

Leader of the Council – Councillor Muhammed Butt

Top news since my last report:

- **Visitor Levy and Voluntary Ticket Contributions:** I wrote to the Secretary of State with fellow London borough leaders to press for new fiscal powers, specifically the ability to introduce a visitor levy and a voluntary ticket contribution. A levy on hotel and Airbnb stays would help ensure residents and local services benefit fairly from London's global tourism economy, while a small contribution on large event tickets could restore support for grassroots culture after years of cuts. We argued that these measures are about fairness, sustainability, and reinvestment – ensuring councils can protect services, nurture local talent, and maintain the vibrancy that draws millions of visitors to London each year. I will keep council updated on progress with the campaign and building a broad set of support for it, in the coming months.
- **Transport for London Commissioner meeting:** I used a visit from London's Walking and Cycling Commissioner, Will Norman, to spotlight local walking and cycling improvements, like School Streets and new cycle routes, and to press the case for further investment in our transport network. We acknowledged that residents rely on public transport, and with thousands more homes planned, demand will only rise. I highlighted that Brent is one of the capital's biggest housebuilders, and that schemes like the West London Orbital and the Bakerloo line upgrade and extension would not only support that growth but also boost economic opportunities for our residents. I noted our commitment of over £465,000 to keep the West London Orbital moving forward with this shovel-ready scheme, using an existing freight line. It is backed by 69 per cent of residents, could deliver 15,800 new homes and 23,000 jobs. We have also joined 32 London councils calling for the Bakerloo extension to be approved and fast-tracked, it's estimated to generate £1.5 billion for the national economy and support 150,000 new jobs.
- **Huge cash injection into Brent:** I am proud that Cabinet has agreed a transformational £14.5 million investment to revitalise Brent's roads, parks, and public safety infrastructure. Funded through our Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy, this programme will deliver real improvements residents can see and feel every day, smoother roads, safer pavements, vibrant parks, and smarter CCTV. Building on the £15 million we've already invested since 2022, we're putting another £10.7 million into highway maintenance, £730,000 into our award-winning parks, and £3.1 million into expanding and modernising our CCTV network. This is about restoring pride in Brent's streets and creating a cleaner, safer, greener borough where residents feel connected and proud of where they live. We'll keep residents and members updated as projects get underway.
- **Cabinet Meeting 8th September:** I would like to take the opportunity to remind all Members of the Brent Cabinet meeting on Monday 8 September at 10am in the Conference Hall at Brent Civic Centre, where we'll be taking more decisions that will shape Brent's future. On the agenda is our new Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Strategy, including proposals for Lynton Close that demonstrate our

commitment to fairness and safe living conditions for every community. We'll be considering the relocation of Islamia Primary School to Brentfield Road, securing long-term stability for a much-loved local institution, and agreeing new NCIL funding to invest directly in grassroots projects across our neighbourhoods. Cabinet will also look at procurement of leisure facilities, while also pressing forward with the expansion of our Council Homes Acquisition Programme backed by GLA funding, another step in tackling London's housing crisis. Alongside this, we will kickstart a review of the Local Plan to ensure Brent continues to harness the growth in our borough. Finally, we'll take stock of how we respond to residents' concerns through the Complaints Annual Report and scrutinise our strong financial management in the Treasury Outturn. These are big decisions about homes, schools, fairness and local investment, and I encourage you to come along and see Brent's leadership in action.

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

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

Top news since my last report:

- **Fair Funding Review:** As part of its recognition of the state of local government finances, and its commitment to restabilising them, the Government launched a Fair Funding Review earlier this year which Brent's finance officers have responded to. We welcome many of the proposals in the consultation, which will go a real way to reforming the sector, and we will ensure that the challenges Brent faces are heard loud and clear.
- **Budget 2026/27:** Our Finance team are beginning to work through the details as we look to the next financial year, ensuring that Brent's careful financial stewardship and relative stability are not endangered as we continue to face a wave of challenges. From increased reliance on Adult Social Care to an unrelenting housing waiting list of over 30,000 people, the work begins once more to set out the blueprint for the Council's finances.
- **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.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me at the email address below:

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

Top news since my last report:

- **Well and Warm Energy Advice Service:** Over 1,000 consultations have been undertaken with vulnerable residents who may struggle to heat their homes ahead of the winter months, successfully surpassing our target ahead of time.
- **Launch of Brent Energy Efficiency Grant for Buildings:** This August, we marked the launch of the Energy Efficiency Grant for Buildings. This builds on the previous Brent for Business Energy Efficiency Scheme which ran in 2022-23 and is designed to help local organisations and businesses make sustainable improvements to their premises. Grants of up to £9,000 are available to implement recommendations from energy efficiency audits, and we have already received strong interest from over 20 organisations.
- **Brent Schools Climate Action Summit:** We were proud to have held the first ever Brent Schools Climate Action Summit, as part of London Climate Action Week, bringing together 200 students and teachers for an engaging day about how we can collectively tackle climate change in Brent. Grants will now be distributed to schools in September, for projects such as gardening clubs and rewilding zones.
- **SCIL investment into Church End and Roundwood:** Brent has committed significant SCIL funding to enhance Church End and Roundwood's appearance, and residents' quality of life. 'Green Corridors' will focus on better walking and cycling access, cleaner air, increased safety, and overall community wellbeing.
- **NCIL Investment at September Cabinet:** This year's NCIL programme represents one of the most ambitious investments we have made directly in our neighbourhoods, with over £8 million allocated to projects that respond to residents' priorities and show Brent is serious about fairness, growth and pride in place. We are funding 39 public realm projects, from pothole repairs, new cycle hangars, four new School Streets, expanded CCTV, Neighbourhood Patrol Officers and tougher waste enforcement through Don't Mess with Brent. We are backing our young people and cultural life through Brent Beats and Roots, supporting Cricklewood Irish heritage, the Kilburn Music Mile, and Buskers Corners, while also investing in classrooms for Brent Start and cost of living support including school uniforms and debt advice. We are making Brent greener with 1,500 new trees, green corridors in Church End and Kingsbury, a Habitat Bank to rewild the borough, new rain gardens, park upgrades and community planting schemes. Other highlights include new digital noticeboards and maps at park entrances, investment in town centre spring cleaning, crime reduction partnerships in Kilburn, outdoor gyms, repair cafes, and murals celebrating our diverse identity. These are investments that touch every ward, tackle crime, climate and cost of living together, and show how this council is delivering the basics while investing in our future.

- **Social Progress Index:** We were excited to publish the first Brent Social Progress Index – a multi-layered tool that will help measure and track key indicators on what contributes towards residents' quality of life. Data is available at ward level and can be found on the Brent website.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me at the email address below:

Contact: Cllr.Jake.Rubin@brent.gov.uk

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

Top news since my last report:

- **The success of Brent's libraries:** Brent's libraries saw over 110,000 visits in July, with even more expected for August. This number is a testament to the hard work of our Libraries and Heritage teams, opening up our community spaces to residents of all ages. Our Summer Fun Reading Festival, which promotes the free and diverse programme of events and reading for fun throughout the school holidays, reached over 11,000 Brent pupils at 21 schools; and a number of ESOL, exercise classes, and art classes have taken place at libraries across the borough.
- **New Horizons Centre:** The Community Wellbeing Service at the New Horizons Centre continues to grow as a collaborative, multi-agency hub, supporting some of Brent's most vulnerable residents. As well as exploring their housing options, families are able to speak to council officers from Adult Social Care, making sure we can identify a whole host of potential issues under one roof.
- **A new story for Kilburn Library:** Kilburn Library has now temporarily closed 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.

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 with further details and updates to follow.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me at the email address below:

Contact: Cllr.Promise.Knight@brent.gov.uk

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

Top news since my last report:

- **GCSE results:** I am so proud to celebrate our borough's young people on GCSE Results Day, which has once again shown Brent's strength and resilience. All 15 of our secondary schools with Year 11 students have now reported their provisional results, and Brent continues to outperform the national picture. This year our students achieved strong pass grades at 9 to 5 that are 10.7 percentage points above the national average, and standard pass grades at 9 to 4 that are 8.4 percentage points higher. These results are a credit not only to the hard work and determination of our young people, but also to the teachers, support staff, parents and carers who have supported them throughout their journey. This is not just a moment of celebration, it is proof that when communities rally, schools deliver, and ambition meets opportunity, Brent's next generation can and will shine.
- **A-Level and BTEC results:** I am delighted to celebrate the success of Brent's young people on A Level and BTEC Results Day, which has once again shown the strength of our schools and the determination of our students. Across all 15 of our schools offering A Levels, the overall pass rate stands at 98.4 per cent, higher than the national average of 97.4 per cent. An impressive 32.2 per cent of results were at the very top A* or A grades, compared with 28.2 per cent nationally, and 83.4 per cent of results were A* to C, 5.7 percentage points above the national average. Our vocational learners also excelled, with a 99.4 per cent overall pass rate and nearly three quarters of grades awarded at Distinction or Distinction*. These achievements are a tribute to the talent and resilience of Brent's next generation, and to the teachers, support staff, parents and carers who have helped them thrive. This is not just a day of celebration, it is proof that Brent's young people are ready to lead the way into the future.
- **Islamia Primary School:** I am proud that we have secured the future of Islamia Primary School, Brent's only Muslim state funded primary school, by agreeing plans to relocate it to the Gwenneth Rickus site on Brentfield Road by September 2027. Without this move, the school faced closure following an eviction notice from its current site on Salusbury Road. Parents, staff and residents told us clearly that the existing split site was overcrowded and unsuitable, and the new site will provide modern facilities, more outdoor space and better provision for children with special educational needs. By making use of a site that would otherwise have stood empty due to falling rolls, we are both protecting diversity of choice in our family of schools and ensuring children receive the safe, high-quality environment they deserve.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me at the email address below:

Contact: 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:

- **Oral health in Brent libraries:** I am determined to tackle Brent's poor oral health outcomes for children, which are sadly among the worst in the country. That is why we have launched family oral health events in our libraries this summer, bringing free dental check-ups, nutrition advice and oral hygiene support straight to families who might not otherwise access a dentist. At our first event in Willesden, 47 children were seen, and many families were helped to register with an NHS dentist. This is about fairness, breaking down barriers to healthcare and making sure every child in Brent has the best start in life.
- **Drug and alcohol services and B3 turning 17:** I am proud that our drug and alcohol services in Brent have not only met but exceeded national targets, with 1,426 residents engaged in structured treatment and hundreds of new treatments starts in the last year. Our ambition now is to get even more people struggling with opiates and crack cocaine into recovery. Alongside this, I want to pay tribute to B3, our brilliant service user council, which has just celebrated its 17th birthday and is attended by 30 to 40 residents every week. This is community power in action, residents supporting each other to rebuild their lives, and it deserves national recognition.
- **Launch of the EVE project:** We have just launched the EVE Project in Harlesden and Craven Park, a bold new initiative to support women engaged in sex work with practical help, food, clothes and hygiene products, as well as interventions to support them into treatment or out of sex work altogether. This is about dignity, compassion and tackling hidden inequalities head on. By providing outreach, building trust and linking women into vital services, we are showing that Brent will not turn its back on those most at risk.
- **Tri Borough Leisure Contract Procurement:** I am proud that we are taking the bold step of withdrawing from the Tri Borough leisure procurement with Ealing and Harrow so that Brent can begin its own standalone procurement for Vale Farm Sports Centre. This decision means we keep local control over pricing, programming and investment while securing continuity of service for residents. It also puts us firmly on the path to an Active Wellbeing model, which is about much more than gyms and pools, it is about prevention, tackling health inequalities and embedding community wellbeing in everything we do. From 2031, when Willesden and the new Bridge Park come into scope, we will be able to bring all our major facilities together under one borough wide model that delivers fairness, inclusion and sustainability. Already we are making progress, including securing £180,000 from Sport England to install solar panels at Vale Farm, cutting costs and emissions. This is Brent showing leadership, taking back control, and preparing to lead nationally on the shift from traditional leisure to Active Wellbeing.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the email address below:

Contact: Cllr.Neil.Nerva@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement – Councillor Krupa Sheth

Top news since my last report:

- **Healthy Streets and EV Chargers:** 140 EV chargers have already been installed across the borough, with the installation of 20 Uber EV chargers also underway. This is in addition to 17 new bike hangars being installed, taking the total up to 170 across the borough. We are also continuing to work collaboratively with Lime to ensure residents are at the heat of the e-bike revolution, with plans for around 200 bays underway after consultation at the Lime Residents Forum.
- **Recycling and Cleansing:** Food waste collection has expanded across Brent estates and pilots for flats above shops are progressing with support from ReLondon. Time-banding changes in Harlesden and nighttime Veolia collection have seen visual improvement in the look and feel of public realm across the borough, with good feedback also received from residents.
- **Regulatory services:** Brent's Trading Standards team have been working with the Metropolitan Police to raise awareness of scams among frontline staff, and have recently signed up to the scam's hub, which works in partnership with the Royal Mail. This has already enabled two successful postal scams interceptions, returning hundreds of pounds to vulnerable residents.

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

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Cabinet Member for Housing – Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson

Top news since my last report:

- **New Homes:** Delivery is on track for 900 new social homes this year. Nearly all 115 homes at Clearwater House are now let, Queensbrook Building is more than half occupied, and the Arlington Building handover is expected soon.
- **Brent pledges rapid improvement following housing regulator's report:** Work is continuing to ensure there are rapid and sustained improvements in the way Brent manages housing services, following a judgement published by the Regulator of Social Housing.

The judgement, published on 28 May 2025, found that the council had not met all 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 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 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.

- **Private Renters Fair:** Preparations are underway for October's Renters' Fair, which will be a one-stop shop for everything our private renting community needs, combining exhibits, stalls and presentations. The fair will provide essential support and guidance on renter rights, tenancy agreements, and how to navigate challenging situations with landlords.
- **Council Homes Acquisition Programme (CHAP) Delivery:** I am proud that we are pressing ahead with Brent's Council Homes Acquisition Programme, which will see us buy 15 good quality homes to provide safe and stable temporary accommodation for families who would otherwise be placed in costly hotels. With £1.8 million of support from the GLA and a total capital budget of £11.7 million, this investment is part of our pledge to deliver 5,000 affordable homes in Brent by 2028, including 1,700 directly from the Council. At a time when one in 50 Londoners is homeless and over 83,000 children are growing up in temporary accommodation, this is a clear sign that this council is determined to act. These

homes will not only reduce costs to the Council, saving around £15,000 per property per year, they will also give families dignity, security and a platform to thrive. This is about fairness, tackling the housing crisis head on and making sure no family in Brent is left behind.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me at the email address below:

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

Top news since my last report:

- **Wembley Jobs Fair:** The highly anticipated Wembley Jobs Fair 2025 returned to Wembley Stadium on Tuesday 15th July 2025. More than 150 companies showcased their current vacancies, including the Brent-based IKEA and global brands such as M&S, KPMG and Coca-Cola. Jobseekers were 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 were also on hand to provide one-to-one personalised career advice, with 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.
- **New knife amnesty bin installed in Willesden:** An amnesty bin designed for the safe disposal of ninja swords has been installed in Willesden. The launch of the new bin in Willesden Community Gardens in Denzil Road near The College of Northwest London follows the recent ban on ninja swords in the UK. Funded by the Home Office, this dedicated bin adds to the seven existing knife amnesty bins across the borough. The ninja sword amnesty bin features a specialised chute at the top built to accommodate larger weapons, including ninja swords and machetes. A separate slot is also available for disposing of standard knives. This new bin provides residents with a safe and discreet way to surrender dangerous and now-illegal weapons. If you or someone you know is in possession of a ninja sword, please take this opportunity to dispose of it responsibly. Every weapon taken off the streets helps make our community safer.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me at the email address below:

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

Top news since my last report:

- **Regeneration:** Major progress has been made on the Wembley Housing Zone, with Ujima House and Cecil Avenue works advancing. Cecil Avenue is due to 'top out' in September. The schemes have generated £45,000 in funding for Community projects, supported by Wates – with more rounds due to follow.
- **Improved infrastructure:** Playground works at One Tree Hill and Mount Pleasant were completed in August, with further tree planting planned for the autumn.
- **Town Centres and Creative Enterprise Zones:** Across Kilburn, Harlesden, Willesden Green, Church End, Wembley, Neasden and Ealing Road, a wide program of investment and engagement is underway. Highlights include Kilburn Music Mile Festival in September, Harlesden's Reggae Walk of Music, Willesden Green Festive Lights, Wembley's thriving business engagement, and Neasden's Civic Partnership workshops. Artist Studio Company support programmes also launch in September, with exciting affordable workspaces fitted out in Wembley Park and Watkin Road to enhance Brent's creative offer.
- **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 be completed by Summer 2027. 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.
- **Brent Development Plan Documents Review:** I am clear that reviewing Brent's Local Plan is essential to keeping us in control of our future. Without an up-to-date plan, power shifts away from local decision makers, and residents lose the protections they deserve. That is not acceptable, which is why we are acting now, backed by an £880,000 budget to take this review forward. The last few years have been shaped by building safety rules, viability pressures and a very challenging housing market, but Brent is not standing still. Through this review we will reset our framework so that we can continue to deliver affordable homes, family homes and the infrastructure that our communities need, from schools and GP surgeries to green spaces and transport connections. It is also a chance to strengthen policy where residents have real concerns, like the over concentration of student accommodation or the harm caused by adult gaming centers.

We are proud to have delivered more homes than almost any other London borough in recent years, and we are determined to go further, supporting the government's target of 1.5 million new homes nationally. This is not about tower blocks in quiet streets, it is about shaping growth in the right places, around transport hubs and growth areas, where new jobs, schools, health centers and parks come with it. When the consultation launches, I will strongly encourage residents, businesses and community groups to take part and help shape a Local Plan that delivers growth fairly and sustainably for everyone in Brent.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me at the email address below:

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