

Borough Plan 2023-27 Evidence Pack

This pack provides an overview of key information and data used to frame and shape the draft Borough Plan 2023-27 priorities. The data was used to contextualise Brent – outlining needs, challenges, successes and opportunities within the borough. This data will also feature within the upcoming evidence base that will be published alongside the final Borough Plan.

Demographic data

Age – Brent has a relatively young population: the median age of the population is 36 compared with 40 across England. However, in line with national trends, the population is ageing; projections suggest the number of residents aged 65 and over could increase by 78% between 2020 and 2041 – an additional 33,000 older residents.

Sex – The gender split in the population is 51% male and 49% female. The proportion of men is highest in the 20-39 age group where they comprise 55% of the population. In contrast, women make up a higher proportion of the Borough's very elderly population, comprising 61% of those aged 85 and over.

Ethnicity - Brent is one of the most diverse boroughs in London; almost two thirds of the population (64%) are from BAME groups, the third highest in London. Around 16% of residents are White British, the second lowest rate in London. One in five Brent residents are from other White minority groups.

Disability – Around one in seven Brent residents have a long-term health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day-activities in some way. The prevalence of disability rises sharply with age; more than half of all residents aged 65 and over have a long-term health problem or disability.

Language – Around 150 different languages are used in Brent. In 2011, 37% of the Brent population used a main language other than English – the 2nd highest in England. At the time of the 2011 Census, the top 10 language groups in Brent were; Gujarati, Polish, Arabic, Portuguese, Tamil, Somali, Romanian, Urdu, Persian/Farsi and Nepalese speakers.

Religion – The borough's three largest religious groups are Christian (41%), Muslim (19%) and Hindu (18%). Overall, 82% of residents have a religion – the fourth highest rate in England and Wales. The borough has the second largest Hindu population in England and Wales, and the tenth highest Muslim population (as a percentage of the population).

Sexual orientation – Statistics about the size of the LGB population vary considerably and there is no single widely accepted measure. The 2020 GP Patient Survey found that 7.4% of Brent residents surveyed identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other – above the England rate (4.5%). ONS survey estimates are typically lower (England, 2.9%).

Strategic Priority 1: Prosperity, Pride and Belonging in Brent

DESIRED OUTCOME 1: Easing the Cost of Living Crisis

Poverty & Deprivation

- The overall poverty rate after housing costs (AHC) in Brent was estimated at 33.0% by the ONS in 2017 (*Small area model-based households in poverty estimates, England and Wales*); this is notably above the London average of 26.4%.
- Child poverty AHC was 39.5% in Brent for 2020-21, the seventh highest level across London (*End Child Poverty*). The average for London in the equivalent period was 35.2%. In the seven years since 2014/15 that these figures have been published there has been very little change in Brent's performance over time, with figures between a high of 40.9% for 2018-19 and a low of 39.5% in 2021-22.

Support and provision

- Demand for Community Hubs continues to grow, with 11,823 residents seeking help in 2021-22, compared to 9,693 in 2020-21.
- 3,423 food bank referrals were made through Brent Hubs in 2021-22.
- Demand for the Resident Support Fund is also increasing with 2,277 applications received in Q1 of 2022-23 alone; this is a 220% increase from the 711 received in Q1 of 2021-22. There were 6,609 applications made for 2021-22 overall.
- As of December 2021, 7.7% of the Brent population aged 16-64 report having no formal qualifications at all – this is the second highest level in London, behind Barking & Dagenham at 12.4% (*Annual Population Survey*).
- Last year, 273 local residents were helped into employment or apprenticeships through Brent Works. 171 of these were in work paying on or above the London Living Wage.
- 4,813 students enrolled on Brent Starts courses during 2021/22, including 1,908 who were doing an ESOL course.

DESIRED OUTCOME 2: Brent for Business

- 27.9% of full time employees in Brent for 2021 earn less than the London Living Wage of £11.05 per hour. This is the second highest level in London after Enfield (28.2%) (*Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings*).
- Brent's median annual wage for full-time employees is £33,805. This is the third lowest level in London after Hounslow (£32,516) and Barking and Dagenham (£32,931), and are 10% below the London median of £37,500 (*Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings*).

Strategic Priority 2 – A Cleaner, Greener Future

DESIRED OUTCOME 1: A Cleaner and Safer Borough

Community Safety

- In the 2021 Brent Resident Attitudes Survey (RAS) the most valued feature of living in Brent is that it is a safe area, free from crime and bad behaviour, with 44% of residents considering this a priority.
- Community safety (jointly with health services) was the most frequently mentioned area where residents would like more money spent on services, with 34% of respondents identifying them as a priority (RAS).
- In the year to September 2022 there were 3,661 domestic abuse offences in Brent, up 4.4% from the previous 12 months. (*Metropolitan Police Service Crime Data Dashboard*). There were also 867 offences of domestic abuse violence with injury in the year to September 2022.

Environment and recycling

- Parks, open spaces & trees were the third most valued feature of living in Brent, with 24% of residents selecting them as a priority (RAS).
- In 2020-21, only 33.4% of Brent's Household waste was recycled; this is ever so slightly above the median score for London boroughs of 32.1%.
- There were 3,703 waste cases investigated which led to enforcement action in 2021-22.

DESIRED OUTCOME 2: Empowering our Communities

- 28% of Brent residents had given unpaid help to groups, clubs or organisations in the last 12 months – this is the same as 2018. (RAS)
- 58% of residents would like to be more involved in decisions made in the local area. (RAS)
- 641 residents attended the 10 participatory budgeting decision day events, with 89 local projects being either fully or partially funded. 2,030 residents engaged with the participatory budgeting pilot over its complete run.

Strategic Priority 3: Respect and Renewal in Brent

DESIRED OUTCOME 1: Safe, Secure and Decent Housing

Housing delivery

- At the end of June 2022, Brent had so far delivered 660 homes of its 1,000 new council homes target. There are additional 496 homes on site and another 440 with planning permission and moving to site shortly.

Housing need

- There are 26,014 households on the Housing register list at the end of June 2022, 3,118 of those with priority. Compared to the last published data from March 2021 this is the third highest level in London, behind Lambeth (30,864 households) and Newham (31,887) (*Local Authority Housing Statistics*).
- There were 1,671 Brent households in temporary accommodation at the end of June 2022.
- As of May 2022 325 Brent residents had their housing benefit capped, to an average cost of £63.72 per month (*Benefit Cap: HB Point in Time Caseload*).
- The median private rent for a two bed property in Brent is £1,400 per month – this is the fourth highest level in Outer London, above the Outer London Median of £1,350 (*Private rental market summary statistics*).

DESIRED OUTCOME 2: A Sustainable Borough and a Greener Economy

- 99% of contacts procured meet the London Living Wage standard, and 35% of Brent suppliers are locally based.
- In 2021-22 17 local apprenticeships and work experience opportunities were created with suppliers as part of our Social Value and Ethical Procurement Policy; this policy also saw 59 hours of support for community initiatives.
- Over £3m in revenue income was secured from our commercial portfolio in 2021-22.

DESIRED OUTCOME 3: Keeping Brent on the Move

- In 2021/22 only 66.6% of Category 2 defects (non-emergency repairs to highways/footways) were responded to within their target time.
- 40.4% of Brent adults have not engaged with any kind of active travel within the past year. 15.6% adults have not done a continuous walk of at least 10 minutes within the past year, which is the fourth highest level in London (*Active Lives Survey*).
- 71.7% of Brent adults have not cycled within the past year (*Active Lives Survey*).

DESIRED OUTCOME 4: A Representative Workforce

- Brent Council has the most ethnically diverse workforce in London with 66% of staff identifying as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic, compared to 46% for London as a whole. However, Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic employees are less well represented at higher grades (31% PO5-PO8 and 55% PO1-PO4), compared with 77% of those in the lowest grade group (*Brent Workforce Equalities Report 2021*).

Strategic Priority 4: The Best Start in Life

DESIRED OUTCOME 1: Raised Aspirations, Achievement and Attainment

- Brent is ranked 15th in London for children achieving a standard 9-4 pass at GCSE, with 75.4% of children achieving the desired grade in 2020-21. The average Attainment 8 score varied between different ethnic groups – for example, Brent is ranked 23rd out of 32 for the performance of pupils from a black ethnic background, with an average score of 48.9, compared to 53.7 for the borough as a whole (*DfE Statistics: GCSEs (key stage 4)*).

DESIRED OUTCOME 2: Young People are Seen and Heard

- 46 residents engaged with Moving on Up in 2021/22.
- Only 55% of residents aged 16-34 felt very or fairly well informed about Brent council services; this is compared to 64% for the population overall (*RAS*).

Strategic Priority 5 – A Healthier Brent

DESIRED OUTCOME 1: Localised Services for Local Needs

- Only 18.7% of people in Brent aged 40-74 received an NHS health check – well below the London average of 33.0% (*Office for Health Improvement and Disparities: Optimise Health & Reduce Risks Early*).
- 8.9% of residents aged 17+ have diabetes. As well as being the fourth highest level across London, it's the eighth highest within England (*Office for Health Improvement and Disparities: Diabetes Prevalence and risk*).

DESIRED OUTCOME 2: Tackling Health Inequalities

- Health services were the second most valued feature of living in Brent, with 25% of residents selecting them as a priority. Health services were also the most frequently mentioned area where residents were asked where more money should be spent on services (chosen by 34%, joint with community safety) (*RAS*).
- Only 59% of residents feel there are enough opportunities to improve their health through exercise, down from 69% in 2018 (*RAS*).
- 40.1% of Brent five year olds have experience of visually obvious dental decay– this is the second highest level in London, behind Harrow on 42.4% (*Office for Health Improvement and Disparities: Child Health Profiles*).
- Brent is ranked ninth in London for the prevalence of obesity in year six pupils, with 25.2% of pupils being obese (*Office for Health Improvement and Disparities: Child Health Profiles*).
- 29.60% of Brent Children are active for an average of less than 30 minutes a day (*Active Lives Survey*).