – they might not know the practicalities of it, but they know that each of these procedures or interventions are paid differently. And that's why, we can't do all of them."*  
- **Patrick Clements Staff Member**

*"We are getting to the point of near system collapse. General practice is just withdrawing entirely from the provision of contraception in London to women. And it's going from bad to worse. The rate at which women can get the coil from their GP in Brent is four times lower than the rate at which GPs in England do it. And it's specific to the coil. That's something councils pay for, but they've never done it much – and they're doing it less and less. If you look at short-acting contraception, like the pill – it's nearly halved [number of pills GPs in Brent are giving out]"*  
- **SHL.uk Commissioner**

#### Zoom in on: Chem sex

*"When you are drinking or drugged, your sexual drive is higher"*

Our focus group with Brent's drug and alcohol peer support service also gave us a unique insight into the concept of 'chem sex.' There were comments on the link between substance use and heightened sex drive, as well as the use of substances to help with pressures to perform sexually. There was also some recognition that this was of particularly issue among men who sleep with men.

*"If you're taking drugs to heighten your sexual abilities, you're forcing something. You make yourself do it. If you just want to be continuously having sex, then you take your drugs just to maintain that high, which is when it gets dangerous, because it's too much. You feel like going all night, so you take some more and some more until you do"*

## Recommendations

Sound sexual and reproductive health is a fundamental right for all adults and an important factor for the overall wellbeing of individuals. Local authorities commission services that promote healthy sexual behaviour and reduce risky behaviour, whilst recognising the disproportionate experience and inequalities in sexual health. Services work to reduce STI rates through targeted interventions for high-risk groups, reduce unintended pregnancies and under-18 conceptions and work towards eliminating late diagnosis and onward HIV transmission.

Over the last years, Brent has celebrated the successes of:

- Recovering activity to pre-Covid levels by maintaining and increasing access to clinical services
- Improving patient pathways and efficiency for PrEP, reducing the need to attend clinics for repeat prescriptions.
- Increasing routine contraceptive activity locally via the Sexual Health London services and community clinic
- Increasing uptake of PrEP, including among black African communities, migrant communities, women and sex workers.
- Chemsex Pilots
- Increase in online contraceptive and asymptomatic screening, reduction in asymptomatic screening in clinic

And has worked towards the following challenges:

- London-wide approach to review of tariffs to ensure they reflect current costs of delivering interventions, in particular taking account of cumulative impact of recent NHS pay awards.
- Maintaining a consistent methodology across London for setting baselines, taking account of changing patterns of service use post-Covid.
- Continuing in-clinic and outreach testing and treatment for populations who either don't have access or chose not to use online tests.
- Reduced provision of contraceptive in Primary Care services

Analysis of existing data shows that new STI diagnoses rates are higher than London and well above England. The STI testing positivity rate is also higher than England, though lower than London. Chlamydia accounted for 41% of new diagnoses and gonorrhoea for 20%. From 2012 to 2023, there has been an upward trend in diagnoses for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, and syphilis. Initiatives to tackle these three STIs will contribute to lowering overall rates. For herpes and warts, the trend has been downwards, suggesting that activities over the past decade have had some success.

A higher proportion of new diagnoses of chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis and genital warts are in males. Among gay and bisexual men, numbers of chlamydia, gonorrhoea, and syphilis have increased from 2018 to 2023. Adaptations and additions to services that improve access and uptake for men should be considered.

The most deprived areas of Brent had the highest new STI diagnosis rate overall and for chlamydia, genital herpes, gonorrhoea and both HIV prevalence and new HIV diagnosis. Increased service capacity and access and greater prevention efforts in the most deprived areas is needed to tackle these inequalities. Of note, prevention through HPV vaccination is considerably below London and England rates.

Although Brent's overall HIV testing rate is improving, HIV late diagnosis in people first diagnosed with HIV in the UK is at 51%, considerably above London (41%). Late diagnosis rates are in line with London for gay men, suggesting that awareness and access is adequate for this demographic, but late diagnosis is relatively high for heterosexual men and heterosexual and bisexual women. While Brent has high levels of initiation and ongoing prescribing to treat HIV, initiation and continuation of PrEP are lower compared with London and England. Further work is needed to raise awareness and encourage uptake of PrEP.

Home testing has increased from almost zero in 2017 to almost 50% of sexual health service activity in 2023. Where people attend a clinic in person, this is more commonly outside rather than inside the borough (30% vs 23% respectively).

In terms of reproductive health, although the under 18 conceptions have been on a downward trend and total abortions have declined over the past decade for Brent, there remain concerns about high rates of under 18 conceptions leading to abortion, repeat abortions for under 25s and abortions in the over 25s. Low and declining uptake of LARC and attendance at specialist contraceptive services is likely contribute to those patterns, although GP provision is decreased for all public health enhanced services.

Engagement with key healthcare professionals and representatives from high-risk groups showed that there are quite a few challenges, sometimes conflicts, that need to be mitigated in order to improve access, support and prevention for sexual and reproductive health. Key points that were highlighted from the primary qualitative fieldwork that the Brent Public Health team undertook show that whilst overall services are well regarded among service users once in contact, challenges and access barriers revolve around staffing and recruitment, location and infrastructure of clinics, service access in terms of opening times and walk-in service, wider stigma around sexual health and treatment, language, cultural issues, overall perceptions, knowledge and understanding of sexual health and outreach.

The newly formed Sexual and Reproductive Programme Board, after having reviewed the findings of both the London-wide and the Brent needs assessment have agreed on the following priorities in order to translate the documents into a shared direction of travel:

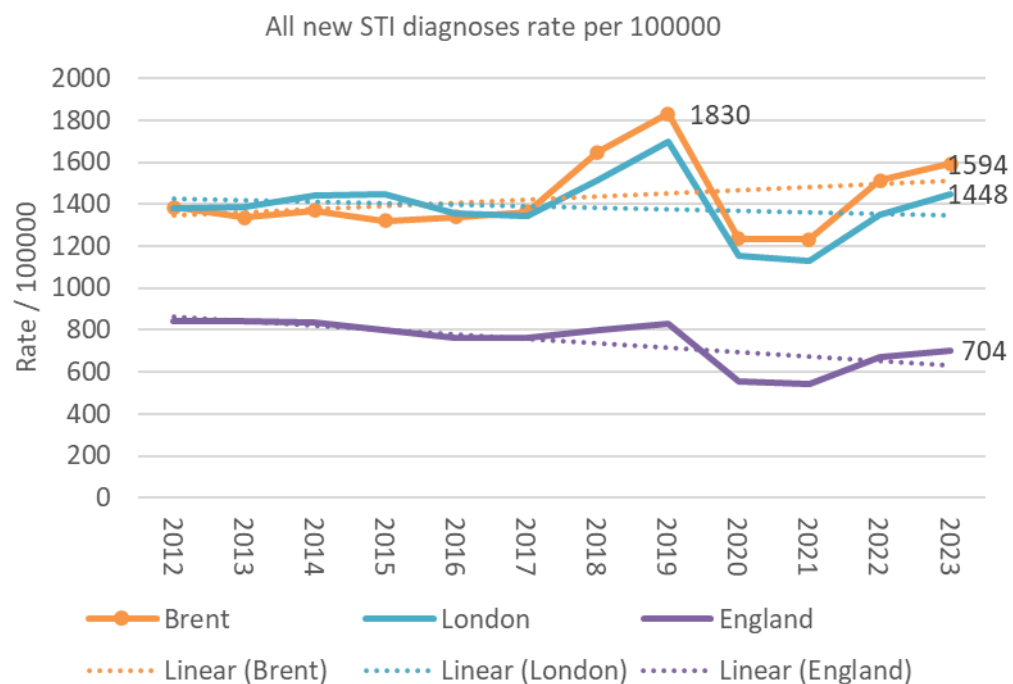
- Work across the system to ensure services are equitable, based on user's views and involve service users in design, and meet the needs of those who are more vulnerable and at risk specifically young people, gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM), people with learning and or physical disabilities, Black communities, migrants and others with varying needs.
- Evaluate service user and resident views of their SRH needs and service access and undertake more in-depth local analyses on the reasons for high abortion rates and low HPV vaccination rates.
- Build on the successful collaborative working across London Councils, through the London Sexual Health Programme, including co-commissioning of the SHL E-service expanding the online offer to include PrEP to allow local Face to Face services to focus on those with more complex needs.
- Strengthen collaborative working between local government and the NHS to ensure that primary care, SRH, abortion, urology and gynaecology services work collectively to improve access and outcomes.
- Continue to raise awareness of SRH issues with the public and amongst professionals.

- Sustain support for London's HIV Fast Track Cities Initiative by implementing the National HIV Plan, including the piloting on HIV testing in A& E and increased awareness in primary care.
- Improve access to local services so that residents are able to access care including HIV prevention and treatment within borough.
- Continue collaborative working with LNWH and partners to continue to implement the National syphilis action plan and the forthcoming National SRH action plans.
- Given the low HPV vaccination coverage for both teenage boys and girls in Brent, the Sexual Health programme board will support a system response to increase HPV vaccination.

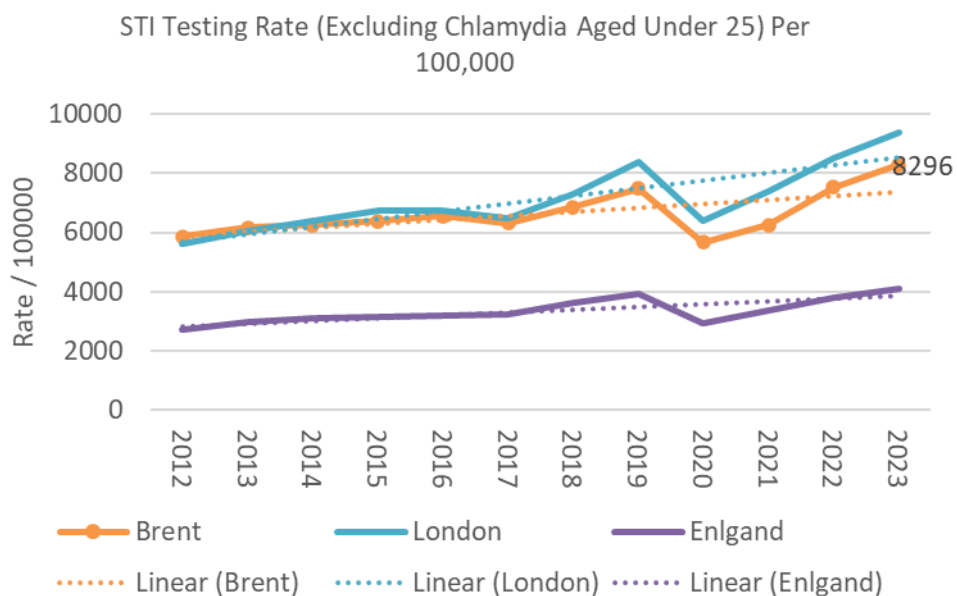


## Appendix- Sexual and Reproductive Health Outcomes

Outcomes 1- **Source:** Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles)



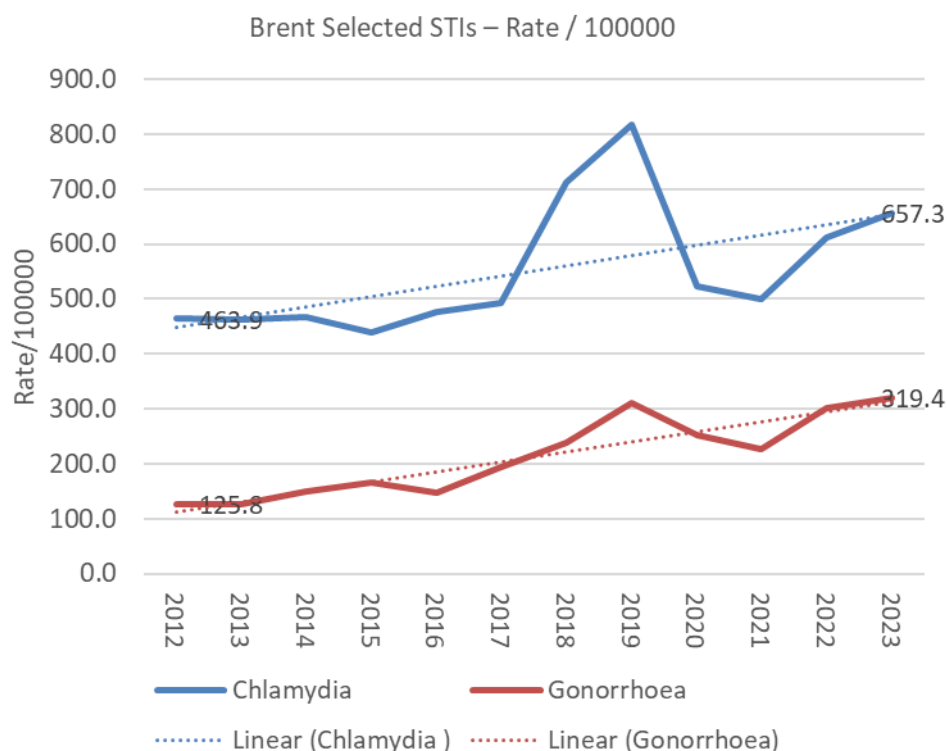
Outcomes- 2: **Source:** Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles.



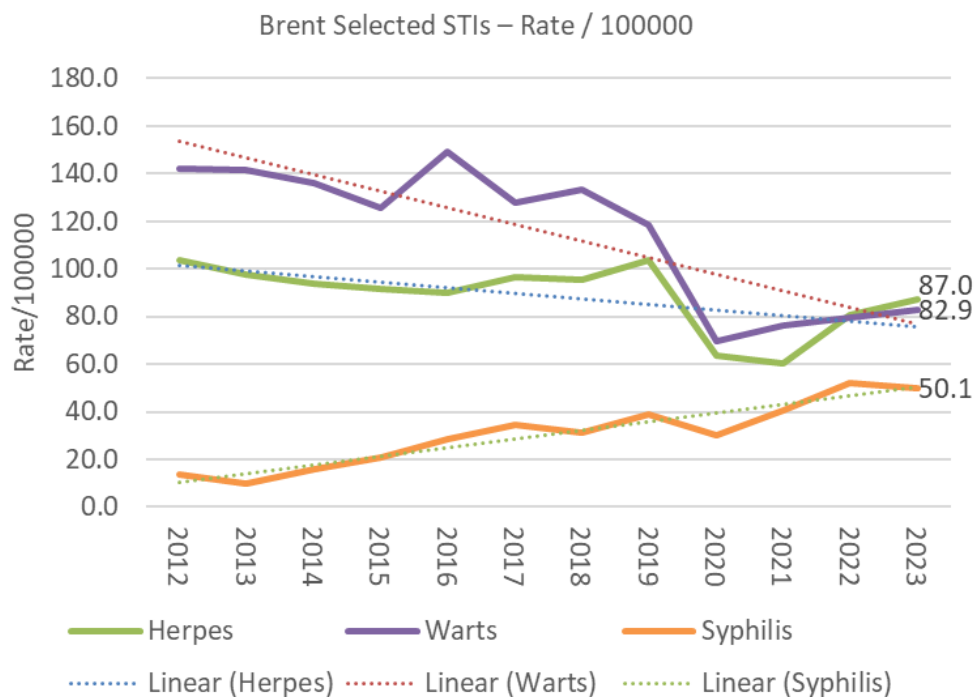
Outcomes 3- Commonly Diagnosed STIs in Brent (rate / 100,000); (source - UK Health Security Agency; fingertips published data).

| Rate / 100 k  | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Chlamydia     | 464  | 464  | 468  | 439  | 476  | 492  | 713  | 818  | 523  | 499  | 612  | 657  |
| Gonorrhoea    | 126  | 126  | 150  | 167  | 148  | 193  | 237  | 310  | 252  | 226  | 302  | 319  |
| Herpes        | 103  | 98   | 94   | 92   | 90   | 96   | 95   | 104  | 64   | 60   | 81   | 87   |
| Warts         | 142  | 142  | 136  | 126  | 149  | 128  | 133  | 118  | 70   | 76   | 80   | 83   |
| Syphilis      | 14   | 10   | 16   | 21   | 28   | 35   | 31   | 39   | 30   | 41   | 52   | 50   |
| New STI Total | 1385 | 1336 | 1370 | 1321 | 1340 | 1363 | 1648 | 1830 | 1235 | 1232 | 1513 | 1594 |

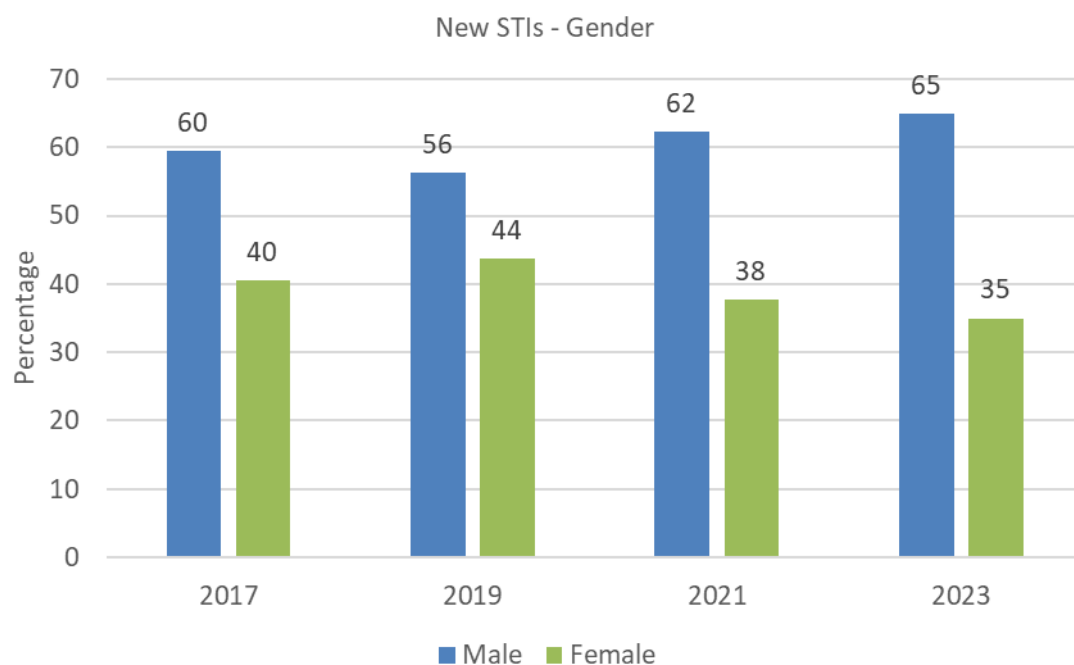
Outcomes- 4- Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea 2012 to 2022 (Rate / 100,000) Brent . (Source - UK Health Security Agency; fingertips published data – Brent)



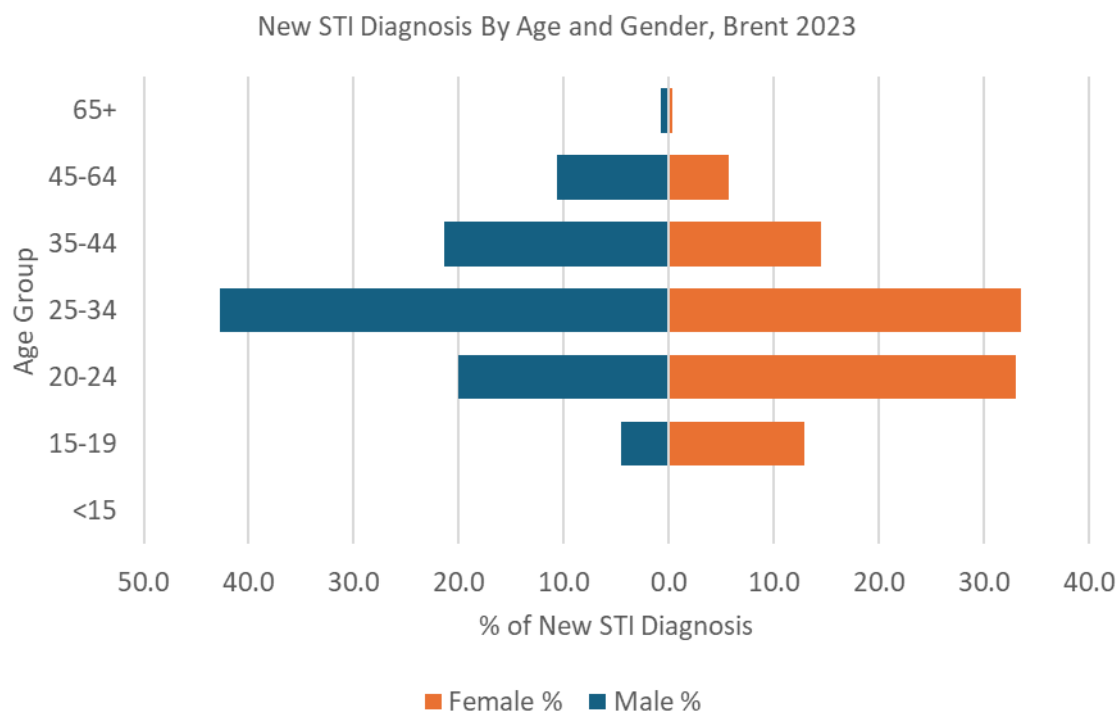
Outcomes- 5: Herpes, Syphilis, Warts 2012 to 2023 (Rate/100,000) Brent. (Source - UK Health Security Agency; fingertips published data – Brent)



Outcomes- 6- New STIs Gender Brent (Source = UK Health Security Agency, Totals Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs – Brent)



Outcomes 7- New STI Diagnosis By Age Group and Gender, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency; Numbers and Rates of STI Diagnoses – Brent).

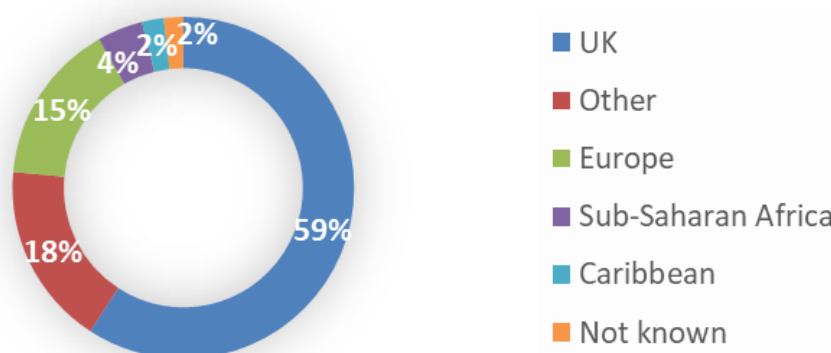


Outcomes 8- Chlamydia Diagnosis By Country Of Birth, Brent 2023. (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)

| Rank | World Region  | Country           | Chlamydia N | Chlamydia % |
|------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1    | UK            | United Kingdom    | 1001        | 59.2        |
| 2    | Other         | Brazil            | 101         | 6.0         |
| 3    | Europe        | Romania           | 38          | 2.2         |
| 4    | Europe        | Italy             | 35          | 2.1         |
| 5    | Europe        | Portugal          | 34          | 2.0         |
| 6    | Europe        | Poland            | 33          | 2.0         |
| 7    | Caribbean     | Jamaica           | 28          | 1.7         |
| 8    | Other         | Philippines (the) | 27          | 1.6         |
| 9    | Other         | India             | 23          | 1.4         |
| 10   | Europe        | Spain             | 18          | 1.1         |
|      | All Other     | All Other         | 354         | 20.9        |
|      | Overall Total | Overall Total     | 1692        | 100         |

Outcomes 9- Chlamydia Diagnosis By Area of World, Brent 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)

Chlamydia Brent Split By World Area 2023



Outcomes 10 – Gonorrhoea Diagnosis By Country Of Birth, Brent 2023. (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)

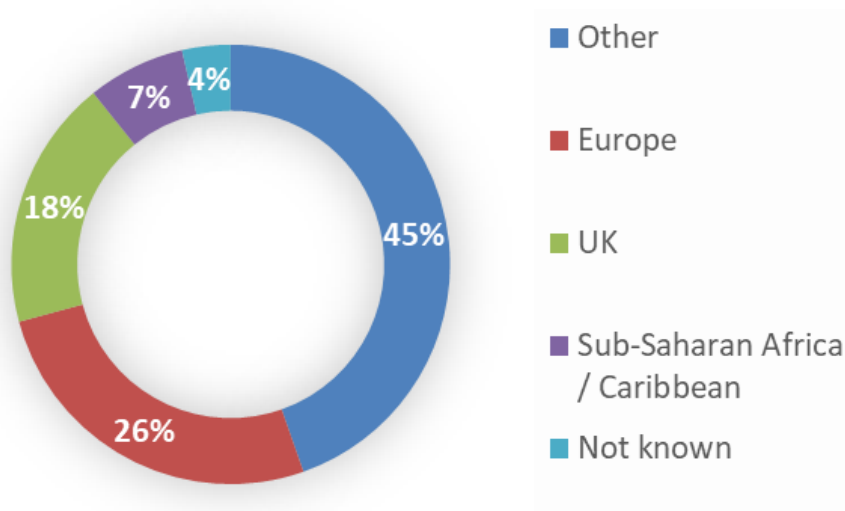
| Rank | World Region  | Country           | Gonorrhoea N | Gonorrhoea % |
|------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1    | UK            | United Kingdom    | 549          | 50.6         |
| 2    | Other         | Brazil            | 76           | 7.0          |
| 3    | Europe        | Romania           | 34           | 3.1          |
| 4    | Europe        | Italy             | 33           | 3.0          |
| 5    | Europe        | Spain             | 26           | 2.4          |
| 6    | Other         | Philippines (the) | 23           | 2.1          |
| 7    | Other         | India             | 20           | 1.8          |
| 8    | Europe        | France            | 18           | 1.7          |
| 9    | Europe        | Portugal          | 18           | 1.7          |
| 10   | Other         | China             | 17           | 1.6          |
| 11   | Europe        | Poland            | 16           | 1.5          |
| 12   | Europe        | Greece            | 11           | 1.0          |
|      | All Other     | All Other         | 243          | 22.4         |
|      | Overall Total | Overall Total     | 1084         | 100.0        |

Outcomes 11- Syphilis Diagnosis By Country Of Birth, Brent 2023. (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)

| Rank | World Region  | Country           | Syphilis N | Syphilis % |
|------|---------------|-------------------|------------|------------|
| 1    | Other         | Brazil            | 41         | 24.4       |
| 2    | UK            | United Kingdom    | 31         | 18.5       |
| 3    | Europe        | France            | 8          | 4.8        |
| 4    | Europe        | Romania           | 8          | 4.8        |
| 5    | Other         | India             | 8          | 4.8        |
| 6    | Other         | Philippines (the) | 7          | 4.2        |
| 7    | Europe        | Italy             | 6          | 3.6        |
| 8    | Europe        | Portugal          | 6          | 3.6        |
|      | All Other     | All Other         | 53         | 31.6       |
|      | Overall Total | Overall Total     | 168        | 100.0      |

Outcomes 12- Syphilis Diagnosis By Area of World, Brent 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)

Brent Split By World Area 2023



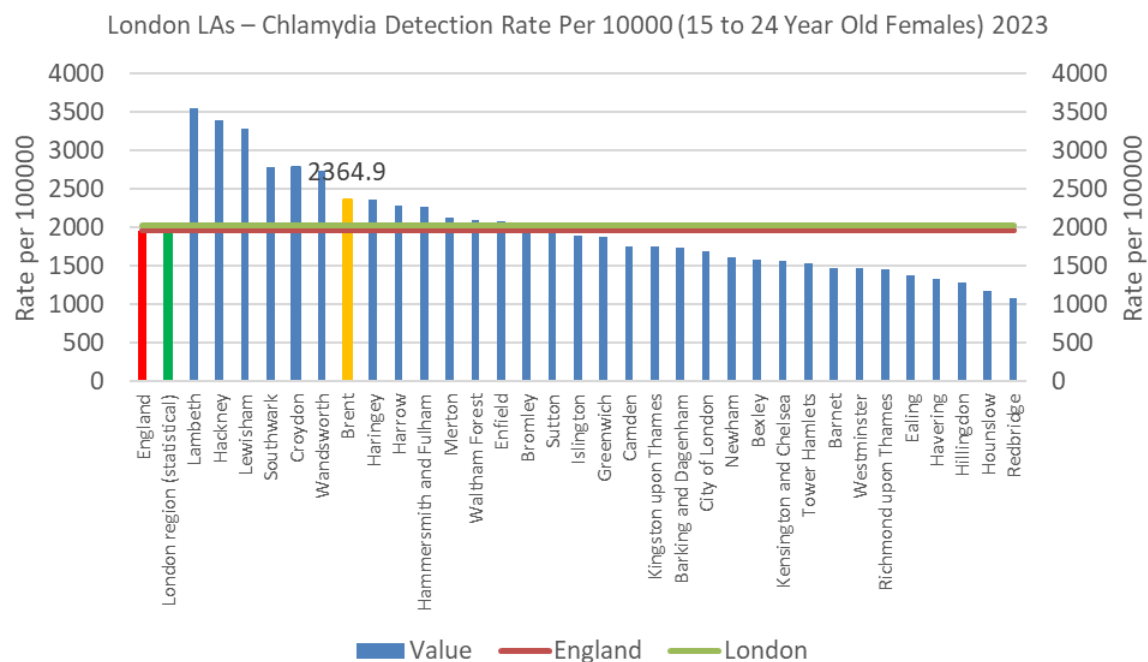
Outcomes 13 – Genital Herpes Diagnosis By Country Of Birth, Brent 2023. (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)

| Rank | World Region  | Country           | Herpes N | Herpes % |
|------|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------|
| 1    | UK            | United Kingdom    | 137      | 46.4     |
| 2    | Other         | Brazil            | 26       | 8.8      |
| 3    | Other         | India             | 11       | 3.7      |
| 4    | Europe        | Italy             | 7        | 2.4      |
| 5    | Europe        | Spain             | 7        | 2.4      |
| 6    | Europe        | Romania           | 6        | 2.0      |
| 7    | Caribbean     | Jamaica           | 6        | 2.0      |
| 8    | Europe        | Portugal          | 5        | 1.7      |
| 9    | Other         | Philippines (the) | 5        | 1.7      |
|      | All Other     | All Other         | 85       | 28.9     |
|      | Overall Total | Overall Total     | 295      | 100      |

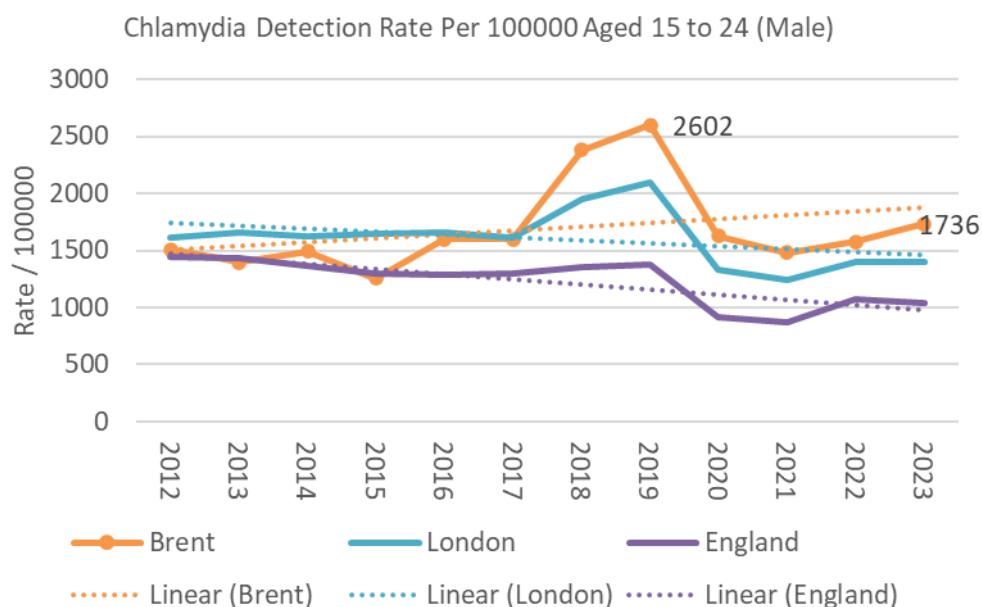
Outcomes 14 – Genital Warts Diagnosis By Country Of Birth, Brent 2023. (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)

| Rank | World Region       | Country                    | Warts | Warts % |
|------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------|---------|
| 1    | UK                 | United Kingdom             | 113   | 40.2    |
| 2    | Other              | Brazil                     | 14    | 5.0     |
| 3    | Europe             | Italy                      | 13    | 4.6     |
| 4    | Europe             | Romania                    | 12    | 4.3     |
| 5    | Other              | India                      | 12    | 4.3     |
| 6    | Other              | Iran (Islamic Republic of) | 11    | 3.9     |
| 7    | Sub-Saharan Africa | Somalia                    | 6     | 2.1     |
|      | All Other          | All Other                  | 100   | 35.6    |
|      | Overall Total      | Overall Total              | 281   | 100     |

Outcomes 15- Chlamydia diagnostic rate per 100000 (15 to 24 year old female) - source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data.

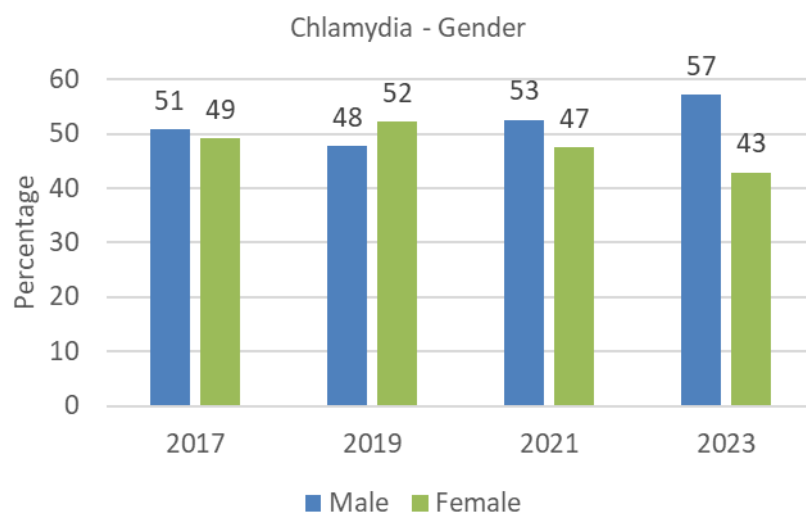


Outcomes 16- Chlamydia Detection Rate Per 100000 Aged 15 To 24 (Male)

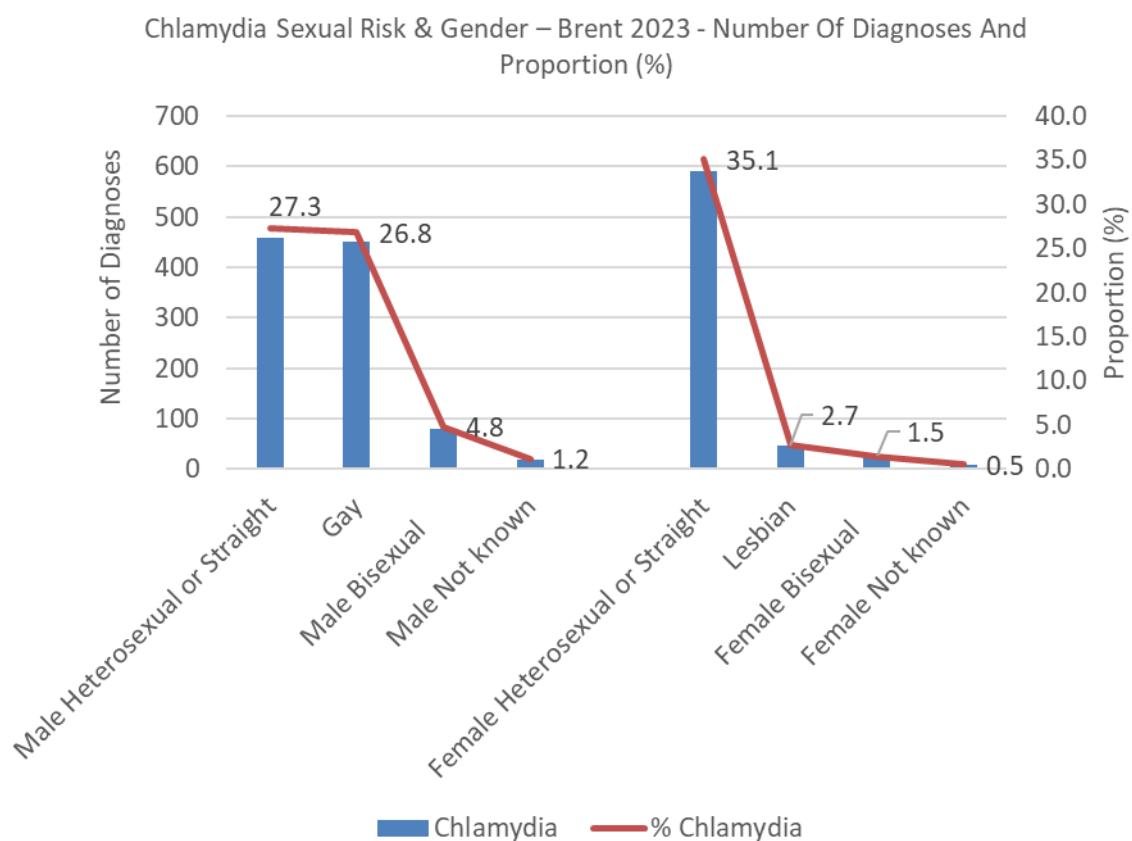




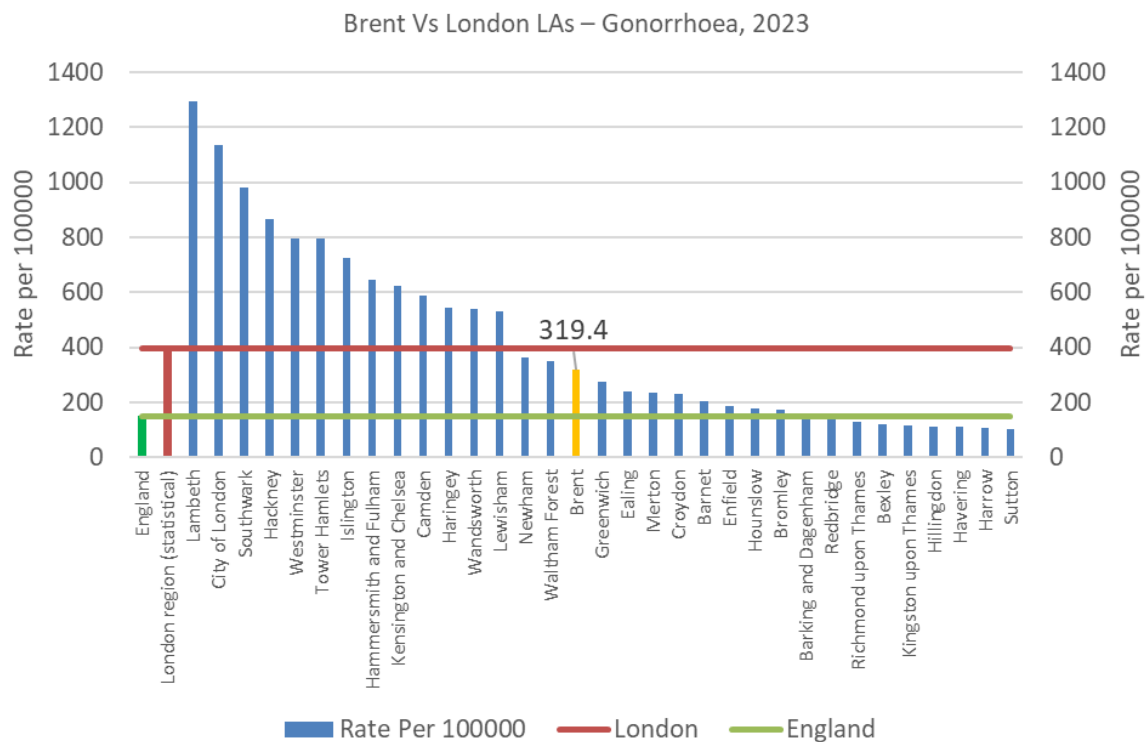
Outcomes 17- Chlamydia Gender For Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs – Brent)



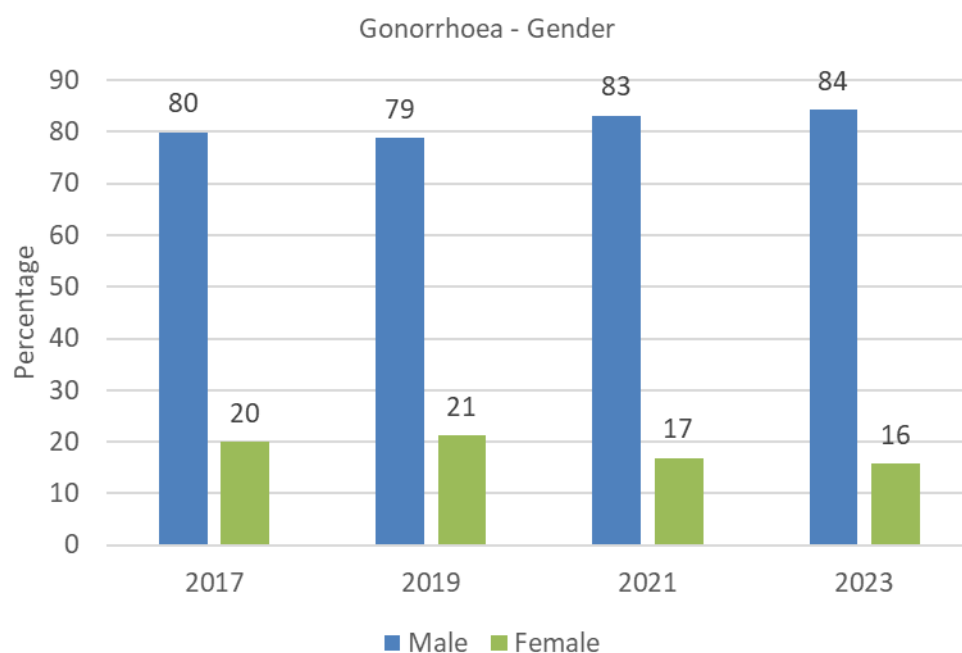
Outcomes 18- Chlamydia Sexual Orientation & Gender, Brent 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent)



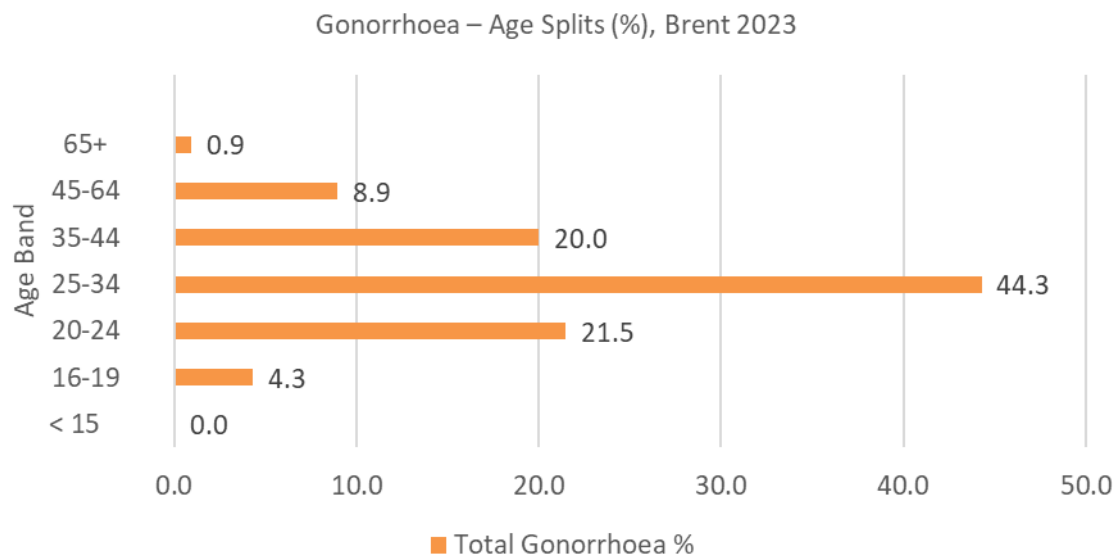
Outcomes 19- Gonorrhoea Diagnostic Rate Per 100,000, London Authority Comparison, 2023  
(source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data).



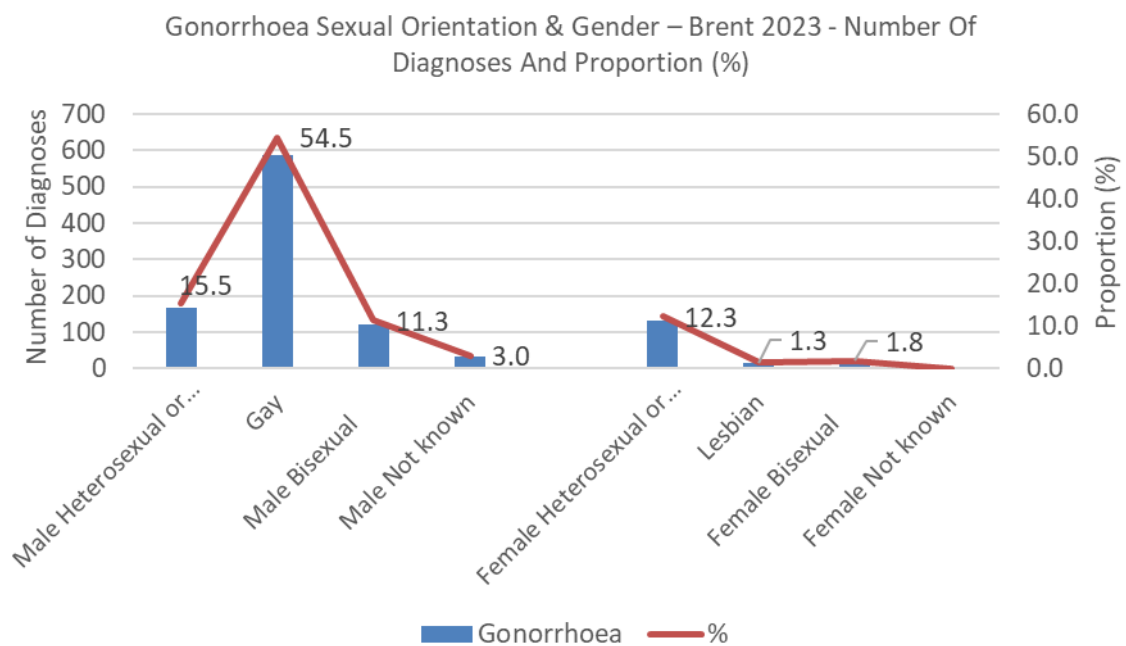
Outcome 20- Gender Splits Gonorrhoea, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs – Brent)



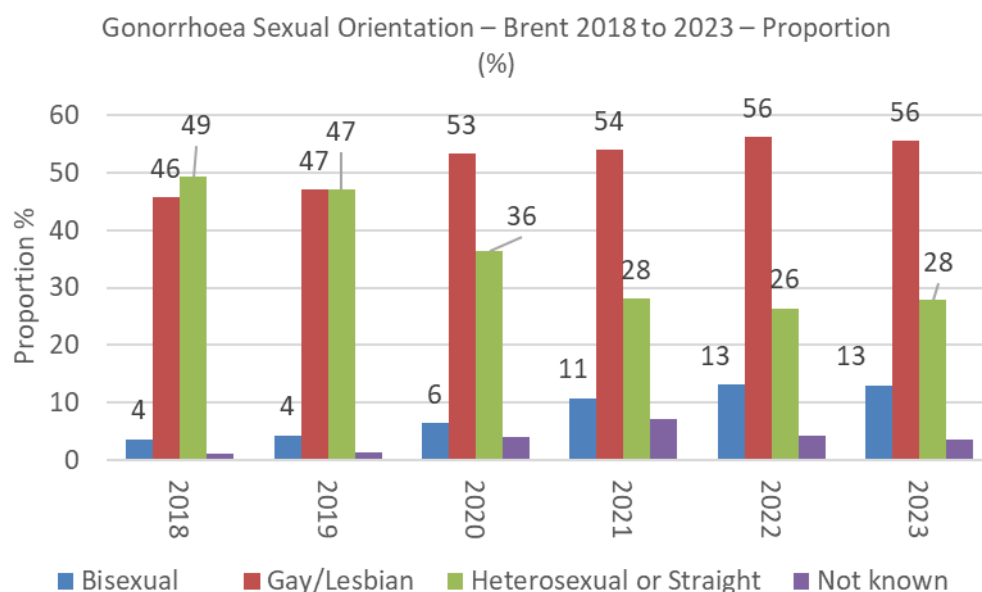
Outcomes 21- Age Splits Gonorrhoea, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)



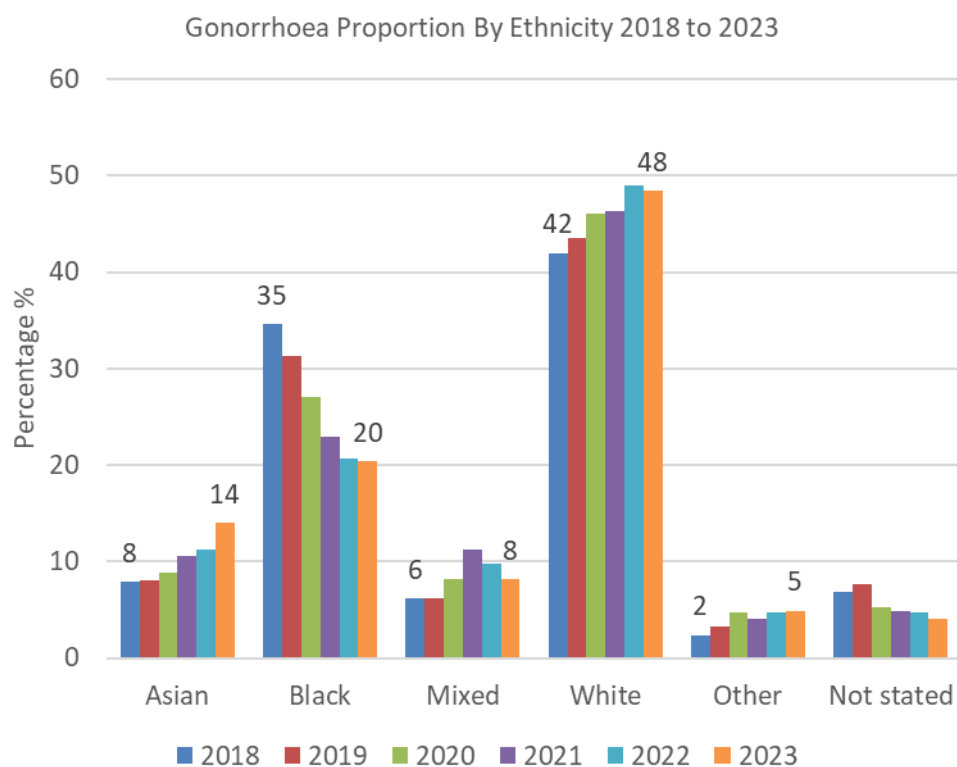
Outcomes 22- Gonorrhoea Sexual Orientation, Brent 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent)



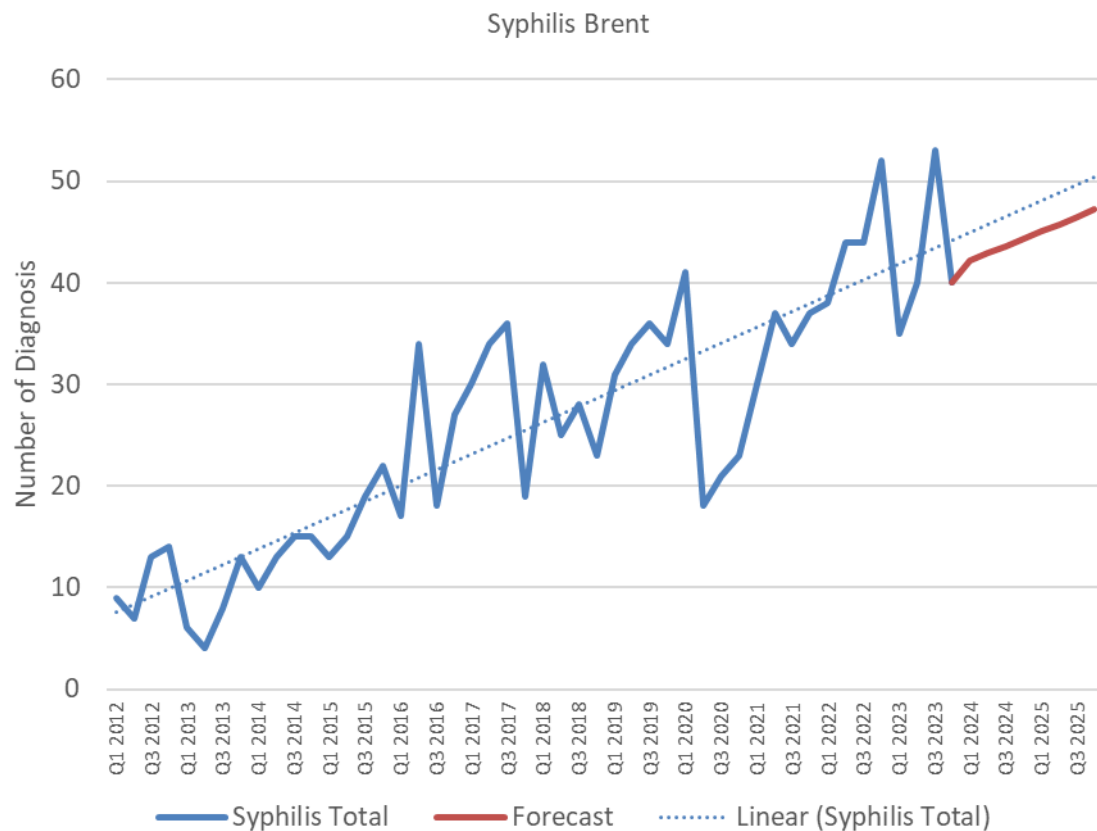
Outcomes 23 – Gonorrhoea Sexual Orientation, Brent 2018 to 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent)



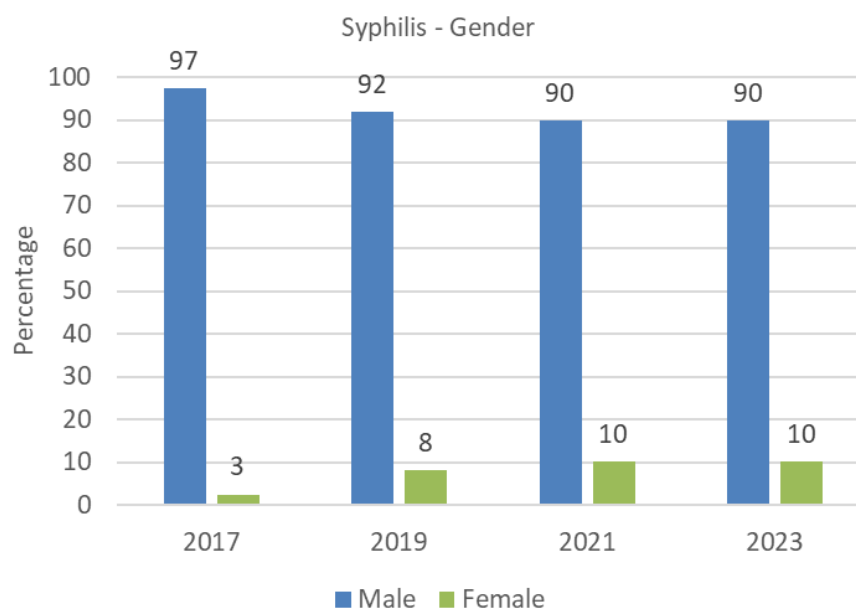
Outcomes 24 - Proportion Of Diagnosis By Ethnicity For Gonorrhoea In Brent 2018 to 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent; Census data, Brent)



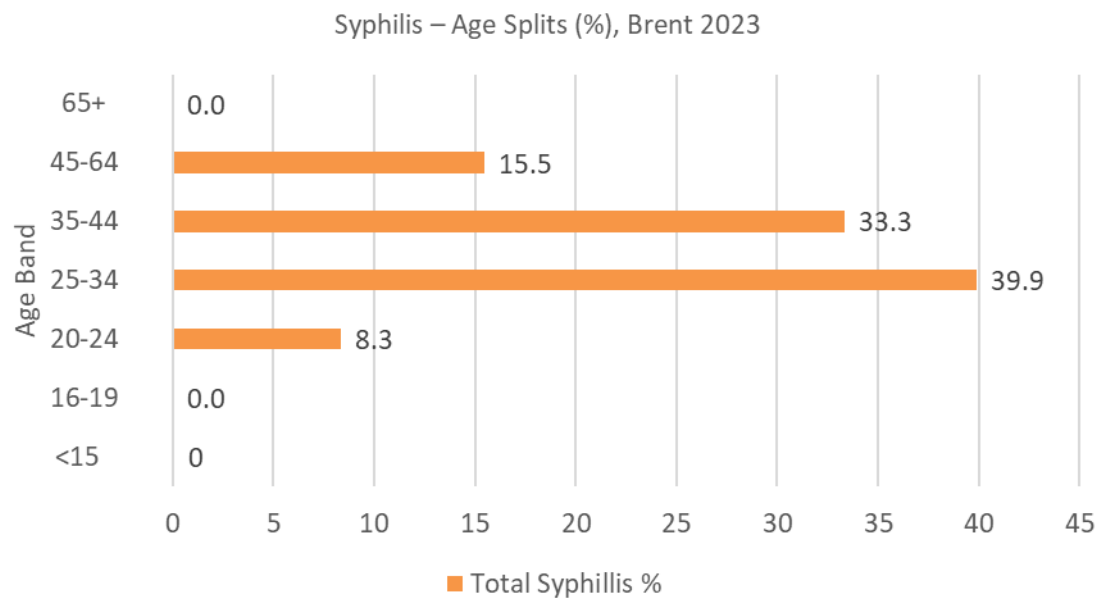
Outcomes 25– Brent Syphilis Forecast (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Brent Totals Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs)



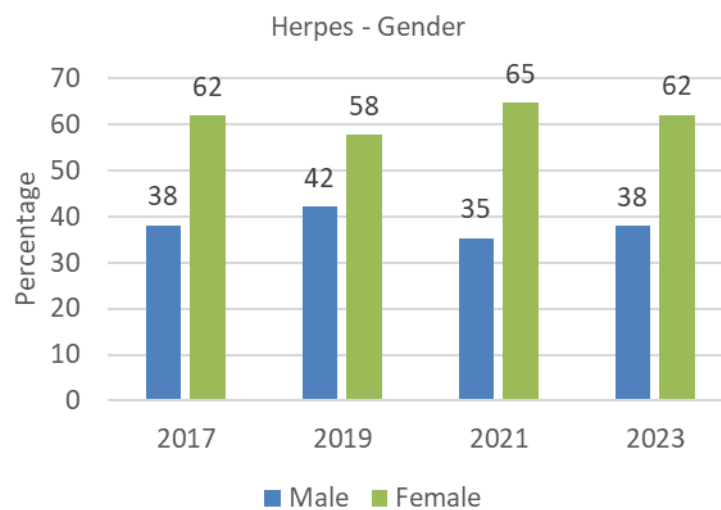
Outcomes 26- Gender Splits Syphilis, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs – Brent)



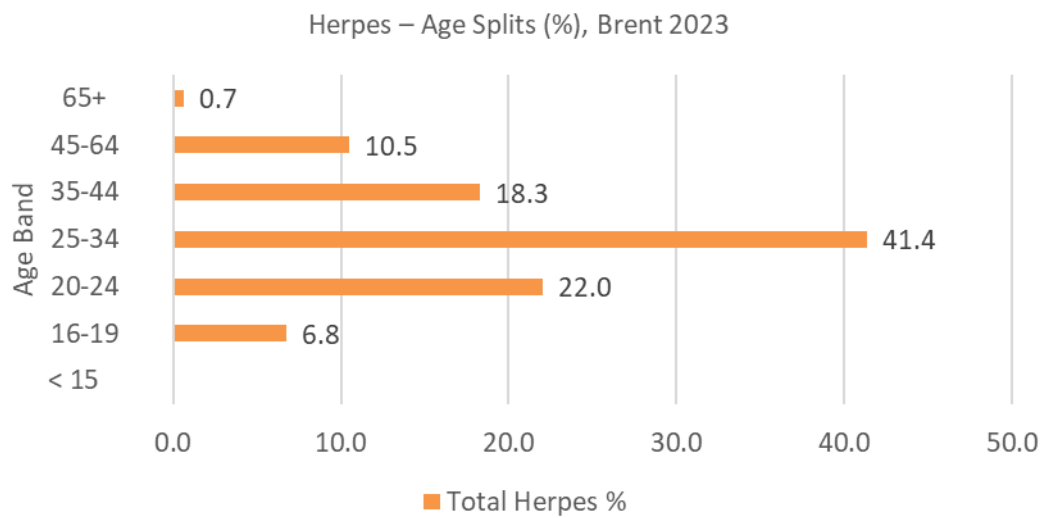
Outcomes 27- Age Splits Syphilis, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)



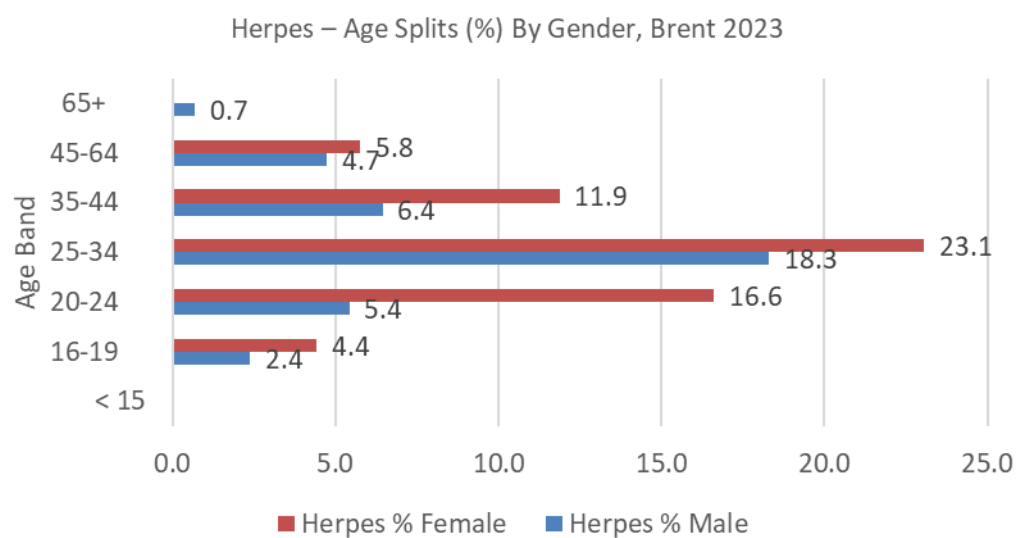
Outcomes 28- Gender Splits Herpes, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs – Brent)



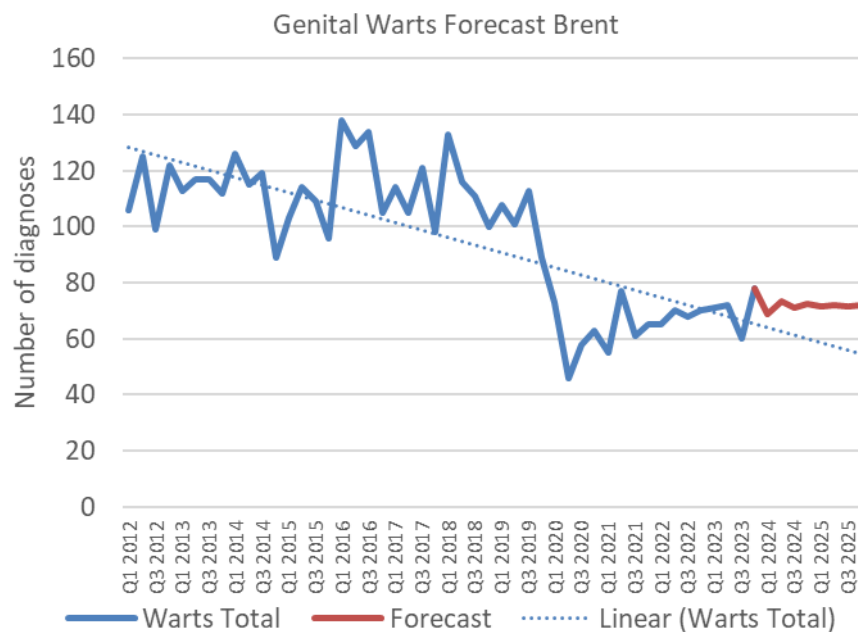
Outcomes 29- Age Splits Herpes, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)



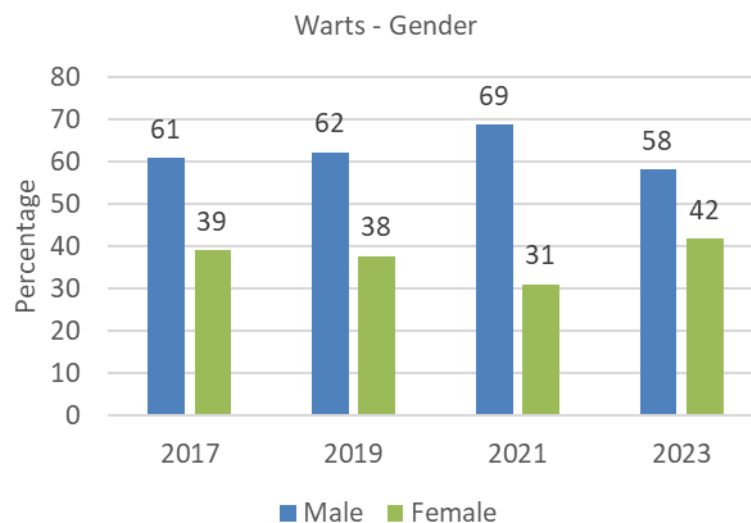
Outcomes 30- Age And Gender Splits, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)



Outcomes 31 – Forecast Genital Warts (Source, UK Health Security Agency, Brent Totals; Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs – Brent)

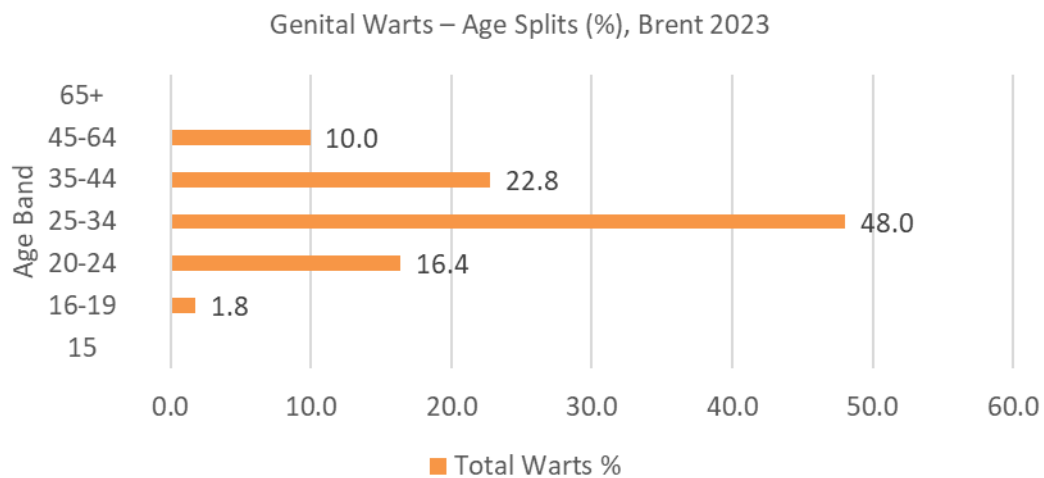


Outcomes 32 – Gender Splits Genital Warts, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Annual and Quarterly Trends of STIs – Brent)

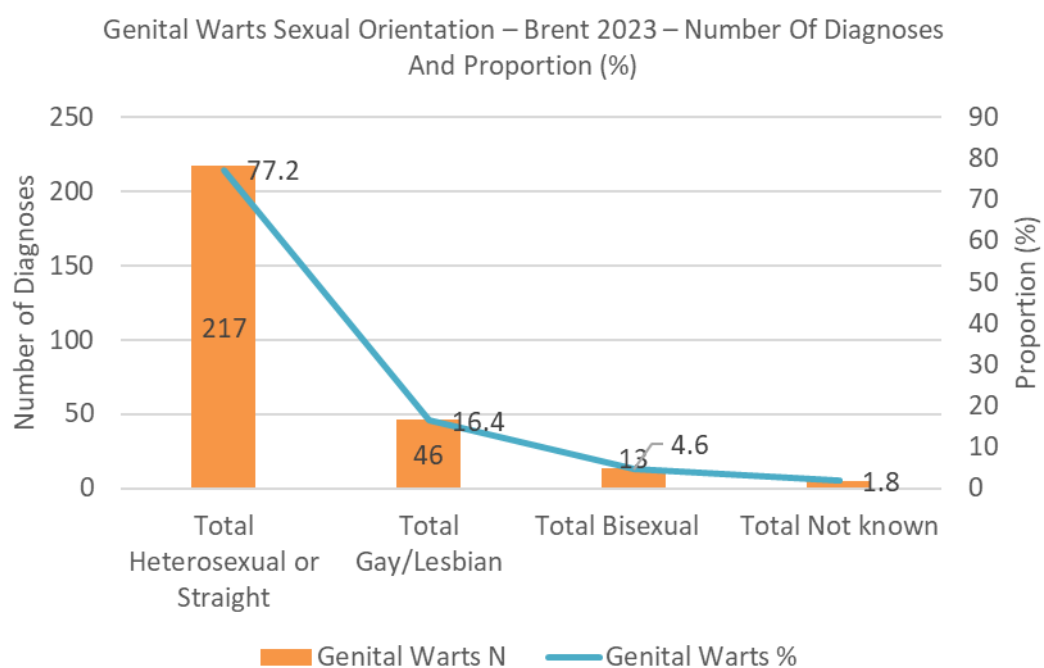




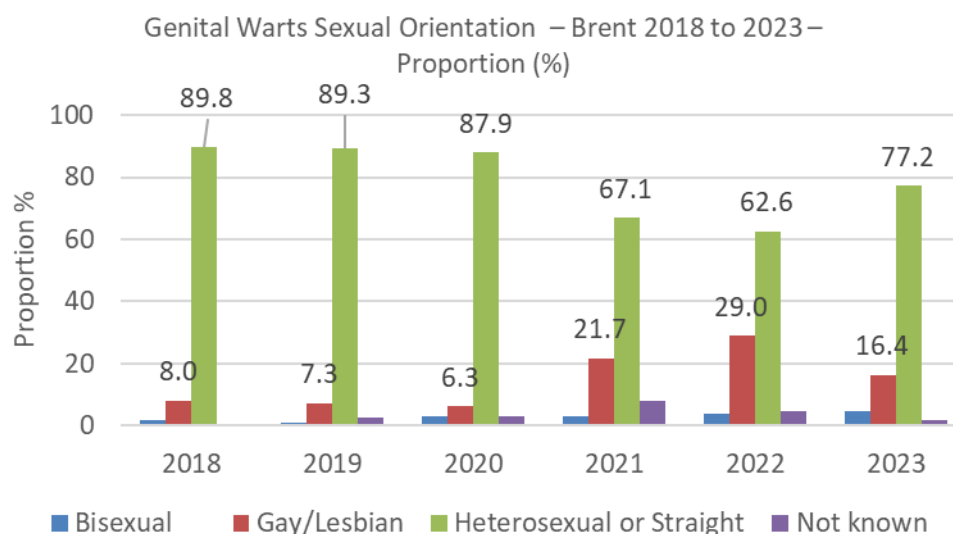
Outcomes 33 - Age Splits Genital Warts, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)



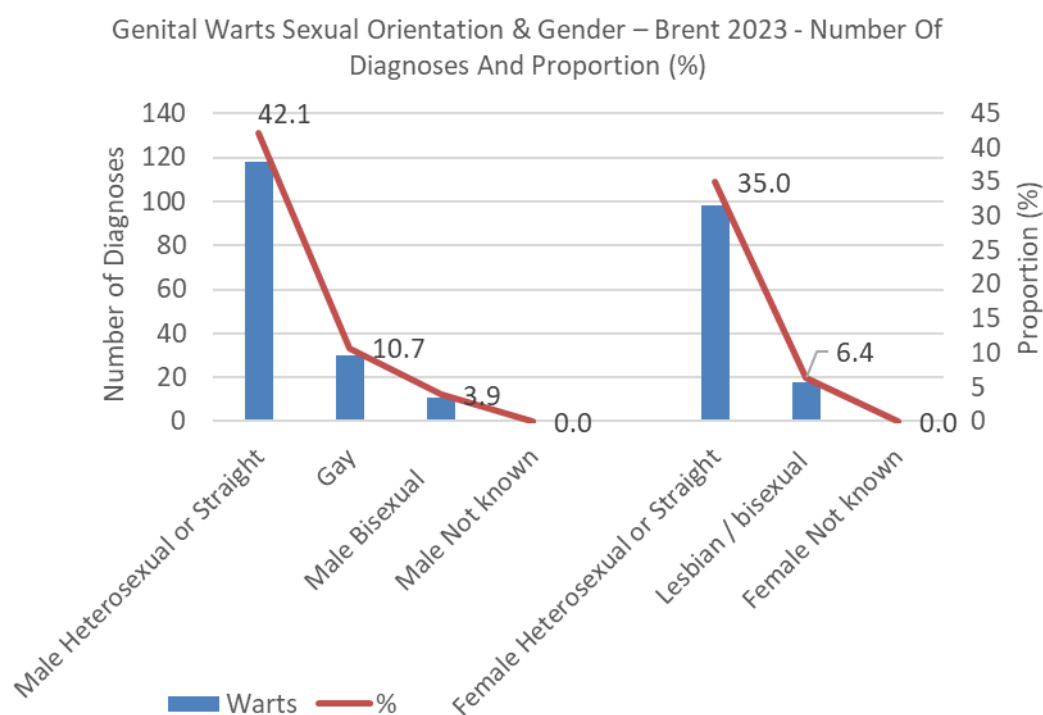
Outcomes 34 – Genital Warts Sexual Orientation, Brent 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent)



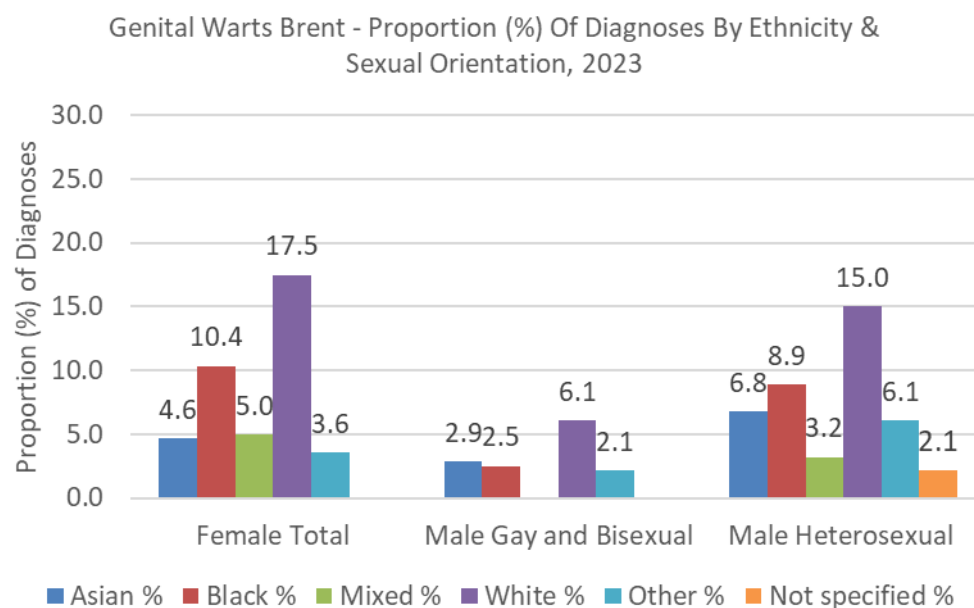
Outcomes 35 – Genital Warts Sexual Orientation, Brent 2018 to 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent)



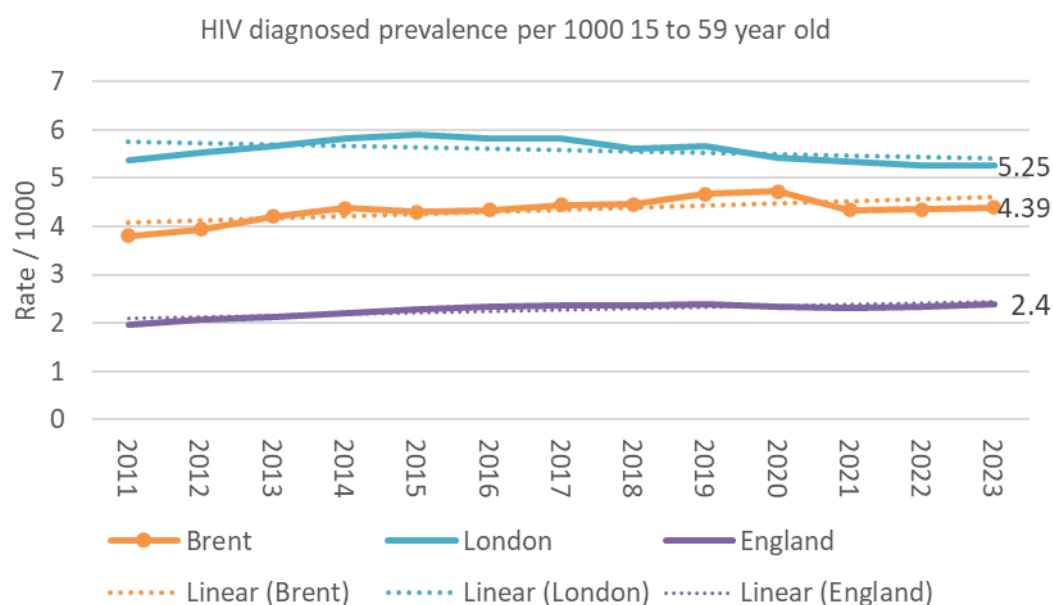
Outcomes 36 – Genital Warts Sexual Orientation & Gender, Brent 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis – Brent)



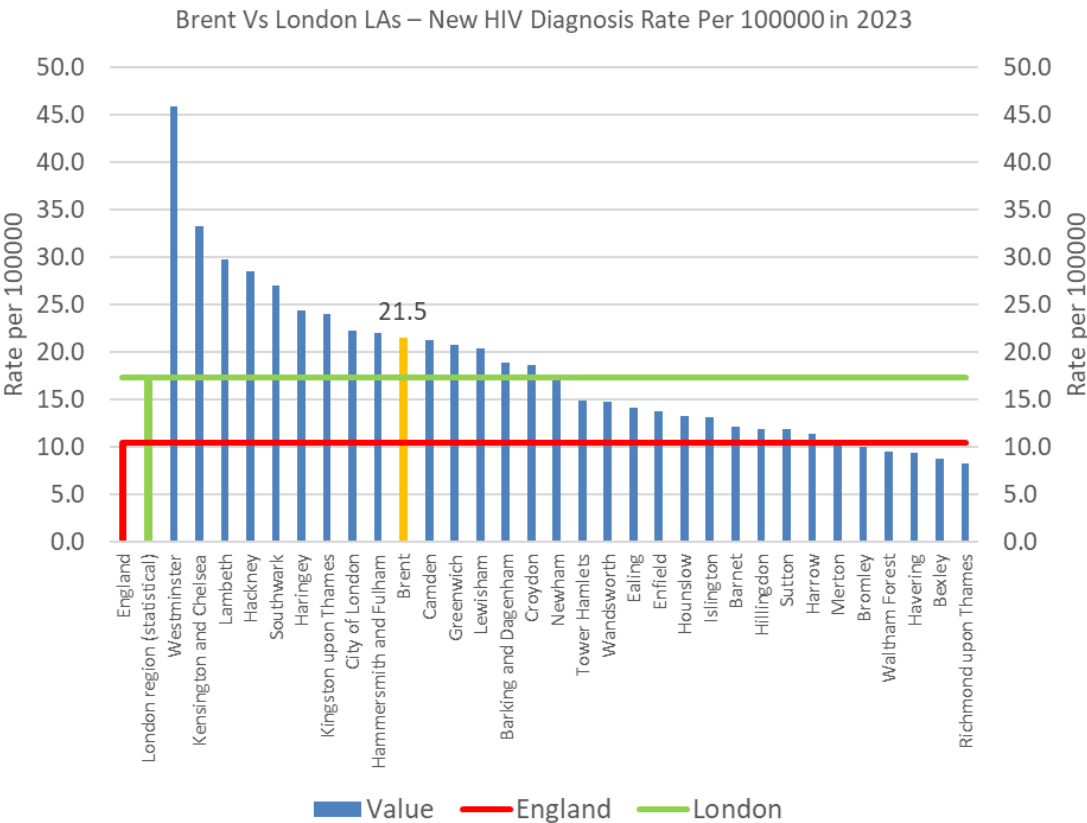
Outcomes 37 – Ethnicity And Sexual Orientation For Genital Warts In Brent 2023 (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent; Census data, Brent)



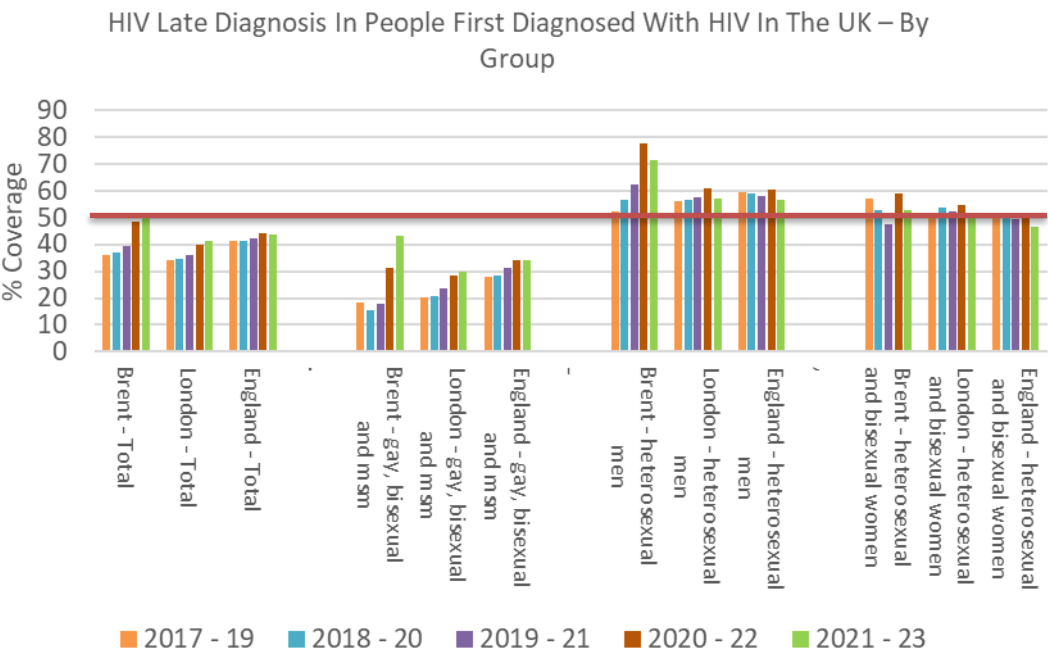
Outcomes 38 – Diagnosed HIV Prevalence Per 1,000 Age 15 to 59, Brent, London, England; Source - UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data



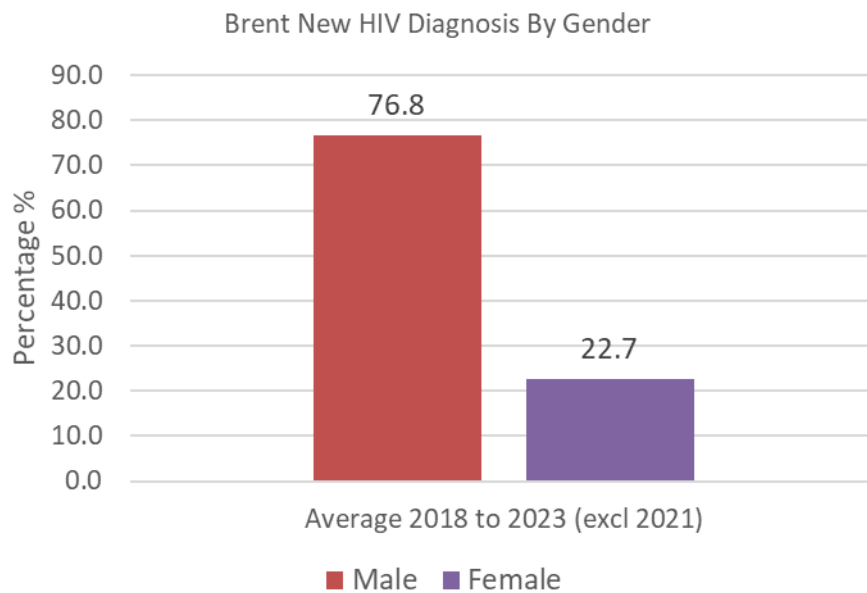
Outcomes 39 – New HIV Diagnosis, Rate Per 100,000, London LA’s, 2023. Source - UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data



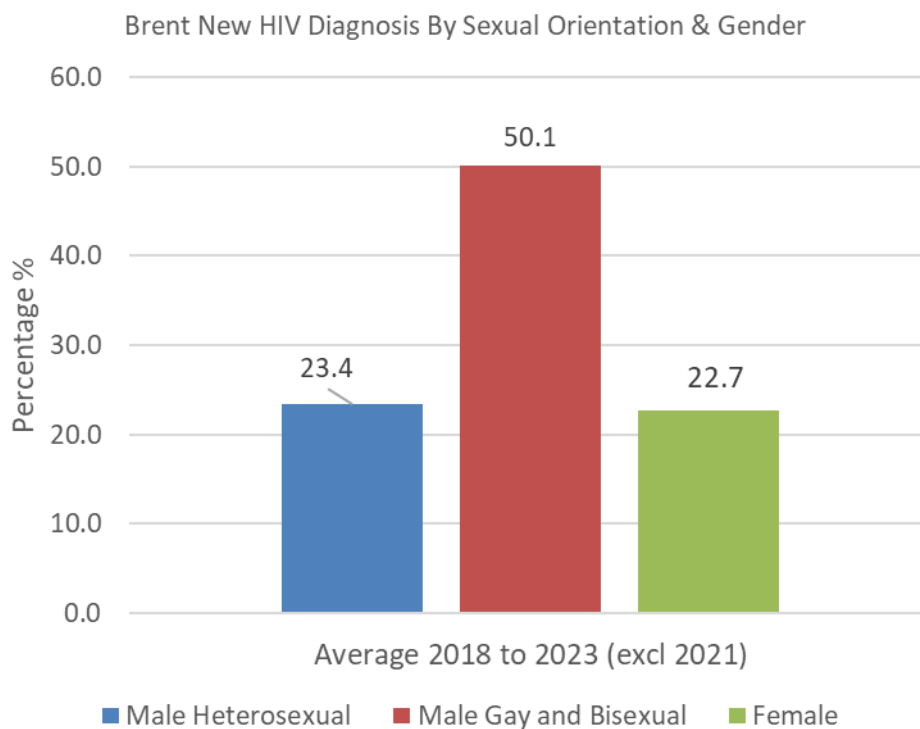
Outcomes 40 – HIV Late Diagnosis In People First Diagnosed With HIV In The UK By Group - Source - UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data



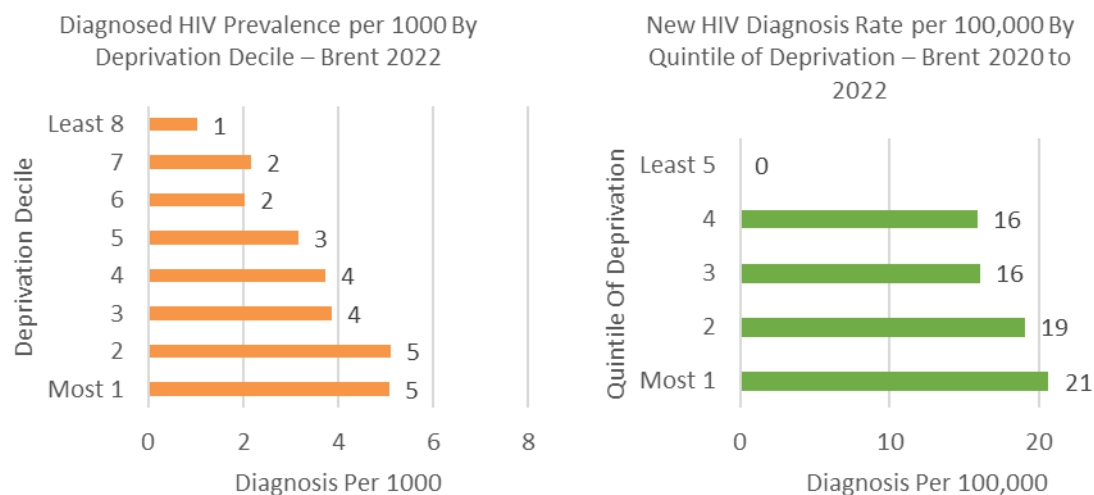
Outcomes 41 – Gender Splits New HIV Diagnosis, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)



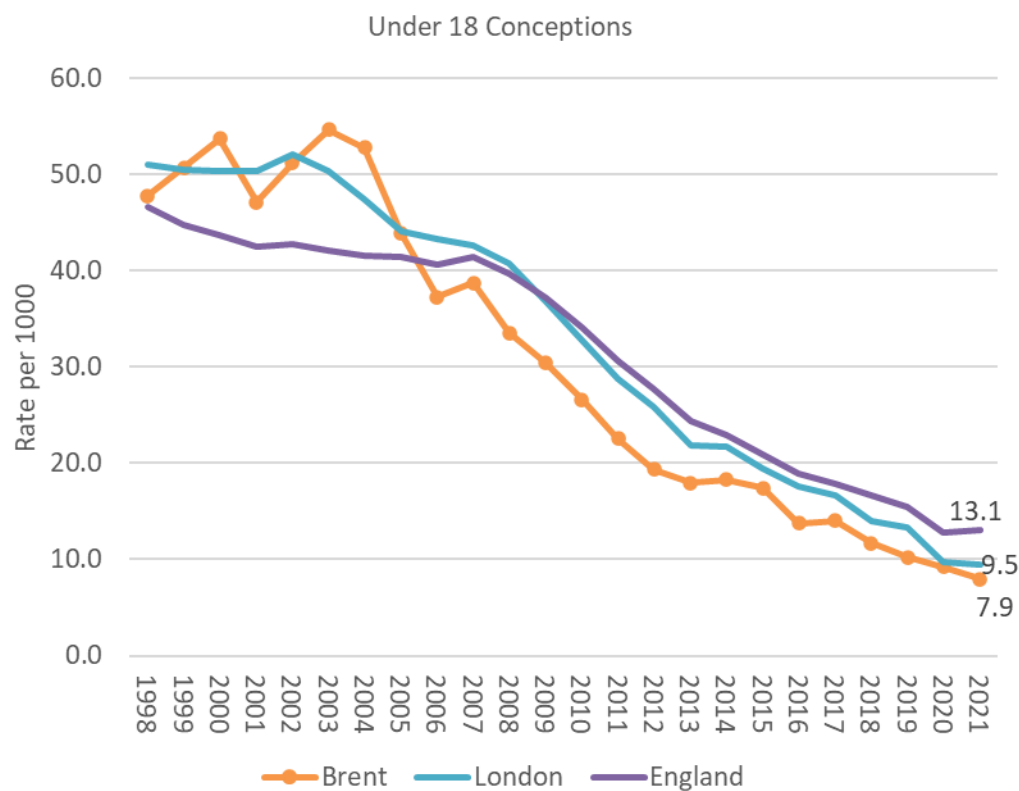
Outcomes 42 – Sexual Orientation & Gender Splits New HIV Diagnosis, Brent (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)



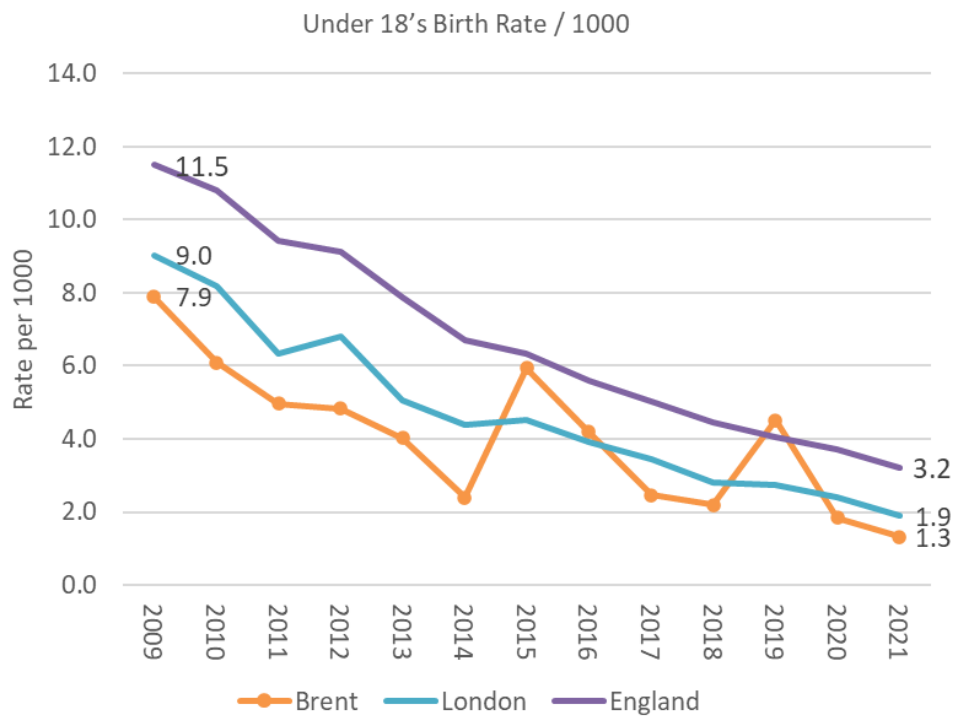
Outcomes 43 – Deprivation Diagnosed HIV Prevalence Per 1000 (2022) and Deprivation New HIV Diagnosis Rate Per 100,000 2020 to 2022- Data sources: HARS (numerator); ONS mid-year population estimates by LSOA for 2020 (denominator), UK Health Security Agency and HANDD (numerator); ONS mid-year population estimates by LSOA for 2020 (denominator), UK Health Security Agency



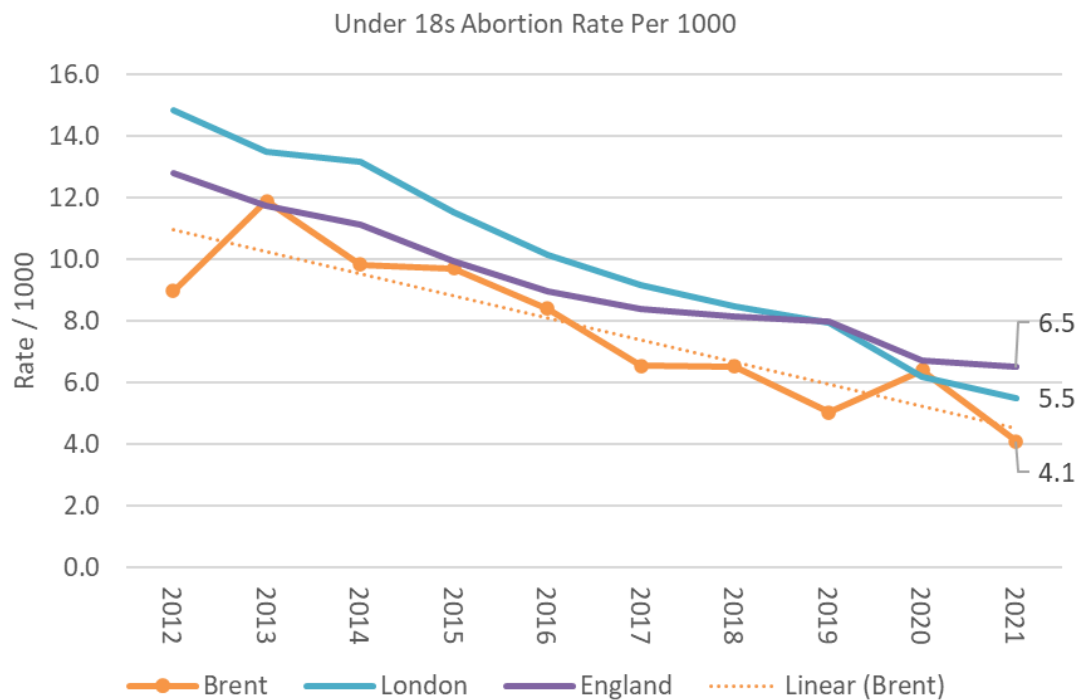
Outcomes 44 – Under 18 Conceptions (Rate Per 1000) – Brent, London, England; Source - UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data



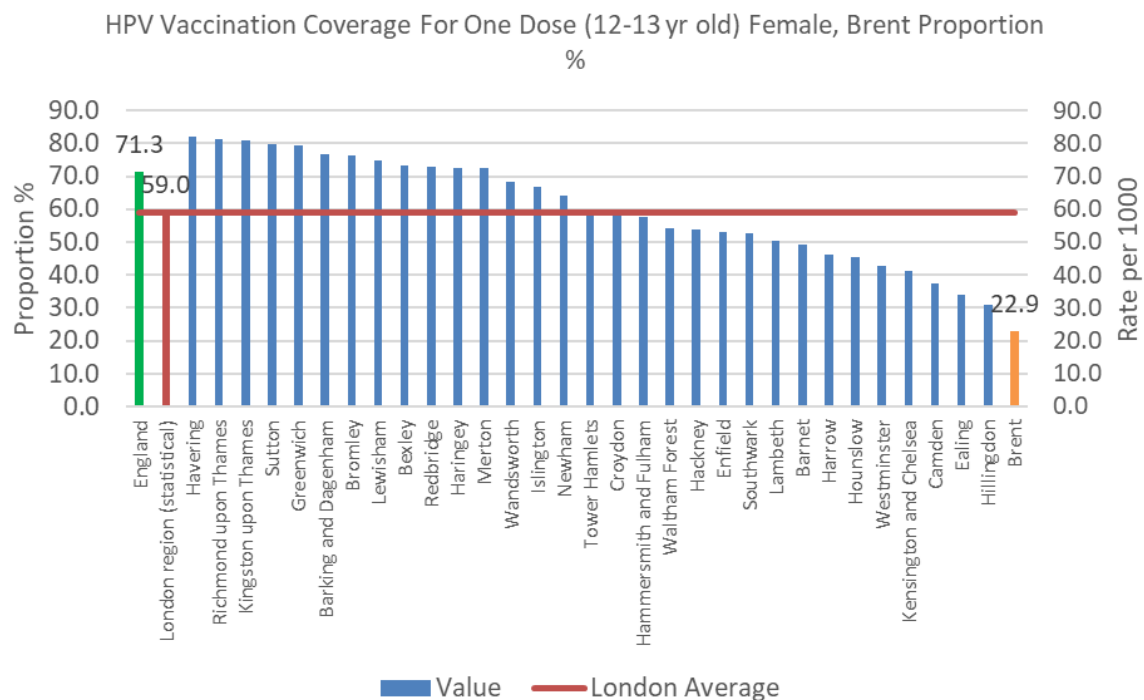
Outcomes 45 – Under 18 Birth Rate Per 1000 – Brent, London, England; Source - UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data.



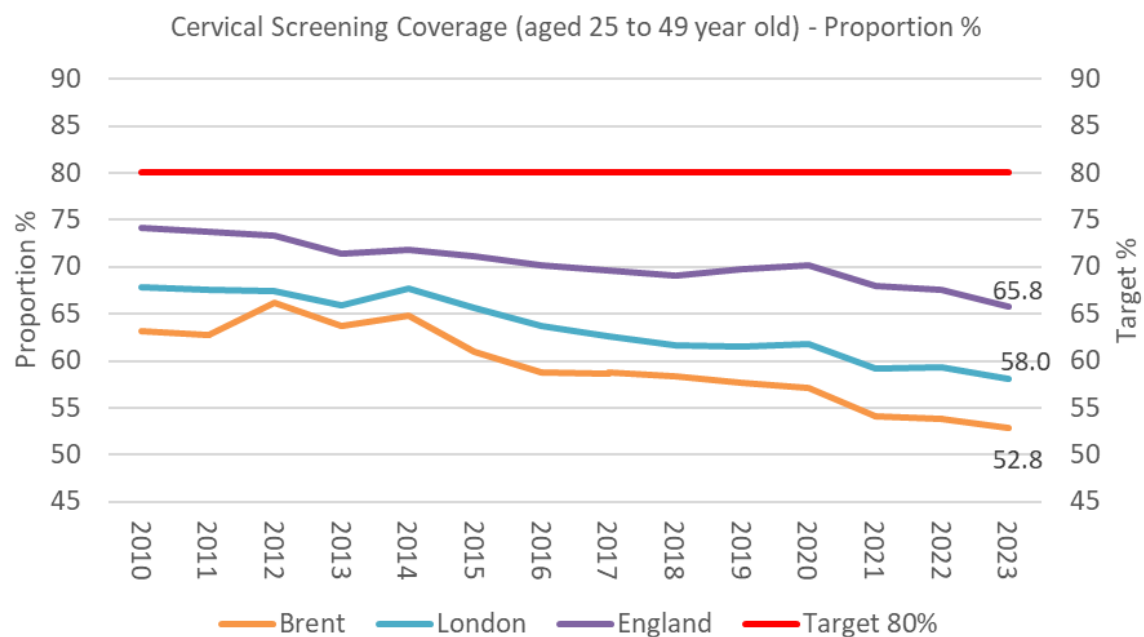
Outcomes 46 – Under 18 Abortions UK Rate Per 1000– Brent, London, England; Source - UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data



Outcomes 47 – HPV Vaccination Coverage % Females 12 To 13 Years Old London LA Comparison 2022 - UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data.

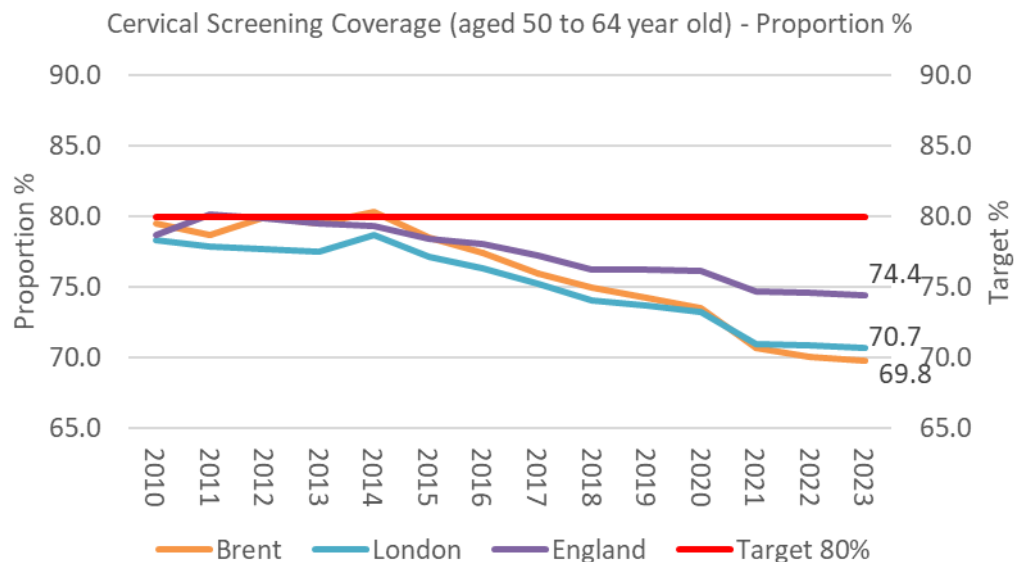


Outcomes 48 – Cervical Screening Coverage (aged 25 to 49 Year Old) – Brent, London, England; Source - UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data.



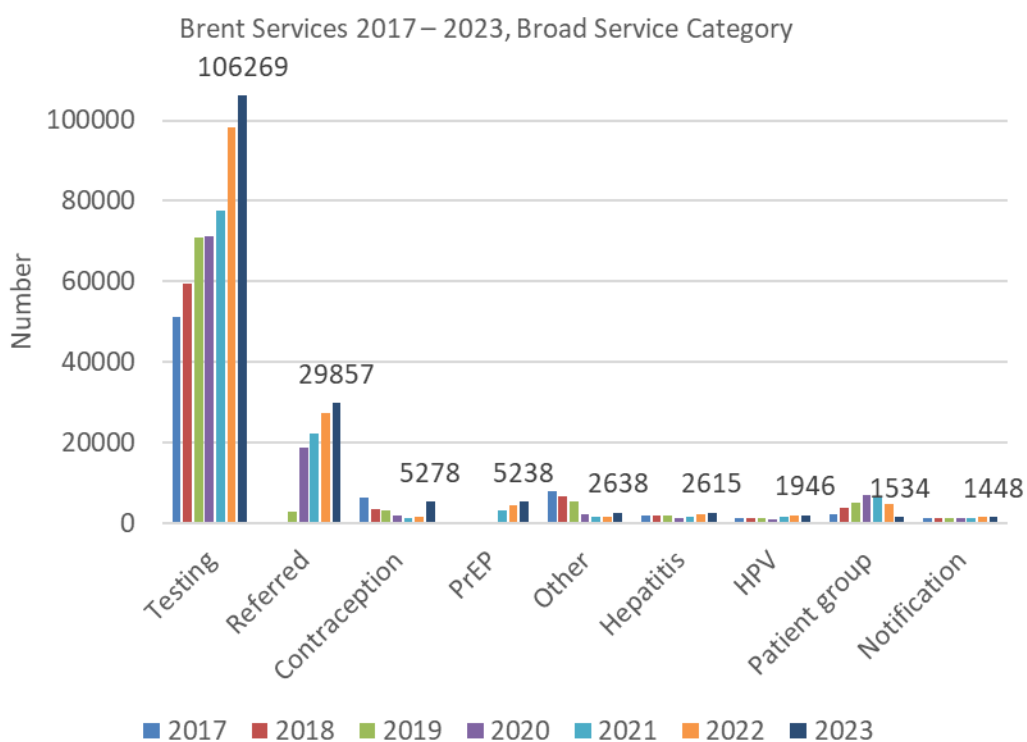


Outcomes 49 – Cervical Screening Coverage (aged 50 to 64 Year Old) – Brent, London, England;  
Source - UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – fingertips published data.

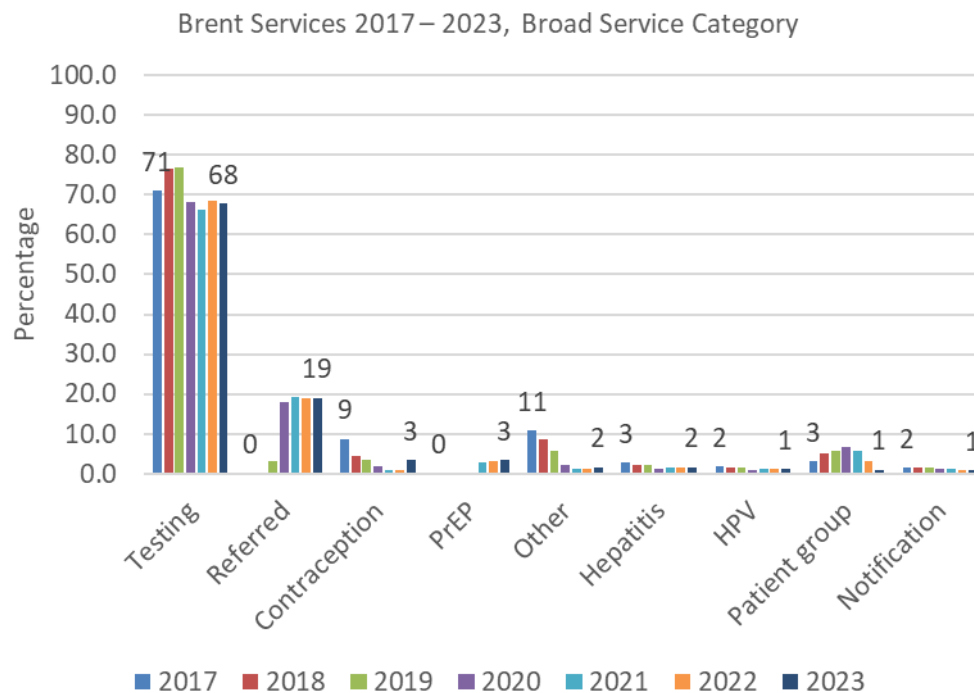


## Appendix- Service delivery

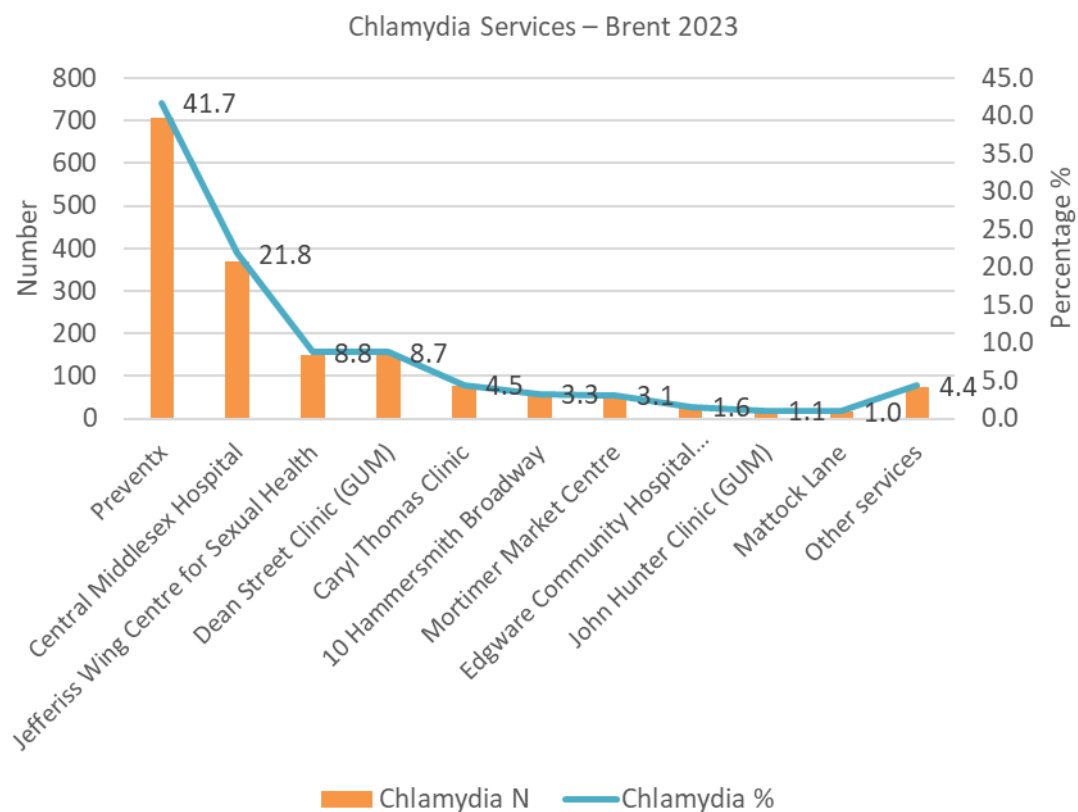
Service Delivery 1 – Brent SH Services, Numbers Broad Service Category (Source, UK Health Security Agency Numbers of all diagnoses and services – Brent)



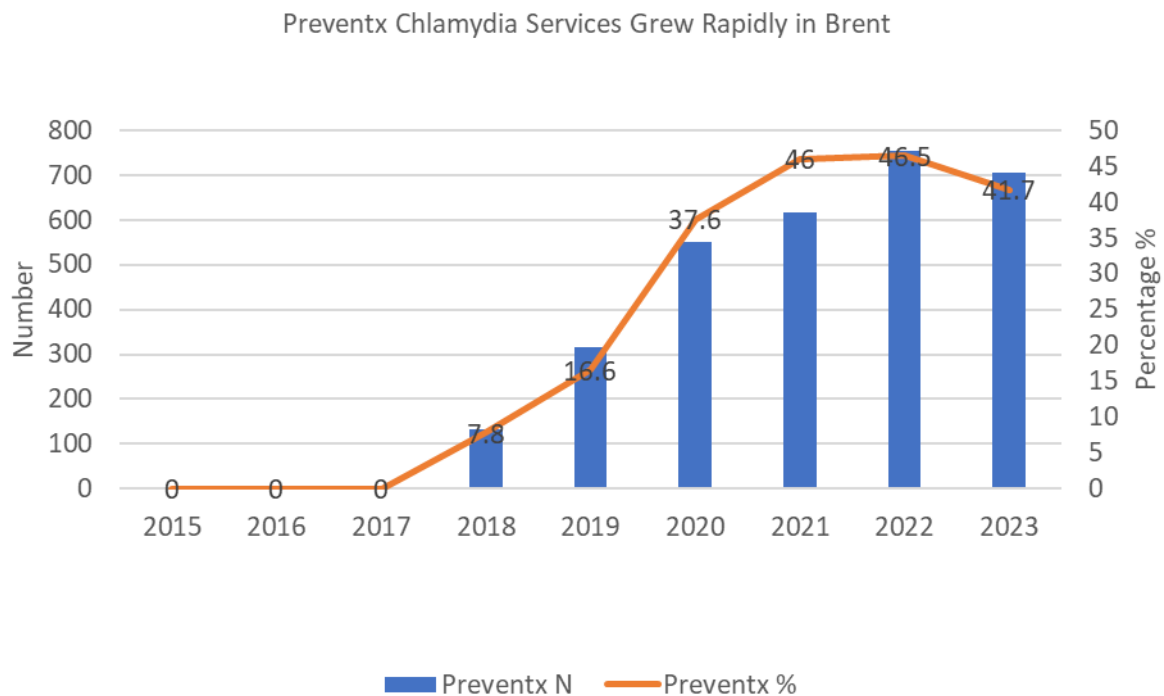
Service Delivery 2 – Brent SH Services, Percentage Broad Service Category (Source, UK Health Security Agency Numbers of all diagnoses and services – Brent)



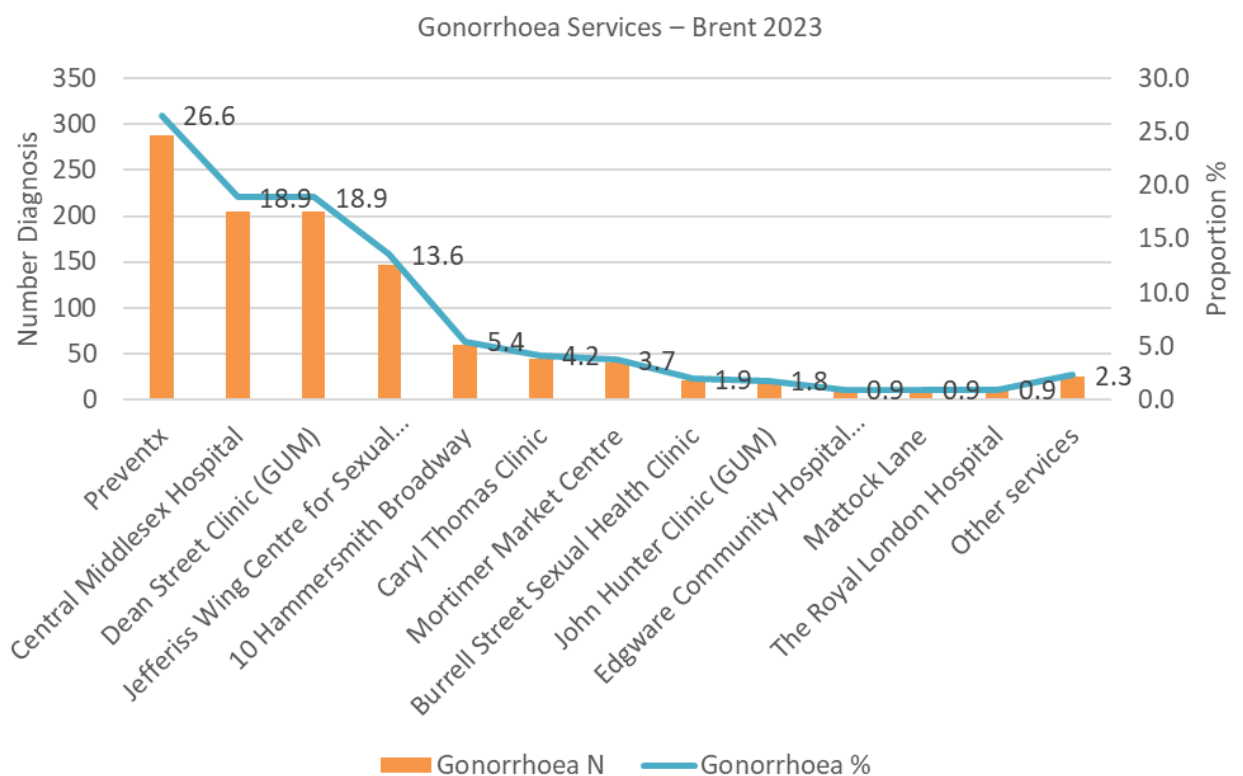
Service Delivery 3 – Chlamydia Services, Brent (Source UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis)



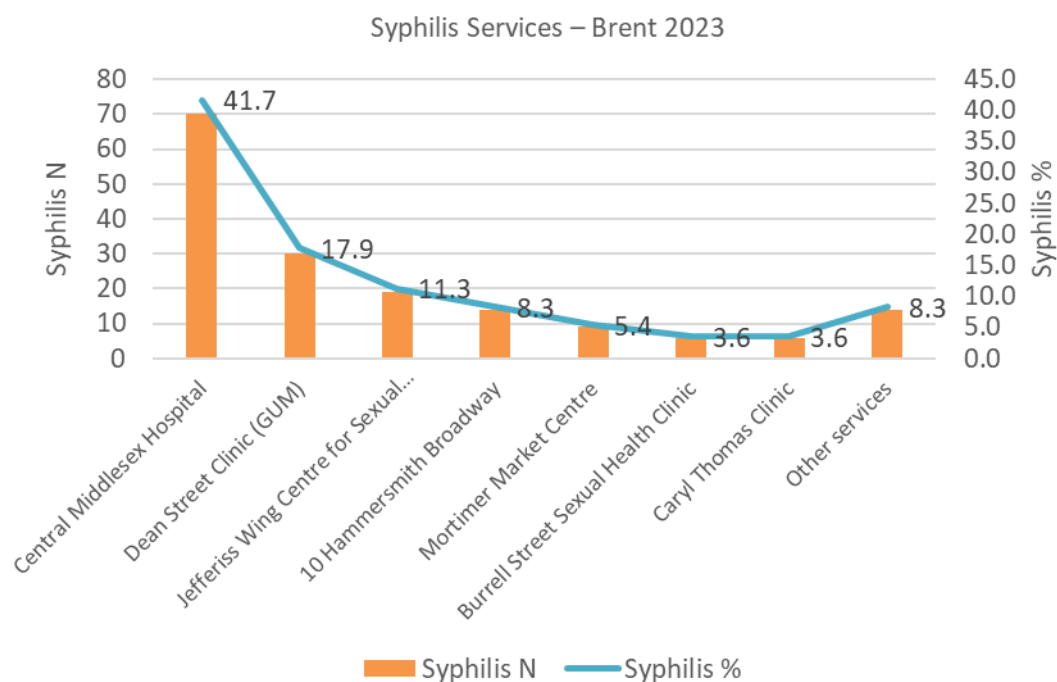
Service Delivery 4- Preventx Chlamydia Services Over Time (Source UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent)



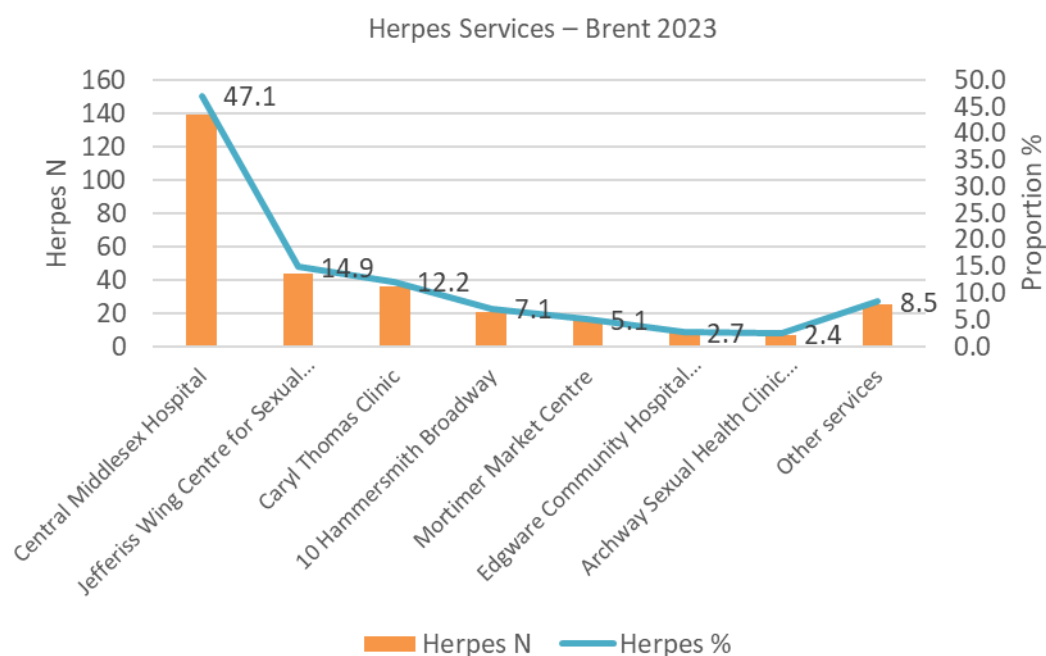
Service Delivery 5- Gonorrhoea Services, Brent (Source UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis)



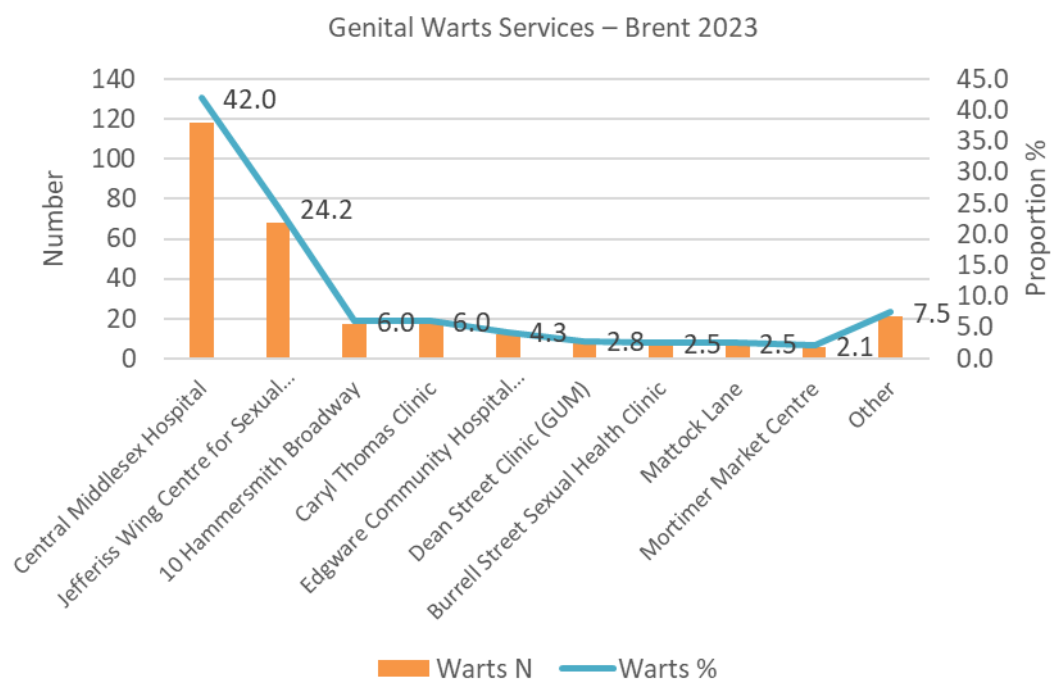
Service Delivery 6– Syphilis Services, Brent (Source UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis)



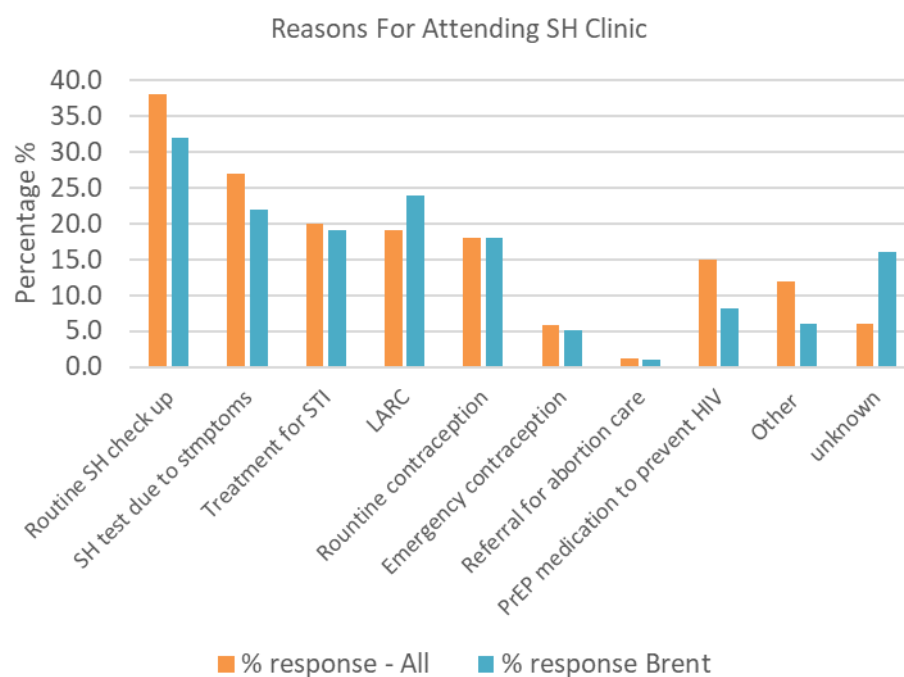
Service Delivery 7– Genital Herpes Services, Brent (Source UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis)



Service Delivery 8– Genital Warts Services. (Source - UK Health Security Agency, Selected STI Diagnosis, Brent).

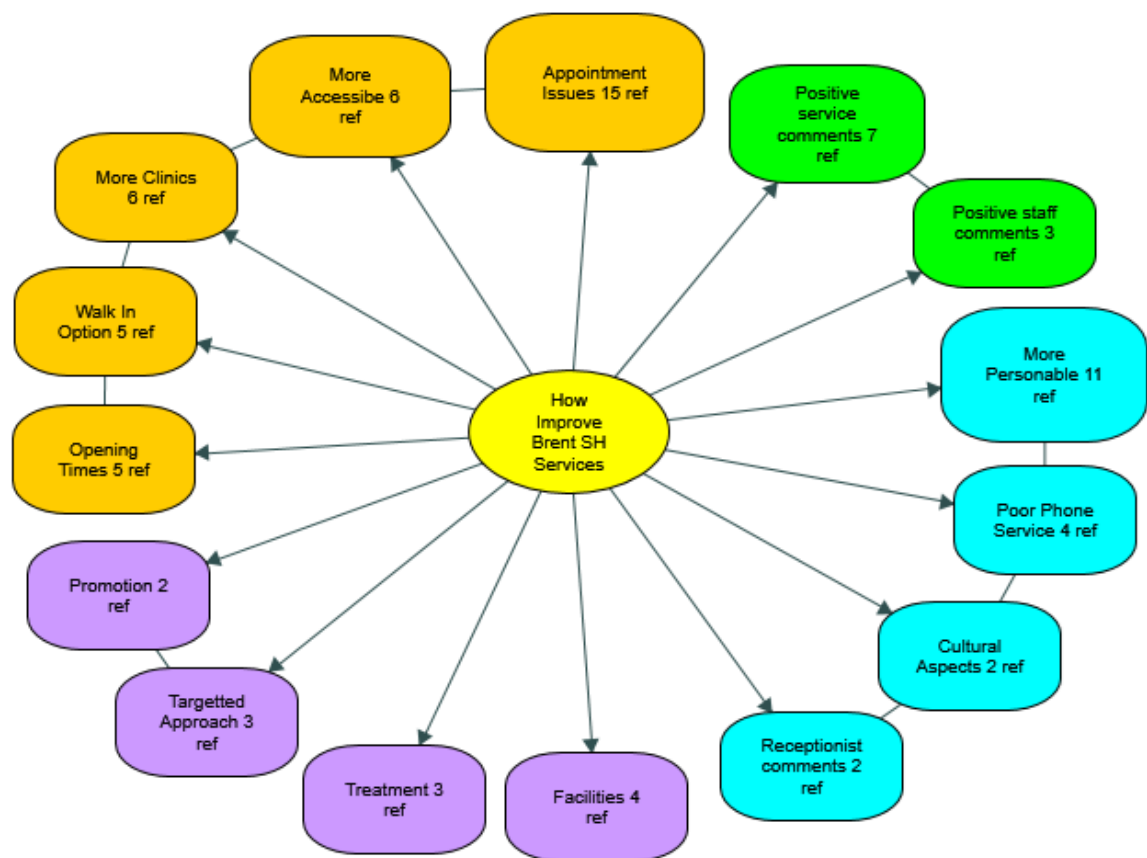


Service Delivery 9– SHS survey- Reasons for attending a SH clinic.



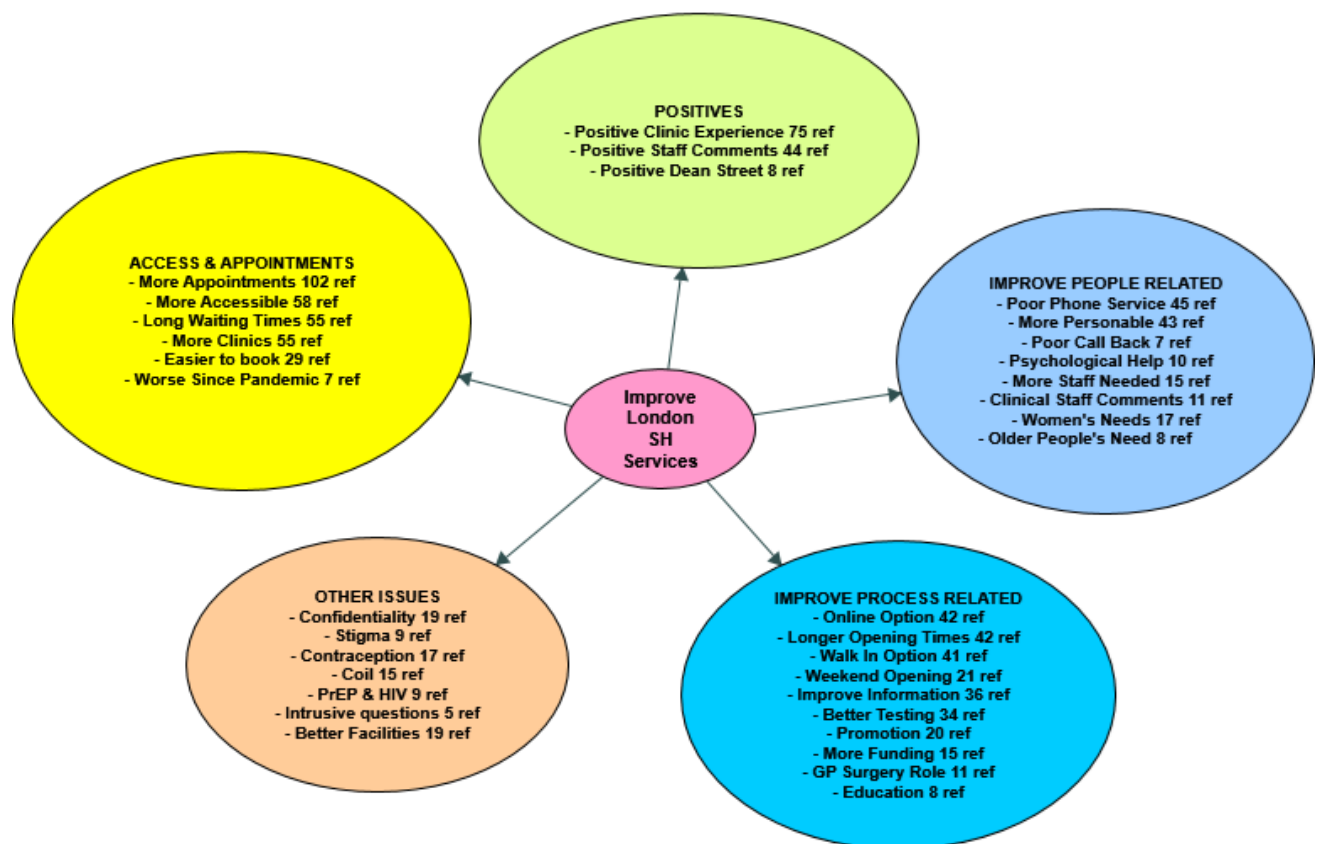
Service Delivery 10 – How To Improve Brent Services (Source Text analysis of open-ended comments from across London SH survey – Your Views Matter)

Key - Access; Positives; People; Other



Service Delivery 11– How To Improve London Services (Source Text analysis of open-ended comments from across London SH survey – Your Views Matter)

Improvement comments around the following: **Access**; **Positives**; **People Related**; **Process Related** and **Other**



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