

## Leader of the Council – Councillor Muhammed Butt

### Top news since my last report:

- **Changes to Cabinet** – I'm delighted to report that Councillor Promise Knight has now returned to Cabinet following a period of maternity leave. I'd like to thank the entire Cabinet for their support over this period, but in particular, Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, who has ably guided two portfolios over the period.

The full list of revised Cabinet responsibilities is printed overleaf.

- **Brent Council earns "well-performing" recognition following LGA Corporate Peer Challenge** - The Local Government Association (LGA) has recognised Brent Council as a well performing authority following a rigorous peer review earlier this year. The review praised the council's strong organisational culture, effective leadership and impressive achievements in regeneration, housing delivery and education. Brent's record on building new homes, among the highest in London, and its commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion were highlighted as particular strengths. The LGA also commended the council's collaborative approach with partners and communities, noting staff pride and engagement as key drivers of its success.

The review also identified areas for improvement, encouraging Brent to build on its progress by strengthening collaboration across departments, planning further ahead financially and accelerating its digital transformation. It urged the council to focus on improving housing management and addressing challenges in temporary accommodation while continuing to lead on equity and inclusion across the borough. We have welcomed the findings and published an action plan to respond to the recommendations, underlining our commitment to continuous improvement and delivering for its residents.

- **Brent Backs the Bakerloo Line Upgrade and Expansion** - Brent Council is firmly backing the Bakerloo Line Upgrade and Extension project, marking a major commitment to improving transport in the borough. On 3 June 2025, the council announced overwhelming support among residents and businesses, 81% of residents and Brent companies who believe the upgrade will improve accessibility, reduce journeys by car, and stimulate economic growth.

The project combines urgently needed modernisation—replacing ageing trains and outdated signalling with a planned southern extension through Old Kent Road to Lewisham, and eventually Hayes and Beckenham Junction. This strategic support underscores Brent's role in advocating for sustainable infrastructure that boosts connectivity, housing, jobs and secures a reliable future for the borough's transport network.

- **New chapter for Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre** - The closure will allow plans to provide a new leisure centre, adult education space and modern community facilities that better meets the needs of the local community to take a new step forward.

The redevelopment of Bridge Park is part of a wider masterplan to radically transform the local area, which could unlock £600 million of investment along the Hillside corridor in Stonebridge over the coming years.

The current leisure centre is based in a converted bus garage and its condition has deteriorated and now requires very substantial capital investment to keep the site open and safe on a sustainable basis. Major and expensive works to the lifts, roof and other key parts of the building would be needed. The report approved by Cabinet argues that this expense would not be a sensible use of limited council funding, particularly when there are proposals to build a new and larger, state-of-the-art centre for the community to use for years to come.

The proposals for the new development include:

- New flexible community spaces,
- An improved adult education centre,
- Fully accessible public gardens,
- Hundreds of new and affordable homes to meet the growing demand for housing

A significantly larger leisure centre, including a larger swimming pool, larger gym, sports hall, fitness studios and a cafe.

The proposals aim to create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable neighbourhood that will meet the needs of future generations. Additionally, the development will create a neighbourhood that helps tackle climate change with greener buildings, more trees, and areas that support wildlife.

- **Ministerial Visits** - I've been proactively meeting with Defra ministers to ensure Brent's message "Don't Mess With Brent" is heard loud and clear. In April, I met the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to secure their support for protecting Brent from unfair environmental regulations and ensuring our community gets its fair share of attention and resources.

In May, I join Baroness Fiona Twycross in Harlesden to discuss Brent's gambling-reform proposals, pressing for tougher restrictions on Adult Gaming Centres and a stronger public-health approach. Through these meetings (and future meetings planned) I put Brent's concerns at the heart of national conversations, advocating for the investment and policy changes our borough needs.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Muhammed.Butt@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Muhammed.Butt@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Portfolios – June 2025**

### **Leader:** *Councillor Muhammed Butt*

- Communications
- Public Affairs
- London Councils and Partnerships
- Emergency Planning
- Strategic Change Programme
- Brent Black Community Action Plan [BCAP]
- All executive functions not allocated to any other portfolio

### **Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources:** *Councillor Mili Patel*

- Finance
- Capital Investment
- Debt Recovery
- Shared IT Service
- Legal Services
- HR and Organisational Development
- Health and Safety
- Organisational Assurance and Resilience
- Democratic Services
- Complaints
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Diversity Ambassador

### **Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools:** *Councillor Gwen Grahl*

- Early Help
- Children's Social Care
- Family Wellbeing Centres
- Children's Safeguarding
- Looked after Children and Corporate Parenting
- Youth Offending
- Youth Provision and Strategy
- Brent Youth Parliament
- Pupil Referral Units
- SEND Provision (including Transport)
- Early Years
- Brent Family of Schools
- School Admissions and School Place Planning
- School Effectiveness
- School Attendance

### **Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement:** *Councillor Krupa Sheth*

- Public Realm
- Parks
- Trees (cross-cutting responsibility)
- Air Quality
- Waterways
- Roads and Pavements
- Active Travel and School Streets
- Waste and Recycling

- Street Cleaning
- Waste Enforcement
- Parking
- Street Lighting
- CCTV
- Building Control and Enforcement
- Regulatory Services
- Pest Control
- Planning Enforcement
- Public Space Protection Orders

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

- Climate and Ecological Strategy
- Procurement and Community Wealth Building
- Social Value
- Strategic Commissioning
- Community Engagement
- Brent Connects
- NCIL and Community Grants
- Voluntary Sector Liaison
- Corporate Performance
- Innovation and Insight
- Digital Transformation

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

- Adult Social Care
- Public Health
- Sports, Leisure and Outdoor Activities
- Adults Safeguarding
- Supported Living
- Adaptations and Support
- Carers Support
- Brent Health Matters
- Mental Health and Dementia Support
- Alcohol and Substance Misuse
- Food Justice
- Liaison with Health Partners

**Cabinet Member for Housing:** *Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson*

- Housing Services and Management (including Repairs, Engagement with Tenants and Leaseholders and Landlord Services)
- Housing Needs and Support
- Homelessness and Rough-Sleeping Support
- Private Rented Sector Support and Landlord Licensing
- Liaison with Registered Providers
- Housing companies: i4B, First Wave Housing
- Member Responsible for Complaints – Housing

**Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property:** *Councillor Teo Benea*

- Regeneration
- Planning

- Property
- Facilities Management
- New Council Housing Programme
- Local Plan
- London Growth Plan
- Strategic and Economic Development
- Inward Investment
- Town Centre Managers
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Affordable Workplaces

**Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Jobs and Skills:** *Councillor Harbi Farah*

- Community Safety
- Liaison with Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)
- Prevent
- Noise Nuisance
- Violence Reduction Unit
- VAWG
- Refugees and Asylum Support
- Jobs and Skills
- Brent Starts and Brent Works
- Good Work Standard and London Living Wage
- Business Engagement
- Apprenticeships

**Cabinet Member for Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture:**  
*Councillor Promise Knight*

- Resident Services
- Citizenship and Registration Services
- Welfare Support
- Council Tax and Business Rates Support Service
- Debt Support
- Blue Badges
- Community Hubs
- New Horizons Centre
- Libraries, Heritage and Culture Services
- Mortuaries, Bereavement and Cemeteries Services

## Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources – Councillor Mili Patel

### Top news since my last report:

- **Budget 2025/26:** The Council approved its budget for 2025/26 in February, safeguarding frontline services for our residents in the face of 15 years of cuts. Officers, Cabinet, and Members dedicated thousands of hours to ensuring that the foundations of our council remain strong, and that we can deliver the right services to our residents. A commitment to even more new, safe and secure homes; the highest number of social housing starts in London; raising standards for private renters; putting an arm around those in food and fuel poverty; equipping people of all ages with access to training and jobs; keeping Brent clean and on the move by looking after our infrastructure and environment; maintaining our award-winning parks and open spaces; and providing the best start in life for our children through to dignity in the last stages of life – this is a budget that safeguards what matters most to the residents of Brent.
- **Community Cohesion and Inclusion Event Strategy:** Brent is one of the most diverse boroughs in the country, a place where different cultures, faiths, and traditions come together to create a vibrant and inclusive community. Our diversity is our strength, and it is vital that we continue to celebrate and foster cohesion among all residents, from a breadth of backgrounds. The Council has refreshed its approach to community cohesion events, looking to work more effectively with community groups to celebrate EDI events throughout the calendar year.
- **Gambling Campaign:** Brent Council is leading the way on calling for urgent reform of the Gambling Act 2005, whose “Aim to Permit” policy makes it extremely difficult for councils to say no to new gambling premises. With the grassroots voices of residents in Harlesden and beyond, we’re proud to have joined forces with over 40 other councils and mayors across the country, making the case to Government that the time for change is now. The Council has also commissioned the Social Market Foundation think tank to produce a report, which will make a series of policy recommendations on how to empower councils to take back control of their high streets.

### Other news:

- **Legal Services:** Our Legal Services team had their annual LEXCEL assessment in January 2025, where they once again performed extremely well in applying the principles of the LEXCEL Framework to a high standard.
- **People Strategy:** Brent is proud to have launched its new People Strategy, embedding inclusion and equality into everything we do as a workforce and facing outwards to our partners and communities. This refreshed Strategy is another component in our commitment to developing a skilled and engaged workforce that reflects the diversity of our borough.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Mili.Patel@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Mili.Patel@brent.gov.uk)

## Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power – Councillor Jake Rubin

### Top news since my last report:

- **Brent Schools Climate Summit:** The Brent Schools Climate Summit, held at the Civic Centre, brought together primary and secondary students from across the borough to discuss and plan climate actions. Focusing on sustainable transport, energy-efficient buildings, biodiversity, and waste management, the students, acting as eco ambassadors, developed practical strategies to implement in their schools. The best projects will receive financial support to help turn these ideas into reality, contributing to Brent's efforts to become a greener, more sustainable borough. A big thank you to our climate officers for organising and executing this successfully.
- **Youth-Led 'Roots of Brent' Documentary:** A powerful new documentary, *Roots of Brent*, created by local young people, highlights the effects of climate change on the youth of Brent and showcases the inspiring climate actions taking place in the community. Over six months, the participants - aged 7-25 - developed key skills in documentary production, from filming and editing to conducting interviews. Supported by Brent's climate action programme and sponsored by FM Conway, the project culminated in a premiere at the Brent Climate Showcase on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025. This initiative shows the importance of engaging with/empowering young people to lead the charge in tackling climate change.
- **Love Where You Live Grant now open for Brent based community projects**  
- Brent Council's Love Where You Live Grant gives power to residents and local organisations to brighten our borough and bring communities together. I encourage anyone who has a positive idea to apply and make use of the support Brent is making available. Thank you to Wembley Stadium for their partnership on this programme. The Love Where You Live Grant is now accepting applications for grants between £1,000 and £15,000 to support community-led projects that improve the lives of Brent residents.

Brent Council will partner with Wembley Stadium Foundation (WSF) to award grants to projects across Brent. Wembley Stadium Foundation is an independent grant-making charity, using the power of Wembley Stadium to empower grassroots communities, and create transformative experiences. This collaboration intends to increase funding, better support Brent-based organisations to improve community cohesion and empowerment and provide opportunities that are available to all.

The grants can be used for activities, events or equipment that contribute to key areas such as, developing community and social cohesion, tackling environmental issues, addressing inequalities and expanding local engagement, capacity-building, tackling social isolation and reducing health inequalities.

- **Up to £5,000 available for climate-friendly community projects** - Brent Council has launched Round 4 of its Together Towards Zero grant, making up to £5000 available to residents and community organisations in Brent to deliver one off climate and ecology projects. Eligible applicants including residents,

constituted community groups, faith organisations, charities, housing associations, social enterprises and local businesses can apply for grants of between £1 and £5000.

To date the scheme has supported 35 projects across the borough with a total value of £32,490. Proposed projects must align with the council's five theme climate strategy, deliver measurable carbon savings or biodiversity gains, and actively engage local people especially young people aged 5 to 25, older residents, and those from ethnic minority backgrounds or with disabilities. This funding programme demonstrates Brent Council's commitment to supporting community led climate action and empowering local people to deliver meaningful environmental improvements.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Jake.Rubin@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Jake.Rubin@brent.gov.uk)



## **Cabinet Member for Customer Experience, Resident Support and Culture – Councillor Promise Knight**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- **£550,000 Arts Council Funding for ‘Vi-Brent’ Initiative:** At the start of 2025, nine leading arts organisations in Brent secured £550,000 of funding from Arts Council England's National Lottery Place Partnership. The funding will support the ‘Vi-Brent’ initiative, a three-year programme aimed at boosting the borough’s cultural sector and inspiring young people through the arts. The programme will engage over 7,000 children and young people in underserved communities, providing them with access to a diverse range of creative opportunities.

The initiative will be delivered by a coalition of organisations, including Brent Council, Punchdrunk Enrichment, Fresh Arts, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Mahogany Arts, Unique Community, Young Brent Foundation, Garden Studios, and The Awareness Tap. Key projects include a pilot programme offering free arts provision for primary schools, a children’s arts festival involving 4000 young people, and skills bootcamps for careers in music production, film, TV, and theatre. This initiative is a fantastic opportunity to empower Brent’s young people through culture and creativity, opening pathways into the arts and creative industries.

- **A new story for Kilburn Library** - Kilburn Library will temporarily close soon for a landmark £1million refurbishment, creating a modern, inclusive and vibrant space for the entire community. This investment is made possible by £783,000 in funding from the council’s Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL, is a charge that local authorities can impose on new developments to fund infrastructure projects) and £231,500 from Arts Council England, the refurbishment will provide a range of exciting new features to better meet the needs of Brent’s growing and diverse communities in the south of the borough.

Library users asked for additional study spaces, exhibition areas, and enhanced digital facilities – and we are pleased to deliver on these requests.

This landmark investment in Kilburn Library will provide increased capacity for learning, a versatile new space for events and creative activities, and a dedicated digital zone for all.

Visitors can look forward to an exciting new outlook including:

- A brand-new digital area with upgraded IT facilities
- A new modernised, comfortable and welcoming children’s library, offering an engaging learning environment
- Flexible spaces for events, activities, community programmes and exhibitions
- More study areas for students and remote workers
- A new extension featuring a hireable community space

The new community space will be available for hire at competitive rates, offering local groups and residents an affordable venue for meetings, workshops and events.

During the refurbishment period, temporary alternative arrangements will be in place to continue serving the community and ensure access to key services. We are working on the details and updates will follow.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Promise.Knight@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Promise.Knight@brent.gov.uk)

## Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools – Councillor Gwen Grahll

### Top news since my last report:

- **Launch of Brent Youth Strategy 2025-2028:** The new Brent Youth Strategy was officially launched at St Raphael's Family Wellbeing Centre, with young people at the heart of its development. This travel-themed strategy is aimed at empowering 11-18-year-olds, and up to 25 for those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). It covers four key areas: youth engagement, skills and opportunities, safety, and health and wellbeing.

Developed in collaboration with Brent Youth Parliament members and local organisations, the strategy seeks to ensure that every young person in Brent has access to the support, advice, and opportunities needed to thrive. It is the second youth strategy for the borough, following the success of the 2021-2023 strategy, which was created in response to the Independent Brent Poverty Commission's recommendation to support young people through a comprehensive Youth and Community Strategy. This is a strategy made for young people, by young people. The launch was an important milestone in Brent's ongoing commitment to creating a brighter future for its youth.

- **SEND School Nearing Completion:** The new £22 million Wembley Manor School, a crucial addition to Brent's educational infrastructure, is nearing completion. Designed to meet the growing demand for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) places in the borough, the school will provide an additional 150 places for local children. The final modular units for classrooms were installed earlier this month, marking a significant milestone in the project.

The school will provide much-needed, specialist support to students and their families, reducing the need for pupils to travel outside the borough for education. The site, which spans 3,801 square metres over three stories, has been designed to the highest sustainability standards, achieving a BREEAM design score of 98.9 and a perfect score of 45 out of 45 for the Considerate Constructors Scheme. These achievements highlight the quality and environmental sustainability of the new facility, which is on track to achieve an overall BREEAM Outstanding rating. The school is set to open in October 2025 and will be a valuable resource for Brent's SEND community, offering a nurturing, state-of-the-art learning environment.

- **Ending the 21-hour rule for young carers:** Following the Full Council motion passed in November calling for the end of the 21-hour rule for young carers, significant progress has been made. Brent has worked closely with the Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) to drive forward this policy change. We designed and distributed a survey to young carers, youth officers, career advisors, and schools, which has provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by young carers in the borough. This data has been used to inform SSAC's research on the issue, and as a result, Brent has been invited to participate in roundtable discussions with the Secretary of State. These discussions will be a critical next step in the policy development process, with recommendations expected later this year. In addition, Brent continues to work with the APPG for Young Carers/Young Adult Carers to improve the collection and use of data on

young carers and feed into their inquiry on policy improvements. This work is helping to ensure that young carers in Brent are given the support they need to thrive.

**Other news:**

- **Brent Pupils Offered Top Primary School Choices:** Brent Council has received positive feedback on primary school placements for the 2025-2026 academic year. A total of 96% of families entering Reception Year have been offered a place at one of their top three preferred schools, with 86% receiving their first choice. This is in line with pan-London averages and reflects the high quality of Brent's schools, many of which have been rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. This result shows our commitment to ensuring that every child in Brent receives the best start in life through access to excellent primary education. The allocation process, which was completed in early 2025, allows parents to have confidence in the local education system and provides families with a range of high-quality school options.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Gwen.Grahl@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Gwen.Grahl@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Leisure – Councillor Neil Nerva**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- **Food Strategy Workshop:** On 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025, 60 stakeholders gathered for the Food Strategy Workshop, where they worked collaboratively to co-design Brent's forthcoming Food Strategy. This ambitious strategy seeks to address the interconnected challenges across health, education, employment, food growing, the environment, community resilience, and poverty. The insights gathered reflect Brent's unique strengths and challenges, and the workshop served as a critical step in developing a comprehensive, equitable food system for the borough. Participants emphasised the need for an integrated approach to ensure that food security, sustainability, and public health are prioritised within the community.
- **The Belonging Project – Tackling Social Isolation:** Brent Council has launched a new service aimed at preventing social isolation and loneliness, particularly among adults. The Belonging Project, run by Ashford Place, will proactively connect isolated adults with local networks, peer support, activities, and vital services. By creating strong local connections, the project aims to enhance well-being and reduce loneliness in the borough, helping to build a community where everyone feels they belong. This initiative marks a significant step in addressing one of Brent's most pressing public health challenges.
- **Integrated Neighbourhood Dashboards – Tackling Health Inequalities:** In collaboration with the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams at the Integrated Care Partnership, Brent has launched the Integrated Neighbourhood Dashboards. These dashboards provide an evidence-based approach to identifying health issues and inequalities within each of our five neighbourhoods. By reviewing data on social determinants of health, life-course outcomes, and health disparities (including the CORE20Plus 5 framework), the dashboards will help local services target interventions and improve the overall health and well-being of Brent's communities. The launch of these dashboards marks a significant milestone in our efforts to reduce health inequalities and tailor interventions to the specific needs of each neighbourhood.

### **Other news:**

- **Somali Community Welcomes Royal Visit:** On 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025, The Princess Royal visited Church End to learn about the Brent Health Matters (BHM) programme, which has been addressing health inequalities in the Somali community since its inception. The BHM programme, which was launched in response to the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on the borough, has conducted over 10,000 health checks and continues to engage with local communities through co-produced events. Recently, a health event held at Chalkhill Community Centre saw 210 Somali residents attend, where health issues such as diabetes, hypertension, and mental health were discussed. The success of BHM lies in its partnership with local organisations, ensuring that the services are effectively reaching those most in need.
- **Assessment Days** - I was proud to join our Adult Social Care teams at one of Brent's Community Assessment Day events this spring at the Church End and

Roundwood Unity Centre. These events bring together social workers, health professionals and partner organisations to offer residents immediate support, advice and care assessments on the spot. We welcomed over 120 people on the day, many of whom were able to access help there and then, including free health and wellbeing checks from Brent Health Matters and financial advice from Citizens Advice. By using new tools like the Ask Sara digital assessment system and AI-powered note-taking, we were able to spend more time face to face with residents and less time on paperwork. I am proud that these fast-track events show our fresh approach to adult social care, making it more accessible, more responsive, and empowering residents with the information and support they need without long waits.

- **Age-friendly borough** - I am proud to lead Brent's work as an age friendly borough, making sure our older residents feel valued, included and supported. Earlier this year we launched the Age Friendly Brent steering group, bringing together local organisations such as Brent Pensioners Forum, Age UK and Elders Voice to develop a borough wide strategy based on the World Health Organisation's eight domains of age friendliness. We have already held focus groups with older residents who use adult social care and those who attend community Zumba classes to understand their priorities. We are also seeking additional funding to appoint a dedicated coordinator to drive this work forward. More than eleven per cent of our residents are already aged sixty five or over and this figure is expected to rise by seventy eight per cent between twenty twenty and twenty forty one, so it is essential that we act now. Through practical improvements such as safer pavements and more benches, better access to transport, social events to reduce loneliness and more inclusive communications, we are making Brent a place where everyone at every stage of life can live well and feel part of our community.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Neil.Nerva@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Neil.Nerva@brent.gov.uk)

## Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement – Councillor Krupa Sheth

### Top news since my last report:

- **Low pollution routes** - A ground-breaking initiative, funded by Defra, has mapped out a number of low pollution walking routes for 93 schools across the borough. Tackling polluted air is so important because it can have such a negative effect without us even noticing. That is why I am delighted that so many local pupils have got involved in this plan to use low air pollution routes. Thank you to Zoe who made a beautiful mural which has brought more life to Harlesden.

As part of the campaign which has delivered 53 workshops and reached 6,200 students so they know how best to dodge pollution, a new mural has gone up in Harlesden.

Hand-painted by artist Zoe Alleyne from Bud Studio. Developed through workshops with pupils and local community groups, the artwork celebrates clean air and active travel. And in true eco-style, it was painted by hand to keep its environmental footprint low.

At Furness Primary School, pupils took part in a Citizen Science Day, using handheld monitors to track pollution levels on different walking routes. A real eye-opener on the dangers of pollution hotspots – and the benefits of steering clear.

Breathe Clean which aims to steer students and parents towards quieter, cleaner walking routes. Find out more on the Breathe Clean Brent website: <https://breathecleanbrent.org>

- **Millions in funding for a Better and Safer Kilburn** - In partnership with Camden and Westminster Councils, we have successfully bid to Transport for London for over £8 million funding for 'Better, Safer Kilburn', a scheme to improve the public realm and road safety in the neighbouring boroughs on Kilburn High Road.

The consultation, undertaken between July and August 2024 asked 'Overall, what are your feelings about the proposed scheme?', with 82% of responses being positive. There was also strong support for 'more trees, pocket parks and planting' and 'wider pavements, more pedestrian crossing and continuous pavements'.

Camden and Brent councils have already spent over £1.5 million on upgrading paving, lighting and street furniture in the upper section of Kilburn High Road, as an earlier phase of the overall scheme. Construction was also recently completed in the lower section, including a protected cycle lane and new street furniture funded by Camden and Westminster councils and TfL.

I know that residents will be delighted at the huge investment that has been secured to make Kilburn High Road greener, more accessible, and better for pedestrians. Residents have been crying out for investment here, so I am very excited to work closely with Camden and Westminster councils, and TfL.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Krupa.Sheth@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Krupa.Sheth@brent.gov.uk)



## Cabinet Member for Housing – Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson

### Top news since my last report:

- **Brent pledges rapid improvement following housing regulator's report -** Rapid and sustained improvements in the way Brent manages housing services have been promised by the council, following a judgement published by the Regulator of Social Housing.

The judgement, published on 28 May 2025, found that the council has not met all of its responsibilities as a landlord in delivering against the outcomes of the Safety and Quality Standard, saying 'significant improvement is needed'.

The council voluntarily referred itself to the Regulator last month, after its Housing Improvement Plan highlighted concerns with how building safety risk assessment actions had previously been managed. The regulator has said the council has 'engaged positively with us since making its self-referral and has plans in place to understand the wider impact of its current position.'

While all required safety checks had been completed across its housing estates, the council identified weaknesses in how follow-up actions were managed and recorded.

As soon as concerns were identified, the council notified tenants to explain what is being done and the council has committed to working closely with the Regulator to ensure rapid and lasting improvements for tenants. It has appointed and is working closely with health and safety specialists and is developing a robust recovery plan which will see internal processes and accountability strengthened in order to improve safety compliance. In addition, the council is appointing more contractors to address overdue actions and is committing to keeping tenants informed throughout the process.

- **115 new homes for families in Grand Union -** We are proud that over the past year, Brent Council has overseen the delivery of 434 new affordable homes in the borough. Developments such as Grand Union help us in our commitment to increasing affordable housing.

We are proud to have worked closely with the St George Grand Union team from the outset to ensure this new neighbourhood delivers what the community needs, allowing us to plan ahead and prepare for the future with the right homes, facilities, jobs and infrastructure in place to support the local people of today and tomorrow.

These affordable homes are much more than just bricks and mortar, they provide a safe and secure haven for our residents. What's more, they are also set within a serene, canalside location, with lots of exciting new restaurants, shops and amenities on their doorstep, helping them to thrive in their new home.

- **Major crackdown on unlicensed landlords -** Enforcement officers patrolled the streets of Brent in late May, as part of our ongoing borough-wide operation to identify and take action against landlords renting out properties without a licence.

The law states that every landlord who rents out a property in Brent must have a licence, except for properties located in Wembley Park. Multi-agency teams, including officers from private housing services, anti-social behaviour and environmental services, went door-to-door across targeted areas. They provided waste management advice, listened to residents' concerns about anti-social behaviour, checked whether properties were free from serious health or safety hazards and took enforcement action against unlicensed landlords.

Every landlord in Brent is legally required to have a licence to rent out their property. This law exists to protect people from landlords who put them at risk by ignoring safety standards, cramming too many people into one home, or failing to carry out essential repairs.

We know that poor housing conditions can be extremely stressful and harmful to people's health and wellbeing. No one should have to live in damp, overcrowded, or dangerous conditions while their landlord looks the other way. That's why we're using targeted intelligence to focus our patrols on streets where we suspect landlords are renting without a licence. This is about protecting our residents and making sure landlords take their responsibilities seriously.

Responsible landlords play a vital role in providing quality homes and helping to ease the housing crisis - we won't let rogue landlords ruin the reputation of those doing the right thing. If you're a landlord in Brent and you're breaking the law, we will find you and you will face prosecution and hefty fines.

- **A new beginning for families with launch of new homelessness service -** Brent Council has opened a new homelessness service for families by relocating the Families Homelessness Service from the Civic Centre in Wembley to the New Horizons Centre in Roundwood. The expansion is part of a broader Community Wellbeing Programme aimed at addressing the homelessness emergency caused by rising housing pressures and the cost of living crisis.

The service currently supports an average of 61 families per week, around 3,200 households per year, with priority given to families with dependent children and pregnant women. The new centre includes dedicated reception and triage facilities, private interview rooms and administrative areas funded through a £400,000 capital budget. Co-location with wider specialist services including food support, debt advice and public health initiatives is expected to deliver better preventative and sustainable outcomes, reducing the need for temporary accommodation, rough sleeping and longer term social care. Operating five days a week, the service can now support up to 1,000 families annually and demonstrates Brent's commitment to providing integrated and outcome focused support for its most vulnerable residents.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Fleur.Donnely-Jackson@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Fleur.Donnely-Jackson@brent.gov.uk)

## Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, Jobs and Skills – Councillor Harbi Farah

### Top news since my last report:

- **Minister of State for Employment Visits Brent's Family Wellbeing Centre:** In May 2025, Alison McGovern, Minister of State for Employment, visited Brent's Family Wellbeing Centre in Harlesden, accompanied by Deputy Mayors of London Debbie Weekes-Bernard and Joanne McCartney. The ministerial delegation met with parents, children, and partners providing vital services at the centre, such as Jobcentre Plus, Citizens Advice, and charities offering support for refugee and migrant families. The centre provides a wide range of services, including food parcels, advice on budgeting, and family activities. McGovern emphasised the importance of such services in the face of the cost-of-living crisis, noting that poverty can isolate families from their communities. Brent's eight Family Wellbeing Centres continue to support families struggling with daily necessities while also offering access to arts and entertainment. The visit follows a similar one in October last year by the Secretaries of State for Education and Work and Pensions, who launched a 10-year plan to tackle child poverty in Brent. We are in touch with the Minister and with the Deputy Mayor for Skills and Employment for a follow-up visit.
- **Upcoming Wembley Jobs Fair 2025:** The highly anticipated Wembley Jobs Fair 2025 is set to take place on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at Wembley Stadium. More than 150 companies are lined-up to showcase their current vacancies, including the Brent-based IKEA and global brands such as M&S, KPMG and Coca-Cola. Jobseekers will be able to meet with employers in retail, construction, tech, travel, health and hospitality industries and in some cases, apply for roles on the spot. Brent Works, the council's employment service and partners will also be on hand to provide one-to-one personalised career advice, and there will be inspiring development workshops running throughout the day. We had a record-breaking turnout last year with over 8,000 attendees. 390 people secured good quality jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities as a direct result of attending the jobs fair. The event provides an invaluable platform for job seekers to meet with employers, attend workshops, and network with industry professionals, offering new opportunities across various sectors. Prospective attendees are encouraged to sign up via Eventbrite, ensuring they bring ID and relevant documents with them.
- **Brent Start Enrolments for 2024/25 Academic Year:** Brent Start continues to provide access to high-quality education and training. For the 2024/25 academic year, there have been 5,464 enrolments across 615 courses, representing 1,906 individual learners. Brent Start is committed to providing accessible learning opportunities to residents and equipping them with the skills needed to succeed in the workforce.
- **Skills Bootcamp – Gas Engineering Graduation:** On 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025, we hosted a celebratory graduation for 18 learners who completed the Level 3 Gas Engineering Skills Bootcamp. This initiative, part of Brent Works, is aimed at providing local residents with the training needed to secure high-quality, well-paid jobs. To date, 79 Brent residents have been placed into employment following

their participation in the programme. Additionally, Brent Council has secured an additional £263,097 in funding from the Greater London Authority for Wave 6 of the programme, enabling 40 more residents to enrol in the Gas Engineering course. The grant agreement is currently pending, with the programme continuing to provide essential skills and employment opportunities to the community.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Harbi.Farah@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Harbi.Farah@brent.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property – Councillor Teo Benea**

### **Top news since my last report:**

- **£5 Million for Major Alperton Station Accessibility Overhaul** - Commuters using Alperton Underground Station are set for a transformative upgrade, with Brent Council announcing a crucial £5 million funding injection towards full step-free access and other vital improvements. This significant commitment, leveraging the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL), will be matched by Transport for London (TfL), unlocking a comprehensive station overhaul anticipated to complete by Summer 2027.

The decision, confirmed at the Cabinet meeting on 19 May 2025, marks a major victory for accessibility and urban regeneration in Brent. Alperton Station, which serves over 3 million passengers annually, currently lacks step-free access and suffers from congestion at peak times and outdated facilities.

The approved plans will see the installation of new lifts, an increase in ticket gates to ease overcrowding, and the provision of upgraded, fully accessible toilet facilities, including baby changing amenities. TfL's concept designs promise to respect the station's historic character while delivering modern, inclusive infrastructure.

- **South Kilburn Single Delivery Partner** - Brent Council has launched the procurement process to appoint a Single Delivery Partner to deliver the remaining phases of the South Kilburn regeneration, one of the borough's largest and most ambitious projects. The partner will deliver at least 1,600 additional homes, alongside a new primary school, improved parks, community facilities, and enhanced public spaces, completing a transformation that has already provided over 1,900 homes delivered or under construction, 1,133 households permanently rehoused, and five new parks created. The regeneration has won 18 design and community awards to date and enjoys strong resident backing, with 84 percent voting in favour of the programme in a formal ballot. The Single Delivery Partner appointment reflects Brent's commitment to delivering a further 250 shovel ready homes at the Hereford and Exeter site, securing affordable housing, and embedding social value, long term stewardship and meaningful public realm improvements, ensuring South Kilburn becomes a thriving, sustainable and inclusive neighbourhood for generations to come.
- **Brent backs West London Orbital** - Brent Council has made a significant investment of £465,500 to progress the West London Orbital Overground line. This funding will support the next stage of the project, which aims to convert existing freight rail lines into a new passenger service, connecting areas such as Cricklewood and Neasden with Acton, Brentford and Hounslow. The line will bring a host of benefits, including connecting underserved communities to employment opportunities, accelerating the delivery of much-needed homes, and helping to ease congestion on London's roads. The project is backed by the West London Alliance, which includes Brent and neighbouring boroughs, and Transport for London aims to see the line carrying passengers in the early 2030s.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.

Contact: [Cllr.Teo.Benea@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Teo.Benea@brent.gov.uk)