CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

Brent

London Borough of Brent

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1 WHY DO WE NEED AN ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK?

The impacts of climate change are already being felt, both globally and locally. The past ten years (2015-2024) were the warmest on record. In 2022, temperatures in England exceeded 40°C for the first time, contributing to nearly 3,000 excess deaths.

Summers are becoming hotter and drier, with dense urban areas such as Brent increasingly vulnerable to heatwaves and water shortages. Winters are now warmer and wetter, with more unpredictable rainfall and intense downpours that can cause flash floods, even in summer. In July 2021, widespread flooding across London affected homes, infrastructure and businesses in Brent, illustrating the kind of flooding event we can expect to see more often in future.

This Climate Adaptation and Resilience Framework sets out how Brent will prepare for the impacts of climate change. It focuses on three main hazards: flooding, extreme heat, and drought and water shortages, also recognising that climate risks are often unpredictable and interconnected. This document builds on Brent's first Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (2022), and responds to new evidence, local priorities, and a growing urgency to act.

What is Adaptation and Resilience?

Climate **adaptation** means preparing for the effects of climate change, many of which are now unavoidable. Adaptation aims to reduce exposure and vulnerability to harmful climate impacts, protecting people and the systems we rely on, such as homes, services, businesses, and nature.

Climate **resilience** refers to our ability to cope with, respond to, and recover from harmful climate-related disruptions and long-term pressures, while continuing to function and thrive. Resilience is often the result of effective adaptation.

Adaptation and resilience differ from climate change mitigation, which focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming.

Tackling the climate emergency requires a joined-up approach that both reduces emissions and strengthens our ability to cope with a changing climate.

How this Framework supports Brent's wider Climate and Ecological goals.

Brent Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019, and in 2021, the Brent Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy was published. While this Strategy primarily focused on mitigation, it also recognised the need for adaptation and resilience.

Brent's first Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan was published in 2022 and identified the key climate risks facing Brent. This updated Framework builds on that foundation, providing an evidence base that will guide delivery on adaptation.

This Framework complements other Council strategies, including the Green Infrastructure Vision, the forthcoming Tree Strategy, Brent's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, and other plans related to health, transport, infrastructure and planning. An initial action plan is set out in section ten of this document and will be integrated into the wider Climate and Ecological Emergency Delivery Plan, to ensure a joined-up and consistent approach.

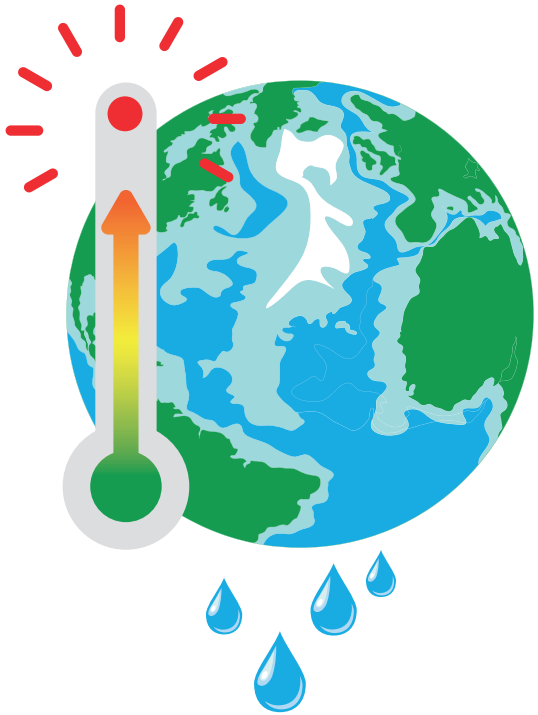
2 BRENT'S CLIMATE CONTEXT

Climate Projections for Brent
The severity of future climate impacts will depend on global greenhouse gas emissions and the level of global warming. The Paris Agreement sets a target for countries to limit global warming to well below 2°C, while aiming for 1.5°C, to reduce the risks of dangerous climate impacts. However, current global policies and pledges are not sufficient to meet this goal.

Without rapid and sustained reductions in emissions, scientists expect we could reach 1.5°C global warming within the next 5-10 years. Under current global pledges, 2°C warming is likely by the 2050s, while a 4°C scenario remains a plausible worst-case scenario by the end of the century.

Even small increases in global temperature can have significant local consequences. For Brent, this means:

- **Rising temperatures:** Brent will experience hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters, with more frequent and intense heatwaves. These changes will have direct implications for public health, especially for vulnerable residents.
- **Changes in rainfall patterns:** Winter rainfall will increase, while summers are expected to become drier overall. However, intense rainfall events are likely to become more common, increasing the risk of flash flooding in urban areas, even in summer.
- **Drought and water stress:** Reduced summer rainfall will heighten the risk of drought, placing pressure on water resources and green infrastructure.



GLOBAL WARMING THRESHOLDS AND LOCAL IMPACTS (UK AND BRENT CONTEXT)

Note: The impacts shown below are estimates based on studies that use emissions scenarios to explore possible futures. These scenarios broadly align with the global warming levels shown, but actual impacts may differ and are difficult to predict.

Global Warming level	Emissions Pathway	Likelihood and Timing	Local Impacts
1.5°C	Rapid global decarbonisation	Central estimates suggest 1.5°C could be reached by the **2030s**. Highly unlikely to limit warming to this level without urgent and immediate global action.	• Warmer, wetter winters. • Hotter, drier summers. • Some increase in extreme weather events. • Heatwaves like July 2022 and localised flash flooding will become more likely, but less extreme and frequent than under higher warming scenarios.
2°C	Current global pledges and mid-century net-zero targets	Most likely outcome under current pledges. Central estimates suggest 2°C could be reached by the **2050s**. Current global actions and policies put us on a trajectory of **2°C to 3°C** warming by 2100.	• Hotter summers and more frequent and intense heatwaves, with significant health impacts. • Max. summer temperatures could rise by 3°C. • Heat-related deaths could increase up to six-fold. • Winter rainfall may increase by 10%. • Summer rainfall could decrease by 8%. • Increased risk of flash flooding due to more extreme and sporadic rainfall events. • Flood risk could increase by 61% in the UK.
4°C	No action and high emissions	Plausible worst-case scenario. Could be reached by the **end of the century** if emissions remain high.	• Severe and frequent extreme weather becomes the norm, with major health and infrastructure risks. • Max. summer temperatures could rise by 6°C. • Heat-related deaths in England and Wales could increase by over 50x, reaching to over 34,000 annually by the 2070s. • Most of the UK becomes suitable for new domestic mosquito species, increasing the risk of vector-borne diseases. • Winter rainfall could increase by 20%. • Flood risk could increase by 118% in the UK.

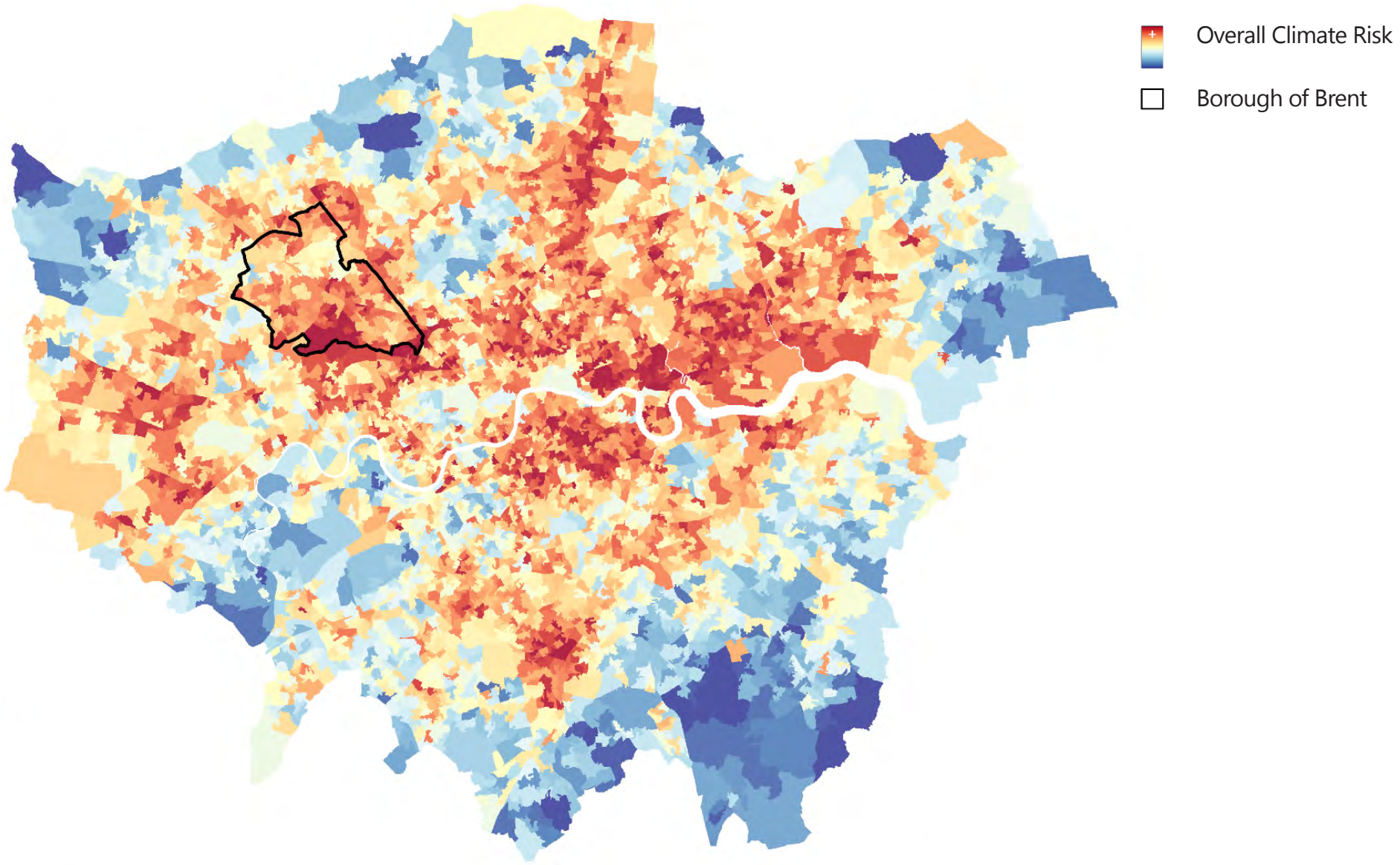
LONDON-WIDE CHALLENGES

Brent shares many climate challenges with the rest of London. The city's dense population, built environment, and limited green space make it especially vulnerable to floods and extreme heat. Many homes in London are poorly insulated and lack ventilation, increasing the risk of overheating. London's water supply is also already under strain, and its growing population is only increasing demand.

How these pressures play out locally is shaped by Brent's specific context. Some parts of Brent, particularly in the central and southern areas, are more built-up and green space-deficient, increasing their exposure to climate risks. Local socio-economic factors also shape how Brent's communities experience and respond to these risks (see section 3). Understanding Brent's specific needs and strengths is essential to ensure adaptation efforts are fair, effective and targeted where they're needed most.

BRENT OVERALL CLIMATE RISK WITHIN LONDON

Data Source: Bloomberg Associates, Climate Risk Map (Updated 2024), commissioned by the Greater London Authority.



3 WHO IN BRENT WILL BE MOST AFFECTED BY THE CLIMATE CRISIS?

The impacts of climate change will not be felt equally across the borough. The risks people face depend on a variety of factors, including where they live and work, the conditions of their homes, neighbourhoods and workplaces, and how easily they can access support when needed. For example, people living in areas with poor quality housing or limited green space may be more likely to experience the effects of extreme heat or flooding.

Some residents may also be more vulnerable because of their age, health, income, or personal circumstances. When these challenges overlap, the risk becomes even greater.

The table to the right highlights some of the key groups in Brent who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Other groups such as pregnant people, those experiencing homelessness, unpaid carers, and outdoor workers, also face greater risk. Structural inequalities mean that some ethnic minority communities may experience greater climate-related risks too, particularly where these overlap with factors such as housing quality, income, and access to green space.

Group	Description
Older adults (75+)	Older people are more vulnerable to extreme heat and cold, which can lead to serious health issues such as heatstroke or respiratory illness. Many also live alone or in housing that overheats easily. By 2041, the number of residents aged 75 and over in Brent is expected to double.
Young children (0-4)	Babies and young children (approximately 6% of Brent's population) are more sensitive to heat, dehydration, and poor air quality. They are also less able to regulate body temperature and rely on adults for protection.
People with long-term illness or disability	1 in 7 Brent residents (14.7%) have a long-term illness or disability that limits daily activities. Health conditions such as heart or lung disease, mental illness, or mobility challenges can make it harder to cope during heatwaves or floods. Some medications also increase the risk of heat-related illness or dehydration.
Low-Income households	People on low incomes may live in overcrowded or poorly insulated homes and often lack the financial resources to prepare for or recover from extreme weather events.
People facing multiple disadvantages	Insecure housing, social isolation, language barriers or digital exclusion can reduce access to support and emergency services, increasing both exposure and vulnerability during climate events.

Other local conditions affect exposure and vulnerability to climate impacts, including access to green space, housing quality, and work environments. These factors vary across communities and can contribute to unequal risks.

ACCESS TO GREEN SPACE MATTERS

Areas with fewer trees and parks tend to be hotter and more prone to flooding. Trees and green spaces help cool local areas, provide shade during heatwaves, and absorb rainwater during heavy rainfall. Improving access to nature and green space not only enhances quality of life but is also key to reducing climate risk.

WORKING CONDITIONS AND HIGHER RISK JOBS

Outdoor and manual jobs, such as construction or street cleaning, carry higher risks during heatwaves and may be more affected by flooding. People working in hot indoor environments with poor ventilation will also struggle in hot weather. Supporting people who work, as well as live, in the borough will be an important part of building climate resilience and ensuring fairer outcomes for all.

QUALITY OF HOUSING AND CLIMATE RISK

Poorly insulated homes, overcrowded living conditions, top-floor or basement flats, or buildings prone to damp can make it hard to stay cool in summer or safe during floods. Renters and low-income households may also have fewer options to make improvements.

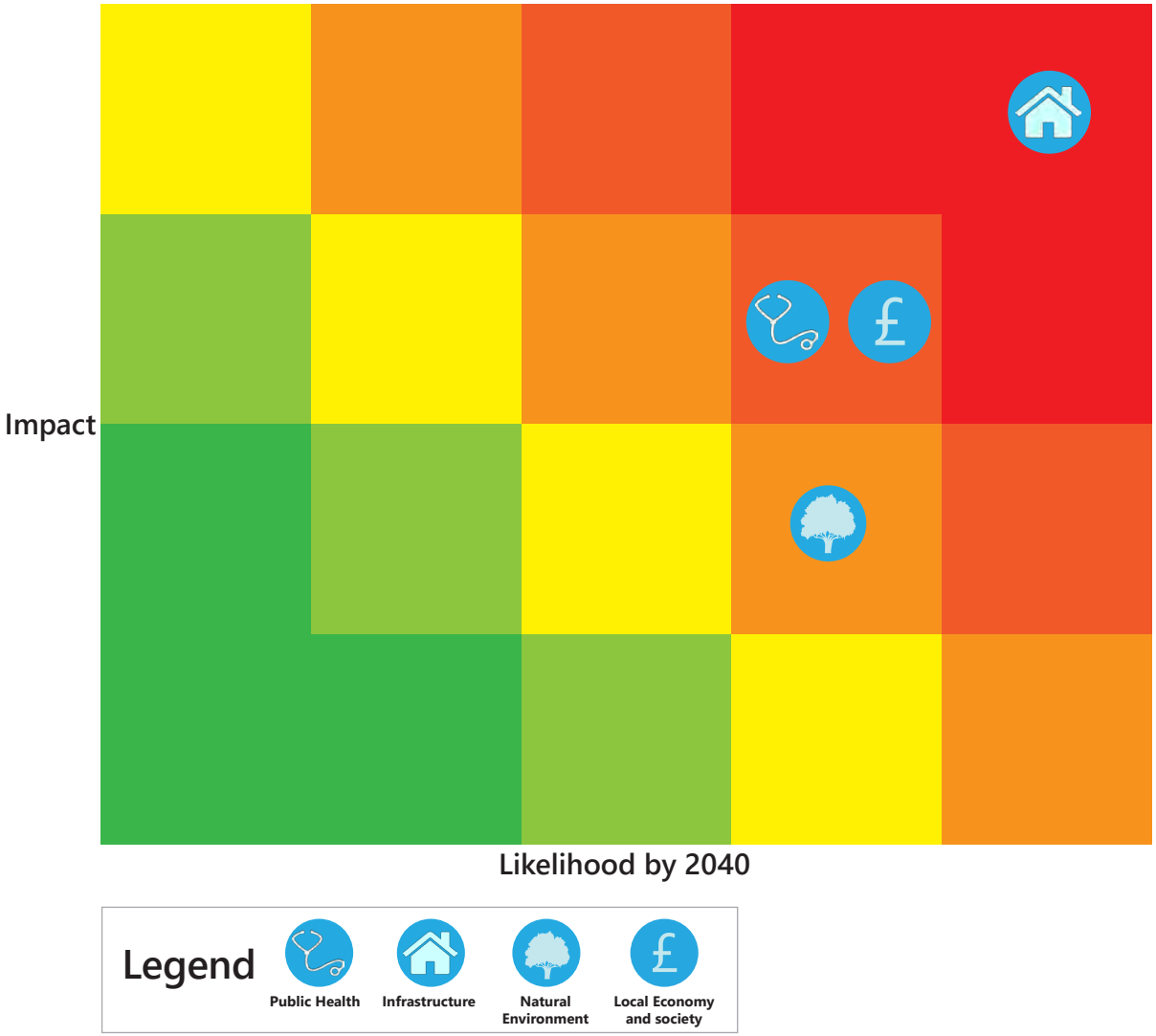
4 FLOODING

Climate change is predicted to bring more frequent and intense rainfall, particularly in winter. Even summers, though expected to become hotter and drier overall, are likely to see heavier downpours than we experience now. This will increase the risk of flooding in Brent.

The main flood threat facing Brent is from surface water flooding. This risk is increased in areas with less green space and more paved or impermeable surfaces, which hinder drainage. Brent experienced significant flood events on 24 September 2019, 12 and 25 July 2021, and 3 November 2022. These were triggered by intense rainfall and required an emergency response to prevent threshold flooding. The July 2021 floods were especially severe, affecting properties across London, and were particularly pronounced in Kilburn.

Without further adaptation, flooding of a similar or more severe nature is likely to become increasingly common as the climate continues to change.

BRENT FLOODING RISK MATRIX



WHAT TYPES OF FLOODING AFFECT BRENT?

Type of flooding	Surface water flooding	Fluvial flooding	Groundwater flooding
What this means for Brent	Surface water flooding is the main flood risk facing Brent. Surface water flooding typically occurs during or immediately after high intensity rainfall, when water is unable to drain into the existing drainage system due to it being at capacity. Brent's limited amount of green space, increasing coverage of impermeable surfaces, and ageing drainage infrastructure combined with heavier rainfall exacerbates this risk.	Fluvial flooding occurs when the capacity of a river channel is exceeded, usually because of intense, sustained rainfall. It can also be caused or worsened by blockages in the river channel. While most of Brent is at low risk of fluvial flooding, some areas close to the River Brent and its tributaries are at higher risk. Approximately 1,390 properties are potentially at risk of fluvial flooding at least once in every 100 years in Brent. In recent years, the Wembley Brook has flooded due to a combination of factors, affecting nearby properties.	Groundwater flooding occurs when the underground water table rises to the surface, usually following a prolonged wet period. Brent sits on a "London Clay" formation, which means that pockets of groundwater can pop up resulting in the occasional saturated garden or in some cases, internal leaks.
Risk level	**Very high**	**Very high**	**High**

Surface water flooding in London

IMPACTS OF HEAVIER RAINFALL AND FLOODING BY SECTOR

Public health
Flooding can have significant health impacts, including injuries, infections, and greater mental health problems. It can also cause disruption to health service provision, impacting routine care. In 2021, two hospitals in east London asked patients to stay at home due to flooding causing power outages. Flooding may also hinder ambulance services and care providers from accessing residents in need of medical help.

The worst health impacts of flooding are likely to affect those with existing health problems, and people in the most vulnerable age groups, who are most likely to feel the impacts of health and social care service disruptions. Residents with lower incomes, living in poorer quality housing, or who are socially isolated, will also be disproportionately affected as they are least able to recover from the effects of flooding.

Infrastructure
Flooding of any kind can severely damage property and disrupt critical infrastructure such as energy supplies, communications networks, water supply, roads and railways.

In a very extreme rainfall event (0.5% annual chance), around 35,500 homes and 4,400 other properties in Brent could experience surface water flooding exceeding 10cm in depth. In summer 2021, flash flooding in London led to road closures, tube disruption and flooded pavements, causing significant delays and disruption across the city.

Infrastructure impacts can have several knock-on effects, including reduced business productivity and economic output, exacerbated health impacts, and reduced information access caused by power outages or travel disruption.

Local economy and society
Flooding can have significant and unequal impacts on Brent's local economy and the wider functioning of the borough. Brent's business base is predominantly made up of small and micro enterprises, which are particularly vulnerable to disruption. Damage to premises, loss of stock, and interruptions to power or water supplies can result in closures, income loss, and job insecurity.

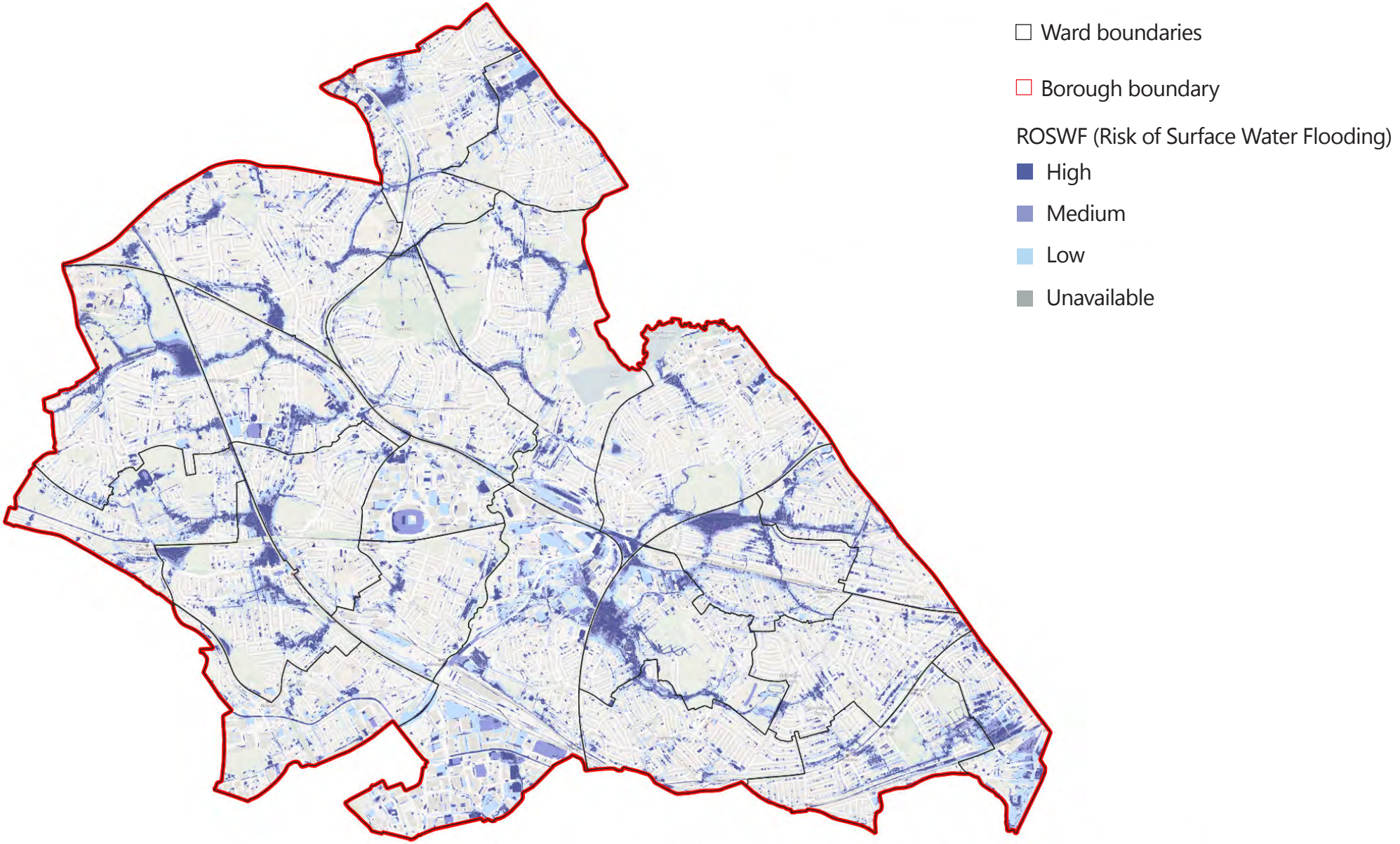
Flood events can also lead to increased insurance premiums for both residential and commercial properties, particularly for those not eligible for the government's Flood Re scheme. In addition, flooding of transport routes, schools, and community venues can disrupt employment, education, and access to essential services, delaying recovery efforts and weakening community resilience.

Natural environment
Flooding can have negative effects on the natural environment and ecosystems, with some plant species struggling to survive in extreme wet conditions. Severe prolonged floods may damage habitats, cause wildlife to drown and increase the likelihood of disease.

However, some ecosystems such as wetlands (like the Welsh Harp) thrive in very wet conditions. In Brent, the targeted use of green infrastructure, alongside sustainable drainage systems, could both reduce surface water flooding and provide habitats for new wildlife.

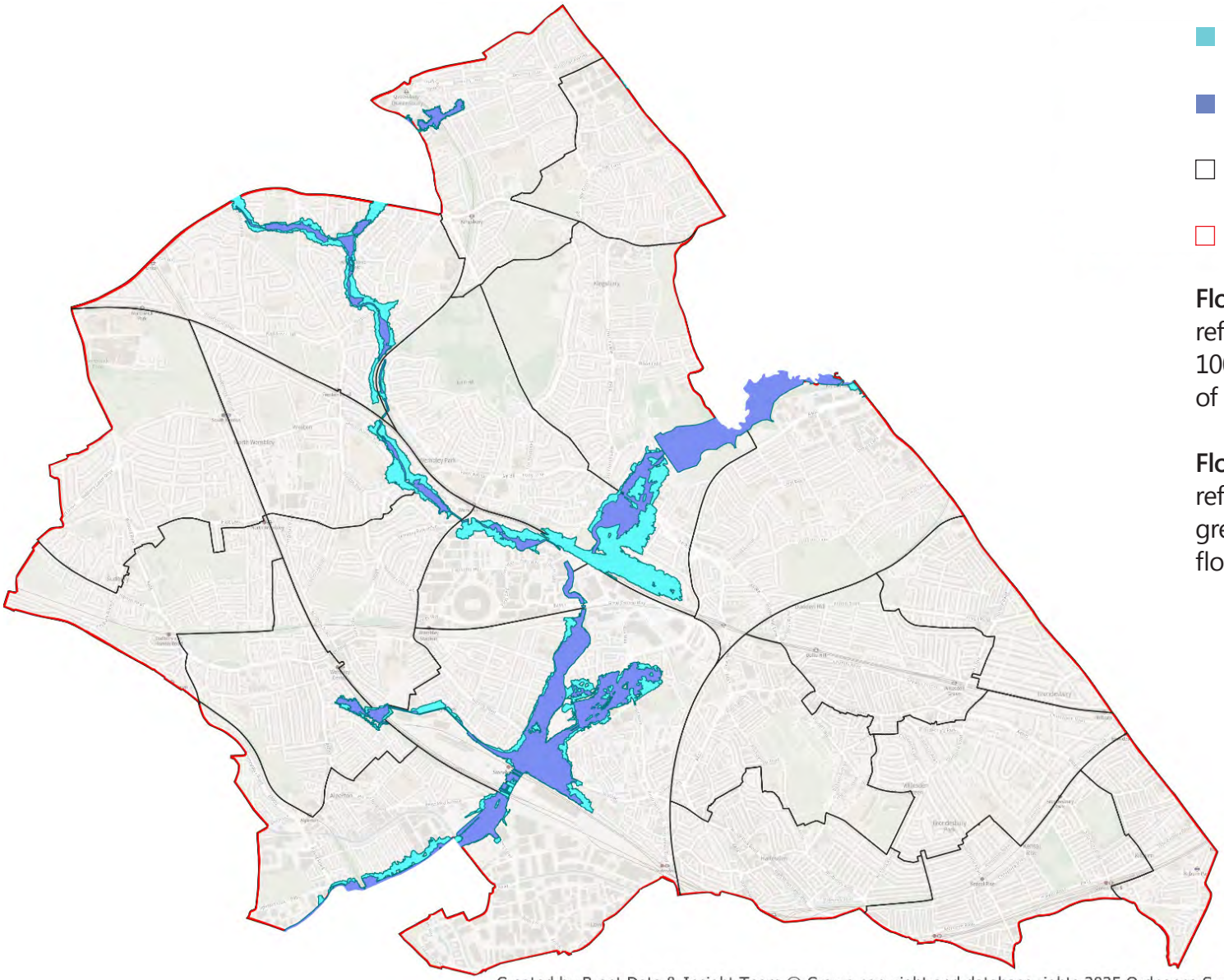
RISK OF SURFACE WATER FLOODING IN BRENT

Data Source: Environment Agency, Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Extent, (2025)



RISK OF FLUVIAL FLOODING IN BRENT (ZONES 2 AND 3)

Data Source: Environment Agency, UK Government Flood Map for Planning (2025).



- Rivers and Sea Flood Zone 2
- Rivers and Sea Flood Zone 3
- Ward boundaries
- Borough boundary

Flood Zone 2
refers to land having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding.

Flood Zone 3
refers to land having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding.

HOW CAN YOU HELP TO REDUCE FLOOD RISK IN BRENT?

Even small actions at home or work can make a big difference in managing flood risk. Here are some simple, practical steps residents and businesses can take to help protect their properties and support the wider community.

- Keep gutters and drains clear so rainwater can flow properly.
- If you have the space, consider installing a water butt to collect rainwater. Alternatively, you can direct water onto planting beds, but only if your garden drains well and you don't have a basement that could be at risk of flooding.
- Plant water-loving, resilient species in your garden like yellow flag iris, purple loosestrife, or meadowsweet to help soak up rainwater and reduce runoff. Planting trees, hedges, or creating a rain garden can all boost flood resilience. See more plant ideas from the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT).
- Let lawns stay slightly uneven to help trap rainwater and support local wildlife.
- Add potted plants to paved outdoor spaces to help absorb rainwater.
- If your property is in a high flood risk area, consider flood-proofing your property by using flood-resistant materials like steel skirting, solid flooring, and temporary barriers.
- Check your roof regularly for loose tiles or damage, especially after storms.
- If you have a hard outdoor surface, consider swapping to a lawn or other permeable options like loose stone, gravel, or decking to help water soak into the ground. See RHS advice on permeable paving.
- Report blocked drains or littered rivers and brooks to Brent Council to help prevent local flooding. Use FixMyStreet to report issues, or visit Brent Council's "Drains, gullies and sewers" page for more guidance on who's responsible.
- If you see a flood developing, report it immediately to Brent Council or the Environment Agency's Floodline: **0345 988 1188**.

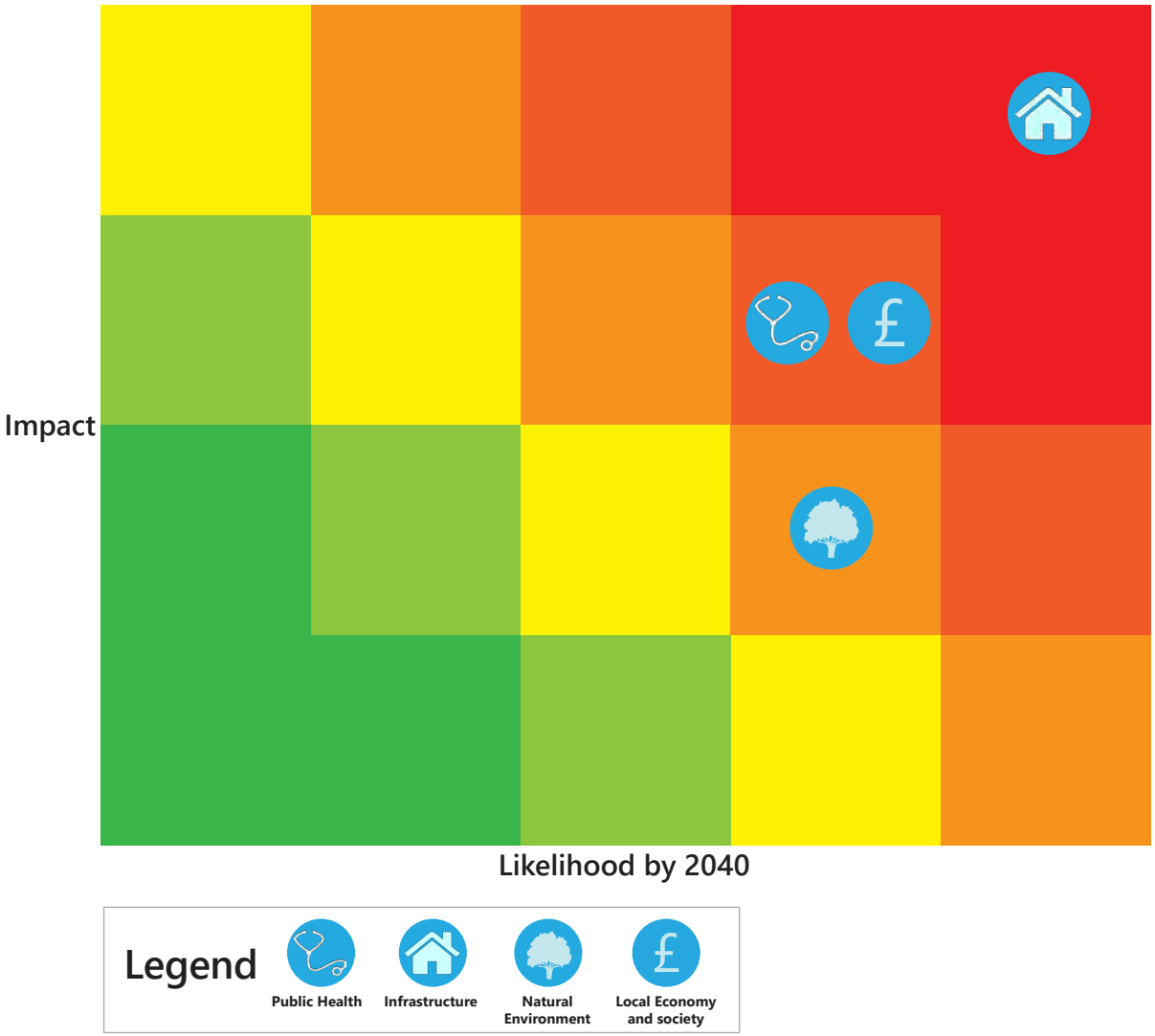
5 EXTREME HEAT

Climate change is increasing the likelihood and severity of extreme heat events in the UK. As levels of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere increase, so too do global temperatures. As a result, the UK is seeing a trend towards hotter and drier summers and more frequent, intense, and long-lasting heatwaves. The UK's ten warmest years on record have all occurred since 2002, and the 2022 heatwave saw temperatures exceed 40°C for the first time.

In Brent, the risk from extreme heat is particularly acute. The Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect means London can be up to 10°C warmer than surrounding rural areas. Local projections suggest that, under a 2°C global warming scenario, Brent could see summer maximum temperatures rise by around 3°C. Under a 4°C scenario, this could increase by over 6°C. By 2070, the frequency of hot spells, defined as two or more consecutive days above 30°C, is expected to rise from once every four years to around four times per year.

Extreme heat poses growing risks to local people, infrastructure and our environment. In 2024, the Brent and London Risk Registers upgraded heatwaves to a very high risk, the most severe category, reflecting the urgent need for local adaptation.

BRENT EXTREME HEAT RISK MATRIX



IMPACTS OF EXTREME HEAT BY SECTOR

Public health

Extreme heat can have serious health impacts, including dehydration, heat exhaustion and heatstroke. It can also worsen existing conditions such as respiratory and cardiovascular disease. In 2022, nearly 3,000 excess deaths were recorded in England during heat periods.

Older people, babies and young children, people with existing physical or mental health conditions, those with lower socioeconomic status, and people who spend a lot of time outdoors are more vulnerable to heat impacts. Overheating in homes is a key driver of heat-related illness, with households in top-floor flats, social housing, or poorly ventilated buildings particularly at risk.

Heat can also affect mental health, disrupt sleep, and increase stress, especially during prolonged periods of high night-time temperatures. Poor air quality can intensify heat stress further.

Infrastructure

High temperatures can reduce the efficiency of electricity generation and transmission systems, while rising demand for cooling during hot weather places additional strain on the electricity grid, increasing the risk of power cuts and voltage drops.

Transport infrastructure is particularly vulnerable. Extreme heat can cause railway tracks to buckle, overhead cables to sag, signals to fail and prevent maintenance from being performed. High temperatures can also cause pavements and roads to soften and melt. Brent is home to 21 tube stations and 12 rail stations and public transport accounts for 36% of trips in the borough, making this a significant area of risk.

Local economy and society

Extreme heat can impact Brent's local economy and day-to-day functioning in multiple ways. High temperatures can reduce productivity, particularly in outdoor sectors such as construction, logistics, and manual labour. Indoor workspaces that are poorly ventilated or not adapted for heat can also become unsafe or inefficient, increasing the risk of health issues, staff absence, or the need for shortened working hours.

Prolonged periods of hot weather may also affect energy use and utility costs, as businesses turn to more expensive cooling methods. Small and micro businesses, which make up the majority of Brent's business base, will feel these economic impacts worse.

Schools, early years settings, and other community facilities may also struggle to operate safely in extreme heat, affecting access to education and essential services that vulnerable people rely on.

Natural environment

Heatwaves and droughts can reduce the amount of vegetation cover, disrupt local ecosystems, and increase wildfire risk. Wildfires have occurred in recent years in London's open grasslands, such as Epping Forest during the 2022 heatwave. Parklands in Brent, including Fryent Country Park, could also face high wildfire risk during prolonged hot, dry, and windy weather.

Protecting, expanding, and ensuring equitable access to green infrastructure is vital for providing cooling and shade during heatwaves. However, many areas of London, including Brent, lack sufficient green space. Those living in areas of high deprivation and people from Global Majority backgrounds are more likely to be green space deprived. In Brent, areas lacking green space (mainly central and southern Brent) also tend to have the lowest tree canopy cover, further increasing the risk of heat for local communities.

THE URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT

Cities and urban areas, such as London, are particularly susceptible to extreme heat due to a phenomenon known as the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect. The infrastructure commonly found in urban areas like buildings and roads absorb and re-emit the sun's heat more than natural landscapes such as forests and water bodies. As a result, highly urbanised areas often experience higher temperatures than their surroundings.

The UHI effect can cause London to be up to 10°C warmer than neighbouring rural areas. In Brent, areas that lack tree canopy cover or access to green open space tend to get much hotter than areas with more green infrastructure present. These are often the same areas already facing the greatest health and social inequalities.

London's population is expected to reach 11 million by 2050. The increase in development associated with building new housing could pose a real risk of intensifying urban heat if adaptation measures are not incorporated. It will be important that new developments incorporate measures that limit or reduce the UHI effect rather than exacerbate it.

The role of Green Infrastructure and Cooling Design

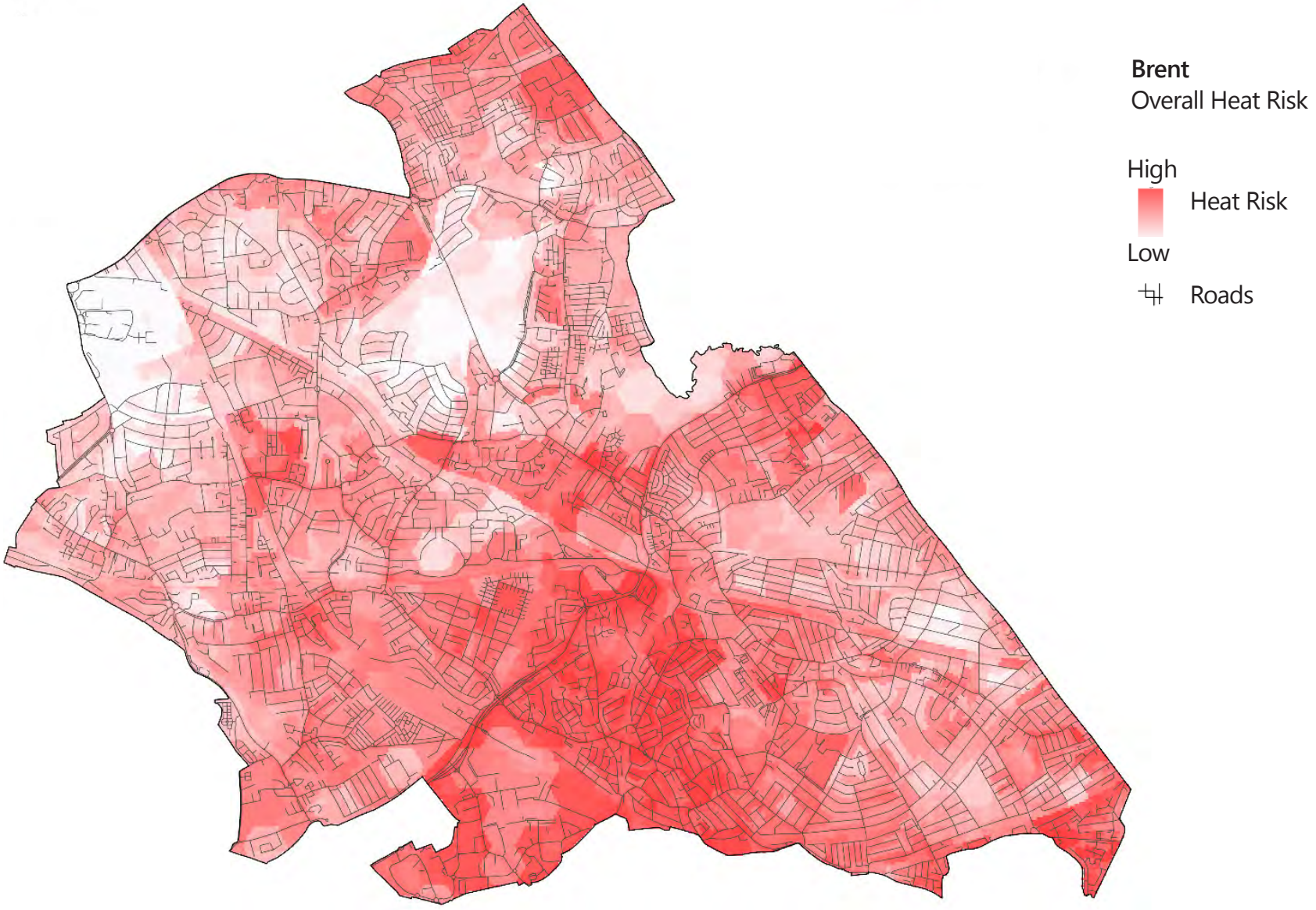
Green infrastructure is central to Brent's strategy for adapting to extreme heat. Trees, parks, green roofs and walls, and biodiverse planting help cool the air, reduce surface temperatures, and provide shade, especially in areas with limited green space or high levels of deprivation.

Efforts to expand the borough's green infrastructure are already underway through Brent's wider Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy, Green Infrastructure Vision, Sustainable Environment and Development Supplementary Planning Document, and the development of a new Tree Strategy (expected in 2026) to guide planting in areas that need it most. Projects such as the Church End and Roundwood Green Corridors, community-led greening initiatives, and ongoing tree planting programmes are already helping to green the borough. These efforts need to be scaled up and more precisely targeted in neighbourhoods most exposed to heat, to ensure all communities benefit from cooler, healthier environments.

While trees and natural features are key, other forms of shade and cooling can also play an important role, particularly where space for greenery is limited. Canopies, sun sails, pergolas, and reflective materials can help reduce heat exposure in streets, schools, and public spaces. On buildings, blinds, external shutters, awnings and other measures can have significant cooling benefits. Brent will continue to explore both nature-based and man-made solutions to help reduce urban heat where they are most needed.

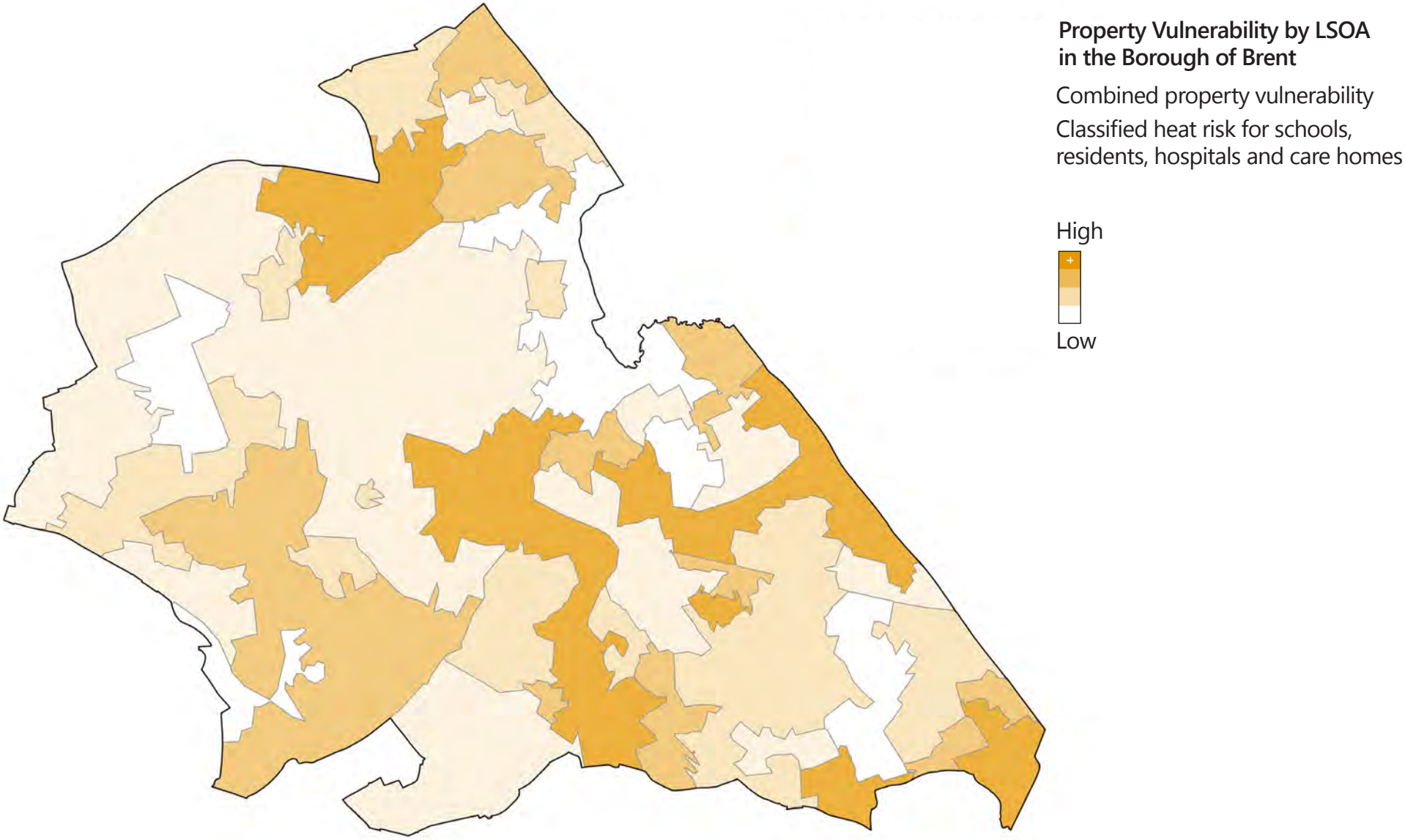
RISK OF EXTREME HEAT ACROSS BRENT

Data Source: Bloomberg Associates Climate Risk Metrics Heat Risk Map (updated 2024), commissioned by the Greater London Authority.
The maps overlay environmental exposure data with socio-economic vulnerability factors that affect someone's ability to cope with extreme heat.
Areas in central and southern Brent, such as Harlesden, Wembley, Stonebridge Park, Church End and Kilburn are most at risk from high temperatures.



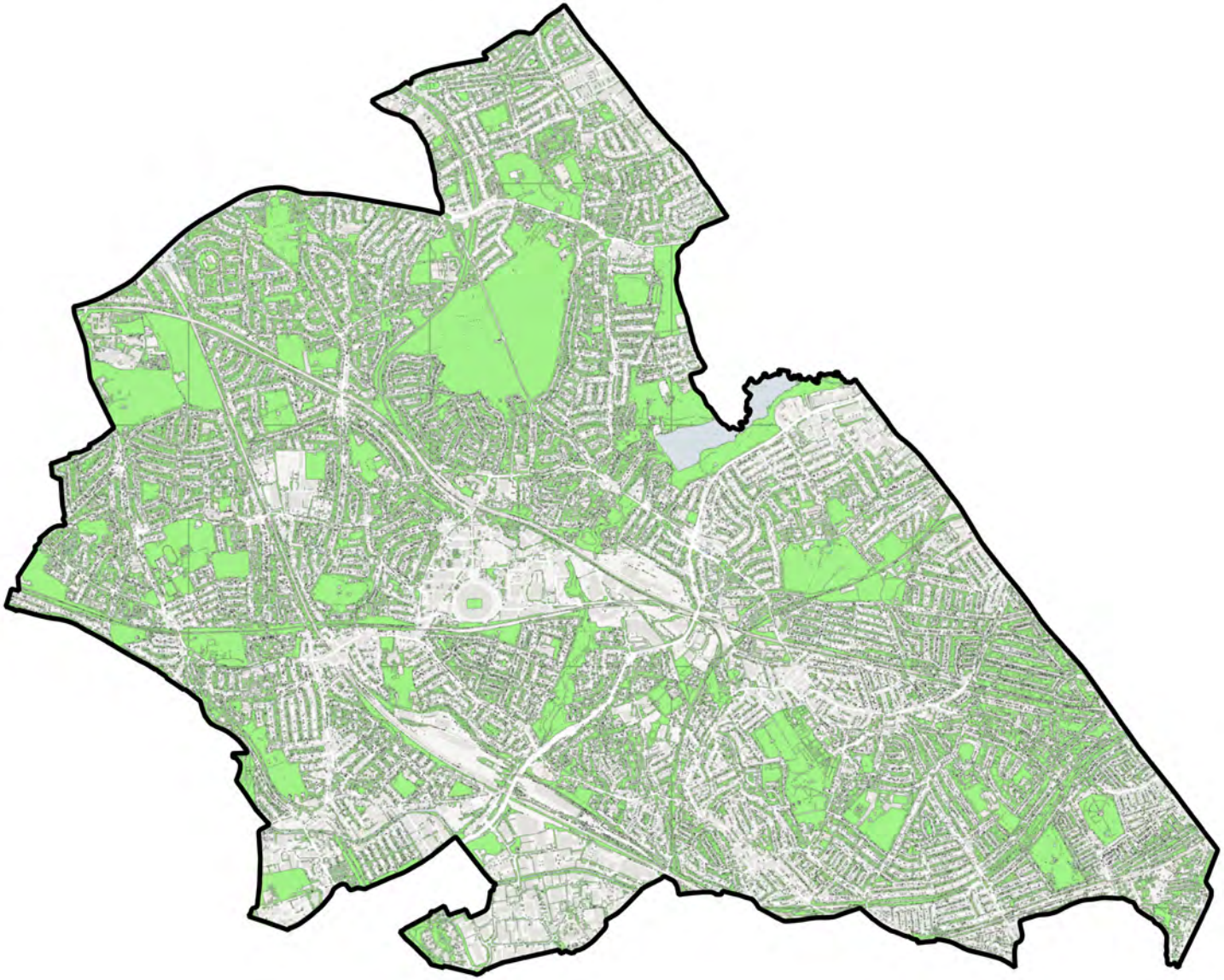
PROPERTY VULNERABILITY IN BRENT

The map reflects relative vulnerability across schools, residences, hospitals, and care homes.
Data Source: Bloomberg Associates (2025), using property-level vulnerability data informally shared by Barnet Council.



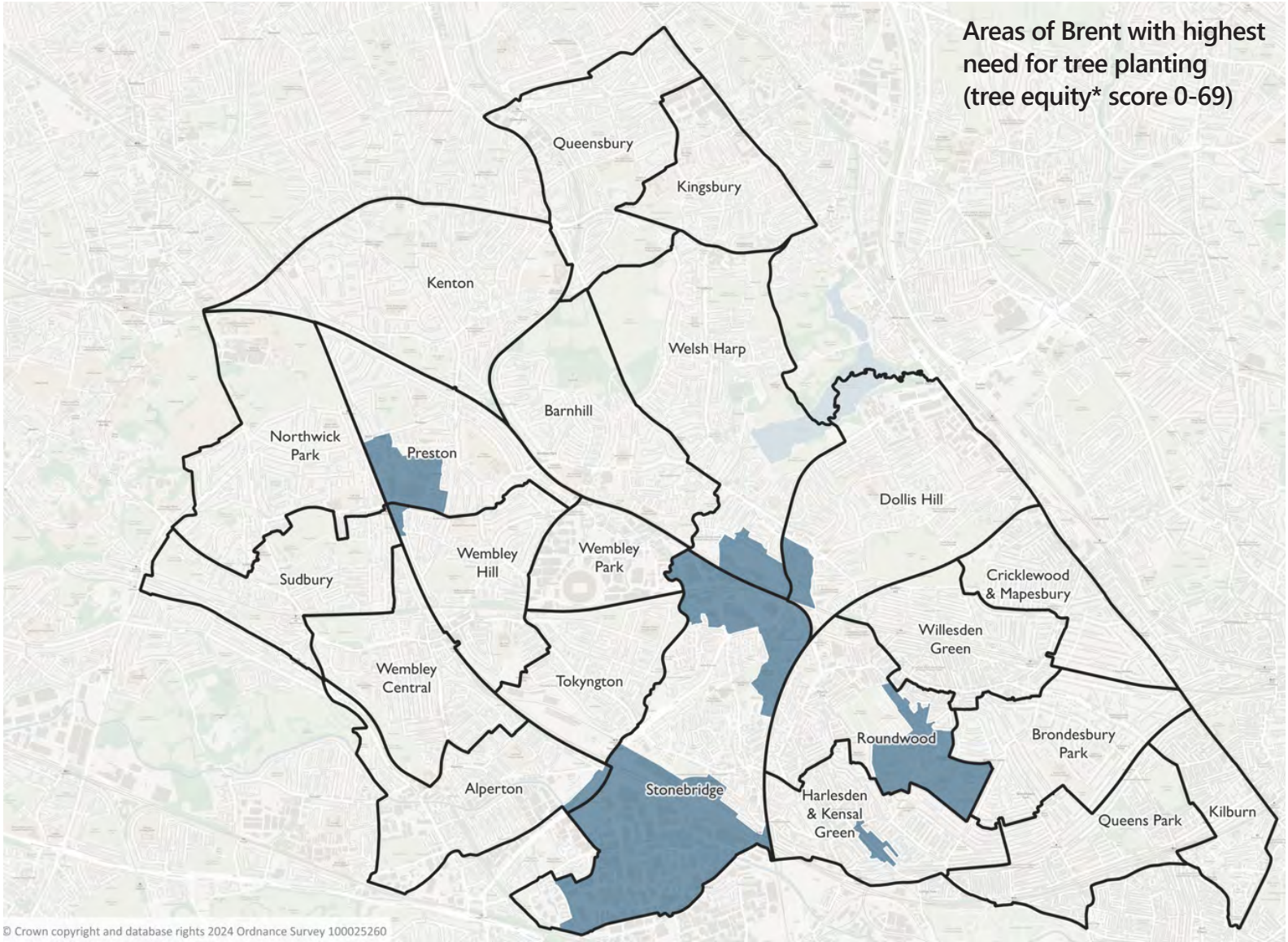
GREEN COVER IN BRENT (2024)

Data Source: Greater London Authority (2024). Green Cover 2024. Extracted for the London Borough of Brent. Available via London Datastore.
Green cover is the amount of land in an area that is covered by vegetation such as trees, grass, shrubs, and other plants. Areas with low green cover are more vulnerable to overheating and flooding.



TREE EQUITY* IN BRENT

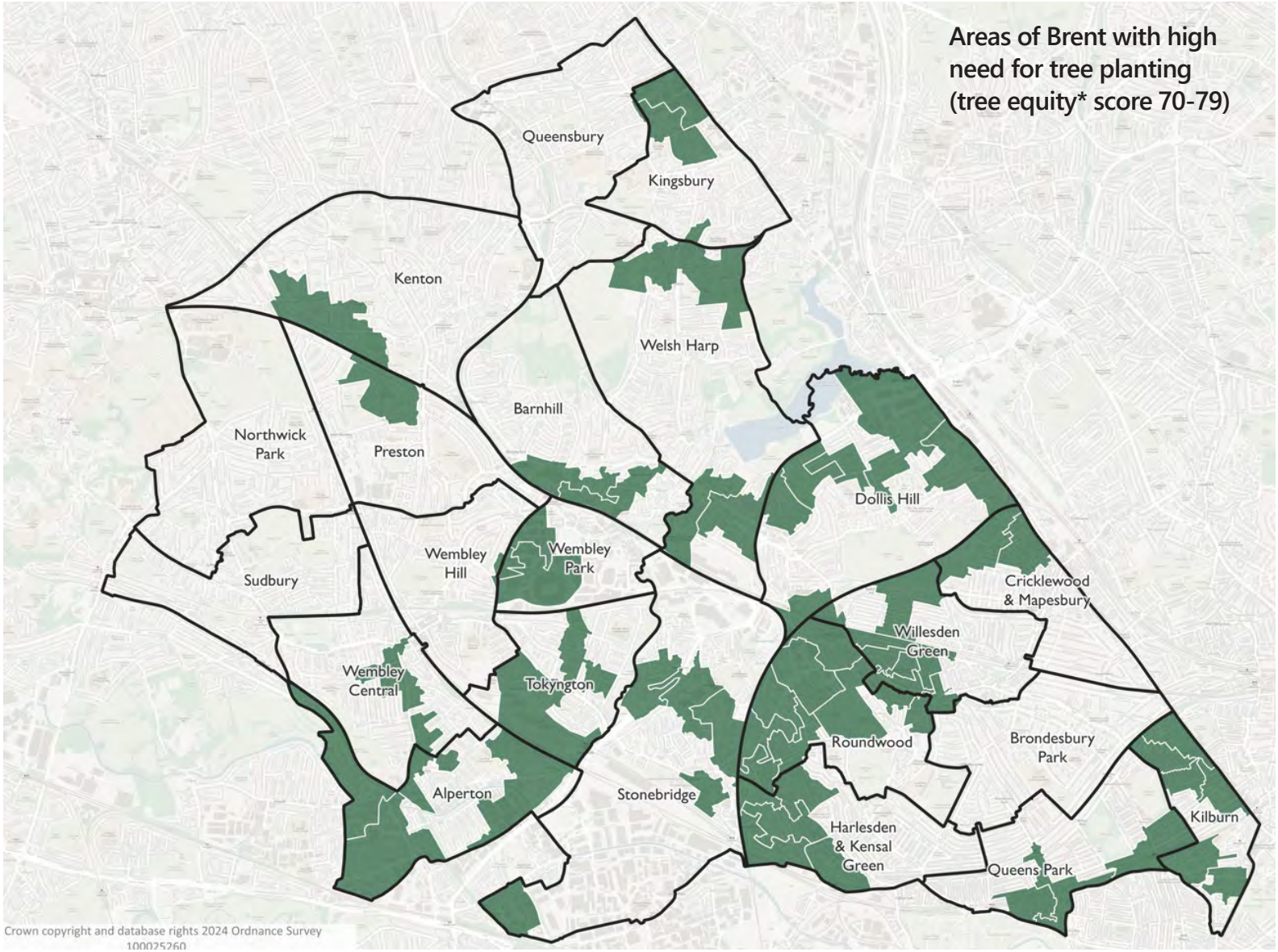
Maps created by Brent Council (2025) for the draft Brent Tree Strategy, based on Tree Equity Score UK data developed by American Forests.



*Tree equity is about ensuring that tree canopy is fairly distributed across urban areas. The Tree Equity Score combines tree canopy data with factors like income, health, employment, age, heat, and air pollution to identify where tree investment is most needed. See the Tree Equity Score UK map for more.

TREE EQUITY* IN BRENT (CONTINUED)

Maps created by Brent Council (2025) for the draft Brent Tree Strategy, based on Tree Equity Score UK data developed by American Forests.



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HOW CAN YOU HELP TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF HOT WEATHER IN BRENT?

As our summers get hotter, small changes at home or work can help keep you, your family, and your community safe. Here are some practical steps residents and businesses can take to stay cool and reduce the impact of extreme heat in our borough.

- Keep windows closed if it's cooler indoors than outside. Open them at night or early morning to let cooler air in.
- Block out sunlight by closing blinds and curtains during the hottest parts of the day. Light-coloured or thermal curtains and reflective window coverings can help keep your home cooler.
- Consider adding external shading like shutters, awnings or DIY outdoor fabric, especially if you live on a lower floor.
- Use fans wisely by placing a bowl of ice or cold water in front of them to help cool the air.
- If possible, ensure your home or building is well insulated and opt for double or triple glazing alongside shading to reduce heat indoors.
- Choose energy efficient appliances that emit less heat such as LED lightbulbs.
- Green your outdoor space with trees, shrubs, climbing plants or flower beds to help cool the area and reduce heat.
- Use reflective paint on external walls and roofs or consider installing a green roof to reduce heat absorption.
- Register your business or community setting as a "cool space" where people can go to cool down. To register a site, visit the GLA Cool Spaces Website or email climateemergency@brent.gov.uk for support.
- Join a local gardening project like the North Brent Community Garden or Harlesden Town Garden to help enhance green spaces and connect with nature.

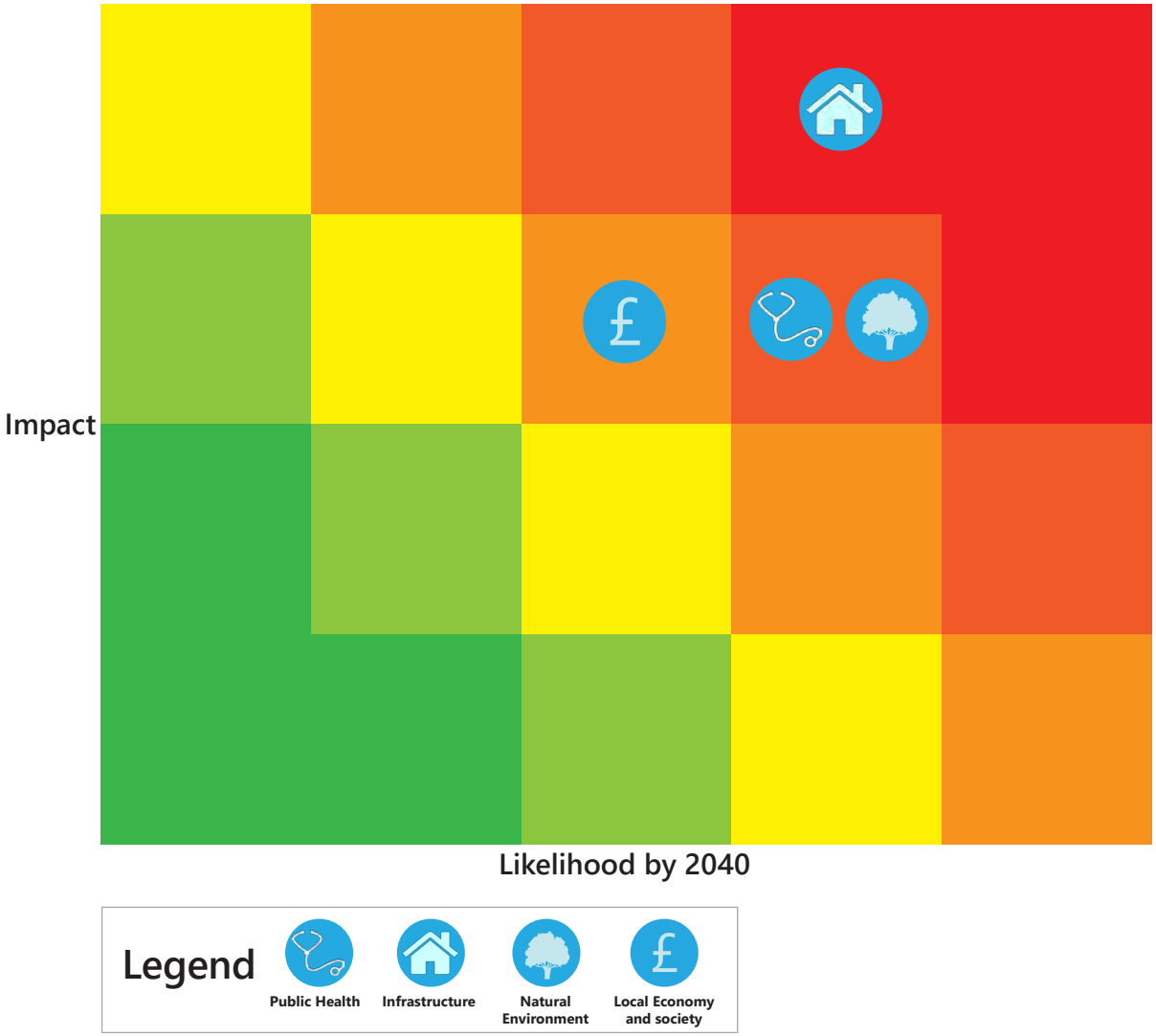
6 DROUGHT AND WATER SHORTAGES

Brent faces a significant and growing risk of drought and water scarcity, driven by both climate change and increasing demand. The primary concern is that prolonged dry periods could severely strain the capacity of water companies to meet public water demand, potentially leading to restrictions on water use for the public.

Climate projections indicate that summers in the UK will become increasingly hot and dry. Summer rainfall in England is expected to decline by approximately 15% by the 2050s and up to 22% by the 2080s. Although winters are likely to become wetter on average, natural climate variability means dry winters can still occur. This variability introduces uncertainty into long-term water availability, especially if multiple dry winters happen in succession. Such scenarios, though less likely, could still lead to severe drought conditions, particularly in regions like London where water demand is high.

The Southeast of England, including Brent, is particularly vulnerable due to its dense and growing population and high water use. Without proactive adaptation, the region could face increasing pressure on its water supply over time.

BRENT DROUGHT AND WATER SHORTAGES RISK MATRIX



RISKS OF DROUGHT AND WATER SHORTAGES IN BRENT

Public health
The main health implications of drought include reduced water availability and quality, which can affect hygiene and sanitation, food security, and air quality. These impacts are intensified during heatwaves, particularly for vulnerable groups. Water restrictions, such as Temporary Use Bans, are likely to affect high-risk individuals and vulnerable people with existing health conditions most, especially those who require greater water access.

Mental health may also be impacted, especially where restrictions limit access to green space or raise concerns about water affordability for low-income households. Drought-related dust can worsen respiratory issues, particularly in areas already affected by poor air quality.

Infrastructure
Prolonged, severe drought could lead to water companies being unable to meet public water demand, resulting in restrictions on customers. Water supply in Brent is managed by two water companies, roughly split by the North Circular Road: Affinity Water manages water supply in the north of the borough, whilst Thames Water manages water supply in the south of the borough. Both companies have already reported water supply-demand deficits. The gap is expected to grow in the future due to predicted reductions in water available and increasing demand for water.

Brent is also at risk of drought-induced subsidence – when hotter and drier summers cause clay formations in the ground to shrink and crack. This can cause damage to buried infrastructure like electricity cables as well as to railways and roads.

Local economy and society
Although Brent has not recently experienced mandatory water restrictions, the borough remains vulnerable to the economic and social repercussions of drought-induced water shortages. Strained water supplies could potentially lead to increased operational costs for businesses, particularly those reliant on consistent water usage, such as hospitality.

Socially, the impacts of drought are not felt equally. Overcrowded homes and poor housing can make it harder for some to cope, particularly when combined with heatwaves. Drought can also disrupt food supply chains, driving up prices and increasing insecurity.. Although imposition of water restrictions is still rare, climate change and population growth increases the risk. Ensuring equitable water access and supporting community resilience is essential to reduce economic and social strain.

Natural environment
Although many ecosystems are resilient to short-term drought, long-lasting, severe droughts can cause loss of habitat, species migration, spread of invasive species and overall biodiversity loss. During drought, the usual restrictions on the amount of water that can be abstracted from rivers and groundwater may be temporarily lifted. This can significantly affect the flow of rivers – like the River Brent and Wealdstone Brook – and damage wetland ecosystems – like in the Welsh Harp. It would also threaten Brent's parks and open spaces.

EXAMPLES OF DROUGHT IMPACTS AND RELATED ADAPTATION RESPONSES

Amenity grassland at Tokyngton Recreation Ground during prolonged dry weather in 2025, showing the impact of drought on green spaces.

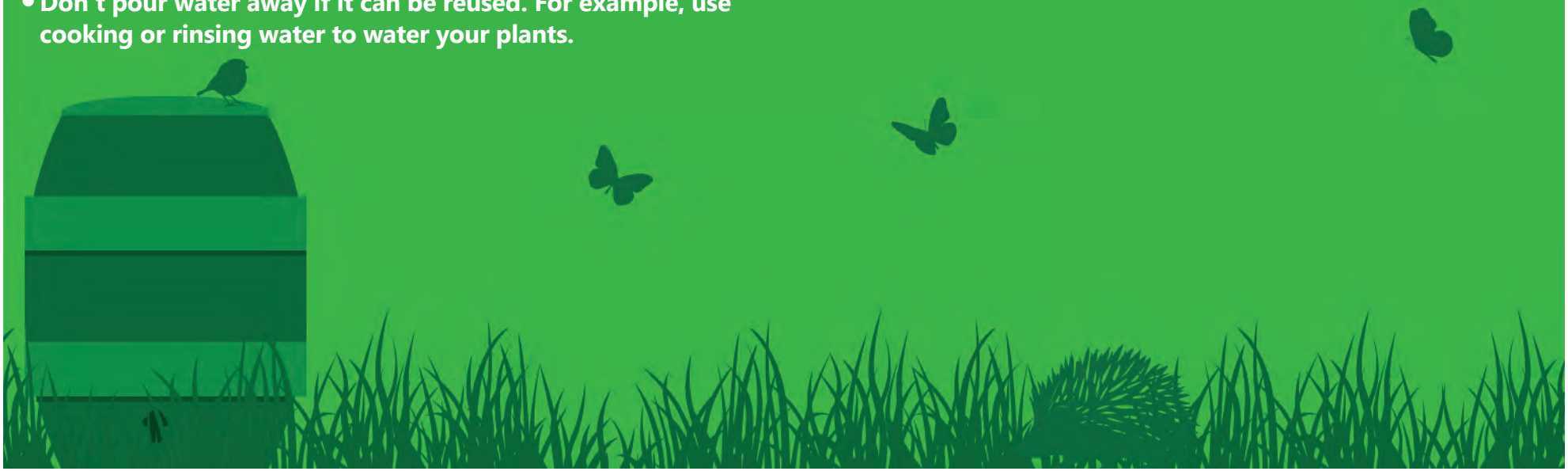
Water butt used to collect and store rainwater. Providing a sustainable source for watering plants during dry periods and reduces reliance on mains water.

Water fountain in Wembley Park. Public fountains support hydration during hot weather, which often coincides with periods of drought.

HOW CAN YOU HELP BRENT BECOME MORE RESILIENT TO DRIER WEATHER AND DROUGHT?

As drier summer conditions and water shortages become more likely, small everyday actions can help Brent adapt. These simple steps can help save water, protect green spaces, and make our homes, businesses, and communities better prepared for dry weather.

- **If you have the space, install a water butt at the base of your downpipe to collect rainwater for use during dry spells.**
- **Contact your water provider to get a water meter installed for free. It can help you track your water usage while helping you save money at the same time. Check Citizens Advice for guidance on switching.**
- **Fit an ultra-low-flow showerhead and try timing your showers. You might be surprised how long you spend in there, so challenge yourself to cut it down a little each time.**
- **Don't pour water away if it can be reused. For example, use cooking or rinsing water to water your plants.**
- **Only run your washing machine when it's full and use the eco or quick wash setting to save water and energy.**
- **Let your lawn grow longer. This can help the roots reach deeper into the soil, keeping moisture in and reducing the need for watering.**
- **Add a bird bath or shallow bowls of water in your outdoor space to help birds, insects and hedgehogs stay hydrated during hot, dry weather.**



7 UNPREDICTABLE AND INTERCONNECTED CLIMATE RISKS

While previous chapters have focused on the key direct climate risks, it is also important to recognise the growing unpredictability and interconnectedness of climate impacts. Weather events are variable and may not always follow expected seasonal patterns. They can also trigger cascading effects across systems such as energy, transport, and healthcare, increasing disruption. Building resilience requires an approach that accounts for these broader, less predictable and interconnected risks.

Extreme cold, storms and temperature swings

Beyond the primary climate risks, other weather events such as extreme cold, storms, and sudden temperature changes will continue to pose serious challenges. While winters are expected to become milder overall due to climate change, cold snaps can still be severe and unpredictable, leading to increased health risks, especially for older adults, children, and those in fuel poverty. In Brent, where over 12% of households face fuel poverty, cold-related illness and excess winter deaths remain a major concern. Local responses such as winter gritting, emergency protocols, and winter support for vulnerable people will remain important even in a changing climate.

Storms and high winds, though often short-lived, can also cause significant disruption, including power outages, blocked roads, and damage to infrastructure. These events often occur with little warning and may coincide with other hazards, compounding their impact. While the link between climate change and storm activity remains uncertain, it will be essential that Brent continues to work with partners to ensure robust plans are in place for when severe storms do occur.

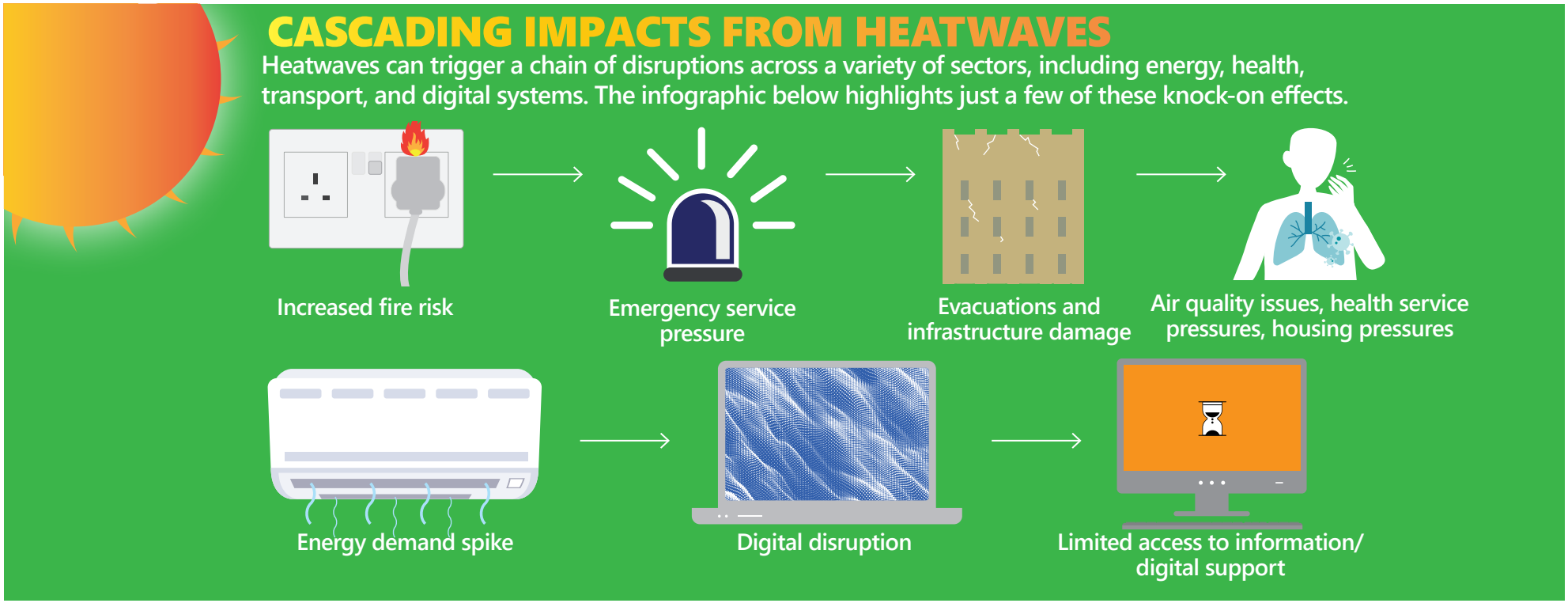
Finally, increasing temperature variability, including unseasonal warm spells followed by sudden cold, is an emerging risk to ecosystems and the local environment. These shifts highlight the need for resilient green infrastructure and ongoing monitoring of climate impacts on nature.

CASCADING AND COMPOUND RISK

Climate-related impacts rarely occur in isolation. As extreme weather events become more disruptive, they can trigger knock-on effects across interconnected systems such as housing, transport, energy, health, and social care. These cascading risks can unfold rapidly or develop over time, exacerbating the challenges faced by communities and local services.

National and regional guidance increasingly recognises the urgency of addressing these systemic risks. The UK's Third National Adaptation Programme highlighted the difficulty of fully understanding cascading failures due to the complexity of interlinked infrastructure, stating "the vulnerability of interconnected systems may be significantly underestimated."

In London, where services are densely concentrated, the potential for cascading impacts is particularly high. To build resilience, it is important that Brent plans for how risks interact, not just how they occur individually.



GLOBAL CLIMATE PRESSURES AND LOCAL IMPACTS

Some climate risks facing Brent originate outside the borough's boundaries but still have local consequences. These indirect risks include disruptions to food supply, global trade, energy markets and migration patterns, all of which can affect residents and services in Brent.

The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2022) highlights international and systemic climate risks as a growing concern. Amongst its eight priority risk areas include:

- Risks to supply of food, goods and vital services due to climate-related collapse of supply chains and distribution networks
- Multiple risks to the UK from climate change impacts overseas

Extreme weather abroad can disrupt food production and transport infrastructure, leading to price volatility and shortages that disproportionately affect lower income households. Climate-related displacement may also increase demand for housing and public services in urban areas like Brent.

While these risks cannot be addressed at the local level alone, they may intensify existing pressures or introduce new challenges over time. Brent will need to monitor their local implications and reflect them in future adaptation planning.

8 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This Climate Adaptation and Resilience Framework is supported by a set of strategic priorities that define the key areas we believe must be addressed to strengthen climate resilience across Brent. These priorities set out where we need to focus our efforts to target support, inform decision-making, and deliver practical change. Each priority is underpinned by a set of goals that outline what we are aiming to achieve within that focus area.

These priorities reflect our long-term ambitions for climate adaptation and resilience, however, delivering them is currently highly challenging due to financial and resource limitations. Implementation will require wider resource and funding support, including from national government and other external actors, as well as strong collaboration with local communities and partners. Further detail is outlined in Chapter 9: Implementation and Delivery.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PRIORITY 1
SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

We will support Brent's residents, communities, schools and businesses to prepare for and reduce the risks of climate impacts, with a focus on those who are most vulnerable and most exposed. Key goals include:

- Supporting vulnerable residents to stay healthy and safe during climate-related events through targeted interventions.
- Informing and empower residents to take steps to reduce their own climate risk.
- Equipping schools, community groups and local organisations with tools and knowledge to prepare for and respond to climate impacts.
- Supporting Brent's business community to build climate resilience and reduce disruption to local economic activity.

PRIORITY 2
ADAPTING INFRASTRUCTURE, BUILDINGS AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

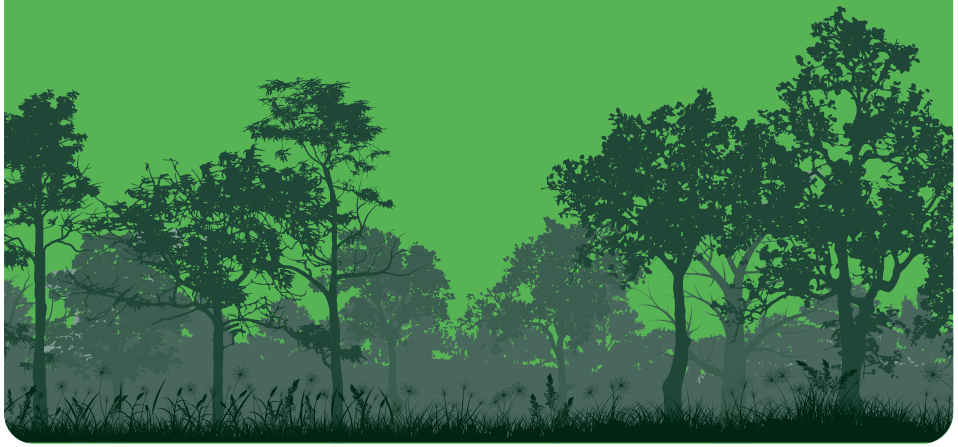
We will focus on making Brent's homes, buildings, infrastructure and public spaces more resilient to the impacts of climate change. Key goals include:

- Improving and upgrading Brent's highest risk homes and buildings to be resilient to extreme heat, flood, and drought.
- Embedding climate resilience into planning, development, and regeneration projects to future-proof Brent's built environment.
- Adapting Brent's public realm to reduce direct climate risks and protect vulnerable communities.
- Working with partners to strengthen the resilience of transport networks and utilities against climate hazards.

PRIORITY 3
ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We will protect and enhance Brent's parks, green spaces and ecosystems, and deliver nature-based solutions that reduce climate risks, support biodiversity, and promote public health and community wellbeing. We will prioritise expanding green infrastructure in areas with low green cover and high vulnerability to ensure fairer access to nature. Key goals include:

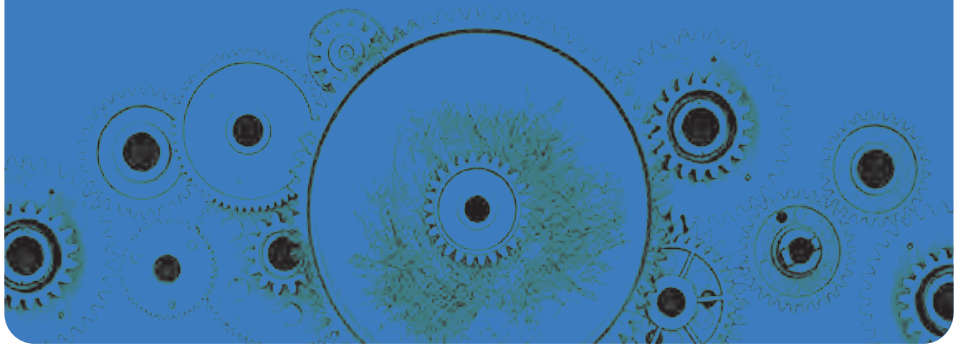
- Ensuring Brent's green spaces, trees and ecosystems are as resilient to climate change as possible.
- Expanding and connecting Brent's green infrastructure to manage climate risks, support biodiversity, and increase equitable access to nature.



PRIORITY 4
EMBEDDING ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE IN LOCAL SERVICES AND GOVERNANCE

We will integrate climate risk into council services, operations and decision-making to ensure Brent is prepared for the challenges ahead. This means improving service resilience, strengthening partnerships, and enabling long-term, joined-up action across the borough. Key goals include:

- Integrating climate risk into the council's day-to-day operations and decision-making to ensure that services remain resilient to climate impacts and disruptions.
- Strengthening partnerships and borough-wide coordination to deliver joined-up climate adaptation.



9 IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

Delivering Brent's climate adaptation and resilience priorities will require a phased and flexible approach. The Council is committed to doing all it can to progress these priorities, but the current financial climate presents significant challenges. This chapter sets out a framework for delivery, starting with what we can do right now, what we would do next if resources become available, and what we would look to deliver over the longer term with further investment.

Our approach is evidence-led to ensure that resources are targeted where they are needed most and that benefits are felt across the borough. As part of this, we will trial adaptation methods and interventions through a place-based pilot, focusing on areas where climate risks and vulnerabilities are greatest.

Over time, adaptation needs may shift in response to changing climate impacts and global warming scenarios. While this framework does not yet include formal adaptive pathways or trigger points, developing these will be an important next step in building long-term resilience.

The tables on the following pages summarise actions for each strategic priority, grouped into the three delivery phases. This framework will remain under review and may be updated when significant new evidence, risks, or opportunities arise. We recognise that some actions may not be delivered for many years, if at all, depending on resources and emerging evidence.

PRIORITY 1: SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

What we will do NOW, with the budget we have	What we'd do NEXT, if funding and resource is available	What we'd do LATER, with the right long-term investment
Undertake a study to better understand heat risk and vulnerability in one of Brent's highest risk neighbourhoods and identify solutions. Launch a targeted, intelligence-led community awareness campaign to support residents who are most vulnerable to extreme heat. Explore opportunities to increase the number of 'cool spaces' on the GLA Cool Spaces Map, particularly in areas most at risk from extreme heat. Launch and support Brent's first Community Flood Action Group in Kilburn. Launch a community awareness campaign about how residents can reduce their flood risk. Support schools to consider climate resilience measures, such as shading, sustainable drainage, and cool spaces, when developing or updating their School Climate Action Plans. Work with Public Health and Adult Social Care to better understand impacts of overheating on Brent's most vulnerable residents.	Implement the priority recommendations of the neighbourhood heat resilience study. Develop toolkits and training to help community organisations, schools and businesses assess their own climate risk and create resilience plans. Train frontline staff and volunteers on extreme weather preparedness and pilot heatwave volunteer check-in systems. Expand Brent's network of cool spaces, funding community and faith settings to provide accessible facilities and cooling measures. Support the development and implementation of a community flood action plan in Kilburn and seek to expand to other high-risk areas. Launch a grants scheme to support local organisations, businesses, and faith groups to pilot local adaptation solutions. Co-develop a heat risk mitigation strategy for schools and care settings.	Develop a borough-wide Climate and Health Strategy with the NHS ICB, UKHSA and Public Health partners, and embed climate risk into the JSNA and Health & Wellbeing Strategy priorities. Develop access to real-time local risk information and trusted community support networks that help all residents prepare for and recover from climate events. Establish a Brent Climate Resilience Partnership bringing together public services, health, community, faith and business leaders. Create a long-term Community Climate Resilience Fund to empower neighbourhood-led adaptation. Deliver a grant scheme to help local businesses adapt premises and operations. Work with SMEs and business partnerships to develop supply chain and workforce resilience plans for the most affected sectors in Brent.

PRIORITY 2: ADAPTING INFRASTRUCTURE, BUILDINGS AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

What we will do NOW, with the budget we have	What we'd do NEXT, if funding and resource is available	What we'd do LATER, with the right long-term investment
Explore how climate adaptation and resilience measures can be integrated into existing housing retrofit programmes, to both reduce carbon emissions and reduce risk from floods, extreme heat, drought, and unpredictable weather. Identify care settings in Brent most at risk of overheating and explore options for piloting low-cost adaptation measures. Continue to build our evidence base on high-risk buildings in Brent, including those prone to overheating, beginning with the pilot neighbourhood heat resilience study. Include requirements around climate resilience and sustainability in the renewed South Kilburn Masterplan and single delivery partner procurement, to future proof development in the area.	Fully integrate climate adaptation into existing housing retrofit programmes. Undertake borough-wide overheating and flood-risk mapping for public buildings, care settings, and sensitive housing, including identification of high-risk basement properties and those with high solar gain. Review planning policies to ensure developments address climate impacts and consider developing a Climate Adaptation SPD or design guide. Pilot a 'Climate Resilient Streets' project in a regeneration area, combining SuDS, shading, cooling, and permeable surfacing. Enhance monitoring and maintenance regimes for drainage, green infrastructure, and highways to reduce surface-water flooding. Work with utilities, TfL, and Thames Water to assess and improve the resilience of key infrastructure (water supply, power, transport). Pilot rainwater harvesting in council buildings and fund water butt installations at community settings.	Deliver a climate-resilient retrofit programme for high-risk council assets including homes, schools, and care settings, supported by regional and national funding. Begin to expand 'Climate Resilient Streets' in other high-risk areas, incorporating blue-green infrastructure and shading along key walking and transport routes. Work with key partners in the transport and energy sectors to upgrade transport and utilities infrastructure to withstand extreme heat and flooding, coordinated through multi-agency investment planning. Implement climate-resilience standards in planning policy and building control, ensuring all new development is designed for future climate scenarios.

PRIORITY 3: ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

What we will do NOW, with the budget we have	What we'd do NEXT, if funding and resource is available	What we'd do LATER, with the right long-term investment
Identify priority opportunities for nature based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and to develop a delivery pipeline for their implementation. Continue delivering projects focused on expanding and enhancing nature and green space in Brent, as committed to in the Council's overarching Climate and Ecological Emergency Programme. These include the council's ongoing tree planting programme, the Church End and Roundwood and Kingsbury Green Corridors schemes, and support for wider community-led greening initiatives.	Deliver nature-based SuDS schemes in high-risk locations, prioritising those with flood and heat-reduction co-benefits. Expand tree planting and green infrastructure in areas with low canopy cover and high heat exposure, guided by tree-equity and health data. Train maintenance teams and community partners on climate-resilient planting and sustainable water management. Support local greening initiatives and depaving projects, especially around schools, estates, and community hubs. Work with organisations like Thames 21 and the Environment Agency to restore local waterways and reduce fluvial flood risk Further research the impacts of floods, extreme heat and drought on biodiversity in Brent.	Expand delivery of SuDS interventions in all identified high-risk locations. Create a connected blue-green Nature Recovery Network linking parks, rivers, SuDS sites, and green corridors across the borough. Integrate nature-based infrastructure into all new highway and regeneration projects, supported by long-term capital funding. Create community stewardship agreements for SuDS, street trees, and green corridors to ensure maintenance and shared ownership. Establish a long-term ecological monitoring framework to track biodiversity, soil health, and climate resilience benefits.

PRIORITY 4: EMBEDDING ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE IN LOCAL SERVICES AND GOVERNANCE

What we will do NOW, with the budget we have	What we'd do NEXT, if funding and resource is available	What we'd do LATER, with the right long-term investment
Deliver a multi-agency climate adaptation simulation exercise to better understand cascading service impacts and identify priority adaptation measures. Establish a cross-departmental Climate Adaptation and Resilience Working Group and embed the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Action Plan into the wider Climate programme.	Continue to review and update Brent's Climate Adaptation and Resilience Action Plans and Flood Risk Management Strategy, aligning with new national and regional guidance. Conduct service-level climate-risk assessments to understand vulnerabilities in council operations, supply chains, and staff welfare. Integrate climate resilience into procurement, commissioning, and asset-management frameworks. Further develop and expand partnerships with the NHS, emergency services, utilities, and voluntary sector for joint preparedness planning. Embed adaptation indicators into council performance management and risk registers. Develop formal adaptive pathways and trigger points for major infrastructure and service decisions. Lobby regional and national government for sustained funding, clearer statutory duties, and devolved powers for local adaptation	Establish a Brent Climate Resilience Partnership bringing together public services, utilities, housing associations, community and business leaders to drive coordinated investment and response. Develop a long-term Adaptation Investment Plan, aligning council capital budgets with regional and national funding streams. Integrate climate resilience into all council service delivery plans, workforce policies, and emergency planning frameworks. Develop a borough-wide Climate Resilience Dashboard, integrating local risk data, monitoring indicators, and public reporting. Establish a climate resilience training and leadership programme for all council departments and key partners.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN DELIVERING ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

Climate adaptation and resilience is a shared responsibility. The Council plays a central role locally, however meaningful progress depends on coordination and contributions from national and regional government, businesses, organisations, and communities.

These roles should be read alongside the Implementation and Delivery tables above. They represent indicative responsibilities rather than immediate commitments, and delivery will depend on funding, partnerships, and evolving priorities.

Our role as a Council

- Shape and enforce local planning policy to ensure new development is climate-resilient and does not increase local climate risk.
- Embed climate resilience across services, including housing, public health, adult social care, highways, and emergency planning.
- Work to adapt and maintain Council-owned assets and infrastructure so that they can withstand future climate impacts.
- Identify and address climate-related public health risks and reduce health inequalities that exacerbate risk.
- Strengthen the borough's emergency planning, preparedness, and response to climate-related incidents.
- Secure and direct available funding to priority projects, nature-based solutions and supporting innovation.
- Support and enable community-led action on climate adaptation, providing tools and partnerships to build local capacity.
- Monitor and assess local climate risks, track progress, and adjust delivery as new evidence and risks emerge.
- Advocate for Brent's needs at regional and national levels to unlock funding, policy change, and system-wide support.

What we need from National Government

- Set a clear and ambitious strategic direction and policy frameworks for local adaptation.
- Ensure that national agencies (e.g. Environment Agency, DEFRA, UKHSA) coordinate effectively with local authorities on risk management, emergency response, and public health adaptation.
- Provide long-term funding and investment to support local delivery of adaptation measures.
- Strengthen national planning policy, building regulations, and infrastructure standards to reflect future climate risks.
- Support access to national climate datasets, research, and guidance to inform local decision-making.
- Coordinate cross-sector and cross-regional efforts to address systemic risks

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN DELIVERING ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE (CONTINUED)

What we need from Regional Government and Partnerships

- Provide strategic direction via London-wide policies and frameworks, such as the London Surface Water Strategy and upcoming Heat Plan.
- Supply boroughs with consistent climate risk data, mapping, and analysis to inform evidence-based planning and investment.
- Facilitate collaboration between boroughs, utilities, and key delivery partners to ensure coordinated regional action.
- Call on national government for greater ambition and investment in climate adaptation and resilience to support regional and local authorities.
- Lead and support London-wide initiatives that scale up adaptation, attract investment, and support local delivery capacity.
- Provide funding and grant programmes to help boroughs implement local adaptation and resilience projects.

What businesses and organisations can do

- Use local risk data to assess climate risks to premises, staff, and supply chains, and build business continuity plans that account for extreme weather.
- Support staff, customers and service users during extreme weather events, for example, by providing cool spaces during heatwaves, flexible working arrangements during disruption, and information on staying safe in extreme weather.
- Developers and property owners can incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), green roofs and walls, shading, and passive cooling into new and retrofit developments to reduce overheating and surface water flood risk.
- Anchor institutions such as NHS trusts, universities, housing associations, and major employers can assess climate risks across their estates, and develop plans to ensure critical services remain operational.
- Collaborate with the Council and local partners to deliver local adaptation projects such as tree planting, rain gardens, or contributing funding, expertise, or maintenance support.
- See if you can reduce supply chain vulnerability by sourcing locally and working with suppliers to identify climate risks, particularly for food, transport, and logistics sectors.

What individuals and communities can do

- Take practical steps at home and in the neighbourhood to reduce overheating, manage flood risk, and use water more efficiently.
- Support your friends and family to stay safe and well during heatwaves or heavy rainfall events, for example by providing local information on support available.
- Get involved in community initiatives like tree planting, gardening projects, and flood volunteer schemes that build shared resilience.
- Make sustainable everyday choices, such as reducing energy and water demand and increasing biodiversity and more green spaces.
- For more detailed advice on actions residents can take to manage specific climate risks, see the 'How Can You Help' sections within each risk chapter of this strategy (pages 15, 24, and 28).

10 2025/26 ACTION PLAN

Following the strategic priorities set out in this strategy, a set of short-term actions has been identified for delivery over the next 12 months. These reflect what is currently achievable based on available funding and capacity and are intended to lay the foundations for longer-term change. While they represent an important first step, the scale of the challenge means that significantly more action will be needed in future. The council is committed to seeking further investment and building partnerships to expand delivery in the years ahead. This framework and the accompanying Action Plan will continue to evolve in response to new resources, community insights, and emerging data.

The table below outlines the initial actions and their expected outcomes. Some of these actions will be delivered as part of a place-based pilot in an area of the borough facing the highest climate risks and vulnerabilities. These are marked with an asterisk.

Other actions within Brent's wider Climate and Ecological Emergency programme also contribute to adaptation and resilience, particularly those focused on enhancing nature and green space, and are not repeated here.

	Action	Strategic priority	Outcome
1*	Undertake a mapping exercise to better understand heat risk in one of Brent's most vulnerable neighbourhoods and identify solutions.	1 Supporting people and communities	→ Helps identify heat-prone areas and solutions, guiding future investment decisions. Also has the potential to attract future funding.
2*	Launch a targeted, intelligence-led community awareness campaign to support residents who are most vulnerable to extreme heat.	1 Supporting people and communities	→ Builds community capacity to act early and support vulnerable residents during heatwaves, reducing pressure on local services.
3*	Explore opportunities to increase the number of 'cool spaces' on the GLA Cool Spaces Map, particularly in areas most at risk from extreme heat.	1 Supporting people and communities	→ Improves access to public cool areas and supports future expansion of local cooling infrastructure, providing respite for vulnerable people during hot weather.

* This action is relevant to, or may be delivered as part of, a place-based pilot.

2025/26 ACTION PLAN (CONTINUED)

	Action	Strategic priority	What this action enables or unlocks
4	Launch and support Brent's first Community Flood Action Group in Kilburn, led by the National Flood Forum.	1 Supporting people and communities	→ Builds local flood awareness and readiness, with potential to unlock formal flood investigations (S19) and funding for future interventions.
5*	Launch a targeted community awareness campaign about how residents can reduce their flood risk, including messaging around the impact of paving over gardens and the benefits of incorporating SuDS.	1 Supporting people and communities	→ Raises awareness of everyday flood prevention actions at the household level to reduce surface water flood risk.
6*	Support schools to consider climate resilience measures – such as shading, sustainable drainage (SuDS), and cool spaces – when developing or updating their School Climate Action Plans.	1 Supporting people and communities	→ Encourages schools to plan and think about heat and flood-resilient environments for students, supporting potential future interventions at schools.
7	Explore how climate adaptation and resilience measures can be integrated into existing housing retrofit programmes, to both reduce carbon emissions and reduce risk from floods, extreme heat, drought, and unpredictable weather.	2 Adapting infrastructure, buildings and the built environment	→ Lays the foundation for future delivery of climate-resilient housing by aligning energy-efficiency retrofit with adaptation goals.
8*	Work with Adult Social Care to identify care settings most at risk of overheating and explore options for piloting low-cost adaptation measures.	2 Adapting infrastructure, buildings and the built environment	→ Builds understanding of overheating risks in care settings to inform future prioritisation for intervention. Supports pilot projects in care homes that could guide wider rollout of adaptation measures in care settings.

* This action is relevant to, or may be delivered as part of, a place-based pilot.

2025/26 ACTION PLAN (CONTINUED)

	Action	Strategic priority	What this action enables or unlocks
9	Identify priority opportunities for nature based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and to develop a delivery pipeline for their implementation.	3 Enhancing the natural environment	→ Generates a ready-to-deliver prioritised list of green SuDS projects to reduce flood risk and boost local green space.
10	Deliver a multi-agency climate adaptation simulation exercise to better understand cascading service impacts and identify priority adaptation measures.	4 Embedding resilience in local services and governance	→ Builds internal understanding of cascading climate risks, informing future planning to improve readiness and resilience of council services.

* This action is relevant to, or may be delivered as part of, a place-based pilot.

10 GLOSSARY

Cascading risks	When a climate-related event, such as a flood or heatwave, triggers a chain of disruptions across different sectors or systems. For example, flooding might damage power supplies, which then disrupts health services and transport.
Climate adaptation	Preparing for the effects of climate change, many of which are now unavoidable. Climate adaptation aims to reduce exposure and vulnerability to harmful climate impacts, protecting people and the systems we rely on, such as homes, services, businesses, and nature.
Climate change mitigation	Actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit the extent of global warming. Climate change mitigation is about tackling the causes of climate change, while adaptation is about coping with its effects.
Climate projections	Estimates of future climate conditions, such as temperature and rainfall, based on different scenarios of greenhouse gas emissions. Climate projections help us understand what changes to expect locally and plan for them.
Climate resilience	The ability to cope with, respond to, and recover from harmful climate-related disruptions and long-term pressures, while continuing to function and thrive. Climate resilience is often the result of effective adaptation.
Community Flood Action Group	A local group, often supported by organisations like the National Flood Forum, that brings together residents and stakeholders to raise awareness, share information, and take practical steps to reduce flood risk in their community.
Compound risks	When multiple climate-related hazards or stressors occur at the same time or in close succession, exacerbating their overall impact. For example, a heatwave during a drought, or heavy rainfall following a period of extreme heat.
Cool spaces	Public or community spaces designated as places where people can go to cool down during periods of extreme heat, helping to reduce health risks for vulnerable residents. The GLA co-ordinates the Cool Spaces programme in London, which sets specific criteria for eligible Cool Spaces.
Drought	A prolonged period of below-average rainfall, leading to water shortages that can affect people, businesses, and the natural environment.
Excess deaths	The number of deaths above what would be expected based on historical averages, often used to measure the impact of extreme weather events such as heatwaves.
Fluvial flooding	Flooding that occurs when the capacity of a river channel is exceeded, usually due to intense, sustained rainfall or blockages in the river. In Brent, areas close to the River Brent and its tributaries are at higher risk.

GLOSSARY CONTINUED

Flood Re	A government-backed reinsurance scheme in the UK that helps make flood cover more widely available and affordable as part of home insurance policies.
Flood Zone 2/Flood Zone 3	Flood Zone 2 refers to land with a 1 in 100 to 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding. Flood Zone 3 refers to land with a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding. These zones are used in planning to assess flood risk.
Fuel poverty	When a household cannot afford to keep adequately warm (or cool) due to low income, high energy costs, or inefficient housing, increasing vulnerability to extreme weather.
Global warming/global warming thresholds	Global warming refers to the increase in average global temperatures due to rising greenhouse gas emissions. Global warming thresholds are specific temperature increases (such as 1.5°C, 2°C, or 4°C) above pre-industrial levels, used to assess the severity of climate impacts and guide international targets.
Green infrastructure	Natural and semi-natural features such as parks, trees, green roofs, rain gardens, and green verges.
Groundwater flooding	Flooding that occurs when the underground water table rises to the surface, usually following a prolonged wet period. In Brent, this can result in saturated gardens or internal leaks, especially in areas with clay soils.
Heatwave	A period of abnormally hot weather lasting several days, which can have serious health, infrastructure, and environmental impacts. In the UK, an official heatwave is declared when the daily temperature meets or exceeds the heatwave temperature threshold (28°C in London) for at least three days.
Nature-based solutions	Approaches that use natural processes and features, such as planting trees, restoring wetlands, or creating green roofs, to address climate risks like flooding, overheating, and poor air quality, while also supporting biodiversity and community wellbeing.
Overheating	When indoor temperatures become uncomfortably or dangerously high, especially during heatwaves. Overheating in homes is a key driver of heat-related illness, particularly for vulnerable groups.
Permeable paving	A type of surface that allows water to soak through into the ground, helping to reduce surface water flooding by mimicking natural drainage.
Place-based pilot	A targeted trial or intervention focused on a specific area or neighbourhood, used to test and refine adaptation measures where climate risks and vulnerabilities are greatest.

GLOSSARY CONTINUED

Subsidence	Ground movement (often sinking) caused by the shrinking and cracking of clay soils during hot, dry weather, which can damage buildings and infrastructure.
Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)	Nature-based solutions designed to manage rainfall and reduce flood risk by mimicking natural drainage processes. Examples include rain gardens, permeable paving, and swales.
Surface water flooding	Flooding that occurs during or immediately after high-intensity rainfall, when water cannot drain into the existing drainage system because it is at capacity. This is the main flood risk facing Brent.
Temporary Use Ban	A restriction on water use (sometimes called a "hosepipe ban") imposed during drought to conserve water supplies.
Tree Equity	Ensuring that tree canopy is fairly distributed across urban areas. The Tree Equity Score combines tree canopy data with factors like income, health, employment, age, heat, and air pollution to identify where tree investment is most needed.
Urban Heat Island Effect	A phenomenon where urban areas, such as London, experience significantly higher temperatures than surrounding rural areas due to buildings and roads absorbing and re-emitting heat.
Water stress	Pressure on water resources due to reduced rainfall and/or increased demand, increasing the risk of water shortages.

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